

**The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011**

**Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board**

**Progress Update Review (PUR) Report by the PRSA Assessment Team**

**21<sup>st</sup> April 2023**

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## 1. Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011

The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 20 April 2011. It is the first new public records legislation in Scotland since 1937 and came into force on 1 January 2013. Its primary aim is to promote efficient and accountable record keeping by named Scottish public authorities.

The Act has its origins in *The Historical Abuse Systemic Review: Residential Schools and Children's Homes in Scotland 1950-1995* (The Shaw Report) published in 2007. The Shaw Report recorded how its investigations were hampered by poor recordkeeping and found that thousands of records had been created, but were then lost due to an inadequate legislative framework and poor records management. Crucially, it demonstrated how former residents of children's homes were denied access to information about their formative years. The Shaw Report demonstrated that management of records in all formats (paper and electronic) is not just a bureaucratic process, but central to good governance and should not be ignored. A follow-up review of public records legislation by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) found further evidence of poor records management across the public sector. This resulted in the passage of the Act by the Scottish Parliament in March 2011.

The Act requires a named authority to prepare and implement a records management plan (RMP) which must set out proper arrangements for the management of its records. A plan must clearly describe the way the authority cares for the records that it creates, in any format, whilst carrying out its business activities. The RMP must be agreed with the Keeper and regularly reviewed.

## 2. Progress Update Review (PUR) Mechanism

Under section 5(1) & (2) of the Act the Keeper may only require a review of an authority's agreed RMP to be undertaken not earlier than five years after the date on which the authority's RMP was last agreed. Regardless of whether an authority has successfully achieved its goals identified in its RMP or continues to work towards them, the minimum period of five years before the Keeper can require a review of a RMP does not allow for continuous progress to be captured and recognised.

The success of the Act to date is attributable to a large degree to meaningful communication between the Keeper, the Assessment Team, and named public authorities. Consultation with Key Contacts has highlighted the desirability of a mechanism to facilitate regular, constructive dialogue between stakeholders and the Assessment Team. Many authorities have themselves recognised that such regular communication is necessary to keep their agreed plans up to date following inevitable organisational change. Following meetings between authorities and the Assessment Team, a reporting mechanism through which progress and local initiatives can be acknowledged and reviewed by the Assessment Team was proposed. Key Contacts have expressed the hope that through submission of regular updates, the momentum generated by the Act can continue to be sustained at all levels within authorities.

The PUR self-assessment review mechanism was developed in collaboration with stakeholders and was formally announced in the Keeper's Annual Report published on 12 August 2016. The completion of the PUR process enables authorities to be credited for the progress they are effecting and to receive constructive advice concerning on-going developments. Engaging with this mechanism will not only maintain the spirit of the Act by encouraging senior management to recognise the need for good records management practices, but will also help authorities comply with their statutory obligation under section 5(1)(a) of the Act to keep their RMP under review.

## 3. Executive Summary

This Report sets out the findings of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 (the Act) Assessment Team's consideration of the Progress Update template submitted for Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board. The outcome of the assessment and relevant feedback can be found under sections 6 – 8.

#### 4. Authority Background

The Scottish Borders is one of 32 council areas of Scotland. It borders Dumfries and Galloway, East Lothian, Midlothian, South Lanarkshire, West Lothian and, to the south and east, Northumberland in England. The administrative centre of the area is Newtown St Boswells.

<https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/site/>

The Scottish Borders Licensing Board (“the Board”) is the Licensing Authority for the Scottish Borders Local Government Area for the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005 as amended by the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 & Alcohol(Scotland) Act 2010.

[https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/491/licensing\\_board](https://www.scotborders.gov.uk/info/20025/licensing/491/licensing_board)

#### 5. Assessment Process

A PUR submission is evaluated by the Act’s Assessment Team. The self-assessment process invites authorities to complete a template and send it to the Assessment Team one year after the date of agreement of its RMP and every year thereafter. The self-assessment template highlights where an authority’s plan achieved agreement on an improvement basis and invites updates under those ‘Amber’ elements. However, it also provides an opportunity for authorities not simply to report on progress against improvements, but to comment on any new initiatives, highlight innovations, or record changes to existing arrangements under those elements that had attracted an initial ‘Green’ score in their original RMP submission.

The assessment report considers statements made by an authority under the elements of its agreed Plan that included improvement models. It reflects any changes and/or progress made towards achieving full compliance in those areas where agreement under improvement was made in the Keeper’s Assessment Report of their RMP. The PUR assessment report also considers statements of further progress made in elements already compliant under the Act.

Engagement with the PUR mechanism for assessment cannot alter the Keeper’s Assessment Report of an authority’s agreed RMP or any RAG assessment within it. Instead the PUR Final Report records the Assessment Team’s evaluation of the submission and its opinion on the progress being made by the authority since agreeing its RMP. The team’s assessment provides an informal indication of what marking an authority could expect should it submit a revised RMP to the Keeper under the Act, although such assessment is made without prejudice to the Keeper’s right to adopt a different marking at that stage.

#### Key:

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| <b>G</b> | The Assessment Team agrees this element of an authority’s plan. | <b>A</b> | The Assessment Team agrees this element of an authority’s progress update submission as an ‘improvement model’. This means that they are convinced of the authority’s commitment to closing a gap in provision. They will request that they are updated as work on this element progresses. | <b>R</b> | There is a serious gap in provision for this element with no clear explanation of how this will be addressed. The Assessment Team may choose to notify the Keeper on this basis. |
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## 6. Progress Update Review (PUR) Template: Scottish Borders Council and Licensing Board

| Element                    | Status of elements under agreed Plan 25OCT17 | Progress status 19APR22 | Progress status 21APR23 | Keeper's Report Comments on Authority's Plan 25OCT17   | Self-assessment Update 31JAN22  | Progress Review Comment 19APR22   | Self-assessment Update as submitted by the Authority since 19APR22  | Progress Review Comment 21APR23  |
|----------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|---|---|--|
| 1. Senior Officer          | G  | G                       | G                       | Update required on any change.   | The responsible officer has changed. The Council's Chief Executive Tracey Logan left early 2021 and was replaced by Netta Meadows.  | The Assessment Team thanks you for this update which has been noted.  | The responsible officer has changed. David Robertson is Acting Chief Executive. His email address is: David.Robertson@scotborders.gov.uk            | The Assessment Team thanks you for this update which has been noted.   |
| 2. Records Manager         | G  | G                       | G                       | <p>N.B. The Keeper understands that, since the <i>Plan</i> was submitted for his agreement, Teresa Maley has left Scottish Borders Council. As stated in the Keeper's guidance to his <i>Model Plan</i>, a change of personnel does not invalidate the <i>Plan</i>.</p> <p>On this issue the Council have now stated: "Jaimie Taylor has been appointed as the interim Information Manager to lead a project focussed on the GDPR. However, this role will not assume all duties previously undertaken by Ms Maley and responsibility for these duties will sit with the Chief Legal Officer, Nuala McKinlay (see element 1) with assistance from the Interim Manager and Information Officers."</p> <p>An update is required on any change.</p> | There is no update.   | Update required on any change.  | The Chief Legal Officer and SIRO is still Nuala McKinlay. Jenna Waldie was appointed Information Manager in November 2020.                          | <p>Thank you for this update; it has been noted.</p> <p>Update required on any future change.</p>  |
| 3. Policy                  | G  | G                       | G                       | Update required on any change.   | <p>The Records Management Policy, Disposal of Records Policy and Disposal of Confidential Waste Management Policy was reviewed in 2021 and consolidated into one. This Policy has been approved by the Information Governance Group and will soon be available for staff to view on the Intranet.</p> <p>Other Policies are being refreshed/revisited to ensure they are still appropriate.</p> | The Assessment Team thanks the authority for this update on Records Management Policy review, and the consolidation of relevant policies into a single Policy. The Team encourages Scottish Borders Council and Licensing Board to continue regularly reviewing and updating policies on records management as appropriate. | The revised consolidated Policy is now published on the Council's intranet. Steps will be taken to ensure a copy is also published on the internet. | <p>The Assessment thanks you for this positive update which has been noted. It is good to hear that the consolidated policy document is also published, both internally and externally.</p> <p>Update required on any future change.</p> |
| 4. Business Classification | A  | A                       | A                       | <b>The Plan states (page 8): "Scottish Borders Council has not yet adopted a global business classification scheme for records because of the diversity of systems deployed in services. Most</b>  | After recent discussion with the Council's IT Client Manager it has been determined that business   | The Assessment Team understand that Scottish Borders Council have adopted SCARRS, and have chosen to reflect the authority's business classification  | Business Classification is recorded within the Council's Information Asset Register (IAR). The IAR is a working progress however this does capture  | <p>Thank you for this update.</p> <p>Element 4 expects that records are known and</p>  |

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|                       |   |   |   | <p>service systems have a local business classification or file plan. The Council ... will be moving shared drives to Office 365 from 2017." And goes on "The move to Office 365 presents an opportunity to assist services in using business classification to structure their information and promote use of the retention schedules more consistently than it has in the past." The Keeper agrees this improvement principle.</p> <p>The Keeper agrees this element of Scottish Borders Council and Scottish Borders Licensing Board's <i>Records Management Plan</i> under 'improvement model' terms. This is in acknowledgement that the authority is in the process of 'embedding' <i>Information Asset Register</i> (see above) and populating the <i>Business Classification Scheme</i> throughout the organisation. He is convinced of the commitment to complete this work, however his agreement is conditional on his being updated as the project progresses.</p> | <p>classification does not form part of the O365 project.</p> <p>Business classification is not a widely known term in Scottish Borders Council and can be confused with security classification i.e. Official-Sensitive. Scottish Borders Council has adopted the Scottish Council on Archives Records Retention Schedules (SCARRS) and business classification.</p> <p>Business classification is captured in our Information Asset Register, benefits of a business classification scheme will be included in our Information Asset Register and guidance review. It will also be included in our revised mandatory Information Management online training module to help raise awareness and understanding.</p> <p>Although business classification does not form part of the O365 project active consideration will be given to any new processes and or systems we are adopting.</p> | <p>within their Information Asset Register. It is welcome to hear that Scottish Borders are providing training on their IAR and business classification to support and inform staff.</p> <p>In practical terms, the implementation of O365 will affect how and where records are created, managed, and stored across the suite of Microsoft applications. Scottish Borders Council are clearly aware of this, and have indicated that they are carefully considering the effect that the O365 migration on their RM systems and processes.</p> <p>The Team commend the authority for the progress made against Element 4. The Element remains Amber while work continues.</p>  | <p>electronic and physical records and captures what assets contain personal data.</p> <p>There is also a section on the Council's Information Management mandatory training course on Business Classification. For awareness this training was revised in June 2022.</p> | <p>identified within a structure, ideally founded on function. An up-to-date and complete Information Asset Register, without a separate Business Classification Scheme, can fulfil this function.</p> <p>The Team acknowledges that the Information Asset Register remains work in progress, but that progress has been made and continues to be made. It is also reassuring to hear that training on Business Classification is provided to staff as part of mandatory Information Management training.</p> <p>This Element remains at Amber while the work on IAR continues.</p> |
| 5. Retention Schedule | G | G | G | <p>Update required on any change.</p>  | <p>Further to our last update the O365 project has paused. A pilot was undertaken in January 2021 however this was unsuccessful due to the migration of certain file types i.e. Access Databases.</p> <p>Although retention policies for O365 has been agreed these have not been 'switched on'.</p> <p>O365 is recognised as a significant enabler for allowing the Council to transform how we use and manage data. Relevant meetings with Management are scheduled to discuss resource for a Project Manager to drive this project forward.</p>   | <p>The Assessment Team thanks the authority for this update on the implementation of records retention schedules on O365.</p> <p>It is positive that retention policies, as described by the authority in their previous self-assessment update have been allocated. However, the transition to O365 is likely to be a complex and time-consuming task for authorities, and the Assessment Team recognise that there will be teething problems along the way, as described by Scottish Borders Council in relation to their pilot.</p> <p>The Team are aware that authorities' business areas will be migrating to O365 incrementally. The authority clearly understand the changes O365 will bring and are currently discussing resourcing a Project Manager to</p> | <p>There is no update.</p>  | <p>Update required on any change.</p>   |

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|                             |   |   |   |  |  | support and drive forward the transition. This is positive to hear.<br><br>The Assessment Team would be grateful to hear updates on this piece of work in subsequent PURs.   |  |   |
| 6. Destruction Arrangements | A | A | A | <p><b>The Keeper agrees this element of the Council's records management plan under 'improvement model' terms. This means that the Authority has identified a gap in their records management provision (destruction of electronic records held on shared drives) and has put processes in place to close that gap. The Keeper's agreement would be conditional on his being updated as this project progresses.</b></p> | <p>In addition to the update provided under Element 5 for O365, improving structure of shared drives, access to information and carrying out housekeeping around retention is going to be required before all departments' transition to SharePoint.</p> <p>Separate to this a records management housekeeping communication will be issued to all schools in due course before the school curricular moves to one server. School staff will be asked to review their information. Progress will be monitored in terms of storage space. This will help drive records management improvements.</p> <p>With regard to physical destruction arrangements, Council Headquarters and some localities are in the process of preparing for staff to hot desk. As a result, this has meant staff have been required to have a major clear out of their physical records. A number of communications has been issued to staff and services given allocated time slot to go in to their office to appropriately destroy, scan or prepare for storing in physical form on or off-site. This piece of work has seen a reduced number of filing cabinets and physical records.</p> | <p>The authority are clearly making well-considered preparations regarding retention across the organisation in light of the upcoming move to SharePoint.</p> <p>The Assessment Team also welcome news that Scottish Borders Council are planning to ask staff at all schools to conduct a review of their information. Understanding of what information is held is vital and such an exercise will help to improve awareness of records management responsibilities, including, in regards to Element 6, ensuring that information is disposed of appropriately.</p> <p>Scottish Borders Council's move to hot-desking for staff in certain locations has led to a clear out of physical records. The Team are pleased to hear that Scottish Borders Council are providing accompanying guidance to staff on the proper retention and destruction of physical materials during this project and have confidence that the authority will continue to make appropriate arrangements relating to the management of their physical records across the wider organisation.</p> <p>The Element remains at Amber while work continues. The Assessment Team would be interested to hear updates on in subsequent PURs.</p> | <p>A major clear out of physical records has been undertaken since the pandemic. This has resulted in a number of files being securely destroyed.</p> <p>In addition, work began in 2022 to identify what physical records can be securely destroyed from the Council's off-site storage site with Iron Mountain.</p> <p>Retention and destruction is also being further considered in systems such as Mosaic, Uniform and IDOX.</p> | <p>Thank you for this update regarding paper records destruction, both at Scottish Borders Council premises and at long-term storage facility with Iron Mountain.</p> <p>It is good to hear that retention and destruction continues to be considered in the authority's line-of-business systems.</p> <p>In the next PUR, an update on the move to SharePoint and the gap identified in 2017 (destruction of electronic records held on shared drives) would be very welcome.</p> <p>The Element remains at Amber while work continues. The Assessment Team looks forward to being updated on progress in subsequent PURs.</p> |
| 7. Archiving and Transfer   | G | G | G | Update required on any change.   | There is no update.  | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change.   | There is no update.  | Update required on any future change.   |
| 8. Information Security     | G | G | G | Update required on any change.   | There is no update.  | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change.   | In 2022 the Council started using a 'third party assurance form' which is sent on to third party suppliers to complete and evidence to us what   | Thank you for this update on how Scottish Borders Council and Licensing Board continue to take both information   |

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|   |   |   |   |  |   |   | technical and organisational controls they have in place to protect information prior to purchasing/using. The Council's IT service is outsourced to CGI. Completed forms are reviewed by CGI and also helps inform data protection impact assessment where one is required.   | security and data protection matters into account in their dealings with potential third-party providers as well as internally. The Team also note that the Council's IT service is outsourced to CGI, and that there are robust mechanisms in place to ensure legal compliance.<br><br>Update required on any future change.  |
| 9. Data Protection                        | G | G | G | Update required on any change.   | There is no update.   | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change.  | Refer to element 8.  | See comments under Element 8. Update required on any change.   |
| 10. Business Continuity and Vital Records | G | G | G | Update required on any change.   | There is no update.   | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change.  | A Business Continuity Management System is an established part of the UK's preparations for managing risks faced by organisations, whether from internal system failures or external emergencies such as extreme weather, flooding, terrorism, or infectious diseases. As such, the Council's system holds Business Continuity Plans, which provide a clearly defined and documented policy, framework and operational direction to ensure that critical services continue to be delivered following an incident.<br><br>During the Covid19 pandemic SBC's approach to business continuity differed to allow responsive action to be quick & efficient, this involved direct conversations between Emergency Planning and services as well as in-house online surveys. As a result, the current BC system was not being updated and therefore the system now holds out of date information. A new system is currently being implemented. A data protection impact assessment has been undertaken and the Council is taking a number of steps to roll this out effectively. | The Assessment Team is grateful for this update. It seems that the Council was, and continues to be, prepared for an unexpected events with regard to Business Continuity Plans. It is also clear that the authority understands how essential well-maintained plans are.<br><br>It is also positive to hear about Scottish Borders Council and Licensing Board's response to the pandemic, and that a delayed software system implementation is currently taking place as a result of the pressures of the pandemic.<br><br>The Assessment Team has no particular concerns about this Element. Update required on any change. |
| 11. Audit Trail                           | A | A | A | The Council have made the following statement about record tracking in the authority: "There is no centralised procedure | There is no update other than that provided under the Elements above with regard to O365 project. | Noted with thanks. Implementation of O365 will ultimately provide the authority with greater version control over | There is no update.  | Thank you for letting the Assessment Team know that  |



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|                          |   |   |   | <p>for tracking files within the Council, however the majority of paper files are working files and officers within the services should be able to locate with ease. Services with regulatory requirements hold file registries such as the legal team who utilise the Profess time management system that has an inbuilt file registry and the Planning service who track files using a system called Uniform. Other departments such as Social work hold no paper files as all information is uploaded to their case management system and the paper copy is destroyed.</p> <p>Again, there is no central process in place for tracking and identifying records within shared drives. The Council recognises that this requires to be addressed and is committed to improving this through the implementation of Office 365. Office 365 will produce an audit trail of amendment/variations to any document/record and the Council recognises the value in promoting a consistent approach to version control and will produce guidelines for staff to be published along side the introduction of Office 365.”</p> <p><b>The Keeper agrees this element of the Council’s records management plan under ‘improvement model’ terms. This means that the Authority has identified a gap in their records management provision (tracking of records in paper format or held on shared drives) and has put processes in place to close that gap. The Keeper’s agreement would be conditional on his being updated as this project progresses.</b></p> |   | <p>their records, and help to improve audit trail functionality.</p> <p>The Element remains Amber while work is ongoing. The Team look forward to updates in future PURs.</p>   |   | <p>there have been no major updates to this Element.</p> <p>Ensuring that audit trails in terms of tracking and version control are in place for both paper and born-digital documents is a key element of a robust records management regime. It is completely understandable that the pandemic will have hindered progress on this area, but the Assessment Team would be keen to hear how Scottish Borders Council and Licensing Board are approaching the matter of closing the gap identified in the Keeper’s Agreement (tracking of records in paper format or held on shared drives). The ongoing implementation of 365 will likely automate some of these processes.</p> <p>This Element will remain at Amber as work is ongoing. We look forward to being updated on this project in subsequent PURs.</p> |
| 12. Competency Framework | G | G | G | Update required on any change.  | Information Manager attended the Practitioner Certificate in Scottish Public Sector Records Management in December 2021 and is currently working on her assessment portfolio. | <p>Update noted with thanks, and the Assessment Team commends the Information Manager’s hard work.</p> <p>The Team also note that throughout this PUR self-assessment update, the authority have indicated that training and guidance relating to various facets of RM has been provided to staff. This is commendable.</p> | <p>Information Manager completed Practitioner Certificate in Scottish Public Sector Records Management in 2022.</p> <p>The Council’s IT service is outsourced to CGI. Their Chief Information Security Officer is providing Information Security awareness training to members of the Council’s Information Governance Group. Similar awareness training was provided to Elected Members.</p> | <p>The Assessment Team notes this update with thanks, and congratulates the Information Manager for the completion of Practitioner Certificate!</p> <p>Thank you also for the update on IS awareness, delivered by CGI to the Council’s IG Group and Elected Members.</p> <p>Update required on any future change.</p>   |

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| 13. Assessment and Review | G | G | G | The <i>Information Asset Register</i> (see element 4) is re-surveyed annually. The <i>Plan</i> shows a 'future development' in element 4 to re-survey the Information Asset Register in 2018 to ensure business classification and retention schedules are fully integrated. <b>The Keeper would be pleased to know the result of this work.</b> | There is no update. | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change. | The Records Management Policy is also assisting in ongoing work such as the Scottish Government's data maturity project which the Council has had the opportunity to engage with. It is a 6-9 month programme which will include an assessment of where the Council is on its journey to data maturity, and workshops and seminars to increase knowledge and understanding on how to move forwards. This piece of work feeds into another project which is focusing on Social Work & Practice data. The Council's approved ambitions will eventually feed into a corporate project on improving the Council's data maturity covering people, processes and technologies. | Thank you for letting us know of the SG Data Maturity project, This does, indeed, sound like a potentially very useful exercise, and Scottish Borders Council is commended for embarking on it. This is entirely in the spirit of the Act and indicates that the authority is seeking continuous improvement.<br><br>The Assessment Team look forward to hearing how this project progresses in subsequent PURs.  |
| 14. Shared Information    | G | G | G | Update required on any change.   | There is no update. | Noted with thanks. Update required on any future change. | Refer to element 8.<br><br>The Council has a data sharing agreement template on its intranet. This is due to be revised and ensure it is easy for staff to read and understand their role and responsibilities.<br><br>There is also a document on 'when and how to use password protection and encryption' the intranet to ensure staff share information securely.   | Element 14 is concerned with information sharing, both within the authority and with other bodies or individuals, and ensuring that that information is necessary, lawful and controlled.<br><br>See comments under Element 8.<br><br>It is also great to hear that a template data sharing agreement is available to all staff, and that revision of this template is imminent.<br><br>It is also very appropriate that staff members are made aware of the risks of sharing information via an insecure connection.<br><br>Update required on any change. |

## 7. The Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's Summary

### Version

The progress update submission which has been assessed is the one received by the Assessment Team on 13th January 2023. The progress update was submitted by Jenna Waldie, Information Manager.

The progress update submission makes it clear that it is a submission for **Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board**.

The Assessment Team has reviewed Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board's Progress Update submission and agrees that the proper record management arrangements outlined by the various elements in the authority's plan continue to be properly considered. The Assessment Team commends this authority's efforts to keep its Records Management Plan under review.

### General Comments

Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board continues to take its records management obligations seriously and is working to bring all elements into full compliance.

Section 5(2) of the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 provides the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) with authority to revisit an agreed plan only after five years has elapsed since the date of agreement. Section 5(6) allows authorities to revise their agreed plan at any time and resubmit this for the Keeper's agreement. The Act does not require authorities to provide regular updates against progress. The Keeper, however, encourages such updates.

The Keeper cannot change the status of elements formally agreed under a voluntary submission, but he can use such submissions to indicate how he might now regard this status should the authority choose to resubmit its plan under section (5)(6) of the Act.

## 8. The Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's Evaluation

Based on the progress update assessment the Assessment Team considers that Scottish Borders Council and Licencing Board continue to take their statutory obligations seriously and are working hard to bring all the elements of their records management arrangements into full compliance with the Act and fulfil the Keeper's expectations.

The Assessment Team recommends authorities consider publishing PUR assessment reports on their websites as an example of continued good practice both within individual authorities and across the sector.

This report follows the Public Records (Scotland) Act Assessment Team's review carried out by



Iida Saarinen  
Public Records Officer