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**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** 18 September 2020 12:02  
**To:** Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning  
**Cc:** Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government; Cabinet Secretary for Finance; First Minister; Permanent Secretary; DG Education, Communities & Justice; DG Scottish Exchequer Mailbox; Director for Housing and Social Justice; [redacted]  
[redacted]  
; Campbell J (Jeanette) (Special Adviser); McAllister C (Colin); Director of Budget and Public Spending; Twyman K (Kerry); Gwyon R (Rachel); Communications Covid-19; [redacted]  
  
Lloyd E (Elizabeth); [redacted] [redacted]; News Desk; Communications CSSE; [redacted]; MacDougall A (Audrey)  
**Subject:** OFFICIAL : SENSITIVE - First Home Fund - latest uptake and suspension to new applications  
First Home Fund - Ministerial Letter to John Marr - UK Finance - scheme closure and extension to March 2022 - September 2020.docx; First Home Fund - Ministerial Letter to LGCC - Scheme closure and extension to March 2022 - September 2020.docx; First Home Fund - Ministerial Letter to Nicola Barclay - Homes for Scotland - scheme closure and extension to March 2022 - September 2020.docx; First Home Fund - email text to builders, lenders, IFAs and solicitors - closure and extension - September 2020.docx; First Home Fund pilot success - NR.docx  
**Attachments:**

[redacted],

**OFFICIAL: SENSITIVE**

This note is to make the Minister aware that 93% (£167m) of the £180m First Home Fund budget for 2020-21 is now committed. This represents 7,642 applications since 1 April 2021. Projections indicate that the budget will be fully committed by Friday 25 September.

When the funds are exhausted, we will give stakeholders 7 days' notice of the fund's closure for 2020-21. This over allocation takes account of estimated withdrawals and slippage of cases into next financial year. As a result, the final deadline for submission of 2020-21 applications will be 6 p.m. on Friday 2 October.

I attach the draft **News Release** to be issued on Friday 25 September. We intend to include a quote from a first time buyer who has benefited from the Fund – this will be added next week.

I also attach three **draft letters** for the Minister to send out on 25 September:

- John Marr, Principal – Devolved Government & Social Housing, UK Finance
- Nicola Barclay, CEO of Homes for Scotland
- James Dornan, Convenor of the Local Government & Communities Committee.

Please note that, as requested by the First Minister, we have made Homes for Scotland and UK Finance aware, on a strictly confidential basis, that the FHF budget is almost fully committed and that we will stop accepting applications within the next few weeks. They are also aware of our intention to extend the scheme to next year and are fully supportive.

A more detailed communication will be issued by the scheme administering agent (Link Homes) to builders, lenders, IFAs and solicitors providing 7 days' notice of the closure date. The text of this email is attached for information.

## Recommendation

We ask that the Minister:

- notes the First Home Fund budget is almost committed and the key dates set out above;
- clears the draft News Release; and
- approves the text of the letters to stakeholders for issue on 25 September.

Once the Minister has confirmed he is content with the letters to stakeholders, final versions will be sent to Private Office for issue on Friday next week.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Many thanks,

[redacted]

**[redacted]** | More Homes Division | Scottish Government | [redacted]

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