



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Lady Susan Rice CBE
4 Lilybank Gardens
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Room T3.60
The Scottish Parliament
EDINBURGH
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2 September 2015

Dear Susan,

Thank you for recent attendance at our business planning day and for your subsequent correspondence. You suggest that given the limited outturn data currently available for the devolved taxes that it may be useful that your commentary on the forecast for the devolved taxes relative to outturn receipts is provided alongside the draft budget. However, given the late publication of the draft budget this year due to the timing of the UK Spending Review this would not allow sufficient time for adequate scrutiny.

As you are aware, Revenue Scotland publish outturn data in relation to LBTT in the third week of each month which includes figures for the previous month. This means that the figures for the first 6 months of LBTT should be available in the third week of October. It would be useful if the Commission could provide a commentary on the Scottish Government forecast relative to the first 6 months of outturn data. The Committee would be happy to delay the Commission's report to allow you to conduct this analysis. It would be helpful if this could be provided by 25th November followed by oral evidence from you and your colleagues on Wednesday 2nd December. The Committee would also be happy for you to provide your commentary on the forecast for Scottish Landfill Tax relative to the available outturn figures at the same time.

In response to the Committee's concerns in relation to the lack of transparency in relation to the work which the Scottish Government and the SFC have been carrying out on forestalling you refer to your letter to the Deputy First Minister dated 21 January 2015. The letter indicates that further work is needed by Scottish Government officials on their forecast for forestalling before the SFC can form a view on the reasonableness of that calculation and that they continue to refine this work. The Committee has not received any details of the forecast for forestalling or whether the SFC has agreed that it is reasonable.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Gibson MSP
Convener, Finance Committee