

Case No: VS13P00027

**IN THE BRISTOL FAMILY COURT**

Bristol Crown Court

Date: 17/06/2015

**Before:**

**HIS HONOUR JUDGE WILDBLOOD QC sitting as a Judge of High Court.**

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**Between:**

	<b>Roger Williams</b>	<b><u>Applicant</u></b>
	<b>- and -</b>	
	<b>Rebecca Minnock</b>	<b><u>First</u></b> <b><u>Respondent</u></b>
	<b>-and-</b>	
	<b>Ethan Freeman Williams (by his guardian)</b>	<b><u>Second</u></b> <b><u>Respondent</u></b>

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**M Pope for Mr Butt**

## **HHJ Wildblood QC:**

1. Andrew Butt you have disgraced yourself publicly. You lied to the police. You lied twice in your evidence. You may face prosecution for perjury which, as I have explained, is a serious criminal offence. You admit having told serious lies in evidence and I found to the criminal standard of proof that you told further lies under oath. You deliberately obstructed the Tipstaff, the police and the court in their work. You have caused considerable amounts of public money to be wasted.
2. On 12<sup>th</sup> June I passed a sentence of 28 days imprisonment on you and directed that you should serve one half of that sentence in custody as I am obliged to do. You had been arrested on the 10<sup>th</sup> June and I directed that the time that you had spent in custody should count towards your sentence, again as I am obliged to do unless there is a good reason to the contrary.
3. You belonged in jail for your behaviour and I have no doubt at all that the sentence that I imposed was richly deserved. The purpose of the sentence was not to put pressure on Rebecca Minnock to come forward with Ethan as that would not have been a permissible purpose of the sentence - *Re B (a child) (removal from jurisdiction: removal of family's passports as coercive measure)* [2014] EWCA Civ 843. The purpose of the sentence was to mark the seriousness of your own contempt of court.
4. You have now served the equivalent of a sixteen day sentence since you have been in custody for eight days. Every day that you are in custody costs the public purse a great deal of money.
5. I accept that you have now expressed regret for your actions and have apologised. Further, you encouraged Rebecca Minnock to give herself up and have shown genuine concern for the welfare of Ethan. The impact of the sentence upon you has been dramatic. You, and any others like you, now know where contempt will lead. As I said when I sentenced you, you allowed yourself to get caught up in this family's attempt at a publicity stunt at the expense of the child concerned, Ethan.
6. You are now marked as a man who lies and who has been to prison for a serious contempt. You may well face prosecution for your lies. As far as this family court is concerned I consider that the court has sufficiently marked its deprecation of your actions and that you should now be released. I therefore accept that you should now be released from custody, having purged your contempt.

HHJ Stephen Wildblood QC.  
17<sup>th</sup> June 2015