



## **ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2022**

The Management Committee of Blochairn Housing Association has carried out a comprehensive review of compliance with the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management and the requirements of Chapter Three of the Regulatory Framework.

This review has highlighted a number of improvement areas for Blochairn HA. The Association has been working towards completion of these areas in the last few months and while many are now complete, there are a number of identified weaknesses outstanding. We are working towards compliance in these areas, namely:

### **Standard 1 – the governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users**

- 1.1 The governing body sets the RSL’s strategic direction. It agrees and oversees the organisation’s business plan to achieve its purpose and intended outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
- 1.2 The RSL’s governance policies and arrangements set out the respective roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of governing body members and senior officers, and the governing body exercises overall responsibility and control of the strategic leadership of the RSL
- 1.4 All governing body members accept collective responsibility for their decisions.
- 1.6 Each governing body member always acts in the best interests of the RSL and its tenants and service users, and does not place any personal or other interest ahead of their primary duty to the RSL
- 1.5 All governing body members and senior officers understand their respective roles, and working relationships are constructive, professional and effective.

### **Standard 2 - The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.**

- 2.5 The RSL is open, co-operative, and engages effectively with all its regulators and funders, notifying them of anything that may affect its ability to fulfil its obligations. It informs the Scottish

Housing Regulator about any significant events such as a major issue, event or change as set out and required in notifiable events guidance.

**Standard 3 - The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being, while maintaining rents at a level that tenants can afford to pay.**

- 3.3 The RSL has a robust business planning and control framework and effective systems to monitor and accurately report delivery of its plans. Risks to the delivery of financial plans are identified and managed effectively. The RSL considers sufficiently the financial implications of risks to the delivery of plans.
- 3.4 The governing body ensures financial forecasts are based on appropriate and reasonable assumptions and information, including information about what tenants can afford to pay and feedback from consultation with tenants on rent increases.

**Standard 4 The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.**

- 4.1 The governing body ensures it receives good quality information and advice from staff and, where necessary, expert independent advisers, which is timely and appropriate to its strategic role and decisions. The governing body is able to evidence any of its decisions.
- 4.2 The governing body challenges and holds the senior officer to account for their performance in achieving the RSL's purpose and objectives

**Standard 5 - The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.**

- 5.5 The governing body is responsible for the management, support, remuneration and appraisal of the RSL's senior officer and obtains independent, professional advice on matters where it would be inappropriate for the senior officer to provide advice.
- 5.6 There are clear procedures for employees and governing body members to raise concerns or whistleblow if they believe there has been fraud, corruption or other wrongdoing within the RSL.
- 5.7 Severance payments are only made in accordance with a clear policy which is approved by the governing body, is consistently applied and is in accordance with contractual obligations. Such payments are monitored by the governing body to ensure the payment represents value for money. The RSL has considered alternatives to severance, including redeployment.
- 5.8 Where a severance payment is accompanied by a settlement agreement the RSL does not use this to limit public accountability or whistleblowing. The RSL has taken professional legal advice before entering into a settlement agreement

**Standard 6 The governing body and senior officers have the skills and knowledge they need to be effective.**

- 6.1 The RSL has a formal, rigorous and transparent process for the election, appointment and recruitment of governing body members. The RSL formally and actively plans to ensure orderly succession to governing body places to maintain an appropriate and effective composition of governing body members and to ensure sustainability of the governing body
- 6.2 The governing body annually assesses the skills, knowledge, diversity and objectivity it needs to provide capable leadership, control and constructive challenge to achieve the RSL's purpose, deliver good tenant outcomes, and manage its affairs. It assesses the contribution of continuing governing body members, and what gaps there are that need to be filled.
- 6.7 The governing body is satisfied that the senior officer has the necessary skills and knowledge to do his/her job. The governing body sets the senior officer's objectives, oversees performance, ensures annual performance appraisal, and requires continuous professional development.

## Next steps

An improvement plan is in place with actions to address these weaknesses. This plan is being further developed to include timescales, actions, and evidence of improvement (where available).

We are assured that we are working towards having appropriate systems in place for the collection and the use of equalities data and human rights. We are assured that we are working towards using this data to take account of equality and human rights issues in our decisions, policy making and day-to-day service delivery.

As Chair, I was authorised by the Management Committee at a meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 to sign and submit this Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.



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Chairperson

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