

Lawyer of the week Jo Keddie

Jo Keddie, the head of employment at the law firm Forsters, acted for a Goldman Sachs executive who was awarded nearly £1.5 million by an employment tribunal. It ruled earlier that Jonathan Reeves was unfairly dismissed from his job at the investment bank after suffering sex discrimination while on parental leave after the birth of his child.

What were the biggest hurdles you had to overcome in this case?

Obtaining compelling evidence to support the “stigma” damages claim for reputational harm and career disruption caused by the litigation. The challenge was building the evidential picture to demonstrate the link. The tribunal accepted that despite winning, the claimant’s job

prospects had been severely affected. Another challenge was quantifying the loss in terms of future impact on career prospects and earnings.

What is the best decision you have taken as a lawyer?

To take a curious and courageous approach, and explore novel, interesting areas of the law.

Whom do you most admire in the law?

Baroness Hale, the former president of the Supreme Court. Her influence remains enormous. Her leadership in constitutional and

equality law, including the Gina Miller prorogation case, made her one of the most respected judges of modern times.



What is the funniest thing that has happened in your job?

When a judge presiding over a remote hearing during Covid had to compete with his chorus of chickens, demanding their daily corn in ever increasing decibels. I struggled to keep a straight face.

What are the best and worst elements of being a lawyer? The

best are making a difference, especially in difficult but deserving cases where the odds are against us — I describe it as “pushing water uphill”. The worst are delays in the tribunals system that make securing access to justice ever more challenging.

What law would you enact?

Reforms to the tribunals system, which is in urgent need of financial investment and priority attention.

What is your favourite drink? A glass of fizz. I reach for it on the good days to celebrate with the team and on the bad to remind myself not to take life too seriously.

Frances Gibb