**KENT HOUSING OPTIONS SUB GROUP (KHOG)MEETING**

**Held at Maidstone BC Office, Maidstone House, Maidstone**

**Present:** Marie Gerald, (Vice Chair), Dartford BC; Deborah White, KHG Mentor and WKHA; Roxanne Shepherd, Swale BC; Elly Toye, Dover DC; Emily Matthews, KCC; Sylvia Roberts, ABC; Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Robin Cahill, KCC; Stuart Clifton, Maidstone BC; Rachel May, Thanet DC; Lora McCourt, CCC; Lyn Wilders, Gravesham BC; Jason Wheble, T & M BC; Deborah McLening, KSS CRC; Andrew MacDonald; KCC; Matt Jones, Sevenoaks DC; Jane Lang, TWBC; Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice; Jill Pells, KHG

**Apologies:** Jane Smither, (Chair) T & MBC: Lesley Clay, Kent JPPB; Stephen Joyce, VOA; Marion Money, NLA; Jane Griffiths, BPHA; Sarah Robson, Shepway DC; Vicky May, Thanet DC

**Guess:** Joanne Straw, LGA;

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference** | **Action/Decision** | **Timescale** | **Lead person** | **Notes/Outcome** |
| **Election of Vice Chair** | Following a closely fought ballot Marie Gerald, Dartford was duly elected Vice Chair which shows that you really can’t get too much of a good thing. |  |  |  |
| **Notes of Meeting held on 15 December 2016** | Notes and actions from the meeting held on 15 December 2016 were agreed with matters arising being addressed during the course of the meeting.  MG requested a presentation on the Pathway Projects.  Obtain Affordability Protocol developed through the NMSG. | .  Next KHOG meeting? | N/A  JP/MB  DW | Notes agreed.  Discussion regarding affordability tests. MB mentioned Employment Pathway Projects – one in Kent and E Sussex soon, embargoed until 24 March. For those with MH problems. Other schemes in other parts of the country. Porchlight are leading on this project.  Though Live Well Kent network (Porchlight and Shaw Trust) also help people with MH problems into work.  DW to speak to EM regarding Affordability Protocol.  Locata looking at taking a very detailed income statement from applicants. |
| **YP Pathway** | Protocol to be updated and sent to LC and JP for comment prior to going to next JPPB for ratification.  Follow up session to be arranged by JPPB.  ET to attend DWP meeting (early April) regarding changes and report back to KHOG.  RM to raise under 22s at meeting next week and report back. | As soon as possible | RC  LC  ET  RM | RC updated on 22 February workshop. Attended by Operational Teams and 12 Districts and Boroughs, facilitated by St Basils.  MG raised changes to HB from April and some exemptions (eg under 18 care leavers). Require some further advice on how this will be applied. |
| **HRA funded incentives to downsizing HA tenants** | JP to contact RS regarding why this information is required. | Immediate | JP | Unsure re origins of this item but thought that information may be required to inform a paper being written by RS.  In West Kent HA area, Sevenoaks financially support a scheme but not via HRA as not stock holding.  General response “why would HRA fund this?” |
| **Behavioural Insights Project** | Circulate bid with notes.  JL to send a summary email for members to respond if they feel they can assist and indicate which project they feel would work best. |  | JL | Bid document tabled at meeting.  Joint bid put into LGA for project related to managing demand for accommodation. |
| **Eviction Protocol Refresh** | Need to have a joint KHOG NMSG meeting to take this forward. |  | JP | Need to formally agree and acknowledge. Need to highlight the cost saving benefits to HAs of early notification when eviction is likely. |
| **Homeless Reduction Bill (SI)** | See training below.  MG to keep Group informed of her project. | ASAP | MG | Bill is on its way through. MG gave an overview of what she is doing at Dartford. No indication of any additional funding. There will be more people approaching and we will have more responsibilities in terms of recording information, giving advice, etc.  Dartford are creating a hub in Civic Centre (from June) with Porchlight, Specialist Children’s Services, DWP, Early Help and Money Advice Service. Intention is to be entirely on line eventually.  Apparently DWP are looking for hot desks.  TDC is considering a personalised housing service and looking at a fact finding visit to Wales.  Locata have met with DCLG regarding changes. Medway is a trailblazer. VH has asked if this can be rolled out throughout Kent.  Maidstone BC recruiting officers to develop personalised plans.  CCC are intending to amalgamate teams to provide a “hub” but without other agencies being involved. Requested more staff but turned down. |
| **National Policy (SI)** |  |  |  | Covered in previous items. |
| **Protocols (SI)** |  |  |  | Covered in previous items. |
| **Recent Case Law (SI)** |  |  |  | Barakate –v- LB Brent. Brent making an offer of private sector accommodation in Birmingham. Bent had a suitability policy but this does not mean that you can automatically refer out of area. Still unresolved but Brent have undertaken a fresh review. |
| **Training Opportunities, Including Local Training** | Contact Satnam Kaur at T & M if interested in booking a place on the 25 May training  SC to give further details of Shelter training when known  SR to circulate information on Eligibility Training when known.  SC to give more details when known. | Immediate | ALL  SC  SR  SC | Implementing the Homeless Reduction Bill  T & M hosting NPSS Implementing the Homelessness Reduction Bill on **25th May** 2017. There are circa 12 places available.  Cost will be £70 plus VAT to include lunch.    MBC considering Shelter course on Implementing the HR Bill.  TDC running NPSS training on 21 June. Details previously circulated.  ET asked about Eligibility Training and SR at  ABC is willing to look at this.  Welfare Reform training being considered at MBC.  Gravesham Triage Tool VH reported this is nearly ready to go. |
| **AOB** | **New DA Integrated Service** – Need to review protocol and procedures with LAs.  **Specialist Children Services have Ofsted**  LAs to produce information on numbers of 16/17 year olds placed in B & B over last two years  **Care Leavers** Information to be brought to future meetings  Restructure KSSCRC Cynthia Allen Interventions Director to attend in future. DMcL to provide contact details to JP. | Now! | All  All  DMcL | EM updated on the new DA Integrated Service from 3 April. Very little immediate change although now a single provider (Thanet and Dover: Oasis; Ashford, Canterbury and Shepway: Centra Support; MBC, Dartford, Gravesham, Swale: Centra; TWells, Sevenoaks, T & M Domestic Abuse Volunteer Service).Tendered on quality not price. Some innovative elements, including excluding perpetrators from properties.  EM has identified a variety of approaches to DA cases throughout County. |