**Present**: Julian Wells, Chair and Ashford BC; Daniel Shaw, Sevenoaks; Hazel Skinner, T&MBC; Steve Lusk, KCC; Kerry Petts, F&H DC; Jason Wheble, T&M BC; Christy Holden, KCC; Dan Otley, Canterbury; Rachel Evans, Dartford; Jane Miller, OT KCC; Nigel Bucklow, Maidstone BC; Sue Oliver, TWBC; Lloyd Rees, Medway; Ashley Jackson, Thanet; Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** Susan Hughes, Swale BC; Amanda Martin, Dover DC and KEEP; Glyn Pritchard, Swale BC; Marion Money, NRLA; Peter Littlewood, ihowz; Steve King, Thanet; Sandra Woodfall, Dartford BC and KEEP;

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who  | Action/Decision |
| DFG/Social Care scoping for disabled children –  | Christy Holden of KCC gave a presentation based on the presentation she gave to KHG Executive Board in July. This will be circulated by email only. Short Breaks are for children to move into a facility/foster home to get overnight care, to give the families some respite. KCC would like children to be able to stay in a family environment but this is challenging due to lack of facilities in the foster carers homes. The occupation health team report a good working relationship with LAs. CH presented a brief case study to paint a picture to help members understand what the issues are and where families are struggling to care for children in their home due to lack of adaptations.KHG Executive Board were asked to progress the agenda and;* Discuss whether there are options to explore in Districts where Foster Carers

 or Shared Lives Hosts could be considered for DFG adaptations to allow service provision to be expanded to allow for Short Breaks* Discuss whether some new build housing stock could be designated for enhanced adaptations for families with disabled children, or adults

The KHG EX Board responded by;* Identified Sponsor for the work
* Permission to work with Medway Council initially and to scope issues
* Set up meeting with the Chairs of Kent Homechoice, Kent Private Sector Housing Group and Kent Tenancy Group
* Support for good practice protocol, should that be required by Partners

The ask for the PSH group focuses on;* Out of area requests for DFG?
* Support and input to protocol development
* Support conversations with Housing Associations?
* Share local eligibility and process documents with KCC

A working group has met twice with Medway Council taking a lead. They have an outline protocol in development. This group is asked to* Support and have input to developing the protocol.
* Consider how the group can support conversation with HA
* Share local eligibility and process documents with KCC

JW said the group would think about the ideas proposed and how to support it.KP suggested that as chair of JMG for East Kent perhaps the working group would like to seek support from her and Nigel B for West Kent.KP suggested out of area placements are covered in protocol would be useful to consider which organisation will do which tasks. JM said different councils make different requests and we may need to revert to the legal guidance to understand what our responsibilities are and how to prioritise. JM said she was willing to join the working group.Christy said she would make the contacts as suggested.  |  |  |
| Out of area homelessness placements | Stuart Clifton, chair of KHOG, wanted to highlight the LGAs draft out of area protocol [File.php (local.gov.uk)](https://research.local.gov.uk/WRQualtricsControlPanel/File.php?F=F_cJcTiQHeNGXvnsW). The consultation has ended so a new protocol is anticipated in 2022. This is about LHAs placing homelessness households out of their borough and the pressures this puts on housing and support services. SC explained that protocol has been worked on for a couple of years. It would cover placements, so probably both temporary and settled accommodation. Part of the protocol covers the requirement that the home should be inspected within 5 days, by a suitably qualified independent officer or a LA officer. If this happens it may be useful to consider having a reciprocal agreement between organisations within Kent, when placements are made by Kent LAs. JW expressed support for inspections for out of area placements and that if people are placed in their borough ABC do aim to inspect the home before occupation. He suggested it is easier to get works done whilst the home is empty before occupation.SC said Maidstone do receive a large number of placements from other Kent LAs and London boroughs. He thought a reciprocal agreement wouldn’t suit placements from London boroughs and suggested any reciprocal agreement would be between Kent LAs. KP This is the first she’s heard of the protocol. She is not aware of a large number of OOA placements in F&H. She would like to see the placing authority making the inspection as to prioritise new households over those awaiting service would be challenging. LR said Medway would also be struggle to prioritise this over those already on PSH waiting list.RE echoed KP’s thoughts. Dartford does experience large number of placements from London. She feels uncomfortable prioritising OOA clients over those they have on their PSH waiting list.JW asked whether we could provide information on landlords to a placing LAs. RA said we’d need to be GDPR compliant so really from those served Notices recently. SC said that if your Housing Options team regularly place households outside your borough then you may receive requests to inspect the home. Also, if the placing authority inspects a home this may result in the home being inspected multiple times compared to if the host authority did the inspection. RE there are officers in the Housing Options team that can inspect homes in their borough for the purpose of placements.SO If the placing borough does the inspection there will be more time spent travelling, so perhaps not a good use of time. It may be better for host authority to this.JW they have many homes used as TA. They now employ a consultant to look at TA and nightly paid provision. They suggest there is a move away from inspecting the homes and find other ways to ensure they are in good order, but he does not have the details on that. JA offered to share learning from consultant when it is available.JW Once the LGA protocol is released the subgroup will need to revisit the issue. LAs may then need to consider whether a reciprocal agreement across Kent would be wanted. SC It is possible that the protocol will be adapted following the consultation. SC suggested that members gain information on the numbers placed into your borough to inform any decision.NB this could be bigger than the PSH team as the obligation is on the council itself to be placing appropriately. Previously Maidstone has done inspections in neighbouring LAs.HS and JW it would be useful to know what each LA does at the moment regarding these type of inspections. DS the allocations team can now do these inspections now. Going out of borough takes time. If you find the need for enforcement then it goes back to the relevant borough as the placing authority cannot serve a notice out of their area. | JAAllALL LAs | Share learning on ways to ensure homes are suitable without full inspection when availableConsider collating information on the number placed into your boroughFind out how this matter is addressed in your organisation to inform future discussions |
| RISE Expo February 2022 | KP The Covid pandemic has changed the format of the RISE expo. The organisers are planning for a hybrid event in Whitstable in February 2022. Though people did volunteer to help KP advised we don’t have the resource to support a housing specialist event. She has liaised with Jade and instead we will support a more generalist event in 22nd June in Detling. KP would like volunteers to man the stand on 22nd. KP would like volunteers to present please let KP know. KP will liaise with Jade. | All | Volunteer to look after stall – contact KPVolunteer to give presentation – contact KP |
| Group updates | KEEP; JW read the KEEP update from AM which will be posted on the website with the meeting papers. Thanks to Amanda for providing the update. Please direct any questions regarding the update to Amanda. JM there was a government announcement about more DFG money for next year and the encouragement to spend it in more creative ways. JW we’ll revisit this.  |  |  |
| Implementing the K&M Housing Strategy | JW highlighted the objectives of the [strategy](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/protocols/kent-medway-housing-strategy-2020-2025-a-place-people-want-to-call-home/) that this group contributes to. These include;* Share, enhance and promote the successful Hospital Discharge Schemes to enable all residents of Kent and Medway to benefit from this service.
* Promote and support the objectives of the Kent Fuel Poverty Strategy and the Kent Environment Strategy – which was mentioned in the KEEP update from AM
* Develop an even closer relationship with Kent Fire & Rescue around prioritising fire safety in all tenures, housing new and old, planning and infrastructure, prioritising any emerging legislation and regulation as a result of Grenfell – which is addressed in the new protocol with KFRs

The chairs and vice chairs of the subgroups are invited to regular meetings with Tracy Allison, the KHG vice chair, to discuss progress towards the relevant objectives in the strategy. | HM | Make this a standing item of agenda |
| Topics and format for next year’s meetings  | Julian has chaired this group for one year and asked how people want the meetings to be run in 2022. The group felt complying with their organisations Covid requirements was important and also some organisations do not wish to host meetings with external visitors and have reduced the seating capacity of meeting rooms to permit social distancing in meetings. The group decided to keep meetings virtual for 2022, with the possibility of meeting outside at the RISE event on 22nd June at Detling. The group agreed to reduce the frequency of meetings to twice a year. This group repeats some work from the Technical Working Group and KEEP. JW asked for volunteers for vice chair role. MM has covered this role very ably for some time yet does not work for an organisation that is a member of the Kent Housing Group. The group asked JW to discuss the matter with MM and report back. JW will confirm when those two meetings a year should be. Currently anticipation June for outside meeting at RISE and virtual meeting in December.  | HM | Cancel PSH teams meeting in March. |
| AOB | JW thanked HM for helping set up meetings and finding speakers. He thanked the speakers for their valuable input. He wished all Merry Christmas. |  |  |