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24 October 2017

Sir Paul,

Scottish Parliament: Environment and Climate Change

Thank you for your letter of 29 September. Victoria Barby and I very much welcomed the opportunity to appear before the Committee and I hope that committee members found the session helpful. We remain committed to assisting the committee in whatever way we can.

I will deal with the matters raised in your letter in turn.

Members’ Local Offices
Advice and support on environmental matters is provided to Members, local office staff and all parliamentary passholders on our website where guidance documents such as our Environmental Policy and Carbon Management Plan are available. In order to keep all passholders up to date with environmental good practice, we regularly feature snippets and updates on environmental issues in the weekly Corporate Bulletin.

We are at the early stages of exploring how best to apply the good environmental practices we have implemented in and around the parliamentary campus to local offices. We are currently working with Adaptation Scotland to prepare guidance for Members to use in local offices to ensure that climate change adaptation risks are assessed and acted on. We are also currently investigating how we can best support local offices in managing their waste. My expectation is that good progress will be made on both of these fronts in the coming 12 months and I will be happy to report on that progress this time next year.
Lights in the Holyrood Building

We are fortunate that we have an onsite building maintenance team who carry out regular planned maintenance activities to ensure that our building is well lit to support our various business activities, which of course, in a building of our nature change frequently due to the wide variety of uses our building is put to. We use LED light fittings across the campus and when light fittings are upgraded on a routine basis, including for the recent chamber lighting project, we continue to use the latest technology to minimise energy use. Further to this, we regularly review our lighting schedules to ensure that, where possible, areas are lit appropriately to the level of activity in that area. For example, the Chamber now has five different settings on the lights to suit the different activities that take place there.

In many of our building areas we also have detectors that will switch lights off if there is no activity in that room or area after a period and this helps remove the reliance on room users to switch lights off when they leave rooms. That said, we do still put reminders above light switches in certain rooms where it is perhaps impractical to install activity detectors.

Catering Contract and Scottish Food

In general, procurement rules do not allow us to specify any goods, including food, by geographical location (e.g. "Scottish") as doing so is considered to be discriminatory under the EU Procurement Directive. We do, however, require the catering contractor to provide sustainably sourced fresh and seasonal produce. Our contract manager works with the contractor to ensure that Scottish produce is used within this requirement where it meets environment, quality and value standards. This approach is set out in our Catering Standards Policy, under which we receive a quarterly report from the contractor in relation to the sourcing of fresh produce. The most recent of those reports show that the following percentage of fresh produce was sourced from Scottish producers or suppliers:

- 56% of meat
- 60% of dairy
- 54% of fruit and veg

In addition, the public café promotes Scottish brands including drinks, crisps and confectionary items along with its home baking range. The Queensberry House Lounge offers a wide selection of Scottish craft beers and currently has 5 Scottish gins available. A range of Scottish vodkas will also be available in the near future. We will continue to work productively with the contractor to ensure that fresh and seasonal produce remains at the top of our priorities in relation to our catering outlets.

Building Maintenance Costs

Our building maintenance costs, which include our two main principal contracts for High Level and Mechanical and Electrical maintenance as well as smaller contracts directly managed by our Facilities Management team, is currently budgeted for the 2017/18 period at £2.09m and our estimated project costs for the same period is £1.1m. Our FM team has budgeted for next year an increase in maintenance costs in line with inflation.
To support our future renovation and project costs, we have a detailed 25-year maintenance plan that specifies the manufacturers' estimates of the lifespan of our assets and any anticipated replacement costs. This is then narrowed down to a six-year plan for budgeting and resource purposes where we smooth out any peaks and troughs in the expenditure where possible over that period. Next year, our anticipated budget for projects (which includes 'emerging needs' as well as planned maintenance projects), is £1.7m although this has yet to be agreed as part of Parliament's overall budget forecast planning.

I should also mention that this year we have had two additional major projects to manage - the chamber lighting project referred to above which cost £1.75m and our electronic security upgrade project which is budgeted to cost £1.33m and which is planned for completion early in 2019.

Brexit Planning

Finally, you asked about the planning that the Parliament has been undertaking to prepare for the expected high volume of secondary legislation stemming from the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill. The Parliament's work is being led by the Constitutional Issues Board (which is chaired by one of my Assistant Chief Executive colleagues), a key purpose of which is to ensure that the Parliament is equipped to undertake its scrutiny function in relation to the new challenges presented by the UK's exit from the EU. Since the referendum last year, the Board has been carrying out various contingency planning exercises. For example, the Board recently conducted an exercise to assess the capacity of the Parliamentary Service to support the scrutiny role in relation to Brexit over the next two years. Steps are also being taken to strengthen inter-parliamentary co-operation (particularly the information flow) at both official and Member level. In addition, consideration is being given to the role that the Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee might play in "flagging" Brexit-related secondary legislation to subject committees.

I hope you find this additional information helpful, and I look forward to working with the Committee again in the future.

Yours sincerely,

P E GRICE
Clerk/Chief Executive