

BUDGET BRIEFING TO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

19 December 2012



Malcolm Coe (Assistant Director Finance, Efficiency, Technology and Assets) and David Northey (Head of Finance) met with the Chamber of Commerce on 19 December 2012 to run through the proposed Plymouth City Council budget for 2013/14, setting out the national context and the impact on Plymouth. The following areas were considered -

- Changes to the Business Rates and the transfer of risk from central to local government
- Collection rates and impact of appeals
- Non-change to valuation office
- Changes to the Council Tax Support and the impact on the most vulnerable
- The measures we have put in place to “soften the blow” although we have had to pass the £2.6m funding cut on to the public
- one per cent Council Tax Freeze Grant and that this was not viable as it would leave us short of funding in 2013/14 against our MTFS (Medium Term Financial Strategy) but also introduces more uncertainty for the future as it is only guaranteed for two years
- Current collection rate for council tax is 98.5 per cent and our assumption for next year of 97.5%
- Importance of growth as a priority and hence less savings targets set
- Adult Social Care concerns around funding both this year and next
- Cross-cutting delivery plans in particular procurement targets / local spend initiatives / income generation including parking / senior management reductions
- Need for transformation and the project which has been approved; will savings be achieved
- Capital spend and best use of assets
- Working with partners

Two areas were flagged as being of major importance for the scrutiny sessions:

1. They remain unclear as to what has become of the Invest to Save Fund They would like to know how the monies have been expended, by project and amount with an estimate of the return that has been/ will be achieved by these projects.
2. They expect to have a full set of HR data – staff numbers/turnover/sickness – ahead of the scrutiny sessions as a specific area to interrogate.