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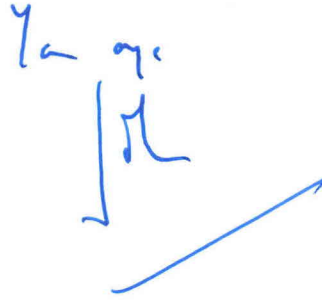
East Lothian Council

Additional information:

Authorised By	Jim Lamond
Designation	Head of Council Resources
Date	05/03/15

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All other terms of the local government finance settlement offer for 2015-16, including the commitment to deliver a council tax freeze, as set out in my letter of 9 October 2014 remain unchanged.



JOHN SWINNEY

13 February 2015

John Swinney MSP
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Dear Mr Swinney

Teacher Number Commitments 2015-16


I write to you with reference to the on-going discussions between COSLA and the Scottish Government regarding the future commitment with regards to teacher numbers.

As you will be aware this has been the subject of significant discussions between COSLA Leaders, who have re-affirmed the need for a strong message from Local Government that the accepted practice of COSLA and Scottish Government conducting business through collective national negotiations has served us well and continues to be our preferred way of operating. We need to return to that approach on the specific issue of teacher numbers and that must also be the way we conduct all future negotiations on the wide range of other issues upon which future agreement will need to be reached.

Please be assured, we remain firmly committed to raising educational outcomes, lessening inequalities, and through a combination of innovative and forward thinking investment, we aim to drive up the attainment of our most disadvantaged students. We strongly believe, the continued focus on input measures rather than outcomes is not the most effective way to deliver this.

I would therefore urge the Scottish Government to re-engage with COSLA through these national discussions in order to secure a successful outcome for both parties.

Yours sincerely,



Willie Innes
East Lothian Council Leader

c.c. David O'Neill, COSLA President
c.c. Angela Leitch, Chief Executive, East Lothian Council

WI/WG

20 February 2015

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Dear Mr Swinney

Local Government Finance Settlement 2015-16

I write further to my letter of 13 February and specifically with regard to the revised terms of your offer of grant set out in your letter of 5 February.

The revised terms relate to future commitments in respect of teacher numbers, specifically that for 2015-16;

1. as a minimum, the total number of teachers employed will be maintained at 2014-15 levels,
2. as a maximum, pupil teacher ratios will be maintained at 2014-15 levels,
3. places will be made available for all probationers who require one under the teacher induction scheme.

As previously made clear, our strong preference would have been to work in accordance with the long established practice of collective national agreement through COSLA and Scottish Government and we regret that on this specific issue of teacher numbers, the Scottish Government have decided not to continue with the negotiations.

I can confirm that East Lothian Council will accept the offer of grant for 2015-16 in accordance with the amended conditions as set out above.

In closing, I would strongly request that you reconsider your intention to penalise those Council's who fail the test through no fault of their own and we conduct all future settlement discussions and negotiations through COSLA with a view to securing national agreement.

Yours sincerely



**Willie Innes
Leader
East Lothian Council**

c.c **David O'Neill, COSLA President
Angela Leitch, Chief Executive, Alex McCrorie, Jim Lamond, Darrin
Nightingale East Lothian Council**