I refer to your letter of 15 September regarding the above.

I note the timescales set out in your letter indicating that the publication date for the budget, while not yet known, is likely to be some time in December 2016. Clearly, Scottish Borders Council would wish the finance settlement to be published as early as possible following appropriate scrutiny by civil servants, government ministers, appropriate committees and parliament itself.

Any additional uncertainty regarding the resources available to local authorities is unwelcome, not least due to the potential impact on the budget setting process and associated service delivery. The indicative timing of the settlement will be difficult, particularly in an environment where resources are constrained; however, the Council plans to set its budget based on information available from Scottish Government in February 2017 as in previous years.

I hope this information is helpful to you and provides you some reassurance that the Council will continue to work closely with government in setting its forthcoming revenue and capital budgets.

David Robertson
Chief Financial Officer
23 September 2016