

Chris Barnes represents journalist in challenge to reporting restrictions: Tickle v Father & Ors [2023] EWHC 2446 (Fam)

5th October 2023

In a judgment of the Honourable Mrs Justice Lieven, sitting on an appeal from the Family Court in Manchester, handed down today, Chris Barnes successfully appealed from a decision of His Honour Judge Haigh to adjourn an application to lift reporting restrictions to permit reporting of a hearing conducted on 21st and 22nd August 2023.

Chris Barnes represented Louise Tickle, a journalist with a long track record of reporting in relation to the Family Courts, on a pro bono basis as the appellant in an appeal heard in public on 26th September 2023.

At a time when transparency within the Family Court is a matter of particular prominence the appeal judgment serves as a timely reminder of the principles to be applied, as well as providing guidance on the management of applications to report, the nature of the balancing exercise to be undertaken when considering adjourning an application to report, and the approach judges should typically take to the exercise, by journalists, of the right to attend hearings heard in private.

The judgment, which cautions against judges questioning how a journalist has come to attend a hearing, highlights the importance of the principle of open justice, and emphasises the substantial public interest in the reporting of cases heard in private within the Family Court to provide a greater understanding of the Family Justice System.

To read the full judgment, please click [here](#).