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Douglas Hutchison,
Director of Education,
South Ayrshire Council

Cc: Eileen Howat, Chief Executive, South Ayrshire Council; Fiona Lees, Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council; Elma Murray, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council; Gavin Stevenson, Chief Executive, Dumfries and Galloway Council.
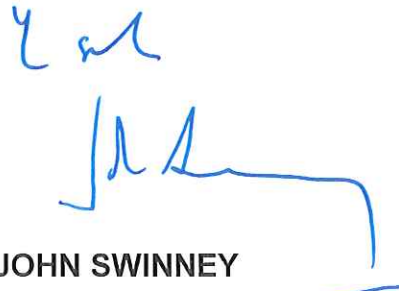
1 November 2017

De Douglas,

I would like to offer my congratulations on your appointment as Regional Improvement Lead for the South West Collaborative which has now been confirmed.   I believe the Regional Improvement Collaboratives have a critical role to play in providing expert and practical support for our teachers and schools. This support will be crucial in realising our vision for education – closing the unacceptable gap in attainment between our least and most disadvantaged children and raising the attainment of all.

I have received regular updates from the interim Chief Inspector of Education on his involvement in both the process and resulting appointments and I appreciate that the timeframe for this exercise has been challenging. All six appointments have now been made and are detailed in the annex to this letter.

I am also pleased to note that Education Scotland have assigned a regional lead officer to work with you on developing your Regional Improvement Plan by January 2018. I recognise that our work on developing and implementing this new regional approach is now at a crucial phase and I have asked that both Scottish Government and Education Scotland officials support you to ensure that ambitious regional improvement plans can be developed. I understand that these meetings will shortly take place.

I would also be very grateful if you would join me on the newly established Scottish Education Council which will have its inaugural meeting on 24 November 2017 in Edinburgh. My officials will be in touch with further details shortly.

I look forward to working with you.

JOHN SWINNEY