Consultation

*Did you take part in any consultation exercise preceding the Bill and, if so, did you comment on the financial assumptions made?*

1. Yes, South Lanarkshire Council responded to the Scottish Government on the consultation exercise preceding the Bill in January 2014 with comment on the financial implications made.

*If applicable, do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the FM?*

2. No. Although the FM acknowledges that actions arising from the development of the strategy and dialogue with stakeholders will give rise to additional activity or costs with reference to child victims of trafficking, these are not known and cannot be estimated at this time. A key point of the Bill is to increase awareness and identification of victims more widely. This will have associated implications for local authorities and further work is required to cost these implications across the board.

*Did you have sufficient time to contribute to the consultation exercise?*

3. Yes.

Costs

*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.*

4. No. The FM highlights that the proposed Bill would not appear to have direct financial implications for local authorities. However, it is well known that many cases of trafficking appear to be going undetected and if, as it is hoped, the proposed legislation leads to further awareness and therefore detection, there should be a resultant increase in identification of victims and therefore a requirement for additional resources and support within local authorities. The impact is expected to be specifically in Social Work but potentially also in other areas such as Housing and Education. In addition, any increase in detection of offenders will lead to a resultant increase in resources being required in the criminal justice field to deal with offenders.

*Do you consider that the estimated costs and savings set out in the FM are reasonable and accurate?*
5. No. The majority of the FM outlines that there will be no new costs falling on local authorities as a consequence of the Bill. However, the Council cannot support this view as with reference to child victims of trafficking, costs are not known and cannot be estimated at this time. Further work is required to cost the implications of this and until such time it cannot be said whether they are reasonable and accurate.

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?

6. No. It is anticipated that there will be a requirement for additional resources and support within local authorities, specifically in Social Work but potentially also in other areas such as Housing and Education. In addition, any increase in detection of offenders will lead to a resultant increase in resources being required in the criminal justice field to deal with offenders. If the cost of these implications turns out to be significant then they cannot be met by the Council. An allocation from Scottish Government would be required.

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?

7. No. The majority of the FM outlines that that there will be no new costs falling on local authorities as a consequence of the Bill. It acknowledges, with reference to child victims of trafficking, that costs are not known and cannot be estimated at this time. The margins of certainty have therefore been reflected however further work is required to cost the implications of a resultant increase in victims being identified.

Wider Issues
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?

8. No. The FM highlights that the proposed Bill would not appear to have direct financial implications for local authorities. A resultant increase in victims being identified would require additional resources and support within local authorities, specifically in Social Work but potentially also in other areas such as Housing and Education. In addition, any increase in detection of offenders will lead to a resultant increase in resources being required in the criminal justice field to deal with offenders.

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?

9. It is not possible to quantify any further costs on local authorities at this stage.