

## 'We have concentrated on transactions likely to proceed to completion'

### PHILIP O'CONNOR

Managing Partner  
OCWM Law

**ACTIVITY** We have been fortunate in that our main service lines have remained buoyant throughout the pandemic. We have had a number of significant property deals which, although they may have taken longer to complete, were completed nonetheless. More recently, we have begun to notice difficulties in getting office purchases approved where there is some sense of uncertainty about the future value or adaptability of that asset class.

We have concentrated on the client transactions that are likely to proceed to completion. The more general assistance queries have related to how can we assist in facilitating transactions to completion with Covid restrictions in the background. We also work closely with the credit union sector and have helped develop a range of



collaborative measures to ensure continuity of service to members.

**REMOTE WORKING** I do not believe that remote working has affected service delivery at all. Our main focus from the beginning was on implementing a clear structure around how meetings and communications are run

between home, the office and clients. When this is done correctly everything runs smoothly and works really well. Realistically, I think the main challenges are creating a good working-from-home process, and knowing how you are going to communicate with colleagues and clients.

Our lawyers are coping well with the extended out-of-office regime. Indeed, the more senior lawyers who would have been entirely office-based were pleasantly surprised at how effectively they could work from home. We have weekly catch-up calls with all members of the firm and have adopted a wellbeing policy and charter.

**LITIGATION** The court lists and remote hearings are progressing well and, in many respects, allow for more efficient use of practitioners' time. That said, there will still be a backlog of certain types of business to be caught up on. Meanwhile, mediations offer a worthwhile opportunity to avoid delays or other uncertainties about securing trial dates, particularly those requiring oral witness evidence.

**OUTLOOK** We anticipate that restructuring arrangements, mergers and acquisitions, property deals (formerly postponed or delayed) and commercial litigation will come to the fore from a work perspective.