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Date: 8 July 2020

**To Chris Nichols**  
**Director of Policy and Regulation**

By e-mail to: [Chris.Nichols@legalservicesboard.org.uk](mailto:Chris.Nichols@legalservicesboard.org.uk)

Dear Chris

Thank you for your letter of 12 June.

The principal risk identified was the inability to hold hearings of the Adjudication Panel if it was not possible to have the panel and the parties physically present. Fortunately, the Chair of the Adjudication Panel has had extensive experience of chairing remote hearings. On 11 May 2020 the Chair issued [Guidance on Changes to Arrangements for Hearings during COVID-19 Pandemic](#). Applying that Guidance the Adjudication Panel has held a Case Management Conference and two substantive disciplinary hearing which had been fixed for hearing during what proved to be the lockdown period. There have been no particular delays consequent on holding hearings remotely, though as explained below there is a little time spent in set up to make sure that all parties can participate.

Each of the parties were asked in advance of the hearing whether they objected to the hearings being held remotely. The Notice of Hearing posted on the CLC website stated that the hearing would be held remotely via Zoom and an invitation given to anyone who wished to observe the hearing to contact the CLC in advance so they could be provided with a link to the hearing. A few days in advance of the hearing the parties attending were contacted to ensure they did not have access problems. A member of the CLC staff attended the hearing to help anyone who had connectivity problems. In accordance with the standard practice, the substantive hearings have been recorded, the determination was announced at the end of the hearing and the written determination of the Adjudication Panel was sent to the parties shortly after the hearing.

It is anticipated that similar arrangements as for disciplinary hearings would apply to applications to the Panel for interim suspension orders.



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As a final comment, our experience has been that remote hearings may actually incentivise some who otherwise would not have attended to take part.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss our experience in holding remote hearings.

Yours sincerely

*Sheila A. Kumar*

**Sheila Kumar**  
**Chief Executive**