



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

EXETER AND BARNSTAPLE CIVIL

COURT USERS MEETING MINUTES

27TH February 2025

Attendees :- HHJ Walsh, DJ Eaton-Hart, Mandy Squire, Jo Copp, Natasha Bellinger, CAB rep, Chris Tagg, Nikolai Klein, Nicola Hall, Dominika Windak, Gemma Sparks.

Apologies :- Jen Law

Minutes.

1. Frequency of Meetings.

There was lengthy discussion about this, and the general consensus was that every 6th months would be sufficient. It was mentioned that today was not attended as well as had been hoped but Nicola Hall stated that it was the members of the Devon & Somerset Law Society Contentious Business Group that had request reinstatement. HHJ Walsh had also requested that Practitioners/Court users are encouraged to supply Agenda items for future meetings.

2. Practitioner issues

Missing documents from the file – On occasion documents do not get the Judge/file on time. Jo Copp stated that correspondence usually sat at between 5 and 10 days old and it would assist, if filing close to the hearing, that the following be put in the subject line of the email “Urgent (followed by the hearing date)” it would assist staff in identifying the documents.

Delay in orders being produced – It was suggested that there is a delay in receiving orders. Currently outstanding orders are sitting at 8 days. Jo Copp indicated that if there any particular issues, she is happy to receive email directly in order to try and assist.

Contact Centre - It is accepted that the phone lines being answered in the contact centre is not always ideal, however, there is nothing that can be done. Again, if a matter is urgent, please do email the Court.

3. Multi Track case management and bundles.

There is some confusion regarding the filing of bundles. Jo Copp confirmed that Egress or PDF attachment is the only way in which the Court is permitted to receive documents. Any other format will be rejected by the Court office other than paper bundles (two copies of which should be filed in addition to e-bundles for all Multi-Track trials at the hearing Court). All judiciary should have access to Egress, however, if there are any issues, please send to the Court email address and the staff will deal with them from there.

4. PCOL/Possessions.

CAB advised that funding is still a concern for them, but they will continue assisting the Court on possession days as long as they can. There has been no update given to either the staff or the judiciary regarding the Renter Rights Bill but it is anticipated to be brought in the Autumn.

5. Communication with Judiciary.

There were no issues raised, however, HHJ Walsh reiterated that if there are any issues that need to be dealt with by him, he is more than happy to receive communication direct.

6. AOB.

Natasha Bellinger mentioned that the paperwork provided by the Court to the Defendants in relation to committal proceedings are out of date. Jo Copp said she will ensure this is updated.

Date of next meeting – TBC (in approx. 6 months)

HHJ Walsh thanked everyone for attending today.