

REX

v.

MARIUS GUSTAVSON

DAVID CARRUTHERS

JANUS ATKIN

PETER WATES

ION VALENTIN CIUCUR

ASHLEY WILLIAMS

STEFAN SCHARF

SENTENCING REMARKS

Introduction.

1. On various dates the seven of you now before this court have pleaded guilty to offences covering your involvement in carrying out extreme body modifications over a period of more than 4 years. On 15th January 2024, three others involved, Damien Brynes, Nathaniel Arnold and Jacob Crimi-Appleby were sentenced in respect of extreme body modifications they carried out on you Marius Gustavson [the removal of your penis, the removal of part of one of your nipples and the freezing of your left leg that led to amputation], and now I must sentence you Gustavson, and the others before me, for the offences you have each committed.
2. Gustavson, on the evidence you are very much the ‘mastermind’ behind this grisly and gruesome enterprise. The business you set up was one that was both busy and lucrative. As with all the others involved, you have no medical qualifications. You came to the UK from Norway in or around 2012. Through a website you established called ‘Eunuchmaker.com’, so called extreme body modification ‘services’ were advertised including male castration and penis removal. Many of the procedures carried out were filmed. Over time those films were produced to an increasingly professional standard under the banner of ‘Eunuchmaker / Nullset Productions’. The website operated between 14th January 2018 and 1st March 2021. By March 2021, there were over 22,800 registered users from across the globe.
3. Footage uploaded to the website is extremely explicit. It was made available to paying subscribers, no doubt so they could watch it for their own sexual gratification. The footage

shows that procedures were performed at your home Gustavson, in hotels or at rented premises. Examples of the material on the site were shown in the course of the sentencing hearing. On the website there were various levels of engagement with the site with differing levels of annual subscription and then additional payments for access to videos. The site also allowed for chat between like-minded individuals. Those who had procedures performed on them were promised money from the video revenue. Like-minded individuals were recruited by you Gustavson to assist in what became a largescale, dangerous, and extremely disturbing enterprise.

4. It would appear that those involved ‘consented’ to what took place. As the law in this country makes clear consent is not a defence to what took place. Whilst it might provide some mitigation to sentence, the performing of complex medical procedures on such people by the unqualified is extremely dangerous. Many may well face life-long issues. I will refer to a number of people who had procedures carried out on them. In each instance I will refer to their initials.
5. A detailed schedule has been prepared summarising the graphic footage that has been recovered. From that schedule it is clear that all procedures were carried out in environments that were far from sterile and that all procedures were performed by a person or by people without any medical or similar qualifications. The procedures were conducted in amateur and dangerous ways: in some instances it is little more than human butchery. Whilst in some cases medical equipment was used, with others that was not the case and normal household implements and kitchen knives were used. Implements used for some procedures were ones designed and made for use on livestock. Some procedures were overtly sexual or had clear sexual overtones. Many procedures clearly caused great distress and some resulted in the need for immediate emergency medical treatment. Stills from the moving footage and some graphic video imagery has been shown in the course of this hearing. I am entirely satisfied that the motivations of all involved were a mix of sexual gratification as well as financial reward.
6. I do not intend to recite the detail of the horrors within all the individual procedures that were carried out. It is sufficient to say that there are numerous procedures to remove one or both testicles and, or the penis of many men. In a number of procedures clamps are used and applied and in others fluids are injected. As is clear from the schedule, in many of the filmed procedures a consequence is extensive blood loss. Some of those undergoing the procedures are clearly in severe and acute pain. With one instance, the person I will refer to as CN, can be heard on film saying he does not want to die. The closeness of what takes place to what I

have described as little short of human butchery, can be seen all too clearly when in his case two 999 calls are made calling for an ambulance. Gustavson you can be heard saying there has been an accident with a kitchen knife. Nothing is said about the real reason for CN having bleeding to his groin. When asked whether it was on purpose that there was a cut to the groin, you repeat that it is definitely an accident. The account of the ambulance officers who attended is of catastrophic and uncontrolled haemorrhaging. In this case CN required emergency surgery.

7. It is also of note that in much of the footage there is audio where encouragement or direction is given by you Gustavson, and the others involved.
8. With the procedures on TF to remove his testicles, because of what happened he needed to undergo surgery through the NHS. Despite that he returns some months later to have his penis removed by you Gustavson, Wates and Atkin. With that process all does not go to plan, and three 999 calls are made on 6th May 2018. There was significant bleeding and pain. When the ambulance attended, TF claimed he had tried to self-circumcise. He named as his boyfriend you Gustavson and said that after watching on-line films had tried to remove his own penis. He had to be operated on under general anaesthetic.
9. Found on the computer at your address Gustavson, dated 24th June 2017, is a film of you taking a severed penis, and putting it in your mouth. Dated a year later, in June 2018, there are images showing preparations being made for lunch and then the cooking of what appear to be human testicles that are then plated to be eaten.
10. Carruthers, Atkin, Wates, and Ciucur you are to be sentenced alongside Gustavson for your participation in the conspiracy to cause grievous bodily harm with intent [count 1]. Extracts from the video footage of the involvement of you Carruthers, Atkin, Wates and Ciucur across the period from 2017 to 2020 has also been shown in the course of this hearing. For those procedures where there is no footage, your involvement is clear from the exchange of messages. I have referred to one procedure in paragraph 8 above. In what can be seen in the videos the five of you are all willing participants in the various procedures that have been identified, and as set out in the detailed schedule, your involvement in the processes that comprise count 1.
11. One victim, RP, has assisted in the investigation. In 2020 his report to the police started this police investigation. As well as giving an account in interview he provided over 5,000 WhatsApp messages between him and you Gustavson and some with you Carruthers. There were some sensitive images and videos he provided too. He explains how he met you

Gustavson and being on drugs when his scrotum was cut by you on 17th July 2017. He gave to the police a detailed account of the procedure he was subjected to. He returned on 20th September 2019, to be castrated. He was strapped to a table and a clamp used to crush his testicles. This was video recorded. Gustavson you are seen masturbating before putting clamps on to RP's testicles. So severe was the pain that he had to attend hospital a week later. Damage to the scrotum was seen by the medics who examined him. Despite this he returned a third time on 2nd December 2019, he thought the dead testicles were to be removed. Gustavson you used a red hot branding iron on the back of his leg and 'EM' for 'eunuch maker' was branded on him. That process was also filmed and it is obvious the pain that was caused. On 18th January 2020, when Gustavson you along with Atkin, Carruthers and Williams were all present, he returns. RP's testicle is cut out and then sewn back in. The swelling had meant that the full planned procedure was not carried out. In the interview RP gave to the police, he expressed his anger towards you Gustavson. He says that Carruthers looks after him after the procedure. He also says that he is mentally furious over what has happened to him. He was seen by an expert urologist who noted scars to the body including the scrotum and where blood vessels to the testicles. The expert noted that the testicles are effectively dead.

12. Gustavson, you are also to be sentenced on counts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6: five further substantive counts each of causing grievous bodily harm with intent; making an indecent image of a child [count 7] and distributing, between January 2017 and January 2020, an indecent image of a child [count 8]. You are also to be sentenced in relation to count 13, possessing criminal property. Gustavson, you also before this court on a separate indictment with one count of possessing extreme pornographic images, and three counts of distributing indecent pseudo-photographs of a child.
13. Williams [count 14] and Scharf [count 15] you are to be sentenced for substantive counts of causing grievous bodily harm with intent.

A. The offences.

Gustavson

14. As I have already said, you are very much the ringleader of the operation. On Count 1, in the period between 2017 and 2020, you were involved in at least 16 different procedures: 16 instances where grievous bodily harm is caused with intent to cause such harm. Those have been identified as:

- (1) Assisting Wates in the removal of HM's testicle [21.07.2017];
- (2) Present when Carruthers removed HM's testicle along with Williams also present [09.09.2017];
- (3) Present and assisted in Williams and Carruthers removal of Atkin's testicles [07.11.2017];
- (4) Removing GL's testicle along with Wates [03.02.2018];
- (5) Along with Wates and Atkin, carrying out a penectomy (removal of penis) on TF [06.05.2018];
- (6) The removal of PS's testicle along with Wates and Atkin [23.09.2018];
- (7) The cutting of a nerve in GL's penis along with Wates and Atkin [06.10.2018];
- (8) The removal of PS's testicle along with Wates and Atkin [19.01.2019];
- (9) The insertion of needles into RC's scrotum with Ciucur [on or around 20.07.2019];
- (10) The removal of AC's testicle along with Wates [25.07.2019];
- (11) Assisting Ciucur in clamping the testicles of RM [04.08.2019];
- (12) The removal of AC's testicle along with Wates and Atkin [26.10.2019];
- (13) The removal of TS's testicle along with Carruthers [27.10.2019];
- (14) The removal of SG's penile nerve along with Atkin and Carruthers [23.11.2019];
- (15) The removal of DG's testicle along with Wates, Atkin and Carruthers [26.11.2019];
- (16) Being present at the removal and then reinsertion of RP's testicle along with Williams when Atkin and Carruthers performed the procedure [18.01.2020].

15. As I have said there are five other counts in the same time frame dealing with other procedures you undertook without assistance from others and so are in addition to the criminality reflected in the conspiracy charge. Count 2 [8th April 2017] deals with your acts in performing a penectomy and double orchiectomy castration (removal of testicles) on CN; Count 3 [17th October 2019] where you clamped the testicles of DG and were also involved in splitting his penis; Count 4 [4th February 2018] concerns the use of Burdizzo clamps on the testicles of TF, leading to surgical castration in hospital on 6th February 2018. You also

pierced TF's testicles with needles; Count 5 [20th September 2019] covers the use of Burdizzo clamps on RP. You also injected RP's testicles with anaesthetic; Count 6 [28th January 2020] where you undertook freezing the leg of AS such that it required amputation.

16. Counts 7 and 8 relate to a further procedure carried out by you again acting alone. On 22nd December 2017, you electrocuted the anus and penis of a child aged 16. This was filmed and the film then distributed by you posting it to the site for money. Some of the profits are sent to the child by way of payment or reward. From the footage the 16 year old is clearly in some pain and asks that it stop.
17. Count 13 reflects the proceeds through the 'enuchmaker' website from subscribers between 2017 and 2021. The total amounts received into three accounts using the payment platform Stripe was over £300,000 representing the proceeds of criminal activity.
18. On the Wood Green indictment, on counts 6 to 9 there is a count of possessing extreme pornographic images where on 18th May 2021, you were in possession of an extreme pornographic image depicting intercourse with an animal, and three counts of distributing indecent pseudo-photographs of a child, where between 15th September and 31st January 2021, you distributed six indecent pseudo-photographs of a child of a category A nature, six indecent pseudo-photographs of a child of category B nature and 4 indecent pseudo-photographs of a child of a category C nature.

Carruthers.

19. On count 1 and your criminality there are a minimum of six procedures you were involved in carrying out between 9th September 2017 and 18th January 2020. You were arrested on 19th January 2022, in Newport, Gwent. You pleaded not guilty plea on 30th June 2023 and your trial date was set for March 2024. After legal argument you then pleaded guilty on 25th January 2024. On count 1, you will be sentenced for your involvement in the following procedures:

- (1) The removal of RM's testicle along with Williams and Gustavson present, 09.09.2017.
- (2) Present and assisting Williams in the removal of Atkin's testicles, Gustavson present, 07.11.2017.
- (3) The removal of TS's testicle along with Gustavson, 27.10.2019.
- (4) The removal of SG's penile nerve along with Gustavson and Atkin, 23.11.2019.

- (5) The removal of DG's testicle along with Wates, Atkin and Gustavson, 26.11.2019.
- (6) The removal and then reinsertion of RP's testicle along with Atkin, while Gustavson and Williams were present, 18.01.2020.

Atkin

20. On count 1 there are a minimum of eight procedures between 6th May 2018 and 18th January 2020 you were present for or assisting with. You were arrested in Edgbaston, Birmingham on 18th January 2022. You studied Veterinary Science at both Bristol and Liverpool Universities. However, you were not a qualified surgeon, or a doctor.
21. You initially pleaded not guilty on 30th June 2023, and your trial was also listed for March 2024. After legal argument you pleaded guilty on 25th January 2024. On count 1, you will be sentenced for your involvement in the following procedures:
 - (1) Along with Wates and Gustavson, cutting off TF's penis, 06.05.2018;
 - (2) The removal of PS's testicle along with Wates and Gustavson, 23.09.2018;
 - (3) Cutting a nerve in GL's penis along with Wates and Gustavson, 06.10.2018;
 - (4) The removal of PS's testicle along with Wates and Gustavson, 19.01.2019;
 - (5) The removal of AC's testicle along with Gustavson and Wates, 26.10.2019;
 - (6) The removal of SG's penile nerve along with Gustavson and Carruthers, 23.11.2019;
 - (7) The removal of DG's testicle along with Wates, Gustavson and Carruthers, 26.11.2019;
 - (8) Removing and then reinserted RP's testicle along with Carruthers, while Gustavson and Williams were present, 18.01.2020.

Wates

22. On count 1, you were involved in a minimum of nine procedures between 21st July 2017 and 26th November 2019. You were arrested at your home address in Purley, Surrey on 2nd February 2022. You pleaded guilty to count 1 at the PTPH hearing on 19th April 2023, and so are entitled to 25% credit. In February 2021 you bought five scalpels online and in June 2017, you bought a suturing kit online. The procedures concerning you are:
 - (1) Assisting by Gustavson in the removal of HM's testicles, 21.07.2017;
 - (2) Along with Gustavson and Janus Atkin, cutting off TF's penis, 06.05.2018;
 - (3) The removal of PS's testicle along with Gustavson and Atkin, 23.09.2018;

- (4) Cutting a nerve in GL's penis along with Gustavson and Atkin, 06.10.2018;
- (5) The removal of PS's testicle along with Atkin and Gustavson, 19.01.2019;
- (6) The removal of AC's testicle along with Gustavson, 25.07.2019;
- (7) The removal of AC's testicle along with Gustavson and Atkin, 26.10.2019;
- (8) The removal of DG's testicle along with Gustavson Atkin and Carruthers, 26.11.2019;
- (9) The removal of GL's testicle along with Gustavson, 03.02.2018.

Ciucur

23. On count 1, Ciucur you were involved in two procedures on the 30th August 2018 and the 4th August 2019. You were arrested on 15th February 2022 at your home address in Gretna, Scotland. You also entered a not guilty plea to count 1 on 30th June 2023, and the trial date set for March 2024. You pleaded guilty to count 1 on 14th December 2023. There is a written Basis of Plea in your case. In that document there is an acceptance to a sexual component to the offending as well as a financial interest.

24. The procedures you participated in were:

- (1) Inserting needles into RC's scrotum with Gustavson, on or around 20.07.2019;
- (2) Assisting Gustavson in clamping the testicles of RM, 04.08.2019.

Williams.

25. Williams you pleaded guilty plea to count 14 on 30th June 2023. You were arrested on 19th January 2022, at an address in Newport, Gwent. You participated in one procedure, reflected in count 14. That count covers you assisting your husband Carruthers, in the removal of Atkin's testicles, with Gustavson also present on 7th November 2017. Stills from this procedure were shown in the sentencing hearing. Other footage shows you also to have been present at two other procedures on 9th September 2017 and 18th January 2020.

Scharf

26. Scharf, you pleaded guilty to count 15 on 2nd February 2024. Count 15 reflects your involvement in the removal of AC’s testicle on 25th July 2019. You flew to London from Frankfurt for the purpose of carrying out the procedure before returning to Germany. Your arrest took place on 24th November 2023, at Heathrow Airport, when you were meeting a connecting flight from Florida to Frankfurt.

B. Sentencing guidelines and authorities

27. At the sentencing hearing for Byrnes, Arnold and Crimi-Appleby I made reference to s.57 of the Sentencing Act 2020. I do so here too. As that section makes clear, in sentencing a court must have regard to various matters including punishment, reform and rehabilitation, protection of the public, the making of reparation in appropriate cases and, as perhaps particularly here, the reduction of crime including its reduction by deterrence.

28. Within the relevant sentencing guidelines for offences contrary to s.18 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, consideration needs to be given to harm and to culpability. In *R. v. Brendan Patrick McCarthy* [2019] EWCA 2202, the Court of Appeal considered sentencing for extreme body modifications. At paragraphs 52 to 56 there is helpful guidance given to the impact of consent. I note in particular what is said at paragraph 56 namely:

Given the underlying policy imperative which dictates that consent does not provide a defence to serious assaults of this nature, genuine consent will have an impact on the appropriate sentence but not such as to lead to penalties entirely divorced from cases of the ordinary sort. It is possible that the category of “harm” will be reduced; but it is more likely that real consent will affect the evaluation of “culpability” and lead to a reduction in the sentence that would be appropriate in the ordinary course.

29. Here, applying the relevant guidelines and considering culpability, the Prosecution submits that on count 1, as well as for all the substantive s.18 offences, this case sits within the ‘high’ category on the basis of the presence of a number of factors identified within the guidelines. I entirely agree. As the guidelines make clear culpability is to be determined by weighing all the factors of the case. Where there are characteristics present which fall under different levels of culpability, then the court is required to balance these characteristics giving appropriate weight to relevant factors to reach a fair assessment of the offender’s culpability.

30. Here there is significant planning or premeditation that takes place prior to all of the procedures being carried out. This is amply demonstrated by the extensive text messages set out in the evidence. On the ‘victims’ at least some of them, are obviously vulnerable due to age, personal characteristics, or circumstances. Whilst I note that only one of those to undergo procedures has positively assisted the police investigation, that does not mean there are no victims. The prosecution suggests it is also within high culpability through the use of a highly dangerous weapon or weapon equivalent. In some of the procedures items are used that may well be fit that definition when one considers all the facts and circumstances of the procedures. A number of the procedures carried out used knives or surgical scalpels. As I found in the context of dealing with Arnold, a surgical scalpel is, in the context of its use in this case, capable of being considered a highly dangerous weapon. On count 1 this factor is not here determinative of putting these assaults into this category: in my view it is something I need to consider alongside the other factors.
31. I need to consider roles. Certainly for Gustavson and those who undertake a number of procedures, a clear leading role in group activity is present. Finally, this is prolonged or persistent assault. Here, before looking at any aggravating factors that may be defendant specific, there are some other factors that apply to all defendants. In addition to the significant planning of the procedures themselves, the planning is added to by the provision of filming equipment and the equipment to be used in the extreme body modification. There are copious messages detailing the arrangements as to location and timing as well as the provision of medical products including scalpels, masks as well as making arrangements for when procedures could be carried out.
32. Turning next to the assessment of harm, in my judgment the activity here all comes within category 1 as to harm. The removal of the penis or testicles carried out as here by non-medically trained people and in conditions far from sterile or ideal, are particularly grave and life-threatening matters. They are permanent and irreversible procedures and will have a long-term, lifetime, effect on the ability of the victim to carry out their day-to-day activities. Many of those subject to these practices will require extensive medical and other assistance for the rest of their lives. With you Ciucur, where you inserted needles through two victims testicles and used Burdizzo clamps on another, this is also category 1 as to harm.
33. The filming of the procedures is in my judgment an aggravating feature of this case. Whilst this is specifically included as an aggravating feature of offences in the sexual offence guidelines it is not in the offence specific guidelines for causing grievous bodily harm with intent, but bearing in mind the sexual nature of the offences here, it is something that adds

further to the seriousness of what took place. Whilst I accept those who participated consented to what took place and their faces were pixellated on the website, it is still a feature of the case of some significance.

34. Dangerousness needs to be considered in all cases, particularly for those on count 1. I will turn to this when I deal with each defendant.
35. I am invited to consider the imposition of a Sexual Harm Prevention Order [SHPO] in each of your cases. S.18 OAPA 1861 is included in sch. 5 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and so such an order can be made. The test for imposing such an order is that it has to be necessary. If such an order is necessary, then the terms of the order must be proportionate.

Consent.

36. When sentencing others I made the following observation [para 67] as to consent:

In terms of 'consent', whilst some allowance will be made for that, I need to have regard to the quality of the consent given, and as is clear from what was said by the Court of Appeal in McCarthy, to reduce appropriately the sentence, but not so as to lead to penalties divorced from cases of the ordinary sort. To many of those looking at this case the activity will appear at the very least to be disgusting and abhorrent.

37. I note what is set out in the sentencing note from the prosecution at paragraph 64 as to the quality of the consent given. I have seen and read the victim impact statement of RP. He speaks of the coercive nature of you Gustavson towards him and the impact you had on him. Whilst he says he reluctantly went along with what happened, as he also makes clear this was after you had cajoled him into what then took place and was not true consent on his part to what actually took place. He ended up going to hospital as he was in such pain. He also speaks about you Carruthers, 'Zeus Pup' as he says you were known and you Williams, known as 'Hades' and the general impact of those he met through the website had on him. He says that whilst first impressions were welcoming and pleasant, with hindsight it was manipulative and coercive. He also speaks of the offers of money that to him in his circumstances then would be life-changing. The impact on him of what took place is clear: physical, emotional and psychological. In my judgment RP should be commended for having taking the right, but clearly very difficult decision of making his complaint to the police. Had he not done so, this appalling activity may well have continued and caused grave and really serious harm to many others.

Other guidelines on extreme images and possession of criminal property

38. On the guidelines for possession of criminal property, the case comes within Category A, high culpability on the basis that you played a leading role where the offending is part of group activity. I note this was criminal activity over a sustained period of time. On harm part A, as the sum is £300,000 it is category 4. On the guidelines, a start point for sentence of 5 years' and a sentence range of between 3 to 6 years' imprisonment. Taking into account harm B, in my judgment the underlying offending here is so serious that it leads to an upwards adjustment to the next level and a sentence of 7 years' imprisonment before any discount for plea and consideration as to totality.
39. For the making and distribution of an image, counts 7 and 8, this is within Category A and so a start point of 6 years' custody and a range of sentence of 4 to 9 years' custody.
40. On the images the subject of the indictment initially before the Crown Court at Wood Green, with possession I note the maximum sentence for indecent images involving necrophilia or bestiality is 2 years otherwise 3 years. On the three counts of distribution of indecent images, the offending here is in category A for distribution and so a start point of 3 years' custody and a range of sentence of between 2 and 5 years custody.
41. Having set out the relevant guidelines and the appropriate sentence ranges, clearly I must bear in mind the guidance on totality of sentence so as to ensure I do not double-count.

C. Individual circumstances.

Gustavson.

42. You are now 46 [dob 7.12.1977]. There are two convictions recorded against you. Both relate to when you lived in Norway, and are for offences of fraud. In 1999, you were sentenced to 75 days' imprisonment suspended for 2 years, and in 2001, a sentence of 8 months' imprisonment, was partially suspended.
43. I note that in addition to the relevant matters already mentioned, found on the computer at your address was an image of the freezer at your home address showing that you kept numerous body parts – no doubt what you would regard as the trophies of your acts in carrying out extreme body modification procedures.

44. In my judgment there can be no doubt about the clear evidence of sexual motivation to the offences you committed either alone, or with others: this is drawn from the filmed activity where you masturbate many of those you then carry out procedures on, as well as what you say on the footage. In addition there are numerous messages sent by and to you that also demonstrate obvious sexual motivations.
45. On financial motivation or gain, the evidence shows that accounts you operated as part of the website received very significant sums of money. The overall sterling equivalent is in the region of £300,000. The confiscation proceedings in your case have been adjourned and a timetable set. The dates are these: Response to s.18 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 [PoCA] Disclosure Order by 7th June 2024; service of s.16 PoCA statements of information by 30th August 2024; service of any rebuttal to s.16(s.17) by 25th October 2024; and service of prosecution response by 3rd January 2025. There will be a confiscation directions hearing at this Court on 24th January 2025. As well as receiving substantial sums into the bank accounts you operated which you did not disclose for tax purposes, you were claiming benefits in part at least from your need for care based on what had been done to you.
46. There is a Pre-Sentence Report [PSR] dated 1st May 2024. I note from the contents of the report that you do not accept seeking out or recruiting any of other defendants but you claim that they sought you out once they saw what was on the website. You accept you engaged in sexual activity with some of your co-defendants, but say you were never in a relationship with any of them and refute any suggestion that you believe you took advantage of any of their vulnerabilities: they were all willing participants. In terms of the account given by RP , you deny much of what he says about the nature of the relationship between you and him. In the report I note the following passage:

“ It is difficult to form any firm conclusions in respect of Mr Gustavson's level of insight into his offending. He has not expressed any particular remorse, as he feels that he has helped the victims. In addition, he does not present as though he has any particular responsibility to them, or his co-defendants. From his perspective, all those involved were consenting, and participating in the offending for their own reasons. That he considers himself to be capable and well placed to make decisions about who did and who did not qualify for the offending is notable, as his only qualification would be his own personal experience. When asked what he could have done differently, he said that he should have kept the webpage with its original purpose and "helped people." He said he should never have engaged in the body modifications and "that just went too far."

47. On 1st May 2024, the day before the sentencing hearing started, a psychiatric report dated 24th March 2024, was uploaded to the DCS file. If it was to be relied on it is very surprising this

was been provided so late into this process. The overall proposal of the report is for this court to consider the imposition of a hospital order in your case. Mr Panesar told the Court that proposal is not relied on. As I observed in the course of the hearing from reading the report it is clear that it is based entirely on interviews with you and there has been no access to any other medical information from the time events are said to have taken place, or from your time in custody, or from any independent third party source. The weight to be given to this report is not as it would be if there was independent material to support it.

48. I need to consider dangerousness. In the light of the activity you have admitted to by your pleas, bearing in mind the test is whether there is a significant risk of serious harm occasioned by the commission by you of further specified offences, I find that test as set out in s.308 of the Sentencing Act 2020 [SA 2020], to be met. I note the assessment included in the PSR and that the author of the report places the risk at 'high' rather than as 'significant' so far as you are concerned. I also note that in the psychiatric report Dr Quereshi appears to accept that the dangerousness test is met. The ultimate assessment is one for this Court. Taking into account all of the details of your offending here, and all that I now know about you, in my judgment the risk should be categorised as significant. On your behalf, Mr Panesar concedes that the dangerousness threshold is met. In your case I will need to consider whether a life sentence is required and if not, there will clearly need to be an extended sentence of some considerable length.
49. In mitigation Mr Panesar has made a number of submissions. He relies on your early pleas. He relies on the content of the psychiatric report and the diagnosis of Body Integrity Dysphoria in your case. He also relies on the involvement in body modifications following the break-up of your marriage. He did not seek to minimise any of your actions or involvement, but observed that you are someone who wanted to help others by addressing the issues that they had with their bodies.
50. He made a number of points about those who have not engaged with the police investigation and who he says do not support a prosecution and also those who got involved in doing further procedures once they had had one procedure carried out. He referred to some of the messages in the prosecution papers that give positive responses to the procedures. As I observed in the course of his mitigation, some of his observations on the material may be seen as aggravating what was being done rather than mitigating it. As I have also made clear the 'consent' of those involved in the procedures is clearly a mitigating factor: the question for this Court is by how much any 'consent' should reduce the sentence? As is clear, there is the evidence from RP, but there the absence of numerous similar such accounts.

51. Mr Panesar also referred to the statement of Dr Turjanski who saw you after your leg was amputated. It is of note that she says in her statement that:

“To my recollection neither I, nor any member of the Liaison Psychiatry Team, had seen a similar presentation either preceding Mr GUSTAVSON presentation to the Royal Free Hospital, or since. His case was discussed in an anonymised manner with other professionals in the field, nationally and internationally, seeking best advice. As a result of these discussions BIID was considered the likely diagnosis. To my knowledge there was no specific recommended treatment for BIID, he was offered antidepressant treatment as above, but he declined”

52. On financial motive and reward he says that whilst £300,000 might be the income into the accounts, that should not be equated with your personal benefit from this enterprise. In relation to Ciucur it is submitted by Mr Panesar that there is no acceptance of any manipulation of him by you. This is in contrast to what is said on behalf of Ciucur.

53. In regard to dangerousness, Mr Panesar submits that a life sentence is not required. He submits that all that was done here was to assist those with the wish to change their body and what then took place is not so serious that it warrants a life sentence: it can be met with a determinate sentence, or if necessary an extended sentence.

Carruthers.

54. You are now 61 [dob 9.11.1963] and of previous good character. I have seen and read a report about you from Dr James Barrett, a Consultant Psychiatrist, dated 24th January 2024. He speaks of your feelings of gender dysphoria. He makes clear that in your account to him you said you followed what Gustavson told you about those you carried out procedures on and that you somewhat naïvely went along with what Gustavson said to you. I note that you had worked for the Ceredigion Mid Wales NHS trust from 1991-2002 as a ‘domestic assistant’: and although you are clearly well qualified, you have no medical qualifications.

55. In terms of sexual motivations for what you did, there is evidence from the footage and messages to confirm it. Financial records show money sent to you by Gustavson. I note that on one of the films Williams speaks of your fee being £500 and his being £800 and that Gustavson adds “and you’re still not half up to what Gert is taking.” I also note that in some instances you wore a camera so as to better film the procedures you were carrying out. When your home was searched some testicles were found in the freezer.

56. In your case I have seen a read a sentencing note where it is said there was no sexual nor financial motive to your actions. I do not accept those submissions. The material in this

case reveals a wealth of evidence depicting your full engagement in what was taking place and that it was clearly done by you for both sexual and financial reasons.

57. There is a PSR dated 30th April 2024. In the report, when asked about the sexualised nature of some of the messages you sent, you said you were just playing along with Gustavson and that these were just fantasies and no sexual pleasure for you. As I have said, I do not agree with what is said in your account on this topic, nor with the submissions made on this point by your counsel. The content and tone of the messages is very clear and shows your clear sexual motivations and from that it is clear you also derived some sexual gratification. I note the author of the report observes that whilst you accept responsibility for what you did, you do not fully accept the obvious harm caused to others and that you have something of a ‘saviour complex’ in relation to your offending. In the interview with the probation officer you seek to explain holding some level of surgical experience and that the procedures were in sterile settings despite the opposite being the case on both these points. In my judgment this too is a sign of a lack of the realisation on your part of the seriousness of what you were doing to others.
58. Dangerousness is something I need to consider in your case. I have considered all of the material I have about you and alongside the statutory test. I do not find the test met.
59. In mitigation Mr Greenwood relies on your plea, your previous good character and what others have to say about you. He has referred to some messages in the evidence that he submits show a different side to you in connection with some of the others involved, including RP. As well as the character letters written about you by others he has referred to the content of your own letter written to the Court. You express in that letter some remorse for what you have been involved with. When I asked him to deal with issue of sexual gratification as I made clear I do not accept what you say about it, he accepted that there are some messages that reveal sexual motives, but invites the court to have regard to what may be fantasy type conversation as opposed to messages depicting sexual acts and no video footage of any sexual acts when procedures take place. On financial motive, he submitted that funds received by you were extremely modest and relate only to the payment of travel expenses. That in my judgement does not accord with the tone of the messages.
60. Mr Greenwood made some observations on role within the conspiracy played by you and also in relation to whether a scalpel in the context of your offending is a highly dangerous weapon.

61. Mr. Greenwood submits that a SHPO should not be made in your case. In a written document he sets out various submissions as to why such an order is not necessary and would be disproportionate.

Atkin

62. You are now 39 [dob 30.3.1985] and are of previous good character.

63. In terms of sexual motivations for acting as you did, there is evidence from the footage and messages to confirm it. Some of the messaging as it relates to you is very extreme and explicit. There is evidence that you received payments from Gustavson. Where there are records, the payments total several hundred pounds. Pieces of genitalia were found when your home was searched.

64. I have seen and read a PSR dated 1st May 2024. I note from the interview with the very experienced probation officer who has written the report in your case, that you sought to minimise your role. You also sought to rely on your veterinary studies as giving you sufficient knowledge and skills such that you ‘knew’ what you were doing. You also express the view that what you were doing was ‘helping’ people rather than harming them. As is clear from all of the evidence here, this was really serious harm caused to a number of people. I note too that you seek to distance yourself from what was taking place when you were present and to lay the blame on Gustavson. In part of the report, the author makes the following observation:

“ In my assessment Mr Atkin's offending is linked to distorted thinking that has allowed him to overcome his internal barriers to commit this offence. His association with negative peers being a significant factor in his offending. It is clear from the case papers that Mr Atkin was a willing participant in what took place and he lacks any real insight into his behaviour which was hugely reckless over a protracted period of time. His motivations and triggers require further exploration post sentence, in order to reduce his risks ”.

65. Dangerousness arises in your case. I note the assessment of the experienced probation officer that the risk is assessed as medium and for the statute it has to be significant. Having reflected on all the information available, I do not find the test is met.

66. In mitigation Mr. Taylor submits that people here went into the procedures after much thought. He has also referred to documents in the unused material where some in messages make clear that those who underwent procedures were happy with what happened to them.

67. As part of his mitigation he submitted that it may be that the law needs to catch-up with what many people now regard as being something they should be permitted to have done to them. As I have made clear a number of times, a measured discount will be applied to reflect the consent given by those who had procedures carried out on them when it comes to assessing sentence. With respect to the submissions made by Mr Taylor about the position in law not reflecting current attitudes, I do not agree with him that it is for this court to express views about changes in the law.
68. On the application of the guidelines he submits that a case such as this was never within the mind of the authors and suggests that this Court should not try to ‘ram pieces of a jigsaw puzzle into places where they do not properly fit’. In my judgment the guidelines apply – the issue is how they apply to the individual offending.
69. Turning to personal mitigation he points to your age, plea and previous good character. He says that you are an intelligent man and that had you not met Gustavson and fallen under his spell you would not be before any court. He also says that your primary motivation was to help others to undergo procedures similar to the ones you had had done to you. He also submits that whilst sexual motivation and financial rewards are accepted, they are relatively minor matters so far as you are concerned. In relation to sentence, he invites consideration of your HIV status and the possible impact of that on your health and invites the Court to take that into account in passing sentence.

Wates.

70. You are now 67 [dob 19.4.1957]. You have a conviction from 11th January 2023. On that date you were sentenced for the possession of ammunition found at the time of your arrest on these matters on 2nd February 2022. You were fined for the possession of ammunition. You are a retired chemist and former member of the Royal Society of Chemists. As with all the other defendants you have no surgical experience nor qualifications. In terms of specific aggravating features in your case I note that on arrest, in the freezer of your home was found a scrotum and two penile shafts. On one of those penile shafts was a tight ligature formed by an orange band close to the cut margin and the margin of the penile shaft had been cleanly incised and on the other, a tight blue band close to the line of excision at the base of the shaft. In addition a quantity of metal clamps, a large green medical bag with medical supplies including sutures, scalpels, and surgical gloves; multiple documents describing male genitalia and anaesthetics, other medical supplies and bottles of lidocaine and testosterone. As the

prosecution suggest, as a chemist, you would know both the legal and ethical consequences of having the medical supplies. In terms of the sexual motivation and interest in your case, I note that you used as a moniker ‘Stuffedick’ to access the ‘eunuchmaker’ website and also on the extreme fetish website ‘cutedeadguys’, a site with explicit images of dead males.

71. I have seen and read a number of character references and a letter from your older brother, Michael Wates. Some letters are from people who have known you for close on 40 years and they speak of your acts here being out of character. One author, Sally Everitt, makes the comment that it is remarkable that you are locked up at a time when there is talk of overcrowding and a shortage of prison spaces and well as saying that you believed you were helping people and present no danger. It may be the writer of that letter will take a different view once they know the full details the gruesome catalogue of your involvement are known to them.
72. I have seen and read the PSR dated 23rd February 2024. I note that the interview with the probation officer is a candid statement of your involvement: perhaps more so than for others. I note by way of example, the observation: *“Mr Wates' guilty plea indicates that he accepts responsibility, and he does not apportion blame to others for his wrongdoing”*. That should be seen alongside the comment: *“However, his level of self-insight and his understanding of the impact of his offending is limited.”*
73. I am grateful to the experienced probation officer who has compiled the report for her considered views on risks in relation to the issue of dangerousness. Although I must consider this issue, taking into account all I now know about you, I do not in your case find the test to be met.
74. In mitigation on your behalf Mr. Dixon speaks of the motivations behind what you did. He submits that credit for your plea should be at the highest level as there were discussions at the magistrates’ court even though the BCM form is not available to indicate overtly a likely guilty plea. In my view you certainly deserve credit of not less than 25% as you did plead at the first opportunity at this Court. Through Mr Dixon you express your regret for being persuaded to get involved in the procedures you did. Mr Dixon, perhaps rather more realistically than some others, accepts the categorisation of the offending within the relevant guidelines and he is right to do so.

Ciucur.

75. You are now 30 [dob 3.4.1964] and of previous good character. I note that in terms of age, you were 24 and 25 as at the date of the procedures you were involved with in 2018 and 2019. Images of the procedures you were involved in were shown in the course of the opening.
76. Sexual motivation in your case is demonstrated by messages and images you sent. You also received payments from Gustavson. Some of this appears to be for what you were doing and also as you claimed you were without an income. In the messages about money it is clear you introduced to Gustavson others who wished to have a procedure performed on them.
77. In your case although I do not have a PSR, I have seen and read a psychological assessment from Dr. Katherine Goodsell, a forensic psychologist, dated 20th January 2024. The report sets out your account to her of having borrowed money from Gustavson that you were in his thrall and that demands were made of you in return and that is how you came about to get involved in the procedures you took a part in. I also have a sentencing note and a letter of reference from John Cabrini-Dale.
78. In mitigation Mr. Osborne submits that your age and character are very important. He refers to the basis of plea. He also relies on the fact that whilst you have been in the UK, you have been very much alone. He submits that you are someone who has been under the influence and manipulation of Gustavson and in assessing your culpability, that should be met with some reduction in sentence. Of the two procedures you are to be sentenced for, he submits that whilst both are significant, one is less serious than the other. He concedes, and again in my view very properly, the engagement on the running or administering the website is an aggravating feature. He submits that whilst that is the case, it has limited additional impact. Mr. Osborne has spoken about the period you have been in custody and how that has had an impact on you. He also speaks of concerns you have as to homophobia on a return to Romania at the conclusion of any sentence passed on you.

Williams.

79. You are now 32 [dob 17.9.1991] and of previous good character. You are the partner or husband Carruthers. There is evidence in your case of the sexual motivation to what you did here. The general aggravating factors I have set out apply to you and I note in addition that whilst your active participation is on one procedure, you were present at two others. I also note that on your arrest, testicles were found in a chest freezer in the kitchen of the address you shared with Carruthers.

80. I have seen and read the PSR dated 19th April 2024. The author of that report notes, as do I, a rather deeper level of involvement than you may wish to portray. Through your close relationship to Carruthers you would have been well aware of the wide ranging nature and scale of what was going on. The author of the PSR addresses the issue of dangerousness and I am grateful for the observations made. I agree with the assessment that the statutory test is not met in your case.

81. I have seen and read a report from Dr. Tim Green dated 1st March 2024. I have also seen and read a number of letters of support written about you. On your behalf Mr. Thomas submits that in the light of all the personal letters, reports and other material, this Court can take a view on sentence that your involvement is less than others. He refers to the contents of the reports and the impact of custody on you. He submits that all of the features of the case here bring this into the bracket where sentence could be suspended. I do not agree.

Scharf.

82. You are now 61 [dob 15.7.1962] and of previous good character. In the procedure you were involved with you are half naked. Images from that procedure were shown in the sentencing hearing. I note amongst the messages that relate to you that you send a message to Gustavson introducing him to a young man who says he has decided to self-castrate that weekend and that you may need his [Gustavson's] advice.

83. There is a PSR in your case dated 30th April 2024. I note from the report that whilst you take some responsibility through your plea of guilty, you maintain that at no point did you intend to cause harm to anyone. You also seek to downplay your contact with Gustavson and speak about being deceived by him into doing what you did. On this particular point of the probation interview I need to read this alongside the other evidence summarised in these remarks that shows your clear connection and involvement. In the course of the sentencing hearing, the prosecution have referred to your connection to body modification procedures in Germany.

84. The PSR refers to you saying that you have suffered two heart attacks, one whilst in custody. There is a reference in medical documents to support this. I have no doubt that the prison service will be able to deal with any health issues you may experience. I have seen and read a short statement from your brother saying that if given a suspended sentence with a condition of residence in the UK, the family will support you. There are a number of other letters where people who have known you for some time speak highly of you.

85. In mitigation Mr. Padley refers to your plea, age and good character. He makes some submissions both in the written sentence note and in the hearing about the appropriate categorisation of the procedure you were involved in. His submission is that harm is more appropriately categorised at level 3. I do not agree with the way in which harm here is downplayed by Mr. Padley. In my judgment when all of the features are considered, it is more appropriately into category 1. The points made by Mr. Padley may go to where in the range it may best fit.

Sentences.

Gustavson

86. Gustavson, on count 1, your involvement covers the sixteen procedures set out at paragraph 14 above. In addition there are the five further substantive counts of causing grievous bodily harm with intent. Counts 7 and 8, although charged as different offences, show another extremely serious procedure you engaged in. In addition I have to sentence you for a total of four offences of possessing or distributing extreme pornographic images. Finally, count 13, on the main indictment, possessing criminal property of a sum of £300,000.
87. In the light of your role in the conspiracy set out in count 1, the other offending in counts 2 to 8, and having found the dangerousness test to be met, considering the seriousness of count 1 and the offences in counts 2 to 8 and 13 that are associated with it, a sentence of imprisonment for life is clearly justified. There will be life imprisonment pursuant to s.285 SA 2020. Having come to that conclusion, I need to assess the appropriate minimum term for that discretionary life sentence. I assess that as 22 years. In my judgment the notional determinate sentence is one of 33 years imprisonment. I have come to that figure by taking an overall initial start point for sentence of 50 years, have then made some allowance for consent to reduce that to 44 years, and then made a reduction of 25% to reflect your pleas of guilty.
88. On each of counts 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 there will be concurrent determinate sentences of 6 years' imprisonment. For counts 2 to 6, on the basis of the category 1 for harm and category A for culpability, a start point of 10 years, some reduction for consent and then the reduction for plea. On count 7, a concurrent determinate sentence of 18 months and on count 8, a concurrent determinate sentence of 6 years imprisonment. On count 8, the gravest of those two counts, allowing for the significant aggravation in relation to the production of the video, a start point of 8 years before plea. On count 13, the start point before plea is one of 7 years and so a concurrent sentence of 5 years' imprisonment. All of those sentences are to be concurrent to each other and concurrent to the life sentence imposed on count 1.
89. Turning to the Wood Green indictment, on the count dealing with possession of an extreme pornographic image, 12 months' imprisonment and on the three counts of distributing indecent images of children, 2 years imprisonment on each count. As I have to consider

totality those sentences to be concurrent to each other and to the sentences on the primary indictment.

90. As I have passed a life sentence, I do not make a SHPO.

91. In relation to the life sentence what that means is that, before you will first be considered for parole, there will be a period of 22 years less 415 days you have been on remand. The sentence is one of life imprisonment with a minimum term of 22 years less 415 days. If the information which I have been provided with as to the days on remand proves to be inaccurate, then the prosecution or defence must notify the court so that the case can be relisted to correct the calculation as soon as possible and in any event within 56 days. When it comes to the minimum term that you will serve, I make plain that I am not ordering that you are to be released at the end of that term. Whether you will be released or not at that stage will be a matter for the Parole Board to consider. Only when the minimum term has been served can the Parole Board decide whether it is safe to release you or not. If the Board does release you, then you will remain on licence and liable to recall for the rest of your life.

Carruthers

92. Carruthers, on count 1, your involvement covers the six procedures set out at paragraph 19 above. The initial start point for sentence in your case, allowing for the identified aggravating and mitigating factors, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 17 years' imprisonment. The offending here, as with all others, is all within Category 1 as to harm and category A for culpability on the relevant guidelines. The sentence in your case has to reflect the role you took in some of the procedures. I have indicated that I do not find you to be dangerous within the statutory definition of that term. Making some allowance for consent, I reduce the sentence that would otherwise be passed to one of 13 years. As your plea was not at the earliest stage, and a trial date had been set, credit of about 15% is appropriate and so a sentence of 11 years' imprisonment. There has been a qualifying curfew in your case. That has run for 306 days and so 153 days will count towards your sentence. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. I have considered the provisions relating to a SHPO. I do not make such an order in your case. I have considered your age as at the likely date of release and the necessity for such an order.

Atkin

93. Atkin, on count 1, your involvement covers the eight procedures set out at paragraph 21 above. The initial start point for sentence in your case, allowing for the identified aggravating and mitigating factors, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 18 years' imprisonment. The offending here, as with all others, is all within Category 1 as to harm and category A for culpability on the relevant guidelines. I have indicated that I do not find you to be dangerous within the statutory definition of that term. Making some allowance for consent, I reduce the sentence that would otherwise be passed to one of 14 years. As your plea was not at the earliest stage, and a trial date had been set, credit of about 15% is appropriate. I do not accept that you are entitled to credit of 25%. Others pleaded far earlier than you did. Allowing for the level of credit I have set out, a sentence of 12 years imprisonment. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. I have considered the provisions relating to a SHPO. I do not make such an order in your case.

Wates

94. Wates, on count 1, your involvement covers the nine procedures set out at paragraph 22 above. The start point for sentence in your case, allowing for the identified aggravating and mitigating factors, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 20 years' imprisonment. The offending here, as with others, is all within Category 1 for harm and A for culpability on the relevant guidelines. I have indicated that I do not find you to be dangerous within the statutory definition of that term. Making some allowance for consent, I reduce the sentence that would otherwise be passed to one of 16 years. As your plea was at the PTPH credit of 25% is appropriate and so a sentence of 12 years' imprisonment. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. As with the previous defendants, I do not make a SHPO. I have considered your age as at the likely date of release and the necessity for such an order.

Ciucur.

95. Ciucur, on count 1, your involvement in the conspiracy relates to two procedures as set out in paragraph 25 above. The start point for sentence in your case, allowing for the identified

aggravating and mitigating factors including your role in the administration of the website, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 11 years' imprisonment. I place this offence into Category 1 for harm and A for culpability. In the light of all I know about you and taking into account your offending, I do not find you to be dangerous within the statutory definition of that term. Making some allowance for consent, and in your case the facts of one of those two procedures, I reduce the sentence that would otherwise be passed to one of 7 years. As your plea came later you are not in the bracket for full credit for your plea, but a reduction of approximately 15%, and some additional reduction on age, a sentence of 5 years' 8 months' imprisonment. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. I have considered the provisions relating to a SHPO. I do not make such an order in your case.

Williams.

96. Williams on count 14 [the removal of the testicles of Atkin] the start point for sentence, allowing for the identified aggravating and mitigating factors, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 10 years' imprisonment. I place this offence into Category 1 for harm and A for culpability. 10 years' imprisonment is at the bottom of the category range. Making allowance for the consent of Atkin, I reduce that sentence to one just below the start point appropriate for medium culpability: 6 years' imprisonment. Giving full credit for your plea, a sentence of 4 years' 6 months imprisonment. There has been a qualifying curfew in your case. That has run for 306 days and so 153 days will count towards your sentence. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. I have considered the provisions relating to a SHPO. I do not make such an order in your case.

Scharf.

97. Scharf on count 15, the removal of AC's testicle, the start point for sentence, allowing for the identified aggravating and mitigating factors, but before considering the impact of consent, would be one of 10 years' imprisonment. Although I place this offence into Category 1 for harm I must have in mind that the testicle removed from AC remained viable when put back in. The offence is in category A for culpability. Again, a sentence of 10 years is at the

lowest end of that category range. Making allowance for the consent, I reduce that the sentence close to the starting point appropriate for medium culpability: 6 years' imprisonment. Giving full credit for your plea, a sentence of 4 years' 6 months' imprisonment. You will serve two-thirds of that sentence and then be released on licence for the remainder of the sentence. Whilst on licence, you must comply with the terms of that licence: at any time it may be withdrawn and your return to custody ordered. I have considered the provisions relating to a SHPO. I do not make such an order in your case.

98. As the statutory surcharge applies in this case to all of you, the appropriate orders will apply and can be drawn up in each of your cases. I have adjourned the confiscation proceedings in relation to Gustavson. Deprivation orders under s.153 SA 2020 are made in relation to all of the items listed in the 10 page schedule that has been prepared and uploaded to the DCS at item Q:49 [Q261-270].
99. Before I leave this case I wish to commend the police officers working on this case. As with any case of this size and complexity I appreciate it will very much have been a team effort. I have no doubt that this investigation will have been exceptionally complex. There have been two Senior Investigating Officers, DCI Rebecca Reeves and DI Amanda Greig. I would wish to commend them along with DS Peter Walker, the Case Officer and DC Marie Marshall, the Deputy Case Officer. Part of this case has required the digital viewing team led by DS Andrew Deamer and including DC Babita Chohan, DC Emma Stewart, DC Francesca Balchin, Police Staff Andy Gallagher and DC Owen Magner. I am told that these officers viewed thousands of images and videos and identified 400 hours of footage of offences relating to the 10 suspects. The viewing team produced detailed viewing packs for the key offences. Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation officers stated it was amongst the most extreme material they had seen. All defendants, with the exception of Marius Gustavson, were identified through the work conducted by the viewing team. I also commend DC Scott Albert, the financial investigator, who has completed reviews of over 100 financial accounts across 18 subjects with over four years of data to review per account, and DC Paul Morgan, the Disclosure Officer who completed a complex disclosure task due to volume of material completing high quality disclosure schedules within tight timescales. I am told that the scale of the investigation was perhaps four times the size of a typical murder

investigation. In my view all those I have mentioned, and I am sure many others I have not mentioned by name, deserve sincere thanks and commendation.

Recorder of London
His Honour Judge Mark Lucraft KC
Central Criminal Court,
Old Bailey,
LONDON EC4M 7EH
May 9th 2024.