

Item: 10

Education, Leisure and Housing Committee: 5 June 2019.

Annual Assurance Statement.

Report by Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

1. Purpose of Report

To consider the Annual Assurance Statement for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is invited to note:

2.1.

That the Council is required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator between April and October.

2.2.

That the Scottish Housing Regulator has provided a prescriptive template to be submitted but has not been prescriptive in respect of the structure of the information to accompany this.

2.3.

That the Annual Assurance Statement is required to be completed and agreed by the relevant local authority committee prior to submission.

It is recommended:

2.4.

That the Annual Assurance Statement, together with the Key Points relating to the Council's Performance and the Action Plan, attached as Appendices 1 to 3 to this report, be approved for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

3. Introduction

At its meeting held on 3 April 2019, the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee noted:

3.1.

That the Scottish Housing Regulator had published a new Regulatory Framework and associated guidance relating to housing services' performance.

3.2.

The requirement for the Council to produce an Annual Assurance Statement covering housing services' performance and submit it to the Scottish Housing Regulator between April and October.

3.3.

That, accordingly, guidance on the Annual Assurance Statement had been produced.

3.4.

That the Annual Assurance Statement required to be completed and agreed by the relevant local authority committee prior to submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

3.5.

That the Housing Service currently undertook a broad range of performance related tasks and was subject to various inspections, as detailed in section 5 of the report by the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing.

3.6.

That, in order to produce an Annual Assurance Statement that met the requirements outlined in the Scottish Housing Regulator's guidance, the Housing Service's existing performance processes required to be refined and enhanced.

3.7.

That, accordingly, in order to meet the Scottish Housing Regulator's requirements in respect of publication of an Annual Assurance Statement, the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing would submit annually, to the June cycle of meetings, a report on the Housing Service's performance.

4. Background on Performance Structures

4.1.

Members were previously advised of the broad range of performance measures that are in place across Housing Services.

4.2.

A broad range of performance reports are presented annually to the Committee including:

- Homelessness update.
- Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.
- Housing Performance.

4.3

A broad range of returns are submitted by Housing Services including:

- Quarterly submission of homelessness returns to Scottish Government (HL1, HL2, HL3 and Prevent 1).
- Completion of quarterly and annual returns for Scotland's Housing Network.
- Completion of annual return to Scottish Government "Housing Statistics Annual Return".
- Membership of Scotland's Housing Network and benchmarking against peer authorities and also national benchmarking.

4.4.

Housing Services undergo a range of inspections including:

- Care Inspectorate – Sheltered Housing.
- Care Inspectorate – Homelessness and Housing Support Services.
- National Standards for Information and Advice Providers (nationally recognised accreditation).
- Undertakes How Good is our Council Self Assessment.

4.4.1.

The outcome of inspections is reported to committee along with any action plans.

4.5.

Additionally, the following are in place across Housing Services:

- Housing Services is subject to an annual assessment against 8 specific criteria to determine the level risk posed by relevant services and consequently any need for an internal audit.
- An annual pre-submission audit of the Council's Annual Return against the Charter is undertaken by an independent organisation.
- A quarterly meeting of key staff to consider, analyse and discuss improvements relating to the performance across Housing Services in relation to the indicators underpinning the Annual Return against the Charter.

4.5.1.

In addition to corporate processes such as the monitoring of indicators through the Council's corporate performance monitoring system Aspireview.

4.6.

Some areas of Housing Services' performance are regulated and required by the Scottish Housing Regulator. These include:

- Submission of Annual Return against the Charter.
- Publication of Annual Report for Tenants.
- Three Yearly Customer Satisfaction Survey with specific questions and requires a 40% return rate.

4.6.1.

The results of the latter are reported to committee and the Customer Satisfaction Survey is produced biannually.

4.7.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has produced an engagement plan for all social housing providers. Individual engagement plans highlight performance indicators which the Scottish Housing Regulator has identified as being areas where they may initiate some engagement with the organisation concerned.

5. Annual Assurance Statement

5.1.

The Annual Assurance Statement requires to be submitted annually between April and October and it is necessary for the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee to be assured that performance structures and assessments are appropriately robust.

5.2.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has produced guidance which is available from <https://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Annual%20Assurance%20Statements%20-%20final%20-%20February%202019.pdf>

5.3.

The Scottish Housing Regulator's guidance requires that the Annual Assurance Statement should be completed and agreed by the relevant local authority committee and should:

“Confirm that you have appropriate assurance that you comply with:

- All relevant regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

(https://www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Regulatory%20Framework%20-%20final%20-%20February%202019_0.pdf)

- All relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- All relevant legislative duties”.

5.4.

The Scottish Housing Regulator has provided a prescriptive template to be submitted, and this is attached at Appendix 1, but has not been prescriptive in respect of the structure of the information to accompany this.

5.5.

It is anticipated that a template may follow in the future, but the timing of the committee cycles add additional complexities.

5.6.

Given that the appropriate Council committee is required to issue assurance on the performance of the Housing Service to the Scottish Housing Regulator, it is crucial that Elected Members are provided with sufficient information to be satisfied that performance processes are sufficient.

5.7.

Appendix 2 draws out the salient points in respect of performance from the key list at paragraph 4.6 above, highlighting areas where performance has declined or would warrant additional explanation.

5.8.

The onus is on the Council to highlight areas where it recognises its performance could be improved or where there are contextual factors which would limit its ability to compete at a national level. This information is contained in Appendix 2.

5.9.

Scotland's Housing Network, the organisation which provides benchmarking services and good practice guidance to the housing sector has developed an action plan which organisations may choose to complete as part of their assurance process, ahead of submission. This is attached at Appendix 3.

5.10.

Annual Assurance Statements are required by the Scottish Housing Regulator for all social housing providers that is both local authorities and registered social landlords. Consequently, some areas covered in Appendix 3 are corporate responsibilities as opposed to being limited to those within Housing Services.

5.11.

There is a potential that a prescriptive template detailing the structure of the information to accompany the Annual Assurance Statements may be developed by the Autumn. Should a template be produced by the Scottish Housing Regulator ahead of submission this will be circulated as a briefing report. The facts which will be included in the submission are anticipated to be as contained within this committee report so it is likely that changes would be relatively minimal.

6. Corporate Governance

This report relates to governance and procedural issues and therefore does not directly support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan and the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan.

7. Financial Implications

There are no significant financial implications arising directly from the recommendations to this report.

8. Legal Aspects

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 both established the creation of the Scottish Housing Regulator and introduced its function as a regulatory body accordingly. It also sets the Scottish Housing Regulator's statutory objective, functions, duties and powers.

9. Contact Officers

Wilfred Weir, Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing, extension 2436, Email wilf.weir@orkney.gov.uk.

Frances Troup, Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services, extension 2177, Email frances.troup@orkney.gov.uk.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Annual Assurance Statement.

Appendix 2: Key points relating to the Council's performance.

Appendix 3: Action Plan.

Appendix 1 to Annual Assurance Statement Report

Orkney Islands Council's Housing Service

School Place

Kirkwall

Orkney

KW15 1NY

Annual Assurance Statement

We achieve all of the following standards and outcomes for tenants, 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 Social Housing Charter;
- All relevant legislative duties.

Where additional explanatory information is required, this is included in Appendix 2 of the attached report and will be reproduced in the contextual information provided with the Annual Return against the Charter to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

I confirm that the Council's Education, Leisure and Housing Committee have seen and considered appropriate evidence to support the level of assurance we have at the meeting of our Education, Leisure and Housing Committee held on 5 June 2019.

Signed

(Chair of Education, Leisure and Housing Committee

Appendix 2 – Key points relating to the Council’s performance

Explanatory information has been provided to explain either a change in performance or areas where Orkney’s context is particularly important.

Annual Return Against the Charter

The Annual Return against the charter for financial year 2018 to 2019 has been completed for Orkney Islands Council for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 May 2019. Areas of performance which required additional explanation are as follows (the indicators referred to are nationally required):

Indicators 4 and 5

As regards the indicators focusing on complaints, there has been a decline in complaints responded to within the timescales set by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Of the 12 complaints that were over the 5 day timescale, 7 were just outside the timescales and were completed in 6 to 8 days. Predominantly this was due to staffing pressures. Every effort is being undertaken to get these figures back below 5 days for the 2019 to 2020 reporting year.

Indicator 7

A specific module has been developed in the asset management system Concerto, which now facilitates recording of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. While the module was being developed, the opportunity was taken to undertake a refresh of our data and an initial stock review with a view to reducing the level of abeyances and exemptions. At the same time the depth of information held on Concerto has been enhanced. This has led to a significant reduction in abeyances and exemptions, reducing from 31 abeyances in 2017 to 2018 to 20 by 2018 to 2019 and 34 exemptions in 2017 to 2018 to 15 by 2018 to 2019. It has however resulted in an increase in the number of properties failing the Scottish Housing Quality Standard which have risen from 3 properties failing the standard at year end in 2017 to 2018 to 55 recorded as failing the Scottish Housing Standard over the next year in 2018 to 2019. Most of these are marginal fails and the intention would be to address the reason for failure on a significant proportion of the properties concerned throughout the year.

Indicator 11

The time to complete emergency repairs, increased from 7.29 hours in 2017 to 2018 to 8.34 hours for financial year 2018 to 2019.

Each year since 2015 to 2016 this indicator has remained within a 90-minute timeframe varying from between 6.89 hours to 8.39 hours. Each year there have been a small number of cases which have been over the 24-hour timeframe and these coupled with the small sample size has led to a distortion in figures. In financial year 2018 to 2019 this applied to 3 cases that were significantly over the 24-hour timeframe. The reasons for this included 119 hours for a heating failure in August (and the householder advised that heating was unnecessary due to summer), and a 44 hour and 51-hour repairs. One of these was attributed to a

traditional property and the failure of a bathroom light (not a bulb) and a shower which kept tripping the power supply and had to be replaced.

In addition, the measured term contract was scheduled to end on 31 March 2019. It is generally the case that the final quarter before a contract end shows a decline in performance and this year was no exception. A new contract was awarded from 1 April 2019. The Council will continue to work closely with its contractors to ensure the performance management culture remains central to service provision despite pressures with significant pressures on services and Orkney's remote and rural context.

Indicator 12

The time to complete non-emergency repairs improved from 10.94 days in 2017 to 2018 to 10.27 days for financial year 2018 to 2019 year. The introduction and ongoing development of our asset management system Concerto, along with changes to operational processes and closer joint working with relevant contractors has led to progress over the last 3 years since the original introduction of Concerto. Sustained progress is now evident as a result.

Indicator 18

The percentage of offers refused has improved from 49.26% in 2017 to 2018 to 34.75% for financial year 2018 to 2019.

The reasons for this are that operational procedures have been enhanced. While applicants are given four area choices, in practice they may not take an offer if it is not in the area of first choice. Therefore, additional steps have been introduced to contact the prospective tenant, prior to offer, (where possible) to ensure their circumstances have not changed and that they would be interested in the potential offer etc. This has greatly reduced the number of refusals received.

A lettings review is underway and it is intended that this will include seeking to increase the level of choice available through our lettings policy.

Indicator 19

The percentage of anti-social behaviour cases resolved within local targets has risen to 83.33% for financial year 2018 to 2019 from 55.56% in financial year 2017 to 2018.

Orkney has a very low level of anti-social behaviour with few cases of serious anti-social behaviour. The targets within its anti-social behaviour policy, seeking a case to be resolved within 30 days, were very ambitious. Following a review of our policy and procedures on anti-social behaviour and consideration of targets used elsewhere in Scotland, our locally agreed targets have been amended to 90 days.

Indicator 20

There were some fluctuations in the categories surrounding tenancy sustainment. Some categories improved other got worse. Overall there was a slight decrease in tenancy sustainment

	2018/19.	2017/18.
20 - Percentage tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - existing tenants.	100.00%.	89.66%.
20 - Percentage tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - applicants assessed statutory homeless LA.	87.50%.	88.37%.
20 - Percentage tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year - applicants from organisations housing list.	85.71%.	91.55%.
20 - Percentage tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year – others.	100.00%.	100.00%.
20 - Percentage tenancies began in previous year remained more than a year – all.	88.37%.	90.34%.

Given that the numbers being referred to are very low, this potentially makes individuals identifiable in an Orkney context. Consequently, information relating to the reasons for tenancies not being sustained have been amalgamated.

The reasons for tenancies not being sustained are as follows:

Reason for Refusal.	Percentage (Number).
Application cancelled (circumstances changed).	7% (1).
Deceased.	13% (2).
Left Orkney (Personal Reasons).	13% (2).
Purchased in the Private Sector.	13% (2).
Rehoused by Orkney Housing Association Ltd (Moved in with Partner).	7% (1).
Rehoused Orkney Islands Council (Medical Reasons).	13% (2).
Renounced (included moving in with partner / parents (financial or health reasons), leaving Orkney)	33% (5).

Indicator 21

The percentage of lettable self-contained properties becoming vacant during the year dropped (an improvement) from 14.30% in 2017 to 2018 to 10.89% in 2018 to 2019 which is predominantly a result of there being no newly built properties for allocation.

Indicator 31

Indicator 31 covers gross rent arrears as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year.

Gross arrears have risen to 9.09% for financial year 2018 to 2019 from 8.38% for financial year 2017 to 2018. A further analysis of this figure shows that current tenant arrears have risen to 4.72% for financial year 2018 to 2019 from 3.52% in 2017 to 2018. While the arrears trend had stabilised during quarters 1 and 2 of 2018 to 2019 the introduction of Full Service Universal Credit in September 2018 has adversely impacted on performance since then.

The percentage of former tenant arrears in 2018 to 2019 of 4.37% is an improvement on 2017 to 2018 of 4.86% and is the best performance since 2016 to 2017, indicating an improving trend.

The Council continues to actively and prudently pursue former tenant arrears rather than write-off, although this continues to be detrimental to the overall rent arrears performance – statistics and anecdotal evidence suggesting that practice in other organisations is to write-off the majority of former tenant debt.

Indicator 35

As regards the indicator on the average length of time taken to relet properties, a total of 94 properties were relet during financial year 2018 to 2019. The total number of calendar days they were empty was 4,975 giving a relet time of 52.93 which is higher than financial year 2017 to 2018 which recorded 49.10 days. This figure is affected by a small number of properties which are subject to low demand and consequently were vacant for an extended period of time. These are as follows:

Sheltered Housing

5 Rae's Close	357 days.
26 Lambaness	616 days.
25 Lambaness	483 days.

If the above three properties were removed from the figures, this would become 91 relets with a total of 3,519 days, giving a relet time of 38.67 days.

In addition, there was one property situated on an island which has low demand. The property had been considered for onward sale however, a tenant became available and consequently it was relet.

Isles

33 St Colm's Quadrant	597 days
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If this property were also removed from the figures this would lead to a total of 90 relets and 2,922 days, giving a relet time of 32.47days.

Annual Report for Tenants

The annual report for tenants will be produced by 31 October 2019 as required by the Scottish Housing Regulator. This will include key information which is of interest to tenants.

The Council has a joint Residents' Panel with Orkney Housing Association which consists of tenants / residents of both organisations. They will be asked for their views on the Annual Report ahead of publication and their views will be taken into account in producing the final document. The Council includes a section in the Annual Report which encourages feedback from tenants more generally on how they feel about the report and the information on it.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Council is required to undertake a wholesale tenants' satisfaction survey every 3 years. The Council does this in partnership with Orkney Housing Association Ltd in order to reduce costs and produces the customer satisfaction survey biennially. This is undertaken by an independent body in order to ensure impartiality.

A range of customer satisfaction surveys are in place across the Service in order to assess the quality of the service on an ongoing basis. These include:

- New tenants' survey re quality of home and service
- Repairs Satisfaction survey
- Improvements satisfaction survey
- Exit questionnaires for tenants leaving the Council's accommodation
- Homelessness service, new tenants' questionnaire
- Homelessness service, exit questionnaire
- Housing Advice service, exit questionnaire

In addition, information is used from complaints and general feedback as encouraged by footnotes on all correspondence etc. The information is used to inform the Service Delivery Plan for the relevant part of the Service to inform any service improvements accordingly.

This links to standard 3.12 in the National Standards for Information and Advice Providers which is part of our accreditation.

While the Council collects data from its wholesale tenant satisfaction survey, this can lead to some distortion in figures. For example, when questions are raised regarding repairs it should be the most recent repair. It is therefore more effective to collect this data immediately following completion of the repair. A similar situation exists surrounding the condition of the property at the point it was let to the tenant, it is important that the respondents have recently become tenants so it is clear that the answers relate to the current service delivery.

The Council intends to use its ongoing customer satisfaction information so it can evidence that the information collected relates to the present day.

Scottish Housing Regulator's Engagement Plan

The Scottish Housing Regulator's engagement plan highlights key indicators, relating to service quality, where they have indicated they wish to engage with the Council.

These are:

- tenants satisfied with the opportunities to participate in the landlords decision-making;
- satisfaction with the quality of home;
- hours to complete emergency repairs;
- days to complete non-emergency repairs;
- anti-social behaviour cases resolved within local targets;
- average days to re-let properties; and
- gross rent arrears of rent due.

The results of these indicators have been explained in the section above relating to the Annual Return against the Charter and the section on Customer Satisfaction. The one exception relates to tenants satisfied with opportunities to participate in the landlord's decision making.

The results of the Tenants' Satisfaction Survey was presented to the Education, Leisure and Housing Committee on 6 June 2018. It was specifically noted that when asked to rank which specific aspects of the service were least important to them, 64% of tenants chose opportunities to participate.

The Housing Service does encourage tenants to take part in tenant participation through a range of means and will shortly be undertaking a review of its tenant participation strategy. Tenants are able to become part of the residents' panel, join a residents' group if they are resident within Grieveship in Stromness. In addition, tenants could form their own group or can participate in decision making on an ad-hoc basis such as through focus groups etc. The Council's Tenant Participation Officer is available to assist with enquiries about and the encouragement of involvement in the Council's decision-making processes.

Appendix 3: Assurance Action Plan

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Assurance and Notification				
Prepare an Annual Assurance Statement in accordance with guidance.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers.	October 2019.	Green.	Committee report and appendices to be presented to Education, Leisure and Housing Committee on 5 June 2019.
Submit Annual Assurance Statement to Scottish Housing Regulator between April and October each year.	Technology Officers.	October 2019.		On target to be submitted by October 2019.
Make Annual Assurance Statement available to tenants and other service users.	Technology Officers and Tenant Participation Officer.	October 2019.		To be included in Housing Services' area of website.
Notify Scottish Housing Regulator during the year of any material changes to the assurance in the Annual Assurance Statement.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers.	As required.	Green.	
Have assurance and evidence that we are meeting all our legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Works and Inspection Manager.	Ongoing.	Green.	This links to Standard 1.5 of National Standards for Information and Advice Providers. Evidence includes a broad range of Council corporate policies including the Health and Safety Policy; Challenging Behaviour by Members of the Public: The Role of Customer Service Advisers and All Staff Using the Customer Services Facility; Housing Services' Staff Training and Development Policy;

				<p>Library Procedure for Housing Services; staff training logs and internal portal which includes a broad range of information on corporate policy areas. Staff management processes are in place across Housing Services including induction, regular one to ones in line with the Line Management Policy and all staff are required to complete the Personal Development Award for Advisors with Shelter at the next intake after taking up post. In addition, structures such as qualified housing officer are in place to encourage housing staff to complete a housing qualification.</p>
<p>Notify Scottish Housing Regulator of safety matters which have been reported to or investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or reports from other regulatory or statutory authorities or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.</p>	<p>Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services / Works and Inspection Manager.</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<p>The Council's Health and Safety Advisor provides guidance on all aspects of health and safety as required. If a report were received from the Health and Safety Executive, immediate steps would be taken to address the issue and the Scottish Housing Regulator would be advised accordingly.</p> <p>We have policies covering issues such as Asbestos and procedures in place regarding Radon / Legionella etc. Our Development and Infrastructure Services undertake property inspections</p>

				and ensure properties are fitted with smoke alarms etc.
Make Engagement Plan easily available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers.	May 2019.	Green.	To be included by link to the Scottish Housing Regulator's website from Housing Services' area of the Council's website.
Register all requirements for providing data to Scottish Housing Regulator and Information Commissioners Office.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Head of Legal Services.	In place.	Green.	Housing Services will hold a register of any matters reported to the Scottish Housing Regulator and Legal Services will record all matters reported to the Information Commissioners Office.

Requirement	Who	When	RAG	Comments
Scottish Social Housing Charter Performance				
Submit Annual Return against the Charter to Scottish Housing Regulator in accordance with published guidance.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers.	May 2019.	Green.	On target to be submitted by 31 May 2019.
Involve tenants, and where relevant service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree an effective and meaningful approach with tenants. 	Tenant Participation Officer.	In place.	Green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents' Panel involved in development of annual report as standard; Section in the annual report to encourage feedback; Invite Residents' Panel to annual presentation on performance from Scotland's Housing;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicise approach to tenants. Verify approach and evidence involving tenants has happened. Involve other service users in an appropriate way. 				<p>Network (from 2019) and discussion at Residents' Panel meeting thereafter.</p>
<p>Report performance to tenants and other service users no later than October each year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree format of performance reporting with tenants and ensure accessible with plain and jargon free language; Provide assessment of performance in delivering Charter outcomes; Include relevant comparison including previous years, other landlords and with national performance; Set out how we intend to address areas for improvement; Give tenants and service users a way to feedback views on style and form of reporting 	<p>Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers and Tenant Participation Officer.</p>		<p>Green.</p>	<p>The Council has a joint Residents' Panel with Orkney Housing Association which consists of tenants / residents of both organisations. They are asked for their views on the Annual Report ahead of publication and their views will continue to be taken into account in producing the final document. The Council includes a section in the Annual Report which encourages feedback from tenants more generally on how they feel about the report and the information on it.</p>

Make Scottish Housing Regulator report on our performance easily available to tenants including online.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Technology Officers.	When produced by SHR.	Green.	To be included as a link to the Scottish Housing Regulator's website from Housing Services' area of the Council's website.
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Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Whistleblowing.				
Ensure effective arrangements and a policy for whistleblowing for staff and elected Members.	Head of HR and Performance.	In place from October 2015.	Green.	Policy on Whistleblowing is available on internal portal or in either electronic or hard copy from HR on request. Trade Unions are also aware of this. There is a monthly meeting with Trade Unions which is corporate and each individual service holds regular meetings with the Trade Unions as well.
Make Whistleblowing policy easily available and promote its existence.	As above.	In place. As above.	Green.	As above.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Tenants and Service Users Redress.				
Make information on reporting our significant performance failures, including the Scottish Housing Regulator's leaflet, available to our tenants.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation	June 2019.	Green.	A link will be provided to the Scottish Housing Regulator's leaflet from the Council's website.

	Services. and Tenant Participation Officer.			
Provide tenants and service users with the information they need to exercise right to complain and seek redress.	Team Leader (Policy and Planning).	In place.	Green.	The Council's corporate complaints process is used and corporate policy in line with the guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Information is available through our website and in hard copy on request.
Respond to tenant complaints within our service standards timescales and in accordance with the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman guidance.	Team Leader (Policy and Planning).	In place.	Green.	Reporting against timescales is included in the Annual Return against the Charter.
Ensure we have effective arrangements to learn from complaints and other tenant and service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services and Head of Legal Services.	In place.	Green.	This links with standard 3.12 of the National Standards for Information and Advice Providers which covers using feedback to inform service provision. Information collected through complaints, comments and customer satisfaction surveys is used to inform the update of the Service Delivery Plan for the relevant service area.

Requirement.	Who.	When.	RAG.	Comments.
Equality and Human Rights.				
<p>Have assurance and evidence we consider equality and human rights issues properly when making decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in our day to day service delivery.</p>	<p>Senior Management Team of the Council.</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies within Housing Services contain a section on equalities; • The Housing Service has a specific Equalities Policy and one on Accessibility; • Committee reports on policy matters contain a section on equality; • Completion of equality impact assessments is standard; • The Council monitors its website and ensures it meets website accessibility requirements; • The Council employs a specialist equalities officer to ensure compliance.
<p>Collect data relating to protected characteristics for existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists and elected Members and staff.</p>	<p>Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services.</p>	<p>In place.</p>	<p>Green.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equalities criteria does not apply to elected Members given that they are democratically elected; • Equalities monitoring information is collected for new tenants along with information relating to requirements for information in a range of formats. Information collected includes age, disability, race and sex. We don't collect this for all protected characteristics on the basis of data protection. We have to be

				<p>clear on the reason why we need the information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will review the information collected on a regular basis and will follow best practice.
Collect data on protected characteristics of people who apply as homeless.	Head of Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation Services.	In place.	Green.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equalities monitoring information is collected for people who apply as homeless as follows: Age, disability, marriage, race, sex, pregnancy and maternity. We don't collect this for all protected characteristics on the basis of data protection. We have to be clear on the reason why we need the information; We will review the information collected on a regular basis and will follow best practice.
Collect data on protected characteristics of people who use our Gypsy / Traveler services.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.	N/A.