

Our Ref: RMcC/DHC/MM
Your Ref:
Date: 21 December 2010

John Swinney, MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Sustainable Growth
St. Andrew's House
Regent Road
EDINBURGH
EH1 3DG

Dear Mr. Swinney,

Financial Settlement 2011/12

West Dunbartonshire Council at a full Council meeting held today, 21 December 2010, considered the terms of the settlement offer as outlined in your letter of 17 November, and agreed to confirm our agreement *in principle* to the delivery of the undernoted commitments.

- To remain committed to the delivery of the current Single Outcome Agreements, the 3 jointly agreed social strategies and the curriculum for excellence
- To a council tax freeze for 2011/12
- To Police Officers being maintained at 17,234 throughout 2011/12
- To maintain the pupil teacher ratio in p1-p3, the crucial early years of primary school
- To protect the number of teacher posts as far as possible in order to secure :
 - Places for all probationers who require a place under the induction scheme in August 2011
 - Sufficient teaching posts available for all probationers who achieve standard and full registration in summer 2011
 - A reduction in the total number of unemployed teachers
- To an independently chaired review of all aspects of the McCrone agreement, to report by June 2011, with the clear intention that its recommendations should be available for implementation before August 2012

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- To continue to deliver the shared service Scottish Government/Cosla commitments on Free Personal Care, for which payments will be uprated in 2011/12.
- To continue to work with the Scottish Government towards implementation of the Carers and Young Carers strategy at local level, including the maintenance of an extra 10,000 weeks respite provision.

I however wish to make clear that our agreement *in principle* is made on the basis of the following conditions being met.

1. The Scottish Government has been successful in securing approval to the settlement for 2011/12 in the terms set out in your letter of 17 November, from the Scottish Parliament.
2. That changes to the conditions of employment for teachers outlined in your letter of 17 November are delivered by the end of January 2011.
3. That a successful resolution to the potential difficulty of the police service being offered a blanket reduction of 2.6% when many Councils have suffered a loss substantially greater than this and indeed West Dunbartonshire resources have been reduced by 4.53%.
4. That Councils will be notified what a reasonable, albeit local, contribution will be required from each Council in relation to meeting national commitments.
5. That an assurance is provided that individual Councils who accept the offer and who can demonstrate that they have made reasonable budgetary provision towards the delivery of a share of a national commitment will not be penalised in circumstances where that commitment is not delivered at the national level.
6. That resources in the Change Fund referred to in the Cabinet letter of 17 November are available for spend by 1 April 2011 and are overseen and controlled by a governance arrangement that is genuinely local.

West Dunbartonshire Council will meet to formally approve our budget for 2011/12 on 27 January 2011 and, following that meeting, I will write to you to confirm whether or not appropriate budgetary provision for the delivery of those commitments has been included within the agreed budget.

Yours sincerely,

Ronald McColl
Council Leader