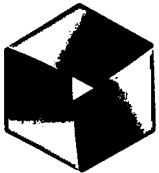


Company number: 02368562
Charity Number: 1003342



Public Law Project

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021



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Public Law Project annual report

Reference and administrative information

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Public Law Project annual report

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2021

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:

Sarah Jane Burton	
Renata Czinkotai	
Pavan Dhaliwal	
Andrew Hood	Company Secretary
Rosanna McKearney	
Qalid Mohamed	
Bryan Nott	
Elizabeth Prochaska	Chair
Richard James Savill	Treasurer
Mark Wood	

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

Despite the ongoing pandemic, PLP achieved much of which I am proud. As always, our achievements are shared with many other organisations and individuals. I mention just a few here.

Our client Medical Justice successfully challenged a deeply unfair Home Office removal policy, one that had had the consequence of denying vulnerable people access to the court to prove their entitlement to remain in the UK. In response to a case brought by a disabled client the Department of Work and Pensions' agreed to stop its egregious practice of pressuring benefit claimants into accepting less benefit than their full entitlement. Cases brought by PLP for domestic violence survivors resulted in significant improvements to the legal aid eligibility criteria (and thus increases access to justice for many others).

PLP remained a prominent voice in defence of the rule of law. We advanced wider public understanding on the use of algorithms in decision-making, published thoughtful research on the impact of the pandemic on administrative justice, and drew attention to serious deficiencies in our system of delegated legislation. As the year progressed the current administration's appetite for constitutional reform and its willingness to depart from convention became an increasingly prominent theme. Alongside specific plans to restrict judicial review came a series of further consultations, reviews and initiatives including on the Human Rights Act, immigration, and civil procedure rules, as well as primary and secondary legislation.

New and significant challenges emerged across our focus areas. Throughout the year we saw the acceleration of the online courts and greater use of algorithms in decision-making; increasing vulnerability of benefit claimants; stasis in legal aid reform; the challenge to Parliamentary sovereignty presented by Brexit legislation; and the limitations of the EU Settlement Scheme.

To ensure that PLP was prepared for the cumulative impact posed by the uniquely challenging external environment, we adopted the prevention of regressive constitutional change as a central organisational goal.

This supported PLP to grow and evolve in response to the scale of threat: in recognition of the advocacy and influencing work, we recruit a dedicated Communications Officer and a Policy and Parliamentary Officer. In 2021, PLP recruited two constitutional research fellows to join our research team, and we created the new position of Deputy Research Director.

Following the initial success of the EUSS Hub, PLP expanded its hub model and set up a Welfare Rights Hub to support individuals and organisations navigating the welfare system. After extensive consultation with our partners in Wales, we recruited our first PLP Wales lawyer, who is now based in Cardiff. We also made changes to PLP's internal structure aimed at increasing our agility and efficacy, and invested in our back office and support functions to maintain the efficient delivery of our charitable work.

The development of the Black Lives Matter movement inspired further change at PLP. Systemic, structural racial injustice cuts across many aspects of PLP's work as the disparity in outcomes for people seeking justice are increasingly defined by place and race. With the support of an external consultant, we asked ourselves some tough questions about our own performance and culture in respect of equality and diversity. There was much to celebrate in that respect, and also much that we

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

can work to improve. In 2020 the trustees adopted a project charter to formally capture our ambitions in equality and diversity and commit PLP to specific targets and resourcing

The COVID-19 pandemic inevitably had a significant impact on our work. In March 2020 shortly before the national lockdown we closed our office and all began working remotely. As we had robust systems in place, we were able to make that switch relatively easily, and continued to provide legal service to individuals and organisations. We were able to move all our events online and in the process of doing so to significantly increase the number of delegates able to access our events. It is likely that positive and permanent changes to PLP's services and working practices will ultimately result.

I am however mindful of the negative impact of protracted uncertainty and disruption, including enforced home working and the management of school closures and periods of illness/isolation. Over 2020-21 we increased investment into our wellbeing programme, introduced a new Employee Assistance Policy and employed a temporary HR Manager. We have also increased the centrality of staff welfare and connectivity into our operational plans for 2021-22. Meaningful engagement with the whole staff team in collective and individual wellbeing has helped to ensure that we maintain a positive working environment in such difficult circumstances.

That PLP is in the enviable position that it is, and that it has continued to produce work of such a consistently high standard is, as ever, is down to the focus, expertise and hard work put in by everyone at PLP - staff and board - and to the generosity and collegiality of our friends, partners and funders. Thank you to all.

Jo Hickman

**Director
Public Law Project**

Chair's report

PLP has had a hugely successful year. It has not simply survived the pandemic. In response to significant challenges, it has thrived and delivered outstanding results for its clients and beneficiaries.

There were so many highlights. We have delivered public law training to record numbers of delegates. We now have one of the largest public law research teams in the country, producing more high-quality work than ever. Our casework team has empowered vulnerable individuals to take on some of the most complex and daunting legal challenges we have faced. I encourage you to read about them in this report.

What really stands out for me is how quickly and effectively PLP acted to respond to the significant threats to justice and the rule of law, by recruiting new people and adjusting its strategy. It's a sign of the strength and resilience of PLP's leadership that it achieved this during a pandemic while the team was under considerable pressure.

PLP's vision is a world where state decision-making is fair and lawful and each person has the power to hold authorities to account. This has never been more important. Throughout COVID and the process of leaving the EU, we have seen efforts to shift the relationship between the executive, judiciary and the legislature in fundamental ways. The undermining of accountability and proposed restrictions on judicial review, and the failure to improve access to legal aid and the courts must be considered alongside the inevitable threat to our economic wellbeing as we emerge from the pandemic. People who are vulnerable whether because of poverty, disability, race, gender or any other factor are now even more at risk of disadvantage when the state acts unlawfully. People who already experience disadvantage are at the sharp end of unlawful decision making and they face the greatest barriers to achieving a just outcome.

Public law is at the heart of addressing these challenges. It is crucial that PLP continues to play an active role in holding the state to account with and on behalf of disadvantaged groups, and in building the capacity of others. The work that PLP has undertaken this year, both externally and internally, has positioned the organisation to achieve its goals for the long-term, and to do so with the focus and expertise for which it is renowned.

Elizabeth Prochaska

Chair

Public Law Project

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Trustees' annual report

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. 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

During the reporting period, PLP agreed revisions to its five-year strategic plan 2017-22 which included the addition of three central organising goals running from 2021-22.

PLP's central organising goals for 2021-22 are:

- Goal 1: Identify and contribute to the prevention of regressive constitutional reform
- Goal2: Use resources effectively to challenge unlawfulness significantly impacting on disadvantaged groups and support others to do so, and
- Goal 3: Prioritise development of PLP as a resilient, connected organisation

These goals are concurrent with our existing strategic priorities which are:

- 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, and
- Priority 4: Continuing to strengthen infrastructure and capacity in order to improve our effectiveness as an organisation.

As the current administration made significant advances towards regressive constitutional reforms and demonstrated a particular willingness to depart from constitutional conventions, the dominating issue of this reporting period has been constitutional reform. When it came to reviewing our strategy, there was near unanimous agreement amongst stakeholders that the single thing that PLP must do was to mitigate and respond to threats to judicial review and to other constitutional norms giving effect to the rule of law.

The reform agenda was chiefly manifested through a series of overlapping and - in places seriously flawed – reviews and consultations, including on judicial review, the Human Rights Act and the New Plan for Immigration.

The Independent Review of Administrative Law (IRAL) began work in July 2020 and became the focus of civil society research and influencing work around the reform of judicial review. The panel reported to Government in January 2021, but it was not published until March 2021 when it appeared at the same time as a short Government consultation. The Government's consultation proposals went much further than the IRAL's relatively modest recommendations and appeared to mischaracterise the panel's take on the most pivotal issue. Even though the IRAL said that the Government could be "confident" that the courts would respect institutional boundaries in exercising their powers, the Lord Chancellor inaccurately claimed that the IRAL identified a "growing tendency" for courts to review the merits of decisions, not just their legality.

Effective discourse and scrutiny were further disrupted by the Government's refusal to publish its own departmental responses to the IRAL as well as by its failure in the consultation process to offer meaningful evidential basis for its proposals. And in the case of one of the main proposals - to abolish Cart judicial reviews - the Government relied on seriously flawed data.

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The Independent Human Rights Act Review set out to examine the relationship between UK courts and the European Court of Human Rights, and the impact of the HRA on the relationship between the judiciary, the executive and the legislature. The review also looked at the justiciability of secondary legislation, which has implications for judicial review.

Towards the end of the reporting period the Government published the New Plan for Immigration which engaged several rule of law issues relating to access to judicial review, particularly around costs and removal notice periods. This consultation preceded the publication of the Nationality and Borders Bill in Summer 2021.

Beyond these 'big ticket' reforms, rule of law concerns were regularly engaged by primary and secondary legislation relating to COVID and leaving the EU, including by the Internal Markets Bill and the Immigration and Social Security Bill.

Other significant themes included the escalating role of technology in public decision-making, and the delivery of justice as the HMCTS reform programme accelerated following the mass move to remote hearings prompted by the pandemic. Conversely, the pandemic delayed the Ministry of Justice's work on the civil legal aid means test review. Originally planned for completion in Summer 2020, the department announced it is aiming to begin a consultation on proposals in the Autumn of 2021. Social distancing requirements also pushed huge numbers of people to claim benefits and placed claimants at even greater vulnerability.

In light of this context, and our new goals on constitutional reform, PLP's five interlinked areas of focus remain: access to judicial review, access to legal aid, benefit sanctions, public law and technology, and Brexit.

Judicial Review

PLP's goals are to:

- Keep the pressure on decision-makers to enhance and preserve access to judicial review
- Ensure that charities and NGOs can use judicial review to support marginalised individuals and groups
- Improve access to judicial review in 'advice desert' areas

Early in 2020, PLP identified that its central organisational goal should be to prevent regressive constitutional reform. PLP made considerable progress against that goal in the reporting period.

Our evidence to the Independent Review of Administrative Law (IRAL) was submitted by the end of October with the key message that there is no robust evidence that judicial review has unduly hampered government decision making; the real issues relate to its lack of accessibility. Our submission received support from many quarters, including praise from eminent academics, Peers, legal practitioners, and formal endorsements including from the Bach Commission, Legal Action Group and Bindmans. Our Legal Director was invited to give oral evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into the review.

In preparing our response to the IRAL, PLP organised three roundtable events drawing together experts in the field, hosted by Dinah Rose QC and Professor Paul Craig and attended by distinguished academics, practitioners, and former judges. Feedback was extremely positive, with attendees reporting that the discussions had helped inform their own thoughts and submissions to IRAL.

In this period, we also offered support for other organisations navigating the evidence base (particularly statistical information) relating to judicial review. We received particular thanks from JUSTICE, the Bar Council and Liberty, as well as a series of charities without legal expertise who were keen to make their voices heard. As part of these activities, we co-authored *A guide to reading the Official Statistics on judicial review in the Administrative Court, in order to increase public understanding of existing judicial review data.*

"The Bar Council engaged with PLP long before the IRAL panel was launched and the subsequent report published to begin to collect the facts and figures around JR. PLP took a leading role in researching and presenting the evidence basis which many organisations referred to in their own submissions to the IRAL." Piran Dhillon-Starkings, Special Advisor to the Chair of the Bar

We worked closely with Liberty and an external consultant to gather a series of case studies to illustrate how the primary purpose of judicial review is to uphold accountability and the rule of law and ensure that public authorities act lawfully. A petition was launched through 38 degrees profiling some of the individuals in the case studies we prepared. In co-operation with Liberty, we delivered a series of legal sector and mainstream media briefings to communicate key messages.

The Government's proposed changes in response to the report were more regressive than those recommended by the IRAL. The Government also blocked publication of the evidence they had submitted to the IRAL. PLP issued a series of FOIA requests and worked with legal journalists to maintain calls for transparency. Central to our messaging in response to the report and consultation was that serious constitutional reform demanded a high evidential threshold of which the

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Government was falling short, especially in relation to Cart JRs. PLP's concerns were voiced and reflected in much of the mainstream and legal sector media coverage on this issue.

To support this work, we recruited two Research Fellows to work on constitutional reform and towards the end of the reporting period we finalised plans to recruit our first Policy and Parliamentary Officer to support our advocacy.

Human Rights Act

In preparation for submitting a response to the Independent Human Rights Act Review (IHRAR), PLP hosted an information-sharing event, '[Unpacking the Independent Human Rights Act Review](#)', to help civil society organisations prepare submissions of their own. PLP also contributed to a similar roundtable event hosted by the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law. As part of our submission, we undertook research on the role of the Human Rights Act (HRA) in relation to delegated legislation, primarily to respond to growing concerns that courts have excessive legislative power. Initial findings were published on the [UK Constitutional Law Association Blog](#), which attracted considerable attention including from Joshua Rozenberg, and was cited by several organisations in their submission to the IHRAR. Later in the year, PLP's Legal Director was invited to give oral evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights inquiry into the review and to attend a roundtable with the IHRAR panel and other legal/human rights organisations.

Tribunal appeals

Alongside more high-profile reforms, PLP produced a detailed response to the Government's [consultation](#) whether to restrict appeal rights from tribunals. PLP submitted and published its response in January, our position was that restricting an already narrow scope for appeal from tribunals would be detrimental to the right to a fair trial and access to justice.

Medical Justice

In its final judgment in October 2020, the Court of Appeal held that the Home Office's 'removal notice window' policy unlawfully restricted access to justice for people facing removal from the UK. Some 40,000 people had been removed under the policy before it was suspended.

Not only did the Court of Appeal find that this policy was unlawful, its judgment was a strong and clear restatement of the fundamental importance of the right of access to justice.

The Home Office's next steps were outlined in the New Plan for Immigration consultation in March 2021, which included proposals to legislate on notice for removal and for the limited re-introduction of legal aid. PLP responded to the consultation and continued to work with our networks to monitor developments and protect migrants' right to access to justice.

"The Court of Appeal's judgment in the *Medical Justice* case was a vindication of years of work by our team and showed PLP at its best: never giving up. Stopping the use of removal windows will have prevented loads of unlawful removals and prevented injustice on a huge scale. I'm so proud of the commitment which we made as a team to this case and the result that we got at the end." – PLP Legal Director, Alison Pickup

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

Department of Work and Pensions 'cold calling'

This case saw the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) agree to change its practice of making 'offers to settle' to claimants who were appealing decisions to award them lower levels of benefits than they were entitled to. PLP's client was a disabled woman in receipt of benefits who had agreed to accept lower benefits than she was entitled to after being cold-called by the DWP.

No Recourse to Public Funds

In Spring 2020 PLP represented Project 17 in their intervention in a challenge to the Home Office's No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) scheme. The intervention drew upon Project 17's extensive evidence to highlight that section 17 Children Act 1989 does not provide an adequate safety net against the risk of destitution created by the NRPF scheme.

The judges ruled that the NRPF policy breaches Article 3 of the ECHR, which prohibits inhuman and degrading treatment.

Work with self-organised groups

PLP continued to assist women's domestic violence services with challenges to commissioning decisions. We focused on BAME led organisations, including working with the Centre for Women's Justice and Imkaan. We provided advice to Southall Black Sisters on a potential challenge to the Home Office pilot on domestic violence services for those without immigration status. The Home Office backed down at an early stage and litigation was not required.

PLP successfully supported the group Untold Story in their efforts to create a less dangerous and hostile environment for sex workers in Hull. PLP represented members of the group in their challenge to Hull City Council's use of section 222 of the Local Government Act (1972) which effectively criminalised sex workers in Hull. The challenge resulted in a legal obligation for Hull City Council to introduce policies and police guidance which prioritises the safety of sex workers.

Access to JR in Wales

PLP's work in Wales has progressed to the next stage. Through our consultation we identified that recruiting a public law expert to be based in Wales was key to improving access to public law remedies, and we appointed Matthew Courts to the role in January 2021.

Matthew has started providing training, information and expert 2nd tier support to organisations, and representing individuals and organisation in claims for judicial review. So far Matthew has focused on issues linked to unlawful housing policies and has acted for asylum seekers accommodated in an ex-military training camp in West Wales.

PLP also acted for a Welsh NGO in a potential intervention in a judicial review challenge to the lawfulness of the camp which closed before the case proceeded to trial.

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Legal Aid

The aim of Public Law Project's legal aid work is to:

- Significantly increase the number of people financially eligible for legal aid
- Increase the accessibility of legal aid for those whom parliament intended should access it, and
- Significantly improve the sustainability, accessibility, and quality of publicly funded advice on legal aid.

Widening the scope for legal aid eligibility

Two cases brought by PLP's clients had a material impact on widening legal aid eligibility.

The first, is the case of GR v LAA which tackled the issue of 'trapped capital'. The challenge successfully established that when assessing eligibility, the Legal Aid Agency has discretion not to take into account capital where it cannot be accessed. Our client was a single parent survivor of domestic violence who, despite claiming Universal Credit, was ineligible for legal aid because the 'trapped capital' was locked into the home she jointly owned with her abusive ex-partner.

A second case dealt with the issue of 'imaginary capital', i.e. a persons' interest in a property. Acting on behalf of another domestic violence survivor we challenged the rule which limited the amount of a mortgage that could be deducted from the value of property when assessing legal aid eligibility. As a result of the challenge, the Lord Chancellor agreed to change the rules so that the whole of a person's mortgage would be deducted from the value of the property, making legal aid accessible for many home-owners with little or no equity who cannot afford to pay for legal representation. Following these cases, PLP has produced resources, training materials and precedents to share with legal aid and family lawyers to empower many more to access the legal aid scheme.

In Parliament

PLP's written evidence to the Justice Select Committee's Future of Legal Aid inquiry was cited several times in the Committee's report.

Several of PLP's key recommendations to the Committee were referenced, including simplifying and reviewing means testing, improving the Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) scheme, and reducing financial risks for legal aid providers.

In late 2020, PLP's Director Jo Hickman gave evidence to the Westminster Commission on the Sustainability of Legal Aid. Jo shared with the cross-party group of MPs and Peers a series of compelling examples of how domestic violence survivors, disabled, elderly and other vulnerable individuals have needed legal aid to challenge decisions made by public authorities.

Immigration legal aid

In Spring 2021, PLP published, 'The case for broadening the scope of immigration legal aid' as a summary of the evidence and rationale for why policy-makers should bring immigration law back into scope for legal aid.

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

The publication coincided with the Government's open consultation on its 'New Plan for Immigration' and demonstrated that for it to be effective, the 'new legal advice offer' contained within the plan must include bringing immigration law back into scope for legal aid.

Having investigated problems with the quality of legal advice provided to people in immigration detention under the Detained Duty Advice Scheme (DDA), PLP lawyers worked with a network of NGOs who support people in immigration detention. In late 2020, PLP was instructed to enter pre-action correspondence with the Legal Aid Agency to challenge its failures to ensure the quality of advice given under the DDA contract. In 2021 a claim was subsequently issued and permission granted.

Legal aid and the pandemic

Throughout the pandemic PLP pressed for action to ensure that the ECF scheme functioned as effectively as possible, writing to the Lord Chancellor in April 2020 to request changes to the system.

Through research conducted between June and July 2020, we found that 80% of practitioners were unaware of the steps that the LAA had implemented to ensure the accessibility of the ECF scheme.

The results of this research published in October 2020, 'Improving Exceptional Case Funding: Responding to Covid-19', urged the government to learn lessons from the first wave of the coronavirus and make the ECF scheme more accessible. We again wrote to the Lord Chancellor in March 2021 with another set of recommendations.

Our work on how Covid had exacerbated existing problems with the ECF scheme was profiled in the legal press and PLP research fellow Emma Marshall spoke at the Westminster Policy Forum event in March 2021, with an audience of Central Government policy officials.

"Being invited to speak at the Westminster Legal Policy Forum marked that PLP has really raised its profile in terms of the conversations we are being invited to." - Emma Marshall CHECK THIS WITH EMMA

Legal aid and SEND

PLP's Justice First Fellow Ollie Persey broke new ground by helping several education law legal aid providers secure ECF for hearings at the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) tribunal for the first time. Such applications have now become standard practice.

"I saw yesterday . . . PLP achieving exceptional funding on SEND work and the training you're offering. I think this is so brilliant and such an achievement." Part-time SEND Tribunal Judge

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

Public Law and Technology

Our 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

Online courts and digital justice

During the Covid-19 pandemic and the rapid shift to online processes, PLP was particularly well placed to contribute when online processes extensively and rapidly expanded, as we had already been monitoring the HMCTS court reform programme and online procedures.

We set up constructive, open dialogue with the MoJ and HMCTS around our work on assisted digital services and online courts. We also convened several events and panels on developments in the online courts. The uptake and value of PLP's expertise was evident when our work was cited extensively by the House of Lords Constitution Committee report, COVID 19 and the Courts, in March 2021.

Our activity included:

- Judicial Review during COVID 19: In this report, we documented the first set of empirical findings concerning remote justice in the Administrative Court during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research featured in our written evidence to the House of Lords Constitution Committee inquiry into the constitutional implications of COVID 19, and in the Administrative Law blog.
- Remote justice? Access to the Courts during the pandemic: PLP convened an expert panel featuring Dr Natalie Byrom and Professor Celia Kitzinger to discuss user experiences and issues arising from the new Government guidance.
- Online Immigration Appeals: A case study of the first tier tribunal: This report examined the transition to using the online procedure to manage appeals in the First-tier Tribunal (Immigration and Asylum Chamber). It featured in our submission to House of Lords Constitution Committee inquiry

"At least the Public Law Project was around to appraise both the pilot and the pandemic response. It is a woeful situation whereby all proper research on court proceedings in the pandemic has been done by voluntary organisations – PLP in this case . . . We need proper evaluations of all new digital processes. This Public Law Project report is great . . ." - Transform Justice, September 2020

- Digital immigration status: A monitoring framework: This report scrutinised the Home Office's case for the transition to digital-only immigration status, drawing on the example of the EU Settlement Scheme. PLP warned that digital-only status risked excluding those without digital access and called on the Home Office not to rule out bringing in a paper-based back-up.
- Digital Support – Good Things Foundation: This report on digital support for those using online court services echoed many of the concerns that PLP had previously raised.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

- In Autumn 2020, PLP provided a witness statement in support of JWCI's challenge to the use of paper determinations as opposed to oral hearings.

"I am proud of the research we did to inform a witness statement in a successful case. It drew on the expertise we had built up doing research on online courts during COVID. Our efforts at gathering evidence for a process that had only just been implemented were recognised in the judgement" - Jo Hynes, Research Fellow

Algorithms and public authority decision-making

PLP was among the first to identify problems with Ofqual's A level algorithm, the MoJ's automation of prisoner categorisation, and with the Government's use of algorithmic decision making in immigration related matters, including visa applications and the identification of sham marriages.

- Sham marriages – In February 2021, PLP obtained Home Office documents under the Freedom of Information Act that revealed the Home Office use of algorithmic decision-making to determine whether to initiate a 'sham marriage' investigation. PLP worked with the Bureau of Investigative Journalism to profile our concerns, which received press attention later in the year.
- Prison categorisation – In June 2020, PLP obtained documents under the Freedom of Information Act revealing details of the MoJ's algorithm for calculating a prisoner's 'provisional category,' as part of its Digital Categorisation Service. In February 2021, Jack Maxwell wrote about this for Inside Time.
- Proving algorithmic discrimination in Government decision-making, October 2020: *Writing in the Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal*, PLP's Research Director Joe Tomlinson and Research Fellow Jack Maxwell highlighted the trend for courts to expect governments to take responsibility for identifying algorithmic discrimination.
- Why OFQUAL has a legal duty to disclose its model, July 2020: Joe Tomlinson and Jack Maxwell wrote in the in UK Constitutional Law Association blog to argue that OFQUAL had a legal duty to disclose the details of its model for calculating GCSE and A level grades. PLP's analysis was also published in the Times Educational Supplement in articles by Joe Tomlinson and TES journalist Amy Gibbon.
- In November 2020 PLP produced Rise of the Robots, a conference equipping public lawyers with the knowledge and skills to challenge automated government decisions. The event was a huge success and was repeated after the 2020-21 reporting period.

Benefit Sanctions

The aims of our benefit sanctions work are to ensure that:

- 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, and
- 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

Welfare Rights Hub

In Spring 2021 PLP initiated the Welfare Rights Hub to facilitate local partnerships between frontline and second-tier advice organisations and identify where strategic litigation is required. Led by former Bristol based welfare rights adviser Olivia Mowll, the Hub began to work with the Law Centres Network, Crisis Skylight centres and other frontline organisations to deliver training, support strategic litigation, and share knowledge with frontline advisers.

Strategy for Civil Society

In August 2020, PLP published Benefit Sanctions: Strategies for Civil Society with the support of the University of York and the Economic and Social Research Council, as a follow-up to the Benefit Sanctions Conference held in January 2020.

The publication outlined four strategies for civil society to tackle the problems with benefit sanctions: press the DWP for more and better data; review the legality of the scheme; create a forum for sharing frontline experiences; and develop an information campaign on claimant commitment and challenging sanctions.

New research post

We secured a grant from the Lloyds Bank Foundation and appointed Caroline Selman to the position of research fellow in order to investigate barriers to appealing benefit sanctions. The findings will be used to develop recommendations to ensure effective sanctions appeal routes.

Claimant commitment

PLP had significant success in making sure claimant commitments are appropriately tailored to the individual circumstances of each claimant.

At PLP's suggestion, the Department of Work and Pensions website now includes more information on how mental health, caring responsibilities, experience of domestic abuse, homelessness, and other personal circumstances may affect how claimant commitments can be tailored.

The updated page achieved 130,000 page views since it was launched, and 32,000 page views in the 12 months to February 2021. During the reporting period, PLP's own Claimant Commitment welfare benefits microsite continued to receive good traffic with 12,069 visits in the period.

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

Claimant commitment and COVID

At the onset of the pandemic, PLP was quick to identify that the extra pressures on the benefit system placed claimants at a far greater level of vulnerability.

The actions PLP took included:

- Writing to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (SSDWP) Dr Thérèse Coffey MP to urge the Government to extend the suspension of Universal Credit work requirements for at least three months beyond 30 June
- Responding to the planned reduction of claimant commitment appointments from 50 to 30 minutes by writing to the SSWP to remind the Minister of what information needs to be communicated to claimants, and
- Updating our claimant commitment microsite with a series of COVID related FAQs.

Changes to hardship payment recovery

Following a judicial review claim lodged by PLP, the DWP agreed that it had the discretion to waive debt accrued by PLP's client, a Universal Credit claimant who had been forced to claim hardship payments to cover essential needs after she was unfairly sanctioned for over a year and a half.

As a result of the challenge, which was initiated during the reporting period, the department revised its Benefit Overpayment Recovery Guide to clarify that it has this discretion.

The judicial review followed a series of successful challenges brought by PLP to overturn six unlawful sanctions decisions which deducted 100% our client's Universal Credit standard allowance for 665 days – roughly one year and nine months.

Benefit Sanctions case study

Our client was a care leaver who had also experienced domestic violence. She suffered from a number of physical and mental health problems and had difficulties with literacy. Throughout the relevant time, the DWP failed to take into account our client's vulnerability.

All six sanctions were imposed for allegedly missing appointments, either at a work programme provider or at the Jobcentre.

Because of the 6-week wait for her first payment of Universal Credit, our client sometimes could not afford the bus fare to her appointments. Her first 3 appointments with her work programme provider were scheduled before she had received her first UC payment.

One of the sanctions was imposed because our client had missed an appointment on a day that she had attended her aunt's funeral.

On another occasion our client had two appointments scheduled for the same afternoon; due to the travel time it would not have been possible for her to attend both.

Part of the reason for such a long sanction period was because 'low-level' Universal Credit sanctions have an 'indefinite' and a 'fixed' period. Our client was deemed by the DWP not to have met the necessary conditions for ending the 'indefinite' periods at earlier points.

The impact of a long time with a big cut in UC meant our client had to apply for hardship payments from DWP, borrow money from friends & family, and got into debt. At times she could not afford food, or heating for her home, and she also got behind on her rent.

Brexit

Our goals in this area are to:

- Uphold the rule of law and ensure procedural fairness, particularly for those likely to be most affected by the Brexit process, and
- Ensure that Parliament remains appropriately sovereign, that the executive is held to account, and that the interests of disadvantaged groups are properly and effectively represented

Brexit, statutory instruments and the rule of law

Our principal concerns were that Parliament had insufficient time or power to adequately scrutinise the huge volumes of Brexit related primary and secondary legislation, and that ministers were being granted too much delegated power. PLP's research helped policy and law-makers to scrutinise the legislation and uphold parliamentary sovereignty and the rule of law.

Our work in this period included:

- Plus ça change, October 2020: This major research report highlighted in forensic detail the significant problems with the UK's system of delegated legislation, including: lack of scrutiny, absence of impact assessments, insufficient time to debate, inability to amend or realistically to reject, use of Henry VIII powers, and frequency of errors and mistakes.

Our Research Director Joe Tomlinson and Research Fellow Alexandra Sinclair were invited to speak on a podcast alongside Lord David Anderson QC on the findings of the research and wrote for Prospect Magazine. PLP produced a social media explainer video with Each Other, which attracted over 6,000 views.

The work achieved widespread acclaim and helped to increase understanding of how the UK constitution is operating at a period of significant constitutional change and strain.

- Internal Markets Bill: PLP raised serious concerns about the provisions of the Bill which sought to authorise Ministers to act in contravention of the Withdrawal Agreement and attempted to immunise Ministerial use of delegated powers from legal challenge.
- Immigration and Social Security Bill: Our briefing made two key recommendations: narrow the delegated powers to ensure that significant policy changes were not left to Ministers alone; and improve scrutiny procedures in the Bill.

EU Settlement Scheme

PLP's EU Settlement Scheme Hub was launched in 2019 to monitor the roll out and operation of the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). Our goal remained to ensure that the EUSS operated fairly and lawfully, promoted access to justice, and protected the interests of marginalised groups.

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

As part of this work, we provided free legal advice to frontline organisations who assist vulnerable or disadvantaged individuals with complex EUSS applications and appeals. Throughout the reporting period, we advised NGOs, advice organisations, charities and law centres on the operation of the scheme.

- PLP worked with Migrants Organise on the need for the Home Office to adopt a proper policy to ensure people with impaired mental capacity could use the EUSS. This case settled after the Home Office developed detailed guidance.
- PLP represented the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI) in a challenge to the Home Office failure to monitor data on the protected characteristics of EUSS applicants and to put in place appropriate safeguards for those unable to apply by the 30 June deadline.
- PLP acted for the3million in a challenge to the discriminatory effects of the Home Office's 'digital-only status' policy.

Although the JCWI and the3million challenges were found by the Court to be premature, the claimants in each of these cases put the Home Office on notice that there are people willing to litigate on behalf of vulnerable EUSS applicants when it is necessary to do so.

- Digital immigration status: A Monitoring framework: Our analysis of the EUSS argued that a digital-only system created a real risk of harm.
- EU citizens' rights: PLP published another in its series of explainers on how the law would apply to EU citizens in the UK after the transition period.

Training and Events

Within weeks of the first lock-down, PLP pivoted quickly from in-person to online events, hosting our first online training session *Costs in judicial review* in mid-April. With the team having equipped themselves with the expertise and necessary IT capability, our online programme went from strength to strength. The reporting period showed a huge increase in attendance of events with civil society attendees reaching 573, a growth of 114% on the previous year. The total number of event delegates over the reporting period was 2,569, our biggest ever number.

Flagship events included our annual conference and our regular *How to do Judicial Review* training events, which we repackaged as 'Online JR academy'. Our event, *10 Years of the Equality Act*, inspired in no small part by development of the Black Lives Matter movement, was a huge success and helped to inform the events team's own equality and diversity strategy to increase the proportion of conference and training speakers from under-represented groups.

We successfully launched our training programme on discriminatory use of algorithms and automated decision making with *Rise of the Robots* and our Southwest Conference saw a two-fold increase in attendees on the previous year. Our annual conference an increase in ticket sales of more than 30%. One aspect of online events is that we can offer unlimited discounted student tickets which have proved hugely popular. There were over 50 student bookings for our annual conference in 2020.

The move online allowed us to produce highly topical and responsive events at relatively short notice, including on remote access to courts in the pandemic and public law and welfare benefits during COVID. We produced training events on challenging delays in EUSS applications and applying for ECF for representation at SEND tribunal hearings.

We were also able to use events to help inform civil society responses to the Government's consultations on the Human Rights Act and judicial review, and following the success of that event a further two events on responses to the Government's consultation on judicial review (which fell just outside the reporting period in April 2021). These online events had combined audience of over 250.

The move to online events brought some excellent and thoughtful innovations. To maintain space for informal contact, we organised online networking lunches for delegates and speakers, and we used live polling for the first time. As an example of the feedback we were able to capture, we found that 48% of the audience for a discrimination law seminar rated themselves confident in legal knowledge in the area at the start, compared to 88% by the end of the session. For our Equality Act conference, we introduced speech to text reporting for the whole of the event to maximise accessibility. Towards the end of the reporting period, we set up a learning management system which, going forwards, will allow delegates to access all their learning materials digitally, including videos and audio recordings of key sessions.

This success has led to an increased need for capacity in the department. From October 2020 to July 2021 we employed a temporary Events Coordinator full time to assist the department. Going forward we are employing two events officers, one full time and one part time.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The events team continued to play a vital role for PLP in building new networks and deepening relationships with existing partners from across the legal sector, academia, civil society, and the political sphere. As well as being exceptionally well attended, this year's programme enabled us to build consensus, drive forward new thinking and share learning on some of the most pressing challenges, including race and gender equality and constitutional reform.

Volunteers

PLP is greatly strengthened by its volunteers. In the last year we were supported by volunteers to the research team Maria Wardale, Kirsten Hudak and Cecilia Correale. We were also pleased to host Bonavero Interns Pearce McManus and Saba Shakil.

PLP is particularly grateful to all our conference and training event speakers. These academics, barristers, solicitors, advisers and other experts all volunteer their time and their expertise.

Pre-pandemic, the events team was regularly supported by students volunteering at training events and conferences, and by individuals who raised money for us by running the Royal Parks Half Marathon. As social distancing measures ease and we produce more in-person training and fundraising events, we look forward to welcoming back our volunteer supporters.

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 2020 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.

Fundraising

PLP's approach to fundraising focusses 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, fundraising dinners (roughly every two to three years), and from individual donations. We made the decision during the reporting period not to hold any fundraising events; in the context of the series of national lockdowns, in person events would not have been possible to produce. Instead, we focused on maximising income through our events programme which delivered nearly £20,000 over our original target.

Public Law Project annual report

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PLP did still receive direct donations via a Charities Aid Foundation account, from unsolicited donations including through our website. 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 continues to use its general mailing list to offer the opportunity to make donations. Although a relatively small group, we began more formal stewarding for those that set up regular donations or make one off donations, sending out an e-mail celebrating PLP's work and thanking them for their contributions just before new year and seasonal holidays.

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 2020/21. 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.

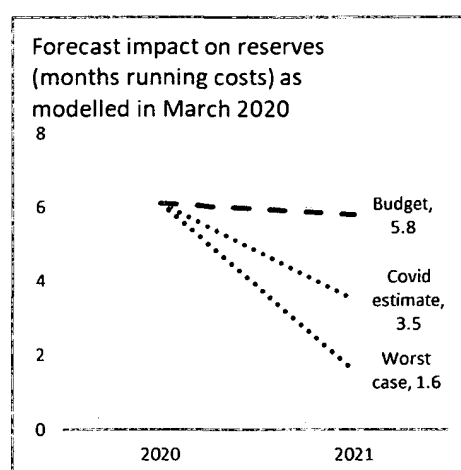
Financial Review

Many charities' financial review of 2020/21 (2021) will speak to the unprecedented nature of the past year however few will be able to share as positive a story as PLP. From an uncertain start to the year PLP quickly moved to have sufficient confidence to accelerate its plans for growth, finishing the year having exceeded budgeted income and opening recruitment for eight new positions.

Early uncertainty

PLP started the year well-placed to not only survive the pandemic but do so whilst continuing to cautiously grow its charitable activities. Before the extent of the pandemic had become clear PLP had prepared a budget with a small deficit for the year (reducing reserves to 5.8 months). The plan was to use our strong reserves position to increase expenditure on the casework and research teams on the basis that posts would become self-financing via casework income and project funding in subsequent years.

Our initial estimates of the financial implications of the pandemic on PLP's budgeted financial outlook anticipated that self-generated activities, especially events but also casework, would be negatively impacted. We were also unsure how the pandemic would affect our funder's priorities and were concerned about the potential for delay to project delivery also delaying income associated with restricted projects. As such PLP estimated that reserves would reduce to 3.5 months reserves by year end with the potential for a worst case scenario where the pandemic converged with other risks reducing reserves to 1.6 months.



Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Unprecedented support from funders

As the year progressed it became clear that PLP need not be concerned that funders might change priority or delay the release of funds. In the early weeks of the pandemic, without any application being made, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation released a £25,665 unrestricted grant to help their grant recipients respond to the crisis. Barings Foundation made funds available to PLP to replace our server which was never expected to deal with the amount of sustained remote working. Recognising the unique role PLP had in monitoring the impact of the pandemic on the rule of law, funders also provided funding directed to increase PLP's capacity to help others during the pandemic in particular London Community Justice Fund, Therium Access and a second tranche of funding from Barings. We are indebted to all our funders for the flexibility and care they have shown supporting PLP through the pandemic.

Aside from the pandemic the government's constitutional reform agenda has presented a challenge to PLP's core mission, and the vital role for PLP in resisting regressive change has also been reflected in several substantial grants supporting the expansion of PLP's work in this area: AB Charitable Trust, The Legal Education Foundation and Barings Foundation, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

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. Paul Hamlyn Foundation has awarded just such support this year, through their Backbone Grant – a £250,000 grant over 5 years starting July 2020. Such existing grants include Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (£263,223 over 5 years starting April 2018, unrestricted funding from the Allen & Overy Foundation, the Bromley Trust, Garden Court and London Legal Support Trust.

We were pleased to share last year a new major funding agreement with the Sigrid Rausing Trust who awarded PLP £450,000 over 3 years which started in July 2020. The Oak Foundation have funded PLP for the last four years for a restricted grant of £613,566 end February 2021 and we are incredibly grateful to them for renewing and indeed increasing their support next financial year with a major long term and now unrestricted grant of £1,000,000 over 4 years starting April 2021.

In addition PLP is fortunate to receive funding for several major projects including from AB Charitable Trust, Barings Foundation, Crisis, The Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Lankelly Chase Foundation, The Law Society, The Legal Education Foundation, Trust for London, Unbound Philanthropy and New Philanthropy Capital. All of which both fund the delivery of the respective projects directly and contribute to the wider cost of running the organisation. Please see note 2 for a full list of funders, to all of whom we are exceedingly grateful.

Charitable activities continue to grow

Despite the uncertainty of the last year and thanks to our funders, PLP was able to grow its direct spend on charitable activities (2021: £878,975, 2020: £809,772). Staff costs account for the lion's share of spend on our charitable activities (2021: 87%). Spend on support and governance costs, necessary for the delivery of our charitable activities, fell compared to last year due to one off costs related to our office move in 2019/20 (2021: £479,865, 2020: £487,109)

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

PLP added the full time equivalent of four new staff members during the year (2021: 22.9, 2020: 19.2). Our public law research team is now one of the largest and most influential in the country. Fourteen people contributed to the research team during the year doubling the full-time equivalent staffing from last year (2021: 5.0, 2020: 2.4).

Casework and legal advice continue to account for the majority of PLP's spend on charitable activities (2021: 59%, 2020: 63%). The appointment of the new Wales Lawyer role added to the number of roles working in this team. We also bid a fond farewell to a number of caseworkers during 2021 and with breaks as replacements were recruited overall direct expenditure on legal advice and casework did not increase by as much as planned (2021: £512,343 2020: £506,258).

Education, information and training expenditure on staff costs continued to increase (2021: £143,045 2020: £128,238) though overall spend on this activity decreased due to the move to online events removed spend on venues, catering and other events costs (2021: £11,310, 2020: £38,559).

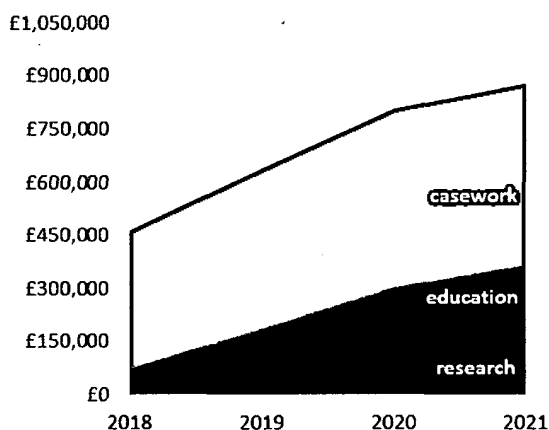
Self-generated income shows resilience

PLP's long term plan has been to increase its income from self-generated revenue streams to supplement our increasing grant-income and avoid over-dependence on one revenue source. We assumed that the pandemic would force us to put these plans on hold and yet our self-generated income showed remarkable resilience in the face of the changes of the last year.

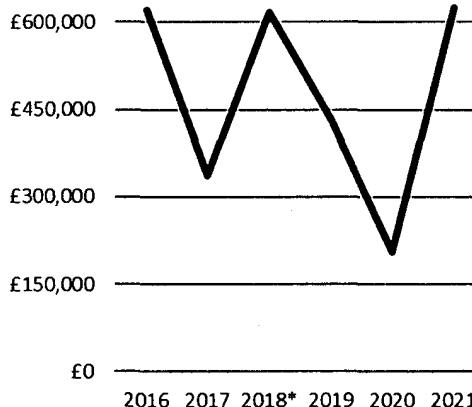
Events was the activity most affected by the pandemic and yet the events team quickly adapted to online delivery. Such was the popularity of the new online events programme that, despite reduced ticket pricing, events actually generated more revenue than the previous all-time high set just last year (2021: £103,804 2020: £90,577).

PLP's casework income is unpredictable year to year due to the relatively low volume of cases and the disproportionate impact that winning any particular case has on the level of income PLP will achieve. 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. Last year we noted that PLP had taken on several more CFA cases strategically important causes and this year we saw this approach bear fruit both in terms of our impact our casework income. Cases valued at nil at the start of the year due to being taken on a CFA such as

Growth in expenditure on charitable activities



Uncertain casework income



Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Medical Justice (see page 11 and *JCWI* (see page 19) generated £250,380 from work completed in prior years. This unpredictable wind-fall led to income from casework increasing to its highest level in 5 years (2021: £620,860, 2020: £205,835).

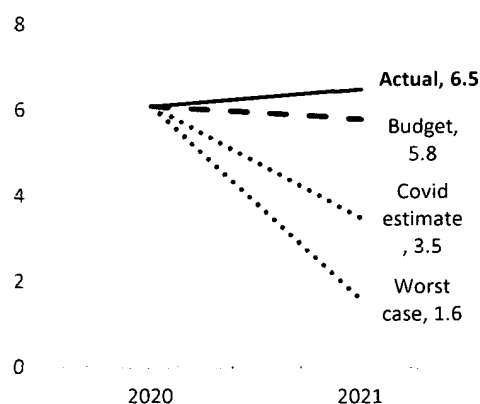
We hope and expect that staff training focussed on increasing the amount and recoverability of billable work the team record, and our new case management system will see PLP income from casework continue at higher levels than recent years.

PLP funds

As outlined above, contrary to our concerns at the outset of 2021 PLP income increased - both fundraising and self-generated - and PLP though growing expenditure we made unexpected savings in casework staffing and events costs.

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. Total funds (£2,292,994), cash at bank (£1,121,955) and cash in deposits (£505,925) remain relatively high for a charity of PLP's size.

Actual impact on reserves
(months running costs) compared
to March 2020 modelling



The majority of our funds remain restricted (£292,500) and designated (£934,357). Our casework work in progress (WIP) designated fund (£884,309) 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 recent casework 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. We are starting to set aside to cover dilapidations and move costs in case that is

required at the end of our new lease, this too is set aside as a designated fund. The remainder of our unrestricted funds are available as general funds and form the basis of calculating our reserves.

PLP funds and reserves

Total unrestricted funds	£2,000,494
Less designated funds of	£934,357
Less assets and long term debtors of	£61,981
Freely available, unrestricted reserves	£1,004,156

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;
- 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 (2021: £20,896) and long term debtors (2021: £41,085, 2020: £41,085). Work in progress (our largest designated fund) is not freely available as explained above.

Our unrestricted freely available reserves at 2021 are £1,004,156 (2020: £715,490) representing seven 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 our increasing running costs following the office move and as we grow the organisation.

PLP's reserves policy during the year ending 31 March 2021 is to retain between six and eight months of reserves of its budgeted annual operating costs. PLP's trustees consider a relatively high minimum reserves policy necessary given the high level of PLP's fixed costs (largely permanent staff and lease on premises) and the unpredictability of its unrestricted income (particularly casework income as noted above).

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

During the review process for the 2021/22 budget, the trustees noted that PLP's income has become increasingly secure in recent years. A greater proportion of PLP income is from grants and several of our major funders have committed to PLP over the long term. As such the trustees agree that PLP can prudently reduce the level of reserves it holds whilst continuing our plans to increase investment in the charity. For the year ending 2022 the trustees have reduced PLP reserves policy to retain between 4.5 and 6.5 months of running costs and have approved a deficit budget with a view to reducing PLP's reserves during the year. We look forward to utilising these funds given the urgent need for our work during this time and PLP's relatively strong financial position compared to many other charities at this time.

Principal risks and uncertainties

The continuing restrictions arising from Covid-19, changes in staffing, the growth of the organisation and the urgent need to respond to the Government's political reform agenda as described above and all contribute to heightened strain on staff capacity and wellbeing. Concerns about wellbeing heightened significantly during the third lockdown where we saw absences to ill health increase. In the short term we have put in place a new Employee Assistance Programme including crisis support and changed the emphasis in our Covid Secure policies highlighting that we consider wellbeing to be a legitimate reason to come into the office and planned to share additional resources and training to support staff wellbeing. The budget for 2021/22 includes substantial investment in new positions which we expect to alleviate these capacity issues in the medium term.

Beyond the remote working enforced by the pandemic we anticipate that many staff will expect to increase the amount they work from home compared to pre-pandemic levels. We will use 2021/22 as a period of experimentation with new and more flexible ways of working which we will review and iterate from. Senior leadership have discussed the desirability of increased flexibility as well as the needs of the organisation (and in particular new and junior staff) for visible leadership, a welcoming office environment and connectivity.

PLP's strong financial position at present presents its own risks around complacency and over-extension. PLP needs to develop a long term financial strategy and business plan following further analysis of our funding model. We will consider whether any further growth could be achieved in a more flexible way that would align more closely to grant funding coming to a close or be more clearly subject to income generation expectations; this would help PLP to adjust our expenditure with minimal disruption should income change in the future from its current historic high. We also want to increase our planning for when long-term major core funding comes to an end and develop strategies should these not be renewed or are reduced substantially.

The trustees have assessed PLP to be going concern with no material uncertainties. In so assessing they have considered the impact of the above and other risks and uncertainties that impact on solvency and liquidity alongside prepared budgets, forecasts and sensitivity analysis.

Governance & Management

There have been no significant changes to governance and senior management personnel during the year since the last annual report.

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

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 2021 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.

Public Law Project annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

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 29 September 2021 and signed on their behalf by

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth Prochaska', followed by a horizontal line.

Elizabeth Prochaska
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

Public Law Project annual report

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Public Law Project (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 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 2021 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

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on Public Law Project's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

Public Law Project annual report

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. 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. 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 course of 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 this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, 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. 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; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

Public Law Project annual report

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities 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.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

Public Law Project annual report

or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

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.

Noelia Serrano (Senior statutory auditor)

4 November 2021

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 2021

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and grants	2	347,193	871,359	1,218,552	186,278	807,032	993,310
Charitable activities							
Casework and legal advice	3	620,861	-	620,861	205,835	-	205,835
Education, Information and Training	3	103,804	-	103,804	90,577	-	90,577
Other trading activities – fundraising		1,556	-	1,556	64,694	-	64,694
Investments		356	-	356	3,552	-	3,552
Total income		1,073,770	871,359	1,945,129	550,936	807,032	1,357,968
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	4	50,314	-	50,314	65,059	-	65,059
Charitable activities							
Casework and legal advice	4	118,217	673,721	791,938	175,870	644,042	819,912
Research and Policy	4	134,436	173,095	307,531	191,148	20,000	211,148
Education, Information and Training	4	231,760	9,075	240,835	249,321	4,500	253,821
Total expenditure		534,727	855,891	1,390,618	681,398	668,542	1,349,940
Transfers between funds		8,370	(8,370)	-	-	-	-
Net income / (expenditure) for the year and net movement in funds	5	547,413	7,098	554,511	(130,462)	138,490	8,027
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		1,453,080	285,403	1,738,483	1,583,543	146,913	1,730,456
Total funds carried forward		2,000,493	292,501	2,292,994	1,453,080	285,403	1,738,483

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 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	10		20,896		24,935
Non current debtors	11a		41,085		41,085
			<u>61,981</u>		<u>66,020</u>
Current assets:					
Amounts recoverable on casework		884,309		649,995	
Debtors	11b	207,997		205,808	
Cash Deposits (longer than 3 months)		505,925		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,121,955		919,277	
		<u>2,720,186</u>		<u>1,775,080</u>	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(489,173)		(102,617)	
Net current assets			<u>2,231,013</u>		<u>1,672,463</u>
Total net assets	14		<u>2,292,994</u>		<u>1,738,483</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds			292,501		285,403
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		934,357		671,570	
General funds		1,066,136		781,510	
		<u>2,000,493</u>		<u>1,453,080</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>2,000,493</u>		<u>1,453,080</u>
Total charity funds	15		<u>2,292,994</u>		<u>1,738,483</u>

Approved by the trustees on 29 September 2021 and signed on their behalf by


Elizabeth Prochaska
Chair

Public Law Project

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow from operating activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	554,511	8,028
Depreciation charges	14,147	12,680
Investment income	(356)	(2,534)
(Increase) / decrease in debtors and WIP	(236,503)	45,372
Increase / (decrease) in creditors	386,555	(57,603)
Loss on disposals of fixed assets	–	6,387
Net cash provided by operating activities	718,354	12,330

	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities		
Net cash provided by operating activities	718,354	12,330
Cash flows from investing activities:		
Investment income	356	2,534
Purchase of fixed assets	(10,108)	(14,111)
Net cash used in by investing activities	(9,752)	(11,577)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year	708,603	753
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year	919,277	918,524
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	1,627,880	919,277

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

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. There was £1k of gifts in kind for 2020/21 for free support and technical hosting for an event, (for the previous year these principally relate to the provision at no cost of venue space or catering for PLP Events. Due to Covid PLP Events have been held on line.

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	4%	4%
Casework and legal advice	55%	58%
Research and policy	19%	20%
Education, information and training	17%	18%
Governance	6%	

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:

- Fixtures and fittings 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 2021 was nil, (2020: £131,659).

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

2 Income from donations and grants

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

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
AB Charitable Trust	-	60,000	60,000	-	60,000	60,000
Allen & Overy Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
Baring Foundation	-	55,000	55,000	-	49,363	49,363
Bromley Trust	15,000	-	15,000	10,000	-	10,000
Community Justice Fund	-	100,000	100,000	-	-	-
Crisis UK	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	-
Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	25,665	52,613	78,278	-	51,329	51,329
Freshfields	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000
Garden Court (CAF)	4,000	-	4,000	4,000	-	4,000
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	-	30,090	30,090	-	-	-
The Law Society	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000	30,000
Lankelly Chase Foundation	-	437	437	-	205,230	205,230
The Legal Education Foundation	-	151,423	151,423	-	78,766	78,766
London Legal Support Trust	10,000	-	10,000	10,000	-	10,000
Matrix Causes Fund	-	-	-	-	4,500	4,500
Oak Foundation	-	145,046	145,046	-	156,844	156,844
New Philanthropy	-	24,250	24,250	-	48,500	48,500
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	70,000	-	70,000	-	-	-
Sigrid Rausing	150,000	-	150,000	100,000	-	100,000
Therium UK	30,000	-	30,000	-	-	-
Trust for London (Strategic Legal Fund)	-	75,000	75,000	-	37,500	37,500
Unbound Philanthropy	-	97,500	97,500	-	65,000	65,000
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	24,173	-	24,173	-	-	-
Other Donations <£5,000	13,355	-	13,355	26,778	-	26,778
Gifts in kind	-	-	-	30,500	-	30,500
	347,193	871,359	1,218,552	186,278	807,032	993,310

Gifts in kind reflect the value of services provided pro bono to the charity. There was £1000 of gifts in kind for 2021 for free support and technical hosting of online events. For 2020 the bulk of gifts in kind was due to donated venue space and/or catering for events (2020: £20,500), with a further £10,000 of donated legal services. Due to covid the Events were held on line in 2021.

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Legal Aid Fees	114,402	-	114,402	99,718	-	99,718
Other Legal Fees	272,145	-	272,145	213,236	-	213,236
Movement in WIP and payments on account	234,314	-	234,314	(107,119)	-	(107,119)
Sub-total for Casework and legal	620,861	-	620,861	205,835	-	205,835
Research and policy income	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sub-total for Research and policy	-	-	-	-	-	-
Events sponsorship	5,250	-	5,250	10,255	-	10,255
Courses and conferences	98,554	-	98,554	80,322	-	80,322
Sub-total for Education, Information and Training	103,804	-	103,804	90,577	-	90,577
Total income from charitable activities	724,665	-	724,665	296,412	-	296,412

Since the year-end, Public Law Project has received no income under Conditional Fee Agreements (2020: £29,733).

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					Support costs £	2021 Total £	2020 Total £
	Cost of raising funds £	Casework and Legal Advice £	Research and Policy £	Education, Information and Training £	Governance costs £			
Staff costs (Note 6)	30,662	462,481	157,560	143,045	52,148	161,061	1,006,957	890,873
Audit	-	-	-	-	9,600	-	9,600	9,400
Bank Charges	-	-	-	-	-	848	848	619
Legal Fees	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
Professional Indemnity Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	18,330	18,330	7,976
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	30,790	30,790	20,307
Premises and Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	114,394	114,394	198,189
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	14,147	14,147	12,680
Office overheads	-	-	-	-	-	78,547	78,547	54,860
Casework Costs	-	49,862	-	-	-	-	49,862	44,063
Courses, seminars, conferences	1,115	-	-	11,311	-	-	12,426	73,936
Research Costs	-	-	1,341	-	-	-	1,341	2,339
Other grant expenditure	-	-	53,376	-	-	-	53,376	24,698
	31,777	512,343	212,277	154,356	61,748	418,117	1,390,618	1,349,940
Support costs	15,156	228,599	77,880	70,706	25,776	(418,117)	-	-
Governance costs	3,381	50,996	17,374	15,773	(87,524)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2021	50,314	791,938	307,531	240,835	-	-	1,390,618	-
Total expenditure 2020	65,059	819,912	211,148	253,821	-	-	-	1,349,940

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

4b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Cost of raising funds £	Charitable activities			Governance costs £	Support costs £	2020 Total £
		Casework and Legal Advice £	Research and Policy £	Education, Information and Training £			
Staff costs (Note 6)	17,682	462,195	109,680	128,238	31,778	141,300	890,873
Audit	-	-	-	-	9,400	-	9,400
Bank Charges	-	-	-	-	-	619	619
Legal Fees	-	-	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
Professional Indemnity Insurance	-	-	-	-	-	7,976	7,976
Personnel	-	-	-	-	-	20,307	20,307
Premises and Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	198,189	198,189
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	12,680	12,680
Office overheads	-	-	-	-	-	54,860	54,860
Casework Costs	-	44,063	-	-	-	-	44,063
Courses, seminars, conferences	35,377	-	-	38,559	-	-	73,936
Research Costs	-	-	2,339	-	-	-	2,339
Other grant expenditure	-	-	24,698	-	-	-	24,698
	53,059	506,258	136,717	166,797	41,178	445,931	1,349,940
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

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation	14,147	12,680
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	-	50,685
Loss on disposal of fixed assets	-	6,387
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT) - for audit:	8,350	8,150
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT) - for SRA audit:	1,250	1,250
	<u>1,250</u>	<u>1,250</u>

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

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries and wages	859,754	758,721
Social security costs	82,214	73,581
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	64,989	58,570
	<u>1,006,957</u>	<u>890,873</u>

There were no redundancy or termination costs in the year (2020: nil)

No employee earned more than £60,000 during the year (2020: nil).

The total employee benefits including pension contributions and employer's national insurance of the key management personnel were £376,864 (2020: £358,136). These are the Director, the Legal Director, the Deputy Legal Director, the Finance and Operations 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 (2020: £nil).

No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil).

No trustees' expenses representing the payment or reimbursement of travel costs were paid (2020: £nil).

7 Staff numbers

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

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Raising funds	0.6	0.5
Casework and legal advice	10.2	10.5
Research and Policy	6.1	3.9
Education, Information and Training	3.2	3.0
Support	4.5	4.1
Governance	1.0	0.9
	<u>25.6</u>	<u>22.8</u>

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

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Raising funds	0.5	0.4
Casework and legal advice	9.8	10.0
Research and Policy	5.0	2.4
Education, Information and Training	3.0	2.8
Support	3.7	3.0
Governance	0.8	0.7
	<u>22.9</u>	<u>19.2</u>

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

8 Related party transactions

The following related party transactions occurred in 2021:

A small thank you gift to the value of £25 was paid to each trustee during the year, which totalled: £280

Three trustees received small gifts relating to significant events to the value of less than £100 .
These totalled £189.02

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

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	64,358	64,358
Additions in year	10,108	10,108
Disposals in the year	(2,945)	(2,945)
At the end of the year	71,521	71,521
Depreciation		
At the start of the year	39,423	39,423
Charge for the year	14,147	14,147
Disposals in the year	(2,945)	(2,945)
At the end of the year	50,625	50,625
Net book value		
At the end of the year	20,896	20,896
At the start of the year	24,935	24,935

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

11a Non current debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Lease deposit	41,085	41,085
	41,085	41,085

11b Current debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	14,387	22,235
Other debtors	33,318	48,065
Prepayments	42,792	42,269
Accrued income	117,501	93,239
	207,997	205,808

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	141,687	23,873
Taxation and social security	33,962	35,041
Other creditors	39,409	21,389
Accruals	24,115	21,011
Deferred income	250,000	1,304
	489,173	102,617

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 2021 PLP had 25 (2020: 21) employees in the scheme. The amount owed to the pension scheme at Year End was £0 (2020: £704).

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

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Fixed assets	61,981	-	-	61,981
Debtors	207,997	-	-	207,997
Amounts recoverable on casework	-	884,309	-	884,309
Cash at bank and in hand	1,285,331	50,048	292,501	1,627,880
Liabilities	(489,173)	-	-	(489,173)
Net assets at 31 March 2021	1,066,136	934,357	292,501	2,292,994

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

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible 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	781,510	671,570	285,403	1,738,483

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income and gains £	Expenditure and losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds:					
Casework and legal advice					
Access to Judicial Review in Wales – Barings Foundation	46,113	-	(13,643)	-	32,470
Access to Justice – Oak Foundation	5,708	145,046	(150,451)	-	303
Access to Public Law Remedies – Esmée Fairbairn Foundation	4,277	52,613	(52,615)	-	4,275
Best Practice Innovation – Crisis		50,000	-		50,000
Community Justice Fund – Access to Justice Foundation		100,000	(91,630)	(8,370)	-
Covid-19, Operational Impacts – Barings		5,000	(5,000)		
Covid-19, Response Fund – Barings		30,000	-		30,000
Justice First Fellowships – TLEF	3,502	17,473	(15,253)	-	5,722
Legal Aid (20/21) – The Law Society	-	30,000	(22,500)	-	7,500
Rule of Law – AB Charitable trust	30,000	30,000	(30,000)	-	30,000
Rule of Law – Unbound Philanthropy 1 & 2	42,497	97,500	(55,000)	-	84,997
Settled Status Hub – NPC Transition Advice Fund (and TAF Extension)	14,193	24,250	(38,443)		-
Strategic Legal Fund for Vulnerable Young Migrants: No notice removals & Immigration Act 2014 (Windows)	3,434	-	(3,434)	-	-
Strategic Partnership project – Lankelly Chase Foundation	119,527	437	(129,487)	-	(9,523)
Welfare & Immigration Rights Post Brexit – Trust for London	5,071	75,000	(64,855)	-	15,216
Research and Policy					
Brexit Public Law Policy – TLEF	9,671	82,250	(84,800)		7,121
Constitutional Reform – AB Charitable Trust		30,000	(15,903)		14,097
Constitutional Reform – Barings Foundation		20,000	(10,602)		9,398
Constitutional Reform – Joseph Rowntree		30,090	(30,090)	-	-
Fairer Systems – TLEF	-	31,700	(31,700)		-
Education, information and training					
LASP Exceptional Case Funding (ECF) Clinics Toolkit – Freshfields	1,410	-	(1,410)	-	-
Law and Technology – TLEF		20,000	(9,075)		10,925
Total restricted funds	285,403	871,359	(855,891)	(8,370)	292,501
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Amounts recoverable on casework (work in progress)	649,995	234,314	-	-	884,309
Office dilapidation and relocation fund	21,575	-	-	28,473	50,048
Total designated funds	671,570	234,314	-	28,473	934,357
General funds	781,510	839,456	(534,727)	(20,103)	1,066,136
Total unrestricted funds	1,453,080	1,073,770	(534,727)	8,370	2,000,493
Total funds	1,738,483	1,945,129	(1,390,618)	-	2,292,994

Public Law Project

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

15b Movements in funds (prior 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 Foundation	-	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
Legal Aid (18/19) – The Law Society and Lloyd's Bank Foundation	1,806	-	(1,806)	-	-
Legal Aid (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 Fund	-	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

15 Movements in funds (continued)

Purposes of restricted funds

Casework and legal advice

Access to Judicial Review in Wales – Barings Foundation

The Barings Foundation has awarded PLP £150,000 over 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. The start of the project, delayed by Covid-19, has now commenced with the appointment of PLP lawyer Matthew Court to the role in January 2021, who has since relocated to be based within a local firm in Cardiff.

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 achieved this by developing a stakeholder network to systemically improve its lobbying and advocacy efforts, delivery of a bespoke training and outreach programme to raise awareness and generate referrals for PLP's casework and taking on 'test cases' to bring about strategic changes. We are pleased to that The Oak Foundation funding will continue to fund PLP through a new unrestricted grant of £1,000,000 over four years starting April 2021.

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.

Covid-19, Operational Impacts 1 – Barings

Barings Foundation awarded PLP a grant of £5,000 over six months has been agreed to cover costs related to operational impacts of Covid-19. The funds were used towards the upgrade of our server which had become unfit for purpose with the dramatically increased demand for remote desktop connections over a sustained period of time.

Covid-19, Operational Impacts 2 – Barings

The Barings Foundation Covid-19 Response Fund is for organisations experiencing an increase in demand for expert legal advice. PLP was awarded a grant of £30,000 over one year to support its work to address increased demand and complexity in requests for advice from civil society organisations.

Covid-19 – Therium Access

This grant was awarded to benefit vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, particularly those facing multi-sectional disadvantage (for example, disability and poverty) by providing core support to PLP to continue to deliver its strategic objectives during the Covid-19 crisis. Our work in this area includes assisting people needing to apply for EU settled status, facing unfair benefit sanctions and/or seeking to access civil courts and tribunals during the pandemic whilst facing digital exclusion.

Justice First Fellowship– TLEF

Under the Justice First Fellowship scheme, the Legal Education Foundation provided funding to enable PLP to host a trainee solicitor, following the qualification of our previous JFF fellows.

Legal Aid (20/21) – The Law Society

The 'Legal Aid Support Project' started in 2013 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. Ever since, The Law Society and PLP have formed a successful partnership evidenced over the past few years by way of successful litigation, the implementation of training and legal education programs building on capacity and awareness to increase the practical accessibility of ECF and collaboration on making the Society's Legal Aid Means Test campaign a successful one. Funding in 2019-20 included a program of strategic litigation to supplement the Means Test campaign and funding in 2020-21 continues this important work supporting access to legal aid.

Best Practice Innovation – Crisis

Crisis provided PLP for two years to a total value of £100,000 through their Best Practice Grant Innovation Programme. The funding will enable PLP and its partners to develop two "specialist support hubs" to address systemic unfairness that causes or prolongs homelessness. The funding will allow PLP to expand its existing EU Settlement Scheme hub to focus on welfare benefits (particularly benefit sanctions), and increase PLP capacity to provide vital public law resource to frontline specialist advisors and lawyers. PLP lawyers assist Law Centres and Skylight centres, as well as other frontline advice organisations, with complex cases, deliver public law training to our partners, develop leaflets and other materials and identify systemic issues with a view to bringing strategic litigation.

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

Community Justice Fund – Access to Justice Foundation

The Community Justice Fund is focused on helping specialist social welfare legal advice organisations be effective and sustainable in the face of responding to COVID-19. Via the Fund, The Access to Justice Foundation awarded PLP flexible support to the challenges arising from the Pandemic in ways that best met its needs. PLP used the grant to facilitate the expansion of its public law support hub, including making a sub-grant to the Law Centres Network to enable local Law Centres to participate in the hub. The grant also enabled PLP to adapt and improve its infrastructure including paying for additional support staffing to implement the additional HR, IT and office work required to respond to the pandemic internally, minimising impact on our lawyers and other front-facing staff.

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.

Rule of Law –TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation have provided funding to proactively develop PLPs 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

The SLF granted PLP funding for pre-litigation research, including obtaining counsel's advice, in respect of a challenge to the Home Office's 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.

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. The account closed the year with a negative balance due to the second year of the funded work starting in the final quarter of 2020/21 prior receipt of funding in the first quarter of 2021/22.

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

Backbone Grant – Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Description to follow

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.

Fairer Systems – TLEF

TLEF have agreed to provide PLP funding of £393,000 over 3 years to ensure that the UK's systems for the exercise and control of executive power are fair and effective, amid Brexit and the rise of automated decision-making. PLP's legal and policy experts will monitor these systems, identify systemic problems, and work with others to challenge them in public debate and in the courts.

Constitutional Reform – AB Charitable Trust

AB Charitable Trust have awarded PLP a restricted grant of £30,000 per year for two years which, alongside funding from the Barings Foundation, meets the employment costs of a Research and Policy Fellow and supports our work to promote and evidence-led approach to constitutional reform, particularly in relation to the government's proposed reforms of judicial review. This post will ensure that PLP has the capacity to conduct pro-active research and gather evidence that supports evidence-based reform of judicial review, and to react effectively as the details of proposals emerge.

Constitutional Reform – Barings Foundation

The Barings Foundation have awarded PLP a restricted grant of £40,000 over two years which, alongside funding from AB Charitable Trust, meets the employment costs of a Research and Policy Fellow and supports our work to promote and evidence-led approach to constitutional reform, particularly in relation to the government's proposed reforms of judicial review. This post will ensure that PLP has the capacity to conduct pro-active research and gather evidence that supports evidence-based reform of judicial review, and to react effectively as the details of proposals emerge.

Constitutional Reform – Joseph Rowntree Foundation

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation awarded PLP of £80,246 over 2 years towards the costs of providing strategic leadership promoting an evidence-led approach to constitutional reform, particularly in relation to the government's proposed reforms of judicial review. The work requires significant input from members of PLP's Senior Leadership Team, particularly the Communications Director who is leading on developing its communications strategy; the Research Director who will oversee and supervise the collation of research to support its strategy; and the Director and Legal Director who will provide legal and strategic input into the communications strategy and engage in advocacy with Parliamentarians and others.

Education, Training & Events

Law and Technology – TLEF

The Legal Education Foundation (TLEF) have awarded PLP £20,000 to train public lawyers on how to challenge automated government decision-making. This work will prepare and deliver a training program which covers an introduction to automated systems in government, the laws governing automated government decision-making, and how to challenge automated decisions in practice.

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 2021 £	2020 £
Less than one year	80,650	80,650
One to Five Years	40,325	120,975
	<u>120,975</u>	<u>201,625</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.