

ANGUS COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 29 SEPTEMBER 2020

HOUSING SERVICES PERFORMANCE UPDATE - ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES

ABSTRACT

This report gives an update on the Council's performance in relation to housing services, what action is being taken to improve performance, and provides information to support members to agree the annual assurance statement required by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) notes the Council's performance in relation to its statutory obligations for housing services;
- (ii) agrees that the evidence provided is sufficient to assure members that the Council is meeting its statutory obligations in relation to housing services; and
- (iii) approves the draft Annual Assurance Statement attached as Appendix 1.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS LOCAL OUTCOMES IMPROVEMENT PLAN / CORPORATE PLAN

2.1 This report contributes to the following outcomes contained within the Angus Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2017 -2030 and Corporate Plan.

- Safe, secure, vibrant and sustainable communities

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As outlined in detail in Report No 175/19 in May 2019, all Scottish social landlords are required to ensure their governing bodies are assured that they are meeting their statutory obligations in relation to housing. This is demonstrated by the submission of an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR).

3.2 Members agreed the above report which outlined what evidence would be provided to members to ensure they could be assured that the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations in relation to housing.

4. EVIDENCE

4.1 The COVID-19 pandemic has had an effect on both performance and the carrying out of service improvement activity. To comply with Scottish Government guidance, the service has had to curtail much of its normal day-to-day business, and so the evidence presented should be considered with that in mind.

4.2 The following evidence is or has been provided in accordance with Report No 175/19:

- Charter information report (Appendix 2) – this annual report summarises how the Council is performing in relation to each of the areas covered by the Charter and what we are doing to deal with any areas of poor or declining performance.
- Housing capital and revenue budget performance – Report No 42/20 was agreed by Committee in February 2020 and it set out the actual Capital and Revenue spend to 31 December each year together with projected outturns for the full financial year and any required updated capital funding proposals
- HRA Rent setting and budget strategy – Report No 43/20 was agreed by Committee in February 2020 and it set out the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget strategy for a five year period and sought approval of rent levels and other associated charges for the forthcoming year. It also set out estimated income and expenditure for the following year, capital investment proposals, affordability assessment and recommended a continued programme of investment in new and existing stock.
- Six-monthly Scrutiny Panel report (Appendices 3 and 4) – Normally, managers from the Housing Service and Assets meet with the Tenant Steering Group in June and November to look at performance against the Charter indicators, provide explanations where requested, and to allow the tenant group to set targets for future performance. It was not possible to organise the meeting in November due to other commitments of staff and tenants, but a presentation was prepared, and this is attached as Appendix 3. Due to COVID-19, the June meeting has been postponed to August and will now take place virtually and to include members of the Tenant E-Panel. If this format is successful it be continued as it allows tenants who would otherwise be unable to participate to join.
- Housing Improvement Team reports – Progress reports from each of our Housing Improvement Teams are included as appendices:
 - Housing Options – Appendix 5
 - Homes and Communities – Appendix 6
 - Income Management
 - Maintaining and Improving Homes - Appendices 7 and 8, and
 - Tenant Participation – Appendices 9, 10 and 11

These reports have all been considered and approved by the Housing Management Team.

- Performance management framework report (Appendix 12) – Each month, the Performance and Access team provides a detailed performance information sheet to the Housing Management Team. This is accompanied by a summary document of charts and analysis to draw managers' attention to any areas of concern. Housing Improvement Teams also use this information to inform their action plans. The attached report is a complete set of indicators for the full year 2019/20.

5. ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

- 5.1 To comply with the Regulatory Framework, the governing body must decide whether the service is meeting all its statutory obligations. The governing body must provide an annual assurance statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator by October of each year either stating that they are assured the landlord is meeting all its statutory obligations or outlining areas of material non-compliance and steps being taken to rectify them.
- 5.2 In light of the information provided to members, it is recommended that the draft Annual Assurance Statement attached as Appendix 1 is submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator stating that the Council is meeting all its statutory obligations. The agreed statement must also be published so that service users are aware of the Council's position, and, as such, we intend to publish the finalised statement on the Housing Blog.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no other implications arising from this report.

8. CONSULTATION

8.1 The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Legal & Democratic Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report

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NOTE: The background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) which were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report are:

- Report No 175/19 - New Regulatory Framework for Housing Services and Annual Assurance Statement
- Report No 42/20 - Housing Capital and Revenue Budget Performance Report - 2019/20
- Report No 43/20 - Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting and Budget Strategy 2020/21 - 2023/24

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Draft Annual Assurance Statement 2019/20

Appendix 2 – Scottish Social Housing Charter Return Results 2019/20

Appendix 3 – Tenant Scrutiny Panel Presentation (first six months 2019/20)

Appendix 4 – Tenant Scrutiny Panel Presentation (full year 2019/20)

Appendix 5 – Housing Options HIT quarterly report

Appendix 6 – Homes and Communities HIT quarterly report

Appendix 7 – Maintaining and Improving Homes HIT quarterly reports

Appendix 8 – Tenant Participation HIT quarterly reports

Appendix 9 – Performance Indicators 2019/20