



# Public Law Project

Information Pack

**Welfare Rights Hub Coordinator**



## Advert

Looking to address systemic unfairness in the welfare benefits system?

Public Law Project (PLP) is searching for an adviser/lawyer to coordinate our innovative new welfare benefits support hub, which will sit within our award-winning casework team. We want someone who enjoys working collaboratively and is excited about using the law creatively, with a detailed understanding of the welfare benefits system. The role is open to specialist welfare benefits advisers and qualified lawyers.

PLP is a growing and lawyer-led access to justice charity, which was founded in 1991. Our vision is a world in which individual rights are respected and public bodies act fairly and lawfully. We act directly for individuals, and are regularly instructed by law firms, lawyers' groups, such as the Law Centres Network, NGOs and other public interest organisations. We work consistently at the leading edge of access to justice issues and there is always lots of scope for development. Recent high-profile cases have engaged with diverse issues such as Home Office removals policy, funding for advice services and legal aid, and the recent prorogation of Parliament.

PLP funding comes from a range of sources, including legal aid and charitable grants. Our mixed funding model gives the organisation financial security and stability – particularly at the moment - and means that our lawyers are able to work creatively to achievable income targets.

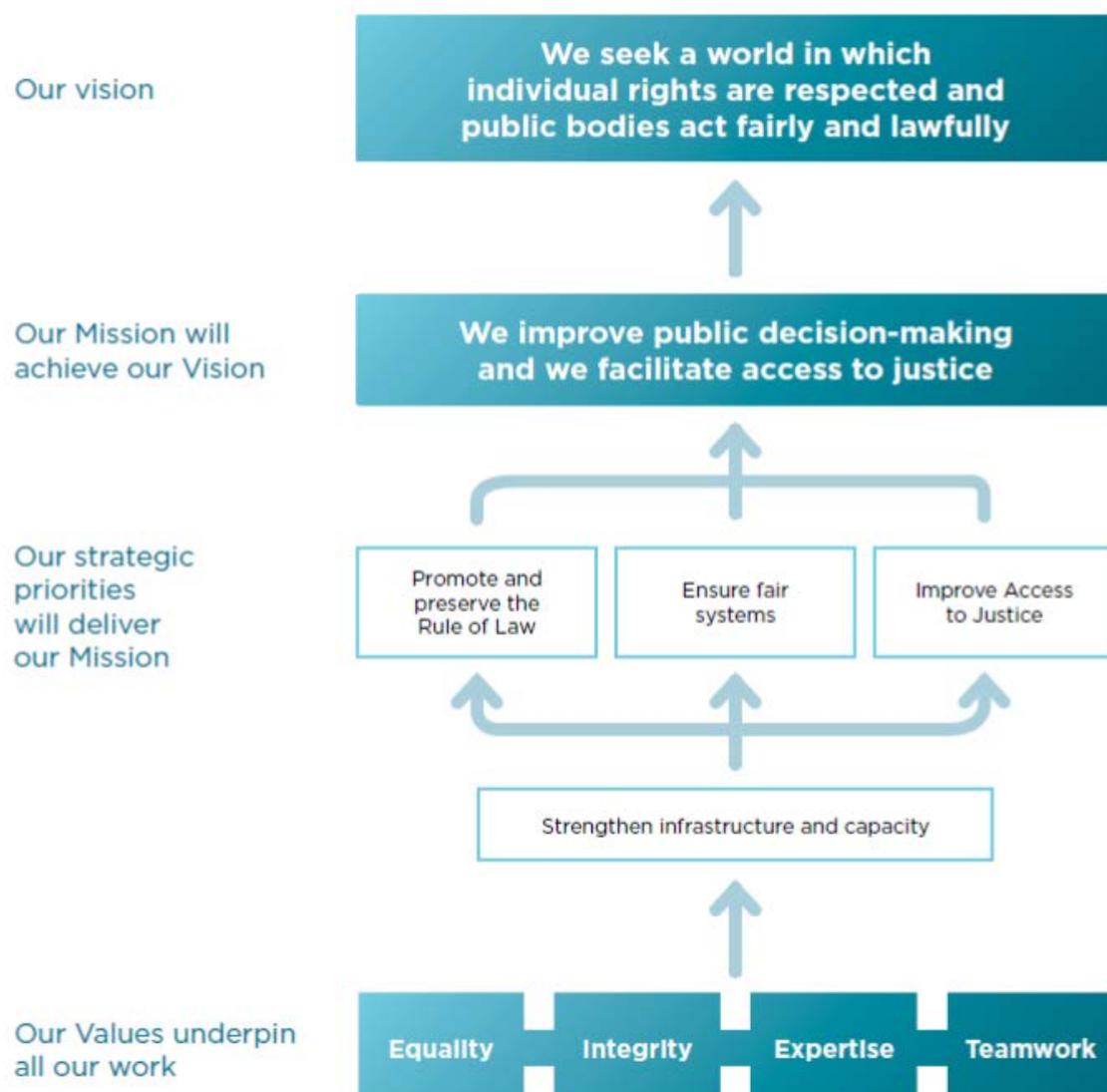
## What is PLP

Public Law Project (PLP) works to ensure people who are disadvantaged and marginalised can hold the state to account. For almost 30 years we have helped civil society, advisers and lawyers use the law to prevent abuses of power and improve access to justice in England and Wales. We employ specialist lawyers who represent individuals, campaign groups and charities, often in high profile, high stakes, public interest litigation. Our researchers work in partnership with the UK's leading academic institutions, and we run a national programme of conferences and training.

PLP is growing. We are expanding our operations and developing our in-house expertise to meet some extraordinary challenges and opportunities; from austerity to Brexit, from benefit sanctions to an unprecedented programme of justice reform.

Can you help us achieve access to justice?

## Vision, Mission & Values



## Employment information

**Job title:** Welfare Rights Hub Coordinator

**Contract term:** 12 months (with the potential for extension)

**Location:** Central London (currently Clerkenwell)

**Hours:** Full time (35 hours per week). Part time or flexible working to be considered for the right candidate

**Salary:** £29,628 - £37,092 per annum, pro rata, dependent on experience. (This range is per our pay scale and will be adjusted accordingly).

**Pension:** 10% per annum after one year. Statutory minimum during first year.

**Leave:** A full time member of staff has 25 ordinary annual leave days each year in addition to bank holidays (usually 8).

**Probation period:** 6 months. Benefits may be offered at a reduced level during the probation period.

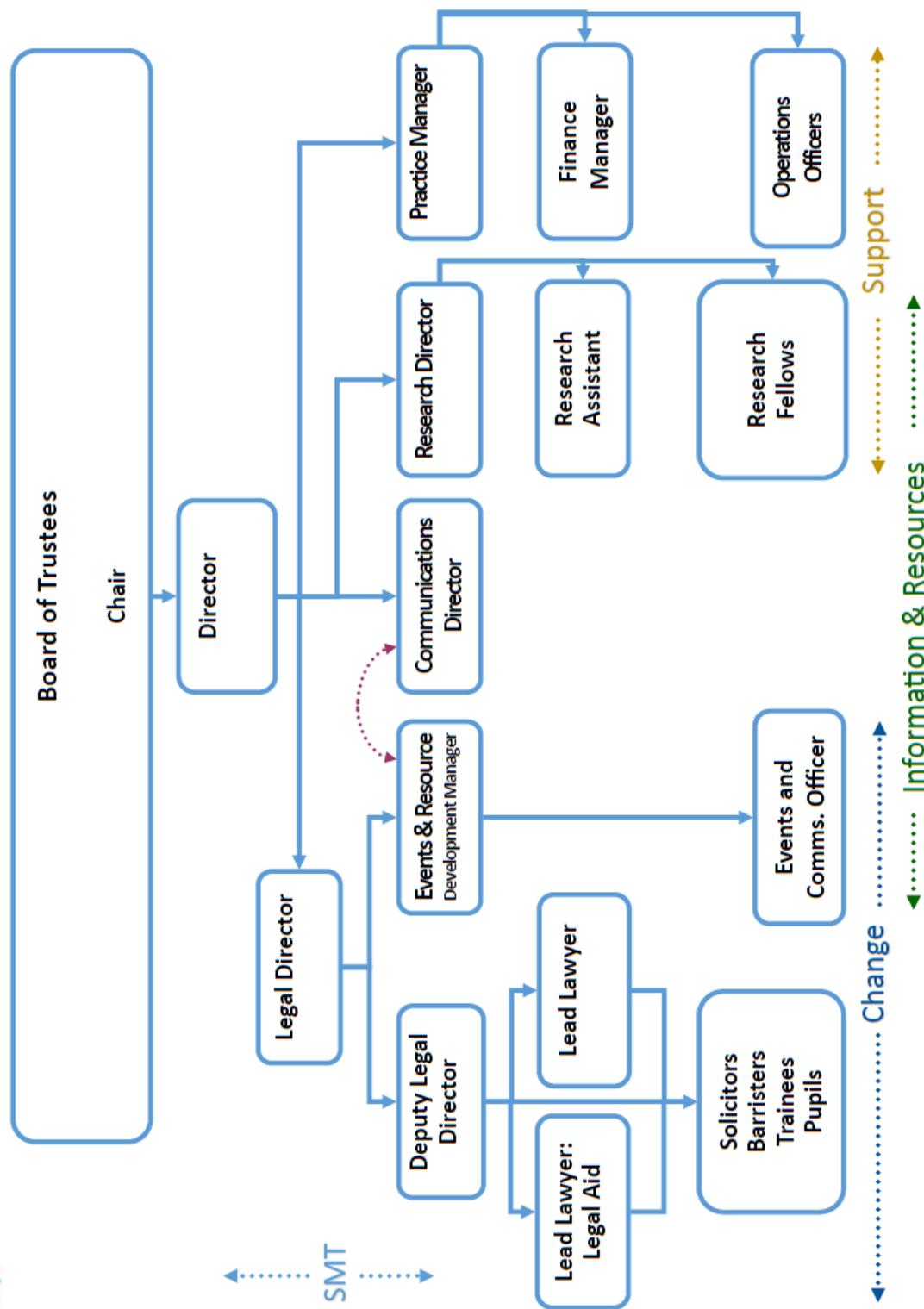
**Payment method:** Payment is made by electronic transfer on or shortly before the 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar month covering payment for that same calendar month.

### **Flexible working:**

PLP is a family friendly employer. We are open to flexible working arrangements including those that will enable the post-holder to accommodate their care responsibilities.

PLP employees may be requested to attend occasional evening meetings. However, PLP recognises that post holders may have other commitments and seeks to be as flexible as possible in this regard. In addition, reasonable notice will be given of such commitments outside normal working hours where possible, and time off in lieu may be taken by arrangement.

*These details are provided for information only and do not form part of an employment contract or job offer.*



## Job Description: Welfare Rights Hub Coordinator

The Hub Coordinator is an adviser based within PLP's casework team, responsible for coordinating PLP's welfare rights specialist support hub. The specialist support hub is a collaboration between PLP, the Law Centres Network and Crisis. Its aim is to increase the availability and accessibility of legal information and specialist social welfare and public law advice. The Hub Coordinator will work collaboratively with PLP's EU Settlement Scheme ('EUSS') Hub Coordinator and with our partner organisations. They will also contribute to the work of PLP's casework team more generally.

### Primary Duties and Responsibilities

The following are primary duties of the Hub Coordinator:

#### *Hub Coordination*

1. Coordinate the work of the Specialist Support Hub in relation to welfare rights ('the Hub'), in collaboration with the EUSS Hub Coordinator, the Law Centres Network, Crisis and other partner organisations.
2. Together with the EUSS Hub Coordinator, the Law Centres Network and Crisis, coordinate monthly peer support meetings and quarterly 'hub' days for partner organisations.
3. In consultation with the EUSS Hub Coordinator, PLP's Legal Director, the Advisory Group and the Hub partners, develop and agree a work plan for the hub and monitor progress against the work plan.
4. Work closely with PLP's casework, research, events and communications teams to progress the work plan.
5. Attend meetings of the Hub Advisory Group as required.
6. Work with PLP's research team to develop and contribute to the planning and implementation of research to contribute to the hub's casework and specialist support functions.
7. Contribute to PLP's policy work as it relates to the work of the hub, including representing PLP at external fora and drafting written briefings and consultation responses on PLP's behalf, for approval by the Legal Director as appropriate.

#### *Specialist support work with hub partners and others*

8. Provide second-tier support on complex welfare rights cases, particularly those related to benefit sanctioning.
9. Identify systemic issues and advise on appropriate public law remedies and strategies to deal with them.
10. Provide authoritative public law advice and information, with appropriate supervision if required.

11. Plan and deliver training on the role of public law in the welfare rights context, particularly benefit sanctions.
12. Develop, maintain and disseminate information relating to public law and welfare benefits, particularly benefit sanctions.

#### *Casework*

13. Provide advice and conduct (or assist in the conduct of) public law litigation on behalf of individuals and organisations, using legal aid and other forms of funding, with a particular focus on welfare rights and conditionality.
14. Meet modest financial targets and ensure that all time recording and legal aid and other billing is undertaken in a timely and appropriate way.
15. Compliance with all professional requirements. In particular, responsibilities to individual clients may sometimes require the post-holder to work outside normal working hours.

#### *General*

16. Work with the SMT and the EUSS Hub Coordinator to ensure the financial sustainability of the Specialist Support Hub, including identifying and securing further grant funding as necessary.
17. Assist in monitoring and evaluation of the Hub's activities including gathering data.
18. Undertake general administration and word-processing in connection with own work.
19. Monitor own financial performance, ensuring adequate funding of cases (including limitations to public funding certificates), timely progression of billing etc.
20. Participating with other staff in the day-to-day operation of PLP's activities including the provision of information to inform accounting and financial reporting (including to funders).
21. Attend internal and external meetings as required, including representing PLP at external meetings and other fora, as requested.
22. Undertake other tasks appropriate to the role as required.
23. PLP lawyers are expected to attend occasional evening meetings. These and other events may also result in the post holder having to be away from home overnight. However, PLP recognises that post holders may have caring and other commitments and seeks to be as flexible as possible in this regard. In addition, reasonable notice will be given of such commitments outside normal working hours where possible, and time off in lieu may be taken by arrangement.

## Person Specification: Welfare Rights Hub Coordinator

<b>Knowledge, skills and competencies</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims of the Public Law Project	✓	
Awareness of current social and legal issues in the public law and welfare rights field	✓	
Qualified solicitor or barrister in England and Wales or similar CILEX with public law expertise, or an experienced welfare benefits advisor with an excellent understanding of the role of judicial review in the field of welfare benefits	✓	
Good understanding of welfare benefits entitlements in England and Wales	✓	
Experience of providing advice and representation on welfare benefits entitlements		✓
Excellent oral and written communication skills	✓	
Practical experience of judicial review litigation		✓
Expertise in proactively generating work and maintaining a financially sustainable caseload	✓	
Ability to develop creative legal strategies, including in litigation	✓	
Expertise and confidence to build and maintain networks with a range of external stakeholders	✓	
Working knowledge of funding litigation and casework	✓	
Proven ability to meet reasonable billing targets		✓
The ability to communicate complex legal issues clearly, both orally and in writing, to various audiences	✓	
The ability to represent PLP in external fora including at meetings with Government representatives, Parliamentarians and other civil society organisations as required	✓	
Experience of working with legal aid funding		✓
Experience of influencing externally including dealing with the media		✓
Experience of engagement in policy or legislative developments with Government, Parliamentarians and other civil society organisations		✓
Experience of delivering training to non-legal audiences		✓
<b>Personal qualities, commitment and values</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
Commitment to PLP's core values of equality, integrity, expertise and teamwork	✓	
Ability to be self-servicing, including word processing skills, and to work flexibly and collegiately within a multi-disciplinary team	✓	

Able to communicate effectively with colleagues internally and also externally	✓	
Willingness and ability to travel to other parts of the country, occasionally staying overnight		✓
Personal commitment to development and learning		✓
Willingness and ability to occasionally attend evening meetings		✓
Right to work in the UK	✓	

## Application process

PLP is an equal opportunities employer. We welcome applications from individuals regardless of age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion and belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Candidates may ask for clarification of elements of the person specification and/or the application process, and may discuss any issues that might impact on how they would be able to undertake the work. PLP will not discuss issues that may give any candidate information that would give them an advantage in their application.

To apply please complete the application form which accompanies this information pack and send it to [hr@publiclawproject.org.uk](mailto:hr@publiclawproject.org.uk)

**The deadline for applications is: 12pm Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October**

**Candidates will be notified of interviews by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October.**

A recruitment panel will be nominated for each vacancy. The recruitment panel will use the completed application form to assess each candidate's ability to meet the essential requirements of the job as set out in the person specification using a scoring system. The highest scoring applicants will be interviewed.

**Interviews will be held during the week beginning Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October.**

Further information about the interview process will be provided to successful applicants. Interviews will usually consist of at least one practical test of your abilities relating to the role and a standard interview with a panel of at least two people. Please let us know in advance of your interview if you have a disability which may interfere with your ability to take part in a test and PLP will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the process is fair to all applicants.

Interview questions will be decided in advance based on their relevance to the job description and person specification and scored separately by interviewers. A score sheet will be set in advance, interviewers may only use information from the application form, the interview and any other assessment methods to inform their score.

If you have a disability which you think may interfere with your ability to do the job as described, please let us know and PLP will make reasonable adjustments both at interview and on appointment.

PLP keeps assessment records/notes for all applicants, whether shortlisted or not, for 12 months. They are stored securely and then destroyed securely after the above period.

All short-listed candidates shall be notified of their selection decision and can obtain feedback from the assessment if they request it. All such requests are dealt with by the Practice Manager who may pass them on to the relevant person if applicable.

## Equality statement of intent

As an employer, PLP will treat all employees and job applicants equally and fairly and will not unlawfully discriminate against them. This also applies to volunteers, interns and anyone undertaking work experience with PLP. Our commitment to equal treatment extends to arrangements for recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, access to training opportunities, access to promotion and transfers, grievance and disciplinary procedures, demotions, selection for redundancies, dress code, references, work allocation and any other employment related activities. Specifically, PLP will endeavour to ensure that:

- I. Whenever practical, we will recruit and maintain a workforce which broadly reflects the diversity of the community in which we operate and serve. We will ensure that the style and content of our job adverts and recruitment materials convey this commitment, and always includes the statement that "The Public Law Project is an equal opportunity employer".
- II. Subject to cost, we will ensure that job opportunities are advertised widely and to diverse audiences. Where appropriate, PLP will take positive action measures to attract applications from all sections of society and especially from those groups which are under-represented in our workforce.
- III. We treat all job applicants equally and fairly and do not unlawfully discriminate against them. We do this by ensuring that we operate an open and fair recruitment process, and making decisions using selection criteria which do not discriminate.
- IV. We will take every possible step to ensure that employees and volunteers are treated fairly, with the aim of creating a culture that respects and values each others' differences, that is free of discrimination and promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that encourages individuals to develop and maximise their true potential.
- V. We recognise our continuing responsibility to develop the potential of all employees, removing any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevents progression or full contribution to the organisation's performance. We will ensure that selection for promotion, training or other benefit is free from discrimination of any kind and is based on the employee's experience and abilities and the needs of the job.
- VI. We will make clear to all employees, volunteers and trustees that anyone who works for PLP in any capacity is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect, and that unlawful discrimination, intimidation, harassment and victimisation are disciplinary offences which will not be tolerated by the organisation and may lead to disciplinary action. We will provide clear and accessible procedures allowing allegations of such conduct to be promptly and sensitively investigated.
- VII. We will provide flexibility to employees in relation to work requirements that may significantly impact on their personal needs and responsibilities and we will seek, as far as possible, to foster a culture that ensures an appropriate work – life balance. We also aim to be aware of days of cultural or religious significance that employees may wish to observe in an appropriate manner.

## Privacy notice

When you apply for a job with PLP we will need to collect information about you including your employment history and contact details so that we can assess your suitability for the role and inform you about the progress of your application.

Your records will be kept securely whilst we consider your application. If your application is unsuccessful, we will keep your data until 6 months after the decision was made. If successful your recruitment information will be kept for 6 years after your last day working with us.

If you opt to provide equal opportunity data to PLP this will be anonymised and retained only as long as is necessary to record the recruitment decision against the anonymised data and no longer than six months.

We do not share recruitment information with third parties.