

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS AND PROPERTY COURTS
OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Claim Number: BL-2020-000817

IN THE MATTER OF THE MOBILE TELEPHONE
VOICEMAIL INTERCEPTION LITIGATION

BEFORE: THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE MANN

B E T W E E N:

ALISTAIR MCCOIST

Claimant

and

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Callum Galbraith, Solicitor for the Claimant

1. My Lord, in this action for misuse of private information, I appear on behalf of the Claimant, Mr Alistair McCoist. My learned friend, Ben Silverstone, appears on behalf of the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited (“NGN”).
2. Mr McCoist is a former professional footballer, football manager and television personality. As a result of his successful career, he was of interest to the press.
3. NGN was the publisher of the *News of the World* which, until its closure in July 2011, was the UK’s biggest selling Sunday newspaper with a considerable readership in this jurisdiction. NGN was, and remains, the publisher of *The Sun* which, to this day, enjoys a substantial circulation and readership in this jurisdiction by way of hard copy sales of the newspaper and via its website.

4. Mr McCoist issued proceedings against NGN in May 2020. Those proceedings were brought on the basis that Mr McCoist claimed his voicemail messages were intercepted by NGN's journalists and, as a result, he claimed those journalists were privy to private and confidential voicemail messages left on his mobile telephone by others.
5. Mr McCoist identified a number of articles which he claimed contained private information about him which were published by NGN's newspapers between 2001 and 2006 and it was alleged that the publication of the articles caused Mr McCoist considerable upset and distress. During this time, Mr McCoist claimed that he used his voicemail extensively and regularly received and left voicemail messages.
6. Mr McCoist has now accepted NGN's offer to resolve his claim on terms confidential between the parties and which involve the payment of substantial damages by the Defendant to him as well as his reasonable legal costs of bringing the claim. NGN has also provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and the Claimant and has agreed to join in this statement to apologise publicly to the Claimant for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant makes no admission of liability in relation to the Claimant's allegations of voicemail interception and/or other unlawful information gathering at *The Sun*.

Ben Silverstone, Counsel for the Defendant

7. My Lord, on behalf of NGN, I confirm everything my learned Friend has said.
8. NGN is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to Mr McCoist for the distress caused to him by the invasion of his privacy by individuals working for or on behalf of the *News of the World*. The Defendant acknowledges that such activity should never have taken place, and that it had no right to intrude into the private life of Mr McCoist in this way.

Callum Galbraith, Solicitor for the Claimant

9. My Lord, in light of the order that has been made, and this public statement, Mr McCoist considers that the matter is now concluded.

Hamblins LLP

.....
Hamblins LLP
Solicitors for the Claimant

.....
Clifford Chance LLP
Solicitors for the Defendant