

 Institute of Licensing

Types of hearings

- In person
- Remote
- Hybrid

In the case of LA03 hearings, all are permissible

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In person hearings	
Pros	Cons
The human factor: seeing whites of eyes.	Travelling: costs and times
Body language	Those who cannot travel (work or disability)
Conversation develops, solutions emerge	Risk of infection (while travelling or at the Council offices)
Flexibility	
Documents	
Customer experience	

Remote hearings	
Pros	Cons
Saving costs and time of travel	Conversation is less organic
Those who can't attend in person (work or disability)	Ability to take instructions / share notes
Screen sharing	Sound and image quality
Avoiding infection risks	Loss of connection
	Can't ensure concentration
	Refusals to use cameras
	Submissions more like radio broadcasts

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Hybrid hearings

Pros	Cons
Best of both worlds	Advantage to party who turns up
Easier to fix hearings without disadvantaging parties	Appears disrespectful not to turn up
Parties who are risk-averse do not need to attend.	Audibility of in person parties by remote parties and vice versa

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Tentative conclusion

1. A party should be entitled to request a remote hearing in any case.
2. Councils should develop guidelines for consideration of requests by the Chair of the Sub-Committee.
3. In general, where no members of the public wish to attend, councils should be open to a remote hearing, at least in routine applications.
4. Where members of the public do wish to attend, the general rule should be an in person hearing, particularly where evidence is contested.
5. In general, hybrid hearings should be resisted due to their technical challenges.
6. If there is any element of remoteness, cameras should be used by councillors and also by all parties when speaking.
7. If the sub-committee intends to limit the time for submissions, this should be stated in advance.




