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

**21 June 2018**

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

**Present:** ; Jane Smither, Chair and T & M BC;Marie Gerald, Dartford BC, Sylvia Roberts, Ashford, Marie Gerald, Dartford; Elly Toye, Dover; Andrew Kefford, Sevenoaks; Ray Easdown, Medway; Franky Roma, Medway; Lora McCourt, Canterbury; Jane Lang, TWBC; Tina Judge, Kent Homechoice; Sophie Valentine, TWBC; Stuart Clifton, Maidstone Borough Council; Deborah White, KHG Mentor and WKHA; Vicky May, Thanet DC; Mark Damiral, F&HDC; Lynn Wilders, Gravesham BC; Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice

**Apologies:** Pam Millington, Dover; Clare Keeling, Gravesham; Lesley Clay, JPPB; Rebecca Smith, KHG

**Guests:**  Richard Williams, MHCLG; Phil Agulnik, Entitled to; Tom Knight, Affinity Works

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| **Reference** | **Notes/Outcome** | **Timescale** | **Lead person** | **Action/Decision** |
| **Action log from Meeting**  **15 March 2018** | **Reconnection Policy** – carry over to next meeting  **Commissioning of homeless services** – carry over to next meeting but some concern was raised that there has not been an update on services, which should be in place by 1st October. It is hoped that we will have more information by September meeting.  **Reciprocal Policies** – to be discussed in a.o.b  **Homeless Triage Tool** – the tool has been updated and advice sheets have been produced and added to the tool.  **Protocols** – With the exception of the intentionally homeless protocol, all protocols have been updated.  **TMBC Ombudsman case** – on agenda  UC Factsheet has been shared |  | **MA** | RS to contact MA about an update for KHOG in October |
| Homeless Prevention Tool - **Phil Agulnik, ‘Entitled to’** | Presentation is on KHG website [www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk](http://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk)  Kent already have the Welfare to work – better off in work calculator.  ‘Entitled to’ have a new Homelessness Prevention Tool which was viewed for a decision on whether we would like to use this across Kent. It is an income maximisation tool allowing a prospective tenant to go through their affordability and consider work options and other areas that they might be able to afford to live in more easily.  The tool uses standard spending amounts, which are taking from AHAS, and we can input other standing spending amounts per area.  Current licence cost with Kent is £12K; it would be a further £12K to have the homeless prevention tool with a standard set up. Additions to the standard tool would be costed but support is included.  *Gravesham and Dover, Canterbury and Thanet to trial and report back at a later meeting.* | By 2nd July | **RS**  **LW, ET, LM and VM** | Report back date to be confirmed once trial period is set up |
| Out of London Placements Data Hub – **Tom Knight, Affinity Works** | Presentation will be shared via a PDF with the action log from the meeting.  IBAA Project Data Hub.  Monitoring of TA placements and costs in Kent and across London and could be costed to 2 sub-clusters across Kent at £25K per sub-cluster. £50K in total.  Concern raised that financial benefits of system would not out way the cost of system in some areas.  It was suggested that KHOG look at average cost of placements by KCC who would benefit more from the savings that this system would provide.  A contract with Affinity works would be 12 months with a 3 month exit clause  KHOG to pass some rates to Affinity Works to do some analysis for creating a business case.  It was also suggested that we approach London Councils via Mark Meehan to discuss match-funding possibilities. | By 2nd July | **RS** | To approach KCC and London Councils |
| Q & A with Specialist Advisor MCHLG re the HRA 2017 – **Richard Williams** | More rough sleeper-funding coming.  MCHLG are aware of some bureaucratic and IT issues with HRA and are keen to know about any issues with the guidance or any particular areas we are being challenged on.  Discussion around the amount and length of the letters we are required to send out and whether we are getting it right.  RW suggested plain speaking letters would be better sent to clients with a reference to additional information about the law.  VH to Share Kent statistics with RW for first 2 months. Shelter are advising previous applicants with homeless decisions to reapply.  RW to attend meeting in September. RW offered to run sessions in grouped Local Authority areas. |  | **VH**  **RS/JS** | RS/JS to liaise with RW about Sept agenda |
| Terms of Reference | Terms of reference should be reviewed annually and then go to Exec Board for information.  JS raised support concern, as the group no longer has Jill Pells. DW advised that Rebecca Smith is able to post minutes to web and send out agendas etc but she is unable to minute all sub group meetings.  It was suggested that we have a volunteer at each meeting to complete the action decision log. KHG Exec Board raised that as KHOG is a sub group of KHG, all paying members should have equal access to attend the meetings. It was agreed that 2 meetings a year would be opened to all to deal with wider issues.  It was felt that not all members would want to attend other meetings, which focus on discussing homelessness issues, but it was agreed that the wording did not truly reflect the nature of KHOG and so this will be amended. | By 13th July | **JS** | JS to alter and send to DW |
| Tonbridge and Malling Ombudsman Case – Update | The Ombudsman have upheld TMBC decision on case with adult and 2 children wanting a 3 bedroom house where 1 of the children lives separately for part of the time. |  |  |  |
| **Protocols (SI)** | Concern was raised about how protocols will be monitored and developed if JPPB no longer exists. |  |  | This will be discussed by KHG at next KHG EXB meeting |
| **Recent Case Law** | A new law is to be discussed in Feb to force banks to give homeless households current accounts. |  |  |  |
| **Standing Items:; Training Opportunities, including local training** | TMBC are considering running Shelter HRA update training and are interested to know if anyone wants staff members to attend.  Maidstone have booked Mark Pritchard to run training. SC asked if anyone is considering Now Medical training  Canterbury considering some mediation training and waiting for dates at the moment but might be Sept/Oct. | ASAP | **ALL** | To contact TMBC if interested in attending training |
| **AOB** | Information on Rent Deposit schemes – please could everyone send information to JS.  SC – should not have schemes that are labelled for priority and non-priority need should be decided on a case by case basis.  JS says that RS wants to set up a workshop in Oct/Nov on HRA around time of duty to refer coming in and look at how HAs can work with us although they do not have duty to refer but can work on pre eviction protocol. Also, ask RW to attend.  Reciprocals – TMBC contact housing association to check. LM thinks we need a procedure in terms of what band they go into. T&F group JS, MD and VM  Rough Sleeper Funding – RE asked if anyone has got money and if they have got outreach workers  Domestic Abuse – MG – people coming out of refuges they would do a statement with their written worker about their experiences to make enquiries but KCC seem to disagree with the procedure we are following.  VM – chief exec of local refuge has asked to meet with her. LM and VM to meet with Emily at KCC to discuss outcomes of first year of new contract.  Referrals – ET asked what process everyone would be using for referrals for relief duty. Timescale must be 10 days. Referrals should be made to seniors within the team. Agreed that referrals should be made to manager and deputy. SC to collate details.  AK – will be leaving  LMcC anecdotal information that contact centres are turning people away as they are non-priority.  MD – has asked how many people in each team  SR – advised that Ray O’shea has started as Head of Housing Operations at Ashford BC | ASAP  By end July | **ALL**  **ALL**  **JS**  **SC**  **All** | Confirm to RS what would want covered at the workshop/speakers etc  Task and Finish working group required  Details to be sent to SC  To pass info to MD |
| **Next Meeting** | LA only **13 Sept 2018** at 10 am (MBC) |  |  |  |