

Judge rejects 'not appropriate' release of grooming gang trial transcript

The transcript of the Judge Rook's sentencing remarks in the main trial of the Oxford gang, R v Dogar, Dogar, Jamil, Karrar and Karrar 2013 was [openly placed](#) on the Ministry of Justice website and paragraphs from it were read out by [Katie Lam MP](#) when she challenged minister Jess Philips recently. Oxford was comendible anyway in the level of reporting allowed and maintained by the editor and reporters of the Oxford Mail. But not every transcript is readily available, that MoJ website is labyrinthine, and therefore a group called Open Justice UK has been working on obtaining other transcripts available.

They argue that "crucial information" about the gangs is being hidden from victims, researchers, and the public, which they allege "blocks wider understanding and prevents meaningful reform."

Transcripts are expensive. They used to be typed up by the shorthand writer from her/his notes made in court. Now trials are tape recorded so a court reporter will audio type them, then they have to be checked by the Judge. You can imagine the cost can run into £thousands so they have had to fund raise.

Funds aside, the first hurdle is the Judge. From [GB News](#)

The group has requested the release of the full transcript from a [2016 trial at Bradford Crown Court](#) for twelve men who sexually exploited a teenage girl in Keighley.



The 12 men (top row left to right) Yasser Kabir, Faisal Khan, Israr Ali, Sufyan Ziarab, (second row) Tauqeer Hussain, Khalid Raja Mahmood, Saqib Younis, Hussain Sardar, (bottom row) Bilal Ziarab, Nasir Khan, Mohammed Akram and Zain Ali were all jailed at Bradford Crown Court

Members of the gang were jailed for the “terrible and heartless” abuse of the girl from the age of 13.

Adam Wren, who runs Open Justice UK, wrote to the court to request the transcripts for the case to “enable accurate public discussion” and to “facilitate informed public awareness of these serious matters.”

But his request was rejected by Judge Jonathan Rose, who said that he did not consider the release of the information to be “appropriate.”

Justice Rose (*error, Judge Rose is a circuit Judge – he is correctly His Honour Judge Rose – it’s good to be a pedant*) objected to the release “in the context of the public debate now taking place in general concerning cases such as this which are said to be part of a currency of offending in this city and elsewhere.” He said that to use the material amid wider public discussion “would in my view be contrary to the public interest.”

Adam Wren has a copy of the email [here](#)

Afternoon,

I have referred your correspondence to HHJ ROSE.

Please see HHJ ROSE directions.

Alison

I have considered this application and the response from the Prosecution and have determined that the request for transcription should be refused.

I do not consider that the release of such transcripts, which necessarily contain material personal to, in particular the complainants/victims involved is appropriate if the object is dissemination of such material in the context of the public debate now taking place in general concerning cases such as this which are said to be part of a currency of offending in this city and elsewhere. To use such material in the context of such a debate would in my view be contrary to the public interest, not least in preserving the

level of confidentiality afforded by Court proceedings.

That such proceedings are in open Court where any member of the public may enter and view the evidence given does not mean that it is right that such evidence be made available for the purpose for which this request is made.

In the circumstances I decline this application.

Jonathan Rose

Regards

Alison

There has been a [culture of secrecy around West Yorkshire and South Yorkshire](#) trials for a good 10 years. Not only are some cases not reported on they do not appear in the public lists announcing which court and at what time daily.

Wren said that crucial information had been “censored,” adding that the release of court proceedings had a clear public interest element.

Speaking on GB News, Wren explained his efforts to get the transcripts released. “I am from the area where these crimes happened and it’s something I have always cared about”, he said.

“In January, when this all kicked off again, I was reading the transcripts that were released and I realised a lot weren’t made public. The reason one of the reasons they weren’t made public is because they are so expensive to obtain.

“There was a case where one of the girls tried to obtain a transcript and she was quoted £7,000. I realised, ‘we can crowdfund the money for this’, we raised £100,000, an incredible amount of money. I was feeling very positive and we have put countless hours into this since. We’ve mapped something like 450 different defendants across 90 trials and we have unfortunately been blocked from a few cases, including the Old Bailey.

“By far the most explosive and egregious is this one from Bradford. It’s ridiculous.

“...we’ve acquired 11 sentencing remarks so far and we have 20 awaiting delivery to us that we’ve had accepted. Of those 11 we have acquired, I have given a bunch to MPs and investigative journalists and other people while we can’t quite release them yet because judges need to go through them, redact and such.

“One of the people who acquired them was Katie Lam who used those transcripts to make that incredible speech last week in the House of Commons. Jess Phillips’ response was, ‘we don’t need the national inquiry because this information is already public’.

"However, some of the information Katie raised was from these transcripts, they have not been public before. The idea that not getting them somehow harms the public interest when this information is not available and has been raised in the Commons is ridiculous."

Robbie Moore MP said: "Blocking the transcripts of these trials protects the system, not the public or my constituents who have a right to know how these horrific crimes were allowed to happen in our area."

He added: "In a single week in Bradford we've seen the courts block access to a grooming gang trial, claims that investigators were threatened with arrest, and local authority leaders still burying their heads in the sand. If this isn't a case for action I don't know what is."

The abuse, corruption and crime within the area administered by the City Of Bradford Metropolitan District Council will dwarf that of Rochdale, Rotherham and Telford once it comes out. Why else is it being covered up so?