

East Lothian to receive less national funding per person than other local authorities

East Lothian Council will receive less national funding per person than almost all other local authorities in Scotland over the coming year despite an increase in grants.

The Government research SPICe report has said additional funding expected to be passed to councils from Scottish Government will see East Lothian and Midlothian receive six per cent more in real terms with £252million and £233million respectively.

But while the two local authorities have seen the biggest increase in revenue from the national settlement over the last decade of all Scottish councils, a rising population means East Lothian remains among the lowest per person.

The county receives £2,224 per head of population with only Edinburgh and Aberdeen receiving less – it compares to island councils where Shetland received £5,079 per person.

The Scottish average of funding per person is £2,732 while Midlothian also lies in the bottom section of the table receiving just £2,373 per head of population.

The report says the island authorities “clearly have the highest allocations per head, whilst Edinburgh and

Aberdeen have the lowest” adding “these two cities have higher levels of anticipated council tax income than the national average”.

It does not explain why East Lothian and Midlothian are so low despite having the biggest increase in the last decade, although they do both acknowledge having the fastest growing populations in the country.

East Lothian councillors are set to confirm a 10% council tax increase next week as it battles to balance its budget for the year ahead alongside its national funding allowance.

Midlothian Council has not yet said what increase it is proposing.

By Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter