



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

REGINA

-v-

John Cole, Angharad Williamson and Craig Mulligan

Cardiff Crown Court

30th June 2022

Sentencing Remarks of Mrs Justice Jefford DBE

1. Shortly after 6.00am on Saturday 31 July 2021, the lifeless body of Logan Mwangi was found in the River Ogmore near to his home in Sarn. Logan was 5 years old. He was described by everyone who knew him as a wonderful child – bright, chatty and artistic – a little boy who could light up a room. There is no word for his death other than that it was a tragedy.
2. His father, Ben Mwangi, did not live near but tried his best to stay in contact with his son. His moving statement has been read in court today. He describes Logan as the sweetest and most beautiful boy and says that the world is a colder and darker place without his warm smile and the happy energy with which he lived his short life. The effect on Ben and his family has been devastating.
3. You - John Cole, Angharad Williamson and Craig Mulligan – have all been convicted of Logan’s murder. You were all responsible for Logan’s death and all the anguish that has flowed from it.
4. John Cole – you pleaded guilty to a further offence of perverting the course of justice. Angharad Williamson and Craig Mulligan – you were both found guilty of this offence following trial.
5. I will come to the events leading to Logan’s death in a moment. Because he was killed in his own home and by his own family, it is not possible to be sure exactly what happened to him but what is very clear is that shortly before his death, this little boy - 3 feet and 5 inches in height and weighing only 3st and 11lb - was subjected to a brutal attack.
6. There were 56 external injuries on his body, mostly bruising. He had suffered a blunt force trauma injury to the head. There was evidence that he had suffered another non-fatal head injury at least 36 hours before his death. Elsewhere on his body his injuries were consistent with 3 or 4 hard punches to his abdomen and a kick to the rear. He suffered substantial internal bleeding. There was a tear to the lower part of the right

lobe of the liver. There was a 5cm tear to the root of the small bowel mesentery. The duodenum had torn away from the head of the pancreas and there was degloving of the duodenum – the inner tube separating from the outer tube – together with two ruptures. The injuries to the duodenum were the sort of injuries caused by high velocity impact or a fall from over 10 ft but were also the sort of injuries seen in abused children. The constellation of injuries in the abdomen was indicative of severe localised blunt force injury inflicted by a blow, kick or weapon. The inflicting of these injuries on a small, defenceless 5 year old is nothing short of horrifying.

7. In the days prior to Logan's death, he had tested positive for Covid. His mother, Angharad Williamson, and step-father, John Cole, had good reason to be cautious as their younger son, then aged 18 months, had been born in difficult circumstances and they were concerned about any infection that might affect his lungs. However, the manner in which they treated Logan was extreme. He was kept in isolation in his room for 10 days. There was a baby gate across the doorway which I accept was there to keep the baby out but also served to keep Logan in. He had no physical contact with his mother. When food was brought to him he was required to turn away – in effect to face the wall – while food was put down and left for him. Aged 5, he was expected to entertain himself in one room all day with toys and activities on screen.
8. This treatment of Logan was the culmination of treatment which had dehumanised him in the eyes of his parents. While teachers and others described an engaging, well-behaved child, his parents described a badly behaved boy, who was frequently naughty and demanding of attention. They punished him by refusing him takeaway food with the rest of the family and making him stand for up to half an hour facing a wall. Neighbours heard shouting at Logan which was aggressive and nasty. One neighbour heard you, Angharad Williamson, shout at him to stop acting like a fucking dickhead. On the Friday before Logan was found dead, you, Angharad Williamson, said that he had been running around like an absolute toon, then sitting on the floor and refusing to get up. You, John Cole, described him lying on the floor refusing to get up and refusing to eat. In all probability, he was already dying and much of what you described was consistent with the presentation of the injuries he received.
9. Angharad Williamson – when you were interviewed by the police and at trial, you ultimately claimed that Logan had been assaulted by John Cole and Craig Mulligan Thursday 29 July. You described an assault in which John Cole punched Logan so that he fell back on his bottom. You said that John Cole then told Craig Mulligan that if Logan flinched again, he should sweep Logan's legs from under him – he did that and then pushed Logan's head into the ground. You claimed that you then ran from the house to seek help but were prevented from leaving the garden by Craig Mulligan. You claimed that that assault did not cause serious injury and that Logan was fine afterwards.
10. From CCTV footage from a neighbouring property, you could indeed be seen leaving the home shortly before 3.00pm, walking to the gate and into the street, followed by Craig Mulligan. You appeared to be in some distress and Craig was trying to stop you leave. Your neighbour heard you tell Craig to stop making a scene. The Stenners, a couple passing in their van, heard you say "Leave me alone, I want to get you". They stopped to ask if they could help. You screamed and just went back into your flat followed by Craig.

11. I do not accept this account of what happened at this time of the Thursday afternoon. Angharad Williamson, I do not accept your account that you were running from the house to get help following an assault on Logan. That was an account you made up after the event to try to protect yourself and when you realised that you could try to shift blame in this way. Whatever caused your distress, this was your characteristic dramatic behaviour. It was completely inconsistent with trying to get away from your partner and seeking help for your son. On the contrary, when help was offered you just went back inside.
12. If an assault happened on this day as you described, it was not the cause of Logan's death which was a combination of the blunt force trauma to the head some hours before death and the abdominal trauma also some hours before death. There may be some truth in this account which would be consistent with the earlier brain injury. But, if that is right, it makes your conduct all the worse. You had the opportunity to protect your son from further injury and you did nothing. The following day you went to the shops with your phone, completely unconcerned for your son's welfare, and the only call you made was to your social worker, sounding like your normal self, and saying that you just wanted to discuss a few things.
13. I am sure that what, in fact, happened was a far more serious assault on Logan sometime later that day or the following day. In the early hours of Friday 30 July, the curtains to Logan's bedroom were opened and closed on a number of occasions. They were closed just after 8.30am so that there was only a small gap left and they remained like that until 5.30pm. That is completely inconsistent with your accounts that Logan was fine and running around while you "decontaminated" his room following a negative Covid test. His injuries meant that he could not have eaten and all that was found in his stomach was a small quantity of cereal. At whatever time the ferocious assault on Logan happened, he was for most or part of that Friday injured and dying.
14. Had any of you sought medical assistance for him he had a 80% chance of survival despite the severity of his injuries.
15. There is nothing that could have provoked the attack that resulted in these injuries other than the understandable boisterous behaviour of a child who had been confined to his room for over a week, effectively separated from his family, and the fact that by this time none of you saw Logan as a child to be cared for as part of your family.
16. I find, however, to the criminal standard that the physical assault on Logan was committed by you, John Cole and Craig Mulligan – and that, to that extent, there is that grain of truth in Angharad Williamson's account. But, Angharad Williamson, I am also sure that, in this small flat, this fatal assault could not have taken place without your full knowledge and collusion.
17. It cannot be known whether Logan slipped slowly into unconsciousness or became unconscious immediately. It may well have been the former both because that is consistent with your evidence about how he appeared on the Friday and because you did not form your plan to cover up his death until the Saturday.

18. In a final act of callousness, all three of you agreed to try to cover up Logan's death as an accident. John Cole and Craig Mulligan, in the early hours of the Saturday morning, you took Logan's body from the house, slung over John Coles' shoulder and dumped him in the river. He was placed well out into the water to make it look as if he had wandered off and drowned or perhaps to try to provide an explanation for his injuries. The story you both told about fly tipping in the river was obviously intended to disguise what you were doing but it is impossible not to draw the inference that you regarded disposing of Logan's body as akin to disposing of rubbish. Angharad Williamson, you claimed to have been asleep throughout this time and to have no knowledge of what was going on. Your account was completely unbelievable. The activity on your phone and the activity in the house, caught on CCTV, when you were the only person in the house other than the baby made it quite clear that you were up and about participating in this plan.
19. I have no doubt your activity in the house while Logan's body was being dumped in the river led you to identify his dinosaur pyjama top, torn into 3 pieces, as a evidence you also needed to dispose of and his bedsheet as also incriminating. When John Cole and Craig Mulligan returned, you gave them the pyjama top to take out and dispose of. You put the washing machine on to wash the sheet. What you did was careful and calculated and not the product of panic.
20. Angharad Williamson, you then made the 999 call to the police falsely reporting Logan missing, as you had all agreed to do. John Cole and Craig Mulligan, you pretended to search for the missing Logan. Until your arrests, you all engaged in persistent attempts to mislead the police investigation.

The Sentencing Code

21. I will deal first with the two adult defendants.
22. In the case of the John Cole and Angharad Williamson, as adults having been convicted of murder, and the only sentence I can pass is one of life imprisonment. I have to fix the minimum term of that sentence. I emphasise for the benefit of all those listening including these two defendants that the minimum term is exactly that. It is the minimum period which the defendant must serve in custody before they can be considered for release on licence by the Parole Board. If they are then released on licence, they will spend the rest of their life on licence. There will be conditions of that licence, and, if they breach the terms of that licence, they may be recalled to prison.
23. In fixing the minimum term I have to have regard to the seriousness of this offence of murder together with any associated offence. I also have to have regard to the starting points set out in Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020. In this case, the Crown submits that this is an offence (or combination of offences) of particularly high seriousness within paragraph 3 of Schedule 21 such that the starting point is a minimum term of 30 years.
24. Paragraph 3(2) sets out the nature of offences which would normally be regarded as ones of particularly high seriousness. The murder of a child by his or her parents, in breach of trust, is not referred to in that sub-paragraph but the Crown submits that the list of not exclusive and that the particular features of this case mean that the starting

point should be a 30 year minimum term. I must then be careful not to double count these aggravating features. It is submitted on behalf of John Cole and Angharad Williamson that if I take a starting point of 30 years, I have already taken account of all the aggravating features and should fix a minimum term greater than 30 years. But counsel also accept that the 30 starting point cannot act as a cap if I consider that the effect of these matters is to take the appropriate sentence about that point.

25. If I am not persuaded by the submission that the starting point is one of 30 years, the starting point is one of 15 years imprisonment under paragraph 5 of Schedule 21. However, all of the matters relied upon by the Crown would be aggravating features under paragraph 9. It is realistically accepted that given the seriousness of these features there may be little difference between these two approaches.
26. I do not accept the Crown's submission that the starting point should be one of 30 years. The murder of a child is one Parliament might have seen fit to include in paragraph 3(2) but Parliament they did not do so. The list of aggravating features in paragraph 9 are themselves appropriate for an offence involving the death of a child at the hands of those who should have cared for him. My starting point is, therefore, on of a 15 year minimum term.
27. In this case, and in respect of the adult defendants, I take account of the following aggravating features.
28. Logan was particularly vulnerable because of his age. He was 5 years old. He was small – 3 feet 5 inches and 3st 11lb. He was completely defenceless against those who killed him.
29. Both his mother and his stepfather were in a position of trust. They wholly breached that trust and they did so against a background of dehumanising treatment of Logan and mental, if not physical, cruelty.
30. What happened to Logan must have involved appalling mental and physical suffering. It is impossible to imagine the terror and anguish of a 5 year old child as these horrific injuries were inflicted on him by those he regarded as family and with the complicity of his mother. There was evidence at trial that his pain would have been intense and at a level that could only have been relieved by morphine.
31. Following Logan's death, all the defendants participated in a plan to try to conceal Logan's body in that they removed it from the home to try to conceal where he had died. How this was done was particularly heartless. It was also utterly calculated and carefully orchestrated. It was not, as you John Cole said, a plan made up in panic about the potential impact on the family of Logan's death.

John Cole

32. You are 40 years old.
33. You have been found guilty of the murder of Logan Mwangi.

34. As I have said, the only sentence I can pass on you is one of life imprisonment but I have to fix the minimum term that you will spend in custody.
35. I sentence you on the basis that you inflicted fatal injuries on Logan, that Craig Mulligan also participated in the fatal assault, and that Craig Mulligan acted as he did either on your instruction or, as you would have well known, to emulate you and win your approval. You had raised him since he was a baby and he regarded you as his father. He idolised you. He had been separated from you for over 6 months and you had fought hard to have him returned to your family home. He would have done anything for you and you actively involved him in the death of Logan and the disposal of Logan's body.
36. For the reasons I have explained, I take as a starting point a minimum term of 15 years. But I then take account of the aggravating features which I have already identified. These include the steps taken to dispose of Logan's body. Rather than pass a separate sentence for that offence, I treat it as a seriously aggravating factor.
37. It is submitted on your behalf and in mitigation that you did not intend to kill Logan but only to cause him really serious harm. I accept that. I cannot be sure that you intended to kill Logan. But in this case, that makes very little difference. You are a man of 40, tall and physically powerful and you carried out a ferocious attack on a small, defenceless child. The fact that you did not intend to kill him provides very little, if any, mitigation.
38. The only thing that can be said in meaningful mitigation is that, at an early stage, you accepted that you had disposed of Logan's body and you pleaded guilty to the offence of perverting the course of justice at the PTPH. I take that guilty plea into account as a mitigating factor.
39. The sentence I pass on you for the offence of murder is one of imprisonment for life. The minimum term that you will spend in custody is 29 years. Had it not been for your guilty plea, the minimum term I would have set would have been greater than 30 years.
40. You have spent 328 days and that will be credited against the minimum term.
41. In the circumstances, there will be no separate penalty for the offence of perverting the course of justice.

Angharad Williamson

42. You are 31 years old.
43. You have been found guilty of the murder of Logan Mwangi.
44. As I have said, the only sentence I can pass on you is one of life imprisonment but I have to fix the minimum term that you will spend in custody.
45. The evidence at trial was that you had, in the past, been, as your own mother put it, a fantastic mother. If anything you had been an over-anxious mother. You had encouraged Logan to learn, had taken pride in his achievements and demanded the best

for him. Something changed and changed significantly and tragically. I have no doubt that your relationship with John Cole was what triggered that change. I do not accept your claims to have been in fear of John Cole. You had a volatile, argumentative relationship but you were perfectly able to stand up for yourself and did so. As time went on, however, your relationship caused your focus to shift from Logan to your child with John Cole and to his child, Craig Mulligan. Logan became superfluous and, in your eyes, the badly behaved, naughty and demanding child that no-one else who knew him described.

46. Nonetheless, things had not changed so much that you would have physically attacked your own son. I certainly cannot be sure that you did and I sentence you on the basis that you did not physically assault Logan. That makes some difference but only a small difference to your position. The jury were sure that you encouraged or assisted in the assault on your son. I agree and I repeat that I am sure that this ferocious and fatal assault could not have taken place without your full knowledge and collusion. I also sentence you on the basis that you did not intend Logan to die but again the brutality of this assault on a small child means that that carries little weight.
47. I have already mentioned the statutory aggravating feature that I take into account. In particular, the anguish that Logan must have suffered knowing that his mother was involved in this assault on him and did nothing to protect him is unimaginable. Neither before or after did you do anything to protect your son. You did not seek medical assistance. You took an active part in the plan to conceal what had happened. You put on, and persisted in, an extraordinary performance of the distraught mother of a missing son. You have never accepted any responsibility for your son's death or shown any remorse for your actions.
48. In addition, you tried to pass the blame to Rebecca Trudgill, John Cole's former partner; you suggested to the police that she had taken Logan for some perverse revenge; and you encouraged them to pursue their inquiries with her. You knew that she was a troubled woman and that she was, in respect of Logan's death, wholly innocent.
49. I again take a starting point of 15 years but I take account of the aggravating features which I have identified.
50. The sentence I pass on you for the offence of murder is one of imprisonment for life. The minimum term that you will spend in custody is 28 years.
51. You have spent 328 days and that will be credited against the minimum term.
52. In the circumstances, there will be no separate penalty for the offence of perverting the course of justice.

Craig Mulligan

53. You were 13 at the time of this offence and are now 14 years old.
54. You have been convicted of the murder of Logan Mwangi, so the only sentence I can pass on you is one of detention during Her Majesty's pleasure. That means that you

will be in custody. You will be taken to a secure place and you will not be allowed to leave until you are told that you can. I have to decide the minimum period that you must remain in custody before it is possible for you to be told that you can leave. That is the minimum term.

55. After you have spent that minimum term in custody, a group of people called the Parole Board will decide if it is safe to release you. If you do leave custody, you will be on licence for the rest of your life. That means that there will be rules about what you can do. You will have to follow those rules for the rest of your life. If you don't do so, you may have to go back into custody.
56. Because of your age, in fixing the minimum term, my starting point is 12 years.
57. I sentence you on the basis that you physically assaulted Logan and were responsible for some at least of his injuries but, as I have said, I am sure that you acted either as your father told you to or to mirror his actions. You idolised him and wanted to gain his approval.
58. So far as the aggravating features are concerned, you were, unlike the adults not in a position of trust, and I accept that you were not involved in any mistreatment of Logan prior to the events that led to his death. You had not lived in the family home for over 6 months. You did not see Logan as a brother. When you were in foster care, you referred to Logan as the 5 year old and on more than one occasion said you wanted to kill him, no doubt because he was with the family and you were not. But while you were in foster care, there was not evidence that you had, in fact, mistreated Logan on any occasion that you visited.
59. There was some evidence at trial that you had previously claimed to have pushed Logan down the stairs in August 2020 when his arm was broken. The evidence about this was thoroughly unsatisfactory. At the time that Logan broke his arm, Angharad Williamson clearly told a police officer that everyone else had been downstairs when Logan fell. Her friend, Rhiannon Hales, said that some weeks later, Angharad Williamson told her that you had admitted pushing Logan down the stairs but that Angharad then remembered that everyone had been downstairs. It was not until January 2021, at a time of great trauma to the family, that Angharad Williamson reported to the police that you had told her you had pushed Logan down the stairs. She seemed by that time to have forgotten that that did not fit with what she had told the police in August 2020 and by her own admission she was told different things at different times and was confused by it. I cannot be sure that you had anything to do with this fall and I do not take it into account.
60. I do take into account, however, that Logan's age made him particularly vulnerable. That would have been obvious to you – he was 8 years younger and so much smaller than you. The pain and suffering caused to him must also have been obvious to you. But you did nothing to protect and help him. You joined in with the disposal of his body and his pyjama top following your father and you too put on a show for the police pretending to search for Logan when you knew that he was lying dead in the river and continuing with the deception for days after and in your police interviews.

61. I take into account, as your counsel has submitted, your maturity and what is known about you. You have been diagnosed as suffering from multiple neuro developmental difficulties and that your emotional, cognitive and emotional development has been affected. There was evidence at trial of your lack of maturity in your aggressive responses to others. 6 months before this happened you had been taken into care after you were assaulted by your biological mother who had claimed for many months to have cancer, which was, in fact, not the case.
62. As I have explained to you, the sentence I must pass is one of detention at Her Majesty's pleasure. The minimum term that you must spend in detention before you can be considered for release is 15 years.
63. You have spent time in local authority accommodation for which you are entitled to credit. You have spent a total of 164 qualifying days in this accommodation so I give you credit for that number of days against the minimum term - so that that is reduced by that number of days.
64. I have taken the offence of perverting the course of justice into account as an aggravating feature in fixing the minimum term and I do not, therefore, impose any separate penalty for that offence.
65. Lastly, these are offences to which the victim surcharge applies, and the orders will be drawn up accordingly in due course.