



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Dominic Grieve QC
Attorney General's Office
20 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0NF

19th August 2013

Dear Attorney General,

This week Bournemouth Crown Court has awarded a suspended prison sentence to Robert Ian Finlay, a former official at Bournemouth Borough Council who was responsible for online safety for the Council's Children's Services and worked as an IT co-ordinator in a number of Bournemouth's schools. Mr Finlay was found guilty of downloading over 600 grotesque indecent images of children, including some at level 5 (the most serious).

I understand Judge Samuel Wiggs who presided over the case told Mr Finlay: "There is no public interest in sending you immediately to prison." I could not disagree more; this is a heinous crime in its own right - to then pursue employment which granted him greater access to children suggests a deeply concerning abuse of responsibility given to someone who is expected to support children - not prey on them.

I appreciate there is a recognised and important line that distances the functions of the judiciary and the legislative involvement in the law. However many constituents, including parents, are expressing grave concern at what appears to be an unduly lenient sentence. I therefore formally seek your advice on what can be done to ensure Mr Finlay receives the punishment appropriate for the crimes he has committed.

Yours sincerely,

Tobias Ellwood