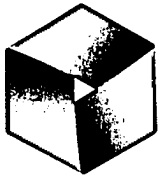
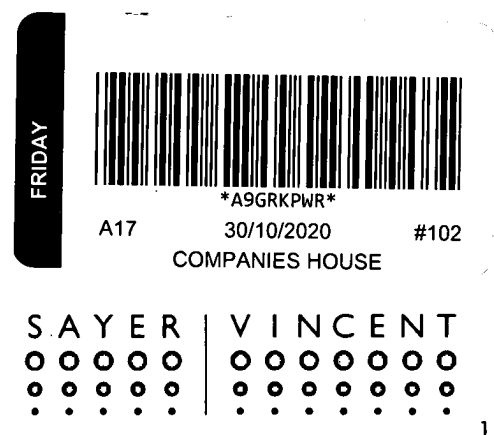


Company number: 02368562
Charity Number: 1003342



Public Law Project

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2020



Public Law Project annual report

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Reference and administrative information	2
Director and Chair's reports	4
Trustees' annual report	6
Independent auditor's report	25
Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)	29
Balance sheet	30
Statement of cash flows.....	31
Notes to the financial statements	32

Public Law Project annual report

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Company number 02368562

Charity number 1003342

Registered office and operational address The Design Works, 93–99 Goswell Road
London
EC1V 7EY

Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Country of registration England & Wales

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Ben Jaffey	(resigned 4 December 2019)
Sarah Jane Burton	
Renata Czinkotai	(appointed 25 February 2020)
Pavan Dhaliwal	
Andrew Hood	Company Secretary
Ruthann Hughes	(resigned 5 February 2020)
Fiona McGhie	(resigned 14 January 2020)
Rosanna McKearney	(appointed 25 February 2020)
Qalid Mohamed	
Savita Narain	(resigned 28 March 2020)
Bryan Nott	
Elizabeth Prochaska	Chair (appointed 4 December 2019)
Richard James Savill	(appointed 30 June 2020)
Hollie Whyman	Treasurer
Mark Wood	(appointed 25 February 2020)

Director Jo Hickman

Bankers Unity Trust Bank PLC
Nine Brindleyplace
BIRMINGHAM
B1 2HB

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Invicta House, 108–114 Golden Lane
LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

Director's report

PLP has continued to make excellent progress against its five-year goals. Our unique approach of combining casework, research, and events expertise across five focus areas - access to legal aid, Brexit, access to judicial review, benefit sanctions, and online courts – has again made real impact.

The appointment of a new lead in the casework team has helped to drive forward our work to increase access to legal aid. Our lawyers have acted for a number of individuals who need legal aid to obtain access to justice, perhaps most notably in a high profile challenge to the legal aid means regulations on behalf of a client who was a survivor of domestic violence. We also published new research on Exceptional Case Funding, following which we were invited to join the Ministry of Justice means test review advisory panel.

Our judicial review working group produced thought-leading work on costs in judicial review and assisted numerous charities and NGO's, particularly Medical Justice in its challenge to the Home Office 'no notice' removals policy as a violation of the constitutional right of access to the court. Following commitments made in 2019 in the run up to the General Election, PLP began the preparations necessary to engage with Government plans to reform judicial review.

Despite the slow progress of the court reform programme, the online court working group made sure that the risks posed by digitisation to access to justice were known to key decision-makers and parliamentarians. We gave oral evidence to the Justice Select Committee, ran our London conference on the theme justice and technology, and published widely. We made an important shift this year by re-framing our focus to include the use of algorithmic and artificial intelligence in public decision making and the impact that will have on how public authority decisions are made and challenged.

At a time when benefit sanctions and Universal Credit were less high on the political agenda, PLP produced a flagship event with York University, bringing together advisers, NGOs and Job Centre managers to formulate strategies for supporting those whom the system has not served well. We also made great progress in supporting claimants to better understand how claimant commitments can be tailored to help prevent unfair sanctioning.

The Statutory Instruments: Filtering and Tracking (SIFT) project played vital scrutiny role as a high volume of Statutory Instruments were used to give effect to legislative changes required to leave the EU. As a result of our work, the course of several Statutory Instruments and legislative approaches were changed. PLP produced regular briefings on withdrawal legislation and was regularly referenced by parliament and in the media. Drawing on this expertise, in autumn 2019, PLP was able to intervene effectively in the Supreme Court case brought by Gina Miller and Joanna Cherry QC to test the lawfulness of the decision to prorogue Parliament.

We also achieved record levels of output in terms of the number of conferences and training events as well as in overall attendance numbers. Our pre-COVID fundraising dinner was a huge success, raising over three times that raised by previous such events.

We finally bid a fond farewell this year to our offices on Caledonian Road and our operations team did a fantastic job of moving us safely to Goswell Road with minimal disruption where (at least until COVID!), we settled in well to our more accessible and suitable accommodation.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

We were very pleased to appoint Elizabeth Prochaska as our new Chair, and to recruit a number of additional board members to support PLP's strategic growth.

As in previous years, the PLP team has had to manage a lot of change and uncertainty this year, not least a new Prime Minister, the build-up and removal of the Brexit deadlock, a General Election, and the beginning of the global pandemic which struck towards the end of the reporting period. All at PLP have more than risen to these challenges and, with the support, generosity, and commitment of our funders and friends, have delivered outstanding work.

Jo Hickman
Director, Public Law Project

Chair's report

I was delighted to be appointed as Chair of the Public Law Project's Board of Trustees in December 2019.

PLP is a relatively small team of lawyers, researchers, events specialists, and support staff who consistently demonstrate outstanding levels of professionalism, expertise, and focus. I was immediately struck by the impact that they make in tackling some of the most pressing challenges facing society.

And there is no doubt that PLP is doing vital work at a challenging time.

Legal aid is still simply not available to some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society. People claiming Universal Credit face an unacceptable risk of unfair sanctioning and have few viable options to challenge unlawful decisions where they are made. Costs barriers to judicial review place a vital mechanism to check the unlawful exercise of power beyond the reach of the majority of citizens. Digitisation of courts and tribunals and the rise of algorithmic decision-making bring with them new and often hidden challenges to those who seek justice. The use of Statutory Instruments and the pace of change in primary legislation manifested by preparations to leave the EU have, at times, undermined the rule of law.

In addition to these challenges is the current Government's commitment to reforming judicial review, made in the Conservative manifesto in late 2019.

As you will see from the Trustees' report, PLP has made excellent progress against our five-year strategy, and towards the ambitious objectives towards which it is working.

As PLP faces these persistent and growing threats to public law remedies and access to justice, I am very proud to have joined an organisation that is committed to holding executive power to account and to helping people to enforce their rights, regardless of poverty or other disadvantage.

Elizabeth Prochaska
Chair, of the Board of Trustees

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Trustees' annual report

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020. Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association and the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Role of trustees

The trustees review the aims, objectives and activities of the charity each year. This report looks at what the charity has achieved and the outcomes of its work in the reporting period. The trustees report the success of each key activity and the benefits the charity has brought to those groups of people that it is set up to help. The review also helps the trustees to ensure that the charity's aims, objectives and activities remained focused on its stated purposes.

The trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities. In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives that have been set.

Purpose and aims

The decisions of public bodies have a significant impact on the lives of marginalised and disadvantaged people. Such decisions may include whether health care will be provided to an older person, whether benefits will be awarded to a destitute family, or whether a migrant fleeing torture will be detained or removed from the country. Those with the most to lose from unlawful or unfair decisions are often the most vulnerable.

The purpose and aims of the charity are, therefore:

- To improve access to public law remedies for those whose access to justice is restricted by poverty or some other form of disadvantage
- To promote and undertake research into the practice of public law, and
- To increase understanding, expertise, and knowledge of public law and how it can be applied

In fulfilling this mission, PLP carries out work in the following areas:

- Research and policy work to influence and inform policy
- Training and events to enhance capacity and expertise in the use of public law
- Advice and support to frontline charities and civil society organisations, and
- Casework to represent individuals or NGOs with standing, to act as an intervener, and in exceptional circumstances, to act as a litigant in its own right.

Strategic Report

The rapid pace of change of 2018-19 was more than matched by 2019-20, during which time events underlined the importance of fairness, accountability, and good governance.

With a new Prime Minister and then a new Government elected in 2019, the break in parliamentary deadlock saw the UK exit the EU with a challenging programme of legislative and constitutional change for Parliament and Government to negotiate within the transition period. The reporting period saw extensive use of Brexit related Statutory Instruments and significant changes to long-standing and well-established areas of law, including in immigration and environmental law.

Towards the end of 2019, the Government gave notice that important areas of the UK's constitutional arrangements were to be reformed. The Government's manifesto commitment to reform judicial review and the Human Rights landscape have brought long-running frictions around the relationship between the executive, legislature and judiciary to the fore. The risk and likelihood that access to judicial review will be restricted is high.

The development of the online court, although slowed by focus on Brexit, experienced acceleration during COVID as courts and tribunals made greater use of available technology. It remains unclear as to whether such changes to our justice system will better serve those who need it most, or how such change will enhance the rule of law. Meanwhile, questions around how to scrutinise decisions made by algorithms require urgent exploration and better understanding, not least by Government.

With the domestic agenda dominated by preparations to leave the EU and disrupted by the General Election, there remains a lack of political will and capacity to improve access to justice, and in the case of judicial review, the Government has still not avowed the existence of barriers relating to costs. Although progress has been made on improving the availability of Exceptional Case Funding, reforms to improve access to legal aid are long over-due, and access to justice remains restricted for those who need it most.

By working to and adapting our strategy 2017-22, PLP is tackling these challenges. Our four strategic priorities remain:

- Priority 1: Promoting and safeguarding the Rule of Law during a period of significant constitutional change.
- Priority 2: Working to ensure fair and proper systems for the exercise of public powers and duties, whether by state or private actors.
- Priority 3: Improving practical access to public law remedies, including by seeking to ensure that justice reform is evidence led and by increasing knowledge of public law.
- Priority 4: Continuing to strengthen infrastructure and capacity in order to improve our effectiveness as an organisation.

Within these priority areas, we have agreed five interlinked areas of specific focus: Brexit, benefit sanctions, legal aid, access to judicial review and public law and technology. The public law and technology focus area is new to 2020 and incorporates the work of its predecessor, online courts.

Achievements and performance by focus area

Access to judicial review

Improving access to judicial review remained a core focus for PLP in 2019-20 and we made good progress against our goals of:

- Maintaining pressure on decision-makers to enhance and preserve access to judicial review
- Ensuring that charities and NGOs can use judicial review to support the poor and the marginalised, and
- Improving access to judicial review in 'advice desert' areas.

PLP progressed the challenge brought by the charity Medical Justice to the Home Office's policy on using 'removal notice windows' which seriously threatens access to justice for migrants facing removal. At a hearing in March 2019 the High Court granted an interim injunction against the removal policy and a final hearing was held in June later that year. Judgment was handed down in September 2019 in the defendant's favour, although the injunction remained in place and the Home Office was not awarded costs. PLP and Medical Justice prepared throughout late 2019 and early 2020 for a Court of Appeal hearing which was held in July 2020.

PLP made a joint intervention with Liberty and the Child Poverty Action Group in the case of *RR v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions*, heard in November 2019. The Court ruled that public bodies, including the First-tier Tribunal, have the power and duty to disapply regulations that are not compatible with human rights legislation. The judgment re-affirmed that citizens should be able to enforce their human rights under the ECHR in any court or tribunal without having to bring separate legal proceedings, just as the Human Rights Act says they should be able to.

In January 2020, PLP assisted Migrants' Organise to produce a report detailing the failings in the immigration bail reporting regime, including the mental and physical health impacts of inappropriate reporting. Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, we worked with Migrants Organise and the Helen Bamber Foundation to achieve the suspension of all immigration bail reporting conditions during the pandemic.

PLP continued to work with Lankelly Chase partners on supporting small, front line organisations to use public law. In January we began work with campaigners and activists in Hull to challenge a council policy which had the effect of criminalising street sex workers. Litigation was brought in January and concluded in June with an agreement with the council to dismantle the system that was in place and to consult with our clients to develop a fairer replacement system.

Throughout 2019, PLP kept the pressure on decision-makers to enhance and preserve judicial review by responding to the Government's consultation in June 2019, which followed from Lord Justice Jackson's review of Fixed Recoverable Costs. PLP communicated its concerns around the Government's failure to consider Lord Justice Jackson's proposals on Qualified One Way Cost Shifting and Aarhus rules, and highlighted the Ministry of Justice's misplaced reliance on Cost Capping Orders as a way of mitigating concerns about access to justice.

Using strategic communications, PLP called on the Government to undertake much needed research to better understand the nature of the costs barriers so that sensible, evidence-based policy reform can be effected. We published a [popular article](#) by our Deputy Legal Director Sara Lomri on cost barriers in June 2019 and later achieved [media coverage](#) of our FOI request which showed that the Government had lost or disposed of the only record of a meeting at which costs measures to improve access to judicial review were reportedly discussed.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

In February 2020, PLP published Supporting systems changers through the use of collaborative legal approaches by Professor Lisa Vanhala and Dr Jackie Kinghan. Drawing on the first two years of the strategic partnership between PLP and the Lankelly Chase Foundation, the research paper identified key lessons for NGOs, legal organisations and for funders.

PLP continued to deliver training to a range of organisations about the use of judicial review to challenge systemic issues and ensure access to justice. This included training workshops which we co-convened with ILPA and the Strategic Legal Fund drawing on the learning from the Lankelly Chase pilot project.

To advance our commitment to improving access to judicial review in Wales, PLP held a highly successful Wales Conference with Cardiff University and Linenhall Chambers bringing together local practitioners, NGOs, academics and politicians including Jeremy Miles, Counsel General for Wales, and Julie Morgan, Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services. The Committee on Justice in Wales report, to which PLP contributed several research reports in previous years, was published in October 2019, and made numerous references to PLP's submissions. Although plans and funding for PLP's first Wales based lawyer were well advanced through 2019, we were unable to recruit to the role at the end of 2019 and with the advent of COVID, plans were put on hold.

Access to legal aid

Since the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO) removed entire areas of law from scope, PLP has worked to increase access to legal aid. Our priorities for 2019-20 were to revise the out-dated financial eligibility criteria, to improve access to the Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) scheme, and to increase access to legal aid in recognised advice deserts.

The creation of a new legal aid lead post in the casework team helped us to work towards these goals and enabled us to build a strong network of partnerships with charities and legal aid providers. Work of our research, events and casework teams all contributed to informing Government policy-makers and debates on access to justice, and allowed us to help individuals and charities to tackle the barriers to legal aid.

To support the development of evidence-based policy-making on ECF, PLP's research team carried out a survey of legal aid providers at the end of 2019 looking at barriers to accessing ECF. As the only data source of its kind, the survey provided a valuable insight into how providers engage with the scheme. The report, Improving Exceptional Case Funding: Providers' Perspectives, revealed that nearly 80% of respondents disagreed that ECF is effective in ensuring that people can access legal aid when they need it. It also demonstrated support for the Government to follow through on the commitments set out in The Way Ahead, the Government's action plan for delivering better support to people experiencing legal problems, published in February 2019. The report highlighted several reforms that could remove disincentives to apply for ECF and identified ways in which the Legal Aid Agency's administrative burden could be reduced. Before the report was published, we shared the initial results with the Ministry of Justice ECF review team and we were invited to sit on the Ministry's advisory panel for the means test review.

To provide practical support in accessing ECF, in November 2019 PLP published a toolkit to support organisations in setting up ECF clinics which assist people applying for funding. The toolkit was aimed at clinics operating in university law schools, pro bono schemes in private practice law firms, and not

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

for profit organisations. PLP caseworkers delivered training on ECF in welfare benefits to a range of civil society organisations, including pro bono charity Advocate and to Exeter University student clinic volunteers. We worked with two CABs to build ECF into their advice models and with Sidley Austin LLP to train their pro bono welfare benefits advisers on ECF.

Demonstrating PLP's expertise on ECF, this year PLP barrister Ollie Persey supported two organisations in making the first successful applications for ECF for a SEND tribunal.

During the reporting period, evidence emerged that there were issues with the quality of immigration advice provided to detainees under the 2018 legal aid contract, which significantly expanded the pool of firms allowed to provide advice. Amid growing concern about the loss of expertise with the widening of the market, we helped our client to raise this issue with the Legal Aid Agency, leading to policy-level discussions about how it might be addressed.

An important objective for the working group this year was to challenge the unfair application of the financial eligibility criteria for legal aid, also known as the 'means regulations'. We issued two claims for judicial review on behalf of victims of domestic violence who were refused legal aid for family proceedings because of the way 'trapped capital' tied up in their homes affected their eligibility. One of those claims settled with our client being granted legal aid, in a decision which – although this has not been acknowledged by the LAA – depended on its acceptance of our interpretation of the regulations. The other case was issued in early 2020 and the client's story was reported by the [BBC](#).

In further work to support the reform of the means regulations, PLP provided consultancy to the EHRC inquiry into access to legal aid for discrimination claims, including feeding into the final report and recommendations which included a call for the reintroduction of passporting for capital as an interim measure pending the review of the means test.

To pursue the objective of improving access to legal aid in advice deserts, in September 2019 PLP convened a conference on Access to Justice in the South West in partnership with Citizens Advice Plymouth and the University of Plymouth, bringing together organisations concerned about access to legal aid in this area. The conference enabled us to establish and improve networks with organisations working in the South West such as Citizens Advice, Shelter, Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council and the Red Cross.

"Great to have the conference as a forum to network -lots of the projects and policy work - good introduction to more of PLP and those who support -would like to see as an annual event" – Conference feedback

In late 2019, as a result of resource considerations, we made the difficult decision to limit the amount of further network building work we could undertake in the South West. We were unsuccessful in two funding applications which would have allowed us to recruit a dedicated post to develop that work, and the lawyer who had been leading the work left PLP to take up the post of legal director at Freedom from Torture. We have continued to maintain contact with the network established in the South West, and to support others working in the area.

Benefit Sanctions

The current system of benefit sanctions has been shown to have a profoundly negative impact on the health, finances and wellbeing of those affected. Throughout the reporting year, PLP has been progressing our work in this area with the aim of ensuring that:

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

- Benefit claimants have access to effective legal remedies when poor decisions are made
- We can identify and tackle systemic problems with the sanctioning system where they result in people being sanctioned unfairly and unlawfully
- Decision-makers, advisers, charities and individual claimants all know how claimant commitments can be tailored to individual circumstances, and that doing so can reduce the likelihood of sanctioning

In support of these objectives, PLP continued to provide training on benefit sanctions. In this reporting year we trained welfare rights advisers and frontline support workers, such as housing support workers, people working in mental health services and law centres, and local authority welfare rights advisers. Our training covered both law and practice around sanctions and how public law remedies can be used in welfare benefits cases.

To improve understanding around claimant commitments, in November 2019 PLP launched a website for claimants (and their advisers) who may experience a range of different circumstances, such as domestic violence, homelessness or issues with mental health.

These resources were distributed to over 6,500 advisers from a range of agencies, NGOs and charities that work with claimants, and to over 120,000 individual claimants.

The feedback we have gathered to date on these leaflets has been extremely positive. Comments included:

"I had no idea you could even change them [claimant commitments]! This is genuinely uplifting to know. I'm going to send this to everyone I know who might be affected because it could be life-changing for them."

"I wish this had been around two years ago when my first set of UC commitments caused my mental breakdown. This might make me slightly less afraid of coming off UC as in future I would use this right to amend my commitments if I need to reapply."

"Extremely helpful! I'm a trainer, and I spend a lot of time talking about this. I now give a set of the leaflets to whichever group I'm training, for them to copy and keep as a resource. Thank you!"

"A brilliant and much needed tool!"

Following the launch of the website, we began working with the best practice team for Universal Credit at Citizens' Advice in South London who are piloting our leaflets with users of their Help to Claim project across four local Citizens' Advice in south London and others in West London.

Feedback received indicates that CAB advisers found the leaflets very useful and that they were well received by clients. Citizens Advice will continue to use the leaflets and we are exploring ways of evaluating the extent to which this initiative has helped UC claimants to obtain suitably adapted claimant commitments.

In January 2020, PLP hosted a conference, *Benefit Sanctions: What Next?* Developed in conjunction with the University of York, the conference brought together over 80 people from civil society, the advice sector, researchers and academic, lawyers, and Job Centre managers to help formulate a common strategy to help those affected and to consider what is next for public law in this space.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

With support from the University of York, we later produced a short-form strategy paper to draw together the conclusions of the conference. The event acted to strengthen our network in the social welfare sector, allowing us to reconnect with organisations to share issues and ideas for addressing the challenges posed by sanctioning. Several members of PLP's casework and research teams spoke at the conference, including Sarah Clarke who highlighted arguments made in her 2019 LAG article on whether benefit sanctioning, particularly for people who are not well enough to work, could constitute inhuman and degrading treatment in breach of Article 3 ECHR.

Throughout the year we continued to act for individual clients. In the Autumn of 2019 PLP, lawyers Katy Watts and Matthew Ahluwalia acted for a client who had accumulated a high number Universal Credit sanctions, some of which were for failing to search for work during a time when she already had a job offer. The sanctions meant that she received no payments for 14 months, leaving her in a very vulnerable position, exacerbating her already poor health and putting her at risk of eviction. In addition, the appeal process took over 77 weeks to complete. Matthew and Katy succeeded in helping our client to overturn every decision that she challenged through the tribunal system.

Brexit

As Brexit-related primary and secondary legislation developed at pace throughout the reporting year, PLP's public and administrative law expertise played a vital role in helping to prevent unlawful decision-making and in informing thinking among civil society and parliamentarians.

In the previous reporting year, PLP secured funding for the Statutory Instruments: Filtering and Tracking (SIFT) project, designed to identify public law issues arising from the Government's use of the delegated powers.

Throughout 2019-20, the SIFT project established a network of civil society organisations interested in the impact of Brexit related statutory instruments. PLP identified a number of SIs that would have lowered environmental and safety standards and worked with organisations including ClientEarth, Friends of the Earth, the University of Sussex and ChemTrust. Several of these organisations were successful in persuading the Government to amend proposed regulations.

In October 2019, the SIFT project identified an SI that would have authorised civil servants to amend customs and excise legislation by making a public announcement, thereby allowing the executive to by-pass Parliament and to make law effectively by proclamation. Shortly after receiving a pre-action letter from PLP, the Government withdrew the draft regulation.

Following the Home Secretary's announcement in 2019 that the Government could bring an end to freedom of movement by using the SI process, PLP published an analysis as to why this could be unlawful. Our work was referenced by the House of Commons Library and cited in a national broadsheet and in legal sector media. The Home Secretary abandoned that approach shortly afterwards.

The SIFT project also identified an SI that purported to remove the right to equal treatment in self-employment for EU citizens. After PLP briefed parliamentarians ahead of key debates, Government ministers gave commitments in the Commons and Lords that the regulations would not impose additional restrictions on EU nationals. Our briefing page on the regulations attracted over 15,000 unique visitors.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

PLP's work on the SIFT project meant that we were uniquely positioned to intervene in the Supreme Court case brought by Gina Miller and Joanna Cherry QC MP to challenge the Prime Minister's decision to prorogue Parliament. Our evidence showed that prorogation would have allowed Brexit SIs laid under the 'urgent case procedure' to come into force before being debated in Parliament. Drawing on PLP's evidence, the Supreme Court decision reaffirmed the constitutional principle of executive accountability and asserted that Parliament's role in scrutinising legislation is fundamental to its purpose.

PLP shared findings of the SIFT project at 8 different events throughout 2019, including at the British Institute of International and Comparative Law and the University of Oxford. PLP authored widely read articles published by Brexit Civil Society Alliance, Free Movement, UK Administrative Justice Institute, UK Constitutional Law Association blogs, and the Law Society Gazette.

PLP briefed extensively throughout the year on Brexit related primary legislation, including on the EU (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill (now Act) 2020 where we highlighted a new power for Ministers to make regulations allowing lower courts to depart from Court of Justice decisions and to set the test for them to do so (clause 26). The concerns about clause 26 were picked up in Parliament and the media and the House of Lords voted against the Government on this issue.

EU Settlement Scheme

PLP's research on the EU Settlement Scheme identified that the Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination Bill denied EU citizens the right to appeal EUSS decisions in the event of a no-deal Brexit. Following briefings at various parliamentary stages, and engagement by PLP in partnership with organisations including the3million and the Brexit Civil Society Alliance, the right of appeal was announced in the 2019 Queen's Speech.

A separate briefing to inform EU citizens of their rights in the event of a 'no-deal' Brexit reached nearly 1,000 downloads.

In July 2019, PLP published 'Quick and Uneasy Justice: An Administrative Justice Analysis of the EU Settlement Scheme'. The report offered an end-to-end administrative justice analysis of the design and the values underpinning the Scheme.

Through this work, PLP identified that the automated nature of the scheme represents an acceleration of a trend towards quick justice at the expense of important safeguards.

At the end of 2019, PLP developed a second-tier support hub to work with frontline organisations who assist vulnerable and disadvantaged applicants to identify and challenge unlawfulness in the operation of the scheme and to improve how it operates.

The hub continues to work on systemic issues, particularly within the focus areas previously identified by the Brexit working group. This includes collaborative working with law centres, UNISON, the3million, JCWI, Unlock and other members of the Brexit Civil Society Alliance. We are gathering evidence from partners and through Parliamentary questions and FOIA requests.

Through our work on the Hub, PLP has identified several 'policy asks' to improve the EUSS, including calling for physical proof of status, a declaratory scheme and clear guidance for applicants in prison and those lacking mental capacity.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Public Law and Technology

For the first part of the reporting period, PLP focused on the objectives of the Online Court working group which centred around informing the debate on court reforms and monitoring the operation of the online court. The impact of our work during this and the previous reporting period were evident, particularly in respect of informing and influencing Government and Parliamentarians.

Following from our submission to the Government's consultation, Fit for the future: transforming the court and tribunal estate, the HMCTS response in May 2019 made several references to PLP's submissions, including where we highlighted the limitations of looking only at travel times as a way of understanding court users' ability and inclination to attend court.

Further to PLP's submission to the Justice Select Committee's inquiry on courts and tribunals reform in March 2019, our Deputy Legal Director Sara Lomri was invited to give oral evidence in June later that year.

Towards the end of 2019, two important factors became increasingly apparent. First was that the progress of the reform programme had slowed considerably. Second was that Government use of algorithms and big data to make decisions across a vast range of areas - including tax, welfare, criminal justice, immigration and social care - was well underway and increasing all the time.

In response, PLP invested time in re-shaping the work of this focus area. Our annual conference, *Judicial Review: Trends and Forecasts* in October 2019, signified the start of a focus on wider issues around public law and technology, with sessions looking at the use of algorithmic and artificial intelligence in decision-making. Several conference papers were later published in a special issue of the Judicial Review journal, and PLP quickly established itself as one of the leading organisations in this area.

By January 2020, PLP's board approved for the focus area to be re-framed as *Public Law and Technology*. This ensured that our working group remained focused on the emerging and most significant developments in public law whilst at the same time maintaining our capacity to respond to and inform the HMCTS reform programme.

Our ultimate goals in this area are to ensure that:

- Automated decision-making is fair and lawful, and that meaningful public law remedies are available when things go wrong, and
- The increasingly digitalised justice system operates fairly, lawfully and accessibly

Plans developed in early 2020 for the focus area include:

- To develop training on automated decision making for public lawyers
- To pilot a dynamic research project, Tracking Automated Government ('TAG'), and
- To monitor the rollout of the online court.

PLP has already begun to inform and lead discussion in this space. We are hosting an ongoing series of roundtables with Liberty and the Bonavero Institute of Human Rights at Oxford University to discuss the challenges posed by the growth of the digital state and its impact on decision-making, judicial review, public law and the public sector.

Additionally, we have written a number of articles and blogs on issues in public law and technology.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

These include:

- Reflections on Lord Sales' 2019 Sir Henry Brooke Lecture on 'Algorithms, Artificial Intelligence and the Law'
- Public law principles and secrecy in the algorithmic state, and
- Public Law and Technology: Mapping and Analysing Legal Responses in UK Civil Society

In early 2020 and in light of the rapid deployment of remote and online hearings in response to the Covid-19 crisis, our maintained focus on the online court was particularly useful.

In early 2020 we organised an event, *Remote Justice? Access to courts and tribunals during the pandemic*, looking at the increased use of technology in courts and tribunals which arose as a response to COVID-19. The event brought together a mix of expert views and first-hand experiences of these dramatic changes to the justice system. Throughout 2020 we continued to publish thought-leading research in this area.

Training and events

Once again, PLP increased the number of events produced and the number of delegates attending. New events exceeded audience targets and our regular events proved even more popular than in previous years. In the reporting period, the total number of attendees at events run by PLP rose to 846, of which 300 can be classed as 'civil society', an audience segment that we have identified as critical to PLP's theory of change.

This year saw the highest year on year increase in either of these figures, and by far the highest annual figure. Factors driving this achievement include having in place a full time Events and Communications Officer, a Communication Director (who joined in April 2019), and the continued expansion of the Research Team.

Increasing our links across civil society allows us to develop more relevant events with more partners. One of the highlights in the period was our conference *Discrimination Law for public lawyers / public law for discrimination lawyers* which sold out in June 2019. Whilst all of our events feedback has been hugely positive, one piece of dynamic feedback for this event stands out, received several months after the event.

"As a result of the knowledge gained at the conference and through information from PLP we have secured funding for a pilot project to support clients to take discrimination cases to county court which should start in the New Year".

Our annual conference engaged with *Public law and technology*, looking at the legal implications of increasingly automated government decision making. The event helped precipitate the re-framing of our 'online courts' focus area as 'public law and technology' in order to engage with wider implications of Government digitalisation.

Our Wales conference entered its 11th successive year with the highest post LASPO attendance figures, which helped us to progress our work in Wales (plans for which were later put on hold because of COVID).

Training and outreach

PLP continued to work collaboratively with other organisations to produce and deliver bespoke training that helps us and other organisations to achieve our objectives. We regularly engage with the Housing and Immigration Group (HIG) for sharing information on immigration status and entitlement to housing, benefits and social services. We have provided training to HIG on issues such as the impact

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

of Brexit on benefits entitlements for EU nationals. We delivered a further iteration of our course on judicial review and removals with the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA); spoke on the topic at ILPA's annual detention conference and at its AGM; and delivered a training course for ILPA on immigration appeals and judicial review. Our Legal Director co-convened two workshops on strategic litigation, together with ILPA and the Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants.

Our increased network building and outreach work has continued to lead to legal issues and test cases being referred directly to us. For example, we worked with Freedom from Torture and the Helen Bamber Foundation to challenge unsuitable accommodation provision for asylum seekers, and with Migrants Organise to assist with work on the Home Office's use of immigration bail reporting conditions.

PLP's final event of the financial year was a fundraising gala dinner and auction celebrating 30 years of the PLP's existence. The event was held at RIBA and was headlined by the comedian Nish Kumar. The event raised close to £40,000 after deductions for costs, almost three times that of previous PLP gala dinner events.

Volunteers

PLP is greatly strengthened by its volunteers. In the last year we were supported by Ariana Devine, who interned with PLP in late 2019, Barney McCay, who helped with research in the summer of 2019, Meric Saric, a Hansard intern who joined us during the first quarter of 2020, and Adam Waring, a Bonavero intern.

The training and events team was supported by volunteers throughout the year at events in London, Plymouth and York. Virtually all our speakers across trainings and conferences are academics, barristers, solicitors, advisers or other experts who volunteer their time and their expertise. The events team is further supported by students interested in public law who volunteer at the events and trainings. PLP was also supported by individuals who raised money for us by running the Royal Parks Half Marathon.

Beneficiaries of our services

PLP lawyers act for individuals who cannot afford private representation, particularly those who face multiple barriers in addition to poverty such as language, literacy, mental health conditions, and physical impairments or ill health.

PLP also acts for organisations which represent the interests of such disadvantaged groups. PLP's success rate is high, and our 2019 Annual Complaints and Feedback Review indicate that clients expressed "very high" levels of client satisfaction.

PLP makes a difference not just to the individual clients for whom its lawyers act but to wider society by identifying and mitigating barriers which prevent individuals from achieving justice and improving the quality of public decision-making, and by influencing and informing Government and public authority policies.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Fundraising

PLP's approach to fundraising is to focus on foundations and grant giving trusts both for core and project funds. This means that fundraising from individual donors is modest in comparison to income from other sources. PLP undertakes individual donor fundraising activities including entering teams in the Royal Parks Half Marathon and the London Legal Walk, annual fundraising dinners, and from individual donations. PLP also receives direct donations via a Charities Aid Foundation account. Routes for individuals to donate to PLP are listed on its website and include information on legacy giving and for those not wishing to use an online donation portal. PLP now uses its general mailing list to offer the opportunity to make donations.

Due to the limited nature of this activity we have not sought to register with the fundraising regulator. Staff involved in organising fundraising regularly update themselves with relevant legislation and codes of practice (including all those overlapping with GDPR) and practice concerning finance, such as VAT and fundraising events, through courses and seminars. PLP received no complaints regarding its fundraising in 2019/20. We do not directly involve vulnerable people in our fundraising activities. Where an individual has been identified as a benefactor of PLP's work, for instance in a case study of PLP's activities, their permission must be explicitly sought. PLP does not ask any third parties to undertake any fundraising activities on its behalf.

Financial Review

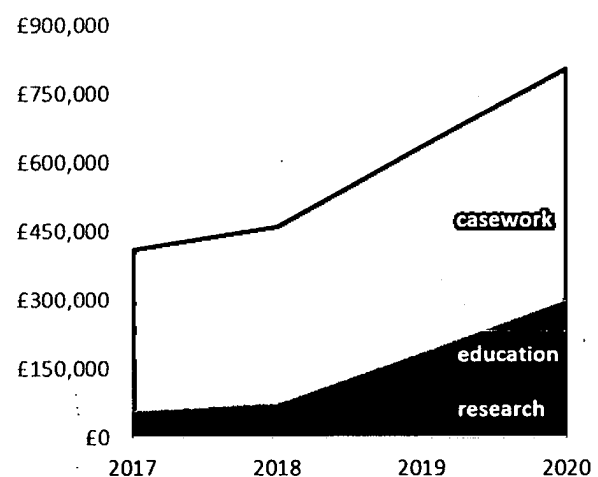
The year ending March 2020 (2020 for brevity) has seen PLP continue to grow its charitable activities whilst also investing in the support of those activities, most notably through moving to new offices. With the help of our funders and supporters PLP has also been able to increase its free reserves during this period of change. (2020: £715,490, 2019: £656,253) As a result PLP is well-placed to not only survive the unprecedented uncertainty arising from the outbreak of Covid-19 but continue the expansion of its most apposite work to promote the use of public law as a means for holding power to account in the interests of the most vulnerable in our society.

Charitable activities continue to grow

In 2020 PLP was able to increase the number of its staff directly working to advance its charitable work by the full time equivalent (FTE) of 4 new staff members (2020: 19.2, 2019: 15.3). The research team, which launched in 2018, continues to grow. There were on average 2.4 FTE research staff employed during the year (2019: 1.7) and expenditure on research staff undertaking charitable activities exceeded £100,000 for the first time.

Education, information and events was the single largest area of growth (direct expenditure 2020: £166,797, 2019: £72,338) with the appointment of the

Growth in expenditure on charitable activities



Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Communications Director in April 2019 both contributing to charitable work directly and increasing the capacity of the events team.

Direct expenditure on casework has also increased (2020: £506,258, 2019: £450,881) having appointed a second lead lawyer and a second paralegal to the team. Casework continues to account for most of PLP's spend on charitable activities (2020: 63%, 2019: 71%).

Looking ahead to 2021 we anticipate that expenditure on charitable activities will continue to increase with further appointments to the research team planned and with appointees made during 2020 having been in post for a full year.

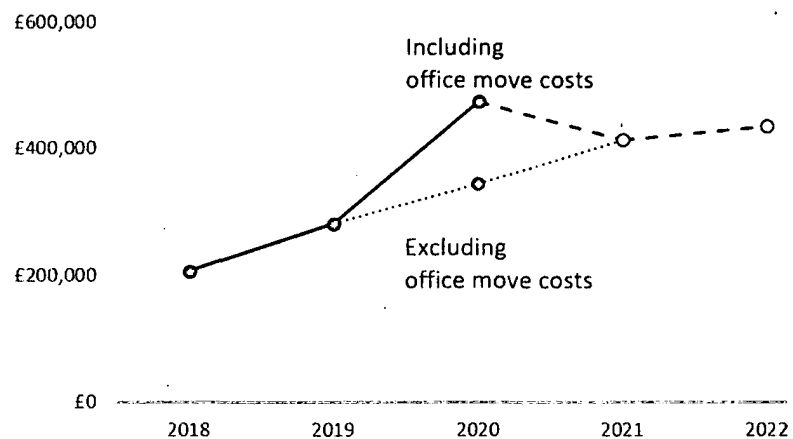
A new home and increasing support of charitable activities

Having grown from 5 FTE staff in 2006 when PLP first moved to its offices in Caledonian Road to 19 FTE staff in 2020, it had long since been time for PLP to find new accommodation that meets our needs. The move to Goswell Road in October 2019 followed years of planning and having built up a designated fund to assist with the cost of the move. We are grateful to Herbert Smith Freehills LLP for their pro bono legal advice which assisted us greatly in managing various issues related to the move. Whilst the introduction of social distancing due to coronavirus raises questions regarding how we will make best use of the new space in the future, the move from Caledonian Road remains necessary and, more than that, represents a key milestone in PLP's drive to improve our infrastructure as per our five year strategy.

PLP's support function has kept pace with the growth of its charitable activities. In 2020 PLP restructured the support team replacing the administrative assistant position with two operations officer roles and promoting the practice manager to finance and operations director to provide a higher level of support across financial, HR, IT & premises management and compliance.

As a consequence, support costs have increased compared to the prior year (2020: £445,931, 2019: £281,796). Premises costs are the largest element owing to the office move (2020: £198,189, 2019: £92,520). Due to higher rent on the new premises and increasing support staffing, PLP anticipates that support costs will continue to increase even once the cost of the move is set aside. We would like to

express our thanks to the team at Fletcher Day for their pro bono support providing PLP with access to specialist employment law advice during the year.



Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Increasing income

PLP plans to increase its income across all revenue streams to meet the recent investment it has made in its charitable activities, support team and infrastructure. 2020 saw PLP increase its income from grants, individual fundraising and events.

PLP's self-generated income is unpredictable and varies greatly from year to year. For this reason we are especially appreciative of long-term funding of our core work which mitigates the changes in income from other sources. Such grants include the Oak Foundation (£613,566 over 4 years starting Feb 2017) and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (£263,223 over 5 years starting April 2018 and an additional £25,665 awarded without application to support us in dealing with Covid-19 in May 2020 for which we are extraordinarily thankful), unrestricted funding from the Allen & Overy Foundation, the Bromley Trust, Garden Court and London Legal Support Trust as well as our newest major funder – the Sigrid Rausing Trust (2020: £100,000) who have recently awarded PLP £450,000 over 3 years starting in July 2020.

In addition PLP is fortunate to receive funding for several major projects including from Lankelly Chase Foundation, The Legal Education Foundation, Unbound Philanthropy and the AB Charitable Trust, Trust for London and New Philanthropy. All of which both fund the delivery of the respective projects directly and contribute to the wider cost of running the organisation. Freshfields, The Law Society and Matrix Causes Fund have also provided funding which enable us to undertake important work which would otherwise not be possible. Please see note 2 for a full list of funders, to all of whom we are exceedingly grateful.

This year has seen a decline in income generated from PLP's casework (2020: £205,835 2019: £431,813). PLP's casework income is unpredictable year to year due to the relatively low volume of cases and the disproportionate impact that winning any a particular case has on the level of income PLP will achieve in the year. This is particularly the case for cases PLP take on a 'conditional fee agreement' (CFA or 'no-win, no-fee') basis as such cases are valued as nil in these accounts but may be worth full private rates if the case is won the following year. This year, thanks to the support of our funders, PLP has been in a strong enough financial position to take on several more CFA cases for worthy and strategically important causes which are nevertheless ineligible for legal aid (2020: 1,942 hours on CFA recorded in year-end work in progress figures, 2019: 242 hours). We hope and expect that positive results in these cases will result in casework income increasing in the coming year. We are also providing staff training focussed on increasing the amount and recoverability of billable work the team record, and continuing to invest in our case management system.

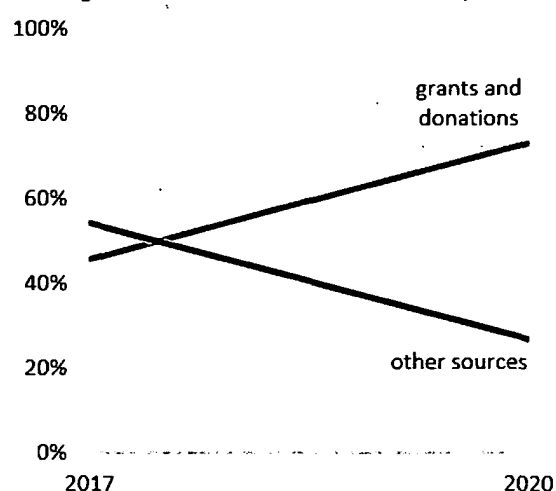
Events income was at an all-time high this year (2020: £90,577) reflecting the increasing demand for our training and conferences. We would like to thank the firms who have generously provided venues and catering to PLP free of charge to support this work – the monetary value of those contributions are noted in these accounts on the basis of what PLP would have had to provide were we not able to access such support (2020: £20,500, 2019: £14,600). Needless to say the quality of the venues and support in facilitating these events is much greater than PLP would have been able to provide from its own resources. We anticipate that events income will be hard hit by social distancing and are encouraged that the events team are still able to meet the need for these services through a wide range of online events, whilst looking forward to seeing delegates in person again in due course.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Taken together, income from all sources increased to £1,357,968 (2019: £1,220,642), with 73% of this income coming from grants and donations. The increase in support for our work from trusts and foundations is particularly striking when you consider that in 2017 PLP raised less than £350,000 from grants, which at that time was more than we had ever previously raised. We are particularly indebted to the many generous donations made at our 30th anniversary fundraiser where friends and colleagues from the legal sector showed an exceptional level of generosity (not least the £800 winning bid for a pair of fingerless gloves knitted by our legal director's mum). It is through such generosity that PLP has been able to increase its spend on charitable activities, improve the support for that work, and increase its levels of funds so that it is well positioned to continue delivering and developing its charitable work in these most uncertain of times.

Change in income sources over 3 years



PLP funds

PLP's total funds have risen following a small surplus in the year; this is despite having planned and budgeted for a deficit year with the office move. Both total funds and cash at bank remain relatively high for a charity of PLP's size at £1,738,483 and £919,277 respectively.

The majority of our funds are restricted (£285,403) and designated (£671,570). Our casework work in progress (WIP) designated fund (£649,995) reflects income we have recognised but is an illiquid asset which cannot be relied upon as part of our reserves policy. Many firms will have WIP with a high turnover, however much of PLP's WIP relates to cases which are two years old or more – therefore PLP cannot be confident that it would be able to convert this income into cash should the need arise during any short-medium period of time. As casework is a major source of unrestricted income we show our WIP as a designated fund in order to avoid misleading funders that these funds are available to invest in our charitable activities. With our office move completed this year the designated fund was reduced substantially to £21,575 and now holds the funds we are starting to set aside to cover dilapidations and move costs in case that is required at the end of the new lease. The remainder of our unrestricted funds (£781,510) are available as general funds and form the basis of calculating our reserves.

PLP funds and reserves

Total unrestricted funds	£1,453,080
Less designated funds of	£671,571
Less assets and long term debtors of	£66,020
Freely available, unrestricted reserves	£715,490

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Reserves policy

PLP's reserves are held to deal with the following contingencies:

- Problems with cash flow, for instance when waiting for casework receipts;
- Staffing shortages such as those due to sickness, maternity/paternity leave;
- Reductions in or withdrawal of funding;
- Costs of building renovations and dilapidations;
- In the event of closure, the costs to wind up the organisation and pay redundancies and leasehold liabilities.

PLP's board of trustees consider PLP's free reserves to include all unrestricted funds excluding designated funds and the value of fixed assets (2020: £24,935) and long term debtors (2020: £41,085, 2019: £0). Work in progress (our largest designated fund) is not freely available as explained above.

PLP's reserves policy is to retain between six and eight months of reserves of its budgeted annual operating costs. PLP's trustees consider a six-month minimum reserves policy necessary given the high level of our fixed costs (largely permanent staff and lease on premises) and the unpredictability of its unrestricted income (particularly casework income as noted above).

Our unrestricted freely available reserves at 2020 are £715,490 (2019: £656,251) representing six months of running costs as budgeted for the coming year. This reflects a significant achievement for PLP in continuing to achieve its minimum level of reserves given the office move and increasing running costs.

The majority of PLP's expenditure is in costs which are fixed (ie not easily changed at short notice). Projected staffing expenditure is forecast to increase above £1m in 2021 (from just £466,520 in 2017) as well having committed to minimum lease rental payments of £201,625 within the next three years (having previously had an unsustainably low exposure to property costs at just £35,000 per year). Given the unprecedented size of investment into our charitable activities and their support, and the level of risk they reflect, the trustees are confident that our current level of reserves is a suitable mitigation to underpin and enable this and some further modest growth.

This reserves policy is reviewed annually when the board of trustees set the budget for the following financial year.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks and uncertainties facing PLP are common to much of the social welfare advice sector.

The outbreak of Covid-19 poses significant challenges to PLP's finances and impact model, particularly on the running of events, conferences and fundraising from individuals as well as introducing uncertainty about how working from home might affect performance of casework income.

In March 2020, analysing the potential challenges to PLP's income arising from Covid-19 and given the uncertainty of our income, PLP modelled a range of scenarios including a reasonable, worst case scenario that could have seen reserves fall as low as 1.6 months reserves by March 2021. Owing to the extraordinary support we have received from our funders and the hard work of staff, PLP now anticipates that we may be able to meet our budget, developed prior to the outbreak of Covid-19, and retain similar levels of reserves to 2020. PLP does not intend to further increase its level of reserves

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

given the context of Covid-19, the urgent need for our work during this time, and PLP's relatively strong financial position in comparison to other charities our size.

The main challenge arising from Covid-19 currently facing PLP is managing the impact of social distancing on the wellbeing of our staff and reopening our office with the easing of restrictions.

The decline in the relative share of PLP's income made up by self-generated income, particularly casework income, presents a risk of over-reliance on grant funding in the longer term. The trustees' strategy for mitigating these risks is to develop our casework strategy whilst maintaining a focus on building casework income via training, performance monitoring and improved systems. Trustees also seek to build on the success of our grant funding, consolidating this growth in income by investing further in PLP's fundraising and funding strategy, particularly through the appointment of trustees Rosanna McKearney and Renata Czinkotai who bring expertise in different aspects of charity income generation.

The trustees have also noted the risk that the need to respond agilely to Covid-19 and the Government's plans for Constitutional Reform (see page 7), divert from our agreed focus areas. The Chair has reviewed staff reporting into trustees, improving the clarity of purpose for which information is presented to the board – standing reports on progress against each of PLP's focus areas reflect the importance to the trustees that PLP maintains an appropriately strategic approach to its charitable activities.

Governance & Management

In 2019 PLP welcomed Elizabeth Prochaska to the position of Chair of the Board of Trustees following the planned resignation of Ben Jaffey QC. PLP thanks Ben for over 10 years' service as a member of the board, four of which were as Chair.

We also thank Ruthann Hughes, Fiona McGhie and Savita Narain for their work as trustees. Following their resignations in early 2020 we welcomed to the Board Renata Czinkotai, Head of Grants at Global Witness, Rosanna McKearney, Senior Campaigns Manager at Age UK, and Mark Wood, former Chief Executive of ITN.

Richard James Savill joined the board in June 2020 with a view to taking over from Hollie Whyman, who anticipates resigning from her role as Treasurer later in the year.

Molly Barr joined the Operations and Finance team in July 2019 to fill the new role of Operations Officer to support Elaine Scott in her role as Administration Officer. Molly and Elaine support the HR, IT and compliance functions of PLP and supported our office move in the Autumn of 2019.

Christopher Igoe's role and title have changed from Practice Manager to Finance and Operations Director, marking the final step in the transition from a 'practice' model to a newly shaped and recruited Finance and Operations team.

PLP also thanks Polly Brendon who left to take up a position at Freedom from Torture at the end of 2019, and Katy Watts who left to join Liberty's legal team in July 2020. Daniel Rourke joined PLP in June 2020 and now leads our legal aid working group. Matthew Court and Emma Vincent Miller are to join the casework team later in 2020.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

One of PLP's Justice First Fellows, Ollie Persey, qualified as a barrister this year, following his year of pupillage supervised by our Legal Director Alison Pickup.

The research team welcomed Jack Maxwell as Research Assistant in November 2019, promoted to Research Fellow in May 2020, Alice Welsh who joined in June 2019 and was promoted to Research Fellow in February 2020, and Jo Hynes who joined on an ESRC PhD placement. The research team has also welcomed a number of interns and secondments throughout 2020.

This reporting year also marked the first full year for PLP's first Communications Director, Luke Robins-Grace, who joined in April 2019.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

PLP has a pay scale in place and remunerates key management personnel in line with their experience and the responsibility required by the role. The pay scale is reviewed as needed and benchmarked against similar roles in comparable organisations to ensure that our salaries remain appropriate and competitive. The trustees reserve for approval by the board the setting of and any changes to the pay scale affecting key management personnel.

Related parties and relationships with other organisations

None of our trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the charity. Any connection between a trustee or employee and anyone involved in the charity's business must be disclosed to the board of trustees in the same way as any other contractual relationship with a related party. In the current year, no such related party transactions were reported.

Statement of responsibilities of the trustees

The trustees (who are also directors of PLP for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable UK accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2020 was 12. The trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was re-appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The trustees' annual report has been approved by the trustees on 30 September 2020 and signed on their behalf by



Elizabeth Prochaska
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Independent auditor's report to the members of Public Law Project

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Public Law Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- The trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- The trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report and the director's and chair's reports, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report and the director's and chair's reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report and director's and chair's reports, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report including the strategic report and director's and chair's reports.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of responsibilities of the trustees set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2020

the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Helen Elliott (Senior statutory auditor)

7 October 2020

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

Public Law Project

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2019 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and grants	2	186,278	807,032	993,310	84,172	633,616	717,788
Charitable activities							
Casework and legal advice	3	205,835	-	205,835	431,813	-	431,813
Research and Policy	3	-	-	-	417	-	417
Education, Information and Training	3	90,577	-	90,577	67,243	-	67,243
Other trading activities – fundraising event		64,694	-	64,694	-	-	-
Investments		3,552	-	3,552	3,381	-	3,381
Total income		550,936	807,032	1,357,968	587,026	633,616	1,220,642
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	65,059	-	65,059	37,677	-	37,677
Charitable activities							
Casework and legal advice	4	175,870	644,042	819,912	112,342	586,750	699,092
Research and Policy	4	191,148	20,000	211,148	131,698	20,000	151,698
Education, Information and Training	4	249,321	4,500	253,821	100,474	5,000	105,474
Total expenditure		681,398	668,542	1,349,940	382,191	611,750	993,941
Net income for the year and net movement in funds	5	(130,462)	138,490	8,028	204,835	21,866	226,701
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,583,543	146,913	1,730,456	1,378,707	125,048	1,503,755
Total funds carried forward		1,453,080	285,403	1,738,483	1,583,543	146,913	1,730,456

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 15 to the financial statements.

Public Law Project

Balance sheet

Company no. 2368562

As at 31 March 2020

	Note	£	2020 £	£	2019 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		24,935		29,892
Non current debtors	11a		41,085		-
			<u>66,020</u>		<u>29,892</u>
Current assets:					
Amounts recoverable on casework		649,995		757,114	
Debtors	11b	205,808		185,146	
Cash at bank and in hand		919,277		918,524	
		<u>1,775,080</u>		<u>1,860,784</u>	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(102,617)		(160,220)	
			<u>1,672,463</u>		<u>1,700,563</u>
Net current assets					
			<u>1,672,463</u>		<u>1,700,563</u>
Total net assets	14		<u>1,738,483</u>		<u>1,760,348</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds			285,403		146,913
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		671,570		897,398	
General funds		781,510		686,145	
		<u>1,453,080</u>		<u>1,583,543</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>1,453,080</u>		<u>1,583,543</u>
Total charity funds	15		<u>1,738,483</u>		<u>1,730,456</u>

Approved by the trustees on 30 September 2020 and signed on their behalf by



Elizabeth Prochaska
Chair

Public Law Project

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2020

Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2020 £	2019 £
Net income / (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	8,028	226,701
Depreciation charges	12,680	7,277
Investment income	(2,534)	(3,381)
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors and WIP	45,372	(285,869)
(Decrease)/Increase in creditors	(57,603)	84,021
Loss on disposals of fixed assets	6,387	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	<u>12,330</u>	<u>28,750</u>

	Note	2020 £	£	2019 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities	20				
Net cash provided by operating activities			12,330		28,750
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Investment income		2,534		3,381	
Purchase of fixed assets		<u>(14,111)</u>		<u>(21,079)</u>	
Net cash used in by investing activities			<u>(11,577)</u>		<u>-17,698</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			753		11,052
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			<u>918,524</u>		<u>907,472</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			<u>919,277</u>		<u>918,524</u>

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

Public Law Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in the United Kingdom.

The registered office address is The Design Works, 93-99 Goswell Road, London, EC1V 7EY.

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

Work under conditional fee agreements is valued at nil until the case is won, at which point the charity has entitlement to the funds.

f) Donations of gifts and services

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt. A total of £14,500 of gifts in kind are included in these statements. These principally relate to the provision at no cost of venue space or catering for PLP Events.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering legal services, education and training events and conducting research undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

	Support Costs	Governance costs
Cost of raising funds	2%	3%
Casework and legal advice	62%	64%
Research and policy	15%	15%
Education, information and training	17%	18%
Governance	4%	

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

k) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

l) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

- Equipment and furniture 33.00% Straight line

1 Accounting policies (continued)

m) Amount receivable on casework (WIP)

Income is recognised on casework earned and due ("work in progress" or "WIP") according to the time booked on the matter multiplied by the relevant legal aid or interpartes rate. Appropriate provision is made for irrecoverable WIP. While some WIP will be recoverable within 12 months and some over 12 months, it is not possible to calculate this split with accuracy. The charity accounts for WIP as a current asset as it aims to recover WIP within the shortest possible timeframe; however, WIP is excluded from the free reserves of the charity.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

r) Pensions

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions.

s) Client monies

Client monies are excluded from the financial statements. The balance on the client bank account of these client monies at 31 March 2020 was £131,659 (2019: £208,889).

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

2 Income from donations and grants

Grants and donations included in income were received from the following:

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2019 Total £
AB Charitable Trust	-	60,000	60,000	20,000	-	20,000
Allen & Overy Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
Baring Foundation	-	49,363	49,363	-	50,000	50,000
Bromley Trust	10,000	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	51,329	51,329	-	50,077	50,077
Freshfields	-	20,000	20,000	-	33,294	33,294
Garden Court (CAF)	4,000	-	4,000	4,000	-	4,000
The Law Society	-	30,000	30,000	-	36,000	36,000
Lankelly Chase Foundation	-	205,230	205,230	-	48,362	48,362
The Legal Education Foundation	-	78,766	78,766	-	139,734	139,734
London Legal Support Trust	10,000	-	10,000	10,731	-	10,731
Matrix Causes Fund	-	4,500	4,500	-	-	-
Oak Foundation	-	156,844	156,844	-	150,783	150,783
New Philanthropy	-	48,500	48,500	-	-	-
Sigrid Rausing	100,000	-	100,000	-	-	-
Other Donations <£5,000	26,778	-	26,778	19,841	-	19,841
Gifts in kind	30,500	-	30,500	14,600	-	14,600
Trust for London (Strategic Legal Fund)	-	37,500	37,500	-	5,366	5,366
Unbound Philanthropy	-	65,000	65,000	-	120,000	120,000
	<u>186,278</u>	<u>807,032</u>	<u>993,310</u>	<u>84,172</u>	<u>633,616</u>	<u>717,788</u>

Gifts in kind reflect the value of services provided pro bono to the charity, including £20,500 of donated venue space and/or catering for events (2019: £14,600), and £10,000 of donated legal services (2019: nil).

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2019 Total £
Legal Aid Fees	99,718	-	99,718	65,777	-	65,777
Other Legal Fees	213,236	-	213,236	175,500	-	175,500
Movement in WIP and payments on account	(107,119)	-	(107,119)	190,536	-	190,536
Sub-total for Casework and legal advice	<u>205,835</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>205,835</u>	<u>431,813</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>431,813</u>
Research and policy income	-	-	-	417	-	417
Sub-total for Research and policy	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>417</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>417</u>
Events sponsorship	10,255	-	10,255	5,994	-	5,994
Courses and conferences	80,322	-	80,322	61,249	-	61,249
Sub-total for Education, Information and	<u>90,577</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>90,577</u>	<u>67,243</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>67,243</u>
Total income from charitable activities	<u>296,412</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>296,412</u>	<u>499,473</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,473</u>

Since the year-end, Public Law Project has received income under Conditional Fee Agreements of £29,733.

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities						2020 Total £	2019 Total £
	Cost of raising funds £	Casework and Legal Advice £	Research and Policy £	Education, Information and Training £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 6)	17,682	462,195	109,680	128,238	31,778	141,300	890,873	685,119
Audit	-	-	-	-	9,400	-	9,400	9,500
Bank Charges	-	-	-	-	-	619	619	988
Legal Fees	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	313
Professional Indemnity Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	7,976	7,976	3,485
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	20,307	20,307	19,966
Premises and Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	198,189	198,189	92,520
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	12,680	12,680	7,277
Office overheads	-	-	-	-	-	54,860	54,860	54,914
Casework Costs	-	44,063	-	-	-	-	44,063	38,392
Courses, seminars, conferences	35,377	-	-	38,559	-	-	73,936	25,953
Research Costs	-	-	2,339	-	-	-	2,339	2,032
Other grant expenditure	-	-	24,698	-	-	-	24,698	48,900
Other Project Operating Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,582
	53,059	506,258	136,717	166,797	41,178	445,931	1,349,940	993,941
Support costs	10,520	274,966	65,250	76,290	18,905	(445,931)	-	-
Governance costs	1,480	38,688	9,181	10,734	(60,083)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2020	65,059	819,912	211,148	253,821	-	-	1,349,940	-
Total expenditure 2019	37,677	699,092	151,698	105,474	-	-	-	993,941

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

		Charitable activities						
	Cost of raising funds	Casework and Legal Advice	Research and Policy	Education, Information and Training	Governance costs	Support costs	2019 Total	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Staff costs (Note 6)	18,251	412,489	62,784	54,769	39,075	97,751	685,119	
Audit	-	-	-	-	9,500	-	9,500	
Bank Charges	-	-	-	-	-	988	988	
Legal Fees	-	-	-	-	-	313	313	
Bad Debts write back/provision	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Professional Indemnity Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	3,485	3,485	
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	19,966	19,966	
Premises and Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	92,520	92,520	
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	7,277	7,277	
Office overheads	-	-	-	-	-	54,914	54,914	
Casework Costs	-	38,392	-	-	-	-	38,392	
Courses, seminars, conferences	8,384	-	-	17,569	-	-	25,953	
Research Costs	-	-	2,032	-	-	-	2,032	
Other grant expenditure	-	-	48,900	-	-	-	48,900	
Other Project Operating Costs	-	-	-	-	-	4,582	4,582	
	26,635	450,881	113,716	72,338	48,575	281,796	993,941	
Support costs	8,790	197,578	30,234	26,377	18,818	(281,796)	-	
Governance costs	2,253	50,633	7,748	6,760	(67,393)	-	-	
Total expenditure 2019	37,677	699,092	151,698	105,474	-	-	993,941	

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

5 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2020 £	2019 £
Depreciation	12,680	7,277
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	50,685	34,000
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	6,387	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT) – for audit:	8,150	8,000
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT) – for SRA audit:	1,250	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT) – for non-audit services:	-	600

6 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2020 £	2019 £
Salaries and wages	758,721	582,422
Social security costs	73,581	54,102
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	58,570	48,594
	890,873	685,119

There were no redundancy or termination costs in the year (2019: nil)

No employees earned over £60,000 during the year (2019: nil).

The total employee benefits including pension contributions and employer's national insurance of the key management personnel were £358,136 (2019: £288,372). These are the Director, the Legal Director, the Head of Strategic Casework, the Finance Director, the Events and Resources Development Manager, the Communications Director and the Research Director.

The charity trustees were not paid or received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2019: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2019: £nil).

No trustees' expenses representing the payment or reimbursement of travel costs were paid (2019: £nil).

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

7 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was as follows:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
Raising funds	0.5	
Casework and legal advice	10.5	10
Research and Policy	3.9	3
Education, Information and Training	3.0	2
Support	4.1	4
Governance	0.9	1
	<u>22.8</u>	<u>19</u>

The average number of employees (based on full-time equivalent) during the year was as follows:

	2020 No.	2019 No.
Raising funds	0.4	
Casework and legal advice	10.0	9
Research and Policy	2.4	2
Education, Information and Training	2.8	1
Support	3.0	2
Governance	0.7	1
	<u>19.2</u>	<u>15</u>

8 Related party transactions

The following related party transactions occurred in 2020: (£)

Contributions to a leaving present to the Chair by other Trustees in November 2019 60

Payment for painting for leaving gift for the Chair – February 2020 360

The following related party transactions occurred in 2019: (£)

i) Donation from trustee – July 2018 500

ii) Contribution to a leaving present for a Trustee by other Trustees April 2018 20

9 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

10 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Total £
Cost		
At the start of the year	57,648	57,648
Additions in year	14,111	14,111
Disposals in the year	(7,401)	(7,401)
At the end of the year	<u>64,358</u>	<u>64,358</u>
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	27,756	27,756
Charge for the year	12,680	12,680
Disposals in the year	(1,012)	(1,012)
At the end of the year	<u>39,423</u>	<u>39,423</u>
Net book value		
At the end of the year	<u>24,935</u>	<u>24,935</u>
At the start of the year	<u>29,892</u>	<u>29,892</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

11a Non current debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Lease deposit	41,085	-
	<u>41,085</u>	<u>-</u>

11b Current debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade debtors	22,235	32,388
Other debtors	48,065	68,439
Prepayments	42,269	25,939
Accrued income	93,239	58,380
	<u>205,808</u>	<u>185,146</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade creditors	23,873	50,728
Taxation and social security	35,041	14,419
Other creditors	21,389	81,971
Accruals	21,011	9,425
Deferred income	1,304	3,677
	<u>102,617</u>	<u>160,220</u>

All deferred income brought forward was released in the year

13 Pension scheme

The charitable company operates a defined contribution pension scheme administered by B&CE. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charitable company in an independently administered fund. The charitable company has no liability under the scheme other than for the payment of those contributions. At 31 March 2020 PLP had 21 (2019:18) employees in the scheme. The amount owed to the pension scheme at Year End was £704 (2019 £167).

14a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Fixed assets	66,020	-	-	66,020
Debtors	205,808	-	-	205,808
Amounts recoverable on casework	-	649,995	-	649,995
Cash at bank and in hand	612,299	21,575	285,403	919,277
Liabilities	(102,617)	-	-	(102,617)
Net assets at 31 March 2020	<u>781,510</u>	<u>671,570</u>	<u>285,403</u>	<u>1,738,483</u>

14b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	29,892	-	-	29,892
Debtors	185,146	-	-	185,146
Amounts recoverable on casework	-	757,114	-	757,114
Cash at bank and in hand	631,327	140,284	146,913	918,524
Liabilities	(160,220)	-	-	(160,220)
Net assets at 31 March 2019	<u>686,145</u>	<u>897,398</u>	<u>146,913</u>	<u>1,730,456</u>

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2019 £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2020 £
Restricted funds:					
Casework and legal advice					
Access to Judicial Review in Wales – Barings	-	49,363	(3,250)	-	46,113
Access to Justice – Oak Foundation	6,645	156,844	(157,781)	-	5,708
Access to Public Law Remedies – Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	4,173	51,329	(51,225)	-	4,277
Benefits Sanctioning – Barings Foundation	27,193	-	(27,193)	-	-
Justice First Fellowships – TLEF	-	38,366	(34,864)	-	3,502
LASP Legacy (18/19) – The Law Society and Lloyd's Bank Foundation	1,806	-	(1,806)	-	-
LASP Legacy (19/20) – The Law Society	-	30,000	(30,000)	-	-
Rule of Law – AB Charitable trust	-	60,000	(30,000)	-	30,000
Rule of Law – TLEF	3,597	7,500	(11,097)	-	-
Rule of Law – Unbound Philanthropy	824	65,000	(65,296)	-	528
Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants: No notice removals & Immigration Act 2014 (Windows)	3,434	-	-	-	3,434
Settled Status Hub – NPC Transition Advice	-	48,500	(34,307)	-	14,193
Strategic Partnership project – Lankelly Chase Foundation	10,840	205,230	(96,543)	-	119,527
Welfare & Immigration Rights Post Brexit – Trust for London	-	37,500	(32,429)	-	5,071
Research and Policy					
Brexit Public Law Policy – TLEF	-	32,900	(23,229)	-	9,671
LASP – PIR ECF Research – Freshfields	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
SIFT Project – Unbound Philanthropy	77,830	-	(35,861)	-	41,969
Education, information and training					
LASP Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) Clinics Toolkit – Freshfields	10,571	-	(9,161)	-	1,410
Matrix Causes Fund publications support	-	4,500	(4,500)	-	-
Total restricted funds	146,913	807,032	(668,542)	-	285,403
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Amounts recoverable on casework (work in progress)	757,114	-	(107,119)	-	649,995
Office dilapidation and relocation fund	140,284	-	(123,122)	4,413	21,575
Total designated funds	897,398	-	(230,241)	4,413	671,570
General funds	686,145	550,936	(451,157)	(4,413)	781,510
Total unrestricted funds	1,583,543	550,936	(681,398)	-	1,453,080
Total funds	1,730,456	1,357,968	(1,349,940)	-	1,738,483

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

15b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2018 £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers £	At 1 April 2019 £
Restricted funds:					
Casework and legal advice					
Access to Justice – Oak Foundation	5,380	150,783	(149,517)	-	6,646
Access to Public Law Remedies – Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	-	50,077	(45,904)	-	4,173
Benefits Sanctioning – Barings Foundation	30,028	50,000	(52,835)	-	27,193
Infrastructure grant – TLEF	9,713	23,320	(33,033)	-	-
Justice First Fellowships – TLEF	-	76,727	(76,727)	-	-
LASP Legacy (18/19) – The Law Society and Lloyd's Bank Foundation	583	36,000	(34,777)	-	1,806
LASP ECF (Exceptional Case Funding) support project – TLEF	-	4,687	(4,687)	-	-
Organisational Consultancy project – TLEF	-	5,000	(5,000)	-	-
Rule of Law – TLEF	7,956	30,000	(34,359)	-	3,597
Rule of Law – Unbound Philanthropy	17,396	30,000	(46,572)	-	824
Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants: No notice removals & Immigration Act 2014 (Windows)	-	3,434	-	-	3,434
Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants: Bail conditions & Immigration Act 2016	-	1,932	(1,932)	-	-
Strategic Partnership project – Lankelly Chase Foundation	48,992	48,362	(86,513)	-	10,841
Research and Policy					
Ethnographic research on the civil justice system – Freshfields	-	20,000	(20,000)	-	-
SIFT Project – Unbound Philanthropy	-	90,000	(12,170)	-	77,830
Education, information and training					
LASP ECF Clinics Toolkit – Freshfields	-	13,294	(2,724)	-	10,571
Matrix Causes Fund publications support	5,000	-	(5,000)	-	-
Total restricted funds	125,048	633,616	(611,751)	-	146,913
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Amounts recoverable on casework (work in progress)	566,579	190,535	-	-	757,114
Office dilapidation and relocation fund	122,784	-	-	17,500	140,284
Total designated funds	689,363	190,535	-	17,500	897,398
General funds	689,344	396,491	(382,190)	(17,500)	686,145
Total unrestricted funds	1,378,707	587,026	(382,190)	-	1,583,543
Total funds	1,503,755	1,220,642	(993,941)	-	1,730,456

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Casework and legal advice

Access to Judicial Review in Wales – Barings Foundation

PLP aims to improve access to judicial review in geographic areas where we know there is a lack of public law practitioners, expertise and culture. In 2018, PLP research showed that the number of firms in Wales providing legal aid had fallen by 29% since 2012 and the following year the only legal aid firm providing social welfare law advice in South Wales closed. The Barings Foundation has awarded PLP £150,000 over the next three years to meet the costs of employing a public law specialist based in Wales. The project aims to improve access to judicial review and legal aid in Wales by providing casework and by building networks with organisations who may have capacity to use public law.

Access to Justice – Oak Foundation

The Oak Foundation awarded PLP £613,566 over four years, starting March 2017, to improve access to justice, increase the accountability of public decision-makers and enhance the quality of public decision-making. PLP will achieve this by developing a stakeholder network to systemically improve its lobbying and advocacy efforts, deliver a bespoke training and outreach programme to raise awareness and generate referrals for PLP's casework and to take on 'test cases' to bring about strategic changes.

Access to Public Law Remedies – Esmée Fairbairn Foundation

Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has granted PLP £263,223 over five years towards core costs to improve access to public law remedies for those affected by poverty or disadvantage.

Benefits Sanctioning – Barings Foundation

The Baring Foundation granted PLP funding to enable the development and implementation of a strategic casework approach to issues of unfairness, discrimination and/or illegality within the benefit-sanctioning regime.

Infrastructure Grant – TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation provided funding to enable PLP to improve in its infrastructure in order to improve casework efficiencies through investment in a new case management system, website and customer relations management software and other improvements to its office and IT infrastructure.

Justice First Fellowship– TLEF

Under the Justice First Fellowship scheme, the Legal Education Foundation provided funding to enable PLP to host a trainee solicitor and, for the first time, two trainee barristers (pupils).

LASP (Legal Aid Support Project) Legacy (18/19) – The Law Society and Lloyd's Bank Foundation

A cohort of funders jointly funded PLP's 'Legal Aid Support Project': Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Access to Justice Foundation and Unbound Philanthropy when the project launched in 2013. The funds were to enable PLP to undertake intense and multi-faceted casework arising out of the reforms to legal aid contained within the Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012, and in particular the new exceptional funding regime in s.10 of that Act. PLP has received further funding since 2017 from The Law Society and Lloyds Bank Foundation to build on the legacy of the LASP project. This has enabled work on the means testing of legal aid, the low numbers of claims for discrimination and work to increase accessibility of Extraordinary Case Funding.

LASP Legacy (19/20)– The Law Society

The Law Society has provided an additional £30,000 of funding to continue to build on the legacy of LASP (described above) in 2019/20. As well as continuing to support our work on financial eligibility for legal aid and the accessibility of Extraordinary Case Funding, the funding also enables PLP to increase provision of legal aid in 'advice deserts' such as in the South West and Wales.

LASP Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) support project – TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation has provided funding to the Legal Aid Practitioners Group to work with PLP to address various issues with the operation of legal aid ECF. ECF allows for the provision of legal aid where there is a risk that failure to do so would breach the human rights of the person who requires it. Under this project PLP provides training courses, produces how-to-guides and organisational consultancy to front line practitioners to help them recognise and apply for ECF on behalf of their clients.

Organisational Consultancy project – TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation have funded this project to facilitate PLP's next phase of development and growth. The funding has enabled the appointment of a skilled external consultant to work with PLP's Board, Director and SMT to address a range of challenges including staff structural changes, the limitations of our current office space and development of its strategic priorities.

Rule of Law – AB Charitable trust

AB Charitable Trust have provided general support funding to assist PLP continuing to conduct strategic litigation limiting the inappropriate exercise of executive power, achieving positive systems change and achieving effective regulatory functions at a time of great constitutional change in the UK.

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Rule of Law – TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation have provided funding to proactively develop PLP's work programme relating to Brexit issues by creating capacity to work with partners and inform the debate through producing briefing notes for key stakeholders.

Rule of Law – Unbound Philanthropy

Unbound Philanthropy have provided general support funding to assist PLP continuing to conduct strategic litigation limiting the inappropriate exercise of executive power, achieving positive systems change and achieving effective regulatory functions at a time of great constitutional change in the UK.

Settled Status Hub – New Philanthropy Capital (NPC) Transition Advice Fund

Anyone currently living in the UK who is an EU citizen will have to apply to the Settled Status Scheme by 30 June 2021 in order to be allowed to stay in the country. New Philanthropy Capital, through the Transition Advice Fund, have provided PLP with £48,500 over 12 months to ensure legality and fairness within the Settled Status Scheme. We seek to achieve this by providing specialist support and training to organisations who are providing frontline advice to people who wish to remain in the UK. Our support will be informed by the expertise of our research team who will monitor the Scheme's implementation.

Strategic Legal Fund (SLF) for Vulnerable Young Migrants: No notice removals & Immigration Act 2014

The SLF granted PLP funding for pre-litigation research, including obtaining counsel's advice, in respect of a challenge to the Home Office's newly introduced policy of removing individuals from the UK without serving removal directions or otherwise providing them with written details of the flight on which they would be removed. Part of the grant was also intended to fund work by PLP to investigate potential litigation projects arising from the Immigration Act 2014.

SLF for Vulnerable Young Migrants: Bail conditions & Immigration Act 2016

Joint project between Migrants Organise and Public Law Project to look into bringing a legal challenge to the stringent bail conditions, particularly around reporting, imposed on minors and disabled young adults pursuant to the 2016 Immigration Act.

Strategic Partnership Project – Lankelly Chase Foundation

The Lankelly Chase Foundation has provided funding to explore how strategic litigation and other legal tools can be used to effect systemic change for people facing severe and multiple disadvantage. The work involves working with a Learning Partner and work with organisations who work with people facing severe and multiple disadvantage to build their understanding and skills relating to legal redress for the people they work with.

Welfare & Immigration Rights Post Brexit – Trust for London

Trust for London have provided a £150,000 grant over two years towards assist Londoners facing immigration and welfare rights issues arising in the post Brexit context. The funding will meet both the costs of specialist lawyers conducting strategic casework on immigration and welfare rights issues, as well as an academic lawyer to gather robust, empirical evidence on the operation of the EU Settlement Scheme. We propose to explore the evolving role of technology in the delivery of justice in these areas.

Research and Policy

Brexit Public Law Policy – The Legal Education Foundation (TLEF)

PLP takes no position on the UK's decision to leave the EU. PLP is engaged with Brexit given the Rule of Law and access to justice issues arising from what is the biggest legislative project in UK history. TLEF have provided £164,999 over 30 months to fund PLP to develop and enhance its ability to achieve impact through policy work, including non-litigation advocacy, analysis, awareness-raising and influencing. The grant also funds a second year of our 'SIFT' (Statutory Instrument: Filtering and Tracking) Project, designed to ensure that the many statutory instruments required for Brexit are monitored and that issues affecting disadvantaged groups are identified.

Ethnographic research on the civil justice system – Freshfields

Ethnography – a traditionally anthropological research method usually based on participant-observation – has not yet been properly developed and deployed in the context of the UK's civil justice system, but it holds potential to the reveal ground-level experiences and problems of court users. Freshfields have provided funding for PLP to create a framework for the use of ethnographic research in the context of the civil justice system, undertake pilot projects scoping areas of concern and scope further areas where the methodology could be of value.

LASP – Post-Implementation Review ECF Research – Freshfields

Freshfields have provided £20,000 of funding in support of PLP work engaging with the online court reform programme and development of the legal aid scheme arising out of the LASPO Post-Implementation Review. PLP seek to generate a robust evidence-base, influence the debate and secure substantive reform outcome to ensure meaningful access to justice.

SIFT PROJECT (Statutory Instrument Filtering and Tracking Project) – Unbound Philanthropy

Unbound Philanthropy have provided funding for this initiative to ensure that statutory instruments made during the Brexit process, particularly those which affect the rights and obligations of disadvantaged groups, comply with relevant public law standards.

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)**Education, Training & Events****Matrix Causes Fund publications support**

Matrix Causes Fund has provided funding to enable PLP to publish accessible information about the 'claimant commitment' for Universal Credit recipients, including the adaptations that are available to reflect individual circumstances, and to establish a microsite to host digital guides and collect feedback.

LASP ECF (Extraordinary Case Funding) Clinic and Toolkit – Freshfields

Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP have provided funding for the production of a guide to setting up Exceptional Case Funding ("ECF") clinics in universities, pro bono units or other partner organisations; the delivery of training workshops to present the toolkit; and to provide subsequent support to organisations setting up ECF clinics.

Purposes of designated funds

Designated funds have been set aside by the trustees for a certain purpose. The trustees have set aside two funds as follows:

Amounts recoverable on casework (Work in Progress)

Purpose: To clearly identify Work in Progress assets in the balance sheet of PLP's audited accounts so as to distinguish them from PLP's freely available, unrestricted funds.

Office dilapidation and relocation fund

Funds set aside to cover the cost of dilapidations at the end of the office lease, or to meet other costs required to facilitate a move to new premises.

16 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Property	
	2020	2019
	£	£
Less than one year	80,650	26,250
One to Five Years	120,975	-
	<u>201,625</u>	<u>26,250</u>

17 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.