



THE CROWN COURT AT HARROW AND ISLEWORTH

1st September 2022

A letter to solicitors with cases at the Crown Court at Harrow or Isleworth

Dear All,

We are all acutely aware of the difficulties facing the criminal justice system, including the solicitors' profession, at the moment.

We do not, of course, express any view on the CBA action but there are some practical issues for all of us, so, as Resident Judges at Harrow and Isleworth, we thought it might help if we clarified the main elements of our approach and our expectations.

- Listing and defendant's attendance: We will continue to list trials and other hearings even if it appears likely that they will not be effective due to the CBA action. Therefore defendants required to attend must attend and will be at risk of a warrant if they do not.
- Communication is key: We expect counsel to comply with the CBA guidance on informing the court but we also expect solicitors to keep the court informed, and particularly so where no counsel has been instructed (for whatever reason). If we have good and early information we can manage expectations on all fronts better. In hearings where a defendant appears without representation it is a big help to all of us to be able to say that we have heard from their solicitor.
- Providing information: For preference information about the case should be uploaded to DCS Section U: Representation with a *brief* note in the margin that it is there to be seen at any hearing as well as emailed to the court.
- Availability: If we are given availability information we can take it into account when listing. Please be pro-active in providing availability information.
- PTPH: For PTPH, even if no advocate attends, we do expect that defendants will have received some pre-PTPH advice, for information to be provided to the court as to the expected way the case will proceed, and for the defence sections of the PTPH form to be completed as far as possible. There should be completion of the defence contact information at minimum. At the PTPH we will consider arraignment, complete the judge's orders and consider trial dates.

- Defence Statements etc.: The obligation to file the DS, SWT, responses to applications and CoTR remains with the instructed solicitor. We do expect these to be attended to in all but complex cases requiring specialist input, but will be flexible about extensions or special circumstances. We need you to keep us informed and to make any necessary application for extension.
- Trials or other hearings that can go ahead: If you have cases where you are confident that there will be representation, such as representation by in-house or solicitor advocates; cases involving vulnerable defendants where counsel has said they will be attending, or private clients then we encourage you to notify the listing team to see if the case can be brought forward.
- Remote and other attendance: We will continue to be flexible about the use of CVP if that allows representation.
- If, in the absence of an advocate, a solicitor or solicitor's representative, attends court with a client we will not expect them to step into the role of advocate but they will be most welcome and we will appreciate any information that they are able to give.

If there are matters that you wish to raise with us, or where you think that we could do better, then please do get in touch by emailing either court for our attention.

Please feel free to share this letter as our mailing list will not necessarily reach all with cases at this court.

With very best wishes,

HHJ Martin Edmunds QC
Resident Judge,
Crown Court at Isleworth

HHJ Rosa Dean
Resident Judge,
Crown Court at Harrow