

Report To:	The Inverclyde Council	Date: 21 February 2013
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No: SL/LA/970/13
Contact Officer:	Sharon Lang	Contact No: 01475 712112
Subject:	Proposed Cuts to Further Education - Motion by Councillor McColgan	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the attached motion from Councillor McColgan, counter-signed by Councillor Brennan, relative to proposed cuts to further education contained in the Scottish Government's draft budget, which has been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 22. APPENDIX

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Council is requested to consider the attached motion.

Sharon Lang
Legal & Democratic Services

Background

A year ago students sent over 80,000 emails to MSPs to remind them of the vital role that colleges play in Scotland, the whole Parliament listened, and the Government reversed their plans to cut colleges. Less than one year on, the government is once again proposing a big cut, of £34.6m, to colleges in their draft budget.

While we welcome money to protect student support and college places, this Budget would still see cuts to colleges worth tens of millions of pounds. At a time of incredibly high youth unemployment, and in a budget that was billed as focussing on economic recovery, that's simply unjustifiable.

Without the protection of college funding, we cannot guarantee the continued quality of college education. Colleges have the ability to change communities and lives, whether it is by creating opportunities for people to enter post-16 education for the first time or by giving others the opportunity to return and re-skill or up-skill. They provide immense opportunities for further and higher education to those from our most deprived backgrounds, and it is vital that the budget recognises this, and funds them properly.

Motion

"We, the undersigned, are extremely concerned at the impact the proposed cut of £34.6m to further education contained in the Scottish Government's draft budget will have on James Watt College and colleges across Scotland."

"We call on the Scottish Government to support NUS Scotland's 'Fund Scotland's Future' campaign, to reverse the proposed cut, and to protect college funding at current levels."

"We also call on our MSPs to support the campaign, to stand together with their local students, and to make college funding a personal priority through the current budget negotiations."

"Colleges serve some of the most excluded communities in Scotland and we believe that funding must be protected to ensure that local access, and quality of teaching and student experience, are protected, ensuring that people from all backgrounds are able to access and benefit from a high quality college education."

Proposer: Councillor James McColgan

Seconder: Councillor Martin Brennan