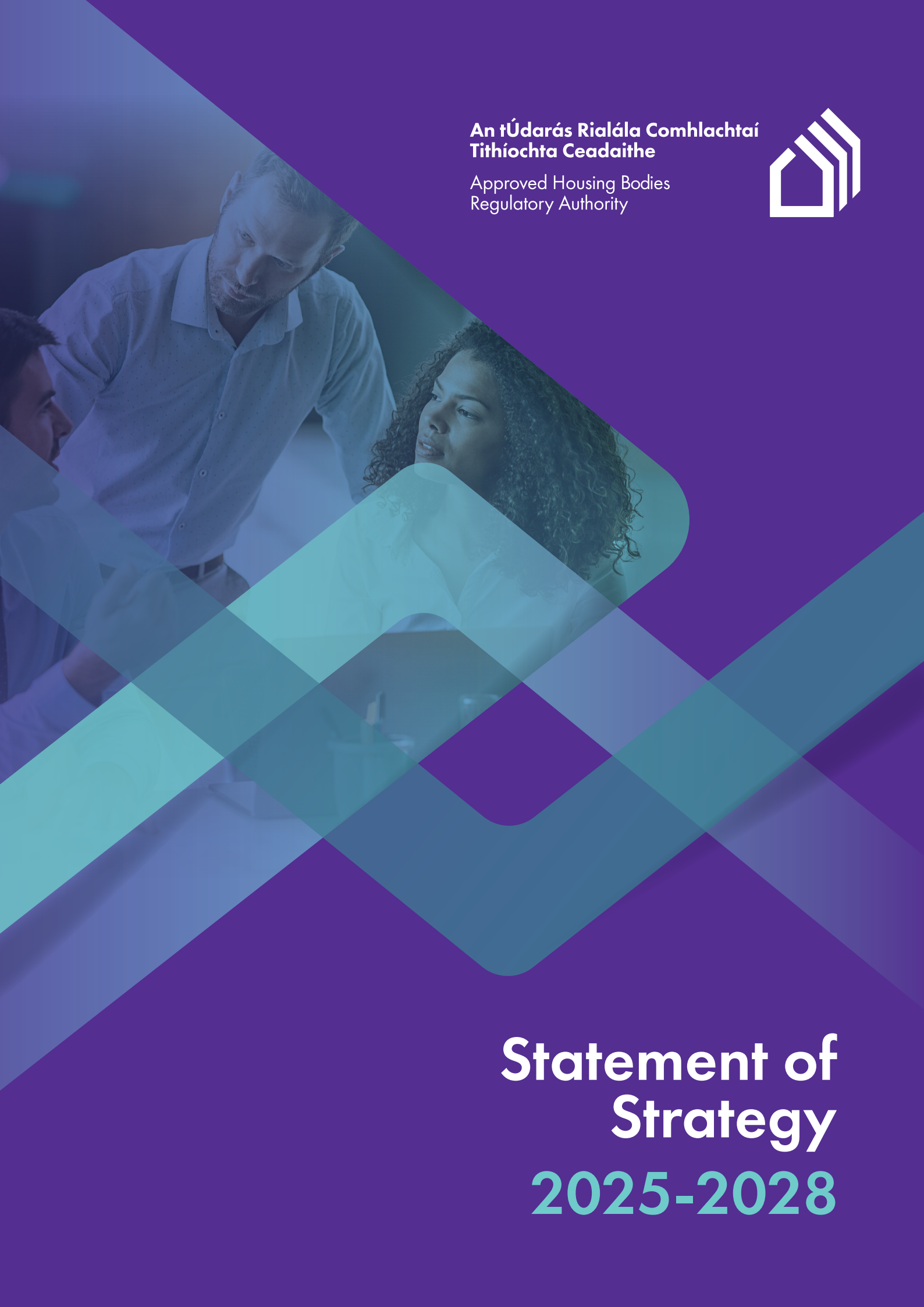


**An tÚdarás Rialála Comhlachtaí
Tithíochta Ceadaithe**

Approved Housing Bodies
Regulatory Authority



Statement of Strategy 2025-2028



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Foreword

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present AHBRA's Strategy Statement for the period 2025 to 2028. The Strategy Statement sets out AHBRA's Vision, Mission and Values, together with its overall goals and anticipated outcomes.

The document marks our second strategic planning cycle and builds upon the solid foundation laid during our initial phase. Over the past three years, we have successfully established the structures and processes essential for our operations. As a result, AHBRA is well placed to continue evolving its risk-based approach to regulation.

Over the next three years, AHBRA will work to enhance the regulatory framework, strengthen engagement with stakeholders, and leverage technology and innovation to improve operational effectiveness.

Delivering a significant programme of effective regulatory outcomes will be the core priority in the next strategic cycle. It is important that AHBRA is positioned to navigate policy or legislative changes impacting the AHB sector. AHBRA will strive to be agile and responsive to ensure the effective implementation of its mandate.

In common with other public sector organisations, we must prioritise the use of our resources, focusing on the key opportunities to apply best practices across our operations. As part of the stakeholder engagement programme, AHBRA will actively seek opportunities to extend cooperation with other regulators, thereby contributing to optimising the use of the State's resources. Similarly, AHBRA expects to continue improving processes, embracing innovation and deploying technology with the aim of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness.

We wish to thank our staff and key stakeholders who participated in the stakeholder consultation programme which supported the development of AHBRA's Statement of

Strategy. Their insights and feedback have been invaluable in shaping AHBRA's strategic approach, and we will continue to engage with them actively as we implement our initiatives.

The AHBRA Board and Executive look forward to working with AHBs, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and key stakeholders to deliver on our strategic goals and contributing to a well-regulated AHB sector.



Eddie Lewis,
Chairperson
AHBRA

1.

About AHBRA

AHBRA was established on 1st February 2021 as an independent body, charged with the regulation of Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs).

The key functions of AHBRA as set out in the legislation¹ are to:



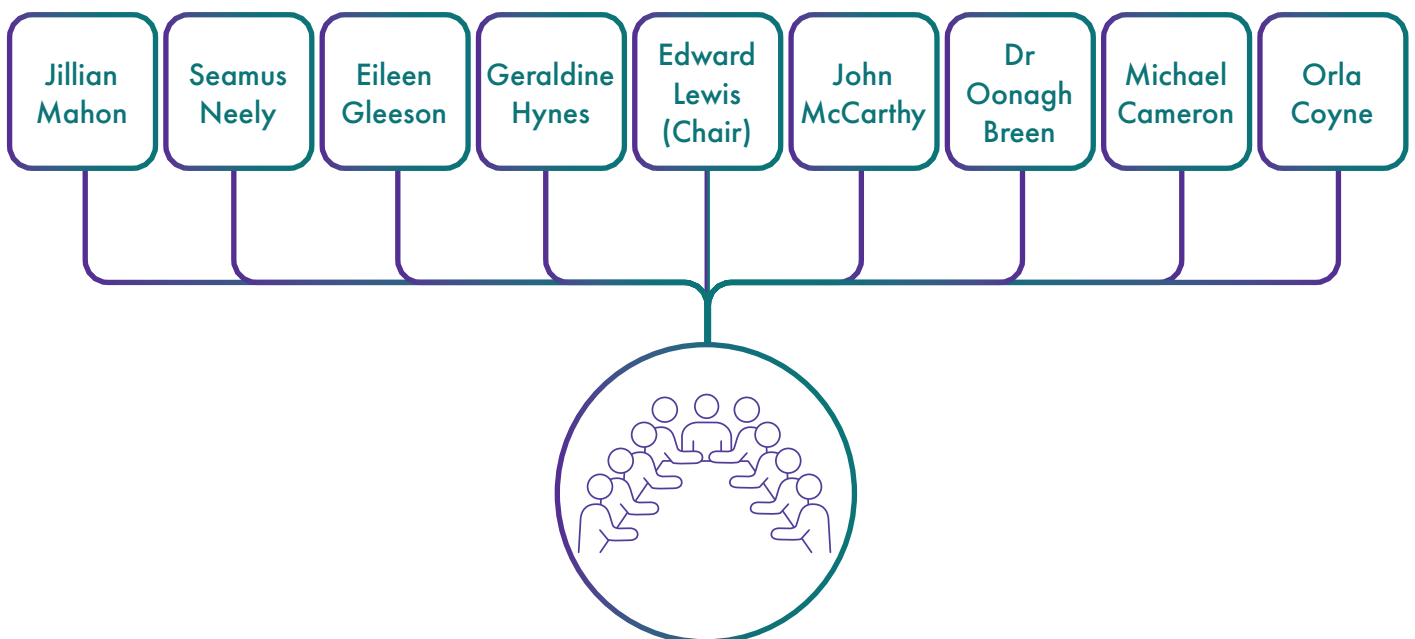
¹ See Section 9 of the Housing (Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies) Act 2019 (the Act)

Our Organisation

The Board

The Board of AHBRA is responsible for setting the strategic direction of the organisation. It is currently comprised of nine members, with extensive expertise in housing, local authority matters, legal, finance, governance, operations and regulation.

The Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage appointed the following Board members for the period 11 February 2021 to 10 February 2026.



Governance

Our corporate governance arrangements are determined by our governing legislation and the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies. Additionally, our governance relationship with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage is overseen by a specific oversight agreement.

The Board is supported in its work by an Audit and Risk Committee and a Legal and Regulation Committee. The terms of reference of the sub-committees will remain under review by the Board over the lifetime of the strategic statement.

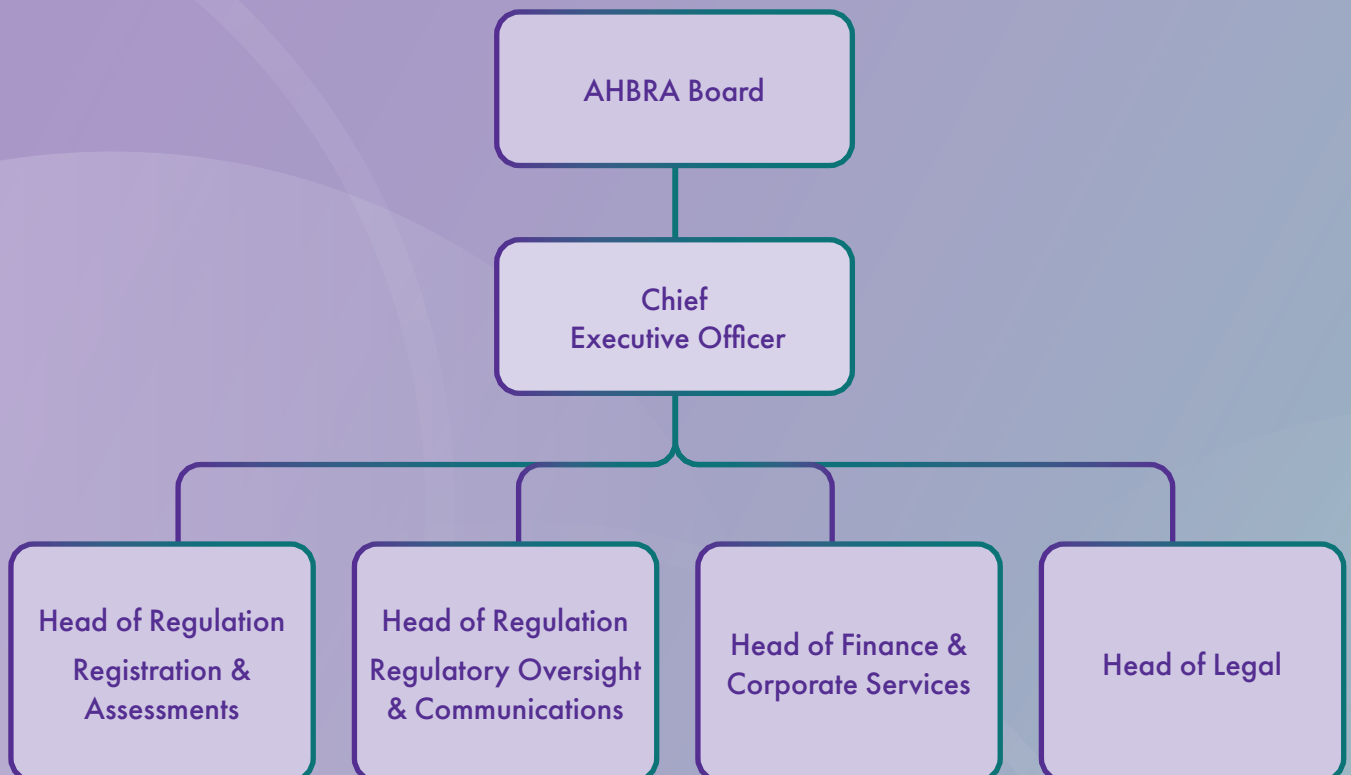
We will review our governance arrangements annually to ensure compliance with our statutory obligations and continuous adherence to best practice.

Organisational Structure

AHBRA is funded by the Exchequer through an annual allocation from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. The Chief Executive is responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the Regulator.

The current level of staffing is premised on substantial investment being made in information, communications and technology infrastructure over the life of this strategy statement. We will regularly review our staffing requirements to ensure they are properly aligned to our deliverables and objectives.

AHBRA organisational chart



2.

Vision, Mission and Values



Our Vision:

A well-regulated sector, where AHBs demonstrate compliance, thereby contributing to funder and tenant assurance and to the sustainability of public investment in social and affordable housing.



Our Mission:

Our mission is to protect homes provided by Approved Housing Bodies through the delivery of effective regulation.



Our Values:



We will operate with **integrity**, ensuring consistent adherence to our principles.



We will deliver **independent**, **proportionate** and **fair** regulatory oversight.



We will be **accountable** and **transparent** in our decision-making.



We will work with key stakeholders in a **co-operative** manner.



We will strive for **innovation** in our delivery of regulation.

3.

Strategy 2021-2024

Our 2021-2024 Statement of Strategy provided the key objectives to be achieved over the first three years of AHBRA's operation which saw the organisation progressively move to becoming fully operational.

Over the course of the last three years AHBRA has delivered on key objectives in line with its planned strategy. AHBRA has:

- 

Established the new organisation with a robust structure in line with the standards set for public sector bodies.
- 

Published the statutory Register of AHBs with 450 AHBs initially registered.
- 

Developed and published Standards for AHBs.
- 

Implemented a risk based regulatory framework, extending to the application of its investigation powers.
- 

Profiled the AHB sector and categorised AHBs according to size and activity.
- 

Systematised regulatory reporting through the Annual Monitoring Programme, achieving a 94% response rate.
- 

Initiated the Assessment Programme, following a pilot programme.
- 

Published accurate data and information on the AHB sector through detailed analysis reports.
- 

Launched a communication programme including the provision of guidance material, the conducting of webinars and public engagements and information sessions for AHBs.
- 

Established working arrangements with other regulators and signed its first Memorandum of Understanding.

4.

Context and Direction

This Statement of Strategy is prepared in accordance with Section 20 of the Housing (*Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies*) Act 2019. Its development has been informed by consultations internally with staff and externally with stakeholders.

The statement sets out measurable and attainable goals for the organisation and focuses on consolidating the achievements of AHBRA's early development phase. AHBRA will complete annual business plans outlining actions, milestones and performance indicators and will report annually, providing transparency for all stakeholders.

AHBRA's first Statement of Strategy guided the establishment of the State's regulatory authority with responsibility for the supervision of approved housing bodies (AHBs). AHBs perform important and diverse roles in communities all over the country. For the first time, their activities and the size of the sector in Ireland have been documented in AHBRA's Sectoral Analysis Report. Informed by its regulatory processes, it offers a comprehensive sector profile and categorises the AHBs, numbering in excess of 400, according to activity and size. The analysis indicates the breadth of activity and the ways in which AHBs serve the community. AHBRA recognises the need to be responsive to emerging developments and flexible in its ways of working, to keep pace with this dynamic sector.

In its first three years of operation, AHBRA has overseen the transition from a voluntary code to statutory regulation. The sector has responded positively to this change. AHBRA recognises that the majority of AHBs are compliant or endeavouring to become compliant with the regulatory standards. In the next three years, AHBRA will continue to refine its regulatory processes to encourage and support high levels of compliance among AHBs. Recognising the voluntary nature of some AHBs, AHBRA will endeavour to provide appropriate compliance guidance tailored to their needs.

Recently, the role played by AHBs in the wider housing system has evolved considerably. In response to housing policy, the sector has scaled to deliver housing at record levels across social and affordable tenures. AHBRA's 2025-2028 Statement of Strategy considers the broad context in which it operates. In the next strategic period, AHBRA will focus on areas of elevated risk, particularly financial risk, to ensure that the public investment in social and affordable housing is protected. Where required, AHBRA will use its enforcement powers. Themes emerging from AHBRA's investigations and concerns processes will inform its regulatory processes and guidance.

AHBRA's 2025-2028 Statement of Strategy is organised in four pillars setting out key priorities in the work required to continue evolving regulatory practice. AHBRA's approach will be risk based, taking account of the different types and sizes of AHBs to be regulated. The strategic framework provided by the Statement of Strategy will inform and guide activity, enabling AHBRA to adapt as required while maintaining a clear strategic focus.

The ability to attract and retain high-performing members of staff is a key enabler of AHBRA's strategy. AHBRA will prioritise learning and development across the staff team. AHBRA's values will inform the ongoing development of its culture and the organisation will refine its structures and systems to optimise delivery against the key strategic priorities.

Engagement with stakeholders has informed AHBRA's approach to date, and AHBRA intends to continue developing its communications with key stakeholders in the housing system and with other regulators. AHBRA has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Charities Regulatory Authority and expects to engage with other regulators to forge similar arrangements, where appropriate. AHBRA will seek to strengthen its systems and processes to enhance the user experience and will expand its range of publications, guidance notes and sector education activities over the course of the next three years.

Significant experiences and learnings have emerged during the first three years of operation. As a result, AHBRA is well placed to deepen its impact, building on the knowledge and stakeholder relationships developed over the past three years.

5.

AHBRA's Strategic Objectives

In the delivery of this Strategic Statement, we will aim to achieve the following four key strategic objectives:

1.

Contribute to the Resilience of the AHB Sector by Embedding Regulation.



2.

Promote Trust and Confidence in AHBRA through Stakeholder Engagement.



3.

Support Compliance and Efficiency by enhancing AHBRA's Operations.



4.

Develop AHBRA's Organisational Capacity within an Inclusive, Values-led Environment.





Evolve pathways through the regulatory, supervisory and enforcement programmes, deploying investigative and enforcement powers as required.



Pillar 1:

Contribute to the Resilience of the AHB Sector by Embedding Regulation

Building on the foundations established, AHBRA will continue to develop its overarching risk-based framework so that the regulatory programme is robust, consistent and clear.

Goals

Goal 1. Complete the implementation of a comprehensive registration process:

- Ensure that AHBs have clarity and guidance regarding all steps in the registration process.
- Develop guidance outlining the parameters of the cancellation arrangements.
- Publish accurate registration data.

Goal 2. Continue to embed the four standards, promoting best practice and a culture of compliance:

- Review guidance on each standard ensuring that AHBs have a clear understanding of the expected compliance, proportionate to the size and activity of the AHB.
- Update the assessment and compliance programme, as necessary to promote best practice and take account of sector developments.
- AHBRA will continually review its approach to non-compliance and communicate key trends.

Goal 3. Deepen the Risk Assessment Practices:

- Implement a holistic risk-informed programme to monitor AHBs, prioritising activity likely to incur elevated levels of risk.
- Continually update the risk measures to apply the learnings from AHBRA's regulatory processes.
- Develop a comprehensive risk scoring methodology.
- Examine data to identify risk trends and concentrations.

Goal 4. Embed the Regulatory Programme:

- Deploy registration data and insights from experience to inform regulatory practice.
- Continue the process of external evaluation of core regulatory elements to align with sector developments.
- Evolve pathways through the regulatory, supervisory and enforcement programmes.
- Continue refining and strengthening the core supervisory and regulatory frameworks in order that a single integrated regulatory regime is evident.

Goals

Goal 5. Refine and strengthen regulatory judgement:

- Leverage AHBRA's sectoral analysis and experience to continually refine the application of regulatory judgement in a fair and transparent manner.
- Adopt a dynamic approach to risk-based measures ensuring that they align with AHB sector roles and current activity.
- Apply measured regulatory judgement, to demonstrate that determinations are consistent, proportionate and objective.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- ✓ A proportionate, fair and transparent regulatory programme is in operation.
- ✓ Risk is assessed continuously and effectively.
- ✓ AHBRA maintains a consistent approach to compliance across the four standards.
- ✓ As a result of consistent application of regulatory tools, a transparent regulatory approach is evident.

Pillar 2:

Promote Trust and Confidence in AHBRA through Stakeholder Engagement

AHBRA will maintain appropriate levels of stakeholder engagement by expanding its programme to include targeted outreach and by building regulatory alignment.

Goals

Goal 1: Provide up to date information to stakeholders about the role of AHBRA and share insights and information about the AHB sector:

- Progress AHBRA's communications strategy to expand the ways AHBRA communicates its role.
- Strengthen and develop the range of insights and data about the AHB sector to inform policy makers and other key stakeholder groups.
- Investigate opportunities to develop and share statistical profiling of the sector using register data or other sources.
- Disseminate timely analyses of regulatory outcomes, where appropriate.

Goal 2: Expand AHBRA's engagement with key stakeholder groups:

- Support the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage to progress the updating of AHBRA's legislation.
- Increase engagement with key stakeholder organisations including specialist categories within the AHB sector.
- Implement a focused outreach programme to engage with key stakeholders in the housing system.
- Seek opportunities to participate in sector conferences and other relevant learning or professional development forums.

Goal 3: Extend regulatory cooperation:

- Investigate opportunities to align with other regulators in the sector to streamline reporting requirements for AHBs.
- Continue to work with other regulators to identify opportunities for cooperation to make best use of resources and regulatory oversight.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- ✓ The purpose and role of AHBRA is communicated clearly and accurately.
- ✓ AHBRA sustains constructive engagement with its key stakeholders.
- ✓ AHBRA is recognised as an authoritative source of accurate information about the sector.
- ✓ Resources are optimised through mutual collaboration with other regulatory bodies.

Pillar 3:

Support Compliance and Efficiency by Enhancing AHBRA's Operations

AHBRA will seek opportunities to develop its systems and processes to increase productivity.

Goals

Goal 1: Monitor and improve the user experience:

- Measure satisfaction in regard to the execution of AHBRA's processes.
- Improve interfaces to facilitate AHBs to conduct their business more efficiently.
- Monitor processes at each level of the Regulatory Framework with a focus on streamlining operations.
- Explore relevant technological solutions to deliver an effective and efficient registration process.

Goal 2: Ensure timely communication of policy or practice changes and other regulatory developments to AHBs:

- Regularly update guidance notes and other educational materials to support AHBs to keep up to date with changes, revised guidelines and trends in the application of standards and compliance practices.
- Expand the range of case studies, sector reviews and reports to provide AHBs and other stakeholders with evidence-based materials indicating how the regulatory practice is evolving.
- Ensure that materials setting out the obligations of AHBs are accessible and available in a range of formats.

Goal 3: Increase effectiveness by leveraging technology, where possible:

- Develop innovative and flexible ways of working by implementing a longer-term ICT strategy.
- Consider the introduction of automated processes to offer faster turnaround times for routine operations.
- Develop creative and flexible ways of working by investing in technology and professional expertise.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- ✓ AHBs are supported to keep up to date with changes in AHBRA's practices and have access to relevant education materials.
- ✓ The user experience is enhanced for AHBs in transacting their business with AHBRA.
- ✓ Resources are deployed efficiently, and technological solutions are employed appropriately to deliver value for money.

Pillar 4:

Develop AHBRA's Organisational Capacity within an Inclusive, Values-led Environment

Deploy AHBRA's skills and resources to execute its functions and to retain the trust and confidence of its stakeholders.

Goals

Goal 1: Design and implement a resilient organisation model that will deliver the AHBRA Purpose:

- Conduct an organisational review to ensure that AHBRA deploys its resources intelligently to maximise impact.
- Ensure that structures and systems are aligned with statutory functions and strategic intent.
- Provide fulfilling career paths and flexible structures so that AHBRA is positioned to attract and retain committed employees.

Goal 2: Align resources with key regulatory and organisational priorities:

- Prepare annual business plans, aligned with strategy and focused on the key priorities emerging from AHBRA's sectoral analysis, risk profiling and sector knowledge.
- Develop a learning and development strategy reflecting the professional and leadership development needs of the organisation.
- Support the implementation of technology solutions with training so that staff are empowered to deliver the benefits.

Goal 3: Increase organisational agility:

- Investigate flexible resourcing policies and practices to enable AHBRA to access specialist expertise as required.
- Continue to embed AHBRA's Values in the organisation, reflecting the Regulator's independence and societal role.
- Refresh and expand the internal communications programme to promote employee engagement and ensure that staff are supported to maintain awareness of AHBRA's performance outcomes and impact.

Goal 4: Demonstrate and promote adherence to all applicable legislation and governance codes:

- Ensure compliance with all relevant legislation and governance standards, including data protection laws, freedom of information regulations, public sector equality and human rights duties, health and safety legislation, public financial procedures, public procurement law, protected disclosures, ethics in public office, and environmental legislation, through robust compliance frameworks and continuous staff training programmes.
- Seek opportunities to embed environmental sustainability into AHBRA's operations and decision-making in delivery of its mandate.
- Build on AHBRA's progressive approach to adopting emerging environmental, social and governance codes to align with best practice.

Anticipated Outcomes:

- ✓ AHBRA directs resources towards the most significant priorities, to operationalise a risk based regulatory approach.
- ✓ AHBRA can provide career opportunities within a positive values-led culture attracting and retaining skilled and motivated people.
- ✓ The skills and resources of AHBRA have been expanded in ways that are intelligent and cost-effective, utilising technology.
- ✓ AHBRA demonstrates high standards of compliance.

6.

Implementing our Strategy

To ensure the effectiveness of this strategy statement, AHBRA will employ a comprehensive and systematic approach that encompasses both qualitative and quantitative measures. The assessment will be structured around the following key components:

Annual Reporting

Publication of an Annual Report, in line with our legislative remit, detailing our progress against the objectives set in this strategy statement.

Performance Delivery Agreement

A performance delivery agreement is in place between AHBRA and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage which includes processes for monitoring performance.

Business Plans

We will produce annual business plans aligned to these strategic objectives. The business plans will identify the risks and opportunities facing AHBRA and reflect the risk appetite of our Board as it evolves over the course of this strategy statement.

Stakeholder Feedback

Regular engagement with our stakeholders is crucial for assessing the effectiveness of our strategy. We will implement mechanisms to gather feedback from AHBs, key stakeholders, and the public.

Risk Management

We will integrate risk management practices into our regulatory framework to identify and mitigate potential obstacles to achieving our strategic objectives. These will include:

- Regular risk assessments.
- Implementation of risk mitigation strategies.
- Continuous monitoring and adjustment of risk management plans.

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