

PR Well, I read the RAP so I have a copy of the RAP paper at home and I read it and re-read it again very carefully. Its been reprinted in the Rochdale Observer since and there is no explicit sexual harassment there and he never denied actual hitting people. In his case that's what his mother used to do to him, you know. As I say, we are all creatures of our time and the time then was very different from what it is now.

AH Just before we talk a bit about Knowl View school which you will have seen from the documents you had a chance to look at is what we have got the most information about. did you ever come across in your time in the Council any allegations or concerns of sexual abuse allegations at other schools or homes governed by Rochdale? I've got a few specific names to throw at you: Foxholes Children's Home?

PR Well I know Foxholes, yes. I mean I was never a member of Social Services

AH No, I appreciate that.

PR So from my point of view there were Councillors in my party that, and there was always a group of councillors that monitored the homes on a regular basis and went round

AH Who would that tend to be?

PR Members, it would have been a subset of people who were on Social Services

AH Oh, I see.

PR So for example, my ward colleague at the time, Phyllis Tweeddale used to be on it, Rita Sargentson was another one, they are both dead. Angela Corrick was another one. They used to go round and they used to talk to the children. But no, I wasn't aware of any specific allegation.

AH Here's a couple of other names but the same might apply: Poplar House?

PR Poplar House, I recall that one.

AH Elmfield?

PR Elmfield was in my ward.

AH Any allegations or suspicions there?

PR No, but it was closed while I was a councillor. I think I recall at the time that was to do with a change in we were trying to put children into foster homes. No allegation was ever made to me about there and certainly, as I say, I visited it as a ward councillor, I was not aware that there was any particular issues with it. The only issue I was aware of was the Langley satanic abuse issue.

AH I might ask you about that in just a second. The final one is Cambridge House, which I appreciate closed in the '60s but apart from the RAP article about Cyril Smith did you ever hear anything about abuse there?

PR No, no never.

AH Okay. Just questions about the political culture of Rochdale and also the fallout of the Langley case. We picked up that there doesn't seem to be much love lost between political parties in Rochdale.

PR I think in any local authority where there is a tight election between political parties there can be strong personalities. Certainly what I've always tried to do when I have been involved is develop. When I took over in '92 the authority was in a mess. The fact that the Chair of Social Services, the Chair of Education lost their seats at the time and what I tried to do was build a much