

CABINET – 16 FEBRUARY 2011

ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Questions received from the following Members:

1. Cllr Roy Darke to Cabinet Member for Finance & Property

"On item 7, Financial Monitoring I notice that under Pooled Budgets (para 26) that the overspend is currently running at nearly £5m. and that this current overspend includes £2m carried forward from last year. Even when the PCT element is taken into account the Council is heading for nearly £2m overspend. What measures will the Cabinet Member be taking to take control of this failure to meet the budget?"

Cabinet Member Reply

"As Cllr Darke acknowledges the overspending which is the responsibility of the County Council is £1.827m. In the next Monthly Monitoring report, he will see that this overspending has fallen still further to £1.298m. All of this overspending relates to social care for adults with physical disabilities (the much larger element of the budget which relates to older people is currently showing that spend is in line with budget). This overspending on social care for adults with physical disabilities is not a reflection of a failure to control the budget but reflects an increase in the number of people who require care. This includes students with physical disabilities who have come to study in Oxford and a number of cases which have transferred across for social care funding from the Primary Care Trust. An action plan has been developed which is looking to find savings in the cost of care such as through the use of supported living arrangements and challenging high cost placements. However, this will not eliminate the overspending which will need to be carried forward into next year. The budget agreed yesterday allocates extra resources to adults with physical disabilities to help manage the pressures next year."

2. Councillor Jean Fooks to Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure

"The proposals to build a Waste Recycling Centre at Kidlington, to cater for the residual household waste from the whole county, and to close facilities at Ardley, Dean, Stanford and Redbridge have generated much concern. Can the Cabinet member reassure us that the district councils, Kidlington Parish Council and the public will be properly consulted before any decision is taken on these sites? Will a full environmental assessment be done on the possible extra traffic generation they will cause?"

Cabinet Member Reply

Yes.

Councillor Richard Stevens to Cabinet Member for Adult Services

3. Since the last Cabinet meeting on 25 January 2011, has the Cabinet member been able to find any evidence of Oxfordshire benefiting from the £1 billion extra nationally in the Personal Social Services Grant, as announced in the Coalition's Spending Review in October 2010?

Cabinet Member Reply

“It was stated at the last Cabinet, that the £1bn had been included in the total revenue support grant, but it was not possible to determine what share was available to Oxfordshire. However, if it had not been included it would have meant that the total level of funding to the authority would have been further reduced. This position still remains the case.”

4. In the event that the answer to (3) above is "no", has the Cabinet member written, or will he write, to the minister responsible to ask where the money is?