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Charlotte Ventham
Call: 2001



Charlotte is recognised as a leading junior and specialises in police law, public law, human rights, discrimination, inquests and inquiries, and malfeasance claims. She is regularly instructed by police forces and government departments/agencies in a range of courts and tribunals. Her practice includes a number of high profile cases and those involving national security and public interest immunity issues.

Clients find Charlotte "very easy to deal with" and "Her effort on cases is tireless" (Chambers UK). She is commended for having "a keen analytical mind with a persuasive advocacy" (Legal 500) and considered to be "A great choice for claims which are complex, sensitive or difficult".

Notable examples of her work include the **7/7 Inquest, Daniel Morgan litigation and Kamoka litigation** (claims of alleged complicity in rendition and torture by HM Government).

Charlotte is appointed to the Attorney General's B Panel of Counsel.

Charlotte is editor of the 5 Essex Court Police Law Update and regularly provides lectures to solicitors on all aspects of her practice.

Recommendations

"She is very personable, very easy to deal with and always goes the extra mile." (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2018

"A great choice for claims which are complex, sensitive or difficult." (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2018

"Her preparation and level of detail leave nothing to be desired, she is an excellent trial advocate." (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2018

"She is very thorough, pre-empts well and knows the papers inside out." (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2017

"Her effort on cases is tireless." (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2017

"She is approachable and knowledgeable" and "is good on her feet" (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2017

“She is a very intelligent and thorough barrister.” (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2016

“She has hit the mark in terms of personality and how she pitches a case. She is very good on paper and on her feet.” (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2016

“She is very, very good at going through complex medical records and picking out the best points to use.” (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2015

“She has a very analytical, scientific way of going through the evidence” (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers 2015

“She is very approachable and no question is too small. She will drop anything to help her clients.” (Police Law - Defendant)
Chambers UK 2014

Police Law

Charlotte’s practice embraces all areas of civil and public law relevant to policing. She has extensive experience as a trial advocate, defending civil actions for false imprisonment, assault, malicious prosecution, negligence, discrimination and misfeasance in both jury and non-jury actions. She also has particular expertise in handling judicial review claims for the police and the IPCC.

Charlotte’s cases have included challenges to the retention and/or disclosure of police information; promotion policies; police cautions; disciplinary outcomes; and the handling of complaints against the police. Charlotte has acted for the police in a number of sensitive inquests including firearms incidents, unlawful killing following domestic violence and deaths in custody. She is experienced in dealing with cases involving public interest immunity and national security issues. Charlotte is regularly asked to advise on non-contentious matters including policy, procedure, police powers and operational issues. Charlotte has also represented the police in numerous employment law claims (particularly in relation to discrimination) and disciplinary matters (including related judicial review claims).

Notable cases include:

R (CL) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (Admin Court, ongoing): challenge to the retention of a crime report relating to “sexting” by a 14 year old child.

Brown v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (High Court, ongoing): appeal concerning the interpretation of the CPR44.16(2)(b) exception to QOCS.

Rees & others v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2017] EWHC 273 (QB): substantial damages claims for malicious prosecution and misfeasance in public office arising out of the murder of Daniel Morgan in 1987 (led by Jeremy Johnson QC).

R (Pitts) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2017] EWHC 646 (Admin): judicial review challenging the interpretation and application of the Home Office Counting Rules on Recorded Crimes in relation to an allegation of rape.

Breeze & Wilson v Chief Constable of Norfolk Constabulary (High Court, ongoing): very high value claim for damages including for loss of share value arising out of the discontinued prosecution of the claimants for conspiracy to defraud various NHS Trusts (led by Jason Beer QC).

McPherson v Chief Constable of Nottinghamshire Police (Court of Appeal, 2016): appeal concerning the admissibility of the Claimant's previous offending history in a jury action for false imprisonment, assault and malicious prosecution; and when the reasonableness of force used by a police officer may be decided by the judge as a question of law without recourse to the jury.

Brown v (1) Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (2) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis (Central London County Court, 2016): claim for misuse of private information, breach of the Data Protection Act and misfeasance in public office arising out of disclosures made between two policing bodies of private travel information relating to the Claimant.

R (XX) v Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police [2014] EWHC 4106 (Admin): judicial review brought by a convicted sex offender challenging the legality of a scheme providing for the collection, retention and disclosure of information relating to his offending history (led by Jeremy Johnson QC).

R (Simpson & ors) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police [2013] EWHC 1858 (Admin): judicial review concerning the claimants' legitimate expectation as to the application of a promotion selection policy in light of an ongoing promotion freeze.

Inquests

Charlotte has acted in a number of sensitive and document-heavy inquests engaging public interest immunity issues and necessitating the careful handling of allegations of failings/Article 2 breaches on the part of state agencies. These have included:

- Firearms incidents eg the shooting of Anthony Grainger – acted for IPCC; Chandler's Ford inquest (interception of armed robbery on a cash in transit vehicle by members of the MPS "flying squad") – acted for Hampshire police.
- Unlawful killings eg Lucinda Port (fatal stabbing of the deceased following history of domestic violence) – acted for MPS.
- Various prison deaths (including suicides) involving inmates with substance misuse issues, self-harming behaviours and physical and psychiatric ill-health.
- Deaths in police custody eg Martine Brandon (deceased choked to death in a police cell as a result of consuming her own underwear) – acted for Hampshire police.
- Deaths following emergency services' response eg Daniel McMahon (deceased hit by train following 999 call) – acted for MPS.
- Deaths involving psychiatric patients eg Preuss (deceased absconded from psychiatric hospital whilst suffering from psychotic delusions and jumped in the River Thames where she drowned) – acted for MPS.
- Charlotte was junior Counsel for City of London Police in the inquest into the London Bombings of 7 July 2005.

Public / Administrative

Charlotte acts for government departments and other public bodies in a range of public law claims and policy matters. She is particularly well-placed, by virtue of her extensive police law practice, to deal with cases involving overlap between the functions of the police and government agencies.

Examples of recent cases:

R (CL) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (Admin Court, ongoing): challenge to the retention of a crime report relating to “sexting” by a 14 year old child.

R (Pitts) v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2017] EWHC 646 (Admin): challenge to the interpretation and application of the Home Office Counting Rules on Recorded Crimes in relation to an allegation of rape.

R (O’Brien) v Ministry of Justice: challenge to the lawfulness of the claimant prisoner’s removal to a segregation unit.

R (Simpson & ors) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police [2013] EWHC 1858 (Admin): claimants’ legitimate expectation as to the application of a promotion selection policy in light of an ongoing promotion freeze.

Personal Injury

Charlotte has acted for the police, Ministry of Defence and other public bodies in a range of high value personal injury claims.

Charlotte’s recent caseload includes claims for work-related stress; mesothelioma; accidental shooting (MoD); catastrophic brain injury in a custodial setting; and psychiatric trauma sustained as a result of arrest/detention/prosecution.

Human Rights

Charlotte’s government and police practice routinely engages myriad human rights issues, arising in a variety of operational/policy contexts. Charlotte has a particular interest in cases involving a national security element and those requiring the application of closed material procedures.

Examples of recent cases:

Kamoka & others v Security Service & others: claims for unlawful detention and misfeasance in public office based on the alleged complicity of the British government in detention and torture abroad.

Motasim v (1) Crown Prosecution Service, (2) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, (3) Security Service, (4) Secret Intelligence Service: damages claim for alleged breach of Article 5 following the discontinuance of the prosecution of the claimant for terrorist offences (acting for CPS).

Schedule 7, Terrorism Act 2000: general advisory work regarding powers under Schedule 7, and various public/private law claims challenging the exercise of such powers in individual cases.

B v Crown Prosecution Service: claim for damages for breach of the Article 3 investigative duty arising out of a withdrawn rape prosecution.

Plane v (1) Ministry of Justice, (2) Parole Board: damages claim for unlawful detention, breach of Article 5 and discrimination in relation to the claimant prisoner's parole review.

R (O'Brien) v Ministry of Justice: judicial review claim challenging the lawfulness of the claimant prisoner's removal to a segregation unit on various human rights grounds.

Regulatory

Charlotte accepts instructions from regulators in relation to enforcement proceedings, in particular in the context of warrant applications.

Examples of recent cases:

Competition and Markets Authority v Concordia International RX (UK) Ltd [2017] EWHC 2911 (Ch) (on appeal to the Court of Appeal): determination of a preliminary issue concerning the reliance on PII material when defending an application to vary a warrant issued under the Competition Act 1998 (led by Jason Beer QC)..

Competition and Markets Authority v Unnamed (Chancery Division): ex parte application for a warrant under s28 Competition Act 1998.

Information Law

Charlotte has dealt with numerous public and private law claims involving the alleged misuse of private information, challenges to the disclosure of information by public bodies and breaches of the Data Protection Act. Charlotte has particular expertise in cases where human rights (most notably the Article 8 right to privacy) intersect with data protection issues.

Examples of recent cases:

R (CL) v Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (Admin Court, ongoing): challenge to the retention by the police of a crime report relating to "sexting" by a 14 year old child.

Brown v (1) Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police (2) Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis (Central London County Court, 2016): claim for misuse of private information, breach of the Data Protection Act and misfeasance in public office arising out of disclosures made between two policing bodies of private travel information relating to the Claimant.

R (XX) v Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police [2014] EWHC 4106 (Admin): judicial review brought by a convicted sex offender challenging the legality of a scheme providing for the collection, retention and disclosure of information relating to his offending history (led by Jeremy Johnson QC).