**Draft KHG EXB Meeting Notes 15 March 2023, Microsoft Teams Call**

DRAFT

**Present**: Brian Horton, interim chair and SELEP; Alison Simmons, chair of HHSC and Sevenoaks; Mark James, chair HSEG and Ashford; Mark Breathwick, Medway; Manpreet Bhupal, vice chair of KHOG and Gravesham; Sue Oliver, chair of Private Sector Housing and Gravesham; Vitra Cummins chair of Tenancy Management sub group and T&CH; Vicky Hodson, Kent Homechoice; Vic May, chair of Homechoice and Gravesham; Tim Woolmer, KCC; Sharon Williams, treasurer and Ashford; Lin Perkins co-chair of Engagement sub group and Golding; Simon Thomas, Kent Chief Planning Officers Group; Sharon Irvine, partnership assistant of KHG; Helen Miller, KHG;

**Apologies:** John Littlemore, vice chair and Maidstone; Anjan Ghosh and Ellen Schwartz, Kent Public Health; Clare Maynard and Simon Mitchell, KCC Commissioning; Jeff Sims, ABC communication service; Neil Diddams, chair of Asset Management sub group and WKHA; Steph Goad, Golding Homes; Peter Dosad, now stepped down as chair of Strategic Domestic Retrofit Group and Dartford BC; Becs Wilcox, chair of Events Group; Toni Carter, chair of KHOG and Dartford BC; Mary Gibbons, Moat; Tracey Kerly, rep for Kent Chief Officers and Ashford; Nick Fenton, KH&DG;

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| **Reference** | Notes/Outcome | Who  | Action/Decision |
| **Updates from sub groups** | Brian welcomed Sharon Irvine who has joined KHG as the partnership assistant.VH gave an update on **Homechoice** and the transition from Locata to Huume. The project is generally going well. The pre assessment part is mainly built. The housing register form is built and each LA is asked to check that it is as they need. The homelessness side is being worked on. The comms campaign to customers has begun to cover the register closing down for a short period. The single sign-on is now working. The HAs will be set up on this. VH has fortnightly progress meetings with Huume and a weekly review with each LA. VH has asked to meet with each project lead each week now. A couple of councils have not achieved the configuration yet and a couple are at risk of not being ready on time and Vicky wants to flag that risk. VH has tried to meet with the relevant LAs but not managed to arrange this yet. Some LAs will need to address this resource gap urgently to ensure it all works properly when it goes live this summer. The new system will be a big improvement but it’s important that all organisations are fully ready. The only practicable option to address the issues is for each LA that is behind to find the resource to address the issues for their organisation. It would be difficult for external resource to really be able to help. BH suggested that Vic May reach out to the relevant heads of housing to ensure they are aware of the issues that Vicky H has raised. VH the system needs to be almost complete in four weeks to enable train the trainer to work. BH we need to do all we can to make the system work for all our members, including housing association. Vitra Cummins of the **tenancy management** group described how they are working with ABC comms group who are supporting them to create a fire safety campaign. The costs are around £420 per member and 9 have agreed to pay towards the costs. The messages have been agreed with the group; “Let’s stay fire safe”. The group wants to work *with* their tenants in partnership. The group is working on the script and moodboard for the animation and has sought feedback from the members and their comms team. The group will share the resources with all members of the tenancy sub group, whether they are paying in or not. The campaign can be used at any time so will also be used for new tenants and staff and well as a campaign this spring and should be ready at the end of March. There will be a link on the KHG website for more information. ABC comms will liaise with KFRS on this campaign. Mark Breathwick, the vice chair updated on **asset management**. He asked how KHG we will set out our position on dampness and mould and that it’s not explicitly mentioned in the K&M Housing Strategy. SW said that when the toddler who died coroner’s report was released KHG put out a press statement which can be found our website [here](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/statement-on-dampness-and-mould/). We will also run an event on it. AS, the HHSC will include dampness and mould in their action plan for 2023-25. SO, PSH the government has said it will be issuing guidance for landlords in spring and the event could focus on what is in it. MBr, MJ and SW are also willing to be involved. MBr suggested that the tenant voice should be included it. We should look into whether the regulator, DLUHC or the Housing Ombudsman would like to attend.MBh, vice chair of **KHOG**, explained they are working with partners on issues around exempt accommodation and the group will do some research and meet again in April. There was an action from main KHG to look at local connections for those leaving care and this is going on the agenda for 21st March. They’ve completed the intentionally homelessness families protocol with KCC and nearly completed the joint protocol for homeless people leaving a mental health facility with KMPT. The YP protocol is being split into one for 16-17 year olds and one for care leavers. The chair and vice chair are looking at how to prioritise which protocols to review first. SW the care leavers issue is important for KCC and they asked that we investigate whether we can allow care leavers to not need a local connection and to all them to seek accommodation across Kent and Medway. MBr we need consider how this works for KCC and also Medway Council as upper tier authorities and Mbr invited MBh to work with him on the Medway angle. MBr asked whether there is any work on pricing of TA in KHOG? There is collective buying power for TA in Kent and perhaps this could be explored. VM she has been collecting data on TA across Kent from each LA. She could also collect data for out of area placements. BH advised this is politically sensitive information in the run up to elections so share it after the elections. MBh KHOG has been discussing TA and hoping to create a mutual exchange system to make it easier to get households housed within their area. BH questioned whether it would be useful to work with SEC on a joint framework for procuring TA for Kent and Medway. ND and DS are linked to KHG. MBr and SW would support a procurement approach on this. AS led on leaving care protocol in Leicestershire. Anyone in that county who received their care from Leicestershire was given a local connection to all LAs in Leicestershire. SW KHG have given presentations to Kent Chiefs before to help build understanding of the work done around housing issues and the challenges experienced. KHOG was tasked to decide what the messages are to go to Kent Chiefs and then have discussions after May elections. AS suggested including the bridging hotels, Ukraine and Afghan schemes so need to discuss how they come together to create significant additional demand. AS is the new chair of **Housing Health and Social Care** sub group. The group still needs a vice chair. She presented the K&M Housing Strategy to the group. The group is beginning to form an action plan for 2023-25 to include dampness and mould, housing with care for older people, TB, fuel poverty and financial and digital inclusion. The job description for the project manager is being reviewed and we hope to begin the recruitment process next.Lin Perkins is a co-chair from the **Engagement group**. The group is looking at tenant satisfaction measures. We need a full circle approach to engagement to learn their views, act and then feedback. We need to look at who is attending the meeting and ensure we’re meeting their needs. The group would also wish to look at tackling stigma. HM explained the **Events** group is working on the Awards and the nominations are open now so please encourage your organisation to send nominations in. It is also working on an event of exempt accommodation, an event on dampness a mould, another event with KFRS with a focus on purpose built flats, and an event to launch the domestic abuse reciprocal agreement for social housing. The Addressing fuel poverty and net zero event, Autism event and Implementing the Fire Safety Regulations events, all held in January, were well attended and we had good feedback on them. Please encourage people in your organisation to join the events groupMark James from **housing strategy and enabling group** explained the last session addressed how they deal with smaller sites and provide affordable housing. They are working to create a series of virtual workshops on bringing scenarios forward to learn what planners, developers and housing enablers want when a new application comes in to build understanding around independent living, 100% affordable and major construction sites. East Kent councils have LGA funding for housing advisors programme to consider joint procurement, greater buying power, etc. The Housing Forum provide planning forums which MJ attends and brings learning back to the group. A short report will be created around speeding the process and placemaking. The group has discussed Action for Communities in Rural Kent which we have an item on later. Sue Oliver, chair of **private sector housing group**, explained there is a lot of work around dampness and mould. The Home Upgrade Grant starts on 1st April but LAs have not heard what their allocations will be. It can be used for low energy efficiency homes with lower income households who are off gas to provide clean heating. Solar Together will begin again soon which gives households access to collective buying of PV panels and batteries. Brian explained that Peter Dosad has stepped back from the **Strategic Domestic Retrofit Group** but he will continue to provide a link to the KMEG. Brian was the vice chair and so will step up to chair. BH will bring colleagues together to agree the role of the group going forward.BH thanked all the sub groups for their hard work. | VMEvents GroupMBhMBhASTC & MBhBHAllAllBH | Send notes to the relevant heads of service to highlight the actions that must be done and timescales. CC Brian HortonConvene a meeting to get this delivered.Liaise with MBr as needed to bring Medway Council into discussion on care leavers and local connectionLiaise with DS of SEC on whether could take a procurement approach for TAPlease send the Leicestershire document with HM for circulationIdentify the issues for KHOG around TA and other housing pressures Give direction on how to tell the story around TA to chief Execs from May Send your nominations in [Kent Housing Group Excellence Award 2023 - Kent Housing Group](https://www.kenthousinggroup.org.uk/kent-housing-group-excellence-award-2023/)Please encourage those in your organisation who enjoy planning events to join this groupCreate a terms of reference for the group(s) going forward |
| **Support organisations for rural homes** | Mark James provided a proposal that was circulated with the agenda. He explained that ACRK provided local housing needs surveys helping pave the way for rural exception sites. The members of staff provided significant expertise to LAs, RPs and parish councils. The community led housing also brings forward rural housing. The ACRK organisation has now finished so this service is not available. MJ, LC and AT have worked to create a proposal to provide an option for a service. They’ve worked with HR to take advice on costs and oncosts and were advised it would be £130k for 23 month period. If KHG agreed to have a service under it’s banner services could be maintained via payments from LAs with KHG being the employing body for the staff.SW advised as treasurer, and on behalf of ABC who will host the role, that for 23 months, we should support this proposal. SW has suggested that the interests of KHG and ABC are protected by having a SLA signed by all who are contributing to funding the project. Also there needs to be a commitment in the SLA for the level of funding for the 23 month period and be provision for any redundancy matters. SW proposes that funding is obtained by the KHG partnership manager by getting a PO from the organisations and then invoicing them. This can be done once the SLAs are done then the financial part can begin as that ensures no financial implication for KHG or ABC.**Decision; all members supported this approach.** MJ get the SLA to all payees and signed.When advised by MJ HM to seek POs on this. So far LAs have pledged what they will provide and this should be sought in one payment for each LA, not a payment for each year. This provides certainty for the service. We can’t appoint until we have signed SLAs and the POs from each organisation. Need a separate tab for this on KHG finances or a separate spreadsheet.KHG can decide how to recruit. SW is happy to make the case to ABC HR for the two current individuals are moved into the post. If HR does not accept that then advertise across KHG for a week. MJ hopes we can get this working by May 2023. The Board agreed Mark James and Sharon Williams should progress this matter. BH asked MJ to keep the potential post holders updated honestly.  | MJHMSWMJ | Finalise SLAs and get signatures from all parties.Once all SLAs signed get POs to cover the 23 months and liaise with accountant on how to record this area of work.Liaise with ABV recruitment on recruitment.Keep relevant individual updated |
| **Matters Arising from Feb 2023** | JS Tell HM what is needed for links with communications teams from all members so contact details can be sought from members they do not have contacts with. DONEBH & HM Send EDI letter to all members of KHG – sent and reps for each organisation sought. Done Availability for the first meeting being sought. BH, LC, MJ, TW and SW Work up proposal on ACRK. DONEBudget decisions; * Recruit to the partnership assistant role – Done and started on 14th March
* Explore how to put on one day conference and get sponsorship – further guidance needed on what is desired so can liaise with providers
* BH to liaise with Sevenoaks on hosting HHSC post – in progress
* We will take shortfall from reserves if needed – Accountant notified
* HM sent budget sheet to accountant - Accountant notified

JS attended the Events Group meeting as requested.CH to liaise with TW if need help making connections with Kent Public Health so can act as rep for Kent Public Health Strategic Board – CH’s update circulated. |  |  |
| **Update on membership** | HM emailed all Housing Associations who do not currently have a seat on the Board to seek volunteers to join the Board. We’ve had 2 volunteers, Stuart Ilsley from T&CH and Amy Cheswick from MHS. HAs sometimes say we have more of a focus on LA than HA and with Sharon as treasurer we could be said to have 4 LA representatives. BH suggested that we invite both volunteers onto the Board. MBr, TW, and SW support bringing both people in.HM emailed Clare Maynard to ask who KCC would like to propose for their second seat on the KHG Board. SW supports KCC commissioning to have two commissioning seats.  | HMHMTW | Update ToR to show 4 HA seatsInvite both SI and AC to join the Board and set up meeting with BHWill seek an additional person from KCC commissioning  |
| **K&M Housing Strategy** | Brian explained there is an implementation group that he chairs. Sharon Irvine will support this group. It will look at whether a dashboard is the good way to show progress on this and may need support from the research and intelligence team at KCC. The dashboard could include some key indicators. This could link to the data collection for RPs that has been floated with members. The data can flag best practice and support our members. There could be a housing item on a Leaders meeting after the elections.  |  |  |
| **KHG Budget** | The budget spreadsheet and paper were circulated in advance. We are seeking sponsorship for 2023 awards so if you know of organisations who may sponsor please let BH now. SW highlighted the shortfall in income from Kent Public Health and the amount we pay for this role. There are discussions on hosting that post that should address this. BH will reflect on fees in 2023 and highlight any suggested changes. | AllBH | Please flag organisations we can approach for sponsorship to BHReflect on fees for 2024-25 |
| **Regular Updates** | Commissioning Update – Clare Maynard (PowerPoint update provided by email on 13 March) SELEP – Brian Horton – please ask BH if you have any questions.Medway Council – Mark Breathwick. Richard Hicks is now the Chief Executive at Medway. Housing has been restructured and there is some recruitment at Medway. COMF - Helen Miller (this short paper was circulated with the agenda)Marketing – Jeff Sims (this short paper was circulated with the agenda)Kent Public Health Strategic Board – Charlotte Hudson (this email was circulated 14th March). Board agreed that Mike Gogarty should be invited to present at 2023 meeting. Home Choice – Vicky May (this short paper was circulated with the agenda) | HM | Invite Mike Gogarty from Kent Public Health to present in 2023. |
| **AOB** | Dates of 2023 KHG Board meetings; 17th May 9.30-11, 12th Jul 1.30-2.45, 11th Oct 9.30-11.30, 29th Nov 1.30-2.45. |  |  |