1. The Commission’s view was that the general principals of the Bill appear to be sufficiently broad to enable measurable improvements in records management across the public sector. Whilst there was an obligation placed on public bodies to conduct audits of records to ease the processes of implementing the requirements of Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 the Bill provides a more formalised approach to record keeping.

2. The Policy Memorandum which accompanied the Bill provided useful background information about the rationale for the perceived requirement to introduce the proposed legislation, the results of the preliminary public consultations and the views of some of the organisations who were involved with this process.

3. The Commission’s view is that the main costs involved in the initial setting up and thereafter running costs associated with an effective records management regime appear to have been detailed within the Financial Memorandum. However, the Commission does not have sufficient detail about the link between the proposed functions and activities and the level of activities to comment in detail about the individual cost areas as these will vary significantly throughout the public sector organisations detailed within the Schedule to the Bill.

4. From the Commission’s perspective the primary cost will be administrative time to compile the Record Management Plan (RMP) for submission to the Keeper of Records, to ensure that the provisions detailed within the RMP are reviewed and to provide assistance with any compliance reviews which are deemed necessary by the Keeper. The Commission will be required to meet these costs from its current and future budgets.

5. However, Scottish Parliament should be mindful that the cost of compliance with the requirements of this Bill need to be very finely balanced with the requirement to continue to force down current and future expenditure costs.

6. The Commission has no comment to make about the consultation carried out by Scottish Government prior to the introduction of the Bill.

26 November 2010