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Ms Johanna Baxter, Drew Duffy and Willie
McGonigle
SJC Joint Secretaries
UNISON
UNISON House
14 West Campbell Street
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Dear Ms Baxter, Mr Duffy and Mr McGonigle

I refer to your email dated 29 March regarding the COSLA pay offer. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, Derek Mackay has asked me to thank you for your letter and to reply to you as Local Government falls within my area of responsibility.

In response to your comments regarding the pay offer, Scottish Ministers have no general powers that would allow them to intervene in matters regarding local authority pay.

However the Scottish Government are providing local authorities with a revenue funding increase of £174.9 million in the 2018-19 Local Government Finance Settlement, taken together with the extra £77 million that will be raised through the council tax, councils will have access to an additional £251.9 million in revenue funding this year.

Local authorities must use the financial resources available as efficiently as possible and deliver services effectively to ensure taxpayers get the best possible value. How this is done is a matter for each council and councils are autonomous bodies, responsible for managing their own day to day business including pay policy.

It may be helpful to explain that education matters in Scotland are fully devolved to the Scottish Government and the pay and conditions of service for teachers in local authority schools in Scotland are negotiated and agreed by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT), a tripartite body which includes representation from teacher organisations, local authority employers and the Scottish Government.

With reference to your comments on the council tax freeze, I can confirm that the council tax freeze was fully funded by the Scottish Government, providing financial relief to Scotland's council tax payers and ensuring there was no impact on local authority funding and services.



Finally, I would like to confirm that the Scottish Government recognise the hard work and dedication of all public sector workers who continue to provide an exceptionally high standard of public service, despite the challenging circumstances.

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Your sincerely

Craig Inglis

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