

**Chief Executive of Ridgeway Primary Care Group: Shaun Brogan**  
**Partnership Select Committee – 23 February 2001**

Initial discussion centred on the structure of the PCG and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) being established from 1 April 2001. Mr Brogan confirmed that although the new PCT was the merging of the Ridgeway PCG, Aylesbury Vale PCG and Aylesbury Vale Community Trust there would be no more money available for expansion.

Ridgeway PCG currently works in partnership with Social Services and the Health Services, although working relationships are satisfactory, they could be better. Two areas of particular difficulty highlighted were Joint Commissioning for mental health and learning disability services. Little progress had been made, on the development of this, however a meeting had been scheduled for week commencing 5 March 2001 to take this forward. The second area of difficulty related to an “attached Social Worker project”, this is an initiative where GP’s surgeries have an allocated Social Worker attached to their practice. This speeds up the process of assessment and practices are keen to develop this. A surgery in Princes Risborough has an attached social worker and this has proved to be an extremely successful initiative. The PCG had spoken to Social Services regarding this initiative and development, however concerns had been raised at the cost implications.

The Committee discussed resourcing issues in terms of financial difficulties, particularly as more and more resources are hypothecated to specific element of the NHS Plan. This means that finding money for basic services is increasingly onerous. Alongside recruitment concerns, an ageing population, technological advances and raised expectations, both health and social services are working in a “stretched” environment.

It was reported that although there had been fewer problems in 2000/01 Winter Planning it was felt that focus should not just be on a “winter” only, but on emergency admissions all year round.