

# Report



meeting	SOCIAL SERVICES STANDING SELECT COMMITTEE	
date	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2004	agenda item number

## **REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **SERVICES FOR DISABLED CHILDREN**

#### **1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To advise Members of the Social Services Standing Select Committee on changes to Government Policy which will impact on the future direction of services to disabled children and their families and to assist Members with evaluating the degree to which the Department is meeting the key overall success criteria in relation to the Best Value Improvement Plan for Disabled Children and their Families.
- 1.2 To update Members on the occupancy rates for short breaks for disabled children in the County.

#### **2. Information and Advice**

- 2.1 The Best Value Review of Services to Disabled Children and their Families took place in 2000-2001. An Improvement Plan was drawn up, and regular updates have been provided to Members through the Children's Forum (Commissioning and Direct Services) as well as Select Committee and Cabinet. At the meeting of the Select Committee on November 4<sup>th</sup> 2003 and the Cabinet meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2003, Members requested further information in relation to the Success Criteria of the Best Value Improvement Plan.

Member of the Select Committee undertook a review of Children's Residential Services in 2003 Report went to Cabinet on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2003. Information about Short Breaks was requested to be incorporated in relation to progress of Best Value Improvement Plan for disabled children.

#### **2.2 Changes in Government Policy**

- 2.2.1 Since the Improvement Plan was drawn up and implemented in 2001, there have been a number of changes to Government Policy. This has influenced the delivery of the Improvement Plan and has necessitated some fine-tuning

to the detail of the Plan. At the start of the Quality Protects Programme in 1999, there was a single performance indicator for disabled children, with the requirement for the number of disabled children receiving respite care to increase annually. Over the course of the programme, Councils reported to the Department of Health that they were finding this a 'perverse' indicator in that this indicator did not 'fit' with the requirement to increase funding to improve access to social and community resources for this user group, and for more disabled children to be supported within their own homes.

2.2.2 In April 2002, this performance indicator ceased and was replaced. The new indicator sought information on 'The number of disabled children supported in their families or living independently in the Children in Need Census week, February 2003, per 10,000 children under 18'.

2.2.3 In Nottinghamshire, this figure was 24.1, equating to 396 disabled children. This figure was reported in the Delivery and Improvement Statement to the Department of Health in Spring 2003. The next Children in Need Census week will be in 2005.

2.2.4 In Autumn 2003, the Government published a Green Paper 'Every Child Matters'. Following a national consultation period which ended in December 2003, a Children's Bill will be published in 2004 based on this document.

2.2.5 The Green Paper proposes four main areas for development:

- (a) early intervention and effective protection
- (b) supporting parents and carers
- (c) accountability and integration – locally, regionally and nationally
- (d) work place reform

2.2.6 In addition, the Green Paper has five key outcomes for children:

- (a) being healthy
- (b) staying safe
- (c) enjoying and achieving
- (d) making a positive contribution
- (e) economic well-being

A full copy of the Green Paper is available as a background paper.

2.2.7 The proposal to provide early preventive services in order to avoid children needing the highly specialised high cost services is fundamental to the Improvement Plan for Disabled Children. It fits in with the strategy to develop and provide high volume low cost flexible services to support disabled children living in their own families, accessing local community resources as opposed to receiving high cost low volume services, such as residential short breaks at first point of referral/service delivery, as has often been the case in the past.

- 2.2.8 Our strategy is, therefore, to develop new and flexible ways of providing short breaks for disabled children and their carers by enabling them to access social and leisure resources close to their home, such as the provision of Saturday Clubs linking into local Youth Clubs for disabled teenagers. This will provide carers with regular breaks and will provide disabled children and young people with opportunities to enjoy themselves in their local community on a par with their peers.
- 2.2.9 The successful development of these schemes will ensure that the residential short breaks service will continue to provide a service for those disabled children with high level needs, ensure that disabled children with lower level needs are not inappropriately placed in residential care and ensure that the current trend of no waiting lists for a residential short break service continues.

### 2.3 Best Value Review Success Criteria

- 2.3.1 The overall aim of the Improvement Plan is to produce better value outcomes in meeting the social care needs of disabled children by shifting the balance of investment towards community and family-based services. This is intended to extend the range and reach of services to allow more children and families to access support services in less institutional settings. The success of the Improvement Plan is based on the following criteria:

#### 2.4 Increased Proportion of Overall Service Spend on Community and Family based Services

##### **Current Status: Increased Spend**

- 2.4.1 During the past year in particular, there has been increased investment in order to develop more community and family-based services. This includes the establishment of a specialist disabled children's team in the north of the County, with the creation of five new social worker posts and 2.5 fte social work assistant posts. In addition 1.5 fte team manager posts were created. With the existing locality Quality Protects funded social workers, the new team has an establishment of 14 workers. The total cost of this new investment in staff is £447,000.
- 2.4.2 A pilot Direct Payments scheme was implemented in 2003 with an initial start up budget of £33,000. Further investment is planned as and when funding becomes available.
- 2.4.3 A community resource budget of £15,000 per year has been identified for the north team to enable them to buy in services to individual families to support disabled children living with their families.
- 2.4.4 A new children's home care service is to be implemented in early 2004 for children in need, with 60% of the overall budget ring-fenced for disabled children. Current home care commitments to children equals £70,000 of the

budget. An additional £30,000 has been allocated for 2004/2005 to ensure capacity for new work.

2.4.5 A temporary project manager has been funded by the Quality Protects grant to develop and implement Saturday Club provision for disabled children.

2.4.6 £50,000 of Choice Protects funding has been ring-fenced to develop a Contract Carers scheme (family-based short breaks service) for disabled children.

## 2.5 Increased numbers of Children and Families Supported

### **Current status: Upward trend**

2.5.1 The Children in Need Census figures of February 2003 shows that 396 disabled children were actively supported during that week. Current open cases to social work teams are around 550, an increase from 291 in September 2002. These figures include open cases to the north team, south team and the Fusion 4 multi-agency team. Some cases also remain within reception and assessment, and children in need teams. Full transfer to the specialist teams should be completed by March 2004.

2.5.2 The total number of disabled children's open cases across **all** services within the Department from December 2002 to September 2003 shows some fluctuation, but the general trend is upward. These services include the team for visual impairment, county deaf team, children's home care, occupational therapy teams, family centres and transitions co-ordinators.

- Open cases at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2002 - 977
- Open cases at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002 - 1128
- Open cases at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2003 - 1208
- Open cases 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003 - 1137
- Open cases at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2003 - 1197

## 2.6 Increased Numbers of Disabled Children Supported by Family or Community Based Services

2.6.1 This information is not currently available and will be presented in a future report.

## 2.7 Increased Numbers of Disabled Children Supported to Access Leisure and Social Facilities

### **Current status: Improving**

2.7.1 District-based family centres provide access to play schemes and local community provision for disabled children under the Breaks in Partnership scheme. They provide the main area of work under this heading. This work is funded from the children's proportion of the Carers Grant. There have been some difficulties with accurate data collection in this area with some

family centres reporting on the numbers of carers supported and other family centres reporting the actual number of disabled children supported. The available figures suggest however, that 200 children were supported in this way during this financial year with an approximate increase of 50 from last year. Further work will be undertaken to improve the current reporting arrangements.

- 2.7.2 In April 2002, funding from the Quality Protects Grant was agreed to provide District-based Saturday provision for disabled children to access social and leisure activities in their local community. There was a delay in the implementation of this project due to there being no available lead to take this project forward. In September 2002, the service manager for disabled children came into post and a feasibility study was commissioned from the play centre for disabled children and their families to research options for models of provision, identify the costs, accessible venues and carry out consultation with disabled children and their carers. The initial target group of children are those who are waiting for a service from the county short breaks team for a sitting and befriending service. Currently 70 children are waiting for this service.
- 2.7.3 In March 2003, the feasibility study was completed and from May 2003, a county-wide multi-agency group has met on a monthly basis to implement the recommendations. It was clear that a project development worker was required to co-ordinate and implement the scheme given the complexity and range of the project. The post was advertised during Summer 2003 and the post holder commenced his duties in September 2003. The post holder is based at and managed by the Play Centre. The contract is temporary until May 2004.
- 2.7.4 The project worker has been instrumental in bringing together key agencies to assist with the roll out of this project. The target is for Saturday provision to be launched in the Bassetlaw area by April 2004. Bassetlaw has been chosen as the pilot area as historically this district has the least resources for disabled children, a factor referred to in the recent Social Services Inspectorate (SSI) inspection of Services to Children and Families in Nottinghamshire. It is intended that there will then be an incremental approach to implementing the project in other districts with a view to full implementation by March 2005.
- 2.7.5 A series of 'Fun Days' are also being planned to take place in each district area during, and after February half-term this year as a means of providing a taster for disabled children and providing the opportunity for further consultation on a local basis.
- 2.7.6 This project is a complex one, involving children with a range of special needs, some of whom would have great difficulty in integrating into a group environment. For some children therefore, individual planning will be required and provision provided on a one-to-one basis. Some children will also have health/medical needs and where this is the case, there will be a necessity for trained workers to provide their physical care during the Saturday sessions. This has implications for the human resources required to operate this project

county-wide. A consistent and dedicated team of helpers need to be recruited, training provided and funding identified to ensure the continuation of the project.

- 2.7.7 Current estimates show that a minimum of £70,000 per year is required to operate the project. This includes the hire of venues, payment of sessional staff, transport costs and the employment of the project worker up until May 2004. Some additional funding will also be required to pay for the Ofsted registration for each venue plus an annual Ofsted inspection. This will incur an additional £2,000-£3,000 per year. The Department will fund the total cost of the project for 2004-2005, via the Quality Protects proportion of the mainstream children's grant.
- 2.7.8 The project worker post will be reviewed in January 2004. The original intention was that from April 2004, a Steering Group would be established in each district area with local representatives being members of the group including staff from Family Centres, Culture and Community Department, Education, Voluntary Sector and a parent/child representative on each Group. Whilst this still the intention, it seems likely that there will be a need for the project worker to oversee and co-ordinate the work of these groups to ensure that the project maintains momentum. Should this prove to be the case, additional funding will need to be sought. As the project worker is based at the Play Centre, there will be opportunities for applying for funding via charities and the Lottery. However, there is no guarantee of success and funding to continue the project worker post in 2004-2005 may be required from the Department.
- 2.7.9 Whilst the initial target group of children is those who are waiting for a sitting and befriending service, the vision is that if the project is successful, it will be opened out to more disabled children and young people in local areas in the future. It is also intended that the project will have close links with local Breaks in Partnership Schemes and Youth Clubs for disabled young people. This will provide excellent opportunities for disabled children to form a peer group in their home area as well as access to other social and community resources outside the specialist Saturday provision.
- 2.7.10 A progress update on the Development and Implementation of the Saturday Club Project is timetabled for a future agenda.

## 2.8 Improved Levels of User – Satisfaction with Information about Services

### **Current status: Improving**

- 2.8.1 Much work has been carried out on improving access to information for disabled children and their carers. The lead for this has been taken by Fusion 4, the new multi-agency team funded by the Invest To Save project and SHINE, the County Council's children's disability information register and information service. There is now an integrated Fusion 4, SHINE and County Council website which is updated regularly.

2.8.2 By April 2004, the three specialist disability teams (north, south and Fusion 4) will be fully operational in terms of receiving direct referrals and conducting all initial and core assessments for disabled children. It is planned that carers and children will be asked to complete a user satisfaction form at the completion of assessments. The form will also ask their views on access to information and will be used to monitor the quality of services provided from a consumer point of view.

2.9 A Higher Proportion of Disabled Children Assessed as Needing Full Time Care Being Provided by Foster Families

**Current Status – Improving**

2.9.1 There are currently 19 children with permanent and substantial disabilities being cared for by foster carers on a long term basis. The fostering service has managed to ensure that these placements are available by the flexible use of support packages – which may include additional finance or access to short breaks. In one situation, the Department is providing the finance for the foster carers house to be adapted for wheelchair access.

2.9.2 The fostering service is also finalising a new initiative which will enable carers to become salaried carers on the undertaking they will offer up to eight links to children whose family are assessed as in need of a short term break.

2.10 Reduced waiting times for services

2.10.1 The following tables show the waiting times for family based short breaks – both foster carer and sitters and befriender:

**Current Status – Slight Improvement**

**As at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2002:**

Summary:

2.10.2 Compared to the December 2002 figures the overall numbers waiting has dropped from 15 to 10. It is anticipated that the impending Contract Carers (salaried carers) service will prioritise several of the remaining children, who have highly complex needs.

2.10.3 In line with policy there has been an emphasis on providing 'lower level' services such as sitting and befriending prior to consideration of short breaks requiring accommodation (118 children benefiting from this service in the year 2002-03). There has consequently been a huge rise in referrals to this service and 54 new referrals were received in the year. Overall, the numbers waiting have increased by 16 in 2002.

**SHORT BREAKS FOR DISABLED CHILDREN WAITING LIST**

**Awaiting Foster Care Service (by locality)**

<b>Waiting Time</b>	<b>Mansfield &amp; Ashfield</b>	<b>Newark Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-6 months	3	2	3	8
6-12 months	0	1	3	4
12 months +	2	1	0	3
	5	4	6	15

#### **Awaiting Sitter/Befriender Service**

##### **Number of Sitter/Befrienders: 60**

<b>Waiting Time</b>	<b>Mansfield &amp; Ashfield</b>	<b>Newark Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Broxtowe Gedling and Rushcliffe</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-6 months	21	6	7	34
6-12 months	3	2	4	9
12 months +	2	3	5	10
	26	11	16	53

#### **Awaiting Foster Care Service (by locality)**

<b>Waiting Time</b>	<b>Mansfield &amp; Ashfield</b>	<b>Newark Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Broxtowe Gedling and Rushcliffe</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-6 months	1	1	2	4
6-12 months	0	1	1	2
12 months +	0	1	3	4
	1	3	6	10

#### **Awaiting Sitter/Befriender Service**

##### **Number of Sitter/Befrienders: 71**

<b>Waiting Time</b>	<b>Mansfield &amp; Ashfield</b>	<b>Newark Bassetlaw</b>	<b>Broxtowe Gedling and Rushcliffe</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Waiting Time</b>	<b>M &amp; A</b>	<b>N/B</b>	<b>BRG</b>	<b>Total</b>
0-6 months	11	6	10	27
6-12 months	6	6	8	20



12 months +	10	4	8	22
	27	16	26	69

## 2.11 Reduced Assessment Times

2.11.1 The following tables show the number of initial and core assessments of disabled children completed within the assessment framework timescales from June 2002 to September 2003.

### **Current status: Improvement Required**

<b>Percentage of Initial assessments completed within timescale (Target : 90% of initial assessments to be completed within 7 working days of referral)</b>	
<b>Quarter ending:</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
June 2002	69%
September 2002	60%
December 2002	69%
March 2003	69%
June 2003	58%
September 2003	64%

<b>Percentage of Core assessments completed within timescale (Target: 90% of core assessments to be completed within 35 working days of referral)</b>	
<b>Quarter ending:</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
June 2002	39%
September 2002	100%
December 2002	73%
March 2003	14%
June 2003	33%
September 2003	60%

2.11.2 From these tables, it is clear there is need for improvement in achieving timescales. Possible reasons for the poor figures include child protection referrals taking precedent in reception and assessment teams plus the historical difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff in these teams.

2.11.3 The move to disabled children's teams taking direct referrals from April 2004 should enable improved timescales and this will be carefully monitored.

## 2.12 Improved assessment quality and less assessments being undertaken that lead to no services being provided

### **Current status: Improving**

2.12.1 The best indicator for this is the quality of reports provided to the Inter Agency Panel for Short Term Breaks and the outcome of applications to Panel. Over the past year, an increasing number of reports provided have been submitted by specialist disability workers with less submitted by mainstream workers. This seems to have improved the quality and analysis of assessments. There are now very few applications to Panel which have resulted in no short term break service provided. In the very small number of cases where no service has been provided, the reason has been that the application was inappropriate or community resources have not been accessed first.

3. **Increase the number of children receiving overnight respite care as part of their family support package**

3.1 The occupancy levels at Caudwell House and The Big House have been consistently high, but there have been ongoing issues about the level of occupancy at Minster View.

3.2 The agreement to extensively refurbish Minster View to provide 8 residential and 8 respite beds was passed by the Social Services Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1999.

3.3 However, the staffing establishment proposed at the time was only sufficient for providing a service to 12 young people. This position reflected a revenue budget hole and the intention was that this would be addressed over the next 3 years as the service became established.

3.4 The staffing establishment has now been set for 2004/05 to reflect the full potential occupancy of 16 beds. This includes the addition of 5 residential support workers recommended by the Residential Review Study Group.

3.5 For the financial year 2000/01 the funding arrangements for this service also relied on continued revenue income from sale of beds to Nottingham City, amounting to £211,640 per annum and the further sale of 3 beds was needed to generate income of £261,507 for the 2000/01 budget to balance. This position has clearly had an impact on the immediate and short term potential use of all 16 beds.

3.6 From its conception the eligibility criteria was established to offer those young people and families with the greatest need, and least likely to be able to receive support from community-based support packages.

3.7 The eligibility criteria for Minster View is 'any child looking to be placed at Minster View either on a residential basis or on a short term break will have a severe learning disability combined with manifestations of challenging and difficult behaviour'. In light of a recommendation from the Residential Review Study Group this has been reviewed (see 3.16 Potential Options from Change).

- 3.8 The current criteria and approach supports the philosophy that children's needs are best met in family and local community services in the first instance.
- 3.9 Therefore, at the time of its development, Minster View was established to meet a need that currently could not be met elsewhere in the county for young people with severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour. There was at this time no residential short break provision for children in the conurbation. Those children from North Nottinghamshire Health Authority boundaries had their needs met at The Big House (formerly Edwinstowe Hall).
- 3.10 Minster View became operational in April 2000 and occupancy rates have been steadily increasing since then. Progress in relation to this has been significantly affected by the difficulty in managing a young woman who posed a significant risk to other young people. She moved to another placement at the beginning of 2003.
- 3.11 There is a view that children meeting the eligibility criteria have not been able to access a service because of staffing difficulties at the Unit. This is not borne out by information from the Inter-Agency Panel that sits to allocate resources to disabled children. Children have not been accepted for a service at Minster View when they have not met the eligibility criteria.
- 3.12 It should be noted that occupancy figures for The Big House have been consistently in the region of 90%. This service provided approximate 90 children a short break. However, these are largely the same 90 children who have received this service and once full, there is little opportunity for new admissions to the service. Children as young as four are accepted for the service and then continue to need the service up to and beyond adulthood. This is a significant factor to consider in relation to the eligibility criteria.
- 3.13 The information below shows the numbers of children/young people receiving short term breaks for the following (April/March) years: 2000/2001, 2001/2002 & 2002/2003. Minster View has 6 beds for short term breaks.

**Table 1 - 2000/01**

<b>Residential Unit</b>	<b>Number of young people receiving care</b>	<b>Bed capacity for short term breaks</b>	<b>Occupancy rate against capacity</b>
<b>Big House</b>	96	8 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 2920	2715 nights used - occupancy rate of 93%
<b>Caudwell House</b>	78	10 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 3650	2780 nights used – occupancy rate of 76%

<b>Minster View</b>		6 beds	No figures available – gearing up/pilot period for stb
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**Table 2 - 2001/02**

<b>Residential Unit</b>	<b>Number of young people receiving care</b>	<b>Bed capacity for short term breaks</b>	<b>Occupancy rate against capacity</b>
<b>Big House</b>	92	8 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 2,920	2628 nights used – occupancy rate of 90%
<b>Caudwell House *</b>	74	10 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 3650 *	2546 nights used – occupancy rate of 70% *
<b>Minster View</b>	32	6 beds ( x 365 = max capacity Of 2190	905 nights used – occupancy rate of 41%

\* (Caudwell House's capacity to deliver short breaks during this financial year was affected by the closure of four beds for a part of the reporting period due to acute, but temporary staffing shortages – therefore their occupancy rate declines against the units virtual as opposed to actual capacity during this period)

**Table 3 - 2002/3**

<b>Residential Unit</b>	<b>Number of young people receiving care</b>	<b>Bed capacity for short term breaks</b>	<b>Occupancy rate against capacity</b>
<b>Big House</b>	91	8 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 2920	2745 nights used – occupancy rate of 94%
<b>Caudwell House</b>	72	10 beds (x 365) = max capacity of 3,650	3199 nights used – occupancy rate of 86%
<b>Minster View</b>	38	6 beds ( x 365) = max capacity Of 2,190	1285 nights used – occupancy rate of 59%

3.14 Children Receiving Short Term Breaks via the Fostering Home From Home Scheme

**Table 4 - 2000/01**

<b>Number of children receiving stb</b>	<b>Number of children receiving befriending sessions</b>	<b>Number of carers</b>	<b>Overnight Sessions (short term breaks)</b>
99	35	67	901

**Table 5 - 2001/2**

<b>Number of children receiving stb</b>	<b>Number of children receiving befriending sessions</b>	<b>Number of carers</b>	<b>Overnight Sessions (short term breaks)</b>
90	76	68	895

**Table 6 - 2002/03**

<b>Number of children receiving short term breaks</b>	<b>Number of children receiving befriending sessions</b>	<b>Number of carers</b>	<b>Overnight Sessions (short term breaks)</b>
75	118	65	724

### 3.15 Children Currently in Placements in the Independent Sector

There are nine children with permanent and substantial disabilities placed in the independent sector. The total cost to children's services is £371,232 for these nine children. Education and Health also contribute additional funding. This cost equates to an average of £793 per week for each child.

## **Review of Eligibility Criteria for Minster View**

### 3.16 Potential Options for Change

#### 3.16.1 **Option 1**

To retain current eligibility criteria and have capacity to continue to offer short breaks to those children meeting criteria.

<b><u>Benefits</u></b>	<b><u>Drawbacks</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can continue to offer children service where their needs would not be met by other services in Nottinghamshire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not full occupancy therefore affects unit costs</li> <li>▪ Children with moderate learning</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Service is staffed and staff trained appropriately to meet the needs of particularly challenging children</li> <li>▪ Needs led service not resource led</li> <li>▪ Supports the ethos of children's needs being best met in their own homes, or supported in community based services</li> </ul>	<p>disabilities/challenging behaviour needs not met by this service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If appropriate short breaks are not available then home placement could be a risk which could result in full time accommodation in Out of County placement.</li> </ul>
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### 3.16.2 Option 2

Revise eligibility criteria to include short breaks to any child with learning disability from Broxtowe, Gedling and Rushcliffe.

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Drawbacks</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased occupancy rates - lower unit costs</li> <li>▪ More families could access short break service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1<sup>st</sup> come first served basis. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not reflective of need.</li> <li>- Not equitable service</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Could not respond to need of more challenging child</li> <li>▪ Children with less complex needs and challenging behaviour would be at significant risk for others</li> <li>▪ Likely to have to purchase expensive out of county placement</li> <li>▪ Would only meet the needs of Additional 40 families - need is greater</li> <li>▪ Would necessitate a change to all the established patterns of care to accommodate children with less need</li> <li>▪ Strong parental objection to change of current care and from those who cannot access service because full</li> <li>▪ Little throughput and opportunity</li> </ul>

	to offer care to other families as children stay with the service until 19years
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### 3.16.3 Option 3

Revise criteria to include some children with mild/moderate learning disabilities.

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Drawbacks</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased occupancy</li> <li>▪ Lower unit costs</li> <li>▪ More families access Short Break Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As above in Option 2</li> <li>▪ Only meet need of additional 20 families</li> </ul>

### 3.16.4 Option 4

Reconfigure how Residential Short Breaks is delivered across County, e.g. Minster View 8 beds mild/moderate learning disability, 8 bed severe disability and challenging behaviour. Eight residential beds offered at The Big House.

<u>Benefits</u>	<u>Drawbacks</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Responsive flexible service</li> <li>▪ Full occupancy</li> <li>▪ Lower unit costs</li> <li>▪ Increase service to approximately 100 children</li> <li>▪ Meet a need currently not met</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All children at The Big House would move to Minster View -</li> <li>▪ Major disruption</li> <li>▪ Parental objections</li> <li>▪ Located South of County, less accessible to those parents</li> <li>▪ Jointly funded venture with Health - would need Health's agreement. Likely to want more funding to deliver support in a different way</li> <li>▪ Therefore funding hole for Social Services to continue to deliver service</li> </ul>

3.16.5 From the review of the eligibility criteria various options have been considered (above). In consultation with the Director of Social Services and the Portfolio Holder for Social Services, it is agreed that Option 1 will continue as the most

appropriate option to continue to meet the needs of those children with severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour.

3.16.6 It is essential that we retain the capacity to meet the needs of children with severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour. Should Minster View provide short breaks for children with less complex needs, this is likely to increase the numbers of children whose needs cannot be met in other ways in Nottinghamshire. This would increase the potential for further expensive Out of County placements. Providing for both categories of children would increase the risks for more able children and would necessitate the re-configuring of current short break arrangements with current need. It is anticipated that by the end of 2004, occupancy rates for Minster View will be in the region of 80%.

3.16.7 This approach is consistent with the principles and actions in the Best Value Implementation Plan for Disabled Children with and their Families.

#### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 It is recommended that:

- (a) Members note and comment on this report
- (b) a further report is present to the Social Services Standing Select committee in March on the progress of the Development and Implementation of the Saturday Club Project. Further progress updates on the Best Value Implementation Plan will be timetabled for a future agenda in 6 months time.

#### **5. Background Papers Available for Inspection**

5.1 Green Paper – Every Child Matters.

**STUART BROOK**  
**Director of Social Services**

Comm(M)SFDIC(a).JS