**NMSG Meeting Action Decision Log – 1st February 2017**

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| Present: Helen Sudbury, Golding Homes & Chair; Matthew Eddy, MHS Homes; Helen Charles; Clarion Housing; Anthony Crossley, Ashford BC; Chailean Dottin-John, Gravesham BC; June Heslop, Southern Housing Group; Naureen Ullah, Ben McGowan & Ray Curry, Moat; Ola Lawal, Riverside; Rebecca Smith, KHG  Apologies: Genette Pinwill, West Kent HA; Matthew Robbins, AHL; David Edie, Dartford BC; Tina Dust, Sanctuary Housing; Steven Knowles, Dartford BC; Jody Bulman, Moat; Dominic Norwell, Medway Council;  Visitors: Andrew Holmes & Cheryl Giles, DWP | | | | | |
| **Meeting Date** | **Reference** | **Notes** | **Action/Decision** | **Lead Person** | **Timescale** |
| 1/2/2017 | DWP Update | Rolled out UC Live Service throughout Kent, single people just claiming JSA, looking at roll out of full UC service. This will be available to all claimants that UC was designed to encompass.  Claimants will have on line account, use this to update changes, liaise with Work Coaches, single transactional on line account to make their application and changes. Not all areas are completed at once when working on new system. Single view of the claim for claimant and DWP staff, helps to support claimants who may need support with this element. Testing of system as being developed to ensure layout and language is easy to understand. The account is accessible 24 hours per day.  There is a ‘to do’ list about what the Work Coach has asked them to do, completion of information provision or job seeking tasks. Changes in account or information will be notified by text or email depending on claimant’s notification preference. There will be personal one to one support, varied according to where the claimant is living and some will be working too.  Full service to date – over 60% of claimants have used smart phone or tablets to make claims. Eventually all existing claimants will have their details posted on line. Roll out is from May 2017 through to September 2018, this is by JC areas. March 2022 is the final deadline for full roll out across all new and existing claimants.  Working together is critical for this process to be successful. All claimants have to be registered on Verify to claim for UC on the new system. Any support or signposting to encourage this will help both DWP and the customer; this will speed up and make the process smoother. Rent verification is a big issue, 82% of claimants not aware of how much their rent is and 34% do not know how much their service charges are. UC is about ‘self-service’ so claimants need to be educated in this and can be supported.  Full service UC is an ‘agile’ service, it’s not yet 50% built yet, the system has been designed for DWP but this is changing as problems occur and is then updated. These can be minor or more major changes to make the system easier to use. UC 182 – this is how DWP contact landlords to verify rent charges, what is needed from landlords is one secure email address per organisation. CG has information about how to set this up via RS.  There are national meetings of landlord’s bi monthly and anything trailed on full service is feedback at this meeting of representatives. Colleagues urged to feedback through their representative about any issues with the system. CG emphasised that this is not a blanket approach for customers; it’s based on an individual’s situation.  There is an 8 week process for Direct Payments for the most vulnerable clients. When a customer is 4 weeks in arrears it is flagged on the DWP system and the Work Coach will contact the customer to assess the situation. DWP cannot mandate customers to go on Budgeting courses. The trail in the North that was completed yesterday, landlords could decide who would get an AP payment based on a number specified. There are no outcomes from this trail yet. DWP will share results when available.  There are exceptions to how often UC is paid, this will depend on a customer’s situation, and this arrangement of direct payments is not long term. The Work Coach will still continue to offer support and sign post to enable customers to manage their income effectively.  The customer will have one Work Coach and will agree a Claimant Commitment, which is based on the customer’s situation. | **AH to share roll out details with RS for circulation**  **ALL to note**  **RS to share information with colleagues**  **CG to clarify and feedback about how rent information is flagged on the DWP UC system**  **AH & CG to share when available** | **AH & RS**  **ALL**  **CG & RS**  **CG & RS**  **AH & CG** | **By 10th Feb**  **As Required**  **By 10th Feb**  **ASAP**  **When Available** |
| 1/2/2017 | Minutes & Matters Arising | Minutes agreed as accurate. There were no matters arising noted. |  |  |  |
| 1/2/2017 | Affordability Workshop Feedback | HS feedback about the Affordability Workshop held by KHG in November. The actions were then distributed to each of the KHG Sub Groups. The issue of sustainability of friends permitted to apply and join a housing register was discussed, concerns raised about potential relationship breakdowns, safeguarding of more vulnerable people to access housing, how you structure a tenancy to flex who can occupy a tenancy should one person leave.  RS to pick up the issue with DWP about future engagement and potential training for both DWP and Housing colleagues.  Principles of Affordability Paper – this is a statement of intent for other stakeholders. HS advised that the CSU in Maidstone have now changed the focus of the meeting from ASB to Vulnerability and these cases or instances are discussed. This happens locally elsewhere. JH suggested exploring the relationships with other providers or support services, such as Porchlight, to encourage the other agencies to get consent from clients to share with landlords.  Mapping of support services – this is localised sharing of information. Using network meetings such as this to update on what is new or changing in relation to services and avoiding duplication.  Downsizing – is there an opportunity for local authorities to offer financial incentive to HA tenant to downsize and then there will be a void within HA stock to fill from the LA housing register. Is this possible using the HRA account. Gravesham BC offer a lump sum per bedroom they give up, or provide carpets and decoration costs, this can apply when people move of borough. This is similar in Ashford BC and is very successful. The circumstance of direct let or bidding will depend upon the household’s income when downsizing.  KHG Eviction Protocol – to be circulated ahead of the next meeting for review and update, for sign off by KHG. RS will share with KHOG too for comments/feedback. | **RS to contact DWP and feedback/continue engagement**  **RS to refer back to KHOG as they sit on KHOG**  **RC Moat to feedback on progress with HA and LA about downsizing discussions.**  **RS to ask KHOG to put on the KHOG agenda about GF paying incentive for HA tenant to move.**  **RS to share and colleagues to bring comments or feedback at April meeting of NMSG** | **RS**  **RS**  **RC**  **RS**  **RS & ALL** | **By 10th Feb**  **By 10th Feb**  **As available**  **By 10th Feb**  **By 10th Feb** |
| 1/2/2017 | Principles of Affordability | HS has shared this with colleagues. Any feedback to be shared with RS ahead of KHG Executive Board before meeting on 15th March. | **All to share any additional feedback on document** | **ALL** | **By 1st March** |
| 1/2/2017 | Housing Options for U35’s | ME provided an overview of the MHS model for Shared Accommodation for under 35’s.  Key Points – from 1st April 2017 only letting shared accommodation to U35’s; slides run through considerations and solutions discussed within MHS Homes; will supply and maintain the white goods and carpets; each room will be treated as a tenancy the other areas such as lounge, bathroom and kitchen are regarded as communal; tenancies granted rather than licences; will use existing or purchase 3 bed accommodation and convert to 3 bed shared; ambition is to provide 50 additional bed space across Medway; will encourage potential tenants to meet and match for sharing and existing tenants will be involved in new occupation when a tenant leaves; Tenancies will be AST’s; MHS will establish a sub brand to market the shared accommodation; income from the three shared room rate rent will help finance maintenance replacement of white goods/carpets and go toward housing management costs.  ME agreed to feedback on progress and learning as this progresses. It was also agreed to contact Ursula Harris, formerly WKHA now managing student accommodation in Canterbury for the University to establish if any good practice/learning that Housing colleagues could obtain for those considering Shared Accommodation models for U35’s. | **RS to share presentation on the KHG website with Action Log**  **RS to add to future meeting agenda**  **RS to contact Ursula Harris and arrange presentation if appropriate** | **RS**  **RS**  **RS** | **By 3rd Feb**  **By end Feb**  **March 17** |
| 1/2/2017 | KHG Update | KHG Seminar on 19th July 2017, Health and Housing focus with themed workshop and key note speakers, costing and agenda information will be shared in due course. KHG Awards taking place in September 2017, categories and criteria to be shared and colleagues encouraged to nominate when details released.  Worked with KCC regarding future commissioning of LD and MH services and offers for these clients groups, working across KCC and Housing to forge commissioning of services. Also worked with KCC, Leaders and Kent MP’s about the placement of households from London  RS continuing work on the County wide DFG project and provided an overview of the work undertaken, including collection of data, pulling together national and local good practice and emphasis on the customer journey and integration of housing health and social care. This project is due to conclude in May 2017.  KHG Partnership Managers continuing to support all sub groups and action plans they have.  RS also working on the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy refresh, the scheduled launch time for this is Summer 2017. KHG sub groups will be asked when appropriate to help shape and inform this document. | **RS to share link to website when news is uploaded** | **RS** | **As Required** |
| 1/2/2017 | Forward Plan | BM has had a recent case where a tenant who has been sub-let a property, the Local Authority in question has asked Moat to pay for financial/legal assistance for the client. The LA has advised Moat that they are not experienced in this area and asked Moat to fund a Barrister.  HS agreed to share an update on the Golding Homes Hoarding Policy and Practice; Golding Homes have had two prosecutions in this area. ME advised that MHS Homes are liaising with Hoarding UK and will share contact details.  JH shared a recent presentation to SHG about fraud and separation of duties within teams managing income and tenancies, more about a reminder than training about new legislation. There was a discussion around the table about various examples and cases of fraud.  There was also a discussion about Moat Promise and Ashford Promise. The latter is on hold currently whilst the Housing Department. Ashford BC have limited resources for delivering this currently but the intention is to take this forward. The learning from Moat is about working with those who aren’t incentivised by Moat Promise and using the Tenancy Agreement alongside the Promise ethos. Gravesham are looking to explore something similar. | **BM encouraged to go back to LA and challenge the LA decision.**  **HS and RS to liaise about presentation on future agenda**  **JH to share contact details with RS for future agenda.**  **RS to add the Eviction Protocol and Case Law Update to future agendas**  **All colleagues encouraged to share presentation or meeting themes with RS, HS and ME.** | **BM**  **HS &RS**  **JH and RS**  **RS**  **ALL** | **As required**  **End of Feb**  **End of Feb**  **By end Feb**  **As required** |
| 1/2/2017 | Discussion Session | AC asked colleagues about additional software being used to support the roll out of UC and exploring Rent Sense. Golding Homes have used this software for a significant time.  HS raised the cost of temporary accommodation in Maidstone and Golding Homes have been approached and agreed direct lets from the waiting list. There was a conversation about the impact of this on others who are still able to bid and the pool of properties available. | **AC to make contact with Matthew Robbins at Amicus Horizon Limited as AHL has explored this.**  **Colleagues to share any similar experiences with HS** | **AC**  **ALL** | **As required**  **ASAP** |
| 1/2/2017 | AOB | RS to check for next meeting host for April 26th | **RS to request volunteer if required** | **RS** | **End of Feb** |

***Thanks noted to Ashford BC for hosting.***