
To: Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

On: 26 October 2021

Report by: Director of Communities and Housing Services

Heading: Regulation of Social Housing: Assurance Statement 2021

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council is required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator in October 2021 demonstrating compliance with the regulatory requirements for local authorities and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
 - 1.2 Appendix 1 lists the requirements as set out in Chapter 3 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework and provides evidence to demonstrate Renfrewshire Council's compliance.
 - 1.3 As Members are aware, regular reports are presented to the Policy Board on housing services performance and benchmarking. These reports demonstrate continuing strong performance across most areas of the housing service in 2020/21 but also highlight some areas for improvement. Section 3 of this reports notes these areas for improvement and also refers to the continuing impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on housing services and highlights several areas where it has not been possible to achieve full compliance.
 - 1.4 The proposed Annual Assurance Statement 2021 for Renfrewshire Council is attached as appendix 2 for approval by the Policy Board.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Policy Board:
 - (i) notes the Regulatory Requirements and evidence of Renfrewshire Council's compliance as set out in appendix 1; and
 - (ii) approves Renfrewshire Council's Annual Assurance Statement 2021 for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator as attached in appendix 2.
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3. Background

- 3.1 All social landlords are required to prepare and submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator each year. The first Annual Assurance Statement from Renfrewshire Council was approved by the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board and submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator in October 2019.
- 3.2 The regulatory requirements for all social landlords include:
- Meeting all duties, obligations and responsibilities placed on landlords by legislation and through statutory guidance
 - Achieving the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter
 - Duties to help people who are homeless, including a statutory duty to prevent and alleviate homelessness
 - Duties relating to the safety of tenants' homes and promoting equality and human rights
 - Meeting the requirements and adhering to relevant guidance from other regulatory bodies
 - Adhering to statutory guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator and taking account of regulatory advice
- 3.3 The Scottish Housing Regulator lists the regulatory requirements for local authorities under five headings in its Regulatory Framework. Appendix 1, which is attached to this report, shows how Renfrewshire Council meets each of these requirements and gives details of current evidence which demonstrates compliance.
1. Assurance and notification
 2. Scottish Social Housing Charter performance
 3. Tenants and service users redress
 4. Whistleblowing
 5. Equality and Human Rights
- 3.4 Arrangements are in place to report regularly to the Policy Board on a range of matters relevant to the above requirements. This includes tenant and resident engagement, service improvement planning, service performance and financial and risk management. Where appropriate, these reports address areas for improvement as well as highlighting areas where the service is performing well. The normal annual cycle of reports is detailed in the table below:

Table 1. Annual Cycle of Reports

Subject	Month
Housing Revenue Account Budget and Rent Levels (report to Council)	February/ March
Private Sector Grant Investment Programme	February/ March
3-year Service Improvement Plan	March
Service Delivery Plan (overview of performance in the previous year)	March
Annual Return on the Charter (and management information on allocations, repairs, homelessness and rent collection)	August
Service Delivery Plan Mid-Year Monitoring	October
Charter Half Year Update (and management information on allocations, repairs, homelessness and rent collection)	October
Annual Housing Performance Benchmarking	October
Annual Customer Engagement report	October*
Budget reports (including Housing Revenue Account)	Each cycle

*The Annual Customer Engagement Report is currently under review following the appointment of Tenant Engagement Consultants and will be presented to the January Board in 2022.

3.5 As part of the preparation for the first Annual Assurance Statement in 2019, a full self-assessment exercise was carried out to see if the Council is achieving the 5 outcomes and standards in the Social Housing Charter. This was updated in 2020, with a refresh exercise carried out for Housing Options and Value for Money. Void Management was the focus for self-assessment update following the 2021 ARC return.

3.6 Performance in a number of areas has been affected by the pandemic as reported to the Policy Board across the range of housing services for 2020/21. Several areas in particular have been identified for improvement as noted below:

- **Gas Certification:** The 2020/21 charter return noted that there had been an increase in the number of times in the reporting year that a gas safety check was not completed within 12 months of a gas appliance being fitted or its last check. However, arrangements were put in place to actively engage with tenants to secure access to properties and enable safety checks to be carried out. These have now all been completed.
- **Adaptations:** The number of households waiting for adaptations to their home increased this year as has the average time to complete adaptations. Work on major adaptations has recommenced with those identified by the Health and Social Care Partnership as most critical being prioritised. However, there is a significant backlog of adaptations ranging from minor aids, to major adaptations. The capacity of our inhouse Building Services team and sub-contractor is constrained, and additional contractor capacity is required to assist in managing the backlog of works. Contractual arrangements are now being put in place to help manage this backlog, and the most urgent cases will be prioritised.
- **Re-let timescales:** The average length of time taken to re-let properties has increased significantly in the last year. Both impact of COVID and self-isolation, and pressure in the construction sector, as well as amended work practices have impacted on the capacity within our in house Building Services team, and this has resulted in a backlog of voids in the system. These issues have also impacted on our voids sub-

contractor. Measures are being put in place to secure additional capacity via external contractors to assist in managing the backlog, and it is hoped that there will be significant inroads into the backlog over the next few months subject to contractor capacity to accept the work, and availability of materials.

- 3.7 The engagement plan issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator for 2020/2021 noted that the Council would have low level engagement. Following publication, the SHR took steps to meet with all local authorities on their Engagement Plans with a specific emphasis on homelessness. Officers met with the SHR in early August to discuss management of homeless services and the impact of Covid 19 on service delivery, a number of areas were discussed, including:

- **Access to Service** - Applications, Changes to Service, Out of Hours, Trends in Demand /Demographics
- **Assessment** – Percentage Assessed as Homeless, Percentage Assessed as Duty to House, Lost Contacts
- **Temporary Accommodation** – Accepted/Refused Offers, Failures to Offer, UAO, Use of B&B, Time Spent in Temp
- **Outcomes** – Lets to Homeless Households, Case Duration, Settled Accommodation Outcomes

The SHR confirmed that they were not looking for any further information at this time.

- 3.8 The Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on housing services, and it was necessary to make major changes to service delivery arrangements in response to restrictions and in keeping with government guidance. Service update reports have been provided to meetings of the Emergencies Board and the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board throughout the year, through Service Delivery Plan updates.
- 3.9 Social landlords are required to advise the Scottish Housing Regulator of any material changes to Council's Annual Assurance Statement during the year.
- 3.10 The Scottish Housing Regulator wrote to all social landlords at the end of October 2019 regarding tenant and resident safety, emphasising the importance of obtaining appropriate assurance that they are meeting all duties on tenant and resident safety. Since then, the Council have appointed Savills to carry out a review of the main compliance areas and have assisted in ensuring the appropriate policies, procedures and processes are in place to meet all duties on tenant and resident safety. The pandemic has led to some delays over the last 18 months with the Council's programme of electrical safety inspections which are required to be carried out every five years, however, a programme of works is now underway to carry out these safety inspections where they are required. The Scottish Government extended the deadline for compliance with the new fire and smoke alarm standards to February 2022 for all tenures and a programme of works is currently underway to comply with this requirement.

- 3.11 Through investment in fabric improvements and energy efficiency measures 93% of Council housing stock was compliant with the EESSH1 target after applying allowable exemptions (in line with Scottish Housing Regulator Guidance), meeting the Band C rating by December 2020, when the first milestone of EESSH was required. All social rented housing landlords must now seek to achieve EESSH2 standard by 2032 and work is underway to set out the Council's strategy to do so'
- 3.12 As noted above, the pandemic has had a significant impact on housing services. Figures contained in a separate report to the Policy Board in August 2021 (Scottish Social Housing Charter – Annual Performance: 2020/21) shows the impact in areas which have previously been reported to Board.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** –
 - *Our Renfrewshire is thriving* – Providing housing and homelessness services which meet regulatory standards.
4. **Legal** – None.
5. **Property/Assets** – None.
6. **Information Technology** – None.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** -
 - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not applicable
13. **Climate Risk** - None

List of Background Papers

Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 15 January 2019, 'Regulation of Social Housing- Response to Consultation by The Scottish Housing Regulator'.

Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 29 October 2019, Regulation of Social Housing: Assurance Statement 2019

Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 17 August 2021, Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2020/21.

Report to Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 26 October 2021, Scottish Social Housing Charter Performance: 2021/22 Half Year Update.

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Communities and Housing Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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Attachment(s): Appendix 1: Renfrewshire Council Assurance Statement 2021
Appendix 2: Regulation of Social Housing Assurance Statement

APPENDIX 1 – ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2021

REFERENCE INDEX

REFERENCE	REFERENCE DESCRIPTION
	Access to Housing and Support
AICV	Additional Information Covid-19
AIG	Additional Information General
CLR	Customer Landlord Relationship
CPSP	Corporate Plans Strategies & Procedures
GVRSC	Getting Good Value from Rents & Service Charges
HQM	Housing Quality and Maintenance
HSP	Housing Strategies & Policy
NC	Neighbourhood and Community

Checklist of Regulatory Requirements/Standards

1. Assurance and Notification

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
AN1	Prepare an Annual Assurance Statement in accordance with SHR published guidance, submit it to the SHR between April and the end of October each year, and make it available to tenants and other service users.	<p>Annual Assurance Statement Presentation to members of the Policy Board 19th October 2021</p> <p>CHAPS Board Report 26 October 2021– Regulation of Social Housing Assurance Statement</p> <p>CHAPS Board Report 15 January 2019 – Response to Consultation by SHR on ARC Return.</p> <p>Annual Assurance Statement 2019 Feedback Letter from the Scottish Housing Regulator, March 2020</p> <p>People's News and Council Website</p> <p>Joint Tenant Meeting, 19th August 2021</p>	<p>AIG11</p> <p>CLR24</p> <p>CLR27</p> <p>CLR24a</p> <p>CLR 25</p> <p>CLR12, CLR12a, CLR12b, CLR12e CLR12f CLR12g</p>	<p>A briefing session and presentation on the Annual Assurance Statement 2021 was provided to members of the Policy Board prior to the meeting of the Policy Board.</p> <p>The Policy Board has been advised in previous reports of the changes to the Regulatory Framework implemented in 2019.</p> <p>Officers have undertaken a targeted self-assessment exercise, building on the previous assessments and information gathering exercises to ensure sufficient evidence is available to provide assurance on compliance with the regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Account has been taken of the SHR's guidance on Annual Assurance Statements in preparing this report.</p> <p>Some areas for improvement have been identified and these are detailed within this report and in other reports to the Policy Board.</p> <p>The first Annual Assurance Statement was approved by the Policy Board on 29 October 2019 and was submitted to the SHR thereafter, with the SHR providing feedback in their letter of 10 March 2020.</p> <p>The 2021 Annual Assurance Statement was discussed</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
				<p>with the Tenants Scrutiny Panel at the joint tenant meeting held in August 2021.</p> <p>Following Board approval, the Annual Assurance Statement 2021 will be available to tenants and other service users on the Council's website.</p>
AN2	Notify the SHR during the year of any material changes to the assurance in the Council's Assurance Statement.	<p>CHAPS Board Report 26 October 2021 – Regulation of Social Housing: Assurance Statement 2021</p> <p>Charter Return</p> <p>Covid-19 Monthly/Quarterly Reporting</p> <p>Correspondence with Scottish Housing Regulator regarding gas safety certification, July 2021</p>	<p>CLR24</p> <p>CLR23</p> <p>AICV9</p> <p>CLR34a</p>	<p>The Coronavirus pandemic has continued to impact housing services, and it has been necessary to make major changes to service delivery arrangements in response to restrictions and in keeping with government guidance.</p> <p>Annual report to charter was submitted to SHR at the end May 2021 and reported to Board in August 2021.</p> <p>The Council's website is updated with information relating to service changes.</p> <p>Procedures are in place to monitor ongoing compliance and any material changes will be reported to the Communities and Housing Policy Board and to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</p>
AN3	Have assurance and evidence that the Council is meeting all its legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.	<p>Council and Housing Strategies, Plans, Policies and Procedures.</p> <p>New Local Housing Strategy– Update, CHAPS Board Report 16 March 2021</p> <p>New Local Housing Strategy Customer Engagement</p>	<p>HSP1a</p> <p>HSP1a</p>	<p>Customer engagement has taken place to review the strategic outcomes in the new Local Housing Strategy</p> <p>Following an updated self-assessment exercise in 2021 on Access to Housing & Void Management has been undertaken this year. Further assessments will be undertaken each year on a rolling basis.</p> <p>We continue to collect and analyse data on new and</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
		<p>Consultation Summary</p> <p>Scottish Housing Regulator Engagement Plan</p> <p>Neighbourhood Nuisance & ASB Policy & Practice – CHAPS Board Report 16 March 2021</p> <p>Renfrewshire Anti-social behaviour Strategy</p> <p>Housing Regeneration & Renewal programme – CHAPS Board Report 18 May 2021</p> <p>Self-Assessment exercise on charter outcomes Access to Housing & Void Management</p> <p>Performance and Benchmarking Reports.</p> <p>Technology Enabled Care (TEC) in Housing Charter, CHAPs Board Report 19 January 2021</p> <p>Communities and Housing Child Protection Procedures</p>	<p>CLR38b</p> <p>HPS11</p> <p>NC2</p> <p>HSP10</p> <p>CLR28</p> <p>CLR16, CLR17, CLR18</p> <p>HSP7</p> <p>HSP12</p>	<p>existing tenants to provide a better understanding of the needs and requirements for all equality groups.</p> <p>The Service works closely with other Council Services to effectively manage Anti Social Behaviour and Neighbour Nuisance. An updated report will be presented to the Community and Housing Policy Board in October 2021.</p> <p>The service monitors performance on an ongoing basis, with regular monthly and quarterly reports prepared for internal review. Performance reports are presented to the Communities Housing & Planning Policy Board on a six-monthly basis which contain a wide range of management information relating to housing and homelessness services. These reports are publicly available on the Council's website.</p> <p>Performance across the range of housing services is regularly monitored and reported to the Policy Board, including benchmarking over time and with other social landlords. As part of this regular monitoring, areas for improvement are identified and action implemented as appropriate.</p> <p>A tenant satisfaction survey is carried out every two years by independent consultants. Feedback from the 2020 Tenant Satisfaction Survey was used to identify areas for improvement, including the repairs service.</p> <p>When new policies or procedures are being developed, officers seek advice from the Council's Legal Services</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
		<p>Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee Child Protection Practitioner Guidance – Legislation Update and information for parents/carers</p> <p>Housing Information & Advice for People with Disabilities</p> <p>Tenants Satisfaction Surveys</p> <p>Consultation on Policy changes and rent setting.</p> <p>Other Regulatory body reports</p> <p>Engagement Plan Meeting with SHR regarding Homelessness in Renfrewshire</p> <p>People's News – Annual Return on the Charter Tenant Supplement.</p> <p>Tenant Newsletters and Information.</p> <p>Corporate Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.</p>	<p>CPSP5a, CPSP5b, CPSP5c</p> <p>CLR9</p> <p>CLR13</p> <p>GVRSC4</p> <p>CLR38, CLR38a</p> <p>CLR25</p>	<p>team to ensure any legal issues are identified and given appropriate consideration. Any relevant issues are highlighted for Elected Members in reports to the Policy Board.</p> <p>The housing allocation process is monitored, and targets and outcomes are reported to the Policy Board annually. Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, the Policy Board was advised that allocation targets would be carried over from 2019, with a continuing focus on meeting homelessness and the highest levels of housing needs and in keeping with the needs-based framework set out in the housing allocation policy. Targets for 2021 were agreed by the policy board in August.</p> <p>To address an increase in homeless applications, additional properties were made available for use as temporary accommodation as required. Given the level of demand and the lack of availability of suitable accommodation, Bed and Breakfast accommodation is utilised as a last resort. In a few, the use of B&B accommodation has been for more than 7 days (the time specified in the Unsuitable Accommodation Order) where other temporary accommodation was not immediately available, but all such cases were directly related to the situation caused by the pandemic.</p> <p>While the vast majority of annual gas safety checks have been carried out prior to the 12-month due date, there are 84 occasions where a service wasn't carried out before it was due. Access has since been achieved and all 84</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
		Internal Audit Report – Council housing Newbuild Programme	AHS25	services are now complete.
		Fire Safety Guidance for Existing High Rise domestic Buildings	AICLR05	The pandemic has continued to cause delays to the Council's programme of electrical safety inspections which are required to be carried out every five years.
		Internal Audit Statement of Compliance.	CLR26	
		Compliance Certificates – e.g. Gas Safety		
		Private Sector Housing Investment Programme 2021/2022 CHAPS Board Report 18 May 2021	HSP8	
		Housing to 2040 CHAPS Board Report, 18 May 2021	HSP9	
		Renfrewshire Common Housing Allocation Policy	AHS1a	
		Allocations Procedures	AHS2	
		Short Scottish Secure Tenancy Guidance	AHS9d	
		Housing Options Advice – Housing Options Form	AHS3, AHS3a, AHS3b,	

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
		Secure Tenancy Agreement	AHS3c AHS7	
		Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	HSP4	
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021	HSP6	
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021	HSP6	
		Link on Council Website to Covid-19 Information Booklet for Tenants on service changes	AICV12	
		Housing Repairs Policy	HQM3	
		Housing Adaptations within Council Stock Policy	HQM10	
		Repairs Handbook for tenants	HQM5	
		Housing Energy Efficiency & Carbon Reduction Programme	HQM9 HQM9b	
		Correspondence with Scottish Housing Regulator regarding gas safety certification, July 2021	CLR34a	

Ref	Requirement	Evidence	Evidence	Compliance
AN4	Notify the SHR of any tenant and resident safety matters which have been reported to or are being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive, or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities, or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.	Corporate Health and Safety Policies and Procedures		<p>Any reportable HSE incidents are logged in the Health & Safety Database and investigated in accordance with the Council's Corporate Health & Safety Policies and Procedures.</p> <p>During the past year, there have been no incidents reported to the HSE.</p> <p>Outcomes of investigations are notified directly to the Council by the HSE and copied to the Director and Head of Service.</p> <p>There have been no inspections by regulatory authorities this year.</p>
AN5	Make the Council's Engagement Plan easily available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.	<p>Council website which includes link to Regulator website</p> <p>People's News</p> <p>CHAPS Board Report 26 October 2021 – Regulation of Social Housing Assurance Statement</p>	<p>CLR25</p> <p>CLR24</p>	<p>The Council's current Engagement Plan is published on the Council's website and any subsequent plans will be made available online for tenants and service users.</p> <p>The Engagement plan is also promoted to tenants in the People's News.</p>

2. Scottish Social Housing Charter Performance

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
CH1	Submit an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) to the SHR each year in accordance with published guidance.	<p>Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2020/21 CHAPS Board Report, 17/08/21</p> <p>CHAPS Board report, 26/10/21, Annual Housing Benchmarking Performance Report 2020/21</p> <p>CHAPS Board report, 26/10/21, Scottish Social Housing Charter Half yearly report 2021/22</p>	<p>CLR18</p> <p>CLR16</p> <p>CLR17</p>	<p>The Annual Return on the Charter was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator in May 2021. A robust framework is in place for internal data checking prior to submission and a sample data check is independently verified by the Scottish Housing Network.</p> <p>Charter performance is reported bi-annually to the Communities, Housing and Planning Services policy Board along with an annual report on performance benchmarking to provide comparisons against the Housing Service's previous performance along with that of other local authorities.</p>
CH2	<p>Involve tenants, and where relevant other service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information. This must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing the approach with tenants • Ensuring that it is effective and meaningful – that the chosen approach gives tenants a real and 	<p>Agenda, Presentation and Minutes of Joint Tenant Representative Group Meetings</p> <p>CHAPS Board Report 17/8/21 – Tenant Participation Strategy – Review of Tenant Participation - Approval to consult on best practice advice</p>	<p>CLR12</p> <p>CLR12a</p> <p>CLR12b</p> <p>CLR12e</p> <p>CLR12f</p> <p>CLR12g</p> <p>CLR1b</p>	<p>Tenants are consulted on how performance information is presented, what indicators should be highlighted and how performance is benchmarked. This information is contained within the Charter supplement of the Autumn edition of the Peoples news and is distributed to all Council tenants and made publicly available on the Councils website.</p> <p>As part of our Customer Engagement Strategy, performance is discussed with representative tenant groups on a regular basis. This year, adjustments have been made to the normal arrangements for meeting with tenant representatives, with more online communication being developed while it is not possible hold face to face meetings.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
	<p>demonstrable say in the assessment of performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicising the approach to tenants Ensuring that it can be verified and be able to show that the agreed approach to involving tenants has happened <p>Involve other service users in an appropriate way, having asked and had regard to their needs and wishes.</p>	<p>CHAPS Board Report 27 October 2020, Housing Customer Engagement Annual Report 2019/2020</p> <p>CHAPS Board report, August 2010, Housing Customer Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2020</p> <p>Tenant Scrutiny Panel activity</p> <p>Sheltered Housing and Multi Storey Quality Circle Inspections</p> <p>Neighbourhood Forum budget monitoring Sheet</p> <p>2021/2022 Rent Consultation and CHAPS Board report on rent increase, 9 March 2021.</p> <p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021</p>	<p>CLR1a</p> <p>CLR1</p> <p>CLR13</p> <p>CLR19</p> <p>CLR20</p> <p>CLR22</p> <p>GVRSC1</p> <p>HSP6</p>	<p>Due to Coronavirus restrictions on gatherings, officers and tenant representatives participated in an online meeting to discuss the Council's Annual Charter Return and the Council's performance in comparison to other social housing providers. At the meeting which took place in August 2021, the style and layout of the 2021 tenant report on the charter was also discussed. This will be issued to all tenants and made available on the Council's website.</p> <p>The current Customer Engagement Strategy was developed in 2010 and is currently being revised to take account of good practice, tenants' views and make full use of new technology in a rapidly changing environment to enhance the opportunities for greater tenant participation. The draft strategy will be presented to a future meeting of the Communities Housing and Planning Policy Board for approval prior to implementation.</p> <p>The 2020 Tenants' Satisfaction Survey noted that 93.7% of Council tenants said they were satisfied with the opportunities to participate in decision-making processes. The Tenant Satisfaction Survey is carried out bi-annually with the next one scheduled to be completed in 2022.</p> <p>The Council has a range of opportunities for both individuals and groups to participate and monitor performance, such as: surveys, meetings with</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021	HSP6	<p>Tenants and Residents Associations, the Council Wide Forum, Neighbourhood Forums, Quality Circles, the Repairs Development Group and the Tenant Scrutiny Panel. The service will continue to work with these groups to review customer feedback and inform future improvements.</p> <p>The Repairs Development Group has not met during the pandemic, this along with other groups and the Service's approach to tenants participation will be reviewed as part of the over-arching tenant participation review.</p> <p>Annual updates are provided to the Policy Board on the Customer Engagement Strategy. This includes reporting to tenants on service performance.</p>
		Council Wide Forums	CLR21	
		Tenant & Resident Association Meetings	CLR32	
		Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Letting Standard Report, March 2014	HQM2e	
		Repairs Development Group	HQM14	
		Regeneration Consultation surveys	CLR40	
CH3	Report performance in achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards to its tenants and other service users (no later than October each year). The format of performance reporting must be agreed with tenants, ensuring that it is accessible for tenants and other service users, with plain and jargon-free language.	<p>Agenda, Presentation and Minutes of Joint Tenant Representative Group Meetings</p> <p>People's News – Annual Return on the Charter Tenant Supplement</p> <p>Council website</p>	<p>CLR12 CLR12a CLR12b CLR12e CLR12f CLR12g</p> <p>CLR25</p>	<p>Each year tenant representatives are consulted on how performance information should be presented, what indicators should be highlighted and how performance is benchmarked.</p> <p>The annual Report to Tenants is delivered to all Council tenants as a supplement to the Peoples News each year and is published on the Council's website</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
CH4	<p>When reporting performance to tenants and other service users, this must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include providing them with an assessment of performance in delivering each of the Charter outcomes and standards which are relevant to the Council • Include relevant comparisons – these should include comparisons with previous years, with other landlords and with national performance. • Set out how and when the Council intends to address areas for improvement • Give tenants and other service users a way to feed back their views on the style and form of the reporting 	<p>Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2020/21 CHAPS Board Report, 17/08/2021</p> <p>Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2020</p> <p>Self-Assessment exercise on charter outcomes on void management x</p> <p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021</p> <p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021</p> <p>People's News – Autumn edition - Annual Return on the Charter Tenant Supplement</p> <p>CHAPS Board report, 26/10/21, Annual Housing Benchmarking Performance Report 2020/21</p>	<p>CLR18</p> <p>CLR13</p> <p>CLR28</p> <p>HSP6</p> <p>HSP6</p> <p>CLR25</p> <p>CLR16</p>	<p>Tenant feedback is used to develop the annual Report to Tenants which includes current performance against previous years and benchmarking against Scottish averages.</p> <p>The Report to Tenants provides a balanced appraisal of performance and highlights areas that will be focussed on for improvement.</p> <p>A self-assessment exercise was undertaken with the tenant scrutiny panel as part of the preparation for the 2021 Annual Assurance Statement.</p> <p>Charter information presented to tenant groups includes performance information, comparisons with previous years' data and other social landlords.</p> <p>The annual report to the Policy Board on the Charter Return includes areas for improvement that have been identified with actions this year including a focus on: average days to re-let properties, adaptations and void management.</p> <p>The three-year Service Delivery Plan provides details of service review and development across housing and homelessness services.</p> <p>The Peoples News provides opportunities for tenants to "Tell us what you think" inviting comments on the format and content of the newsletter. The content and design of the newsletter is also discussed</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
		CHAPS Board report, 26/10/21, Scottish Social Housing Charter Half yearly report 2021/22 Agenda, Presentation and Minutes of Joint Tenant Representative Group Meetings Council website	CLR17 CLR12a CLR12b CLR12e CLR12f CLR12g	regularly with tenant groups.
CH5	Make the report on performance easily available to tenants, including online.	People's News – Annual Return on the Charter Tenant Supplement Council website	CLR25	The annual Report to Tenants is published in the Peoples News and distributed to all Council tenants. The report is also published on the Council's website and, in normal circumstances would also be available from Council offices and public libraries.

3. Tenants and Service Users Redress

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
TS1	Make information on reporting significant performance failures, including the SHR's leaflet, available to tenants.	Council website includes a link to the Scottish Housing Regulator's website. SHR Significant Failures Leaflet	CLR10	Information for tenants on reporting significant performance failures, including the SHR's leaflet is available from the Council website. A link to the SHR's website is also publicised on the Councils website.
TS2	Provide tenants and other service users with the information they need to	Complaints Handling Procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Guide 	CLR3	Information on how to complain is publicised widely, including online and in tenant newsletters.

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
	exercise their right to complain and seek redress and respond to tenants within the timescales outlined in the Council's service standards, in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints Form <p>People's News</p> <p>Council website</p> <p>Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2020/21 CHAPS Board Report, 17/08/21</p> <p>CHAPS Board report, 26/10/21, Annual Housing Benchmarking Performance Report 2020/21</p>	<p>CLR4</p> <p>CLR25</p> <p>CLR18</p> <p>CLR16</p>	<p>The Council adheres to the SPSO guidance in relation to complaint timescales.</p> <p>The Council monitors complaints handling, and this is reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator through the Annual Return on the Charter.</p> <p>Complaints performance information is covered in the Annual Report to Tenants within the Autumn issue of the Peoples News.</p>
TS3	Ensure the Council has effective arrangements to learn from complaints and from other tenant and service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance.	<p>Corporate Complaints Handling Procedures</p> <p>Complaints by Service Area Spreadsheet</p> <p>SMT & 3rd Tier Manager 6 weekly mtg, 23 August 2021</p> <p>SPSO – Link on Council website</p> <p>Sheltered Housing Newsletters</p> <p>Sheltered Housing Good</p>	<p>CLR3a</p> <p>CLR3b</p> <p>CLR3f</p> <p>CLR3g</p> <p>AIG12</p> <p>CLR11</p> <p>AHS22a</p>	<p>Complaints are analysed to identify any themes that require addressing. Officer meetings are held to gain insight into complaints.</p> <p>As part of the 2020 Tenant Satisfaction Survey, tenants were asked about the main reason for complaints and their experience of making a complaint. Around 7% of respondents said they had made a complaint, with the main reasons related to repairs or anti-social behaviour. Three quarters of those who complained said they found it easy to do so.</p> <p>Good News section of Sheltered Housing Newsletter and Housing Support Newsletter.</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
		News		
		Housing Support Newsletters	AHS22	
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021	HSP6	
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021	HSP6	
		2020 Tenant Satisfaction Survey	CLR13	

4. Whistleblowing

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
WB1	Have effective arrangements and a policy for whistleblowing by staff and elected members which the Council makes easily available and which it promotes.	Staff Code of Conduct	CPSP8	The Council's Staff Code of Conduct includes information on Whistleblowing. This is available for staff and elected members on the Councils intranet site. Elected members must comply with the Councillors Code of Conduct which is available on the Standards Commission website.
		Councillor Code of Conduct	CPSP18	
		Council Intranet site		

5. Equality and Human Rights

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
H1	Have assurance and evidence that the Council considers equality and human rights issues properly when making all of its decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in its day-to-day service delivery.	<p>Council Guide for Assessing Equality and Human Rights Impacts</p> <p>Collecting Equality Information : National guidance for Scottish social landlords, August 2021</p> <p>Leadership Board Report 1 May 2019 - Progress Report on Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equality 2019</p> <p>Housing Information & Advice for People with Disabilities</p> <p>Digital Support for Council Tenants</p> <p>Link to Language Line translation service & Alternative formats are available on request.</p> <p>Wheelchair accessible customer service centre with Loop hearing systems in</p>	<p>CLR5</p> <p>OHRD17</p> <p>CLR8</p> <p>CLR9</p> <p>CLR15</p> <p>AIG8</p>	<p>All matters being reported to Board are reviewed for any equality and/or human rights implications.</p> <p>The Council monitors equality outcomes corporately with all policy changes subject to Equality Impact Assessments are carried out and noted by the relevant Board.</p> <p>The Service Delivery Plan includes a statement annually relating to equalities.</p> <p>The Tenant Satisfaction Survey results highlight high satisfaction rates for access to services and for participation opportunities, with respondents noting that they find it easy to participate.</p> <p>As part of the annual update on the Strategic Housing Investment Plan, a consultation exercise takes place to provide individuals and groups an opportunity to provide comments on the proposals.</p> <p>The Renfrewshire Council Newbuild Specification document has been designed to ensure properties meet housing for varying needs standards and a mix of property types and sizes are delivered to meet current and future needs, including an element of wheelchair accessible homes in suitable locations and homes that are future proof for changing needs. The specification is continuously updated to improve the quality of</p>

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
		place.		housing being delivered.
		Renfrewshire Common Housing Allocation Policy	AHS1 AHS1a	<p>The housing-led regeneration and renewal which will not only enhance a significant proportion of the Council's housing stock but will also contribute to the wider transformation of Renfrewshire as a place, and will be central to the economic and social recovery of Renfrewshire. Thus improving the outcomes and opportunities of residents in the lower level SIMD datazones.</p> <p>Housing staff have replicated office based environments to continue to deliver services whilst working from home.</p> <p>To improve customer service, the Near Me platform has been introduced to assist in face to face meetings with customers</p> <p>All customers who are looking for alternative accommodation are invited to discuss their housing options with a housing expert.</p> <p>The discussion will include options that best suit each customer's housing need, such as Council housing, other social housing providers, the private rented sector or owner occupation.</p> <p>The Council also employs a specialist Housing and Disabilities Advisor who can provide information and advice to older and/or disabled people in more</p>
		Housing Options, mobility, Sheltered and HSPC housing application process.	AHS3, AHS3a AHS3b AHS3c	
		Annual Re-registration process for housing applicants	AIG9	
		Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	HSP4	
		Renfrewshire Homeless Partnership multi-agency approach	AHS17	
		Renfrewshire Common Housing Allocation Policy Equalities Impact Assessment.	CLR5b	
		Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021	HSP6	

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
		<p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021</p> <p>Tenants Satisfaction Survey 2020.</p> <p>Draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022-2027, CHAPS 17 August 2021</p> <p>Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022-2027, CHAPS 26 October 2021</p> <p>Draft Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2022-2027 Consultation exercise, September 2020.</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council Newbuild Specification – July 2019</p> <p>Front line service adjustments</p>	<p>HSP6</p> <p>CLR13</p> <p>HSP2</p> <p>HSP2</p> <p>HSP2a</p> <p>HQM19</p> <p>CLR42</p>	<p>complex cases, for example those that relate to hospital discharge, or to people who are housebound. A member of staff will make a referral to them on your behalf where appropriate.</p>
EH2	To comply with these duties, landlords must collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for	Scottish Social Housing Charter: Annual Return 2020/21 CHAPS Board Report, 17/08/21	CLR18	As part of the Housing Options process we ask all housing applicants for information in relation to protected characteristics.

Ref	Requirement	Evidence		Compliance
	their existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists, governing body members and staff. Local authorities must also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to them as homeless. Landlords who provide Gypsy/ Traveller sites must also collect data on protected characteristics for these service users.	<p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan Progress update 2021-2022 CHAPS October 2021</p> <p>Communities and Housing Services, Service Delivery Plan 2021-2022 CHAPS March 2021</p> <p>Final ARC Submission 20/21 – May 2021</p> <p>Unauthorised Encampments Procedures (Gypsy/ Travellers)</p>	<p>HSP6</p> <p>HSP6</p> <p>CLR23</p> <p>CPSP4</p>	<p>The Council collects protected characteristic information from existing tenants, waiting list applicants and new tenants (where they have chosen to provide this information).</p> <p>The Service Delivery Plan outlines how the Service links in with Strategic Outcome 3, tackling inequality, opportunities for all.</p> <p>There are currently no Gypsy/Traveller sites in Renfrewshire.</p>



Renfrewshire Council Assurance Statement 2021

Renfrewshire Council complies with the regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

We achieve the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services.

However, since March 2020, the Coronavirus pandemic has had a significant impact on housing services, and it has been necessary to make major changes to service delivery arrangements in response to restrictions and in keeping with government guidance.

We would note that it has not been possible to achieve full compliance with the requirements on annual gas safety checks and electrical testing during as a result of the pandemic. Delays to planned capital improvement works will also have an impact on the Council's ability to meet the interim target for the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH) and the new fire and smoke alarm standards by February 2021.

The Council has seen a significant impact on performance in a number of key areas as reported to Board.

The Council's Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board regularly receives reports which provide information and evidence to support assurance.

The Annual Assurance Statement 2021 was considered and approved by the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board on 26 October 2021.

Signed:

Councillor Marie McGurk
Convener of the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board

Date: _____