

**Charity Number: 101384**



tel: +44 (0)28 3834 4500

email: [info@uhrw.org.uk](mailto:info@uhrw.org.uk)

web: [www.uhrw.org.uk](http://www.uhrw.org.uk)

twitter: [@UlsterHumanRW](https://twitter.com/UlsterHumanRW)

Ulster Human Rights Watch,  
The Victoria Suite, Brownlow House,  
Windsor Avenue, Lurgan, BT67 9BJ

## **Ulster Human Rights Watch**

### **Trustees' Report**

**for the year ended 30 June 2023**

**Ulster Human Rights Watch  
Trustees' Report  
for the year ended 30 June 2023**

**Charity Number: 101384**

**Trustee Committee and other Charity Information**

**Trustee Committee**

Mr Robert Hamilton Campbell BA  
Mr Philip Alexander Black BSc BPhil  
Mr Robert Ingram Breadon BSc  
Ms Lindsey Louise Liggett LIB LI Dip  
Ms Marion Isabel Jamison Dip Crp  
Mr Raymond Chestnutt  
Mr William Gordon Liggett  
Mr Ivan Marshall Walker

**Charity Number**

101384

**Governing Document**

Memorandum and Articles of Association

**Legal Status**

Private Limited Company by guarantee without  
share capital  
use of 'Limited' exemption

**Registered Address**

23 Upper Toberhewney Lane  
Lurgan  
Craigavon  
County Armagh  
BT66 7EF

**Banker**

Ulster Bank  
18 Bow Street  
Lisburn  
County Antrim  
BT28 1BN

**Independent Examiner**

Keith Lutton FCA, FIATl  
91 Ballygroobany Road  
Richhill  
County Armagh  
BT61 9NA

### **Trustees' Annual Report**

The Management Committee (Trustees) present their report for the year ended 30 June 2023. The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) effective from 1 January 2015.

### **Objectives:**

The Charity's objects ("the Objects") are to promote human rights and the Judeo-Christian interpretation of such rights in Northern Ireland, the whole of the United Kingdom and other countries on the basis of their constitution and international conventions, particularly the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

### **Activities:**

#### **I. Advocacy Service**

This is the final report for the year 2022-2023 on the work achieved by the Ulster Human Rights Watch Advocacy Service between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

The outline of the report is as follows:

- (1) Development of the Advocacy Service (p. 1);
- (2) Development of the UHRW Corporate Governance Manual (p. 2);
- (3) Evaluation and monitoring systems for the Advocacy Service (p. 2);
- (4) Meetings with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS), the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and other stakeholders (p. 3);
- (5) Work effected by the Advocacy Service Sub-Committee (ASSC) (p. 4);
- (6) Cases considered by the Advocacy Service (p. 4);
- (7) Narratives prepared for the Legacy of the Past Record (LPR) (p. 5);
- (8) Victims of Terrorism Council (VTC) (p. 6);
- (9) Promotional programme (p. 6);
- (10) Outputs of the work carried out by the Advocacy Service (p. 7);
- (11) Conclusion (p. 7).

#### **1. Development of the Advocacy Service**

The UHRW Advocacy Service has one Advocacy Support Manager, one full-time Advocacy Support Worker, two part-time Advocacy Support Workers, and one Administration Officer.

To ensure the optimal efficiency of the Advocacy Service, the workload has been divided between the different members of staff. A shared time-table for all members of staff set up on Outlook has been updated regularly. The number of representations made before public bodies and agencies for all the cases dealt with by the Advocacy Service have been recorded. The number of directly supported and indirectly impacted individuals has been recorded according to the Guidance issued by the Advocacy Service in line with SEUPB recommendations and approved by VSS in February 2021. In several cases, further assistance has been provided by way of referral to a partner organisation providing health and wellbeing services and welfare advice (in compliance with Memoranda of Understanding agreed between UHRW Advocacy Service and these organisations<sup>1</sup>).

A promotional programme has been designed with the assistance of Angle Comms during the past year. As a result, articles have been published in the newspapers in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, which were made available on the UHRW website, Facebook and Twitter.

The UHRW Advocacy Service has continued to take an active part in the consultation on the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill that was brought before Parliament in Westminster. The Advocacy Service made representations with the Northern Ireland Office and UK Government Ministers and suggested a number of amendments for the Bill to be made European Human Rights Convention compliant.

UHRW Advocacy Service sent a submission to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC) in relation to the twentieth anniversary of the Belfast Agreement on 5 December 2022.

The Advocacy Service took an active part in assisting victims of terrorism to apply for the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme (TPDPS). The partnership agreement between the Advocacy Service and Ely Centre has been successful in dealing with applications to the Victims' Payments Board. This Agreement has allowed cross referrals for cases that are jointly dealt with by both organisations, with the Advocacy Service dealing with Troubles-Related Incidents and Impact Statements while Ely Centre manages all application forms to be submitted to the Victims' Payments Board. The Advocacy Service made 60 referrals for the TPDPS to Ely Centre since September 2021.

All four members of the Advocacy Service have attended appraisal meetings that were carried out at the end of March 2023. The Advocacy Service staff made a presentation of the work carried out during year 2021-2022 at the UHRW Annual General meeting via Zoom on 14 December 2022.

Registration with the Information Commissioner (ICO) was renewed for the year 2021-2022.

## **2. Development of the UHRW Corporate Governance Manual**

The UHRW remained committed to improving its Corporate Governance Manual and has continued to do so during the year 2022-2023, as required.

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<sup>1</sup> Ely Centre, Castle Hill Foundation, Decorum NI.

The UHRW reviewed its Social Media Policy following the case of a Committee Member who had been the victim of a fake Facebook account that was damaging to his reputation and could severely damage the reputation of the Advocacy Service with an adverse effect on victims of terrorism. VSS carried out their investigation and issued a report that was communicated to UHRW on 11 November. At the same time a thorough inquiry was carried out by UHRW leading to a report completed on the incident and sent to VSS on 18 November 2022 to be passed on to SEUPB. On that occasion UHRW reviewed its Social Media Policy and at the request of VSS carried out a risk assessment. Both documents were communicated to VSS on 18 November. UHRW report was also sent to the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland on 18 November 2022.

The draft of the Advocacy Service Manual has been completed and was reviewed, amended and updated during the year 2022-2023.

### **3. Evaluation and monitoring systems for the Advocacy Service**

Two evaluation and monitoring systems operate concurrently for the Advocacy Service: (a) the Ulster Human Rights Watch internal evaluation and monitoring system and (b) the Victims and Survivors Service monitoring system.

#### **a. Ulster Human Rights Watch internal evaluation and monitoring system**

The Advocacy Service implements an evaluation and monitoring system with all clients, using a Questionnaire. The Questionnaire Form is made up of three sets of questions related to the Advocacy Service Evaluation Scale (9 questions), the Work and Social Adjustment Scale (WSAS) (5 questions) and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS) (7 questions).

Two other documents are being used to assess the answers provided in the Questionnaire for each client individually. The first is the Advocacy Service Evaluation Comprehensive Table which collates the answers provided by each client each year and the second is the Advocacy Service Overall Evaluation Comprehensive Table which provides an overview of the impact of the work carried out by the Advocacy Service.

#### **b. Victims and Survivors Service monitoring system**

The Victims and Survivors Service (VSS) monitoring spreadsheets have been duly completed (with references for all directly supported and indirectly impacted clients) and returned to VSS by the Administration Officer every month from May 2022 to April 2023.

The VSS Quarterly Feedback Reports were sent to the VSS Programmes Officer at the end of every quarter between July 2022 and April 2023.

The Advocacy Service has been dealing with 141 cases and 189 directly supported individuals and 197 indirectly impacted individuals, which brings the total number of registered victims of terrorism being supported to 386.

#### **4. Meetings with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS), the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and other stakeholders**

##### **a. Meetings with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS)**

UHRW has cooperated effectively with the Victims and Survivors Service (VSS). The VSS Finance/Verification Officers carried out verifications of the expenditures claim forms and supporting documentation with an excellent outcome thanks to the meticulous work carried out by the Administration Officer.

Quarterly meetings with the VSS Programmes Officer took place. Members of staff attended the Advocacy Support Working Group (ASWG) meetings during the year.

Staff members took part in training sessions when required.

##### **b. Meetings with the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and representations with the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee (NIAC)**

The Advocacy Service has engaged with the NIO and UK Government Ministers and met with Lord Jonathan Caine, Parliamentary under Secretary of State at the NIO, in Brownlow House on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022 to discuss the Legacy Bill that was going through Parliament. Following this, a written submission on the Bill with proposed amendments to make it acceptable to victims of terrorism has also been completed on 30 September and sent to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Lord Caine and 20 other members of the House of Lords. The submission was made available on the UHRW website and the UHRW Twitter account.

The Advocacy Service also engaged with the Lords, a Senator from the Republic of Ireland, the NIO and UK Government Ministers to discuss the Legacy Bill. Following Lord's Caine proposed amendments to the Bill, UHRW responded with comments sent to 20 members of the House of Lords in January 2023.

##### **c. Meeting with the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI) and the Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB)**

Representations were made with the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI) and the Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB) in order to discuss and follow-up the investigations of several cases.

##### **d. Meeting with partner organisations**

Meetings were arranged with Ely Centre with a view to following-up applications for applying for the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme. Other meetings took place with Decorum to inform about the Legacy of the Past Record (LPR).

#### **5. Work effected by the Advocacy Service Sub-Committee (ASSC)**

The Advocacy Service Sub-Committee (ASSC), consisting of UHRW Chairman and UHRW Secretary, has been meeting on a regular basis. Regular meetings of the UHRW Committee

took place to oversee the work carried out by the ASSC. The Administration Officer has taken part in these meetings to take the minutes and support the Committee in the preparation of financial documents.

On a monthly basis the Advocacy Support Manager, with the assistance of the Advocacy Support Workers and the Administration Officer, has reported to the Sub-Committee on the work carried out by the Advocacy Service.

The Sub-Committee has overseen the activities of the Advocacy Service as follows:

- Overview of the Advocacy Service;
- Report on progress of the Advocacy Service;
- Strategic direction of the Advocacy Service;
- Review of the caseload;
- Finance;
- Marketing;
- Promotional programme and meetings;
- Meetings with other organisations: VSS, NIO, ROI, Ely Centre, Decorum, etc.;
- Report to the Charity Commission;
- Appraisal of members of staff.

## **6. Cases considered by the Advocacy Service**

Representations were made by the Advocacy Service with the Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB), the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI), the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), the Public Prosecution Service (PPS), the Attorney General for Northern Ireland (AGNI), the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), 38 Brigade, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), the National Archives of Great Britain, the Coroners Service and other public bodies in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland (Garda Síochana (GS), National Archives of Ireland, Courts, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)).

All the cases have been reviewed and all action points for each of them have been recorded.

- Cases investigated by the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland (PONI):
  - Substantial complaints lodged with the Police Ombudsman were to be investigated, one of them being second in line (out of a caseload of over 420 cases) was started during the year 2022-2023.
- Cases considered by the Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB):
  - The Legacy Investigation Branch (LIB) dealt with a number of cases whose families are supported by the Advocacy Service. The Advocacy Service submitted questions and reports to the LIB.
- Cases about which information was requested from the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI):
  - UHRW has received a number of court files, including inquest files, criminal files and Public Prosecution files from PRONI.

- Cases about which information was requested from 38 Brigade:
  - UHRW has made a number of requests to 38 Brigade in order to obtain a copy of Army records in relation to a number of terrorist attacks.
- Cases referred to the PSNI and the PPS:
  - Representations were made to the PSNI and the PPS about investigations in individual cases.
- Cases submitted to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland
  - Submissions were made to the Attorney General for Northern Ireland requesting the opening of inquests in legacy cases.
- Cases for which representations were made before other public bodies in NI and ROI:
  - In a number of cases representations were made with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC), the Garda Síochána, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of the Republic of Ireland, the Courts in the Republic of Ireland, and documents were obtained from the Irish National Archives and the National Archives of Great Britain.

## **7. Narratives**

With the approval of clients, the Advocacy Service has undertaken to write the stories of traumatic experiences they have suffered as a result of losing members of their families in terrorist attacks.

The Advocacy Service has taken the initiative of creating the UHRW Legacy of the Past Record (LPR) in cooperation with the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) for the purpose of having a source of reliable information produced by victims of terrorism. This could prove to be useful to educate younger generations as to the consequences of terrorism and to prevent terrorism and radicalization in the future.

The agreement between the UHRW Advocacy Service and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland for the creation of the UHRW Legacy of the Past Record was signed on 20 March 2020 and reviewed in March 2021.

The Legacy of the Past Record received nine written narratives at the end of the year 2021 and other narratives are in preparation to be added to the archive. It is hoped that if the required funding is provided that there will be the possibility to develop audio-visual recordings with victims of terrorism.

## **8. Victims of Terrorism Council (VTC)**

The Victims of Terrorism Council (VTC) was formed with a view to giving a voice to the victims of terrorism who are clients of the Advocacy Service and wish to be more involved in the fight for truth, justice and acknowledgement.

The purpose of the Council is to assist the UHRW in maximising the impact of investigations into cases of Victims of Terrorism. The role of the Council is to advise the UHRW, from a victims' specific point of view, on the most effective means of communicating with and fulfilling the individual needs of victims of terrorism.

The Victims of Terrorism Council has taken an active part in defining the Work Plan for the coming years 2020-2023 following additional funding provided by VSS and approved at the end of October in order to develop such a plan.

## **9. Promotional programme**

### **Public Relations:**

New agreements between UHRW Advocacy Service and Angle Comms were drawn up during the year. Regular meetings were arranged to develop the approach to the various issues of concern and the writing of articles.

**The following articles were published and radio interview given between April 2021 and March 2022:**

- News Letter on 16 April 2022;
- News Letter on 12 May 2022;
- Irish News on 12 May 2022;
- Irish News on 21 May 2022;
- News Letter on 21 May 2022;
- News Letter on 25 May 2022;
- News Letter on 23 July 2022;
- Irish Newspapers on 16 November 2022;
- Irish News on 17 November 2022;
- Derry Now 05 January 2023;
- Irelandlive 05 January 2023;
- Belfast Telegraph 05 January 2023;
- News Letter 05 January 2023;
- News Letter 18 February 2023;
- Sunday World 26 February 2023;
- Numerous press releases and a number of other interviews.

A Twitter account was created for UHRW on 27 February 2020 and on 31 March 2023 UHRW had 450 followers.

A Facebook account was created in July and had over 500 followers by the end of March 2023.

The commemoration of the La Mon House bombing took place in Lisburn Council on 17 February 2022. A bunch of flowers was laid down at the remembrance bench.

## **10. Outputs for the work carried out by the Advocacy Service**

Outputs in relation to the number of clients and family members impacted were in line with the review of targets approved with VSS for the year 2022-2023. The Advocacy Service will be making every effort to meet the reviewed proposed targets by March 2024.

The number of representations made with the public authorities on behalf of clients was significant and demonstrated the level of commitment and the seriousness of the work done for clients. Multiple meetings, letters, emails and phone calls have been undertaken with various public bodies (LIB, PONI, PSNI, PRONI, 38 Brigade, the Attorney General for NI, Garda Síochana and the Courts in the Republic of Ireland).

The number of meetings with clients by members of staff as well as the number of letters, emails and phone calls exchanged with clients has been satisfactory.

## **11. Conclusion**

One hundred and forty-one cases have been considered and dealt with by way of various investigations and multiple representations with the relevant public bodies, with 189 directly supported individuals and 197 indirectly impacted individuals, a total of 386 victims of terrorism supported by the Advocacy Service. The quality of the work done by the Advocacy Service has been acknowledged.

## **2. Other Activities undertaken by the Ulster Human Rights Organisation**

### **1. Education**

Input to the Education Sector has continued to be limited during the 2022 - 2023 year due to a slow uptake of community groups following the lifting of covid-19 restrictions and to the increasing difficulties arising from the downturn in funding available from governments both nationally and locally. However, the organisation has still been available, through various communication channels, to support any issues raised by the community in general and parents in particular with regards to having their children educated in conformity with their own religious and philosophical conviction according to Protocol One to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Also, the staff manager and caseworkers in the advocacy sector continue to avail themselves, at every opportunity, to complete additional recognised qualifications enabling even greater expertise in delivering advocacy advice to a wider client base.

### **2. Religious Freedom**

During the period, as assaults increase against and the lack of tolerance shown towards, religious organisations and especially towards established Christian denominations the UHRW Advocacy Service continues to respond, on an advisory capacity, to personal and organisational queries with respect to the freedom of thought, conscience and religion protected by Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Issues in this area have

continued to increase significantly over the period particularly as a result of parliamentary Acts passed and amendments made to existing ones with respect to same sex marriage, abortion legislation, LGBT legislation, Government and most recently with regards to Government proposals with reference to Conversion Therapy. The organisation has produced in-depth responses to Government Consultation requests for submissions on most of these key issues highlighting, where necessary, the dangers contained in them and recommending alternatives to these vital community matters.

### **3. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly**

In the past the UHRW made significant proposals to the NIO with respect to the various key issues arising in the area of Freedom of Peaceful Assembly. These are contained in Project IMPACT and we are still awaiting consideration by the Northern Ireland Assembly and/or the relevant NIO Minister in order to make progress in this area of work. A recent report would signify that our proposals are still very much 'alive'. Action in this area is expected to take place following the (possible) return of the Assembly at Stormont during the coming year.

#### **Financial Review**

Total receipts were £154,362 and payments were £152,311 giving a surplus of £2,051.

This report was approved by the Trustees and signed below on its behalf by:

*Robert Campbell*

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(Chairman)

13 December 2023