1. Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?
No detailed analysis or presentation regarding the financial assumptions has been made to date, other than to reflect that additional costs on Local Government arising from the Bill would require to be fully funded.

2. If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?
Per the above comment, there remains a significant degree of uncertainty around the financial impact of the legislation, and as such it remains uncertain whether full funding is being proposed.

3. Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?
Yes.

4. If the Bill has any financial implications for your organisation, do you believe that they have been accurately reflected in the FM? If not, please provide details.
The costed areas do appear reasonable however, there remains a significant degree of uncertainty around the financial impact of the legislation, particularly in relation to uptake / volumes.

5. Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?
The costed areas do appear reasonable however, there remains a significant degree of uncertainty around the financial impact of the legislation, particularly in relation to uptake / volumes.

6. If applicable, are you content that your organisation can meet any financial costs that it might incur as a result of the Bill? If not, how do you think these costs should be met?
The costed areas do appear reasonable however, there remains a significant degree of uncertainty around the financial impact of the legislation, particularly in relation to uptake / volumes. The Council would be able to absorb elements of the costs as part of normal business (eg additional GME parental requests), but would wish to note that there remains the potential for significant additional costs should uptake in certain areas be higher than anticipated. The Council would be unable to absorb these costs and would require Scottish Government funding to support delivery.

7. Does the FM accurately reflect the margins of uncertainty associated with the Bill’s estimated costs and with the timescales over which they would be expected to arise?
As noted above, there remains a significant degree of uncertainty around the financial impact of the legislation, particularly in relation to uptake / volumes. While this is acknowledged in the FM, there is a higher than normal degree of uncertainty associated with this Bill.

8. Do you believe that the FM reasonably captures any costs associated with the Bill? If not, which other costs might be incurred and by whom?
Yes, it is believed that the main cost headings for the Council have been identified.

9. Do you believe that there may be future costs associated with the Bill, for example through subordinate legislation? If so, is it possible to quantify these costs?
This is currently unknown, although clearly if additional future costs were to become apparent then the Council would wish to seek assurance that the Scottish Government will provide an appropriate level of funding.

It is important to note that close review and scrutiny will be required to ensure costs associated with delivering the Bill are identified and Councils properly funded in line with this.