

From: Douglas, Suzanne (Finance) @scotborders.gov.uk
Subject: RE: [OFFICIAL] Quantitative data in respect of Live Borders sustainability
Date: 4 December 2025 at 14:17
To: Michael Marshall
Cc: Begg, Drummond Drummond.Begg@scotborders.gov.uk, Small, Eric Eric.Small@scotborders.gov.uk, Pirone, Julie Julie.Pirone@scotborders.gov.uk, Douglas, Marshall Marshall.Douglas@scotborders.gov.uk, Tatler, Robin Robin.Tatler@scotborders.gov.uk, Thomson, Viv Viv.Thomson@scotborders.gov.uk, Peter Maudsley , Anne Snoddy secretary@ccrb Peebles.co.uk

SD

Dear Mr Marshall,

Apologies for the delay in responding to your request, myself and the finance team have been exceptionally busy over the last month, not least in supporting the Live Borders Report presented to Council on the 20th November.

The Live Borders report to Council on 29th October provided detail on the financial position of Live Borders since the pandemic which is when the organisation began to face significant financial challenges and shows that while 2025/26 expenditure has increased by £1.6m since 2019/20, income only just returned to pre-covid levels in 2023/24 with no significant increase currently anticipated. Letters of comfort have been required by the Trusts External Auditors in the last few years due to concerns over their status as a going concern and it's worth noting that Live Borders agree the organisation is not sustainable in its current form.

As you suggest the position of Council funding is very complicated not least because although Council budgets have been largely stable and show a flat cash position, significantly more demands have been placed on Councils with increased directed funding which must be spent on specific purposes. This includes the roll out of 1140 hours of Early Learning & Childcare, Council Tax Freezes, nationally agreed pay awards and the real living wage for care staff as well as the increased demands on our statutory services and increased cost of providing services as a result of significant inflation. For example if we received an additional £5m on a £100m budget and inflation was running at 5% that on the face of it is a real term inflationary increase but if within that an additional £3m of funding is 'directed' for specific purposes then the available increase to the Council is actually only £2m, not enough to meet the inflationary needs of our service. This then requires services to reduce spend by £3m in order to balance the position but the headline is that we have received additional budget.

All Council services have been required to operate more efficiently and prioritise elements of their service delivery in order to support these pressures and historically this included Live Borders where this was exercised through a reduction to the management fee provided. The information in the report you refer to was based on estimated figures which have changed since the report was issued. As a result of their financial difficulties over the last 3 years the Council has provided £6m in additional funding to the organisation with total funding of £7.553m provided in 2024/25 which is £1.6m more than they received in 2016/17.

The proposals approved in the paper on 20th November set out a way for Live Borders to move back to a firm financial footing, supported by SBC, over the next 3 years with significant investment in key income generating assets.

I hope this is helpful in demonstrating that Live Borders have not been subject to

disproportionate funding reductions but in fact have received significant additional funding from the Council in recent years to ensure services can continue to be delivered.

Suzy

<https://scottishbordersintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s94171/Item%208%20-%20Live%20Borders.pdf>

From: Michael Marshall < >
Sent: 14 October 2025 12:59
To: Douglas, Suzanne (Finance) < @scotborders.gov.uk>
Cc: Begg, Drummond <Drummond.Begg@scotborders.gov.uk>; Small, Eric <Eric.Small@scotborders.gov.uk>; Pirone, Julie <Julie.Pirone@scotborders.gov.uk>; Douglas, Marshall <Marshall.Douglas@scotborders.gov.uk>; Tatler, Robin <Robin.Tatler@scotborders.gov.uk>; Thomson, Viv <Viv.Thomson@scotborders.gov.uk>; Peter Maudsley < >; Anne Snoddy <secretary@ccrbpeebles.co.uk>
Subject: Quantitative data in respect of Live Borders sustainability

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