
Report To:	Environment & Regeneration Committee	Date:	14 January 2021
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration and Resources	Report No:	ENV005/21/MM
Contact Officer:	Martin McNab	Contact No:	01475 714246
Subject:	Scottish Housing Regulator – Annual Assurance Statement		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek the Committee's approval for Inverclyde Council's Annual Assurance Statement 2020-21.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Members may recall the first Annual Assurance Statement which was brought to the October 2019 Committee. The statement covered both the Council's Homelessness Service delivered by the Inverclyde HSCP and the remaining tied housing owned by the Council. Unfortunately the 2020-21 statement required to be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator prior to this Committee's approval however the statement is now attached at Appendix 1 for Member's approval.
- 2.2 Unsurprisingly 2020 has been a very challenging year for the homelessness service with the impact of the pandemic initially leading to a reduction in capacity in the Inverclyde centre and the need to work with RSLs to increase accommodation both for residents of the Inverclyde Centre and those released under the prisoner early release scheme. A subsequent increase in those presenting as homeless, a phenomenon seen across Scotland during the pandemic, led to a number of instances where the service was unable to provide Temporary Accommodation.
- 2.3 The impact of the Covid pandemic has also led to delays in proceeding with the potential transfer of the tied housing stock to River Clyde Homes. The Council should shortly begin the process of tenant consultation regarding the transfer however and it is to be hoped that this process can be advanced significantly in the coming year.

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Committee approves the Annual Assurance Statement for 2020-21.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/(savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With effect from	Annual net impact £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

4.2 Legal

There are no legal issues arising from this report.

4.3 Human Resources

There are no HR issues arising from this report.

4.4 Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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NO

4.5 **Repopulation**

There are no impacts on repopulation arising from this report.

5.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

5.1 The Annual Assurance Statement is completed with contributions from the Interim Head of Homelessness, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Recovery Services and the Head of Legal & Property Services.

6.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Scottish Housing Regulator Environment & Regeneration Committee 31 October 2019
ENV052/19/LL/AH

Annual Assurance Statement: Inverclyde Council – December 2020

The purpose of this Annual Assurance Statement is to reassure the Scottish Housing Regulator, our tenants and other service users that Inverclyde Council complies with its regulatory and statutory obligations as set out in section 3 of the regulatory requirements. In areas where there is no (or part) material compliance we have indicated how we are planning to improve in those areas and the timeframe for improvement.

As a local authority we can confirm that we meet our statutory duties to prevent and alleviate homelessness, together with our duties regarding our legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness, equality and human rights and tenant and resident safety. As Inverclyde Council only has a limited housing stock, most of which are on secure tenancies, our tenants have a direct relationship with officers and the customer/landlord relationship must be considered within that context.

We can confirm that Inverclyde Council achieves all but the following standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services:

1. There have been additional pressures on our homelessness accommodation service, with presentations significantly increasing since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. In order to comply with public health advice, the service reduced capacity within the Inverclyde centre. There have been instances where we have been unable to meet our statutory duty to provide Temporary Accommodation and have requested that people remain in alternative accommodation, including staying with family or friends or using short term use of Bed and Breakfast until safe temporary accommodation has been secured.

This unexpected and unprecedented demand has enabled joint working with local Registered Social Landlords who have increased the availability of temporary furnished accommodation within a short space of time. This has not been without its challenges as turnover of housing stock has been delayed by throughput and the ability to bring some properties up to standard timeously.

Following the submission of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan to the Scottish Government a Rapid Rehousing Partnership Officer has been appointed to support local implementation of the plan and the Housing First model.

There have been no breaches in the timeframe between October 2019 and October 2020.

2. All of Inverclyde Council's housing stock currently meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) however, there are 4 houses which do not meet the requirements of the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH). These houses require external wall insulation. All houses also require to have an Energy Performance Assessment carried out.

Inverclyde Council is about to carry out a tenant consultation regarding the potential transfer of ownership of the remaining housing stock to River Clyde

Homes. This is with the exception of three houses which are located within parks, only one of these is on a Scottish Secure Tenancy, the other two are occupied under a Min of Let.

Inverclyde Council is still working through the process of obtaining authority from River Clyde Homes to allow the Council to undertake this consultation. Therefore, it has not yet commenced.

A report to Committee on the outcome of the Annual Return on Charter was not completed this year (2020), in part owing to the COVID-19 response, it is recognised however that this must be completed every year and this report must be made available to our tenants together with the Engagement Plan and the Annual Assurance Statement.

We confirm that we have utilised and considered appropriate evidence to give us this assurance. We will formally approve our Assurance Statement at the Council's Environment and Regeneration Committee on the 14th January 2021.



Martin McNab
Head of Public Protection & Covid Recovery
10 December 2020