



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

The Queen

-v-

Clayton Barker

Charlie Chandler

Ben Potter

Jamie Chandler

Earl Bevens

Sentencing Remarks of Mr Justice Spencer

Luton Crown Court

Wednesday 6th January 2021

1. Clayton Barker, Charlie Chandler, Ben Potter, Jamie Chandler and Earl Bevens, I have to sentence each of you for two offences of murder and two offences of wounding with intent, all committed within the space of a few minutes around midnight on Saturday 19th October 2019. Two of your victims were stabbed to death. The other two were stabbed but survived. It is a dreadfully serious case. You Earl Bevens pleaded guilty to all these offences on the first day of the trial, before the jury was sworn. The other four of you were convicted by the jury after a trial lasting seven weeks.
2. The five of you gate-crashed a 17th birthday party at a house in Milton Keynes, armed with knives and machetes, and with masks to conceal your identity. You had been tipped off that members of the rival M4 gang were at the party and you travelled there together by taxi. Four of you climbed over the fence into the back garden and burst

into the house through the conservatory. The fifth remained outside, to intercept anyone who ran out of the house. Ben Gilham-Rice was stabbed to death in the living room whilst the party was in full flow, in the presence of several teenage boys and girls. Two other victims were stabbed in the house but fortunately not fatally. Dom Ansah managed to run out of the house but was chased, eventually cornered, and brutally and mercilessly stabbed some 35 times. He died in hospital three hours later.

3. For murder there is only one sentence for an adult: imprisonment for life. That is the sentence which I shall pass upon you, Charlie Chandler and you Earl Bevans. You are both over 21 years of age. Because you, Clayton Barker, are still only 20 years of age, the sentence in your case has to be expressed as custody for life. Because you Ben Potter, and you Jamie Chandler, were under 18 years of age when you committed these murders, the sentence in your case has to be expressed as detention during Her Majesty's pleasure. But make no mistake, the effect of the sentence for each of you will be the same. Each of you will remain in custody for very many years to come until you have served the minimum term which I am obliged by law to fix in the case of each of you; thereafter you will remain in custody until such time as the Parole Board considers it safe to release you. You will then remain on licence for the rest of your life, liable to be recalled to prison if you commit any further offence or breach the conditions of your licence.
4. No sentence I pass can reflect the depth of the grief suffered by the families of the two young men whose lives you took. The families have sat throughout the seven weeks of this trial with enormous dignity as they tried to understand and come to terms with the horrifying brutality of the events of that fateful night. In their moving personal statements read to the court they have explained the devastating impact of their loss. Ben Gilham-Rice and Dom Ansah were both only 17 years old, with their lives ahead of them. For the families the loss of their beloved sons is in a very real sense a life sentence.
5. The all-too-familiar background to these senseless and tragic killings was rivalry between gangs of young men, and the culture of violence and knives, promoted on social media. Sadly, Dom Ansah was himself caught up in that gang culture, as a leading member of M4. And it was through his association with Dom Ansah, albeit not

a member of the gang himself, that Ben Gilham-Rice was at the party that night with M4 gang members. But the violence that night escalated way beyond anything that had gone before.

6. You Clayton Barker, Ben Potter and Jamie Chandler were enthusiastic members of the rival B3 gang. You Charlie Chandler and Earl Bevans were not members of B3, but you were closely associated with those who were, and willing to lend your support that night in this revenge attack as part of the ongoing feud.
7. In September 2017, you Ben Potter were subjected at the age of 14 to a vicious and degrading assault at the hands of members of the M4 gang, including Dom Ansah. You were beaten and stripped. A video clip of you naked and bloodied was widely shared on social media. I have no doubt that this episode traumatised you deeply and left you with a sense of understandable grievance.
8. In April 2019, just six months before these murders, you Jamie Chandler were the victim of gang violence when you were attacked in broad daylight and stabbed in the lower back. You had no choice but to report the matter to the police, who had already been called to the scene, but you were unable or unwilling to identify your attackers. It is plain that those responsible were members of M4. The widely circulating belief aired on social media was, rightly or wrongly, that Dom Ansah was responsible.
9. I have no doubt that these two incidents fuelled the desire on the part of members of B3 to have their revenge on members of M4 if and when a suitable opportunity arose. That is undoubtedly the background to these horrific offences.
10. In fixing the minimum term which each of you must serve before you are eligible even to be considered for release by the Parole Board, I am required to take into account the seriousness of these two offences of murder and the two associated offences of wounding with intent. I am required to have regard to the general principles set out in Schedule 21 to the Criminal Justice Act 2003, now re-enacted in Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020. In your case Earl Bevans, because you were convicted before 1st December 2020, the 2003 Act applies. In the case of the other four of you, because you were convicted after that date, the 2020 Act applies. There is no material difference in the provisions of the two statutes.

11. In the case of the three adult defendants it is common ground that because you have been convicted of two murders committed after you had attained the age of 18, the starting point set by parliament for your minimum term is 30 years, which is the equivalent of a determinate sentence of 60 years. In the case of the two juvenile defendants, the starting point set by parliament for your minimum term irrespective of the number of murders is 12 years, the equivalent of a determinate sentence of 24 years. It is rightly conceded on your behalf that there must be a significant uplift from the starting point of 12 years to reflect the fact that you are being sentenced for two murders.
12. Before turning to the aggravating and mitigating factors requiring departure from the starting points set by Parliament, and to the individual circumstances of each of you, it is necessary for me to set out briefly my findings of fact on the evidence.
13. I have no doubt that it was you, Clayton Barker, who received the tip off that members of M4 were at the party. That message came late in the evening, shortly after 11pm. You were then at Charlie Chandler's flat, 23 Fitzwilliam Street. Directly or indirectly contact was made with Jamie Chandler and Ben Potter who were at Jamie Chandler's home, where they had been joined by Earl Bevans. At just before 11.15pm Jamie Chandler and Ben Potter were recording a clip of themselves rapping, in which Ben Potter was talking about "boring", which is slang for stabbing, and asking Jamie Chandler where his mask was, to which the reply was "in the garage". Jamie Chandler then phoned for a taxi, a seven seater, to take the three of them to 23 Fitzwilliam Street, to pick up Charlie Chandler and Clayton Barker. I have no doubt that you, Clayton Barker were taking the lead in this expedition to mount a surprise attack on members of the M4 gang at the party.
14. On the way to the house in Archford Croft where the party was in full swing, the taxi was directed to stop off at some garages in Braybrook Drive for what can only have been the purpose of obtaining weapons or further weapons. You, Charlie Chandler, knew the house in Archford Croft from the outside at least, from previous visits. You stayed outside whilst the other four went over the back gate, into the garden and then rushed into the house through the conservatory, armed with weapons and wearing masks.

15. I am quite sure on the evidence that, with the exception of Charlie Chandler, all four of you went into the house, and that you did so intending to take part in attacking and inflicting serious injury on any members of M4 who were present. You, Ben Potter, were distinctive not least because of your small stature. On its own the voice identification by Olivia Burgess might not have been sufficiently reliable, but coupled with the description of your appearance, by her and other witnesses inside the house, I am quite sure that you spoke to her, asking if she wanted to be stabbed, and that you had a large knife which you were trying to conceal in your waistband.
16. Within seconds of you all entering the house, Ben Gilham-Rice was repeatedly stabbed in the living room, in full view of the terrified teenagers. There were six separate sharp force injuries, including four stab wounds. The fatal wound to his chest penetrated to a depth of 20 cm and pierced the heart. There was a second stab wound close by which cut through the sixth rib and penetrated to a depth of 8 cm. There was also a stab wound 17 cm deep to the back of his right thigh. The clear inference is that Ben Gilham-Rice was stabbed by more than one person. He died within minutes from massive blood loss.
17. Ryan Brown was stabbed in the left side of the chest, with sufficient force to fracture a rib. There was a laceration to his spleen and a contusion to his lung. He was standing just outside the front door when he was stabbed; the person who did it clearly recognised him as a member or associate of M4, and said his name "Ryan" immediately before stabbing him. Ryan Brown fled from the house and escaped further attack. Tom Honhold was also stabbed in the house, receiving a wound to his right arm and a cut above his right hip. He too fled from the house, and was pursued for some distance, but he too escaped further attack.
18. Dom Ansah ran out of the house when he realised what was happening. It is entirely possible that he received some of his stab wounds in the house, but when he ran outside he managed to keep ahead of his pursuers. This part of the incident is clearly shown in the dash cam footage from a taxi parked outside the house. Although there was much discussion and argument during the trial about the identity of the two defendants chasing Dom Ansah and Tom Honhold, I am quite sure on all the evidence that you, Jamie Chandler, were male 3 leading the chase, and you, Clayton Barker, were male 4

who joined him and revived Jamie Chandler's interest in the chase when he hesitated momentarily.

19. The dash cam footage shows Dom Ansah running back towards the house a few seconds later, closely pursued by the two of you. He slipped and lost his footing for a moment, thereby enabling the two of you to catch up with him. There followed an appallingly brutal sustained attack on Dom Ansah, close to the house, in which he was repeatedly stabbed and subjected to chopping injuries from a machete. There were some 35 separate sharp force injuries. The number and distribution of those injuries leads to the sure inference that two or more of you joined in the frenzied attack. The fatal injury was a stab wound to the back which penetrated the left lung with a track depth of 15 cm. There was a chop wound to the back of the left shoulder which almost split the bony process of the shoulder blade. There was a classic defence injury to the left hand which split the bone of the little finger. As the pathologist explained, there must have been some hard surface against which the hand was struck, the anvil effect as he called it, and he demonstrated how this would have been caused with the hands protecting the head. There were other defence injuries to the hand where Dom Ansah had tried to grab the knife or knives being used against him. There were stab wounds to the back, to the chest, and to the left thigh.

20. This attack was witnessed in part by a neighbour watching from his window nearby, although his view was somewhat impeded. He described his growing horror at realising that the victim of the attack was being struck repeatedly with a machete brought down on him. What he saw that night will stay with him for ever. He saw at least three people taking part in the attack. I am quite sure on the evidence that you Clayton Barker and you Jamie Chandler were two of those three.

21. I cannot be sure on all the evidence that it was you, Charlie Chandler, who was wielding the machete. But I am quite sure that you were no mere spectator whilst the attack on Dom Ansah was taking place. You were there close by, ready to lend assistance if necessary and I am sure, as a matter of inference on all the evidence, that you were in possession of a weapon of some kind at the scene, in all probability a knife. You were the only defendant to give evidence. You denied that your role was to cover the front door and intercept anyone from M4 who ran out of the house, but I am sure on all the

evidence that this was indeed your role. You accepted in cross examination that it would make no sense for anyone playing that role not to be armed. You could give no explanation for what you were doing with your right hand, apparently fiddling with your sleeve, when you walked away from the house and turned to face the camera in the dash cam footage. I am sure you were concealing a weapon. I am sure as well that you had taken a face covering with you, giving the lie to the suggestion that you had no idea of what was afoot until you saw the others put on masks and begin to climb over the fence. I am quite sure that you knew perfectly well from the outset what the plan was and that you were encouraging and supporting the attacks.

22. The five of you stayed together immediately after the attacks. At one stage or another you disposed of the clothing you had been wearing. Some clothing was burnt at Jamie Chandler's home, along with a mobile phone. Only one knife was ever recovered, which was put down a drain by Furzton Lake. That knife must have come from your home, Jamie Chandler, and may well have been taken to the scene by Earl Bevans. I am quite sure that Daniel Freeman was telling the truth in describing how you, Clayton Barker, told him you had disposed of a large knife or "Rambo sword" by Furzton Lake, but had retained the sheath which went with it. With considerable courage and presence of mind, Daniel Freeman made an excuse to leave his flat and summon the police when you confessed to him.
23. I am also quite sure on the evidence that you, Jamie Chandler, confessed to Chloe Congdon that you had been involved in the stabbings, and showed her the blood staining on your tracksuit bottoms. You, Ben Potter, confessed to her as well. I am sure too that you, Ben Potter, were boasting to Katie Dart that you had taken part in the killings.
24. You Clayton Barker, wrote about the killings and your part in them in the rap lyrics found in your diary. You may have been imitating the style of others more famous, but I have no doubt that you were describing real events and revelling in what you had done. One passage in particular, at tab 16 page F of the jury bundle, describes all too graphically the stabbing of Dom Ansah, whom you said you "kept knifing", as well as Tom Honhold and Ryan Brown. You Ben Potter recorded yourself rapping and describing how you had stabbed one of the victims ("drilling").

25. As well as sentencing each of you for two murders, I have to sentence you for two further offences of wounding with intent. It is common ground that the appropriate course is to reflect the additional criminality of those offences in fixing the minimum term for the offences of murder, and to impose concurrent sentences for the offences of wounding. Applying the relevant Sentencing Council guideline, it is common ground that these offences would each be classified as category two, lesser harm but higher culpability, indicating a starting point of six years custody after trial. The appropriate determinate sentence has to be halved in adding it into the minimum term, and the principle of totality must also be observed.
26. There are a number of aggravating factors common to all of you, which would justify an increase of the starting points in schedule 21. Some of the factors overlap.
27. First, I am satisfied that there was a significant degree of planning and premeditation. I accept that the opportunity for this ambush attack arose spontaneously on the night, but there was a hastily conceived plan to attend this party, armed with weapons and wearing masks, in order to take the rival gang members by surprise and inflict serious injury upon them. It is different, for example from a situation where one gang, out looking for trouble, comes across a rival gang and engages spontaneously in fighting. Here this house was targeted specifically because M4 were there. The attack may not have been long in the planning but it was planning and premeditation to a significant degree.
28. Second, this was a group attack, by five defendants, a classic joint enterprise.
29. Third, the attack and the killings took place at a private house in full view of a large number of young people, causing untold trauma to those who witnessed it as their evidence and demeanour in the witness box demonstrated.
30. Fourth, knives and deadly weapons were carried to the scene. Even for a single offence of murder, the starting point for an adult would have been 25 years on that account alone.
31. Fifth, there was mental and physical suffering inflicted specifically on Dom Ansah before death. He was chased, running quite literally for his life. There was a prolonged attack during which he was fully conscious, even finding the strength, quite remarkably,

to get up and knock on the door of the house before he collapsed in the sitting room. He survived for a further three hours. It is clear from his mother's evidence that at the hospital he was well aware of the seriousness of his injuries and expected to die. He was also greatly distressed by knowledge of the death of his friend Ben Gilham-Rice, whose own suffering was cut short by his swift loss of consciousness.

32. Sixth, successful efforts were made to dispose of clothing and weapons, with the intention of avoiding detection.
33. All these aggravating factors must be reflected in the minimum term for each of you, together with the additional criminality of the separate offences of wounding with intent.
34. The aggravating factors have to be balanced, however, against the mitigating factors. They vary for each of you. There is the additional complication of the gross disparity in starting points as between the two juvenile defendants (12 years) and the three adult defendants (30 years), reflecting the disparity in your ages and the impact of that on your respective culpability. This makes it a particularly difficult case to sentence.
35. I have considered carefully all the authorities referred to in counsel's written and oral submissions. In particular, I have regard to the guidance in the leading case of R v Peters [2005] EWCA Crim 605; [2005] 2 Cr App R (S) 101, and the importance of recognising the need for flexibility in applying the Schedule 21 starting points to young people, for whom there is no step change in the level of maturity and responsibility simply by attaining the age of 18 or 21.
36. It has been submitted by counsel that an important common mitigating factor is the absence of an intention to kill, as opposed to an intention to cause serious bodily harm. I am prepared to accept that because it is impossible to know who inflicted the fatal stab wounds, it is impossible to say which if any of you intended to kill rather than to cause really serious injury. However, where there is such a sustained and frenzied joint attack, as there was on Dom Ansah, the difference between the two intentions pales almost into insignificance.

37. Nor is any real distinction to be drawn, on the facts of this case, between those who physically took part in stabbing the two victims who died, and those who may not have stabbed but encouraged the others. By their verdicts, applying and following the Steps to Verdict documents for each of you, the jury must have concluded that each of you fell into one or other of these categories.
38. In the case of each of you the minimum term will run from today, and you will have credit for the time already served on remand before trial and following conviction.
39. I bear in mind that the last 9 months of the time you have served already has been made more difficult by the restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. That is likely to remain the case for several months to come.
40. The surcharge provisions apply to this case and the order can be drawn up accordingly.
41. With those general observations, I turn to consider the individual circumstances of each of you. I have considered carefully all the written and oral submissions made by your counsel.

Clayton Barker

42. I deal first with you, Clayton Barker. You are now 20 years old. At the time of these offences you were aged 19 years 6 months. At the age of 15 you were made the subject of a referral order for offences of robbery, but I do not treat that as an aggravating factor. For the reasons I have already explained, I am satisfied that you played a leading role in this joint enterprise. As the independent evidence of the taxi driver confirmed, the others looked to you as the leader. You were steeped in the gang culture of B3 to the point of obsession, preoccupied with violence and knives. You were one of those who entered the house. If you did not yourself take part in the stabbing of Ben Gilham-Rice you must have been very close to it and encouraging it. By your own admission in your diary, you stabbed Ryan Brown and Tom Honhold, and I am quite sure you played an active physical leading role in stabbing Dom Ansah outside the house.
43. I have read the impressive letters from your uncle and your grandmother, and the letter which you have written yourself. I accept that you had a very troubled and deprived upbringing, born to a 14 year old mother who was never able or willing to look after

you properly. Your grandmother brought you up and there remains a strong bond between you, as there is with your uncle too. Your childhood was blighted by tragedy. Your father committed suicide when you were only seven or eight years old. It was you who found him hanging. Such events have scarred you emotionally. I accept that you looked to B3 almost as your substitute family. The writings in your diary do not, in my judgement, suggest a lack of maturity or intelligence. You knew perfectly well what you were doing that night when you led B3 into this fatal confrontation.

44. I accept that, as you say in your letter, you are genuinely remorseful, and you understand the pain and grief of the families of your victims. The clearest expression of remorse would have been a guilty plea. I accept that the period you have already spent in custody has provided the stability which your life has lacked for so long.
45. The strongest mitigation in your case is your comparative youth, coupled with your troubled upbringing. You were still only 19 years old when these offences were committed, and that requires me to make a significant reduction from the starting point which would otherwise be appropriate after an increase to reflect the aggravating factors.
46. The minimum term in your case will be 28 years. There will be concurrent sentences of six years custody for each of the offences of wounding with intent.
47. Stand up please. Clayton Barker, for the offences of murder, counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to custody for life, with a minimum term of 28 years from today, less 411 days already served. On counts 3 and 4, there will be concurrent sentences of six years detention in a young offender institution.

Charlie Chandler

48. I turn to you, Charlie Chandler. You are now just 23 years old. You were aged 21 years 9 months at the time of these offences. You have no previous convictions. For the reasons I have already explained I am satisfied that you played a full part in encouraging these attacks; your role was to remain outside the house to lend assistance if required. You did not take part physically in the stabbings inside the house. Nor can I be sure that you physically took part in the stabbing of Dom Ansa outside the house. Nevertheless, you were close by when that stabbing took place and you encouraged all the stabbings

by your willingness to take part in this plan to ambush and inflict really serious injury on those believed to be members of M4 who were present at the party. It may well be that part of your motivation was revenge for the stabbing of your younger brother Jamie Chandler six months earlier. But that provided no excuse whatsoever for the horrific attacks to which you lent your support.

49. I had the opportunity of observing you in the witness box over a period of several days. You are an intelligent and resourceful young man. You made no effort to dissuade your younger brother from involvement in this criminal venture. You were not lacking in maturity.
50. In your case too, the strongest mitigation is your comparative youth, coupled with the secondary role which you played, albeit a very serious role. I also have to ensure, in sentencing all of you, that there is no unfair disparity between the minimum terms you are required to serve, beyond the disparity which necessarily flows from the different starting points for each of you under schedule 21.
51. The minimum term in your case will be 27 years. There will be concurrent sentences of six years imprisonment for each of the two offences of wounding with intent.
52. Stand up please. Charlie Chandler, for each of the offences of murder, counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to imprisonment for life, with a minimum term of 27 years from today, less 439 days already served. On counts 3 and 4 there will be concurrent sentences of six years imprisonment.

Earl Bevens

53. I deal next with you, Earl Bevens. You are now 23 years old. At the time of these offences you were aged 22 years 6 months, the oldest of all the defendants. You had previous convictions for battery, in the context of domestic violence, and resisting the police, for which you were made the subject of a community order in 2018 at the age of 21. However, I do not treat those convictions as an aggravating factor.
54. You had no direct affiliation to the B3 gang, save your friendship with Ben Potter and Jamie Chandler, who were several years your junior, and your acquaintance with Clayton Barker. Nevertheless you willingly went along with this criminal venture,

seemingly to avenge the previous stabbing of Jamie Chandler and the humiliating assault and degradation of Ben Potter. I am quite sure that you went armed with a knife, which was later disposed of in the drain near Furzton Lake. You are one of the four who entered the house. You admitted in your second defence statement that you had stabbed both Ben Gilham-Rice and Dom Ansah, although at that stage you were falsely suggesting you were in some way acting in self-defence. Nothing could have been further from the truth. By your participation in the stabbings you were strongly encouraging those who inflicted the fatal injuries.

55. The greatest mitigation in your case is that you pleaded guilty to all these offences, albeit only on the first day of the trial. In accordance with the Sentencing Council guideline on reduction in sentence for a guilty plea, the maximum credit I should afford you is one-twentieth. As I observed at the time you entered those guilty pleas, to do so required some courage and is the best demonstration of your genuine remorse. However, in addition to allowing you the prescribed one-twentieth credit for plea, it is appropriate also to reflect to a modest extent, as part of your general personal mitigation, the remorse exemplified by your pleas. Although you denied these offences throughout your police interviews, there was a creeping acceptance of your guilt over the months leading up to the trial: first in your admission to the psychiatrist in November 2019 of taking some part in the stabbings, echoed in your revised defence statement in January 2020. Then in the week before the trial you made it plain to those representing you that you wished to plead guilty to all counts without prevarication. It was necessary for counsel to see you and confirm your instructions, and that process could not be completed until the day before your pleas were entered.

56. The other mitigation advanced in your case derives from the psychiatric report dated 23rd March 2020. Whilst not affording you any partial defence to murder, it is clear that you were suffering from an emotionally unstable personality disorder associated with traits of antisocial personality disorder. This is likely to have led to some impairment of your judgement and actions at the material time. Although I take it into account, it does not in my view reduce your culpability to any significant extent. You knew perfectly well what you were doing and how serious it was.

57. Had you been convicted after a trial your minimum term would have been 29 years. To reflect your guilty plea and the additional mitigation of your genuine remorse, the minimum term in your case will be 27 years. There will be concurrent sentences of six years imprisonment for the offences of wounding with intent.

58. Stand up please. Earl Bevans, for each of the offences of murder, counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to imprisonment for life with a minimum term of 27 years from today, less 438 days already served. On counts 3 and 4 there will be concurrent terms of 6 years imprisonment.

Ben Potter

59. I deal next with you, Ben Potter. You are now 17 years old. At the time of the offences you were aged 16 years 2 months. You have only one previous finding of guilt, possessing a knife in a public place, for which you were made the subject of a 12 month referral order in February 2019. These offences were committed during the currency of that order.

60. You were an enthusiastic member of B3. For the reasons already explained, I am quite sure that you were one of the four who went into the house, and sure that you were armed with a large knife. I am sure on the evidence that you were physically involved in at least one of the fatal stabbings. You were boasting of it in the rap you recorded a month later when you were on the run, and you were boasting of it to Katie Dart only hours after the murders. By your participation in the attacks you were encouraging all the stabbings, with the intention that really serious harm should be inflicted. I have no doubt that your motivation related to the traumatic experience of the assault you had suffered yourself at the hands of M4 two years earlier. But that did not begin to justify your participation in these murders.

61. Your culpability has to be judged in the light of the fact that you were only just 16 at the time of the offences. You were in the company of three much older defendants. I have considered carefully the psychology assessment report dated 31st January 2020, and the insight it gives into your troubled upbringing and early involvement in gang culture. That report was prepared principally for the purpose of establishing whether you required an intermediary for the trial. You did not. In her written and oral

submissions your counsel outlined in detail the background set out in the report. As a very young child you witnessed domestic violence and you never had the consistent support of a male father figure. You suffered from anxiety and depression from an early age. You first joined a gang at the age of 12, at a time when you were particularly vulnerable. When you joined the rival B3 gang, you suffered the humiliating and traumatic assault soon after your 14th birthday to which I have already referred. That led to further anxiety and depression, and panic attacks. You twice made some attempt at suicide. You did not engage fully with the mental health service to which you were referred by the youth offending team in 2019. All this sad background reduces to some extent your culpability for these very serious offences, but I am quite satisfied that your culpability remains high despite this and despite your young age. You had become streetwise, and the picture of your involvement in the offences which was painted in the evidence does not suggest that you were particularly immature. You knew perfectly well what you were doing, and how serious it was.

62. The starting point of 12 years must be very substantially increased to reflect the fact that you have been convicted of two murders and two offences of wounding with intent. I have already identified the aggravating factors common to all of you. I accept in your case, as in the case of the others, that there may not have been an intention to kill, but the ferocity of the two fatal attacks was so great that the mitigation of that point is limited. Whilst in custody you have behaved well and made good progress with your studies, which is to your credit. I take fully into account your young age and your troubled background.
63. The minimum term in your case will be 22 years. There will be concurrent sentences of four years detention for the two offences of wounding with intent.
64. Stand up please. Ben Potter, for each of the offences of murder, counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure, with a minimum term of 22 years from today less 432 days already served. On counts 3 and 4 there will be concurrent sentences of four years detention, pursuant to s.250 of the Sentencing Act 2020.

Jamie Chandler

65. I turn finally to you, Jamie Chandler. You are just 17 years old. At the time of the offences you were aged 15 years 9 months. You are therefore the youngest of all the defendants. You have no previous convictions. However, despite your young age and good character you took a particularly prominent part in these stabbings. You were an enthusiastic member of B3 and subscribed to all it stood for. You ordered the taxi which took the five of you to Archford Croft. That phone call was played during the trial. You sounded calm and self-assured, although you knew perfectly well what was planned. As I have already explained, I am quite sure that you were male 3 in the dash cam footage, chasing Dom Ansah in company with Clayton Barker. You were armed with a large knife. I am sure on all the evidence that you were one of the three who were taking part physically in the horrific sustained attack on Dom Ansah outside the house when he was finally cornered. You admitted to Chloe Congdon only hours later that you had been involved in the killings.
66. Your culpability has to be assessed in the light of the fact that you were only 15 years 9 months old at the time of the offences. I bear in mind the Sentencing Council guideline: overarching principles for sentencing children and young people. I note in particular the sound general advice that children and young people are unlikely to have the same experience and capacity as an adult to understand the effect of their actions on other people, or to appreciate the pain and distress caused, and a child or young person may be less able to resist temptation, especially where peer pressure is exerted. It is said on your behalf that the fact that you yourself had been stabbed but survived effectively unscathed may have lessened your appreciation of the potentially fatal consequences of such stabbings. I find that impossible to accept. You are clearly an intelligent young man. You must have known that multiple stabbings of a victim were likely to risk not merely really serious injury but death. I am quite sure that the fact that you yourself had been stabbed was a powerful motivating factor in your willingness and enthusiasm to take part in these very serious offences. I am sure that you believed Dom Ansah to have been involved in your stabbing, as was generally the word on the street on social media.

67. Following your own stabbing, your mother warned you of the consequences of continuing to involve yourself in this gang culture, as the extracts from text messages between the two of you clearly show. You chose to ignore that advice and continued to embrace the gang culture wholeheartedly. You had done well at school until 2018, excelling in film and media studies, which no doubt accounts in part for the professionalism of the B3 gang video. I accept that you had lost your way, dropping out of school, but I cannot accept that you were immature for your age. Like Ben Potter you had become streetwise. I am satisfied that your culpability remains high despite your young age and troubled background.
68. The starting point of 12 years must be very substantially increased in your case as well, to reflect the fact that you have been convicted of two murders and two offences of wounding with intent. I have already identified the aggravating factors common to you all. I accept that the time you have already spent in custody, and the experience of this trial, has altered your view of the gang culture in which you had become immersed. That cannot alter the seriousness of your culpability.
69. The minimum term in your case will be 22 years. For the two offences of wounding with intent there will be concurrent sentences of four years detention.
70. Stand up please. Jamie Chandler, for each of the two offences of murder, counts 1 and 2, I sentence you to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure, with a minimum term of 22 years from today, less 418 days you have already served. On counts 3 and 4 there will be concurrent terms of four years detention, pursuant to s.250 of the Sentencing Act 2020.