

Court of Protection

Regional Hearing Pilot

The Lord Chancellor announced in July the launch of a scheme to pilot regional Court of Protection hearings. At the moment all hearings are held at the Court of Protection in London. The Lord Chancellor hopes that holding hearings locally will benefit parties by reducing the time, cost and anxiety involved in attending court.

What is the pilot?

For 6 months starting on 1 October 2001 District Judge Ashton, sitting as a Deputy Master of the Court of Protection, will hear enduring power of attorney and receivership cases at Preston Combined Court Centre. The cases will be transferred from the Court of Protection in London.

How will cases be selected for transfer?

The Master of the Court of Protection will identify cases where it is considered more convenient for the parties to travel to Preston than London and transfer those cases to Preston.

Can I ask for my case to be transferred to Preston for hearing?

Yes. For the duration of the pilot (1st October 2001 to 31st March 2002) any party to an enduring power of attorney or receivership case can also apply for their case to be considered for transfer by writing to the Court of Protection in London.

Will there be a Court of Protection Section at Preston?

No. The Court of Protection staff in London will continue to deal with any queries, correspondence or orders relating to the case both before and after the hearing. The case will only be transferred to Preston for the hearing.

What will happen at the end of the pilot?

The Lord Chancellor's Department will evaluate whether the pilot was successful by examining whether the Court of Protection managed to retain control of the cases sent to Preston for hearing and the level of savings in time and costs for the parties involved. If found to be successful, the Lord Chancellor will consider whether to continue holding hearings at Preston and also whether to extend the scheme elsewhere in the country.

Where can I get further information about the pilot?

Further information can be obtained from either the Lord Chancellor's Department or the Court of Protection:

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