

Claim No: HC12A03494

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION BETWEEN:

GEOFFREY ROBINSON MP

Claimant

- and -

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Counsel/Solicitor for the Claimant

1. In this action for misuse of private information and breach of confidence, I appear for the Claimant. My learned friend, Dinah Rose QC, appears for the Defendant.
2. The Claimant is a Labour Party politician and, since 1976, has been the Member of Parliament for Coventry. He is a prominent figure in national life, having also been Paymaster General between 1997 and 1999 and, between 1996 and 2008, the owner of the New Statesman magazine.
3. The Defendant was interested in the Claimant's activities because of his status as a leading member of the Labour Party and Member of Parliament and because of his extensive political and business contacts. The Defendant unlawfully obtained the Claimant's private and confidential information in 2002

and early 2003.

4. The Defendant's action against the Claimant came to light when, in August 2012, Operation Weeting of the Metropolitan Police disclosed documentation to the Claimant showing that it had unlawfully obtained the Claimant's private and confidential information including telephone numbers he had dialled and the date and time of calls. The Defendant had also obtained the Claimant's ex-directory telephone number. The Claimant infers from this, together with call data disclosed by the Defendant, that the Defendant intercepted voicemail messages left on his mobile telephone(s). This is of grave concern to the Claimant given that he would receive voicemail messages of a private and highly confidential nature concerning political matters, as well as personal matters.
5. I am here today to publicly announce that the Defendant has accepted liability for breach of confidence and invasion of privacy in this matter and has agreed to pay damages to the Claimant, together with his legal costs.
6. The Defendant has undertaken not to unlawfully access voicemail messages left by or for the Claimant or to access or attempt to access by unlawful means the Claimant's private information, or to publish any information which it knows was obtained in this way.

Counsel for the First Defendant

7. My Lord, on behalf of the Defendant I confirm everything that my learned Friend, [Mr Tomlinson QC/Ms Allen], has said.
8. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the damage, as well as the distress, caused to him by unlawfully obtaining his private and confidential information. The Defendant acknowledges that this information should never have been obtained, that it had no right to intrude into the Claimant's privacy and that the Defendant is liable for misuse of

private information and breach of confidence.

Tamsin Allen

.....
Hugh Tomlinson QC/ Tamsin Allen for the Claimant

linklaters LLP

.....
Linklaters LLP for the Defendant