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**Subject:** Guidance from HHJ Whybrow - Humber region

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**From:** Whybrow, HHJ Jonathan  
**Sent:** 20 March 2020 08:51  
**Subject:** Skype

Please inform those on FCF distribution that:

Overnight we have received more detailed guidance about para 16 of the President's Guidance issued yesterday. This result is as follows:

The court will use the Skype for Business technology for remote hearings wherever possible. Conference calls will be a fall-back for cases where Skype for Business is not available.

In the Humber Family Court we are in the process of moving existing listings to Skype hearings where possible. Existing conference calls which have been set up should remain. Otherwise, where possible, Skype will be used. Calls will be recorded within the Skype program and/or on the court's recording system.

Each judge will have a nominated clerk to help sort out the practicalities for the listings and the calls. More details to follow about this. In the meantime, address/phone numbers for Skype or conference calls in the next few days may be submitted to..... [insert an address Hull care Filing? As this is generic and will still work if a clerk is not at court]

The expectation is: **in a public law case, for example, the local authority would simply be responsible for checking that every representative / party had access to Skype and, if so, providing the court, for the attention of the judge, all of the relevant email addresses for the judge to plug into the Skype meeting invitation in Outlook. If it proved that a Skype hearing was not possible, for example because a party did not have access to it, then the local authority's responsibility would extend to liaising with the court to set up a telephone hearing paid for by the HMCTS bulk contract, if that was the alternative mode of remote communication chosen.**

**If BT conference calls are used then HMCTS have a bulk contract and the organising LA must liaise with the court to set up the call, get the number and access code, etc. Para 16(a) is not intended to, and should not, impose any financial burden on the LA. It is intended only to give them the administrative burden of setting the hearing up.**

As soon as we know any more about the new arrangements we will let practitioners know.

Thanks