



Midlothian Council
Tuesday 10 October 2023
Item No 8.5

Midlothian Council's Housing Services Assurance Statement 2023
Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place

Report for Decision

1 Recommendations of Report

Council is recommended to approve the Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) attached at Appendix 1 for submission to the SHR by 31 October 2023.

2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary

To comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) Regulatory Framework, the Council must approve and submit an AAS each year providing assurance that it is meeting legislative and regulatory standards for social housing in Scotland. This report explains the Regulatory Framework and appends an Assurance Statement for approval by Council. The AAS confirms the Council fully meets the SHR required standard and outcomes. Following Council approval, the AAS will be published on the SHR and Midlothian Council's websites.

Date: 14 September 2023

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3 Background

- 3.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 sets out the requirement for a Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) and the statutory objectives, functions, duties and powers of the SHR.
- 3.2 The SSHC sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The SHR monitors, assesses and reports on the SSHC. The SHR's statutory objective is to safeguard and promote the interests of current and future tenants, people who are homeless, factored owners and Gypsy/Travellers. [Scottish Social Housing Charter November 2022 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/2022-11-01/summary/summary.page)
- 3.3 A Regulatory Framework sets out the approach to regulation. [Regulatory Framework | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)
The SHR monitors, assesses, reports and intervenes (as appropriate) in relation to Scottish social landlord performance and housing activities. The current framework came into force in April 2019 and it requires all social landlords to submit an AAS providing assurance that their organisation complies with the relevant requirements of Chapter 3 of the framework.
- 3.4 The AAS provided at Appendix 1 replaces the AAS submission for 2022 approved by Council in August 2022.
- 3.5 As the governing body, Midlothian Council is required to approve Midlothian Council's Housing Services Assurance Statement annually, provided at Appendix 1, and an Annual Assurance Statement of Compliance, provided at Appendix 2.
- 3.6 All Scottish social landlords are required to report performance to the SHR annually through the Annual Return on the Charter (Midlothian Council submitted this in May 2023) and a 2023 report to tenants.
- 3.7 During 2022/23 SHR reviewed and compared the data for all local authorities from the Scottish Government's national homelessness statistics and the Annual Returns on the Charter. The SHR also spoke with all local authorities to gather further information and assurance about their homelessness services. Midlothian's Engagement Plan March 2023/24 details, to assess the risk to people who are threatened with or experiencing homelessness. Midlothian Council is to focus on the assessment of homelessness applications, the provision of appropriate temporary accommodation and the outcomes of people who are homeless.

- 3.8 Midlothian Council has a statutory responsibility to anyone threatened with or experiencing homelessness. Midlothian Council has existing scrutiny and performance structures in place to ensure assurance can be given that housing services are delivered in accordance with legislation, regulatory standards and best practice guidance. Midlothian Council can give assurance in compliance with all of the statutory obligations, including The Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2017.

4 Report Implications

4.1 Resource

There are no additional resource implications related to this report.

4.2 Risk

There are no risk implications related to this report.

4.3 Digital

There are no digital implications related to this report.

4.4 Ensuring Equalities (if required a separate IIA must be completed)

The contents of this report were considered under the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment process and it was determined that undertaking such an assessment was not required.

4.5 Appendices

Appendix A – Report Implications

Appendix B – Annual Assurance Statement

Appendix C – Annual Assurance Statement Assessment of Compliance

APPENDIX A – Report Implications

A.1 Key Priorities within the Single Midlothian Plan

Delivering housing services in accordance with legislation, regulatory standards and best practice guidance contributes to reducing the gap in health outcomes and economic circumstances. Improving the quality of life for Midlothian's citizens and safeguarding housing assets for future generations.

A.2 Key Drivers for Change

Key drivers addressed in this report:

- Holistic Working
- Hub and Spoke
- Modern
- Sustainable
- Transformational
- Preventative
- Asset-based
- Continuous Improvement
- One size fits one
- None of the above

A.3 Key Delivery Streams

Key delivery streams addressed in this report:

- One Council Working with you, for you
- Preventative and Sustainable
- Efficient and Modern
- Innovative and Ambitious
- None of the above

A.4 Delivering Best Value

The AAS support the delivery so that tenants and other customers receive services that provide best value for money for the rent and other service charges they pay. We continue to secure continuous improvement in performance while maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost.

A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

Information sharing and consultation takes place with the Midlothian Tenants Panel. The AAS will be made available on the Council's website along with the SHR's Landlord Performance Report and Engagement Plan.

A.6 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

The SHR requires all social landlords to submit an AAS providing and evidencing assurance.

A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach

Not applicable.

A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

Not applicable.