

THE RECORDER OF SHEFFIELD



His Honour Judge Jeremy Richardson KC

THE CROWN COURT AT SHEFFIELD

SENTENCING REMARKS

REX

V

JACK DOUGLAS

BARNEY GRIFFIN

REBECCA MOORE

ON

THURSDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2024

Preamble

You may all remain seated. You must listen with care to what I am about to say.

In the printed version of these sentencing remarks there will be headings for ease of reference.

These sentencing remarks will be made available to you, your lawyers, the press and the public a short while after the conclusion of this hearing.

I also direct that the printed version of these remarks shall be placed within the relevant section of the Digital Case System.

These sentencing remarks will be placed on the file for the consideration of the Parole Board in many, many years when each of you has completed the minimum term I shall fix in this case today.

Regrettably, these sentencing remarks are somewhat lengthy. That is because the sentencing in this case is far from straightforward. This is due to you differing ages and the fact that two of you pleaded guilty and one forced a trial. I also have important issues of fact to resolve. It is important I explain my reasons as clearly as I can. This

is not an appropriate vehicle to set out the law. I have, however, considered the law referable to sentencing in a case such as this with care.

I make it plain to you and to others that the sentence of the court will be Imprisonment for Life in the case of you, Moore. In respect of you Griffin and Douglas, it will be Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure because of the ages you were when you committed the crime of murder. You were both under 18 years.

I am required by law to impose those sentences. I am also required to set the minimum term you must each serve in full before you are able to apply to the Parole Board for release on licence.

You may only be released if the Parole Board consider it is safe to do so. That time will be many years ahead.

The sentences of Life Imprisonment and the sentence of Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure (which is in effect a life sentence) are designed to protect the public. The minimum term I determine is designed to punish you for the crime of murder which you perpetrated.

Introduction

The murder for which you all fall for sentence occurred on 9th March 2024 at approximately 4.26am in Ponderosa Park in the Upperthorpe district of Sheffield.

The victim was Sacad Ali who was aged 24 at the time.

You, Barney Griffin, were born on 8th November 2006. You are now aged 18 years and you were aged 17 at the date of the murder.

You, Jack Douglas, were born on 28th June 2007. You are now aged 17 years and you were aged 16 at the date of the murder.

There is an age difference of 7 months between each of you.

You, Rebecca Moore, were born 27th July 1999. You are now aged 25 years and you were aged 24 at the date of the murder.

You, Griffin and Douglas pleaded guilty to Count 1 (Murder) and Count 2 (Having a bladed article) on 24th May 2024.

I have already lifted the order preventing reporting of your name, Douglas. Each one of you may be named and the full circumstances of this case may be reported.

In your case, Moore, you forced a trial and were convicted by the unanimous verdict of the jury of Murder on 11th November 2024.

In respect of count 2 I shall pass concurrent sentences of 12 months on each of you, Griffin and Douglas.

It is clear from the personal statement of the mother of the deceased that he was much loved by his family and his death has had an extremely adverse impact upon them. It is clear they appear to have been unaware he was a drug dealer.

You, Griffin and Douglas have no previous convictions. In your case Douglas there is a conditional caution for possession of a class B drug with intent to supply. I shall ignore that.

I must take into account you were both drug dealing via the Frank Line, but you have no convictions.

In your case, Moore, you have several previous convictions which include possession of an offensive weapon in a public place, possession of drugs, offences of assault including assaulting emergency workers. You also have cautions for crimes of violence. I note this previous criminality, but it is not going to govern or influence the sentence in this case. You were a drug addict – you were also an alcoholic. You had, as a consequence, a close connection to drug dealers and the Frank Line.

Overarching Observations

It is appropriate in this case that I make these overarching observations at the outset.

First, if ever there was a case that demonstrates the twin evils of drug peddling and carrying knives – particularly young people carrying knives – this is it.

Second, this case demonstrates what can happen when young people get embroiled in drug peddling, and a drug related turf war erupts.

Third, this case reveals how important it should be for those in authority to do what they can to educate the young and warn everyone about the consequences of having a knife in a public place.

Fourth, it must be made clear that even though an individual may intend only to inflict grievous injury on another person – if that other person dies as a consequence – the perpetrator is guilty of murder and faces a life sentence with a long minimum term to be served.

Fifth, this case also reveals that to be convicted of murder it is not necessary to be the individual who executes the attack. Any person who participates in the killing by way of setting it up or assisting the actual killer or killers, providing he or she has the requisite intention, is also guilty of murder.

Sixth, in this case a young man has lost his life. Regrettably, he was peddling drugs. Two other youths have now wrecked their own lives, and a woman in her early twenties has also sabotaged her life. The latter three are all murderers and are facing life sentences with long minimum terms. Two of the murderers were involved in drug peddling via a drug line – in this case called the “Frank Line”. The other is a drug user. This murder was perpetrated as a means of seeking to protect that drug peddling agency.

Seventh, I am satisfied that the two teenage youths who perpetrated the killing were recruited or corrupted to enter the fetid swamp of drug dealing. They did not set up the drug line. However, once recruited and involved they wallowed in that swamp and had large knives to assist them in their criminal tasks.

Eighth, the sex worker who is the third defendant was a drug addict and as such was closely connected to drug supply. Her life was squalid. I have little doubt she was exploited. Her life was comprehensively disordered.

All three of you committed murder.

Sentencing in this case is an extremely difficult exercise as each of you is subject to a different minimum term provision by reason of your ages and involvement. You were all in this together and, in so many respects, deserve the same level of sentence. Had you all been adults at the time the murder was committed, two of you would have been subject to the same minimum provision of a starting point of 25 years and the other 15 years. As it is – for reasons I will explain – Griffin is subject to a starting point of 23 years, Douglas to a starting point of 17 years, and Moore to a starting point of 15 years.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that you, Moore, forced a trial and the other two defendants pleaded guilty.

Passing sentence in a murder case such as this is never an easy task. I eschew any formulaic or mechanistic approach.

I must achieve a result – in relation to the minimum term to be served – which is fair and reflective of the seriousness of this case.

I regard it as a very serious case of its kind.

The Facts

The backdrop to the murder is unquestionably a manifestation of drug dealing turf wars in Sheffield. The deceased – Sacad Ali – it would appear had started to trade in drugs in the area of Sheffield dominated by the “Frank Line” as it was called. He was murdered because of this.

You both, Griffin and Douglas, are drug dealers within the Frank Line.

In your case, Moore, you are a drug user, but closely allied to dealers. You used the Frank Line to obtain crack-cocaine.

All three of you hatched a plan to inflict grievous bodily harm upon the deceased. It is clear that you, Griffin and Douglas, acquired knives and took these large knives to the scene with a view to violence being visited on the deceased.

I will make findings of fact as to whether you, Moore, knew of those knives in the possession of the other two defendants.

The actual act of killing was perpetrated by you Griffin and Douglas. The murder was set up by all three of you. It was your task, Moore to lure the deceased to the location of his death in the park by an offer to buy drugs and to have sex with him. You were a sex worker at the time. You were nearby when it was perpetrated by the other two. The

deceased was stabbed many times by both of you – Griffin and Douglas – wielding large knives. It was two onto one. It is right to say that the deceased had a knife too. He, however, was overpowered by you both and, despite pleading for his life, you murdered him.

You left him there to die; and he bled to death as a consequence of a particularly serious wound to his leg which severed a main artery and vein. There were 16 separate stab-wounds of different types. He was stabbed repeatedly. He collapsed within about 30 seconds – as appeared on the CCTV recording of those shocking events in a public place. He was declared to be dead about 40 minutes later after attempts were made to resuscitate him.

The three of you thought the deceased was dealing drugs on your ‘patch’. He was attacked to stop him from continuing to sell drugs in your area.

I now turn to the more detailed facts.

Both of you, Griffin and Douglas, young though you were, operated, with others, a drug supply line called the “Frank Line”. It operated with the use of a mobile telephone.

In the early hours of 9th March 2024 a woman called Kelly Baker-Finnegan called the Frank Line number to arrange the supply of crack cocaine for other drug users in the area. Arrangements were made. You, Griffin, contacted her shortly before the murder.

The deceased was unquestionably a dealer in drugs. His family were unaware of this activity. His mobile telephone was examined after the murder and it appears he was dealing in cannabis, heroin and cocaine.

On Friday 8th March 2024 the deceased visited a friend called Mohammed Salmani in Upperthorpe in Sheffield. The plan was to watch boxing on television. They spent that evening together.

In another part of Upperthorpe, a man called Kenny Thornhill lived at Springvale Walk. He was an unwell man; notwithstanding he permitted his home to be used for drug dealing on a regular basis. All three of you went to that house regularly. It would seem that Thornhill supplied you all with drugs from time to time.

During Friday 8th March 2024 all three of you attended at Thornhill’s home before midnight. He told the jury in evidence that he was unwell and in bed during that night.

I am entirely satisfied that each of you was intoxicated to a greater or lesser degree by either alcohol or drugs or a combination of both. You all, however, knew what you were doing and were each able to form the necessary specific intent. There is unquestionably an overlay of class A drugs and alcohol in this case from first to last.

It appears that two young women were brought to the home of Thornhill. It is unclear why they were brought to that place, but they saw some of the events and gave evidence about it.

It is clear that a plan was hatched in the home of Thornhill by all three of you to attack the deceased in Ponderosa Park.

The evidence disclosed that it was you, Griffin, who said to Moore “Ring that one”. It appears that you, Moore, rang a number and eventually it was arranged that you would be in Ponderosa Park in 10 to 15 minutes. It is clear you also purported to order drugs as you made a reference to “a 0.2”. You, Moore, were talking to the deceased and setting up the meeting where he would be attacked. After this conversation all three of you went away from where the two girls were seated and went to the far end of the kitchen area for a private conversation. It is clear to me, beyond doubt, that you further hatched the plan for the attack upon the deceased who was on your drug territory.

At this point both of you, Griffin and Douglas, left and you did not take your mobile telephones with you. Shortly afterwards, you Moore, also left.

I am entirely satisfied you were together for much of that short walk to Ponderosa Park. You were captured together on CCTV.

A short while later you, Moore, telephoned the deceased three times. He was in the home of his friend, and he heard the conversation. You asked when the deceased was coming. A more detailed arrangement was made for you to meet him near the block of flats at the junction of Oxford Street and Albion Street in the park.

I have no doubt whatsoever the purpose of those calls was to make the deceased believe he was to meet for a sexual encounter and almost certainly the acquisition of drugs. Your role was to lure the deceased to the area in the park where it was arranged for you, Griffin and Douglas, to attack him.

The fact that a sexual encounter was planned between you, Moore, and the deceased is confirmed by the fact the deceased asked his friend for the supply of some condoms and asked him also to listen to the sexy voice of the woman on the telephone.

The deceased left the flat of his friend and went to meet you, Moore, at the rendezvous point in Ponderosa Park, doubtless thinking he would have sex and supply some drugs to you. Your conduct was pivotal to the plan to attack the deceased.

The events are captured on CCTV at 4.24am through to the murder at 4.26am.

The following appears to be the sequence of events from the CCTV:

1. You, Moore, and the deceased meet on a path near a grassed area and engage in conversation for a short period.
2. Seconds later you, Griffin and Douglas, appear walking in the same direction as Moore and the deceased.
3. You both then commenced your attack upon the deceased, pursuing him down the path and across a grassed area.
4. There is no doubt the deceased got out a knife – indeed, what appears to be a large knife.
5. The deceased was plainly backing away as it was two onto one. Both of you, Griffin and Douglas, were striking out at him with equally big knives.

6. You, Moore, remained. You stood where you were – which was about 30 meters from where the attack was taking place. You observed it and after a short while left the scene.
7. The deceased was shouting and screaming. This was heard by nearby residents in the blocks of flats. One witness saw the deceased trying to defend himself and recalls him saying “alright lads now I’m hurt, leave it”. He was plainly exclaiming for him to be left alone. You both stabbed him and he went down. It was a determined attack perpetrated by you both. That is clear from the CCTV recording of the events. You then left.
8. The pitiful sight of the deceased trying to get to his legs as he was bleeding to death was truly terrible CCTV footage to watch. He just about managed it and then collapsed.
9. Witnesses soon came to the scene. There was much blood. These public spirited people did what they could to help. A knife was thrown into the bushes – that was the knife of the deceased.

The police arrived at the scene speedily as did an ambulance. All did what they could to save the life of the deceased, but it was impossible to staunch the massive blood loss. The deceased died at the scene. He failed to respond to valiant attempts to resuscitate him and he was declared dead at 5.09am.

The post mortem examination revealed a number of stab wounds, but the fatal one was to the leg which severed the femoral artery and vein. This caused exsanguination – which means the deceased bled to death. There were 5 other deeply penetrating wounds. These would have added to the blood loss. When the body was examined by Dr Lumb – the Home Office Forensic Pathologist – he gave evidence that he found barely any blood left in the body of the deceased, such was the level of blood loss. There was also a very serious injury to the elbow area which cut right through bone. This was caused by severe force. There were other injuries consistent with the deceased trying to protect and defend himself.

Each of you after the stabbing met up in the housing estate near to the scene in the vicinity of Albion Street. All three of you were seen in that area by ambulance crew who had parked to pick up a patient. All three of you met up in Addy Street nearby.

You, Griffin and Douglas, went back to the home of Thornhill where the two girls were waiting. You both stated that it was necessary to leave. You had gloves dripping with blood. Other clothing had blood on it.

It is clear that each of you – Griffin and Douglas – disposed of the incriminating items shortly thereafter. You sent the two girls home and each of you went to your own homes having bought plasters to deal with a minor injury to the hand of Griffin.

You, Moore, went to the home of Kelly Baker-Finnegan. It appears you wanted money from her. You made a number of incriminatory remarks to her that you had no where to go and you had somebody killed. It was thought you were intoxicated. You told Baker-Finnegan you had set it up and it was done to protect the Frank Line. You told

her that you had witnessed a sword fight and you had also enticed him there, in effect, on the pretext of sex.

On Tuesday 12th March 2024 both of you, Griffin and Douglas, attended at Shepcote Lane Police Station voluntarily. You were arrested and later interviewed. Both of you made no comment in these interviews.

In your case, Moore, you were arrested on 12th March too. You, however, gave a false name to the police at first. You denied you were a murderer.

In the interviews conducted with you, Moore, you stated you would make no comment on occasion and then made a variety of denials. You then stated that you had met “ghost” – who was the deceased and what happened in the park had nothing to do with you. You stated you had only seen a little of what occurred.

After your appearance in court, Moore, you were taken to HMP New Hall on remand. You made a series of incriminatory remarks to prison officers and to a fellow prisoner. You stated to prison officers that you did not do the murder and it was the boys who stabbed the victim in the leg. The reason for this was because he should not have been selling on your turf. You were laughing and joking whilst you said this. To one of the officers you stated he had a slash to below the knee into a main artery and he had deserved to bleed to death.

Whilst in the showers with a fellow prisoner you were heard to be giggling and you stated you planned to use your mental health as a means of getting off the charge. You also stated that it was your boys who stabbed the victim with a machete and cut his artery because he was on your turf.

On yet a further occasion with another prisoner, to whom you had originally explained your remand was due to drug offending, you told her subsequently “I didn’t kill him” and that it was done by the two lads because they did not like it that an Asian lad was sleeping with a white person. You went on to say that you did not kill him, but you set it up.

My Findings of Fact in relation to the Knives used by Griffin and Douglas

There is no doubt that both of you – Griffin and Douglas – took a knife to the scene of the murder.

It is right to observe that there is no evidence from anyone at the home of Thornhill that knives were on display or brought out whilst there that evening.

I am entirely satisfied that both of you have a very easy way with knives and you were prepared to use them for the purposes of enforcement and drug dealing.

It is possible that you had the knives secreted about your person. Certain it is that is what you told the probation officers for the purposes of reports about you. There is simply no evidence as to where you acquired the knives – but plainly you had them by the time of the rendezvous in Ponderosa Park. It is well known that young people who deal in drugs have knives and usually secrete them in their clothing out of the sight of

others. It is a reasonable inference that you had them with you all the time, but did not display them in the home of Thornhill. Certain it is the two girls whom you had brought to that house, never saw any knives.

My finding of fact in relation to both of you – Griffin and Douglas – is that you had the knives with you and you deliberately took those knives to Ponderosa Park for the purposes of violence and to inflict grievous bodily harm on the deceased.

The reason you did this was because the deceased was drug dealing on your patch and threatening the viability of the Frank Line.

The more difficult question is whether it is proved, so that I am sure, that you, Moore, knew that the other two had knives and were taking them to the scene of the murder.

It is right to say that in the summing up I gave very clear directions about murder and participation.

When covering the evidence I stated this:

“You may feel for this to be a case of murder in respect of (Moore), she would need to be proved to have known of the knives in the hands of the other two defendants and to have formed the specific intent to have caused to the deceased really serious injury.”

I went on:

“The analysis of the evidence and the conclusions you reach are entirely a matter for you. You may feel there is clear evidence of participation in the homicide – or you may not – but if you do, you may feel there is less evidence to demonstrate a clear intention to cause really serious injury, but ample evidence to show she intended that the deceased be caused some bodily injury. These are matters for you and not me.”

I then reiterated that the jury must apply the law that I had previously set out and the jury must approach the case by reference to the route to verdict which had also been explained to them.

It is important to note these were comments on the evidence and not directions of law. They were arguably favourable to you, Moore.

The analysis of the evidence is for the jury when they reach a verdict.

The analysis of the evidence for the purposes of sentence is a matter for me – providing it is not inconsistent with the verdict and is not irrational.

It is feasible that the jury were of the view you knew of the knives in the possession of the other two. I must not speculate about the views of the jury. The verdict of the jury reveals that you plainly participated in this and you also had the intention that the deceased should be subject to the infliction of really serious injury.

Mr Sherratt KC is entirely right to observe that it is entirely feasible for the jury to have reached a clear conclusion about your participation in this and your intention, but have

not necessarily concluded that you knew the knives were in the hands of the other two defendants.

I must approach my task on this important issue with rigorous concentration upon the law:

1. I must only make a finding of fact against you, Moore, if I am sure of it. It is for the prosecution to make me sure.
2. I am entitled to draw inferences from established facts in the evidence. I can draw a common sense conclusion from those facts, but I must not guess or speculate.

The only direct evidence that there were knives is on the video at 4.24am to 4.26am when it is clear that Griffin and Douglas were brandishing knives. At that stage you, Moore, plainly knew they had knives.

I have a strong suspicion that you did know about the knives on one or more of the other two defendants, but I cannot be sure of it. The high water mark is that you probably were aware of them carrying knives or, if they collected them after you left the home of Thornhill, you were aware they had the knives. However, that is speculation.

Therefore, I have come to the conclusion – and this may be generous to you – that I cannot be sure you knew of the knives being taken to the scene by the other two. I have little doubt you knew of the risk they had knives.

Accordingly, my finding of fact must be that you were unaware of the presence of the knives until they were brought out in front of you at the scene.

The Law Relating to Minimum Terms

In the light of the findings I have made in relation to taking the large knives to the scene which were used to commit the murder on the part of you, Griffin and Douglas, there is no doubt that an adult in your position would be covered by paragraph 4(2) of Schedule 21 of the Sentencing Act 2020. In those circumstances the search for the appropriate minimum term would commence at 25 years.

I have no doubt that if each of you had been an adult at the time – for example over the age of 21 – I would unquestionably have passed minimum terms of at least 25 years on each of you, by reason of the aggravating features despite the fact you intended to cause really serious injury and not to kill the deceased.

As it is, the situation is much more complicated by reason of your ages and personal circumstances.

Both of you – Griffin and Douglas – were aged 17 and 16 respectively at the time of the murder. Accordingly, by reference to paragraph 5A(2) of Schedule 21 the minimum term is 17 years in the case of Douglas and 23 years in the case of Griffin, subject to aggravating and mitigating circumstances.

In your case Moore, the minimum term is 15 years subject to aggravating and mitigating circumstances.

It is very important that I emphasise the task of the court is not a mechanistic or formulaic approach, but an assessment of the seriousness of the case.

By reference to the definitive guideline of the Sentencing Council on guilty pleas I may only reduce the sentence in your cases, Griffin and Douglas, by up to one sixth and never in excess of 5 years.

Reports in the case of Griffin and Douglas

There are very helpful reports in the each of your cases, Griffin and Douglas.

I shall cover, your situation, Griffin first.

I have read the psychological report about you and the PSR prepared by the Youth Justice Service.

I have also read the letters of support by those involved in youth football, family friends, your employer and the letter you have written to me.

The following appears from these various reports:

- (1) You had an ordinary family upbringing by your mother, except you were very ill as a child.
- (2) You were – and probably still are – a talented football player. You were in various youth teams. I simply state that it is a great pity that you did not stay with those involved in that sport and secure support from them.
- (3) There is evidence to suggest you were exploited as a young person to participate in gangs and you became involved in drug supply. There is some evidence this was seen as a glamorous enterprise by you. There is a suggestion you were groomed and exploited to become part of a criminal gang.
- (4) You exhibit traits of ADHD.
- (5) You left school at 16 and secured employment.
- (6) You are adjudged to be immature.

I now turn to you, Douglas.

I start by stating I know about your personal circumstances.

I have read the psychiatric report and the PSR prepared by the Youth Justice Service.

The following appears from these various reports:

- (1) You have ADHD and were not taking the relevant medication at the time.

- (2) There is evidence, in common with Griffin, that you were exploited by a criminal gang.
- (3) You were referred to social services and other relevant agencies approximately 10 years ago due to a disintegration of your family life stemming from the divorce of your parents. You were designated a “child in need” at the time.
- (4) You exhibited a number of behavioural problems as a result.
- (5) You too were involved in football. It is great pity you did not stay involved with that and instead followed a path into drug-peddling.
- (6) You too are adjudged to be immature.

Defence Submissions on Sentence

I am extremely grateful to all counsel for their truly helpful submissions in relation to sentence in this complicated case which has many features of considerable difficulty. I have particularly eschewed any mechanistic approach to determining the minimum term. This has been of particular challenge in the cases of Griffin and Douglas.

Griffin

Mr Rhodes KC has prepared a very helpful sentencing note which was amplified in the course of oral submissions. I have fully considered his contentions. These have covered:

- The fact you had no intention to kill the deceased.
- Your guilty plea.
- Your age and immaturity.
- The fact you were vulnerable to exploitation.
- You have not sought to evade responsibility.

Mr Rhodes particularly asks me to consider the “fairness” point (as I shall label it) which arose because of the delay in sentencing through no fault of your own. By reason of section 27A of the Crime (Sentencing) Act 1997 – as amended – had you been sentenced when you were aged 17 you would have been eligible for a review of the minimum term at the half way point of that term. That has now vanished. Your co-accused who is just a little younger than you – but who did exactly the same as you – will have that advantage quite apart from a different starting point. Whilst I cannot disapply the statute, Mr Rhodes asks me to make a modest reduction in the minimum term born of simple fairness. It has to be stated that even if you had been subject to a halfway review, there is no guarantee that you would have been released.

Douglas

Mr Thyne KC has prepared a sentencing note and he too expanded upon it during oral submissions. I have considered the entirety of his contentions. These have covered:

- Your guilty plea
- The fact you had no intention to kill
- You suffer from ADHD and you failed to take your medication.
- Your age and maturity.
- The fact you were subject to exploitation.
- Your progress in custody.
- Your difficult upbringing

There is no doubt that both of you – Griffin and Douglas – were extremely good friends and have been so for many years.

Moore

In your case, Moore, you forced a trial. You do not have the advantage of the other two defendants in that regard.

I have read the very comprehensive report of the psychiatrist who examined you. The doctor states that there is a complex interplay of various psychological disorders in your case. This has stemmed from a very poor upbringing and appalling lifestyle choices. You were a sex worker. You are an alcoholic and a drug addict. You have endured abusive relationships. You are diagnosed as having an Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder. There is also untreated ADHD. You also suffer from Borderline Personality Disorder.

These various disorders result in you being impulsive, emotionally unstable and cannot control yourself emotionally or otherwise in anything approaching a normal way. You also have poor compliance with the medical regimen of those trying to help you.

During the trial there were outbursts. It is also right to say that your use of language in evidence in the trial revealed you are actually an intelligent woman. All the various traits revealed in the report, manifested themselves to a greater or lesser extent in the trial.

Mr Sherratt KC has made the following submissions on your behalf which were also contained in his sentencing note:

- He submitted you were an accomplice and you had an intention to cause really serious injury.
- He emphasised your role was to lure the deceased to the scene.
- You were part of a group attack and withdrew from the scene before the attack was finished.

- You were not involved in the actual attack.
- I have accepted the submissions about your lack of knowledge of the knives.
- He submits you are drug user and not a drug dealer.
- He also submits that your conduct in prison was pure bravado. I do not accept that. You were confessing your guilt in a brazen manner.

In relation to the submissions of all counsel I have summarised what was advanced. I have, notwithstanding, fully considered the arguments put forward in both written and oral submissions.

I make it clear I have also considered the guidance of the Sentencing Council in relation to sentencing young offenders.

Conclusions

In consequence I have formed the following conclusions:

1. The reason for the attack on the deceased was entirely due to him seeking to deal drugs on the patch occupied by the Frank Line drug dealing agency. Drug dealing turf wars has suffused this case from start to finish.
2. I accept the proposition that this drug line or supply enterprise was not something which any of you established.
3. Both of you – Griffin and Douglas – were drug dealers within the Frank Line.
4. I am satisfied that you, Moore, were a drug user and not a drug-peddler. You were, however, closely allied to drug peddlers at the home of Thornhill and elsewhere by reason of your hopeless addiction to class A drugs and alcohol as well as being a sex worker.
5. In your cases – Griffin and Douglas – you have been friends for many years. Both of you were talented football players as youths. It is a tragedy that you did not continue with the camaraderie and support of that sport.
6. You both are immature and have had a raft of problems in your young lives as set out in the various reports. Neither of you have previous convictions. I ignore the youth caution.
7. This is a case where you all had an intention that the deceased should have really serious injury inflicted on him. None of you harboured an intention to kill him.
8. It is my judgment that there is evidence to suggest that you – Griffin and Douglas – were corrupted and exploited by other criminals involved in drugs to operate and materially assist with drug dealing via the Frank Line. You, however, were not peripheral participants in this. You were fully involved with it. You were both drug dealing.

9. I am sure that both of you had an easy way with knives and had these knives about your person on 8th and 9th March 2024. You had these knives as an integral part of your drug-dealing operation.
10. In forming my views about you I have paid attention to the guidance of the Sentencing Council in respect of young offenders – in particular about assessing real maturity as opposed to an assessment of it purely by reason of your chronological ages. It is my view you are both similarly immature and similarly street-wise.
11. This was a planned and premeditated attack – that is an aggravating feature. You planned this because of the encroachment on your drug dealing territory.
12. You both visited sustained violence on the deceased by several heavy blows and stabs with large knives whilst the deceased was trying to get away. It was two onto one. It may be that the deceased got out a knife moments before you did, but you both then pursued him with determination and vicious force. The fact that you, Griffin, appeared to strike more blows is immaterial. You were both in this together with equally big knives which you both used with vicious determination.
13. I accept that you were both intoxicated, but you knew what you were doing. It may have given you the impetus to do as you did.
14. I have well in mind the submissions made by counsel representing each of you.
15. This was a group attack.
16. Your role, Moore, was to lure the deceased to the location. You were a participant in the murder, but you did not inflict the fatal injuries. Your role was, however, pivotal to the plan of attack. It was not peripheral.
17. You too were affected by alcohol and drugs.
18. I am very conscious of your mental health and lifestyle but that offers some mitigation, but not potent mitigation, in the context of this case.
19. You have previous convictions which I note. You are no stranger to violence. These convictions remove your good character, but will not govern the minimum term in this case.
20. In your case Griffin, I accept the submission of Mr Rhodes about the “fairness” point resulting in you being sentenced later than you expected and losing a potential advantage thereby. It is, however, by no means certain you would have been released at the halfway point of the minimum term. I also take the view that there is an element of unfairness to you that your co-accused, who is a little younger than you, has a lower starting point than you when I adjudge you to be similarly immature and similarly culpable. The starting point is just that. I must endeavour to reflect the seriousness of the case on an individual basis and exercise judgment. The starting points are not designed to be

hermetically sealed compartments. I shall make a modest adjustment to reflect these points, but I cannot ignore the clear will of Parliament.

21. In respect of the possession of a bladed article I shall pass a concurrent sentence of 12 months detention in each of your cases as the case falls into category A1 where a sentence of 18 months would have been passed following a trial. The sentences would have been higher had you been adults at the time.
22. I have already set out the starting points at an earlier stage of these sentencing remarks.
23. The guilty pleas of you, Griffin and Douglas, will be reflected by reductions of one sixth to the minimum terms.

Having regard to the circumstances of this case it is my judgment that the following minimum terms are just and proportionate.

In your case, Griffin, the starting point is 23 years. In your case, Douglas, the starting point is 17 years.

You both intended to inflict really serious injury which serves to reduce that term. I also have well in mind the important points of mitigation concerning your immaturity and the contents of the reports. There are the aggravating features of the case which I have identified.

In your case, Moore, the starting point is 15 years. I am very conscious of the role you took and the fact you did not personally inflict any injury of the deceased. Your role was pivotal to the plan. I appreciate your personal background, which is comprehensively baleful, but you do not have the advantage of a guilty plea – you forced a trial.

Sentence

In your cases – Griffin and Douglas – the sentence of the court will be Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure.

In your case, Moore, the sentence of the court will be Imprisonment for Life.

In each of your cases, this means a life sentence.

The sentences I pass upon you must be expressed in a particular way. I will set out the minimum terms to be served which must deduct the number of days you have each been on remand from that in order to produce a final exact term.

Those calculations can be done in one moment.

In your case, Griffin, my analysis is this:

- The starting point is 23 years.
- The various mitigating features reduce that to 19 years.

- The various aggravating points increase that to 21 years
- However, the “fairness” point (as it has been colloquially called) reduces the minimum term following a trial to 20 years.
- One sixth reduction reduces the minimum term by 3 years and 8 months.
- In fairness to you as you are in exactly the same position as Douglas I propose to modestly increase the reduction to 4 years.
- The minimum term in your case will be 16 years.

In your case, Douglas, my analysis is this:

- The starting point is 17 years.
- The various mitigating features reduce that to 15 years.
- The various aggravating points increase that to 18 years.
- One sixth reduction reduces the minimum term by 3 years.
- The minimum term in your case will be 15 years.

It will be appreciated that I have endeavoured to achieve a level of equality in each of your cases – Griffin and Douglas. That cannot be perfectly achieved despite my view you are almost identical in terms of your personal circumstances and your culpability. I cannot ignore the will of Parliament by reference to minimum term starting points, but I have sought to do justice in each of your cases. It has been a difficult task.

I cannot emphasise enough, the assessment of the correct minimum term is not a precise arithmetical exercise. It is the exercise of judgment to reflect the seriousness of the case.

In your case, Moore, my analysis is this:

- The starting point is 15 years.
- The various mitigating features – in particular that you were an accomplice and not the one executing the attack, albeit you were pivotal to the plan – reduces that to 13 years.
- The various aggravating features increases that to 15 years.
- The minimum term in your case will be 15 years.

I pass sentence upon you as follows:

Barney Griffin and Jack Douglas I sentence each of you to 12 months detention concurrent for the crime on count 2

Barney Griffin I sentence you to Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure with a minimum term of 15 years and 106 days.

Jack Douglas I sentence you to Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure with a minimum term of 14 years and 106 days.

Rebecca Moore I sentence you to Imprisonment for Life with a minimum term of 14 years and 106 days.

In each of your cases I impose the necessary statutory charges where appropriate.