

## THE PROCESS FOR VIRTUAL HEARING

The Council have an adopted procedure for hearings and this attached to this report. In so far as is possible and practicable, the Licensing Authority will work in accordance with this procedure.

As a result of the current Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, one of the most significant changes for this hearing is that it will be conducted using the videoconferencing platform 'Zoom' (as opposed to being held in a meeting room at the Council offices).

A link which will take you to the meeting will be provided in the agenda. If there are any issues (or if you are unable to attend the hearing) you should notify the licensing team ([licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk)) as soon as possible.

A remote Zoom test meeting for speakers will be held on either the 16 or 17 July. A calendar invite will be sent to you. Please send your name, email address, phone number and whether you are an objector or supporter to [comsec@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:comsec@teignbridge.gov.uk) by 15 July, 2020. A Zoom calendar invitation for the Licensing meeting will be sent following the test meeting.

In theory, attendees can, with the consent of all parties, produce documentary information at the hearing. In practice, and because of how the hearing is now being held, this may be difficult and the Licensing Authority is requesting that if any party has documentary information they wish to provide or rely on, this be sent to the licensing team ([licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk)) with their response to the Notice of Hearing (which must be submitted 5 working days before the hearing). Also if you are unable to attend but wish to put in writing what you would have said, had you been in attendance, to expand on your submitted representation please send this to the licensing team ([licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@teignbridge.gov.uk)) with their response to the Notice of Hearing (which must be submitted 5 working days before the hearing).

In addition, and to try and ensure the hearing runs as smoothly as possible, the following points should be noted and followed during the hearing:

- Parties should ensure that they are in a private, quiet space where they will not be disturbed. Other occupants of the household should be reminded not to interrupt the participant during the hearing. The door to the room in which the participant is based should be closed and, if possible, locked.
- Other noise sources should be silenced including telephones, mobile phones, tablet devices, Amazon Echo & Google Home devices, door bells, dishwashers etc.
- Participants should organise their workspace carefully in advance. Clear it of anything that is not related to the hearing.
- Attendees should, if possible, ensure that they have a plain wall as a background.
- Ensure that you are well lit by natural or artificial light. Avoid sitting with your back to a window or other light source. This can result in only your silhouette appearing on screen.
- Parties should attend the hearing alone, unless they are sat together with another attendee. The room should be one that has a good Wi-Fi/internet connection and has good lighting.
- Participants should dress in a similar manner to the way they would dress if attending a traditional hearing.
- No food should be eaten during a remote hearing. A glass of water or coffee / tea should suffice for refreshment.
- Parties should remain seated during the hearing.
- Parties should check that their microphone, camera and sound settings are working. This should preferably be done as early as possible. This will allow any technical issues to be raised and dealt with without the need to delay the hearing.
- A computer or other device's in-built camera, microphone and speaker will usually suffice.

- Avoid setting your device to the highest volume, since this is likely to cause feedback when you are speaking.
- Participants should log in at least 15-20 minutes before the hearing starts to confirm that they are having no technical difficulties.
- In case of a technological problem concerning the internet or Wi-Fi connection, you should have a telephone on hand. You should ensure that the number for this phone is provided to the licensing team in your response to the Notice of Hearing.
- If there is a technical failure that cannot be fixed, then the hearing may have to be adjourned.
- Parties should mute their audio when they are not speaking. A failure to do so may disrupt the hearing.
- When it is your turn to speak, remember to unmute your microphone. Speak directly into the microphone.
- Parties should keep their video cameras on at all times if possible. They should be aware that many video-platforms will show your entered name and (if chosen) picture if the camera is turned off. Parties should check their name is correct and their picture is appropriate.
- When speaking, maintain eye contact with the camera. This will ensure you appear to be looking at your audience.
- Ensure that you are clearly visible by maintaining a reasonable distance from the camera, to show your head and upper body. Too close and your image may blur and fill the screen, too far and you will appear distant and detached from the hearing.
- Be mindful that the camera records a wider area than one sees on one's own screen.
- Remember that others are watching even if you cannot see them. In cases involving multiple participants, thumbnail video images may appear on screen, but these thumbnails often move off screen to allow participants to see the face of the person talking, or the document being shared. Observers may also be present. As such, often there are people present at the hearing who are not visible.
- Oral submissions should be structured, relevant to the issues, and not repetitive.
- Concentrate on the substance. Brevity and precision are key. Aim to present your case in a low-key, courteous and measured way.
- In a remote hearing, a brief delay typically occurs between the video image of the person speaking and their voice being heard by the others. This connection delay may lead participants to believe a person has finished speaking before they have, in fact, done so and is liable to result in participants inadvertently speaking over one another.
- Do not interrupt. Let a speaker finish before speaking. Be especially careful not to interrupt another speaker.
- After each party is finished speaking the video hearing should always revert back to the Chair to invite the next speaker. No one should speak without being invited to do so by the Chair.