

# Kabir Sondhi

Junior Counsel - Under 15 Years

**CALLED 2010**

*"He is always well prepared, and has an encyclopedic knowledge of the law and procedure."*

**LEGAL 500, 2025**



**Kabir Sondhi prosecutes and defends across a full range of criminal work, with a specialism in white-collar, corporate, and financial crime. He is regularly instructed in cases alleging serious and complex offending, both alone and as a led junior.**

As well as being an experienced trial advocate, Kabir advises individuals, corporates, and prosecutorial bodies during investigations into offences such as fraud, money laundering, and bribery & corruption. He undertakes work in relation to asset restraint and recovery, including Restraint Order and Confiscation Order proceedings under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA).

Kabir is on the SFO Advocates B Panel, the CPS Specialist Fraud Panel (Level 3), the CPS General Crime Panel (Level 3), the CPS Serious Crime Panel (Level 3), and the CPS Proceeds of Crime Panel (Level 3). He is qualified to accept instructions directly from clients through the Bar Council's Public Access Scheme and is authorised to conduct litigation.

## Background and Expertise

## White-Collar, Corporate, and Financial Crime

Kabir has particular experience in complex white-collar and financial crime cases involving both corporates and individuals – most significantly in relation to allegations of bribery & corruption. His experience includes the provision of advice during the investigation and pre-charge stages of a case, as well as representation in court. Highlights include:

- Acting for the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) in a large-scale, multi-jurisdictional investigation / prosecution of a company for bribery & corruption offences, which culminated in a Deferred Prosecution Agreement (DPA).
- Undertaking an internal investigation into a company accused of misconduct in relation to a high-value public contract.
- Advising foreign lawyers with regard to the criminal liability of their clients in the UK for cross-frontier offending arising out of international business dealings.
- Prosecuting and defending multi-handed cases of complex fraud, cheating the revenue, fraudulent trading, and money laundering offences (prosecuted variously by the Crown Prosecution Service, Trading Standards, and HMRC).
- Advising suspects at pre-charge stage in relation to investigations for fraud and other offences, including advice on voluntary interviews and RIPA notices.
- Multiple years' experience working with SFO case teams on large-scale investigations into complex and multi-jurisdictional fraud and bribery & corruption offences.

## Asset Restraint and Recovery

Kabir provides advice and representation for defendants and prosecuting / investigating authorities in relation to all aspects of asset restraint and recovery, particularly under the provisions of the Proceeds of Crime Act. Highlights include:

- Prosecuting in high-value Confiscation Order proceedings involving third party claims and piercing the corporate veil.
- Advising alleged offenders in foreign jurisdictions on the restraint of their assets in the UK.
- Advising on charges for contempt of court for alleged breaches of Restraint Orders.

## General Crime

Kabir prosecutes and defends across a diverse range of general criminal matters, including those involving allegations of serious and organised offending, complicated legal and factual issues, and sensitive subject matter. Highlights include:

- Prosecuting and defending in cases of murder, kidnapping, false imprisonment, blackmail,

and firearms offences involving OCGs, gang activity and “county lines” offending.

- Prosecuting and defending in cases involving restricted intelligence material, public interest immunity (PII) disclosure decisions, assisting offenders, and other sensitive issues.
- Prosecuting and defending in large-scale drugs importation cases, including those involving encrypted communications systems.
- Prosecuting protest cases involving novel law and detailed submissions on ECHR rights.
- Prosecuting and defending in cases involving vulnerable witnesses and defendants, including trials for sexual offences.
- Advising defendants on entrapment in drugs and child sex cases.

### Civil Law and Judicial Review

In addition to criminal work, Kabir has experience in discrete areas of civil law and judicial review, including applications for injunctions before the High Court and actions for breach of privacy and misuse of confidential information.

### Miscellaneous

Prior to practice, Kabir worked in the judicial division of the International Criminal Court as intern to the lead judge in the case of Prosecutor v. Lubanga (the first ever completed trial at the ICC), during which he assisted in the preparation of the final judgment. He has experience of cases at the ICC and maintains an interest in international criminal law.

As a pupil, Kabir assisted the prosecution team in the case of R v. Dobson and Norris (the trial for the murder of Stephen Lawrence).

## Notable Cases

### Bribery and Corruption

#### **Operation A, ongoing**

Instructed by the SFO in an investigation into bribery & corruption offences committed by a UK company and its officers in relation to its oil trading operations across the world.

#### **Re Company A, 2023**

Advised on the potential liability of four companies and an individual under the provisions of the Bribery Act for suspected instances of bribery committed by associated persons in Europe. The advice involved complex jurisdictional matters and the consideration of both individual and corporate liability.

### **SFO v Glencore Plc, 2022**

Instructed to assist the SFO case team and counsel in the prosecution and sentence of the defendant company for bribery & corruption offences, resulting in a fine of over £182m and confiscation of over £93m.

### **SFO v Amec Foster Wheeler Energy Limited, 2018-2021**

Junior counsel (led by two KCs) instructed by the SFO in the investigation / prosecution of bribery & corruption offences relating to the use of corrupt agents in the oil and gas sectors. The offences spanned from 1996 to 2014 and occurred across several jurisdictions (Brazil, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, and Saudi Arabia). The case culminated in a DPA, with the financial penalty and costs totalling £103m in the UK forming part of a \$177m global settlement with the UK, US, and Brazilian authorities.

Southwark Crown Court

### **Operation P, 2016-2020**

Evidence review counsel for the SFO case team in the investigation / prosecution of the Unaoil and SBM bribery & corruption case, in which the defendants were alleged to have conspired to pay bribes in order to win lucrative contracts in the oil and gas sectors in post-war Iraq.

This is a test line

[Bribery and Corruption](#)

Civil

### **Project D, 2021-2022**

Devised and undertook LPP and sensitive material reviews of computer material as part of a potential civil action by a currency exchange company against a former executive for breach of contract and misuse of confidential information.

### **EJF v MC, 2013**

Application to the High Court for an injunction on behalf of a claimant bringing an action for breach

of privacy, misuse of confidential information, and civil harassment by way of publications over the internet from a foreign jurisdiction.

High Court

## Confiscation and Restraint

### **R v X, ongoing**

Instructed to advise the CPS Proceeds of Crime Division on contempt of court proceedings for breaches of a restraint order imposed on the alleged offender for serious offences of fraud by abuse of position.

### **R v DC and Others, 2024**

Instructed alone to prosecute confiscation proceedings against five defendants arising out of convictions for conspiracy to commit fraud and money laundering offences valued at around £1.6m.

Wood Green Crown Court

### **R v PD, 2023**

Advised a client in restraint order proceedings accused of large-scale metals theft from a Ministry of Defence site and conversion / laundering of the proceeds. The client had left the jurisdiction but proceedings against their assets in the UK continued in their absence.

### **R v X, 2023**

Advised an alleged offender outside the jurisdiction on variation of a Restraint Order against their assets in the UK.

### **R v X, 2023**

Advised the prosecution on charges for contempt of court arising out of alleged breaches of a Restraint Order by an alleged offender under investigation for fraud offences.

### **Operation B, 2020 - 2023**

Led junior for the prosecution in multi-handed confiscation proceedings following the conviction of the defendants for an offence of conspiracy to cheat the revenue valued at over £34m. The case involved nuanced issues under the Proceeds of Crime Act, including the assertion of rights over property by third parties and piercing the corporate veil.

Southwark Crown Court

### **R v X, 2019**

Advised an alleged offender in respect of Restraint Order proceedings against them as part of an HMRC investigation into fraudulent evasion of VAT, fraud, and money laundering offences valued at around £3m. Restrained assets included high-value race cars.

### **R v AGR, 2015 to 2018**

Represented the former treasurer of a historic London club at sentence and in subsequent protracted confiscation (and enforcement) proceedings after he had pleaded guilty to theft of more than £500,000 from his employers. The case was complicated by arguments over the valuation and realisation of a pension fund for the purposes of making a Confiscation Order.

Westminster Magistrates' Court and Southwark Crown Court

#### [Confiscation and Restraint](#)

Drugs

### **R v X, 2024**

Defended in a multi-handed case involving alleged conspiracies to import over 100kg of cocaine into the UK from Europe and the Caribbean. The case involved extensive Encrochat and other communications evidence.

Winchester Crown Court

### **R v X, 2023**

Prosecuted a defendant for an attempt to smuggle more than 20kg of heroin into the UK via Heathrow Airport. The case involved assisting offender considerations.

Isleworth Crown Court

#### [Drugs](#)

### **R v X and Y, ongoing**

Instructed by the CPS Serious Economic, Organised Crime and International Directorate (SEOCID) to prosecute in a case involving an organised and substantial frauds against HMRC and associated offences of laundering the proceeds. The case includes legacy offences relating to the alleged abuse of Covid assistance provisions.

Southwark Crown Court

### **Operation G, 2022**

Disclosure counsel for an SFO case team preparing a high-profile trial for fraud offences under a government contract.

### **Project H, 2021**

Instructed in the internal investigation of a major UK company for potential misconduct – alleged fraudulent activity valued at around £25m – relating to a significant public sector contract.

### **Re G, 2021**

Advised American lawyers with regard to the potential liability of their client – a USA based executive of a UK company – for criminal offences in England and Wales arising out of misrepresentations about project investments they had allegedly been ordered to make.

### **R v DC and Others, 2021-2023**

Led junior for the prosecution in a seven-handed case involving conspiracy to commit fraud on bookmakers (valued around £1.6m) and associated money laundering offences, carried out by an Organised Crime Group.

Wood Green Crown Court

### **Operation V, 2019-2021**

Disclosure counsel for an SFO case team investigating potential fraud, money laundering, and other financial offences committed by the directors of a UK based ethical investments company operating in the UK and Central America.

### **R v SD, 2020**

Led junior for a defendant in a multi-handed trial for conspiracy to handle stolen goods and various money laundering offences relating to high value watches and other luxury items worth over £2m.

Southwark Crown Court

### **R v AS, 2019**

Junior alone for a defendant in a multi-handed trial (prosecuted by KC and junior) involving an industrial-scale conspiracy to commit fraud, fraudulent trading, and associated money laundering offences relating to the mis-selling of energy contracts and refunds. The client was acquitted on a submission of no case to answer after 11 weeks of evidence.

Nottingham Crown Court

### **R v JA, 2018**

Led junior for a defendant in one of a series of trials for conspiracy to commit fraud relating to a complex, and organised “cash for crash” insurance scam. The conspiracy was alleged to have involved 19 defendants and been worth several million pounds. The trial involved multiple cutthroat defences and the cross-examination of several professional prosecution witnesses, including solicitors and doctors, implicating them in the conspiracy. The client was one of only two defendants to be acquitted.

St Albans Crown Court

### **R v MD, 2016**

Led junior for a defendant in a multi-handed trial for cheating the revenue and associated money laundering offences relating to a Gift Aid fraud worth over £5m, prosecuted by HMRC. The case involved significant quantities of evidence obtained under international letters of request and was complicated by the fact that the defendant was advancing a cutthroat defence against their own father and brother. The client was the only defendant acquitted of all charges at trial.

Southwark Crown Court

### **R v IS, 2016-2019**

Represented the manager of a car sales business charged (alongside the company) with offences of fraud and breaches of the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading regulations, in relation to the alleged “clocking” of imported vehicles valued at around £127,000. Negotiated a plea agreement to a lesser offence of failure of professional due diligence and successfully argued against the imposition of a Confiscation Order after a protracted period of litigation.



## Murder and Manslaughter

### **R v X, ongoing**

Junior (led by KC) representing a vulnerable defendant charged with the alleged murder of a friend by beating him to death whilst intoxicated.

Wood Green Crown Court

### **R v RCM, 2018**

Junior (led by KC) for a defendant in a multi-handed joint enterprise murder and wounding trial involving rival groups of drug dealers running “county lines” operations, in which complicated issues of bad character arose surrounding gang affiliation and “drill” music.

Reading Crown Court

### **R v JZ, 2017**

Junior (led by KC) for a defendant in a multi-handed joint enterprise murder involving cutthroat defences by all defendants. The case included the cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses / co-defendants who had allegedly been subject to “cuckooing” by drug dealers.

St Albans Crown Court

### **R v MA, 2014**

Assisted KC and junior counsel representing the second defendant in the trial for the murder of soldier Lee Rigby outside Woolwich Barracks.

Central Criminal Court

## **R v BW, 2012**

Prosecution junior in a trial for murder. The defendant was eventually convicted of manslaughter after punching the victim to the floor outside a kebab shop, causing fatal brain injuries.

Inner London Crown Court

### [Murder and Manslaughter](#)

Rape and Sexual Offences

## **R v X, 2022**

Advised and represented a defendant charged with possession of prohibited images of children in the form of cartoons and other computer-generated images.

Inner London Crown Court

## **R v X, 2019**

Represented a defendant (a convicted rapist subject to section 38 / 41 hospital orders) at a trial for breaches of a highly restrictive Sexual Harm Prevention Order. The defendant suffered from paranoid schizophrenia and a psychopathic anti-social personality disorder. The complainant was herself vulnerable due to mental health problems. Both required intermediaries.

Woolwich Crown Court

## **R v X, 2017**

Represented a defendant at plea and sentence for arranging the rape of a child under 13 years old with an undercover police officer. The case involved the provision of detailed written advice on entrapment.

Kingston Crown Court

## **R v X, 2015**

Represented a youth at trial in the Crown Court charged with inciting an 11 year old girl to engage in sexual activity / pornography online. The defendant, by the age of 16, already had previous convictions for rape and sexual assault of children. A plea deal was agreed and the defendant was eventually sentenced to a Youth Rehabilitation Order.

Oxford Crown Court

## **R v X, 2012**

Prosecution junior in a trial (part of Operation C.) for child sex offences arising out the Telford child sexual exploitation ring.

Wolverhampton Crown Court

### [Rape and Sexual Offences](#)

Special Casework

## **R v SB, 2023**

Prosecuted a trans-rights activist for encouraging offences of battery against “Terfs” during a speech at a march.

City of London Magistrates’ Court

### **Operation B, 2015-2016**

Prosecuted a series of single and multi-handed trials for offences arising out the “Occupy Parliament” protests in London. Several of the cases involved detailed legal arguments over the defendants’ rights to protest, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly under the ECHR.

Westminster Magistrates’ Court and Woolwich Crown Court

### **R v X, 2015**

Prosecuted a terror suspect for offences relating to a road traffic collision. The case involved working with officers from the Metropolitan Police’s Counter-Terror Unit and overseeing a sensitive disclosure exercise including surveillance material.

Highbury Corner Magistrates’ Court and Blackfriars Crown Court

### **R v X, 2014**

Prosecuted a terror suspect for offences relating to an anti-Islam protest by a right-wing group and subsequent retaliation by the associates of a high-profile extremist Islamist preacher.

Westminster Magistrates’ Court

## **Violence**

### **R v AO, 2022-2023**

Junior (led by KC) for a defendant charged with kidnap, false imprisonment, and blackmail offences relating to the alleged abduction, torture, and ransom of two individuals by a criminal gang operating between Wales and the Southeast of England.

Cardiff Crown Court

### **R v DD, 2018**

Led junior for a defendant in a trial for armed robbery and murder. The defendant was charged with the armed robbery of the co-defendant, who was himself charged on the indictment with murder of the defendant's friend, arising out of a "drug robbery gone wrong". Significant issues arose with regard to severance, hearsay, and bad character evidence.

St Albans Crown Court

[Violence](#)

## Achievements

### Associated Work

- Scholarship Committee, Gray's Inn
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Gray's Inn
- Professional Ethics trainer, Gray's Inn
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion trainer, Gray's Inn
- Trustee of the Saintbury Trust
- Fraud Lawyers' Association Committee

### Memberships

- Fraud Lawyers' Association (FLA)
- Criminal Bar Association
- Honourable Society of Gray's Inn
- South Eastern Circuit

### Appointments

- SFO Prosecution Advocates Panel (B Panel)
- CPS Specialist Fraud Panel (Level 3)
- CPS Serious Crime Panel (Level 3)
- CPS General Crime Panel (Level 3)
- CPS Proceeds of Crime Panel (Level 3)
- Direct Access / Public Access qualified – authorised to conduct litigation

### Publications

- Co-author of “How Fraudsters Have Abused the UK’s Pandemic Relief Efforts” – Law 360 (May 2021)
- Co-author of “Corporate Criminal Liability: Is it Time for an Overhaul” – Law.com (April 2021)
- Contributor to “Cyber Crime, Law and Practice” – Wildy, Simmonds & Hill (ISBN 9780854901364) (2014)

## Awards

- Graham Challis European Scholarship, Gray’s Inn
- The Steen Scholarship, Gray’s Inn
- David Karmel Scholarship, Gray’s Inn

## Education

- Bar Vocational Course (BVC) - BPP Holborn (2010)
- Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) - City University (2009)
- MA Philosophy - Birkbeck College London (2008)
- BA (Hons.) Philosophy - King’s College London (2007)

## Activities and Interests

- Kabir is a keen, albeit not particularly accomplished, guitar player and singer. He is a general music fan – his musical tastes range from opera to punk – and he is a massive fan of The Smiths.