

**Midlothian Council's Housing Services Assurance Statement 2021****Report by Kevin Anderson, Executive Director - Place****Report for Decision****1 Recommendations**

Council is recommended to approve the AAS attached at Appendix 1 for submission to the SHR by 31 October, 2021.

**2 Purpose of Report/Executive Summary**

To comply with the Scottish Housing Regulator's (SHR) Regulatory Framework, the Council must approve and submit an Annual Assurance Statement (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 standards and outcomes. Following Council approval, the AAS will be published on the SHR and Midlothian Council's websites.

**Date:** 6 September 2021**Report Contact:** Simon Bain, Acting Head of Housing Services**email:** [simon.bain@midlothian.gov.uk](mailto:simon.bain@midlothian.gov.uk)**tel:** 0131 271 6679

### 3 Background

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.

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.

A Regulatory Framework sets out the approach to regulation.

<https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/for-landlords/regulatory-framework#>.

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. The AAS provided at Appendix 1 replaces the AAS submission for 2020 approved by Council on 17 November 2020.

As the governing body, Midlothian Council is required to approve Midlothian Council's Housing Services Assurance Statement 2021, provided at Appendix 1, and an Annual Assurance Statement of Compliance, provided at Appendix 2.

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 2020) and report to tenants during December 2021. The SHR analyses each charter return and then publishes an individual Engagement Plan for each landlord, which focuses on areas for improvement. Midlothian's Engagement Plan, March 2021 – March 2022, is focussed on services for people who are homeless as we emerge from the Covid pandemic (this applies to all local authorities) and performance in respect of the emergency repairs service.

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 (Resource, Digital and Risk)

### 4.1 Resource

There are no resource implications related to this report.

#### **4.2 Digital**

There are no digital implications related to this report.

#### **4.3 Risk**

There are no risk 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 Additional Report Implications**

Appendix 1 – Annual Assurance Statement

Appendix 2 – 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 the Midlothian 2020 vision of 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:

- ☐ Modern
- ☐ Sustainable
- ☐ Asset-based
- ☒ Continuous Improvement

### **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

### **A.4 Delivering Best Value**

Midlothian Council manages all aspects of its business so that tenants and other customers receive services that provide value for money for the rent and other service charges they pay.

### **A.5 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders**

Information sharing and consultation has taken place with the Midlothian Tenants Panel on 3 September 2021.

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**

Referenced in section 3 of this report.

### **A.7 Adopting a Preventative Approach**

Not applicable.

### **A.8 Supporting Sustainable Development**

Not applicable.

