

- 5.2.3 There has been a low level of service to children with disabilities and no dedicated field social work service as such other than that provided by the Hospital Social Work Team.
- 5.2.4 There has been a well developed and very high quality Day Care Service. There has also been a well developed and resourced specialist adolescent services team working with some young people in a preventative manner and providing court work.
- 5.2.5 Care has been of an overall high quality in terms of standards and localised changes have taken place over a number of years to individual parts of the service. All of these changes have improved the service affected.
- 5.2.6 As a result currently within Social Services the main Child Care Services focus is on Child Protection Work and children looked after by the Local Authority (in care and accommodated).

5.3 Changes

- 5.3.1 The changes introduced by the Children Act 1989 drastically change the relationships between the Local Authority, children and their parents. The Local Authority may not "judge" parents but must provide services to enable children wherever possible to remain with their families, whilst ensuring that the child's welfare is still the first consideration.
- 5.3.2 This will require a major shift in resources into being able to provide genuine preventative services to support families in the care of their children.
- 5.3.3 Choice, control of their own "services", and involvement in the provision of services, coupled with the requirement to work in partnership with parents all require shifts in resources towards an assessment and care management approach.
- 5.3.4 The Criminal Justice Act will require Local Authorities to become the main provider of "Juvenile Justice Services" including provision for secure accommodation as a disposal, and other services to young people that are used as sentences by the courts. These services are not compatible with care and welfare as they are primarily control and punishment resources. They will be however much more appropriate to meet the specific needs of young offenders than adult penal institutions and sentence outcomes.
- 5.3.5 Going Local requires that Social Services provide child care services that are appropriate to the needs of local communities as expressed by the local communities. Close working relationships with neighbourhood community services teams are needed.
- ~~5.3.6 Financial Constraints as a result of the Community Charge that services must be efficient and cost effective and that developments are achieved by realignment of services rather than by new money wherever possible.~~

5.4 Outline Strategy

- 5.4.1 In order to tackle the many changes I propose:- that a Residential Review take place to establish a smaller, but much higher quality residential care service with specific and explicit types of residential provision.