

IN THE CROWN COURT SITTING AT CHESTER

BETWEEN:

THE CROWN

V

JACK WATKIN

SENTENCING REMARKS

1. I make a deprivation order in connection with the devices upon which the indecent images of children referred to in this case were stored. These devices having the exhibit references – MJE /01 and 02 and GY 01 and GY/02.
2. I make a sexual harm prevention order with the prohibitions set out in the draft order uploaded to the Digital Case System because, bearing in mind what I know about you, those terms are necessary for protecting the public from serious sexual harm from you in the future. The order will last for 10 years from today's date.
3. You have been convicted of Sexual Offences to which the notification requirements apply requiring you to sign on the sex offender register for 10 years.
4. I make the following timetable under the proceeds of crime act with regard to the fraud offences you must file a s.18 statement by 3rd November 2025, a s.16 statement is to be filed by 1.12.25, a s.17 statement is to be filed by 12.1.26, any response to the section 17

statement is to be filed by 26.1.26. I order that there be a mention hearing with regard to this aspect of the case on 2nd February 2026.

5. I therefore adjourn all other financial orders that may be appropriate in this case to the conclusion of the proceeds of crime act proceedings this includes a consideration of deprivation orders for the apparently counterfeit items.

INTRODUCTION

6. Jack Watkin you are 26 years of age and prior to the convictions I am now to sentence you for you were effectively a man of good character.
7. You were convicted by a jury, following a trial in which you gave evidence, of offences involving the possession and making of indecent images of children and possessing prohibited images of children and of possessing extreme pornographic images. You will receive no credit with regard to the sentences for this offending.
8. You have also been convicted by your guilty pleas of 6 offences of fraud. Those guilty pleas were entered on the second day of the trial but before any witnesses had been called to give evidence. I will afford you 10% credit in respect of those guilty pleas – as if they had been entered before the jury was sworn.
9. I therefore have to sentence you for offences represented by the 9 counts on the consolidated “images” indictment at B11 on the digital case system and for the “fraud” offences represented by 6 counts on the 10 count indictment at B13 on the digital case system. Being counts 1, 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

10. There are of course probably 100s of victims being the children depicted in the images counts. There are a total of 6 victims connected to the fraud indictment. The overall monies that you defrauded from your victims totals nearly £200,000.00.
11. This is serious offending requiring concurrent sentences on each of the two indictments but consecutive sentences in respect of the two indictments. I shall deal with the two sets of offences separately. However, the offending was taking place over roughly the same period of time.

THE FRAUD OFFENCES

12. It is the fraud offences I shall comment upon first in that it was as a result of an interrogation of the mobile phone taken as an exhibit in that case which led to the discovery of your other offending in respect of the images offences.
13. Jack Watkin you used an outward persona of someone who was wealthy and well connected in order to dupe the victims of your fraudulent behaviour. You described yourself as a millionaire and would talk of your knowledge of luxury products. You would stay in luxury hotels like the Dorchester in London and drink at exclusive bars including those in Harrods Department store in Knightsbridge.
14. You suggested by your appearance and the apparent trappings of wealth that you were a person who could be trusted with other people's money. However, your true motivation was to defraud people out of their money and then spend it upon yourself.
15. You used what became a fraudulent business model to carry out your dishonest crimes. You would persuade your victims to loan you money on the basis that you would be able to purchase and sell exclusive designer handbags. You stated to the victims that the profit from your purported sale would be split and your victim was supposed to receive an additional sum above the loan amount.

16. You would present yourself as someone who could sell designer items on behalf of others due to your contacts. Your frauds centred around the luxury brand, Hermes, a brand which only allows bag purchases by a select group of registered customers. You suggested you had special access to such products.
17. Due to the exclusivity of Hermes handbags such as the famous Birkin bag, named after the actress Jane Birkin, these handbags often go up in price from their original purchase price. This made it possible for you to entice your victims to entrust you with monies you would never repay back to them.
18. Your victims were people who were close to you. Hannah Jakes the victim in count 1 was a close friend. Jason Watkin your victim in count 6 was your own father. Other victims considered you as a friend.
19. The Cheshire Police started their investigation into you following a complaint made to them about you from Christine Colbert the victim in count 2 on the indictment. She runs a store in Prestbury Village called "Dress Cheshire" which store re-sells designer clothes and handbags.
20. You using the false name, Jack Holding, asked for a loan of £5,000 to purchase a Hermes handbag. Christine Colbert lent you the money on the promise she would receive the money back and £1,500.00 on top as profit. You did repay the monies and this meant that she trusted you with further similar transactions.
21. That trust in you was wholly misplaced as between August 2021 and November 2023 through various fraudulent deals you defrauded Christine Colbert out of £43,800.00. Money spent by you on your luxury lifestyle.
22. Christine Colbert was so significantly affected by what happened to her and her business by your criminal activities that she posted on

Instagram that the public should stay away from you because of how she had been defrauded.

23. Hannah Jakes your friend and the victim on count 1 on the indictment read the post and contacted Christine Colbert – the two victims met up in March 2024 to discuss the position. It was clear to them that there would be other victims.

24. Hannah Jakes agreed to meet you in Alderley Edge and informed Christine Colbert of the meeting. Cheshire Police were also contacted and they attended at the meeting point to arrest you. Following which the extent of your fraudulent behaviour unfolded. As did the other offending I shall refer to in a minute or two.

25. Hannah Jakes had been friends with you for over 10 years but that friendship was turned on its head by the way you treated her. She wrongly believed that your business ventures involving luxury items were legitimate. She transferred to you monies for handbags to be bought and sold by you.

26. It was soon after Hannah Jakes got married in the South of France, a wedding you attended as her friend, that she became suspicious of your business dealings with her. You were loaned a substantial amount of money by Hannah Jakes you repaid some of it but you defrauded her out of nearly £100,000 the figure on the indictment is £98,500.00.

27. Jason Watkin, your father was taken in by your scheme that he should provide you with funds to buy and sell designer Hermes handbags. Money would be loaned and profits shared. Again the scenario ended up with Jason Watkin being defrauded out of money because you failed to repay money that you owed to him.

28. Jason Watkin being your father could see how you were living your life. With the trappings of wealth and high living. However, this was a façade because all the while you were owing money to those who you had persuaded to lend you money.

29. Jason Watkin, due to his father/son relationship to you had to deal with complaints from people who had lost money to you. He is out of pocket to the tune of nearly £14,000.00. You may not have had the best relationship with him but that is not an excuse to defraud him out of his money.
30. As I have said you used the name Holding in some of your offending. This name was your father's mother's maiden name and this has impacted upon the larger family.
31. The victim in count 7 on the indictment, James Irlam was introduced to you because his mother in law was friends with your mother. His wife wanted to buy a Hermes handbag. You told him that you had a personal relationship with the director of Hermes and could source such handbags. You sourced a Birkin bag for Mr. Irlam's wife. He wanted to purchase more bags and therefore paid you substantial sums of money.
32. You did not repay the money or provide the bags. Mr. Irlam has lost £24,500 by being involved in trying to source handbags from you. It was this victim who caused you to become bankrupt.
33. There are two other victims of your fraud over this period of time, Andor Farkas who lost £14,000 in connection with loans for luxury handbags and Naheem Akhtar who lost £840 when you failed to purchase for him a pair of designer shoes.
34. Both these victims were effectively friends of yours who you duped into believing you would provide them with what they wanted.
35. You had befriended Andor Farkas, who was a barman at one of the bars in Harrods Store in Knightbridge, when drinking in there as part of your façade as a wealthy young man.
36. Naheem Akhtar became a friend of yours over a period of years – you originally met at a social event but he clearly followed you

closely on social media. Your presence on social media reflected as you appeared in “real life” in that you portrayed yourself as a wealthy young millionaire involved in the luxury fashion industry.

37. You used the monies you had obtained from these friends and family and Christine Colbert to live a luxurious lifestyle. You had no job and no income but would use these monies you had defrauded to go on holidays, stay at expensive hotels and purchase designer goods for yourself. You spent over a million pounds over a relatively short period of time before you were made bankrupt.

38. You denied these offences until the start of the trial in June this year. You will now be dealt with for these offences.

THE INDECENT IMAGES OFFENCES.

39. As I have said your other criminal behaviour was revealed when the police were examining your phone which was recovered when you were arrested for the fraud offences. That phone revealed that you clearly have an interest in viewing the most vile indecent images of children.

40. Counts 1 to 6 on the indictment represent the images which were on your phone recovered from your arrest in March 2024. You had been downloading indecent images of children between 20th December 2020 to 27th February 2024 on that device an I phone which you would be carrying around with you all the time.

41. The overall number of images on the phone is represented by count 1 on that indictment – the total number of indecent images of children was 637. That does not however tell the full story of this criminality.

42. Count 2 on the indictment reveals that on that phone there were 274 category A indecent photographs of children. Category A images

are the worst type of child abuse images. 68 of those 274 images were moving images or videos – there for you to watch on your phone whenever you wanted.

43. A forensic analysis of your phone reveals that two of those videos are of an adult male raping a female child aged between 4 and 6. One of the still images depicts an adult male placing his penis into the mouth of baby.

44. These images show how children and babies are being abused. You, by downloading such images are perpetuating the trade in such images and the continued abuse of children.

45. Count 3 is a count dealing with category B images of children. One of these images can be related to an online conversation with another person which involved highly sexualised chat.

46. Count 4 is a count where you have downloaded less serious indecent images of children. Count 6 is a count dealing with your possession of prohibited images of children. Count 5 is a count dealing with your possession of 6 extreme pornographic images being images of a person performing sexual acts with animals a horse and a dog.

47. You had been arrested and interviewed before being bailed by the police. However, you came into possession of another I phone and whilst you were on bail for the fraud offences you were arrested at Macclesfield train station on 18th October 2024. You were in possession of another I phone which was seized by the police.

48. It seems your wish to view indecent images of children was not stopped by your earlier arrest because counts 7, 8 and 9 on this indictment relate to your downloading and possession of further images. On this occasion there were 7 images found on the phone mainly in category B.

49. Again these images included moving images. One of the videos lasted for 33 seconds and depicted a male child aged 6 or 7 masturbating in front of the camera at the direction of an adult.

50. You made “no comment” replies when interviewed about these matters and you were convicted by the jury after a trial in which you gave evidence.

IMPACT OF YOUR CRIMES

51. During this hearing we have heard something of the impact of your financial crimes. We have heard from one of your victims who read out her statement in Court. We have heard from statements read in court from others who suffered as a result of losing money to you.

52. The fraud offences have left victims with trust issues as they knew you as a friend or relative. Fraud in these circumstances is not just an economic crime it carries with it psychological damage to people.

53. Sadly the indecent images offences have numerous unnamed victims. All victims of child abuse all suffering at the hands of adults who are willing to abuse and photograph the abuse so that people like you can view the same.

MITIGATION

54. You prior to this offending were a man who was effectively of good character having only ever been fined by a court for motoring offences. You have had your own troubles.

55. I have been assisted by the helpful reports uploaded to the digital case system from a psychologist, Dr. Mosher and from the experienced probation officer, Wendy Lewin. I have also read CAHMS assessments from over 10 years ago.

56. The psychological report refers to you as meeting the criteria for Aspergers syndrome. This assessment was based upon there being strong evidence that you were highly self – centred and narcissistic. You show emotion but you do not understand it well.
57. I have rightly been referred to the guideline for offenders with mental disorders, developmental disorders and neurological impairments. Your diagnosis may have affected your ability to understand the effect of your behaviour upon your victims but it does not excuse it. It is likely to impact upon your time in prison.
58. With regard to the fraud indictment, the prosecution accept that the fraudulent activity was not necessarily fraudulent from the outset in that you may well have wished or hoped that you may have been able to re- pay some of the people you defrauded. You did indeed repay some monies at an early stage of your dealings with other people.
59. I am dealing with you now in the autumn of 2025 for offences which were committed some time ago and some of the offending started when you were a much younger person.
60. You will get some credit for your guilty pleas to the fraud offences and the fact that your victims did not have to give evidence and be cross-examined.
61. I will bear in mind the issue of totality of sentence but this is a case where it is appropriate to impose consecutive sentences as between the two indictments.

THE GUIDELINES

62. It is necessary to follow the sentencing council guidelines which exist for most of the offences upon which you have been convicted. I will structure the sentence by imposing the main sentence for the fraud

offences on count 1 which I will take as the lead offence on the fraud indictment, the count in connection with Hannah Jakes.

63. In reaching the appropriate sentence on the fraud indictment I will take into account all the offending to the 6 victims on that indictment and the full amount defrauded across the counts which, as I have said amounts to just under £200,000.00. I will order concurrent sentences on the other 5 counts.

64. In reaching the appropriate sentence on the Indecent Images Indictment I will structure the sentence by imposing the main sentence on count 1 which involves your possession of all the images on the first phone and includes the making of the category A images. I will impose concurrent sentences on the remaining 8 counts.

65. The relevant guideline for the fraud offences is therefore the fraud guideline. Your culpability is clearly high because of the large number of victims and the fact that the fraudulent activity was conducted over a sustained period of time.

66. There was also in this case an abuse of trust between you and certainly some of your victims. You had a close personal relationship with almost all of the victims.

67. There is, in this case a medium to high impact on one or more of your victims which means that consideration should be given to moving up a category or to go up in the category range. It is a case where I will go up within the category range taking into account the figure involved.

68. Harm falls within category 2 on the guideline as the value is between £100,000 and £500,000. I note the starting point for a category 2 offence is based on £300,000. The starting point, after a trial, for a category 2A offence is 5 years with a range of 3 – 6 years.

69.I will reflect the guideline when passing the concurrent sentences on the other counts on the indictment.

70.For the indecent images of children offence in count 1, which is possession of all the images including the category A images – the starting point, after a trial, is one of 12 months imprisonment with a range of 26 weeks to 3 years custody.

71.On the basis that Count 1 is the lead offence the other offending on the indictment is itself an aggravating feature. There is the further aggravating feature that counts 7 to 9 were committed whilst you were on bail for the fraud offences and after you had been interviewed for the offences in counts 1 to 6 on the indictment.

72.I have already commented upon the serious aggravating feature of the fact that a large number of the Category A images were moving images. I have also commented that one of images depicted a baby which is an aggravating feature of the overall offending. There are also a large number of different victims.

73.I will reflect the guideline when passing the concurrent sentences on the other counts on the indictment where there is a guideline. I will take into account the general guideline – overarching principles where there is no offence specific guideline.

74.I will reduce the overall headline sentences to take account of the mitigating features that I have referred to, the totality principle and the fact that this will be your first prison sentence. I mention again that I have had regard to the guideline for offenders with mental disorders, developmental disorders and neurological impairments.

75.I will afford you 10% credit, as I have said for your guilty pleas entered to the fraud indictment.

THE SENTENCE

THE FRAUD INDICTMENT

COUNT 1 – 5 years reduced to 4 ½ years for your plea

COUNT 2 – 2 years – concurrent allowing for 10% credit

COUNT 6 – 1 year - concurrent allowing for 10% credit

COUNT 7 – 18 months – concurrent allowing for 10% credit

COUNT 8 – 1 year – concurrent allowing for 10% credit

COUNT 9 – 4 months – concurrent allowing for 10% credit

THE TOTAL ON THIS INDICTMENT IS – 4 ½ years' imprisonment

THE INDECENT IMAGES INDICTMENT

COUNT 1 – 18 months imprisonment

COUNT 2 - 15 months - concurrent

COUNT 3 – 6 months concurrent

COUNT 4 – 1 month concurrent

COUNT 5 – 4 months concurrent

COUNT 6 – 4 months concurrent

COUNT 7 – 6 months concurrent

COUNT 8 – 4 months concurrent

COUNT 9 – 14 days concurrent

THE TOTAL ON THIS INDICTMENT IS 18 months imprisonment

76. The sentences will run consecutively on the two indictments so that the total sentence is 6 years. You will serve up to half that sentence

in prison less the time that you have served on remand before you are released. When you are released you will be on licence until the end of the sentence. If you breach your licence or any conditions of your licence you can be returned to custody to serve the remainder of your sentence.

HHJ Simon Berkson

6th October 2025