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5 March 2025

Dear Convener,

I have been asked by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government to write to you in response to a discussion about the 2025-26 Scottish Budget which took place at the recent Finance and Public Administration Committee meeting at the Scottish Parliament on 14 January.

The 2025-26 Budget includes provision for spend on a range of the Scottish Government's activity relating to constitutional matters including elections, inter-governmental relations, and policy and advice on the operation of the Sewel convention and UK frameworks. This budget will also cover any work related to the Scottish Government's policy for an independent Scotland. As with previous years, there is no dedicated budget line for 'independence' work.

Given that the Scottish Government's policy is for an independent Scotland, we will continue to advocate for that better future. As we announced in December 2024, the Scottish Government will be publishing one further, final paper to conclude the Building a New Scotland (BANS) prospectus series. The BANS prospectus series provides the people of Scotland with the information they need to make an informed choice about Scotland's future.

Alongside other duties, work on the BANS series was co-ordinated by a team within the wider Constitution Directorate - Constitutional Futures Division (CFD). Work on BANS also drew upon other civil servants from across the organisation who contributed as part of their normal duties supporting the Scottish Government. Given that the BANS series is nearing conclusion, CFD stopped being a standalone division in January 2025 and its activity has been merged into the wider Constitution Directorate. The Constitution Directorate will continue to take forward the varied forms of constitutional related work.

I hope this is helpful to you.

Yours sincerely,

ANGUS ROBERTSON

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