20 July 2017

Dear Convenor,

Thank you for your e-mail of 04 July 2017 following up on the meeting with the REC Committee on 28 June 2017 and the two issues that were raised where the Committee requested further information in due course. These were as follows –

1. To provide an update on the Opening Celebrations and overall summary of costs.
2. The cost of moving and replacing the barriers on the emergency crossovers at either end of the bridge to allow the opening to traffic and the closing for the Queensferry Crossing Experience weekend.

Following a very successful ballot process, which started on July 5th, we have now reached the point where 50,000 individual invitations for the Queensferry Crossing Experience (QCE) have been accepted. This will present 50,000 people with a once in a lifetime experience to cross this iconic structure on foot.

This opportunity has really captured the imagination of the public, with demand for tickets to the event coming from right across Scotland and beyond. To date, through the ballot process, we have directly engaged with 300,000 people and through the QCE website, we have engaged with well over a million individuals. Plans are well advanced for this event and we are actively liaising with Police Scotland and other key stakeholders as part of this planning process to ensure that the event runs smoothly.

We are, however, still finalising the plans for other aspects of the Opening Celebrations, and in particular for the Official Opening Ceremony. Consequently, I am not yet in a position to provide you with an overall summary of costs at this time but will be happy to do so in due course.
On the second question, it was always envisaged that work of this nature would be required to open the Queensferry Crossing to traffic. Consequently, we do not have the information specifically relating to this operation as it is included in the original scope of works which form part of the main contract which was awarded to FCBC and included in the overall contract sum. It is not possible for us to disaggregate this element from the overall sum. As was stated at the Committee hearing, all these costs are included within the overall project budget and this operation will not result in any cost increase.

I will contact you again as soon as I am in a position to provide a response to the first question.

Yours sincerely

KEITH BROWN