
Report To:	Inverclyde Council	Date:	2 December 2021
Report By:	Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services	Report No:	DS/LS/100/21
Contact Officer:	Diane Sweeney	Contact No:	01475 712112
Subject:	Cut to Inverclyde's Challenge Authority Education Funding – Request by Councillor C McEleny		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Council of a request received from Councillor C McEleny in relation to Attainment Challenge Funding.
- 1.2 The terms of Councillor C McEleny's request are set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Council considers the request by Councillor C McEleny.

Anne Sinclair
Interim Head of Legal & Democratic Services

Under Standing Order 45(c) I wish to have the following matter placed on this Thursday's Council agenda. The reason for the urgency of the matter is that the Scottish Government will set the 2022/23 budget on Thursday 9th December so it will not be possible to have a debate at another full Council meeting before then, furthermore the understanding, promulgation and reporting of the implications of the decision of the Scottish Government to change the manner in which Challenge Funding is to be allocated - resulting in over £2M of cuts to Inverclyde was not available before the deadline to submit a motion and the announcement had not been made in advance of last meeting of the Education & Communities Committee in order that members of that committee could've been updated.

Cut to Inverclyde's Challenge Authority Education Funding

Council notes and welcomes the positive impact that attainment challenge funding has had to Inverclyde since its introduction.

Council further notes that members have received repeated reports of the impact the funding has made with Education Scotland Inspectors praising Inverclyde Council's approach to closing the attainment gap in schools as life-changing and sector-leading.

Council notes that £43Million of "Challenge Funding" has in recent years been allocated to nine Challenge Authorities based on level of deprivation.

Council notes that in Inverclyde this funding of circa £3Million has made a positive impact to support welcome additional initiatives which make active difference in reducing the poverty related educational attainment gap in Inverclyde.

Council notes and condemns the Scottish Government's decision to redesign the allocation of £43Million to be distributed amongst all 32 of Scotland's Local Authorities instead of targeted at the 9 Challenge Authorities with the highest levels of deprivation.

Council notes that the impact of this decision will result in over £2Million in funding reduction to Inverclyde aimed at reduction the Educational Attainment Gap and that further will negatively impact on the Council's ability to plan going forward.

Council instructs the Chief Executive of the Council to write directly to the First Minister of Scotland to highlight the negative impact this decision will have on Inverclyde's ability to close the educational attainment gap and to request that the Scottish Government's budget of 2022/23 ensures that the current level of educational attainment challenge funding Inverclyde receives is subject to no funding cut; a commitment is made to the funding for the rest of the life of the current Scottish Parliament; and that the continued levels of deprivation in Inverclyde are recognised by the Scottish Government in the form of specific additional funding awarded in the Scottish Government budget.