

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

11 APRIL 2011

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Minute 126 of the meeting held on 6 April 2011	'INVEST TO SAVE' INITIATIVES AND FINANCIAL UPDATE
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The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the report presented to Cabinet on 29 March 2011, paying particular attention to –

- the four new 'invest to save' initiatives
- continuation of the Carefirst project
- the rolling out of phase II of the Accommodation Strategy

Prior to looking at each scheme in detail, Members' attention was drawn to the fact that some of the figures in the report, relating to the Carefirst project, were incorrect. These were corrected as follows –

Paragraph 4.2

Total Capital Expenditure should read £2, 323,000
Total Revenue Expenditure should read £2,545,000

'Implications' section of the report

Capital Programme project summary table -

Carefirst Total should read £2,323,000
Overall Total should read £7,175,000

Members expressed concern that this information was now in the public domain and suggested that an amendment be circulated in time for consideration of the report at City Council on Monday.

At a time of rising costs and reducing resources, Members welcomed the principle of 'invest to save' initiatives. However, when considering the report in detail, and hearing from each of the project lead officers, Members felt the need to highlight the following –

- (a) that there was no direct correlation between each scheme and the City priorities;
- (b) there was a danger that the 'invest to save' fund would be used to address corporate efficiencies rather than taking a strategic approach to investment;
- (c) Cabinet had more to do to correctly interpret the recommendation arising from the budget scrutiny process which

had been for scrutiny to be involved in the governance arrangements around 'invest to save';

- (d) they felt unable to form a view on each scheme without –
- having first seen the established criteria for 'invest to save' schemes
 - knowing how projects were scored
 - details of the running balance and how it was to be funded
 - knowing the benefit/outcome to be achieved
- (e) that in order for the benefit of these, and any future schemes, to be measured, the information identified at (d) above was essential and ought to be included in the quarterly update on Performance and Finance and in future 'invest to save' proposals presented to scrutiny.

Whilst Members noted and endorsed Councillor Bowyer's proposal that ongoing review of the progress on 'invest to save' schemes should form part of the regular financial reporting cycle, disappointment was expressed at the quality of this particular report in that it failed to provide the necessary information required for them to form a view on the schemes contained therein.

Agreed that –

- (1) an amended version of the report, taking account of the corrections made to the Carefirst total expenditure, is circulated in advance of City Council on 11 April 2011;

Recommended that –

- (2) the information set out at (d) above is included in all future 'invest to save' schemes.