

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE – 27 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**HOUSING ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT**

**REPORT BY ALISON SMITH, DIRECTOR OF VIRANT COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH**

**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**

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 COUNCIL PLAN**

2.1 This report contributes to the following outcomes contained within the Council Plan 2019 – 2024.

- We want our communities to be strong and resilient and led by citizens; and
- We want Angus Council to be efficient and effective.

**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. CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 Following the end of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, virtually all Housing services have been restored. While working practices are continuing to evolve as services adjust to the new workstyles and opportunities to bring staff together in person, staff are once again delivering frontline services in tenants' homes where appropriate and increasing visibility in our communities

4.2 In an effort to reduce the amount of papers for members, the evidence required by [Report No 175/19](#) has been provided in a reduced number of documents. Further documentary evidence is available to members, should they require it, at the [How We Perform: Housing](#) pages on [angus.gov](#).

4.3 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. This report also contains information about performance which was previously provided as a separate appendix. More detailed performance information can be found at the [How We Perform: Housing](#) pages on angus.gov.
- Housing capital and revenue budget performance – [Report No 31/22](#) was agreed by Committee in February 2022 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.
- Housing Revenue Account Rent setting and budget strategy – [Report No 32/22](#) was agreed by Committee in February 2022 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.
- Scrutiny Panel: We were unable to hold Scrutiny Panels in 2021/22 due to the reluctance of tenants to engage with this online, which was the only option available to us due to restrictions and despite advertising this widely through our engagement channels. However, we held a Scrutiny Panel in August 2022 and hope tenant interest will continue to enable this to happen in future years.
- Housing Improvement Team (HIT) reports: Annual reports from each HIT are provided at the [How We Perform: Housing](#) pages on angus.gov.

## 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 [https://angushousingblog.wordpress.com/which tenants are encouraged to follow](https://angushousingblog.wordpress.com/which-tenants-are-encouraged-to-follow).

## 6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report

## 7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

### Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment is not required

**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 31/22](#) - Housing Capital and Revenue Budget Performance Report - 2021/22
- [Report No 32/22](#) - Housing Revenue Account Rent Setting and Budget Strategy 2022/23-2025/26

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List of Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Annual Assurance Statement

Appendix 2: Information Report for the Period 2021/22: Scottish Social Housing Charter Return