

Additional PSB Meeting – Regional Merger Discussion

20 November, 11am–12pm online (Teams)

AGENDA

Members Present:		
Hazel Lloyd Lubran (HLL)	Chair, CAVO	
Gavin Bown (GB)	Vice-Chair, Natural Resources Wales	
Cllr Bryan Davies (BD)	Ceredigion County Council	
Barry Rees (BR)	Ceredigion County Council	
Steve Thomas (ST)	Aberystwyth University	
Geroge Holloway (GH)	One Voice Wales	
Vanessa Cashmore (VC)	Coleg Ceredigion	
Iwan Cray (IC)	Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service	
Trina Nealon (TN)	Hywel Dda University Health Board	
Claire Bryant (CB)	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner	
Also in attendance:		
Cllr Alun Williams (AIW)	Ceredigion County Council	
Greg Jones (GJ)	Ceredigion County Council	
Kerry Hughes (KH)	Mid and West Wales Fire Service	
Linda Jones (LJ)	Carmarthenshire County Council (RPB)	
Liz Bowen (LB)	Probation Service	
Cllr Matthew Vaux (MV)	Ceredigion County Council	
PSB Support Team:		
Diana Davies (DD)	Ceredigion County Council	
Tim Bray (TB)	Ceredigion County Council	
Neil Coetzee (NC)	Ceredigion County Council	
Teleri Elias (TE)	Ceredigion County Council	
Carol Thomas	<i>Translator</i>	
44.1a	Apologies, Introductions	
Superintendent Steve Davies – Dyfed Powys Police Megan Harries – Hywel Dda University Health Board		
44.2a.	Background and purpose of the meeting	
Hazel Lloyd Lubran (HLL) provided the background, noting that the options paper (attached below in Appendix 1) was discussed at the previous meeting in September		

when it was agreed to narrow the options down to either 2 or 3a. Partners were asked to take those options back to their organisations for discussion and return to this meeting to come to a decision.

HLL explained that during the meeting, each partner will be asked to provide their feedback on the options and work towards reaching an agreed decision.

Option 1 – No Change to Occur

Option 2 – All Three PSBs Merge

Option 3a – All Three PSBs formally (retain local PSB's)

Option 3b – All Three PSBs Collaborate (retain local PSBs) + additional Strategic Board

Option 4 – Only Two PSBs Come Together and One PSB Decides not to Join

44.3a.

Clarification from each partner organisation on their preferred option for enhanced regional collaboration

Before the discussion commenced voting eligibility was confirmed. According to the Terms of Reference, any partner who it has been agreed to be part of the board is eligible to vote.

All partners provided their input on preferred options for regional collaboration. Key points are summarised below:

Bryan Davies – Leader of Ceredigion County Council

- To ensure high level representation it's important to consider this carefully.
- Highlighted the importance of Fair Work Charter collaboration and ensuring every voice is heard.
- Noted that partners from health, NRW, fire, etc., are stretched across multiple PSB meetings.
- Emphasised the need for a different model to enable better regional working while maintaining local subgroups/task and finish groups.
- Ceredigion LA preference is **Option 2**, ideally including Pembrokeshire.

Gavin Bown – Natural resources Wales

- NRW supports **Option 2** but is also happy to work with Ceredigion alongside another county.
- Noted previous experience of merged boards in other counties, highlighting successful regional collaboration without loss of local focus.

Iwan Cray – Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service

- Stressed the importance of service support for the chosen model.

- Noted good existing local work and sees no reason why collaboration cannot continue.
- Preference is for **Option 2**, secondary Option 4, tertiary Option 3a.

Steve Thomas – Aberystwyth University

- Agreed with collaborative benefits highlighted by other partners.
- University is a member of only one PSB; concern about focus shifting away from local impact if three counties merge.
- Preference is for **Option 3a**.

Claire Bryant – Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner

- Supports regional collaboration (Option 2) while noting wider area coverage and recent Home Secretary guidance.
- It's important to note and consider the statement made by the Home Secretary last week regarding the future of governance in policing and crime, and the uncertainty this creates in Welsh areas where the government does not have oversight of Local Authorities.
- Preference is for **Option 2**.

Steven Davies – Dyfed Powys Police (received through email to the Partnership mailbox)

- Preference is for **Option 3b** (not among options agreed at the previous PSB meeting).

Hazel Lloyd – CAVO (Third Sector)

- Works across Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire, and Ceredigion; keen to include more partners.
- Preference is for **Option 3a**, with Option 2 as second choice whilst questioning option 4.

Liz Bowen – Probation Service

- Small agency; Option 2 more efficient for attendance and representation.
- Preference is for **Option 2**

Vanessa Cashmore (Coleg Siâr)

- Supported Option 2 to enable regional work on larger projects and economic initiatives.
- Preference is for **Option 2**

Trina Nealon (Hywel Dda University Health Board)

- Confirmed Option 2 aligns with discussions to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.

- Preference is for **Option 2**.

George Holloway – One Voice Wales

- Raised concerns about losing local input and highlighted importance of town council involvement.
- Preference would be for **No change** then, Option 3a.

Discussion Highlights:

- BD reassured partners that local focus would be maintained under Option 2 and emphasised the importance of robust governance. He suggested implementing rotational Chairs and holding face-to-face meetings in each county.
- HLL emphasised the importance of task and finish groups and continuing community-focused delivery in Ceredigion.
- GB highlighted learning from other merged boards; no loss of locality observed.
- ALW re-emphasised the assurances required by LA for Option 2:
 - Robust governance arrangements agreed early.
 - Equal representation across three counties.
 - Rotation of Chairs across counties.
 - Clear forward work programme agreed early.
 - Face-to-face meetings held in rotation across counties.
- HLL noted the importance of considering scrutiny in the process.
- DD noted these assurances can be captured in the Board's Terms of Reference.
- HLL noted further governance discussion will be required regardless of the chosen option.
- CB reinforced the need for coordinated activity to avoid duplication in policing and other areas.
- BD highlighted that regional collaboration strengthens focus on poverty and other shared priorities.
- LJ emphasised learning and sharing best practice across counties, especially with new funding arrangements.

The Board conducted a vote. Voting Results:

- **Option 2:** CCC, NRW, MaWWFRS, OPCC, Probation Service, Coleg Ceredigion, HDdUHB – **7 votes**
- **Option 3a:** One Voice Wales, Aberystwyth University, CAVO – **3 votes**
- **Option 3b:** Dyfed Powys Police – **1 vote**

Conclusion:

- **The overall preferred option by majority was Option 2**, with strong assurances on governance, representation, rotational chairs, and maintaining local focus.

44.4a	Feedback received from Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire PSB's
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both PSBs held detailed discussions on regional collaboration options. Carmarthenshire PSB favours Option 2, with similar considerations about maintaining local focus. Pembrokeshire PSB were less inclined to merge, preferring to retain their existing PSB structure or option 3b.
44.5a	Next steps
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results will be shared with Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire PSBs for further discussion. This is the first step and depending on outcomes, an additional meeting may be required. DD noted that key groups, including the Poverty and Refugee subgroups, would continue regardless of the decision. She highlighted the need to plan for the Assessment of Local Well-being next year and to consider how subgroups feed into the board's work. GB suggested that under Option 2, an early task of any new PSB should be to review current subgroup arrangements across the geography to identify overlaps, potential mergers, or areas where groups should continue under the PSB or independently. <p>Next Steps: Tim Bray will feed back to Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire PSBs. If Pembrokeshire decides not to adopt Option 2, the board will consider whether Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion can proceed with a merged arrangement independently.</p> <p>Closing: DD thanked HLL for chairing the meeting.</p>
44.6a.	<i>Date of the next PSB meeting 1st December 2025.</i>

Appendix 1



PSB Options Paper
FINAL DRAFT.docx