

THE PAT FINUCANE CENTRE LTD

(A company limited by guarantee)

Report of the directors for the year ended 31 March 2024

The directors present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. The directors of THE PAT FINUCANE CENTRE LTD (The PFC Ltd) for the purposes of company law and who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

Our Aims and Objectives

Purposes and Aims

The company is established to promote human rights and the promotion of effective remedies following any breach of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for the benefit of the inhabitants of Derry City and Strabane District Council Area, the environs of Northern Ireland and throughout Ireland (hereinafter called "the area of benefit") without distinction of age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic identity, political or religious opinion by associating the statutory authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education with the object of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants and in particular to:

- a) promote education in human rights whether by teaching, producing materials or by conduction or commissioning research (and publishing the results of such research);
- b) raising public awareness and cultivating sentiment in favour of human rights by the use of publications, lectures, human rights awards, the media, public advocacy and other means of communications;
- c) promoting the sound administration of domestic human rights law by conducting or commissioning research in domestic human rights and publishing the same to public;
- d) promoting the enforcement of domestic human rights law by the state and its institutions.

The Focus of our Work

The Recovery of Living Memory Archive (ROLMA)

The main focus of The PFC Ltd is the ROLMA. The ROLMA provides an advocacy, advice and support service to families, bereaved as a result of the conflict, who wish to engage with statutory agencies to establish the facts surrounding the death/s of their loved one/s. The service, which is free of charge, is already available to families on a cross community and cross border basis.

The ROLMA engages with the Office of the Police Ombudsman in Northern Ireland and other statutory bodies. If the NI Executive agrees to a new overarching body to co-ordinate all historic investigations the ROLMA would continue its advocacy, advice and support role in the context of any new Commission appointed by the two governments and any new unit appointed by the Commission.

The involvement of the Office of the Police Ombudsman in 'historic' investigations has led to a massive increase in our workload due to our long standing involvement in various projects around truth recovery. The liaison between bereaved families and statutory agencies in historic cases rarely involves the legal profession as advocates for two reasons; many of the issues raised by families, perhaps twenty, thirty years after a death, are not strictly legal; and secondly, legal aid is not available.

As a direct consequence there is a role for human rights NGOs in a process which is more akin to truth recovery in transitional justice than as an integral part of the criminal justice system.

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The project aims to ensure that individual families receive the maximum permissible disclosure of information regarding the death/s of the relative/s from those statutory agencies, North and South of the border, tasked with investigating historic conflict related fatalities. The project further aims to ensure that families are supported and accompanied throughout this process by staff who are skilled and experienced in liaising with the relevant statutory agencies and have developed analytical 'paralegal' skills in relation to official reports. Implicit to the advocacy and support roles is an understanding that the process should provide for some level of comfort and solace for those involved. Furthermore it is intended that this process will, at the very least narrow the list of questions passed from generation to generation following a violent death. This in turn should lessen the impact of trans-generational trauma. A positive engagement between bereaved families and statutory agencies will contribute in time to reconciliation at a societal level as individual hurts are addressed and acknowledged.

The concept of acknowledgement and respect for those who have been directly affected by the conflict is the foundation stone upon which the ROLMA has been built. The legacy of violent conflict, the loss of over 3,600 lives, is also a legacy of anger, bitterness and, ultimately, unanswered questions from victims and survivors. These unanswered questions, this act of knowledge, precludes acknowledgement. Without acknowledgement across the board there can be no proper generational process of reconciliation. Each family that receives answers to questions that many have been afraid to ask until now can and should be regarded as a building block in a gradual process of healing. Every question that is answered in this generation is a question that will no longer be passed on to the next, perhaps never to be answered but which will continue to cause hurt and resentment within families and communities. Every question that is answered benefits society as a whole.

This project seeks to tackle the problem of families being left to engage with statutory bodies in such a sensitive area without proper advocacy, support and advice.

Though excellent support networks have been set up to provide counselling and therapeutic support to victims none of these organisations intervene to carry out the 'paralegal' advocacy work currently undertaken by The PFC Ltd.

Financial Review

Principal Funding Sources

The principal funding sources over the relevant financial year have been from VSS - Victims & Survivors Service, Gap Funding, DFA - Department of Foreign Affairs and donations.

Future Funding

It is expected that Victims and Survivors Service, SEUPB and Department of Foreign Affairs will provide core funding for the foreseeable future.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 7 July 2008 and registered as a charity on 7 July 2008. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by its Articles of Association.

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Recruitment and Appointment of the Board of Directors

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of the Board are elected to serve for a period of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next General Meeting.

All members of Board give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity.

Due to the nature of human rights based legacy work much of the charity's work inevitably focuses on people bereaved by the conflict. The Board seeks to ensure that the needs of this group are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the Board.

Members Induction and Training.

Most Board members are already familiar with the work of The PFC Ltd. Board members are encouraged to participate in relevant activities such as conferences and short training sessions.

All Board members have been required to attend governance training.

Obligations of the Board

The main obligation of the Board are to develop and oversee the implementation of policy and to ensure that structures and management complies with legal requirements and good governance practice.

Risk Management

The Board has conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Where appropriate systems and procedures have been established to mitigate the risks. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. A possible breach of confidentiality is an obvious risk in legacy work. All Board members, staff and volunteers have signed the appropriate confidentiality agreements. See reference above to risks associated with loss of funding.

Organisational Structure

The PFC Ltd has a board which meets as required and is responsible for policy, strategic direction and overall governance. A Finance sub-committee meets as required. The committee includes the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, the Project Manager, Administration/Finance Officer and any other Board member that wishes to attend.

A scheme of delegation is in place and day to day responsibility for the project rests with the Project Manager. The Project Manager has responsibility for the day to day operational management of the ROLMA, individual supervision of the staff team and also ensuring that the team have adequate support and continue to develop their skills and working practices in line with good practice.

The Project Manager provides a monthly report to the Board which includes a financial report and an update on project development.

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Responsibilities of the Board of Directors


In addition to the responsibilities outlined above the Board will prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a fair and true view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for the financial year. In preparing those financial statements, the Board should follow best practice and:

- to observe methods and principles of the Charities SORP;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and prepare financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is not appropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.
- the Board, who are directors for the purpose of company law and members for the purpose of charity law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on page 1.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with them reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity 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 charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

This report is prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the board on 3 July 2024 and signed on its behalf by;



Director



Director