



## The Commissioner’s Protocol for Remote Adjudication Hearings

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## The Commissioner's Protocol for Remote Adjudication Hearings

### 1. Purpose

This Protocol outlines the steps required to participate in hearings conducted remotely by the Local Government Commissioner for Standards ('the Commissioner'<sup>1</sup>) and sets out relevant considerations for all participants to bear in mind.

It is not intended to be an exhaustive description of each of the steps that are followed in a hearing. Its purpose is to identify the particular issues that arise when hearings are convened remotely. The Protocol is written to ensure continuity of the Commissioner's statutory function to hold Adjudication Hearings during the course of the Covid-19 pandemic having regard to the measures and guidelines put in place by the Government.

'Webex Meeting' video conferencing software (Webex) will be used to facilitate remote hearings. A guide for using this software has been set out in [Annex A](#) to this Protocol, entitled 'Remote Hearings using Webex Meetings – A Guide for External Participants'. For an explanation of the terms used throughout this document, you may wish to refer to the Glossary which is set out in [Appendix 1](#).

This Protocol is intended to offer practical help and guidance to all participants in hearings that are being held remotely and it does not override the legal rights of the Respondents, any provisions of the Northern Ireland Local Government Code of Conduct ('the Code') or related legislation<sup>2</sup>, and the Commissioner's existing adjudication procedures set out in the 'Procedures for the Adjudication of Cases' and supporting guidance documents. While this Protocol is a general guide for the conduct of remote hearings, the procedure for an Adjudication Hearing will be such as the Commissioner considers appropriate in the circumstances of the case. The Commissioner may therefore vary the procedure in any particular case to ensure the fair and efficient handling of the adjudication.

The Commissioner is required to hold Adjudication Hearings in public in line with the requirements of section 56A of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 2014. Adjudication Hearings will therefore be transcribed by a stenographer and copies of the transcript will be made available to members of the public upon request.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to substantive Adjudication Hearings, this Protocol is also intended to apply to any remote Pre-Hearing Review meetings<sup>4</sup> that the Commissioner has directed should be held in accordance with paragraphs 37-39 of the 'Procedures for the

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<sup>1</sup> All references to the Commissioner within this document include references to an Acting Commissioner where the Commissioner has formally delegated authority under paragraph 14(2) of Schedule 1 of the Public Services Ombudsman (NI) Act 2016

<sup>2</sup> Including, but not limited to, the Local Government Act (NI 2014 ('the 2014 Act')

<sup>3</sup> The Commissioner will not however not share any part of the transcript which relates to a part of the hearing that she determines should be held in private.

<sup>4</sup> Unless the Commissioner directs otherwise, review meetings will be held in private and only between the parties (the Respondent, the Deputy Commissioner or a representative of either). Review meetings are not transcribed.

Adjudication of Cases'. These reviews are convened to address preliminary matters arising in respect of a case in order to fully consider any procedural issues to enable the efficient progression of the adjudication process.

Please also note that neither the Adjudication Hearing nor the Pre-Hearing Review are video recorded.

## 2. Before the Hearing

### Equipment and Relevant Documentation Required

- Laptop, desktop computer or tablet with integrated or external webcam and integrated or external microphone;
- Internet connection > 2-3 Mbps bidirectional (up and down) (internet speed can be checked by typing 'speed test' into Google). A connection check can be conducted with the Adjudication Team prior to the hearing upon request;
- Use of an Apple Mac or Linux system will require prior consultation with the Adjudication Team well in advance of the hearing to test connection;
- Android and IOS mobile devices can be used but is not recommended. Participants may not be able to avail of the full functionality of the Webex platform if using a mobile device. Furthermore, it is also likely to use mobile data which may be limited on some accounts.
- Webex video conferencing software (a link, meeting ID and password is sent to participants by a member of the Commissioner's staff in advance of a hearing). Please refer to [Annex A](#) to this Protocol for further information on Webex;
- Audio headset with microphone (this is strongly recommended to allow for the elimination of any background noise).

If participants have any queries about the suitability of the IT equipment they intend to use, they should contact the Adjudication Team at the earliest possible opportunity.

### Participant environment

Participants should ensure that:

- The electronic device from which they will be participating in the hearing is fully charged and in good working order; it should also be plugged in throughout the hearing;
- They are in a well-lit and quiet room with a neutral background where distractions are kept to a minimum;
- They are alone in the room from which they are participating, unless they elect to be accompanied by a representative. This is particularly important for aspects of any hearings which are conducted in private;

- They are positioned in the centre of the screen/camera with head and shoulders clearly visible;
- They have a glass of water to hand and that they are dressed appropriately taking into account the nature of the hearing.

## **Joining the Hearing**

For instructions on how to install Webex and for joining and participating at a remote hearing, please refer to [Annex A](#) of this document. A demonstration will be provided by a member of the Commissioner's staff in advance of the hearing if necessary and upon request.

## **The Hearing Bundle**

If you are a party to the Adjudication Hearing (i.e. you are the Respondent, the Deputy Commissioner or a representative of either) you will have been sent a copy of the hearing bundle<sup>5</sup> in advance of the hearing date. You should have this available and open on screen if possible. If you are using a mobile device, please contact the Adjudication Team to arrange access to hard copy documents. Please note that the bundle will not be publicly available and should not be shared, other than with any representative you have appointed.

## **3. During the Hearing**

### **In attendance:**

The individuals present at an Adjudication Hearing will be:

- The Hearing Panel (comprising the Commissioner, the Commissioner's Legal Assessor and the Commissioner's Legal Officer(s))
- The Deputy Commissioner and/or his representative
- The Investigating Officer
- The Respondent
- Respondent's representative (if appointed)
- The meeting Host(s) (a member or members of staff from the Commissioner's Office)
- A Stenographer, who will produce a transcript of the proceedings
- Witnesses (if applicable)
- Any other staff members of the Commissioner's Office required

### **Procedure:**

At the commencement of a hearing, the Commissioner will outline the procedure to be followed. Before the hearing starts, and throughout the hearing, the meeting Host will

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<sup>5</sup> Hearing bundles are not required for Pre-Hearing Review meetings. If any papers are required for Pre-Hearing Reviews, these will be provided to parties in advance of the review.

ensure that only those persons who are entitled to participate in the particular part of the hearing are part of the main Webex meeting room. Participants may be required to remain in a witness waiting room or consultation room (breakout room) at certain times during the course of the hearing, as directed by the Commissioner or her staff.

The Host is responsible for the management of the entry and ejections from the main hearing room and breakout rooms. The Host will ensure that the correct participants, and only the correct participants, are present for the session that is active at a particular time.

The Host will endeavour to explain the reason for moving participants between breakout rooms prior to such action taking place. Should participants be uncertain as to why they have been moved, the Webex Chat function can be used to communicate queries to the Host.

### **Members of the Public**

The Commissioner's Procedures state that an Adjudication Hearing will be held in public unless the Commissioner determines that this would not be in the public interest.

While members of the public are not currently able to observe proceedings remotely, the Commissioner does intend to make copies of the transcript of the hearings available upon request. She will not however publish the transcript relating to any part of a hearing that she determines should be held in private.

### **Document Management**

Participants should have easy access to all documents that they need in order to fully participate in the hearing, including the hearing bundle and all relevant legislation and procedural documents.

Documents received in advance of the hearing or presented in session should be emailed securely to the Commissioner's Adjudication Team for circulation at: [LGES.Adjudications@nipso.org.uk](mailto:LGES.Adjudications@nipso.org.uk)

### **Starting the hearing**

Each participant should ensure that their microphone and webcam are working and are switched on. Prior to the hearing starting, each participant should ensure that they have enabled the video function. If participants encounter any difficulty with this function, please use either the Webex chat function to contact the Host (if connected to Webex) or contact the Host using the contact phone number provided. If participants are unable to enable the video function despite seeking technical assistance, the Commissioner may be required to make a direction in relation to this issue.

The Commissioner will:

- Start the hearing by making the usual introductory remarks; including an explanation of the order of proceedings and the purpose of the hearing

- Identify each participant present at the hearing and any staff in attendance.
- Give a brief overview of the remote nature of the hearing and ask that all participants identify any issues with seeing or hearing, or being seen and heard, without delay.

### **During the hearing**

The Host will monitor the hearing by ensuring that participants' connections are stable and that their webcams and microphones are switched on.

Every 20 minutes, the Commissioner, via the Host, will check with participants that they remain online and that they can continue to see and hear proceedings.

### **Audio**

Participants should keep their microphone muted until they are required to speak in order to help reduce any background noise. Where background noise is a problem, the Commissioner may ask the Host to mute the microphones of participants when they are not talking.

If for any reason you are not able to unmute, please physically raise your hand or alternatively use the 'raise your hand' function on Webex to alert the Host and Commissioner to the fact that you wish to speak (further information regarding this function is set out in [Annex A](#)).

### **Breaks/Adjournments**

During the course of a hearing, the Commissioner may direct that the hearing be adjourned for a set period of time. There may be for a number of reasons for this, including but not limited to:

- (i) Taking a comfort break, for instance a 15-minute break for every 90 minutes in session. The Commissioner will have ongoing regard to the interests and well-being of the Respondent whose conduct is under scrutiny at the hearing. If at any point the Respondent requires a comfort break, a request should be made to the Commissioner;
- (ii) The Commissioner and the Panel retiring to deliberate in private;
- (iii) Affording the parties an opportunity to consult any representatives. Should any party wish to speak to his/her representative in private, a request should be made to the Commissioner;
- (iv) Resolving any technical issues arising with the Webex software;

When adjourning the hearing, even for a brief pause or break, the Commissioner must clearly announce the fact of the adjournment for the record. The hearing then must stop, which will be reflected by the stenographer in the hearing transcript. At this point, the Host will arrange for the Panel to leave the main hearing room and be placed in a

'breakout session'<sup>6</sup>. The Deputy Commissioner, Respondent (and their representatives, if applicable) will also be placed in separate breakout sessions. When parties are in a breakout session, only other attendees in the same session will be able to see and hear each other.

Further information in respect of how breakout sessions operate using Webex is set out in [Annex A](#) to this Protocol.

## **Hearing evidence**

If any witnesses are to be called, they will be placed in their own separate breakout session until the Panel is ready to hear their evidence.

Any witness who is giving evidence should first state the words of the affirmation. An oath should not be given for evidence given remotely and only the affirmation should be used. Before a witness starts their evidence, the remote nature of the hearing will be explained to them by the Commissioner. The Commissioner should also require all participants to introduce themselves to the witness.

## **Other Administrative Issues**

Adjudication Hearings will be recorded by a stenographer who attends the hearing for this purpose. Participants are not permitted to record the proceedings by any other means; this includes 'screenshots' or 'screengrabs'. Any attempt to do so, could give rise to proceedings for contempt of court.<sup>7</sup>

The Host can, at the request of the Commissioner, remove an attendee from the Hearing. The Commissioner will only ask for an attendee to be removed if they are being unduly disruptive and impeding the efficient progression of the hearing.

## **Abandonment**

All efforts will be made to provide an environment in which hearings can be heard in full remotely. However, if for whatever reason it becomes impractical for the hearing to proceed, the Commissioner may wish to hear from parties as to the appropriateness of continuing. If, upon hearing from the parties, the Commissioner may decide to adjourn the hearing and reconvene it at a later date.

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<sup>6</sup> Breakout sessions are sub rooms that are created within a main meeting. They are designed to divide meeting participants within the main hearing room into smaller sessions to speak in private. When participants have been placed in breakout sessions, only other attendees within the same session will be able to see and hear each other.

<sup>7</sup> Section 63(9) of the 2014 Act (as amended by Schedule 7 Paragraph 5 of the 2016 Act) applies section 33 of the 2016 Act (relating to obstruction and contempt) to Adjudication Hearings conducted by the Commissioner



## **Annex A - Remote Hearings using Webex Meetings – A Guide for External Participants**



The Commissioner will be using Webex Meeting videoconferencing software (Webex) when conducting Adjudication Hearings remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. This document is designed to offer a step by step guide to joining and participating in remote hearings using the Webex software. Please refer to this Annex in conjunction with the 'Commissioner's Protocol for Remote Adjudication Hearings', which forms part of the main body of this document. Please also note that a Glossary of the terms used throughout this document is provided at [Appendix 1](#).

You do not need to have your own Webex account to participate in a hearing, however it is strongly recommended that you install the Webex app on the device that you will be using to join the meeting (if you do not have it installed already).

Whilst it is possible to participate in Webex via a phone or tablet, it is strongly recommended you use a PC or a laptop which provides for the best user experience. Please see Section 2 of this Annex for further information in this regard.

On the working day before the hearing, an email will be sent to you by the meeting Host, which will contain the necessary details to enable you to join the hearing; this will include a link to join and also a meeting number and password. If you require a Webex demonstration please request this in advance of the meeting.

### **1. Install the Webex Meetings app**

#### **(a) Install on a PC/Laptop**

- Please install the Webex app on your computer/laptop well in advance of the hearing. To manually download the app, go to <https://www.webex.com/downloads.html> and select 'Download.' This would be the preferred option to ensure that you are set up correctly in advance of the meeting starting. This website can be very busy at peak times and particularly early in the morning. It is strongly advised that you install this well in advance, rather than the morning of the hearing.
- Alternatively, when you receive an invitation to participate in a Webex remote hearing, click on the 'Join meeting' button when your meeting is about to start. You will be automatically prompted to install the app if it is not already installed.
- If you are unable to install the app, you can select to join via your browser when you join the hearing. Please note however that participating via your browser provides more limited user functionality.
- You can check that your PC/laptop meets the following recommended system requirements which can be found here:

<https://help.webex.com/enus/nki3xrq/Webex-Meetings-Suite-System-Requirements>

## (b) Install on a Mobile Device

- Search for 'Cisco Webex Meetings' from within the Apple App Store or Google Play Store (for Android) and install the following app on your phone/tablet:
- The Cisco Webex Meetings App is free to download.



## 2. Joining a Webex Remote Hearing

Once the app has been installed on your device, the steps below outline how a participant can join the hearing. Please note that before the meeting, a member of the Commissioner's Adjudications Team will contact you to offer you the opportunity of a Webex demo a few days in advance of your actual hearing. The aim of this informal session will be to walk you through how the software works and to resolve any queries you may have relating to the remote hearing process.

You can also carry out a test before your scheduled hearing to ensure that your audio and video settings are configured correctly. This can be done via the following link: <https://www.webex.com/test-meeting.html>

### (a) Join from a PC/laptop

- The working day before your hearing the Host will email you an invitation confirming the date/time of your hearing which will also contain a link to allow you to join the meeting, including a username and password.
- On the day of the hearing, 15 minutes before it is scheduled to join, please open this email and click 'Join meeting'. This will start

██████████ invites you to join this Webex meeting.

Meeting number (access code): 174 290 8044  
Meeting password: B48jG2D7PBv

Tuesday, November 24, 2020  
12:20 pm | (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London | 1 hr

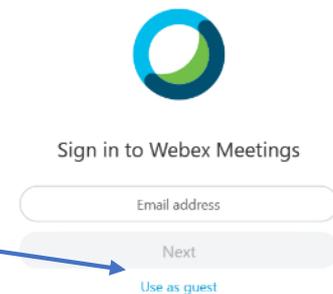
[Join meeting](#)

Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)  
[+44-20-7660-8149](tel:+44-20-7660-8149), [1742908044##](tel:+44-20-7660-8149) United Kingdom Toll

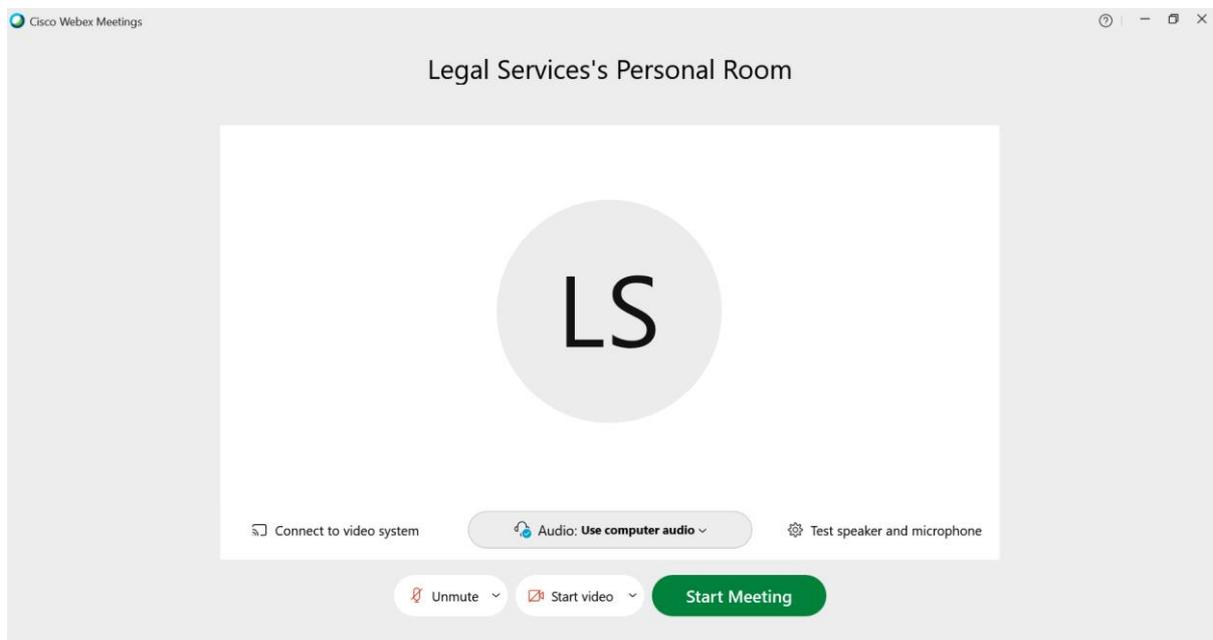
Join by phone  
[+44-20-7660-8149](tel:+44-20-7660-8149) United Kingdom Toll  
[Global call-in numbers](#)

the Webex app (or you will be given the option to download it if you don't have it already).

- When you open the Webex app for the first time, you may be prompted to 'Sign in' to Webex Meetings. If this window appears, simply select 'use as guest'. You can then enter your name (this should be the name you wish to be displayed on the screen for the other participants to see), your email address, and then click 'use as guest'.



- If you are prompted for a meeting password, this can be found in your emailed invitation.
- Next select the 'use computer audio' option if you have a headset or speakers connected to your device. Alternatively select 'Call In' if your PC audio connection is poor. The call in numbers can also be found in the invitation.



- It is strongly recommended that you use a headset or earphones when connecting to the audio via your computer. Relying on the built in microphone and speaker on your PC/laptop will likely result in a poor quality audio experience for you and the other participants.
- Click Start video to start your video and to join with your microphone on, click Unmute.

### **(b) Join from a mobile device**

- Either click on the link in the invitation or Open the Webex Meetings app that you have installed as per previous guidance.

- Tap 'Join Meeting' and if prompted, enter the 'meeting number (access code)' which is in the invitation.
- If requested enter the 'meeting password' which is in the invitation and tap 'OK'.
- Click Join to access the hearing.

### 3. Participating in a Webex Remote Hearing

When you join the Webex hearing room from a PC/Laptop, your screen layout will be similar to the image below



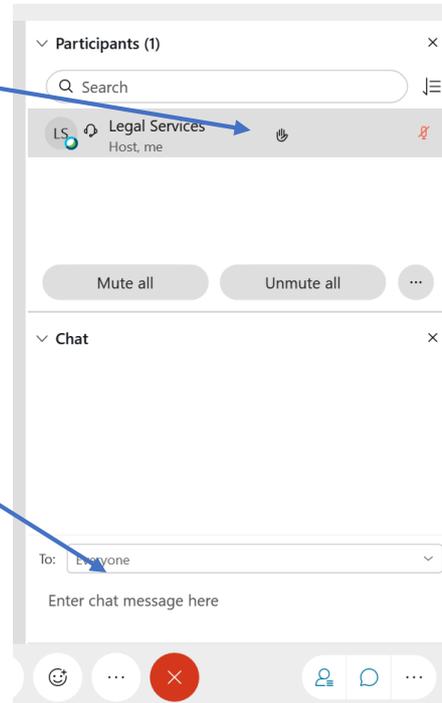
(courtesy of Cisco Webex website)

- If the hearing has not yet started, you will be able to join the Webex meeting but your audio or video will not be connected. You will be placed in the meeting lobby until the Host starts the meeting at which point you will be admitted into the main hearing room. When you are in the Lobby the Host will be aware you are there, they will admit you when they can and at the direction of the Commissioner
- During the hearing, you may wish to change the Video Layout to control how you want to view video participants and panels on your screen (i.e grid view). Click on the layout icon, which is found on the top right of the screen to do this.
- To leave the meeting, click on the red circle.

## Contacting the Host when in the main Hearing room

If you require assistance when in the main hearing room, there are a number of ways to bring this to the attention of the Commissioner or the Host.

- i) Raising your hand – simply physically raise your hand which should be visible from viewing your webcam. This will indicate you wish to speak or raise an issue.
- ii) Raise a ‘virtual hand’ within Webex – You can do this by clicking the hand logo beside your name in ‘participants’ tab. Again, this will alert the Host and the Commissioner that you wish to speak.
- iii) Send a message – you will be able to use the chat function within Webex to send a message to particular participants present in the main hearing room
- iv) Text the Host – in advance of the Hearing, parties will be provided with a separate phone number in order to send a text message or Whatsapp message to the Host at any time. This may be for example if you are encountering problems with the software. Save for in an emergency, phone calls will not usually be feasible from this device as the host will also be managing the hearing room functions. All queries should therefore be communicated via text at first instance and the Host will determine whether a phone call is required.



The number that you plan to use should be registered in advance with the Host. There may be difficulties using both this service and Webex where a mobile device is being used to participate in the hearing.

## Breakout sessions

If during the course of a hearing, the Commissioner directs that an adjournment should take place for a specific period of time, all hearing participants (and along with any appointed representatives) will be placed into their own private ‘breakout session’

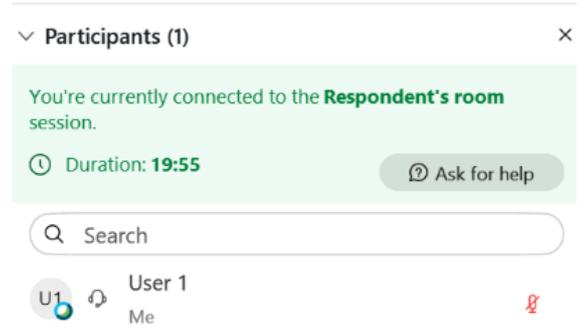
When parties are in a breakout session, only other attendees in the same room will be able to see and hear each other.

Examples of the various breakout sessions that will be set up by the Host are set out below:

- Commissioner’s Room

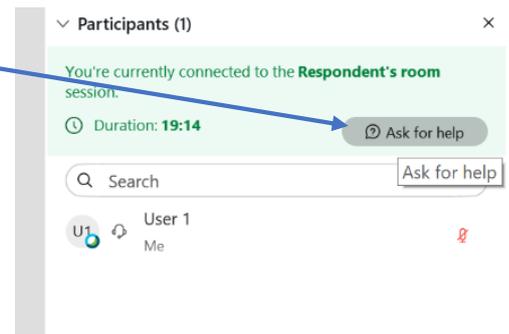
- Deputy Commissioner's Room
- Respondent's Room
- Witness Holding Room (if applicable)
  
- Waiting Room
- Representatives Consultation Room

An example of how the Respondent's screen will appear, once assigned to a breakout session, is set out here.

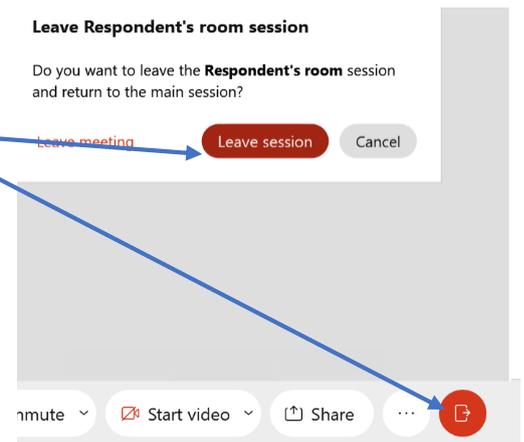


### How a participant can contact the Host while in a breakout session

If you wish to speak to the Host while in your own breakout session, you can click the 'Ask for Help' button. The Host will be notified of your request and will enter your breakout session to speak to you about your query.



Alternatively, you can choose to leave your breakout session by clicking on the red circular button at the bottom right hand corner of the screen. You will then have to confirm that you wish to 'Leave session'.



At this point you will move back to the main hearing room and you will be able to speak to the Host that way.

### How the Host can contact participant during a breakout session

If the meeting Host needs to urgently contact you while you are in your separate private breakout session, he/she will contact you via phone using the phone number referred to above.

The Host may be able to deliver the message via text/phone call, or, if the matter cannot be resolved over the phone, he/she will seek your permission to enter your breakout session and speak to you that way.

In the event the Host is required to enter your breakout session (with your consent), immediately upon entering the session, he/she will announce his/her presence and to

you (and any representative if applicable). Once the message has been delivered, the Host will make it clear he is leaving your breakout session and his name will then disappear from your screen.

### The Commissioner's Legal Assessor

There may also be occasions when the Commissioner's Legal Assessor will be required to speak with a participant and/or their representative in private outside of the main hearing room. The need for such conversations to take place may arise before, during or after the hearing.

In these circumstances, a separate breakout session called 'Representative's Consultation Room' will be assigned for these communications to take place. If this need arises, the participants will be informed in advance by the meeting Host before they are transferred into this separate breakout session.

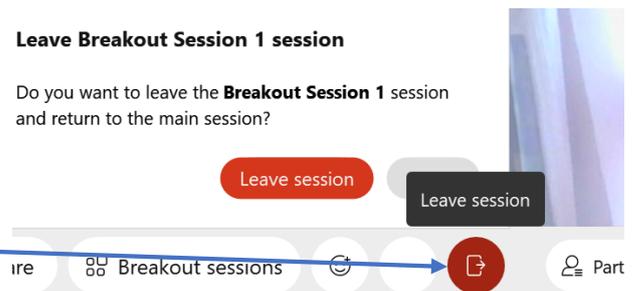
Once the conversation with the Legal Assessor has concluded, the Host will arrange for the participant (and/or their representative) to be transferred back to the main hearing room or their own private breakout session.

### Length of adjournments

The Commissioner will always direct how long any adjournment is envisaged to last for.

Once the designated period of time has elapsed, the Host will transfer you from your breakout session back into the main hearing room. The Host will send a message to all parties in advance of doing this.

Alternatively, if the designated period of time has elapsed and you remain in your breakout session, you can transfer yourself back into the main hearing room by clicking on the circular red button at the bottom right hand corner of the screen and selecting 'Leave session'.



### Extending an adjournment

The Commissioner may on occasion direct that an adjournment be extended beyond the initial period of time directed; for example, if she requires further time to deliberate on a particular issue with the Panel.

In these circumstances, the Host will broadcast a message to each breakout session, advising that that the adjournment will be extended. You will also be informed of how long the adjournment extension is envisaged to last.

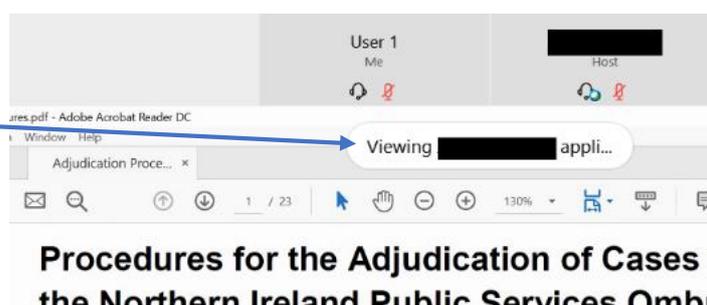
If you have already transferred yourself back into the main hearing room, the Host will communicate the adjournment extension to you that way, and he/she will proceed to place you back into your breakout session for the remainder of the extension period.

## Sharing content on screen

During the course of the hearing, you should have the bundle, which will have been sent to you in advance of the hearing, close to hand and/or open in a separate window. The Commissioner may, at various stages throughout the hearing, wish to refer the parties to a document(s) contained within the bundle.

Upon direction of the Commissioner, the Host will also be able to bring up the particular page within the bundle on the main screen to draw it to the parties attention. When the Host does this, the faces of the participants will disappear from the main hearing screen and a message will pop up to advise that 'The Host is starting to share content'.

The image to the right shows how your screen will look once the Host chooses to 'share content'.



Once the parties finish referring to the document(s), the Commissioner will direct the Host to end the screen sharing, and the hearing will return to its previous layout.

## 4. Support and Assistance

If you are having any issues using Webex before the hearing you can email a member of the Commissioner's Adjudications team any time at: [LGES.Adjudications@nipso.org.uk](mailto:LGES.Adjudications@nipso.org.uk). A response to your query will be issued as soon as practicable.

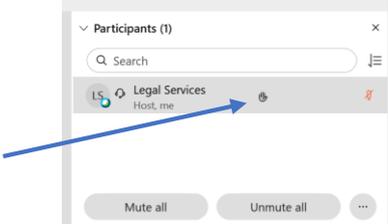
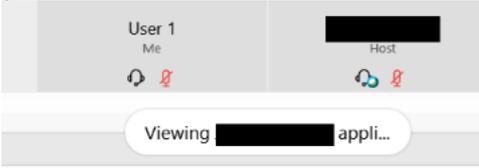
During the hearing, you will also be provided with a separate phone number of the meeting Host who will be contactable throughout the proceedings should you encounter any problems using the software. The phone number will be communicated to you as part of the meeting invite that is sent to you the day before the hearing.



## Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Term	Abbreviation	Details
Adjudication Hearing		The substantive hearing at which the Commissioner will determine whether the Respondent has breached the Code.
Bandwidth		Maximum data transfer rate of your Internet connection. You should have 2mbps of download and upload. Your Internet Service Provider (ISP) can advise you if you have sufficient bandwidth capacity. 
Breakout room		A virtual room which allows participants or witnesses to wait in or where participants can have virtual conferences with other participants, for example if a Councillor needs to consult with their representative.
Ethernet connection		Ethernet is a way of connecting computers and other network devices in a physical space. This will involve plugging a cable from your computer into the rear of your router or modem. This connection is not available for a mobile device. It is the most stable, fast and secure way to connect using your modem or router. 
Hearing Bundle		The electronic collection of documents which will be agreed and provided to all parties in advance of the Adjudication Hearing in PDF format. It will be referred to throughout the Adjudication Hearing and may at times be displayed on the Webex Video Conferencing (VC) platform by the Host to allow all participants to simultaneously view the documents.
Host		A member of the Commissioner’s staff who provides technical and procedural assistance to the Commissioner in managing the remote hearing. The Host is also the central point of contact for all parties during the hearing.
Internet Service Provider	ISP	A company that provides access to the Internet and other related services such as Web site building and virtual hosting e.g. BT, Sky Broadband and Virgin Media.
Laptop or desktop computer		Laptop (or notebook) computers are small portable computers. Desktop computers are larger computer systems which will require to be plugged into the wall and need to sit on a desk. These systems will use one of the following Operating Systems (OS);

		<p>Windows (Microsoft software), MacOS (Apple computers) or Linux (open source free OS). MacOS (Apple computers) or Linux (open source free OS).</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Laptop</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Desktop</p> </div> </div>
Lobby		<p>An area within the Webex VC platform where participants will be placed by the Host until admitted to the main hearing. The Host is unable to communicate with participants while they are in the Lobby. The Host may place participants in the Lobby after giving evidence.</p>
Modem or Router		<p>A modem is a box that connects a home network to the wider Internet. A router is a box that permits wired and wireless devices to use an Internet connection at once. These will normally be in the one piece of equipment.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div>
Operating System	OS	<p>Desktop systems use either Windows (Microsoft software), MacOS (Apple computers) or Linux (open source free OS). Mobile phones for tablets use either Apple IOS or Google's Android software.</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>
Participant		<p>Any individual taking part in the hearing.</p>
PDF	PDF	<p>PDF stands for the Portable Document Format, used to display documents in an electronic form independent of the software, hardware or operating system they are viewed on. Special software can be downloaded from Adobe to view them at <a href="https://get2.adobe.com/uk/reader/otherversions/">https://get2.adobe.com/uk/reader/otherversions/</a> Apple IOS systems will require you to use their App Store where there are a number of free options available. Participants are advised to download this software if not already accessible. It is important that it is downloaded well in advance of a hearing in order to address any technical difficulties. The Commissioner's staff cannot provide support in the use of PDF Reader software due to the extensive range of products available.</p>

		
Pre-Hearing Review	PHR	<p>A hearing at which preliminary matters can be addressed and representations made by the Deputy Commissioner and the Respondent. The Commissioner will make directions in respect of applications made and set the date of the Adjudication hearing.</p> 
Raise a 'virtual hand'		An option within Webex which allows participants to alert the Host that they wish to raise an issue/ask a question. This facility can be used in the hearing room or a breakout room.
Respondent		The Councillor (or former Councillor) whose conduct is subject to the Adjudication Hearing.
Sanction Hearing		A hearing to decide upon the sanction to be imposed if the Commissioner finds that the Respondent has breached the Code.
Screen Share		<p>A function within the Webex platform which allows the Host to share documents or hearing bundles with all participants.</p> 
Screen shots' or 'screengrabs '		<p>A digital image that shows the contents of the computer display.</p> <p>Participants are strictly prohibited from taking screen shots or screengrabs without the prior consent of the Commissioner.</p>
Stenographer		A person who makes a contemporaneous record of the hearing in the form of a transcript. The stenographer is not a member of the Commissioner's staff.
Tablet & Mobile Phone (Smartphone)		Mobile devices which use the Apple IOS or Google Android OS. Such devices will normally have an integrated camera. Both will require WiFi connection. A Tablets or Mobile Phone will have limited functionality compared to a laptop or desktop computer when using the Webex VC software. Older mobiles which are not 'smartphones' cannot use Webex or other VC software.

<p>Video conferencing</p>	<p>VC</p>	<p>VC services provide a video connection between a number of users. VC services let users share their screens, remotely access one another's desktops, chat via text, exchange files, communicate via digital whiteboards, and even broadcast conferences to large groups of passive viewers.</p> 
<p>Webcam</p>		<p>A camera designed for use with a computer, it is needed to send video or pictures unless you have an integrated camera in your laptop/computer or mobile device.</p> 
<p>Webex Meeting</p>		<p>This is the videoconferencing software used to manage the hearing. It is provided by Cisco Systems. The Commissioner's Protocol explains where and how it is downloaded. The Commissioner's staff will provide participants with assistance in operating the software prior to a hearing. Assistance should be requested in advance.</p> <p>Assistance should be requested in advance.</p>  <p>Webex Meetings</p>
<p>WiFi</p>	<p>WiFi</p>	<p>Wireless Local Area Network that connects to the modem or router provided by the ISP to permit a connection to the internet. Whether using a Laptop, Desktop, Mobile Phone or Tablet to connect, you should ensure you have a WiFi connection.</p> 