

## **CABINET – 20 SEPTEMBER 2011**

### **ITEM 4 – QUESTIONS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLORS**

Questions received from the following Member:

#### **Councillor Roy Darke to the Cabinet Member for Finance & Property**

1. “Given the large number of changes in prospect for local government finance and the serious implications that these will have on the County Council's budget will the Cabinet Member ensure that all members are fully briefed about the changes and their impacts?”

#### **Answer**

“We are planning to include any updates on Local Government Resource Review (LGRR) on the planned Member briefings which happen throughout the budget process, although we have also added in another one, 29th September - following on after Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee - to ensure that members are informed of the consultation details in plenty of time before the required response on 24th October.”

2. “The 2011/12 Financial Monitoring and Business Strategy Delivery report includes substantial carry forwards and virements. Are the current arrangements for reporting and discussing these fit for purpose? Surely the relevant scrutiny committees should be where these are discussed rather than solely by the Cabinet?”

#### **Answer**

“Virements are regulated under the Constitution Part 3.3 which is updated as part of the Budget process – please see Council Agenda for 15<sup>th</sup> February 2011 Agenda item 8 (annex 7) Service & Resource Planning 2011/12 – 2015/16 Virement Rules 2011/12.

Virements for approval or noting are reported to Cabinet in the Financial Monitoring & Business Strategy Delivery Report each month. If a virement is permanent and involves a major change of policy or is a temporary virement of more than £500,000, then Council's approval is required. In the case of the virements approved by Council on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the sums for Carry Forward for CEF, S&CS and E & E were all of more than £500,000 and represented the outturn carry forward sums from 2010/11. The details of these virements had been considered by the Strategy & Partnerships Scrutiny Committee meeting of 21<sup>st</sup> July 2011 at agenda item 6 – Provisional Outturn Overview, commentary by the Cabinet Member for Finance. The Strategy &

Partnerships Scrutiny Committee also considers the Financial Monitoring Reports on a Quarterly basis.

Of course there is nothing to stop any Scrutiny Committee deciding to examine virements pertinent to its responsibilities but I do not consider that it would be a good use of its valuable time.”