**Draft LA Kent Housing Options Group Meeting Notes, 10 November 2022 Microsoft Teams Call**

DRAFT

**Present**: Toni Carter, chair and Dartford; Stuart Clifton, Tunbridge Wells; Nicola Conroy, Sevenoaks; Rachel Westlake, KCC; Vicky Hodson, Homechoice; John Littlemore, Maidstone; Robin Cahill, KCC; Kylie Gillham, Canterbury; Roxanne Shepherd, Swale; Kenan Dogan, Gravesham; Natalia Merritt, Maidstone; Steve Tingley, DLUHC; Claire Keeling, TMBC; Max Guest, KCC; Stacey Clark, KCC; Ray Easdown, Medway; Elly Toye, Dover; Mark Damiral, Folkestone and Hythe; Duncan Berrington, Thanet; Graham Urquhart, KCC; Natalie Liddiard, KCC; Hazel South, KCC; Lisa Clarke, Clarion; Helen Miller, Kent Housing Group;

**Apologies;** Sylvia Roberts, Ashford; Niki Verdenik, Prison and Probation Service; Manpreet Bhupal, Gravesham and vice chair;

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| Reference | Notes/Outcome | Who | Action/Decision |
| Matters Arising from Sept 2022 | MBh Arrange a meeting with NC, JL and TC to decide how the reviews of the protocols written by KHOG will be done. The meeting will be arranged. We have started to update some protocols and we will have this planning meeting.  DLUHC rep, Seek successful practice on ways round credit checks and guarantors for Ukrainians and feed back.  KM share legal agreement with ET at DDC. Done  NM request Maidstone outreach team liaise with TC to advise on entrenched RS. Done.  All Please respond to the MAPPA consultation.  All Contact TC if you would like to join and task and finish group on joint KHOG response on MAPPA  MBh to update on KMPT and KHG protocol on discharge from mental health facility. | MBh  TC & ST  MBh | Arrange the protocol review prioritisation meeting  TC will catch up with Steve on this and what we need from KHOG.  Update doc using feedback received and circulate final version seeking sign off |
| DLUHC updates | Steve Tingley is our new rep from DLUHC. New ministers are settling in so minimal announcements today.  The accommodation for ex-offenders programme is being extended for those LAs in scope.  The single homeless project is being rolled out. No prospectus is available and this expected by end of November.  The Homelessness Prevention Grant consultation work is carrying on towards a decision on a way forward. This looked at how the moneys would be distributed. The foundations of the current formula was overdue a change as it was pre Homelessness Reduction Act. There was no joint KHOG response. Maidstone responded and felt the proposals were not fit for purpose.  Supported Housing Improvement Programme, a pilot programme around the supported exempt sector. It’s a pilot to drive up standards improvements in the registered provider and charity based sector. The select committee expressed concerns around the sector. JL said Maidstone did not bid. It is a very challenging sector. Steve invited colleagues to raise any questions with him.  SC from Tunbridge Wells, they have a shared revenues and benefits service with Maidstone. This matter has been raised at a meeting. They believe there is exempt accommodation that they are not aware of and have no referral routes in to. The accommodation they work with appears to be acceptable.  ST the first round of pilots was used for inter disciplinary team to assess including benefits, environmental health would inspect, etc., and this was used to address standards. Housing Benefit staff are not employed to commission supported housing and have a different skill set.  JL, do we know more about whether we can access grant for Homes for Ukraine scheme for the extended families scheme? Steve will get a written response and send back via KHG. ST asked whether we’re seeing more traffic. JL yes, people who had families in Homes for Ukraine scheme but will want their rooms back before Christmas and family visits. ST asked whether the households who got an allowance have migrated this to a housing benefit arrangement. JL not aware of this but will ask HB colleagues. | ST  JL | Email HM a response on this to circulate to group  Ask HB colleagues if evidence of moves from Homes for Ukrainians scheme onto Housing Benefit. |
| ReferKent (SH6) | Stacey Clark, KCC shared her presentation that will be circulated. This is a tool for organisations to refer financially vulnerable clients to other organisations. It’s available for clients living Kent, not Medway. The website [www.kent.gov.uk/referkent](http://www.kent.gov.uk/referkent) has a short animation that explains how it works.  Organisations can onboard, sign a data sharing agreement, service level agreement and join the scheme. You can then make referrals, receive referrals, and receive a report showing what happened. Please consider signing up to help vulnerable clients who don’t follow signposting and need referrals. The service is free.  Dartford community services and One You team use the system. TC hopes housing many use it. This may be suitable to support actions in a Personal Housing Plan.  SC LAs provide many services. Would we set ourselves as one organisation or several depending on activities? SC you can choose the way that suits your organisations. | HM | Circulate this presentation |
| Homechoice and transition to Huume Update | Vicky Hodson of Homechoice and the transition to Huume. The first training sessions were run a month ago on the configuration that is going to be required to build the system. They’ve had project kick off meetings Huume and one with each LA. Each LA has a project plan and project team to progress their issues. Vicky will met with Huume to raise questions raised at the kick off meetings. The configuration site which will become the live site and test sites are both up. The design and web team at DDC are starting on the design of the new website. She has an exit meeting with Locata to cover a test run on exporting data and she will share dates when known.  There is a go live date 1st July 2023. Shutting register down on 1st June 2023.  Each council is aware of the work that needs to be done at their end to make this project work.  TC recognises the huge task that Vicky is doing and offered her thanks. |  |  |
| Gypsy and Traveller site pitch allocation consultation (HW8) | Natalie Liddiard, from the KCC gypsy and traveller service would like to link her service with KHG and KHOG. KCC owns 7 gypsy and traveller sites in Kent. NL sees synergies between allocations of social housing and gypsy and traveller pitches. NT is keen to ensure the allocations policy is similar to those for social housing. She will be opening the public consultation on their pitch allocation and hopes this group would advise.  She will also be looking at pitch licensing agreements in 2023. The public consultation should start on 29th November and HM will forward out to members for their comments.  TC thought KCC colleagues had tried to engagement on an allocation policy pre Covid. She welcomed consultation on allocations and generally engaging early.  JL also welcomed early engagement. It is hard to have a county wide agreement on some matters but sharing aims and knowledge would be great. We would benefit from having a transit site too.  NL is setting up an operational group for site managers and has invited all LAs with a site in their area to share approaches. The first meeting is at the end of the month. If you have a site in your area do encourage the site manager to attend the meeting with Natalie. | NL | Email HM details of the public consultation, when it opens, to circulate to KHOG for comments |
| Commissioning updates | RW swiftly shared her slides which will be circulated.  KIDAS  There has been a contract review and the slides will give more detail on this. The service has been successful. Need has been high and funding and provision has been increased. Survivor feedback has been positive. Providers like the integrated way of working. More male survivors are seeking support.  Sanctuary Scheme is being scoped and they are planning an engagement event at the end of November. Details to follow by email.  16 days of action begins 25th November and the assets can be found in links in the presentation. [News – Domestic Abuse (domesticabuseservices.org.uk)](https://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/latest-news-articles-advice/)  JL will KCC promote the White Ribbon campaign. RW will link JL with Serine.  TC would be great to have collective response to White Ribbon  NC White Ribbon is reaching out to football teams. If you have a local team that may not have been reached then please flag in.  Kent Police also have media work on White Ribbon and have linked social media posts to games.  Young People  RC OFSTED is due to announce to the new regulation for accommodation for 16-17 years olds later this year. There are series webinars over the next two weeks for supported accommodation providers on the new regulations. As we won’t know the requirements until December KCC Cabinet agreed for another direct award for the current providers of their supported accommodation under YPSAFS to March 2024. They will refresh stakeholder engagement.  Kent Homeless Connect  MG The service contract ended at end of Sept 2023. There is a variation for 18 months for transition period. A £4.5m transition fund has been agreed from KCC reserves. KCC is working with each area on the local plans. They are exploring the referral routes into the services and when no further referrals will be accepted.  They are meeting regularly with KCC social services teams to ensure anyone who needs a Care Act assessment does have the assessment.  Please contact MG with any questions | RW | Link JL with Serine on White Ribbon campaign to support a collective response. |
| Protocols (A4 and HW8) | Domestic Reciprocal agreement in social housing – Lisa Clarke from Clarion. We are behind our intended schedule are Clarion experienced a cyber attack. All the documents are at the final stages and will sign these off at the end of November. She met with TC and now have local DA coordinators to manage this function. We will communicate this out and ask social landlords to sign up. This can include webinars, etc. Hope it will go live in February. If you have suggestions or meetings/events when this can be promoted please let Lisa know. JL suggested LC give an update to the DA partnership Board  TC asked what figures KHOG colleagues want to see in the reported. The coordinator wants to include the voice of the service user. RW suggested this should tie in with DA Act. JL can we capture this in HCLIC as could be seen as homelessness prevented.  It uses the Whole Housing Approach template for monitoring and LC will circulate this to the group for comments. Need to monitor how successful the work is and gather all data needed but avoid gathering data for data’s sake.  IH/ Families with complex needs. Natalia Merritt. The protocol was agreed some months back. At end of Sept they had a KHOG and KCC meeting to form the document to provide operational guidance. They identified the barriers and how the LA and KCC services worked. NM is finalising some of the flow and understanding the housing legislation and then they can start building the guidance document and then circulate.  NC asked whether Ukrainians wishing to leave their host family could be covered in this. NM can use that as a case study.  Kent Agency Assessment form Vicky Hodson. Huge amount of work to get it digitalised. It’s been built in Jadu and needs a form of encryption to go to email accounts. Dover are still working on this and then checking the form can be received by each council. Final testing will be next week and if that works then will go live.  After we launch does form go on KHG website are do we need to launch it moving from paper to digital? Forms can go onto LAs website too. TC will ask her senior allocations officer to seek feedback. Also if anyone has any thoughts on this please advise VH. We will need some kind of publicity to ensure professionals know where to find the document.  KMPT and the old Joint Protocol Manpreet Bhupal  Manpreet is currently unwell so unable to give feedback on this. Manpreet has had feedback on the doc and will use them to update then circulate.  Young Persons protocol  Robin Cahill for Care leavers focus;  They had a good meeting on 7th Nov and so far agreed;  Need to split the protocol into 16-17 and Care leavers  Need more details on corporate parenting and should mirror DLUHC Homeless code of guidance on care leavers in Chapter 22.  Need to tighten information governance so can share information securely between all relevant stakeholders.  Need to be able share list of local offers for care leavers from KCC and each LHA, making if a live document, reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year.  Need to increase notification to LHAs when child becomes a care leaver, so notify when child becomes 18.  The working group would like KHOG to consider;  A multi stakeholder panel and SPOC for each partner for each area. This works well in Maidstone. It would be useful to get information from NM on this to learn from good practice. NM agrees these local meetings have been very useful to understand each other’s viewpoints, highlighting gaps and differing interpretations.  We need joint modular training for KCC’s 18+ staff to understand responsibilities, understand gaps and address them  Graham 18+ team said there is training on Delta system for the care leavers but perhaps good for KHOG to see training and then develop the training further to improve it. NM supports housing have input to this.  Revisit local connection for care leavers. Could they make a local housing register application in any LA and how would we make that happen, and what would the implications be? Perhaps this should come to KHOG at a later date.  GU, coordinator for 18+ team. He assembled the training for care leavers. They give rent in advance, guarantor, rent deposit, £2000 and also the training resource. They would like to see joint housing assessments with the LHA done 6 months before they are due to leave accommodation.  JL the earlier we engage with colleagues from KCC for the care leaving team the better. If we can local connection criteria we’d probably need to change allocations policy. KCC are the specialist to support care leavers and have the skill set for this and we’d welcome they working with us at the earliest stage.  Toni Carter for 16-17 year old focus  Hazel South explained there are few actions that need to happen to move this forward. There are a few updates needed around timescales and clarity the narrative. Practitioners have explained that we need an update training on this to ensure everyone is up to date.  TC suggested the protocol recognised the effectiveness of a joint assessment and how that can be fed back. Locata doesn’t give space to report this other than in the journal. Can there be a field for a joint assessment has been done in Huume? NM explained that a task can be set up in Locata to give a space to record a joint assessment has taken place.  NC Sevenoaks has added an option on Locata to say 16-17 old has chosen a s20 and that is why it’s an advice case.  TC suggests we need to do this in a uniform manner across Kent.  VM said that if a task if done in one area she can replicate it across Kent in Locata.  Hazel explained that better recording would enable us to see where in the system the YPs are getting lost, flag any delays and make the system work better.  Samad Nadimi is involved with this work. | All  All  MBh  NM | Identify the data you would like to see collected and let LC and TC know  Let TC know how this new digital form should be publicised  Use the feedback provided to make any amendments and circulate amended version  Send HM ToR to circulate around KHOG |
| COMF underspend (HW8) | KCC will be making an announcement along the lines that LAs with underspend will be invited to retain the underspend and use it to address homelessness by March 2023. HM will send further details as soon as she gets them. LAs who have returned funds will have them sent back. | HM | Send update when available |
| Brief update on TA | Toni Carter there has been drift on this and TC will probably delegate to her TA senior. They will look at the matters raised at the previous meeting.  ET DDC has found a Sharepoint list is completely doable. |  |  |
| Any Urgent National Policy, Case Law Updates | SC recent judgement regarding PRSO Thomas Norton v LB Haringey regarding making all checks before a final offer of private sector rental agreement. | HM | Circulate paper from SC on this |
| AOB | NM MBC been nominated for a European Social Services Award for the One View project. Congratulations to Maidstone Borough Council on their nomination!  ET Xantura One View person starts next week but still issues to resolve.  The dates for 2023 are 26 Jan Full; 21 Mar LA; 25 May Full; 19 Jul LA; 7 Sept Full; 22 Nov LA; All virtual except 25 May that is in person in Maidstone. |  |  |