FINANCE COMMITTEE
FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL
SUBMISSION FROM DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COUNCIL

General

What is your general view on the purpose of the Bill and broadly, are you supportive of it?
1. Dumfries and Galloway Council is broadly supportive of the Bill and its purpose to strengthen openness and transparency in the public sector by the disclosing of appropriate information.

Did you take part in the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Bill and how have your views been reflected?
2. The Council did take part in the consultation on the Bill and our views have been accurately reflected.

The Scottish Government believes the Bill will add strength and clarity to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002. Do you agree? Does the Bill protect the rights to access information?
3. The Council is in agreement with the principle that clarity will be added with the amendments that have been proposed.

Royal exemption

In response to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Bill, concerns were expressed about the Royal exemption provision (Bill section 1). What is your response to the position of the Scottish Government to these concerns?
4. The Council is comfortable that the Royal exemption has been clarified and will still include the extended members of the Royal Family.

Historical periods

In response to the Scottish Government’s consultation on the Bill, concerns were expressed about reducing the time limit period (in certain circumstances) of what constitutes a historical record (Bill section 4). What is your response to the position of the Scottish Government to these concerns?
5. The position requires to be determined by the type of information that is deemed historical, however in general terms the Council would support the position of the Scottish Government.

Financial aspects

The Scottish Government considers the technical changes brought by the Bill will have no financial implications for the Scottish Administration, local authorities, other bodies, individuals or businesses. What is your response to this?
6. The Council appreciates that there may be some minor extra work involved with the proposed amendments, but this should not have an adverse effect on the process which are already in place.

Do you believe your comments on the financial assumptions have been accurately reflected in the Financial Memorandum?

7. Yes.