



Council halts abuse claim battle

Doncaster Council has abandoned legal action over a £25,000 compensation order to a man who was returned to his abusive parents as a child.

Jake Pierce won a landmark judgment in the High Court in 2007, in the first case where a council was found at fault in failing to keep a child in care.

His legal team confirmed the authority had agreed to pay the compensation.

They argued the council was negligent in returning him in the late 1970s to his parents from temporary foster care.

The council lost its appeal last year over the High Court order and has now abandoned the last hurdle preventing the money being paid.

The council has not yet commented on the action.

'Long battle'

Mr Pierce, now 33, told BBC News: "This is very good news for me. It shows the council ignored the signs I was being neglected and abused."

His solicitor, Jonathan Wheeler, said: "The way that Doncaster have defended this case has wasted time and money.

"My client has been kept out of his compensation for 18 months and the legal costs involved have escalated out of all proportion to the sum of damages.

"This settlement is a vindication of my client's long battle to secure justice, and I hope it will act as a beacon of hope for many other victims of abuse who are struggling against well-funded defendants intent on thwarting their rightful claims."

The council, which last year had double the national average number of children on its protection register, is currently under investigation following the deaths of seven children in the area.

In January this year, a crisis meeting into the state of the town's child protection services heard that more than 300 youngsters were at risk of abuse in Doncaster.

The elected Mayor, Martin Winter, has also announced he will not be seeking re-election.

Story from BBC NEWS:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/england/south_yorkshire/8036868.stm

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