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Scottish Budget 2011/12 – Forth Estuary Transport Authority

Dear Barry,

The Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Sustainable Growth made a statement to the Scottish Parliament on Wednesday 17 November outlining the Scottish Budget for 2011/12.

Ministers have decided to publish a one year budget which, while setting out future priorities, does not attach figures to those.

For FETA the proposed budget lines in 2011/12 are;
Capital - £10million
Revenue - £5.1million

I am sure that you will be pleased that these figures reflect the requirements outlined by FETA during the preparatory process and agree that they will allow you to substantially complete vital works, including the viaduct bearings replacement, in the coming year.

As the budget has only been set for one year it will be necessary to prepare for a comprehensive spending review following the Scottish elections in May next year. While it will be possible to utilise much of the work that has been undertaken this year, it is likely that the availability of resources will be significantly more restricted in the coming years. On this basis it is strongly recommended that any efficiencies you have identified are brought into effect as soon as possible in order to begin making these savings while funding is available to support their implementation.

Ministers recognise that, in the course of normal business, FETA have to award contracts which will run over several years and may run beyond the period of this budget and into the next spending review. Where contracts for significant spend across spending review periods are to be entered into, FETA should take steps to ensure that Scottish Ministers are advised and have an opportunity to consider such proposals in advance of firm commitments being given.

The working relationship between Transport Scotland officials and FETA officials has been crucially important in preparing for the budget. This will remain the case in the coming year as we work together to prepare for the spending review to bring forward submissions that are robust and founded on a sound risk based prioritisation of spend.

I fully appreciate the challenge that we all face in delivering ever greater efficiency and I welcome and support FETA's continued efforts to respond to this challenge.

Yours sincerely



Frances Duffy