**Present**: Jo Ellis, Chair & Town and Country Housing; Rebecca Smith, KHG; Stephen Elliot, Riverside; Daniel Kilian, Gravesham BC; Shola Alao, Hyde Housing; Kerry Newbury, Optivo; Hayley Brooks, Sevenoaks DC; Peter Dosad, Dartford BC; Martin Collett, English Rural Housing Association; Nick Fenton, KDG, David Godfrey, KCC; Brian Horton, SELEP; Joe Scullion, GCHA; Tracy Allison, WKHA; Linda Hibbs, TMBC; Ashley Jackson, Thanet DC; Mark Breathwick, Medway; Elaine St Ledger, Optivo; Melanie Anthony & Tim Woolmer, KCC; Sharon Williams, Ashford BC; Karla Philips, David Firth, Shannon Ryan, KCC; John Littlemore, Maidstone BC; Beverley Covington, Clarion HG; Chris Burgess & Mike Barrett, Porchlight; Caroline Smith, KCC; Helen Campbell-Wroe, P2I; Marion Money, NARLA; Linda Smith, KCC Public Health; James Gray, Home Group; Elly Toye, Dover DC; Cynthia Allen, KSS CRC;

**Apologies:** Annemarie Roberts, Golding Homes; Christy Holden, KCC; Caroline Robbins, Look Ahead Care Support and Housing; Andrew Scott-Clark, Kent Public Health; Rebecca Wilcox, Ashford BC; Adrian Hammond, Folkestone & Hythe DC; Becky Ashley & Carol Cairns, Homes England; Jane Lang, Tunbridge Wells BC;

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference** | **Notes/Outcome** | **BY** | **Lead** | **Action/Decision** |
| **Introductions & apologies** | JE welcomed all members to the first KHG virtual full membership meeting and thanked colleagues for their time and continued support of the membership. The resilience of sector and colleagues within organisations in challenging times has been phenomenal. This is a time when forums like KHG should become more important, a network set up to share best practice and support across colleagues. Huge thank you to all Chairs of Sub Groups and for the updates on the Countywide Group updates. |  |  |  |
| **Matters Arising Written Update** | JL reiterated the thanks and recognition of fantastic work of the sub groups, he mentors KHOG. A plea for District and Borough Councils and Medway is for colleagues to share the requested data and information to for Health colleagues, to ensure wrap around service for those impacted by Covid-19, information to be shared about who has been accommodated under Covid-19, a template has been shared via KHOG. Colleagues to ensure that these are returned to James Ransom at K&M CCG or RS.  BH commented that there have been weekly meetings with Government regarding development and if colleagues would like an opportunity to share any issues for this group to pick up, via BH or NF then to confirm with JE or BH.  JE asked colleagues to share and promote the countywide update paper provided with the meeting papers. | **ASAP**  **ASAP**  **ASAP** | **Local Authorities**  **ALL**  **ALL** | **To ensure Options Managers complete and return data**  **To contact NF/BH with any issues to feed back**  **To share document internally** |
| **KHG & Coronavirus Round Table** | JE stressed that Covid-19 has highlighted the significant importance to having a home and that this sector is more than just bricks and mortar, our role is wider, with much support provided to communities and supporting vulnerable members. Housing is vital in the recovery plans to Covid-19.  KN advised that Optivo are currently working through changes to service provision, including a mobilisation plan and officers managing visits, now managing services virtually, have some priority viewings planned. They have contacted 58,000 residents over three themed groups, arrears are down but not as low as expected, also work around wellbeing and how they engage with regards and how to manage this moving forward.  CS updated regarding the Corporate Parent. There have been significant numbers of young people (UASC) into Kent, there are three reception centres in the county with new arrivals going to Oakwood House for at least fourteen days, as part of the isolation process. The pressure and impact is the number of care leavers, now at 1900 and likely to see up to 2000 by the year end. The current number of UASC is almost the same as at the high in 2015. There has been some success in working with other LA’s to take some YP, although isn’t working as well as should be (voluntary national scheme). Lots of information in the press, some additional funding from Government. Main challenge is trying to find accommodation and increased resources to house YP. Approximately 130 21 year olds in shared accommodation through Ready Homes that will need move on accommodation, CS highlighting this pressure now but also a pressure moving forward. The other issue is the mental health upon YP, some YP only have a Personal Advisor as a point of contact, isolation and loneliness has been a key feature during Covid-19. Recovery for CS is the long term impact that Covid-19 has had on YP and how to help them, and the knock on pressure for Health Services.  JE asked why an increased in numbers travelling to the UK, the sense is the good weather using boats, a potentially cheaper option for a YP to buy a seat. Some claiming to be under 18 are not and are adults, an age assessment is undertaken which is timely but at point of entry if they claim to be a YP this has to be accepted. Working with other agencies to understand this issue more.  MA advised that the response to Covid-19 has enabled a better understanding of how service users would like to receive services moving forward, engagement with service users through better ways, working in partnership with inventive and innovative group of providers across Home Care to Care Homes and DA services. Will carry forward learning into recovery plans, and understand that they can be more agile in making and following through decision making, for example the Digital Offer for Vulnerable People, this has been done now at pace with over 1000 units having access to technology, reducing social isolation and one to one calls. The profile of demand has changed and will need to reflect this in contracts moving forward. Poured resources in to the local welfare offer, a double in demand for this support but great learning and quick response for provision of wrap around support.  SW advised that from a LA perspective the experience has been similar to others, has forced the agenda around digital transformation, use of Microsoft Teams and how this has impacted on attendance and allowed business to continue, introduced virtual viewings, electronic sign up etc. Now taking stock of what has worked well and lessons to learn and how to help if and when there is a second wave of Covid-19, also considering the impact of Brexit. Understanding the detail behind what has been done, innovative approaches, how has the demand on services change in more detail. Housing rough sleepers was a challenge from Government, some LA’s were in a better position than others with regards to responding to this, there remains a pressure for move on accommodation. Members have realised the delivery of housing locally in Ashford so moving forward on this agenda to enable meeting the demand for housing. How will we move all groups on from temporary accommodation and have the right support in place.  MB advised that similar to others with regards to moving along with the digital agenda, delivering services more locally in the community, wider issues for households generally, UASC provision and move on – how to deal strategically with this issue and are there options about other organisations not moving back into accommodation used prior to Covid-19, student accommodation, repurposing this potentially for move on options.  LH echoed other responses, a huge positive for LH was the Community Hub work, housing has become more known across Tonbridge and Malling BC, including the wider services provided through housing.  CA advised that from the Probation Service they have seen huge changes, including access to MOJ funding, initially for early prisoner release but only had one person across this area, this has been extended to the end of July to fund TA for prison release, this has been helpful to assist those with entrenched homelessness issues. Some have more stable accommodation with Private Landlords and some pending a LA decision about housing. A lot more engagement and rapport with LA regarding prison release and homelessness, a positive start to building on these relationships. |  |  |  |
| **Kent Resilience Forum Update** | Karla Philips and her colleague David Firth provided the following update: KP is in the Corporate Policy Team with colleagues DF and SR. KP shared an overview of the Kent Resilience Forum through a number of slides, which are to be shared with the notes.  Recovery is taking place at the same time as response to Covid-19. The aim is to produce overall recovery strategy and impact assessment, both positive and negative, opportunities and how to mitigate negative, action plans to support recovery. This is about multi agency work and included in the TOR, how that adds value through multi agency actions. Slides include details about what organisations are included within the structure and the cells, there are 7 thematic cells. All cells are talking to each other so collective issues are highlighted and actioned. There are approx. 150 colleagues involved in the whole structure. There is financial representation across all 7 cells to pick this issues up across the board.  Timescales – 7 cells have completed impact assessments and an overarching assessment also completed and shared, including with Kent Chiefs and Leaders. These are live working documents and can be updated accordingly to help respond along journey of recovery.  Cells will be submitting action plans by end of next week, these will be tested through other partners, and the challenge will be how it will be taken forward and delivered. Then draft strategy for mid-July to test with the recovery group, the draft strategy to go to Kent Leaders following this. In the process of considering the delivery architecture post July 2020, because Covid-19 is ongoing recovering will be longer terms, allowing organisations to get on and deliver actions.  Infrastructure Recovery Cell overview provided by David Firth, TK is the chair of this cell, with representation from KHG colleagues. Strong relationships and networks in place pre covid-19 have been helpful in this process. Longer term implications around markets, changes in demand, financial impacts, commercial impact, all being worked through and planned for. There are three elements – 1) quick wins to get running asap, shovel ready projects to progress when funding is available 2) further actions needed, take a strategic approach to infrastructure and housing, importance of being proactive in approach, stimulating the housing market 3) what is needed from Government, lobbying and liaison to Government. Significant challenges but opportunities, including Green Recovery in a broad sense, behavioural changes including WFH and digital or changes to commuting practices, increased recycling and design guides. Lots of elements in this one cell.  **Questions/Comments**: BH stressed the opportunity to draw value from the Covid-19 situation, Government and Homes England are working hard to establish how to respond to the pandemic, and a chance to get recovery right and leave a legacy. Housing should be a significant element of recovery, having awareness of the adverse financial impact upon housing providers and LA’s, need to show the overall impacts of what the housing sector can offer through the recovery process.  MB questioned KP about the Voluntary Sector Cell and correspondence received, should prevention of rough sleepers returning to the streets as part of the action plan recovery, especially when in a two tier county set up, could a coordinated plan to get rough sleepers into supported accommodation be part of a resilience and recovery plan. JL provided assurance to MB, Kent Homeless Connects comments have been incorporated into the Health and Social Care recovery cell impact assessment and action plan, the plans going forward will address these issues to address settled accommodation and other wider issues. MA echoed what JL said as did TW. The District and Communities Recovery Cell, has the main link through KHOG, and emphasising the importance of this issues. The collaborative response and recovery across all areas and sectors has been strong and successful and noticed at Government level. MHCLG are looking to do a case study on the response, the district led community hub response. Important to emphasise that although KCC are leading on this recovery work it is being shaped by all partners, colleagues urged to contact KP, DF or TW if any issues not being picked up.  MB advised that Medway are linked into key groups mentioned by other colleagues, have a recovery plan on going within their services, and have good number of rough sleepers who have maintained their TA during the Covid-19 period. |  |  |  |
| **Homes England Update** | Members advised that Becky Ashley had provided her apologies at short notice and was unable to participate in the meeting. |  |  |  |
| **Kent Developers Group Item** | In addition to an email with a link shared with the membership the morning of the meeting Nick Fenton, Chair of KDG provided the following update: Pre Covid-19 there was a situation of high demand but then went into shut down, the views taken by the Development Industry has been varied, from a blip to a disaster scenario.    Arranged regular meetings with MHCLG and Homes England and covering the SELEP area, to share news about what was happening locally and where recovery efforts could be provided. No adjustments in terms of sale prices, and where sales offices open and working sales were still going ahead. Developers had forward sales or units with mortgage offers in place. Developers are also digging foundations and starting new sites, sales are increasing at a pace not expected. Some companies with London based offices are interested in Kent as a location so need to understand the impact on the commercial sector and how the design of homes will enable more people to work successfully from home.  Student accommodation may be an opportunity and colleagues to keep this on the radar. There is potentially change within the planning system which we also need to be aware of.  Had a response from Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State following correspondence from NF and colleagues. There is an automatic planning extension on those sites due to expire, a result of honest dialogue and response from Government. Moving forward the weekly meetings with MHCLG and HE are themed with input from a range of colleagues.  The power of joint working and the impact that his has is crucial, especially across the SELEP area and a range of sectors, coordinating messages and asks to share back to Government departments. Any different view or feelings to be shared from other colleagues to be shared to NF and BH.  SW have had a similar position around no dip in sales and interest in homes over the pandemic, how is the experience of developers impacted on the valuations, heard concerns raised about the housing market and the impact on valuations and investment into new schemes. How do we understand what is occurring in the market to provide assurance to members where there is investment planned? NF advised that valuations were ceased for a period of time, but with the push to move toward business as usual should resolve this, answers about the demand are unknown as it could be a number of factors, and employment and access to this may have an impact on financial capability to assess mortgages.  TA has been using the messages and correspondence shared via NF and his colleagues so thanked NF for sharing.  MB raised the issues of mortgage lending, NF advised that some mortgage lenders are pulling away from Help to Buy, this is more about balancing of the products, there are plenty of providers lending but can keep this on the radar. There has to be different ways of home occupancy, not just about outright sale but what are the options through shared ownership and rental supply.  BH advised that NF received direct correspondence from Chris Pincher and other colleagues, arrangements are being made for this. Also due to receive a full response from Robert Jenrrick and ministers to the letter shared, this will be shared with KHG when received. |  |  |  |
| **The Kent & Medway Infrastructure Deal Update** | David Godfrey, lead for this work on behalf of KCC provided the following update: DG presented to KHG in January 2020 and had good feedback from colleagues following this meeting. Seeking input from colleagues. This is a proposition around new infrastructure, new ways of working and delivery plans already in place, unlocking stalled sites and supporting residents around growth without infrastructure.  Back in February 2020 13 of the 14 Kent Leaders agreed to the proposition and wrote to the Secretary of State to confirm, looking at the ambition and investment for Kent and Medway. The return is accelerated delivery. What is the role of the proposition since Covid-19, has the ambition changed? The wider economic recovery for example, how to phase the agreement and impact at a local level, what is the wider economic benefit for jobs and supply chains, everyone should see the benefit across the county.  Need understand more on the RP side and affordable housing, impact on existing plans, how could this deal help accelerate delivery? Is than investment or flexibility or ways of working to get schemes moving on, what is an immediate ask? How can we manage the situation to help delivery what is needed and the quality of housing needed in Kent and Medway? DG Happy to share the developing work next week.  TA raised that there is uncertainty about the Government response to this, for example the Rent Deal and how this will impact future income. DG advised that this is important and needs to be reflected, BH advised that this has been raised by a colleague from an RP, MHCLG colleagues took this away for consideration.  NF advised that with KPOG, KDG are reviewing the planning protocol, Government want to see public and private sector working together on delivery so planning should feature within the deal. There is a good deal of elements agreed or on the cusp of agreement, including the strategy, planning protocol and pending Design Guide and these are all useful for the deal. Another point raised by DG was about an RP with a strategic relationship with HE to share with DG about what the deal could do over and above such a partnership.  JL reinforced the messages shared by BH, MBC are pushing for the need for social rent rather than affordable rent, with recognition that this may impact on the number of units developed and working on council housing building, would urge other colleagues to consider how this could be achieved in other areas.  Andrew Palmer from Hastings BC raised a point recently regarding S106 sites and flexibility around funding for these to unblock stalled sites and viability issues. JG agreed that flexibility would be welcomed and is critical to enable movement within the market. |  |  |  |
| **Planning for future KHG meetings** | KHG Events are considering what to plan and how to delivery for the remainder of 2020 and picking up what KHG members want us to deliver.  Black Lives Matter – BH raised whether should KHG consider this issue? How can we share and learn from good practice and overall agenda? It was agreed for KHG and Events to consider how to pick this up.  RS updated colleagues that the Kent Tenancy Management Sub Group are looking to set up a Live Good Practice Sharing session via Microsoft Teams, for mid-July, to give members a platform to share good practice and learning through Covid-19, more details to follow but for colleagues to be aware of the opportunity to showcase good practice and the importance of social housing to enable a response to the demand moving forward.  MM raised ASB and a key issue for Private Sector Landlords, MM represents NARLA, with the stay on Evictions currently the crucial element from landlords is ASB and the impact on local communities. On a working group to see how some cases can be escalated, RS asked to share some of learning from providers with the private sector, to be shared via MM. The positive is the LHA rates being risen, which has been helpful in the crisis. MB advised that Porchlight may be able to assist private sector landlords with ASB, including access to outreach workers.  HCW – CEX of Pathways to Independence and provide Supported Accommodation in Kent and Medway, plea to see if any opportunities for the voluntary sector and work with partners to share expertise and learning, for members to consider and work with P2I.  All colleagues to contact RS with confirmation of how the meeting has been run today and general feedback. | **ASAP**  **ASAP**  **ASAP**  **ASAP** | **JE/RS/KN**  **ALL**  **RS/MM**  **ALL** | **To pick up following the meeting**  **Contact RS if you wish to be part of the session**  **RS to liaise with MM on sharing of information**  **Colleagues to feedback to RS/JE** |
| **AOB** | JG advised that the forum is excellent and the interaction and thanks for hosting today.  JE interested to know if any organisations are supporting staff for increased for cost for working from home? MC advised that ERHA are offering £1.00 per day, having consulted with staff, if goes above £6.00 this week it has HMRC implications, pro-rated for part time staff. MBC have directed staff to HMRC as you can claim back via this route. CS advised that supported staff with home working bundles of equipment for those requesting, looking now at wider implications for further funding and looking at HMRC £6.00 per week but through KCC claiming so not all staff have to make individual applications. Offices and buildings unlikely to be open for staff until December and likely to be only 30% of staff.  RS raised about another full meeting before September – colleagues indicated yes, JE and RS to share more | **ASAP** | **JE/RS** | **To share more details when available.** |