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The Scottish Conservative leaders of four councils have joined forces with the Scottish Conservative Shadow Cabinet Secretary on Finance to urge the Scottish Government not to impose further cuts on local authority budgets.

The letter to Derek McKay makes clear that since its own budget is not being cut next year there is no justification for it to cut the local authority budget either.

In advance of the Budget announcement for 2018-19, the letter highlights that the cuts local authorities have already endured are affecting front-line services.

In addition, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has increased the Scottish Block Grant in real terms and therefore, any cuts to Council budgets are solely a political choice by the SNP Government.

The letter is signed by Murdo Fraser MSP, Scottish Conservative Shadow Cabinet Secretary on Finance, Cllr Ian Campbell Leader of Perth and Kinross Council, Cllr Shona Haslam Leader of Scottish Borders Council, Cllr Jim Gifford Leader of Aberdeenshire Council and Cllr Douglas Lumsden Co-Leader of Aberdeen City Council.

Scottish Conservative Shadow Cabinet Secretary on Finance, Murdo Fraser said:

“We have written to Derek McKay, outlining our position that local authorities must not suffer any further budget cuts.

“According to COSLA, councils have seen a real terms cut in funding allocation of 8% since 2010.

“These cuts are already affecting front-line services and further cuts would mean an even greater impact.

“The Finance Secretary has just received a real terms increase in the Block Grant and so there can be no justification for any further cuts in Council budgets at this time.

“Any plan to further cut these budgets will be solely down to political choice by the SNP Government