

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

Claim Number: HC-2019-000571

IN THE MATTER OF THE MOBILE TELEPHONE
VOICEMAIL INTERCEPTION LITIGATION

BEFORE: THE HONOURABLE MR JUSTICE MANN

B E T W E E N:

ZOE GRACE

Claimant

and

NEWS GROUP NEWSPAPERS LIMITED

Defendant

STATEMENT IN OPEN COURT

Callum Galbraith (Hamlins LLP), Solicitor for the Claimant

1. My Lord, in this action for misuse of private information, I appear on behalf of the Claimant, Ms Zoe Grace. My learned friend, Ben Silverstone, appears on behalf of the Defendant, News Group Newspapers Limited.
2. The Claimant is an artist and former model. The Claimant maintained close personal relationships with several high-profile individuals, including Sadie Frost, Pearl Lowe, Lisa Morrish, Kate Moss, Jude Law, and Gavin Rossdale (amongst others). As a result of these relationships, the Claimant was privy to private information relating to them.
3. The Defendant was the publisher of the *News of the World*, until its closure in July 2011. It also publishes *The Sun* newspaper. The Defendant's newspapers enjoyed at the relevant time, and in the case of *The Sun* still enjoy, a substantial circulation and readership in this jurisdiction both in the hard copies of its publications and on its websites.
4. In March 2019, the Claimant issued proceedings against the Defendant. Ms Grace claimed that her voicemail messages were intercepted by the Defendant's journalists and that as a result, these journalists would have been privy to her private and confidential voicemail messages left on her mobile telephone. The Claimant also claimed that the Defendant had obtained her personal information by deception. In her action against the Defendant, Ms Grace alleged that she was of interest to the press due to her knowledge of private information about her Associates.
5. The Claimant identified 38 articles that were published by the Defendant's newspapers between 2000 and 2010, which she claimed contained private information about her

Associates and which she alleged were suspicious. During this time, the Claimant would regularly receive and leave voicemail messages for her Associates, family and friends. The Claimant further claimed that the publication of the articles impacted her friendships as a result of which she suffered distress.

6. The Claimant is pleased to confirm that on 7 August 2019 she accepted the Defendant's offer to resolve her claim on terms confidential between the parties, but which involved the Defendant agreeing to pay substantial damages to the Claimant as well as her reasonable legal costs of bringing the claim. The Defendant has provided appropriate undertakings to the Court and the Claimant and agreed to join in this statement to apologise to the Claimant for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her 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 the Defendant, I confirm everything my learned Friend has said.
8. The Defendant is here today, through me, to offer its sincere apologies to the Claimant for the distress caused to her by the invasion of her 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 the Claimant in this way.

Callum Galbraith (Hamblins LLP), Solicitor for the Claimant

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

Hamblins LLP

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Hamblins LLP
Solicitors for the Claimant

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Clifford Chance LLP
Solicitors for the Defendant