**Present**: Sarah Lewis, Chair & Tunbridge Wells BC; Brian Horton, SELEP; Liz Crockford, Sevenoaks DC; Gillian Aylett, TMBC; Sandra Sainsbury, Folkestone & Hythe DC; Arron Nichols & Alana Randall, Medway Council; Rebecca Smith, KHG; Rachel Collins, Dover DC; James Young & Ashley Jackson, Thanet DC; Tessa O’Sullivan, ACRK; Emma Bartlett, Canterbury CC; Donna Michael, Ashford BC; Lucy Breeze, KCC; Shona Johnstone, Homes England (Head of High Growth and New Settlements, Markets Partners and Places)

**Apologies:** David Jeffrey, Optivo; Becky Ashley, Homes England; Mark James, Ashford BC; Rebecca Walker, Swale BC

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| **Reference** | **Notes/Outcome** | **When** | **Lead** | **Action/Decision** |
| **Introductions** | Introductions and apologies noted. |  |  |  |
| **Matters Arising** | RS to share the next County Wide Update paper that will be shared with KHG at the end of September.  TOS and AJ to liaise about a volunteer from a CLT for the Community Hub Steering Group. | **30.9**  **ASAP** | **RS**  **TOS/ AJ** | **To share CW Update paper when completed**  **To liaise outside the meeting** |
| **KLES Update** | LB provided an overview of the Kent Environment Strategy and Low Emissions Strategy, Climate and Net Zero programme. Carolyn McKenzie has now left KCC, there is an interim replacement at KCC. The KES was published in 2016, the third, an overarching high level strategy from heritage and leisure to transport waste, natural environment and climate change. A partnership strategy adopted by Kent Chiefs and Leaders, has a good evidence base to support it. Working together, sharing evidence and funding, collaboration to improve the natural and built environment of Kent and Medway.  Is part of a suite of linked strategies, as headed into 2018 the climate change and air pollution agendas have risen. Kent has been active on this agenda for many years, KCC have had a Climate Change Team for over 10 years, emissions have been reduced but not by a huge amount.  Slides show how emissions need to reduce in Kent. Not just about renewable energy, need to look at reliance on gas and oil, use of the car with walking and cycling over shorter distances, improvements to infrastructure, change how public transport is operated and accessible, digital connectivity also. Need to build resilience into existing communities as well as new communities that are being developed.  There will always be residual emissions and need to understand how to store carbon. Need to consider more than trees, protecting soils, improving bio diversity and looking at other natural storage solutions.  Communication to engage all communities to ensure adoption of low carbon environmental friendly behaviours. All captured in the Kent Low Emissions Strategy – a partnership document, approved by KCC in August and will be seen by Kent Chiefs and Leaders in late September/early October. Once adopted will anticipate that local authorities will take necessary steps to adopt this document.  There are 10 priority actions in the KLES, the key ones are planning and development and in general connectively transport and travel, all linked. 28% of emissions is from domestic, need to tackle this sector to work towards the reduction of emissions. Domestic Gas will be a challenge, how to get households off gas. Would like to get the net Zero ambition into local plans, currently updating and refreshing the Kent Design Guide to reflect the net Zero ambition and low carbon communities. Energy Positive communities – generating more energy than they are using.  Government have set their own targets for 2050 alongside local authorities. There are more benefits other than carbon savings, those who are more active have improved mental health = reduction on the burden of health services, cost benefits related to waste services, reduce fuel poverty through the building design and quality of homes.  SL asked about funding to assist with achieving targets? KCC has put funding towards this agenda, however Covid-19 has impacted all funding. £2m over two years set aside by KCC to support the agenda. Also looking to exploit the funding from Government, the recovery fund, Green Homes Vouchers, potential more money for social housing and decarbonisation, all to support the economic recovery.  GA asked if any more information in relation to the built environment and if there is active engagement with Government to influence locally development and planning standards. LB advised that the national proposals moving forward are not net Zero so may impact upon local authorities’ ambition about net zero. Through consultation on revised local plans KCC response includes the net Zero ambitions, especially as both strategies are partnership documents with endorsement from Chiefs and Leaders.  RC advised that would like to reduce Carbon but also fuel poverty and through new build keep the costing as low as possible. DDC have been advised that can’t generate and sell energy to the tenant it would have to go back to the grid and for the tenant to buy from a supplier, have others experienced this? LB aware of the issue, can share contact details with RC about work being undertaken/advice or clarity. JY advised that Thanet have a similar issue as DDC so that a tenant can benefit from renewable energy.  JY asked about decarbonisation about social housing, has anyone had experience of reviewing stock and meeting the EPC targets set for 2030 and net Zero for 2050? LB advised that the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund of potentially £50m is due imminently (October 2020). BH advised that a project in Rushenden in Kent was successful but does rely upon community engagement, including through schools and education. | **ASAP**  **ASAP** | **RS**  **LB/RC** | **RS to share slides when available**  **LB to share contact details with** [**rachel.collins@dover.gov.uk**](mailto:rachel.collins@dover.gov.uk) |
| **Medway SME** | Small Scale Sites Affordable Housing presentation. This work has been completed prior to the proposals in the White Paper. A big issue in Medway is development interest in sites under 20 units, offers have been 50% of open market value or lower, which impact the viability of sites.  There is a three tier approach and testing on as part of this work, as per the slides shared by AN. Results of the testing shared in the slides, indicating what is viable, a maybe and definitely not.  Just about to spend commuted sums that Medway have had for 3 years, commuted sums do have timeframes for spend associated with them. Going forward Medway are going to write an Affordable Housing SPD, with a cascade mechanism to be in place, this has to be agreed in Medway. AN is working on a report for this work.  AN confirmed that Medway have engaged with relevant groups/partners about the testing and work undertaken, including SME’s to ensure feedback. LC asked if Members have a view on the study, AN confirmed that no steer but Members are generally supportive around Affordable Housing Delivery and working with RP’s, in the past lesser units have been taken to avoid viability, Members are aware that RP’s do not have infinite financial resources. MHS, Moat, Optivo and TCH have all fed into this study.  GA asked if the SPD is referred to in the local plan? The plan is for the SPD to be completed by the end of the year, the adoption timescale for the new Local Plan is mid to late 2021 so should be part of the package of documents linked to the new local plan. | **As avail** | **AN** | **AN has to seek internal agreement before sharing his slides** |
| **SELEP** | BH advised that a letter was shared with Robert Jenrick from the developer groups across the LEP areas and had a response back with issues for the groups to feed into and a meeting with developer group Chairs would have a meeting with Chris Pincher. The chairs are now working on a response to the response, identify a top five list of asks of Government following the Covid-19 recovery responses. The weekly meetings with MHCLG and Homes England are now monthly, these are with Engagement and Market Intelligence Team colleagues and this will continue for the foreseeable future. The dialogue and issues fed back are linked to the daily and weekly briefing son the market to the Ministers.  Also had a letter from the Portfolio Holder for Economic Regeneration to be involved on the meeting with Chris Pincher to feed in their issues. The Chairs are also looking to engage with Localis and the All Party Parliamentary Group for SME Builders, to use the platform that they have developed to influence policy making process and the Comprehensive Spending Review process.  IF colleagues have any issues that would benefit from being raised through these new pathways to contact BH. |  |  |  |
| **Homes England** | SJ provided some updates from Homes England. The big announcement the New Affordable Housing Funding £7.39 billion grant from April 2021 to March 2026, for England ex London, about half of the homes will be affordable home ownership (SO, HO with long term disability, Rent to Buy and Older Persons Homeownership). The other half will be affordable and social rent and also supported and rural housing. A target has been set for strategic partners for 25% of investment into MMC, improvement of energy efficiency and use of SME contractors. SJ to feedback on the breakdown and information of the spilt in tenures as part of the new fund, also any messages about the social and affordable rent element.  Anyone with an interest in Affordable housing can bid, the funding can be accessed on scheme by scheme CME or multi-year strategic partnership deal. Bidding will open in November for CME and for strategic partnerships it will be January 2021.  The other announcement on 9th September was the Government boosting the land release fund and One Public Estate with 30m the Land Release Fund is LA to bid for surplus sites to come forward, again supporting SME builders. SJ to also feedback on the rural element of the funding coming forward.  SL asked about the existing AHP –SJ confirmed that this finishes at the end of 2021, SJ doesn’t have an update to date position, to share a note back to colleagues via RS.  BH asked about First Homes – is there a pilot that is going to be funded? SJ is unsure about whether the pilot is going to be funded but there will be a pilot, SJ to share an update via RS.  BH also shared that the RP’s are sharing concerns about a higher grant rate with a revision around the new arrangements for shared ownership, SJ to feedback to colleagues. | **ASAP** | **SJ** | **SJ to feedback as agreed on the points noted from the discussion post update** |
| **HSEG Action Plan** | Agreed that RS will share the action plan draft with the meeting notes. Colleagues are to then highlight and share back with RS their top three actions and suggested timeframe, then RS will set up a short meeting to agree what will work for the whole HSEG and finalise. | **With Notes** | **RS** | **To share draft action plan for feedback from all colleagues** |
| **ACRK** | Since April 4 housing needs surveys undertaken. Just started the programme of 6 surveys as year with Sevenoaks DC, going out every two months.  TOS has been working with ERHA in Herne Hill, they have planning on a site there, Shepherds Well CLT planning application almost ready for submission. This has developed from a local needs housing ambition through to a CLT, and a result land has been brought forward and they are working with ERHA. There are about 12 other schemes in progress too.  TOS has shared information with colleagues regarding the Consultation on Affordable Housing Thresholds - A Rural Perspective. Rural organisations are lobbying to change the definition of rural housing to a parishes of less than 3000, if they insist on using s 157 these sites could be lost as land owners may expect more for their sites.  The part time post working with TOS will now be working four days a week and supporting TOS.  The Community Housing Hub, this slowed due to Covid-19, the website should be completed by the end of September and provide an overview of services provided by the Hub, there is likely to be a soft launch of this website. There are two technical advisors working with TOS on the Hub, there is also a land advisor working with the hub to source land and link to groups. Will be recruiting for a part time Hub Coordinator in due course. The Steering Group will be meeting shortly, Co Housing, Cooperatives and local authorities are all represented. Looking for a wider CLT representative.  TOS confirmed that there will be case studies/example to share, especially as the current ERHA scheme is the first for them in Kent working with a CLT. | **As avail** | **TOS** | **TOS to share website details when available.** |
| **Training/ Events** | To remain on the agenda as a standing item, colleagues to share any feedback on what they could benefit from training wise and if they have been to any events and have information shared back on.  RS and SL to catch up regarding the Rural Protocol and the launch.  LC asked if at the next meeting there could be a Kent wide view from a KPOG colleague about the White Paper and the implications. |  |  |  |
| **AOB** | LC raised resale homeownership and cladding guidance/fire safety certification and if properties become un-mortgage able due to a lack of fire safety certificates. Will people be able to sell or new purchasers be able to get mortgages to buy? Will those who have been assisted through homeownership be able to move on?  GA to raise an AOB via email regarding a s106 clause and shared ownership and mortgages for colleagues to respond.  **Next meeting date 17th November 2020, RS to update the appointment as will be via Teams** | **15.9** | **GA** | **To share email with colleagues for feedback** |