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## **MEDIA STATEMENT 18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2016**

### **Employment Tribunal Findings**

A former employee of the Jersey Women's Refuge, Ms Samantha Price, recently brought a claim for constructive dismissal against the Committee of the Jersey Women's Refuge. This claim was filed after serious allegations made by her colleagues underwent formal investigation and found to be legitimate. After a failed appeal against the findings, reprimands and sanctions were set down. Ms Price then voluntarily left the employment of Jersey Women's Refuge.

The Jersey Employment Tribunal has subsequently found that Ms Price was constructively dismissed.

Commenting on the finding, Advocate Jamie Orchard, the newly elected Chairman of the Jersey Women's Refuge Committee said the following:

"The Committee and the JWR are committed to protecting the interests of vulnerable women and children and that includes the interests of both its employees and clients. There have already been some marked changes to the Committee in respect of both personnel and our culture which should mean that a situation like this will not occur in the future. The current Committee agrees there was an obligation to investigate the feedback received regarding Ms Price's management style, given their severity and its obligation to promote a positive workplace culture for our staff.

It's clear The Jersey Employment Tribunal's findings are primarily based on procedural problems with the way the Committee Chair and Deputy Chair carried out their investigations. This was a complex case, and we are now obliged to take advice, before

deciding whether it is in the Charity's best interests to appeal the decision. We are concerned regarding how some of the facts were recorded and indeed omitted in the Judgement finding.

In terms of responding to the Judgement findings, the Committee had upon learning of the investigation and resignation, already set in motion a review of its policies and procedures as well as the structure of the Committee and its roles, to make sure that more stringent processes are followed in the unlikely event that a situation such as this occurs in the future.

We are now carefully examining each element of the findings which will assist with finalising our action plan. Following my recent appointment to the Committee, I have emphasised this review should be completed as a priority regardless of the outcome of the Tribunal to make sure that the running of the Refuge is up to date and suitable for the way a charity like the JWR should be run.

**ENDS**

#### Notes

Jersey Women's Refuge exists to provide practical and emotional support to women and children who are suffering from domestic abuse in the Island. Refuge provides a 24 hour, confidential service available to anyone in the Island regardless of age, race, sexuality or disability.

For further information in the first instance please contact

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