

UK judge: No payout to cleared hacking defendant

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In this Tuesday, June 17, 2014 file photo, Charlie Brooks, husband of former News International chief executive Rebekah Brooks, arrives at the Central Criminal Court in London to face charges related to phone hacking. The judge in Britain's phone hacking trial says Wednesday Oct. 15, 2014, acquitted defendant Charles Brooks, cleared earlier this year of conspiring with his wife and others to hide evidence from police, should not be reimbursed for his legal costs because even though he was innocent, his behavior was stupid and suspicious. (AP Photo/Sang Tan, File)

(AP)—The judge in Britain's phone hacking trial said Wednesday that acquitted defendant Charles Brooks shouldn't be reimbursed for his legal costs because even though he was innocent, his behavior was "incredibly stupid" and suspicious.

Brooks was cleared earlier this year of conspiring with his wife, former News of the World editor Rebekah Brooks, and others to hide evidence from police. He said he had stashed material including his pornography collection out of embarrassment.

Brooks applied to the court for 500,000 pounds (\$800,000) plus tax in costs.

Rejecting the application, judge John Saunders said Brooks' "incredibly stupid" behavior in hiding material from detectives searching his property and refusing to speak to police "brought suspicion on himself and on others."

Brooks, a former racehorse trainer, said: "At least on a racecourse, when you back a winner the bookmakers pay you."

The [judge](#) also rejected a costs application from former News of the World managing editor Stuart Kuttner, who was cleared of conspiring to hack phones.

He said that in both cases "the defendants' conduct brought suspicion on themselves and misled the prosecution into thinking that the case against them was stronger than it was."

Kuttner, Rebekah and Charles Brooks and two others were acquitted in June following an eight-month trial triggered by revelations of wrongdoing at the now-defunct Rupert Murdoch-owned tabloid.

Former editor Andy Coulson was convicted of conspiring to eavesdrop on mobile-phone voicemails and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

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