
HOUSING ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Council Homeless Services are subject to scrutiny and inspection by the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). The Council must demonstrate that it is meeting the statutory requirements contained in the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Argyll and Bute Council is no longer a social landlord but retains statutory duties to provide services to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Council submits an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). In 2019 the SHR introduced a requirement for all local authorities to submit an Annual Assurance Statement which will be published on the SHR website.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee approve the Annual Assurance Statement contained in **Appendix 1** of this report.

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 The SHR produced a document entitled Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland in February 2019. The regulatory requirements are set out in Section 3 of the document and even though Argyll and Bute Council is no longer a social landlord there are requirements for the Council to ensuring that statutory duties are met in relation to preventing and alleviating homelessness.
- 3.2 The SHR issued an Engagement Plan to Argyll and Bute Council Housing Services in March 2019. There are 4 areas in which the SHR can engage with the Council in relation to homelessness services:-
- How people access the service
 - The assessment of homeless applications
 - Access to and quality of temporary accommodation
 - Outcomes for people who are homeless

The SHR are engaging with Argyll and Bute Council in relation to Argyll and Bute's assessment of homeless applications and the outcomes for people who

are homeless. The elements within these categories are detailed in the Annual Assurance Statement (**Appendix 1**) and the progress made.

3.3 Members are kept informed of the Council's performance in relation to statutory and regulatory requirements in relation to housing in various ways :-

- Through the Corporate Pyramid Reporting System
- Through quarterly Housing Performance Reports submitted to Committee
- Through the quarterly reporting produced for the Strategic Housing Forum
- Through the Annual Updates on the Local Housing Strategy
- Through an Annual Housing Activity report submitted to the 4 Area Committees

4.0 CONCLUSION

4.1 The Development and Growth Service – Housing Team will continue to improve services to households who are homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Housing Team will continue to engage with the SHR to report on progress on the housing and homeless services provided in Argyll and Bute.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Policy None

5.2 Financial Sufficient budget is required to deliver statutory services

5.3 Legal None

5.4 HR None

5.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

5.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – access to services across the local authority area provided

5.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – addressing and preventing homelessness enables households to address other issues such as income maximisation and exploring employment opportunities

5.5.3 Islands – homeless advice and prevention services are provided on the islands

5.6. Risk – the Council will be subject to censure from the SHR and Scottish Government if statutory duties are not fulfilled

5.7 Customer Service – Area teams provided the service across the local authority

Pippa Milne

Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth

Policy Lead Councillor Robin Currie

Housing, Roads and Infrastructure Services

15th November 2019

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Housing Annual Assurance Statement 2019

Appendix 1



Argyll and Bute Council

Housing Annual Assurance Statement 2019

Legislative Compliance

We can confirm that Argyll and Bute Council achieves all the standards and outcomes for people who are homeless and others who use our services:-

- All relevant regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework
- All relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Housing Social Charter
- All relevant legislative duties

Argyll and Bute Council can confirm that there were no breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order in 2018/19.

Argyll and Bute Council can confirm that there were no health and safety breaches in 2018/19 in relation to housing resulting in intervention by the Health and Safety Executive.

In 2019 The Scottish Housing Regulator notified Argyll and Bute Council that they would be engaging with the Council over 2 areas of work based on the Scottish Government national statistics for 2017/18 and the Annual Returns of the Charter :-

- Argyll and Bute's assessment of homeless applications
- Outcomes for people who are homeless

Argyll and Bute's Assessment of Homeless Applications

No.	Area of Engagement	Progress Made
1.	The percentage of households assessed as not homeless nor threatened with homelessness is above the Scottish average	Argyll and Bute figures - 5.6% of cases at the end of 2018/19 compared to 7.5 % of cases in 2017/18 Scottish Average for 2018/19 – 3.8%
2.	The percentage of households assessed as intentionally homeless is above the Scottish average	Argyll and Bute figures - 5.6% of cases at the end of 2018/19 compared to 7.3% in 2017/18 Scottish Average for 2018/19 – 5.1%

3.	The percentage of households withdrawing their homeless application before decision is above the Scottish average	Argyll and Bute figures – 4.3% of cases at the end of 2018/19 compared to 4.8 % of cases in 2017/18 Scottish Average for 2018/19 – 4.1%
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Outcomes for People who are Homeless

No.	Area of Engagement	Progress Made
1.	The percentage of people in Argyll and Bute assessed as unintentionally homeless which it provided with a Scottish Secure Tenancy is below the Scottish average	Argyll and Bute Figure for 2018/19 – 66% Scottish Figure for 2018/19 – 66% 82% of all unintentionally homeless cases secured settled accommodation in 2018/19 compare to 71% across Scotland
2.	There are a relatively high number of people waiting for more than one year for an outcome	Argyll and Bute Council is working with partners to implement a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan which will address this situation

I can confirm that the Council has sufficient assurance and scrutiny processes in place to support this statement.

Signed

Pippa Milne

Executive Director

Signed

Councillor Robin Currie

Policy Lead for Housing, Roads and Infrastructure Services – 5th December 2019