

IN THE MATTER OF LESLIE HUMES, solicitor

- AND -

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

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Mr W M Hartley (in the chair)  
Mr A Gaynor-Smith  
Mrs V Murray-Chandra

Date of Hearing: 25th March 2003

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## FINDINGS

of the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal  
Constituted under the Solicitors Act 1974

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An application was duly made on behalf of the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors ("OSS") by Victoria Jane Hunt solicitor employed by The Law Society at the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors at Victoria Court, 8 Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5AE on 28<sup>th</sup> November 2002 that Leslie Humes of Marshgate, Doncaster, might be required to answer the allegations contained in the statement which accompanied the application and that such order might be made as the Tribunal should think right.

The allegation against the Respondent was that he had been guilty of conduct unbecoming a solicitor in that he had been convicted of a criminal offence.

The application was heard at the Court Room, 3rd Floor, Gate House, 1 Farringdon Street, London EC4M 7NS on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2003 when Victoria Jane Hunt, solicitor employed by The Law Society at the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, Victoria Court, 8 Dormer Place, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 5AE appeared as the Applicant and the Respondent did not appear and was not represented.

The evidence before the Tribunal included two letters of the Respondent to the Applicant dated 22<sup>nd</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003 which were handed to the Tribunal by the Applicant at the

hearing. The letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2003 included the Respondent's admission to the allegation.

At the conclusion of the hearing the Tribunal ordered that the Respondent Leslie Humes of Marshgate, Doncaster, solicitor be struck off the Roll of Solicitors and they further ordered him to pay the costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £688.40.

The facts are set out in paragraphs 1 to 4 hereunder: -

1. The Respondent, born in 1962, was admitted as a solicitor on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1988 and his name remained on the Roll of Solicitors.
2. At all material times the Respondent was a partner in the firm of Hickmotts of Mansfield House, 34 Mansfield Road, Rotherham, South Yorkshire, S60 2DX.
3. The Respondent appeared at Sheffield Crown Court on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2002 whereupon he pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was convicted of the same and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. Copies of the Certificate of Conviction and the Judge's sentencing comments were before the Tribunal.
4. The Respondent had not lodged any appeal.

#### **The Submissions of the Applicant**

5. The Respondent had been convicted of the manslaughter of his wife and the facts spoke for themselves.
6. A conviction for a serious offence was conduct unbecoming a solicitor.
7. The Tribunal was referred to the sentencing remarks of the Honourable Mr Justice Gage who had said:-

"This was a very serious offence. By your actions, you have taken the life of a young woman who was the mother of your four young children, and no doubt a devoted daughter and sister....."

What makes this the more serious, this offence, in my judgement, was that the attack took place, and was sustained, in the presence of your children."

8. The Applicant sought her costs which had been agreed by the Respondent in his letter of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003.

#### **The Findings of the Tribunal**

9. The Tribunal found the allegation to have been substantiated indeed it was not contested. While the Respondent had not made submissions to the Tribunal the Tribunal had noted his comments in his letter to the Applicant of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2003 in which he had admitted the allegation, spoken of the difficulties facing his family and expressed his sorrow for his actions.

10. The allegation against the Respondent was very serious. It was not appropriate for the Tribunal to comment further on the matters which had led to the conviction. The Tribunal noted the sentencing remarks of the Learned Judge.
11. The Respondent in his letter of 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2003 had expressed a wish to be struck off the Roll as quickly as possible. Given the seriousness of the offence and the fact that the Respondent had not lodged an appeal, the Tribunal considered that the appropriate penalty was to strike the Respondent's name off the Roll of Solicitors.
12. In his letter of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2003 to the Applicant the Respondent had asked for 28 days from the date of any Order to arrange payment of the agreed costs. In the circumstances the Tribunal sought an assurance from the Applicant that the relevant department of The Law Society would not seek costs from the Applicant until 28 days had passed from the date of the hearing. The Applicant gave an assurance that the Recovery Department would not write to the Respondent seeking costs until 28 days had passed.
13. The Tribunal ordered that the Respondent Leslie Humes of Marshgate, Doncaster, be struck off the Roll of Solicitors and they further ordered him to pay the agreed costs of and incidental to the application and enquiry fixed in the sum of £688.40.

DATED this 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 2003

on behalf of the Tribunal

W M Hartley  
Chairman