

Lochaber Housing Association – HAL151

Assurance Statement 2021

In considering our compliance with our legal and regulatory requirements in 2021, we have taken account of the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and consequent business, economic and social disruption. We have complied and continue to comply fully with any temporary changes to legislation and continue to follow national and local policy and requirements including in respect of health and safety, physical distancing, use of PPE, application of Test and Protect requirements and indoor gatherings. Where services had been temporarily suspended these recommenced as soon as restrictions were lifted, and it was safe to do so

We are confident that the measures put in place and the contingency planning which we have implemented have ensured that we are able to continue to meet our responsibilities to our tenants, service users, regulators and funders. Previously, where we have had to adopt temporary revised standards of service delivery, we have communicated changes clearly to our tenants and maintained the necessary records.

Our Business Plan was subject to a comprehensive review by the Board in March and reflects current regulatory guidance. We will take account of updated regulatory advice as we monitor and review our Business Plan.

The Association have enhanced IT arrangements which have further supported the Board of Lochaber Housing Association allowing us to confirm that we have reviewed and assessed a comprehensive bank of evidence to support this Statement and that we have gained the necessary assurance that we require to confirm that Lochaber Housing Association complies with the Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management and the requirements of Chapter three of the Regulatory Framework (2019).

The evidence which supports this Statement includes:

- Reports about performance in key areas including finance, service delivery, asset management, development, and risk
- Key governance documents including Board and Audit & Governance Committee papers and Minutes
- Internal and External Audit Reports
- Advice from external and specialist advisers
- Reports from our Agents and our subsidiaries
- Our “Your Voice” tenant group
- Benchmarking Information
- Reports, advice, and information from senior staff

The Board has been actively involved in the development and assessment of the evidence bank which brings together information which the Board monitors and oversees on an ongoing basis throughout the year. We are satisfied that Lochaber Housing Association has effective measures in place to provide the Board with the information it needs to be assured of continuous compliance and to enable us to identify any changes to our compliance to make the necessary notifications to the SHR.

We have reviewed the identified actions in the improvement plan and are satisfied that all are intended to deliver effective improvements to enhance our current arrangements and that none are material to our current compliance with the Regulatory Framework.

In reviewing our compliance with the Regulatory Framework, we are assured that we are working towards having appropriate systems in place for the collection of equalities data. 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.

In reviewing the evidence and assessing compliance, we have taken account of good practice advice and we have obtained external support from consultant Linda Ewart which has provided us with additional assurance that our approach is effective and robust.

We confirm that this Assurance Statement is being published on our website on the same date that it is submitted to the SHR.

As Chair, I was authorised by the Board at a meeting held on 13th October 2021 to sign and submit this Assurance Statement to the Scottish housing Regulator which confirms that Lochaber Housing Association is compliant with the requirements of the Regulatory Framework 2019

_____ (Chairperson) 13th October 2021