

I then began restructuring the department. It was decided to delete my post and have two assistants posts one for adults and one for children, I was designated as Senior Director to act if the Director was absent.

I was assistant director for adults. In 1992 Jane HALL was appointed Assistant Director for Children. Tony KITCHEN was appointed assistant director for Resources.

Around 1991-92 I was aware there was a concern about Knowl View School, Ian DAVEY was acting director at that time. I didn't know what the concerns were, I never attended any meeting or had sight of any correspondence in regard to this.

I was the Deputy Director I would have had to act in Ian's absence. I would have expected to be briefed about it and also consulted on how to deal with it I had a lot of experience in Child Protection. My perception of Ian DAVEY after Middleton was that he became very concerned to do what the councillors wanted. He took the de-centralisation project off me and did it himself. I didn't feel the structure that he designed was a safe one.

My relationship with Richard FARNELL deteriorated because I was seen as not to carry out the wishes of the Council. Richard FARNELL was a very intelligence far sighted council leader, but he bullied and brow beat people.

I got on well with most of the other councillors, Pamela HAWTIN and Norman CARTH and Jane GARSIDE.

There was inappropriate interference on departmental matters by Richard FARNELL and Cyril SMITH. With Cyril it was to do with individual cases. With Richard it was not co-operating with a certain council initiative.

John PEARCE had appropriate dealings with the department in my opinion. He would listen to what you had to say, John would speak directly to members, he would give them his advice whether they liked it or not.

The FARNELL regime would not listen to advice, they'd wanted something doing in a particular way. My approach was that social workers should be sufficient to provide a quality of services both in child care and mental health and that the Council approach would not provide the public with a robust or safe service. From before I went to Rochdale I'd heard rumours about Cyril SMITH acting inappropriately with boys and teenagers. I thought it was political.

In the 70's I think 1979 the Rochdale Alternative Press printed a story about Cyril it included affidavits from boys who had been abused. It was an election year and following the article Cyril's majority increased.

Nothing happened as a result of this or I wasn't aware of anything happening within Social Services. In my capacity as a social worker I never visited Cambridge House or Knowl View Residential School. I never was aware of any referrals from either establishment regarding abuse.

With regards to Phil SHEPHERD'S and Val MELLOR'S reports I was not aware at the time of these reports and never saw them.

In my opinion I believe I should have been informed of the report. I know at the time there were no procedures in place for dealing with professional abuse but this was clearly a child protection matter and should have been dealt with Police and Education the children should have been spoken to and safeguarded.

The police should have been informed to carry out their investigation. The Chief Executive should have been made fully aware of the incidents.

I have to say when I heard the rumours about Knowl View, I'd found there were management difficulties at some time.

In 1992 Labour lost the council and FARNELL lost his seat. I had some contact with Paul FLOWERS who was Deputy Chair of Social Services, he was on the interview panel for Assistant Director of Social Services. I dealt with Bill LAWLEY, head of legal services quite a lot to do with child protection matters and also when I was Assistant Director. I had very little contact with Diana CAVANAGH. I have met her. I think we did some review of a child protection matter.

I seem to remember the name Martin DIGAN but don't recall ever having any contact with me.

Around June this year I became aware of the Knowl View Investigation. I made contact with the Chief Executive at Rochdale and told them I was working for Rochdale at the relevant time if I could assist with background he said he would pass my details to Mr GARNHAM QC. I was due to go and see him but the enquiry was suspended.