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NBPM
To await further
ministerial views
AT
18/1

Treasury Chambers, Parliament Street, SW1P 3AG

John Ballard Esq
Private Secretary to
Secretary of State for the Environment
Department of the Environment
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 3EB

18 January 1985

Dear John

**LOCAL AUTHORITY CAPITAL EXPENDITURE IN
ENGLAND AND WALES 1985-86**

The Chief Secretary has seen your Secretary of State's letter of 11 January to the Lord Privy Seal about the timetable for handling regulations to give effect to new "prescribed proportions" of local authority capital receipts.

The Chief Secretary acknowledges that consultations may have a role in defusing opposition to the regulations. But he wonders whether they need be as long drawn out as your Secretary of State suggests or necessarily preclude the Orders being laid immediately. He thinks there is a good case for laying the necessary Orders much earlier so that the debates might be dealt with before the public expenditure White Paper (and Budget) debates. It has been made clear in particular that the Orders are necessary to achieve the figures in the White Paper. The Chief Secretary feels that if the necessary Orders have not been debated in advance, the government may be criticised on the grounds that the House was being asked to approve the overall figures before debating a sensitive component of them.

I am copying this letter to Andrew Turnbull (No.10) Janet Lewis-Jones (Lord President's Office), David Morris (Lord Privy Seal's Office), Elizabeth Hopkinson (Education and Science) Colin Jones (Welsh Office), Steve Godber (Health and Social Security), Dinah Nichols (Transport) and to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office).

Yours ever
Richard Broadbent

R J BROADBENT
Private Secretary

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