



Dear Contractor,

We are writing to you as your four Chief Officers, as we will need your approval for several actions we believe we need to take as the four Black Country LPC's.

Following the PSNC and RPG proposals, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, and Wolverhampton LPC's have liaised over the past few months, resulting in this information pack going out to you. Please would you read all the documents enclosed.

Document One- proposed timeline, webinar link, and online voting form link

Document Two- Position Statement from the four Black Country LPC's

Document Three- briefing and explanation on the online voting form

After considering the proposals, the LPC's would like you to vote online using the voting form link on Document One. If anyone has any questions about the proposals, or issues with them, there will be an LPC 'at-home' online webinar on Wednesday February 22nd. 2023, at 7.00 to 8.00pm. The link to join this is also on Document One, and any contractor can quiz the LPC representatives present, following a short presentation.

The intention is to merge the four LPC's within a 24-month period finishing by July 2025, but a target date of March 31st. 2025 has been set by the four Chief Officers, to facilitate ongoing elections.

Kind regards to all our contractors,

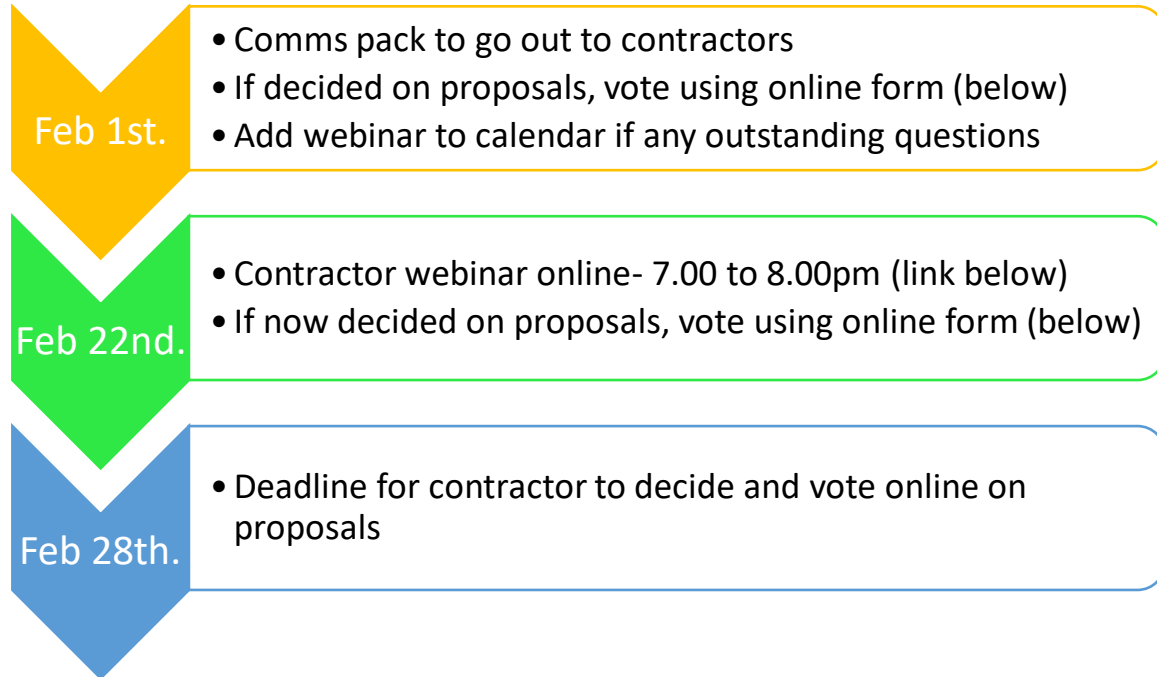
Jeff Blankley, Community Pharmacy Wolverhampton

Ali Din, Sandwell LPC

Jan Nicholls, Walsall LPC

Stephen Noble, Dudley LPC

Document ONE- Proposed Timeline Webinar Link and Voting Form Link



[Black Country LPCs Contractor Webinar Link](#)

[Contractor Voting Form Link](#)



Document TWO- Position Statement

Position Statement on the RSG Proposals from the four Black Country LPC's

The four Chief Officers plus two Chairs of Dudley, Sandwell, and Walsall LPC's, and Community Pharmacy Wolverhampton, met recently to decide how to respond as a single voice to the RSG proposals.

The four respective committees had differing views over how to move forward with the proposals. Staying independent, federating or completely merging was discussed as the three most likely options. In summary:

- Walsall decided on full merger.
- Sandwell and Wolves thought federating under the right conditions was preferable.
- Dudley was split and thought the matter should be decided by the contractors.

After much discussion, the four LPC's jointly decided to recommend to their contractors, that an initial federated structure should be formed, with the proviso that a move towards full merger should be pursued to happen within a 24-month period and accompanied by a detailed plan to achieve a full merger in the agreed timescale.

The main argument for taking this stance is the timescale needed for a full merger, with all the attendant issues that would need to be addressed. The four felt that a simple federated structure could be achieved by the deadline of June 2023 set by PSNC. Then, the tasks of bringing the four onto a level playing field could be started. These included finances and reserves, communications, and the final merged structure.

The initial federated structure should address the increasing demand of community pharmacy representation at Black Country ICB level, enabling the four LPC's to speak with one voice in our dealings with the ICB, as well as NHS England.

Next steps would include a series of area-wide webinars, probably towards the end of January 2023. These would be designed to inform contractors of the arguments and decisions taken and give an opportunity to ask questions. Following that, a Black Countrywide vote for all contractors would be held. This would probably take place electronically, giving a simple agree or disagree choice on the proposal made.

Contractors would be kept informed of the progress being made towards the 24-month deadline to merger.

All four LPC's feel that this approach of federating then moving towards full merger is the most pragmatic way of achieving the proposals made by the RSG committee, giving all contractors the continuing benefits of local representation, with better performance and engagement with local and national bodies. Together with the enhanced possibility of increased efficiencies in operations, and of improvements in services, this should give Black Country contractors a stronger voice and a clearer future.



Document THREE- accompanying notes for voting form

Black Country LPCs voting form.

Section One- contractor information to verify voting rights

This section is to collect

- Sender's e-mail
- Current LPC area (*Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, or Wolverhampton*)
- Pharmacy name
- ODS (F) code
- Affiliation (*Independent, AIMp or CCA- CCA and AIMp pharmacies will vote through their Head Offices*)

Section Two- voting intentions section

This section is to gather approval or non-approval on FOUR questions

- Approval of the current committee arrangements to continue until June 30th. 2023.
- From July 2023 until July 2025, the committee size for each LPC to be set at a maximum of eight per committee (*this is to start to reduce committee sizes for uniformity and to prepare for a combined committee size of a suggested twelve*)
- Changing the name of the LPC from 'xxxx LPC' to 'Community Pharmacy xxxx' (*this would only affect Dudley, Sandwell, and Walsall and follows the PSNC move to 'Community Pharmacy England'*)
- The plan (as outlined in the joint position statement) to move from FOUR LPCs currently to ONE Black Country LPC by no later than July 2025, driven by a project team (*joint LPC to be called 'Community Pharmacy Black Country' and with a suggested two members from each LPC for the project team*)

All FOUR questions are either 'agree' or 'disagree'