

Appendix 1

Scottish Borders Council Annual Assurance Statement 2022/2023 to the Scottish Housing Regulator (draft)

The Assurance Statement on Internal Control and Governance 2022/23 by the Director Social Work & Practice to the Chief Executive includes assurances in respect of landlord services provided by the Council, as detailed below. This informs the Annual Governance Statement 2022/23 by the Chief Executive which will be considered for approval by the Council's Audit Committee at its meeting on Date 27th June 2023.

We confirm that in respect of landlord services provided by the Council we have seen and considered sufficient evidence to give us assurance that the Council complies with the regulatory requirements as laid out in Chapter 3 of the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework, including:

- All relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter in respect of any tenants, homeless persons, and other person who are in receipt of housing services; and
- Legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety.

The overall arrangements in respect of the Council's legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety, appear to be operating satisfactorily and to be materially compliant with the revised Regulatory Framework:

- Gypsy/Traveller site – The Council's designated site for Gypsy/Travellers within Scottish Borders at Tweedside Caravan Park, Innerleithen continues to meet the Scottish Government's minimum standards for Gypsy/Traveller sites. Provision for the collection of relevant data on protected characteristics for service users who use the Gypsy/Traveller site at Tweedside Caravan Park, Innerleithen has been built into a new feedback survey form for use during 2023/2024 which is intended to give all Gypsy/Traveller households who stay on the site the opportunity to give their views on their experience of the service and to make suggestions for how the service can be improved.
- Homelessness Services – The Internal Audit Annual Plan for 2023/24 includes a review of Homelessness services and their progress against the Service Improvement Action Plan. During 2021/2022, the Council's Internal Audit examined and evaluated the progress made in the self-assessment of homelessness services, along with an associated Service Improvement Action Plan. The audit confirmed that the risk, control, and governance systems were largely satisfactory and that management improvement actions were initiated.

Signed _____ Stuart Easingwood, Director – Social Work & Practice

Signed _____ Councillor Elaine Thornton-Nicol, Chair of Audit Committee