



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

Sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Kerr

The Queen

v.

Ryan Cashin

Giovanni Lawrence

Marquis Richards

Manchester Crown Court

27 May 2022

1. Please all remain seated for the moment. The court is sitting today to sentence the three defendants. At the trial held in this court last month they were convicted by the jury of the murder, on 9 September 2021, of Rhamero West.
2. Rhamero was aged just 16 when he was brutally stabbed outside a house in the Old Trafford area. He died of his injuries in hospital a short time later. His mother, Kelly Brown, has spoken movingly in her statement of the unending pain and suffering she and her family must now endure.
3. She has had counselling and medication. She is unable to work. She had to relive her son's last moments, partly captured on film, during the trial. She is haunted by the image of Rhamero fleeing and trying desperately to escape from his attackers. She can find no peace. Rhamero's other family members are similarly affected.
4. In determining the sentences for Rhamero's murder, I must take into account relevant provisions in the Sentencing Act 2020, also known as the sentencing code; in the guideline on sentencing children and young people; and the cases cited by counsel for the prosecution and the defence in their helpful notes.
5. I am required by law to sentence you, Ryan Cashin and Giovanni Lawrence, to custody for life; and you, Marquis Richards, to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure. And I must decide the minimum term you must each serve before you can apply to the Parole Board to be considered for release.

6. A minimum term is not the same as an ordinary sentence of imprisonment, where a defendant serves only half or two thirds of it before being released on license. A minimum term is the time that must be served before the case may be referred to the Parole Board for consideration of your release on license.
7. Whether or not you are released after the minimum term has been served will be for the Parole Board to consider at the end of that term. The Parole Board will not decide that you can be released unless it is satisfied that you are not a risk to the public, and are ready for release.
8. If you are released at that time, or any later time, it will be on license with conditions attached; and you may be recalled to continue serving your life sentence if you breach any license conditions that are imposed upon you.

Ryan Cashin

9. You were born in August 2002 and are now 19. You had already turned 19 when you stabbed Rhamero West and killed him. You have one previous conviction for an offence of aggravated vehicle taking in September 2019, for which you received a 12 month referral order. You have no previous conviction for any offence of violence.
10. Your sentence, custody for life, is fixed by law. To decide the minimum term you will serve, I must consider all the circumstances of your case. I will start with your role in Rhamero's murder. It was a joint enterprise in which all three of you took part, but it was you who inflicted the fatal knife wounds.
11. Contrary to your untruthful evidence to the jury, you stayed with your associates and co-accused in the Millennium Park area in the minutes before the stabbing. You did not hear a bang and run away from the scene, as you tried to pretend you did when you gave evidence.
12. You were a passenger, probably in the stolen 3 series BMW car, when the blue BMW driven by Rhamero West was located by your group. Marquis Richards leaned out of the window of the stolen 1 series BMW and alerted those in the other car, the 3 series, to the presence of Rhamero's group.
13. I am in no doubt that you and your friends intended serious harm to Rhamero and his friends and lost no time in seeking to inflict that harm upon them. I am sure that you are, as the jury's verdict demonstrates, the man in the black jacket captured on film running along Darnley Street, taking part in the chase led by Marquis Richards.
14. On Norton Street, you were captured on film taking from Marquis Richards the long bladed knife seen in the images, wielded until then by him - the murder weapon. You took that weapon from Marquis Richards, intending to use it on Rhamero or members of his group and intending to cause, at least, really serious bodily harm.

15. Then, you chased down Rhamero and stabbed him several times, shouting “Arrr, got you”; in broad daylight and in a public place, outside a house on a residential street, witnessed by at least one member of the public. There were four wounds; by far the most serious and the one that proved fatal, was to the back of his left thigh. Rhamero’s artery was severed and the loss of blood was too much.
16. The doctor and paramedics did all they could to save him, but could not. I do not find that you intended to kill him. I accept that the stab wounds were delivered with “moderate” rather than “severe” force and that they were not aimed at his heart or neck. I will sentence you on the basis that you intended him really serious harm.
17. After the stabbing, you organised a taxi to get you and the others away from the scene. You used the name Tom, which helped to identify you as one of the perpetrators since you had used that alias before with the same taxi company. The stolen BMWs were abandoned or moved away. You then changed into a different jacket, later recovered by police, and went on the run the next day, taking over a thousand pounds in cash.
18. The starting point for determining the minimum term in your case is 25 years, since you took the knife to the scene of the stabbing and used it on your victim. I am sure that you took it from Marquis Richards intending to use it to stab Rhamero or others in his group. It was you that struck the fatal blows to him.
19. I have taken careful note of the submissions of your counsel about your age and level of maturity. The law provides very different starting points in your case, 25 years, and Marquis Richards’ case, 12 years, because of what is in this case a relatively small difference in age. That must not lead to an unfairly wide difference in your minimum term and his. The sentencing code provisions must not be applied mechanically.
20. I do not find that any of the statutory aggravating features was present in this case. The Crown did not expressly rely on any of them. However, there are serious non-statutory aggravating features.
21. The attack was very public. It lasted about five minutes. It was dangerous and frightening for other road users. It involved reckless driving and damage to vehicles. The pursuit on foot was also carried out in public and witnessed by alarmed residents. The stabbing itself was done in public, in a residential street, with residents nearby and one witness who had a partial view of the stabbing itself.
22. In mitigation, I accept that there was no intent to kill; that the attack was not premeditated; and that you were still very young when you committed the offence. There should not be a sudden steep escalation of the minimum term once you turn 18. You had, in fact, just turned 19 when you committed the murder. Your single previous conviction is not for an offence of violence and is of little relevance.

23. Stand up please. For the murder of Rhamero West, the sentence of the court is custody for life. The minimum term in your case would be 24 years. However, the 223 days you have already spent in custody should be included. So the minimum term is 24 years, less 223 days, which comes to 23 years and 142 days. That is 23 years and a little under 5 months. Sit down please, while I deal with your co-accused.

Giovanni Lawrence

24. You were born in February 2002 and are now 20 years old. You were 19 when you took your part in the murder of Rhamero West but had turned 20 by the time the jury convicted you. You had received community orders for previous offending, not involving violence. You were convicted in September 2020 of dangerous driving and ancillary offences and, in 2021, of three offences of handling stolen goods.
25. Your sentence for the murder of Rhamero West is fixed by law: custody for life. To decide on the appropriate minimum term, I must consider all the circumstances of your case. I will start with your role in Rhamero's murder. I do not hold it against you that you chose not to give evidence at the trial. That was your right. In your case, I am sure of the following.
26. First, you did not sell your phone to Marquis Richards. You must have hoped that his story about buying your phone for £100 would be believed, so that cell site evidence linking your phone to vehicle movements connected to the murder would not incriminate you. You hoped that evidence from your witness, Jadlon Williams, would support that untruth, whether or not Mr Williams' evidence was true.
27. Next, I am completely satisfied that you drove the 1 series BMW during the pursuit of the blue BMW driven by Rhamero West. Your DNA was found on the driver's indicator control arm. You were part of the joint enterprise to chase down and inflict, at least, really serious harm to Rhamero or members of his group.
28. I am also sure, beyond reasonable doubt, that you knew Marquis Richards had a knife with him and that the three of you intended that it should be used to inflict really serious harm to Rhamero or his friends. Marquis Richards was in the 1 series car driven by you, from which he emerged, openly wielding the knife and using it to attack the window of the blue BMW.
29. After that car was incapacitated having hit first another vehicle and then a tree, you continued driving the 1 series, at speed, in the side streets, Darnley Street and Norton Street, helping and providing vehicle back up for Marquis Richards, Ryan Cashin and at least one other person, who were pursuing Rhamero West's group on foot.
30. After the stabbing, by driving one of the BMW cars you helped the others to flee from the scene. You did not, I accept, personally strike a blow or carry the murder weapon but you drove one of the two cars that

were a critical part of the joint enterprise. You were as much part of it as your two co-accused.

31. A knife was taken to the scene and used to stab Rhamero West. It was the combined intention of you and your two co-accused that it should be used as a weapon in the attack on Rhamero or his group. The starting point for the minimum term in your case is therefore 25 years. The Crown does not rely specifically on any statutory aggravating features.
32. However, a serious non-statutory aggravating feature is that you drove the 1 series BMW recklessly, causing danger to people and damage to vehicles, spreading fear and alarm to members of the public, first in heavy traffic on the main road and then at high speed through side streets. Your conviction for dangerous driving is therefore relevant.
33. In mitigation, you are still a young man and were 19 when you took part in Rhamero's murder. You did not yourself wield any weapon or take part in the actual stabbing or in the pursuit on foot, though you helped the others flee the scene by driving the 1 series BMW away afterwards.
34. Stand up please. For the murder of Rhamero West, the sentence of the court is custody for life. The minimum term in your case would be 21 years. But in my judgment, the 132 days you have already spent in custody should be included, since that is time you have already served in connection with the crime of which you have since been convicted.
35. The minimum term in your case will therefore be 21 years, less 132 days, which comes to 20 years and 233 days, which is 20 years and a little under 8 months. Please sit down.

Marquis Richards

36. You were born in February 2005 and are now 17. You were 16 when you took part in the murder of Rhamero West and 17 when the jury convicted you. You were convicted in April 2021 of two attempted burglaries, one burglary, all involving residential premises, possessing cannabis and going equipped for theft. You were subject to a 12 month referral order at the time of the murder.
37. The sentence in your case is fixed by law. It is to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure. That is the mandatory sentence for any child or young person found guilty of murder. To decide on the minimum term you will serve, I must examine all the circumstances of your case. I will begin with your role in Rhamero's death.
38. I am sure of the following. First, you lied about buying Giovanni Lawrence's phone, to try to protect him. You did not buy his phone. When the two stolen BMWs arrived in the Millennium Park area, in convoy, you were in the 1 series BMW. You leaned out of the front passenger window and gestured towards the 3 series to attract the attention of its occupants.

39. Whether or not you went to buy cannabis at the edge of the park, your gesture was one informing your associates of the presence of Rhamero and his friends and confirming hostile intent towards them. You got out of the 1 series BMW brandishing a long bladed knife and banged on the window of the blue BMW, with Rhamero and his friends inside, using the knife to attack the car window. That knife was the murder weapon.
40. You struck the window of the car with the knife several times, then ran back and got in the 1 series BMW again. You were in that car during the short but furious car chase which ended with the blue BMW colliding with another car and then a tree. Other vehicles were damaged including the one you were in. You then got out of the car again.
41. About five minutes before Rhamero was stabbed, you ran carrying the murder weapon in pursuit of him and his group. Once on Darnley St, you paused, turned round and gestured to your friends coming up behind you. You were leading the chase and leading the attack on Rhamero's group.
42. On Norton Street, you passed the knife to Ryan Cashin, or he took it from you. I am sure you knew what Ryan Cashin intended to do with it. However, I do not find that he intended, or that you thought he intended that Rhamero or any other victim should die. I will sentence you on the basis that you and the others intended to do him really serious harm.
43. After the stabbing, you were one of the party that drove away in the two BMWs and later got in the taxi with Ryan Cashin and others. You knew full well that the stabbing had taken place. You made up a false story in your evidence to the jury that it was at about this time that you gave Giovanni Lawrence £100 in payment for his phone.
44. The starting point for the court's consideration of the minimum term in your case is 12 years, because you were aged under 18 when your offence was committed; but it is only the starting point, not the end point. The provisions of the sentencing code must not be applied mechanically.
45. The aggravating features in your case are grave. You signalled the start of the operation to attack Rhamero's group. You brandished the knife and publicly attacked the blue BMW with it, in full view of other motorists.
46. You then led the charge during the pursuit on foot, still carrying the knife, the murder weapon. You were at the front of your group, closest to Rhamero who was at the back of his. You paused for your friends to catch you up. You gave possession of the murder weapon to Ryan Cashin, knowing exactly what he was planning to do with it.
47. These aggravating features point in the direction of a minimum term considerably higher than the statutory starting point of 12 years, despite your young age and vulnerability, which I will consider next. I have carefully considered the reports of Dr Saima Latif and Dr Sanjay Mody,

prepared for trial, and the more recent pre-sentence report prepared by Ms Michelle Gregson of the probation service.

48. The latter is the most helpful document because it examines your state after rather than before being convicted of the murder. It is thorough and well prepared. I am very grateful for it. Ms Gregson saw you four times, also met your mother and spoke by telephone to your father. In your account to her, you gave the same version of events as you gave to the jury in your evidence in court.
49. There is a history of strife and domestic violence in your family. Your father has spent time in prison. You have often been absent from home, since the age of 14. There is evidence that you have been exploited by older males encouraging you to commit crime by selling class A drugs, since the age of 14. You have had to deal with bereavements and traumas, called adverse child experiences (ACEs) in the report.
50. The probation officer assesses you as having misplaced loyalty to your older friends, combined with the false bravado not uncommon in male child criminals. You may have autistic spectrum disorder, though this is not clearly established. You are assessed as developmentally and emotionally immature.
51. The author of the pre-sentence report records that you did demonstrate something like a level of remorse during her interviews with you, but dimly, because you continued to deny your guilt to her and do not yet accept fully your role in the murder.
52. I accept your counsel's submission that the incident was not planned beforehand and was more or less spontaneous; that you were two to three years younger than the other two defendants; that you are very vulnerable; that your previous convictions are not for offences of violence and are not relevant; and that you intended Rhamero or members of his group to be seriously harmed but not killed.
53. I take all these points into account, balancing the aggravating and mitigating features. Stand up please. For the murder of Rhamero West, the sentence of the court is that you be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure. The minimum term you would serve would be one of 18 years.
54. However, the 252 days you have already spent in custody should be included since that is time you have served after being arrested for this crime. So I am going to reduce what would otherwise be the term by 252 days. That produces a minimum term of 17 years and 113 days, which is 17 years plus a little under 4 months.
55. That concludes the sentencing decision of the court. Any statutory charges and any minor arithmetical error in the calculations above, can be dealt with administratively.