

# Funding for Scottish Councils allows council tax freeze to continue

The Scottish Parliament today agreed the full allocation of local government funding for 2011-12.

It follows confirmation that all 32 councils formally accepted the terms of an agreement between Ministers and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities which secures a further council tax freeze next year and the delivery of key commitments, including the maintenance of 1,000 more police officers.

The deal also restricts local government's revenue funding reduction next year to 2.5 per cent in the face of swingeing Westminster cuts – a greater degree of protection than other parts of the Scottish Budget and Holyrood says it is superior to that for local government in England.

Speaking after a vote on the Local Government Finance Amendment Orders, Finance Secretary John Swinney said:

“Parliamentary support for the full local government funding package ensures that Scottish communities and householders will see the benefits of a fourth successive council tax freeze fully-funded by the Scottish Government.

“We have faced up to the consequences of the biggest reduction in public spending imposed by Westminster on any Scottish Government, and worked with COSLA leadership to agree a council funding package which maintains key public service commitments, such as the maintenance of 1,000 more police officers than were in post before this Government came to office.

“This decision also limits councils' funding reduction, a

settlement far superior to that for local government in England, while providing a greater degree of protection than other parts of the Scottish Budget. It is the best possible outcome at a time when we have focused fully on protecting our people and communities from a tough financial climate and helping to achieve our longer-term vision and aspirations for Scotland.”