MINSHULL STREET CROWN COURT AUTHORISED TO RESTART TRIALS

Please see the note from His Honour Judge Potter, Resident Judge below:

Minshull St has been authorised to restart trials. We still have much work to do to make this happen – principally in relation to summonsing a jury panel and re-assuring them as to safety – but we believe we may be able to start a trial on the 18th May.

A trial has been selected and I will be contacting Counsel instructed in that trial today – I hope. We obviously require their input well before the 18th May to make sure the trial can proceed and above all else is safe and fair. Please keep this news especially confidential. We are yet to determine how opening a trial court here will effect the listing of other work but that assessment will be made next week.

Please note that the Judges here have conducted a review of every single trial listed between now and the middle of September. I have allocated each Judge a month to work through and their support has been fantastic. I understand a similar process has been undertaken at Crown Sq.

The purpose of the review is to identify those trials which we believe may compromise before their trial date. If this occurs obviously the trial dates can be used to accommodate other work and, in particular, cases listed for sentence. In this way we hope that more cases can be concluded more quickly than otherwise - which we hope will provide some financial assistance to the Bar and solicitors.

In the next few weeks the cases we have identified will be listed for mention with the Defendant to attend from bail or be produced over the PVL. We hope that CVP will be expedited for us so that this allows for more conferences to take place than is currently possible.

There is no compulsion upon lawyers to attend at the Court for these hearings – although remote attendance will be expected.

Obviously if lawyers do want to attend here they will be welcome. I hope they will be re-assured that the building is safe following the positive (eight hour) inspection that took place here a couple of weeks ago by HMCTS health and safety officials and Public Health for England.

If lawyers do attend they need to allow for a longer wait than otherwise before coming into the building as safety measures are adhered to.

At these hearings I hope that both the Crown and the Defence are able to adopt realistic approaches to the case continuing to trial. I accept of course that ultimately this will be determined by instructions received.

**His Honour Judge Potter**

**Resident Judge**

**Minshull Street Crown Court**