



Sentencing remarks of Mr Justice Kerr

The King

v.

Jazwell Brown

Luton Crown Court

17 June 2025

1. These sentencing remarks will be available in writing shortly after this hearing. The court is sitting today to sentence you, Jazwell Brown, for crimes of murder, attempted murder, cruelty to an animal and possessing a knife in a public place.
2. At the start of this hearing, I was told that no application is made under the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 or otherwise for the identity of the defendant's son to be protected. He was aged 17 when these proceedings began and turned 18 a few months ago, in February 2025. I said at the start of the hearing that I am sure the responsible members of the press present in court would consider his position with the utmost care and sensitivity.
3. Last Christmas Day, after taking cocaine, without warning or provocation you stabbed and beat your partner Joanne Pearson to death; you tried to kill your teenaged son, Jake Brown, stabbing and assaulting him; you went to a neighbour's flat and there stabbed a young woman, Teohna Grant, to death; and you tried to kill her partner, Bradley Latter, stabbing him several times.
4. You stabbed your partner's dog and drove from the scene dangerously at high speed, until you were stopped by police and arrested. You had blood on your hands, literally; and a bloodstained knife was on the front passenger seat, with your fingerprint on it.
5. You pleaded guilty on 15 April 2025 at this court to each of the six counts on the indictment. The terrible crimes you committed that day have torn apart the lives of many people. I have seen and heard the moving statements made by your many living victims.
6. Joanne's mother, Susan Pearson, has lost her beloved daughter. Her sister Samantha is also devastated. Joanne was 38 when you murdered her. She

will never see her parents, sister and large extended family again. Christmas will be a time of dread, stress, grief and mourning for the family. They are haunted by the suffering Joanne must have endured in her final minutes.

7. Teohna was 24 when she died, a young woman most of whose life should have been ahead of her. Her mother Petra, her father Reginald and her sisters Jade and Parris are broken hearted at the loss of their youngest daughter and little sister. Petra tells us that Teohna was the kindest, sweetest, most caring daughter any mother could wish for.
8. For Teohna's family too, Christmas will be a time they dread. Their grief, pain and suffering are beyond words. Jade and Parris have spoken of Teohna's pure and kind soul and the emptiness in their hearts left by her brutal killing. Reginald, her father, says he feels as if part of his heart has been ripped out, knowing he will never cuddle his daughter again. It is you, Jazwell Brown, that has caused all this suffering.
9. Your son Jake, aged 17 at the time, is now sleepless at night, has lost his self-confidence, has permanent scarring and has lost the tip of a finger. Everyone he knows is aware of what happened to him and that his own father did it to him. You stabbed Joanne in his presence. He will need much long term help and support because of the harm his own father has done him.
10. Bradley was Teohna's partner. She was the love of his life. You were their neighbour and, they thought, their friend. You took Teohna's life in Bradley's very presence and then brutally assaulted and seriously injured him. He has lost his job and is in physical pain. Worst of all, he has lost his beloved Teohna. All because of you. You heard what they said in their statements.
11. You were living with Joanne Pearson and her dog Tilly at the flat in Newton Leys where it happened, Flat 8. You had been in the relationship for some years, described by neighbours as unhealthy because you both took Class A drugs and were heard arguing a lot. On the day, you and she had been smoking crack cocaine in Flat 8 when your son Jake arrived at about 4.45pm.
12. When Joanne would not give you the crack pipe, you picked up a screwdriver and a kitchen knife from a table and repeatedly stabbed her in a frenzied attack, stabbing Jake in the chest when he tried to pull you away from her as she screamed at you to stop. Jake locked himself in the bathroom and heard you stab Tilly the dog. He called 999, hearing Joanne say "you're killing me" and "tell my kids I love them".
13. The incident lasted about 13 minutes. About six minutes in, you gained entry to the bathroom, wielding a baseball bat with which you struck Jake repeatedly until he fell to the ground. When he got up you had gone and he found Joanne lying dead on the floor. There was no reason to attack and kill Joanne. There was no reason to hurt your son. It was unprovoked.
14. You left Flat 8 and went to the neighbouring Flat 7, across the landing. Teohna Grant and Bradley Latter were enjoying a quiet Christmas together, the door unlocked. You entered with the knife and baseball bat and began

stabbing Teohna, who died at the scene. A neighbour saw her on the balcony and heard her shout that she could not breathe. Bradley tried to pull you off. You overpowered him and stabbed him repeatedly, your expression blank.

15. Bradley managed to get up and saw Joanne lying face down outside on the landing. He called 999 and, while speaking, made his way downstairs to the ground floor, where he was found by police as they arrived. He could not understand why you attacked Teohna and him. You were on good terms with Bradley and had spoken to him the previous day, when you seemed normal.
16. You left the building with Tilly the dog on a lead, covered in blood. You saw your son Jake outside. He warned the neighbours present to take refuge, saying you would kill them all. You got in your car, leaving the dog behind and drove off, out of the car park and into the road. Police officers standing in the road tried to stop you. You did not stop but drove on, without headlights, dangerously at high speed, ignoring traffic signals.
17. After a car chase, you were stopped by armed police officers, forcibly taken from the driver's seat, arrested and handcuffed, at 7.11pm. Your hands had blood on them and there was a kitchen knife next to the driver's seat. You made no reply to the caution. You made various comments while being taken into custody at Milton Keynes Custody Suite, making it clear you admitted carrying out the attacks and saying you had "gone crazy" and were "not well".
18. Cocaine and cannabis metabolites were found in a blood sample taken from you at 10.30pm that evening. You were interviewed under caution over the next two days, making no comment apart from saying you had blacked out at some point. You had a liaison psychiatry assessment on 26 December while in police custody, at which you referred to unspecified mental health issues.
19. You were charged with murder, attempted murder, causing unnecessary suffering to an animal and possessing a bladed article in a public place. You were brought before High Wycombe magistrates on 27 December and remanded into custody. On 18 February 2025, you were interviewed by Dr Ian Cummings, a consultant psychiatrist instructed by your solicitors.
20. Dr Cummings' view in his later report dated 3 June 2025, is that the disturbance to your mental state at the time you committed the offences was caused by taking drugs and not any pre-existing mental health condition. You were fit to plead and stand trial. You pleaded guilty to all six charges at a plea and case management hearing at this court on 15 April 2025.
21. Joanne Pearson received 31 stab wounds to her face, neck, chest, abdomen, left arm and left leg; and cuts to her face, arms and hands. Death was caused by stab wounds to her neck which damaged her jugular vein and airway, and by two chest wounds which entered her left lung. There were also blunt force injuries. She had defensive injuries to her arms and hands and knife scratches which appeared to have been inflicted after death.
22. Jake Brown was taken to hospital by ambulance. A 12 cm stab wound pierced his diaphragm and injured his liver. He had blood and air in his chest cavity.

He had surgery to repair the internal wounds and a drain was inserted into his abdomen. The tip of his right ring finger was cut off and there was an open fracture to the same finger. This was probably a defensive injury received while trying to ward off the knife attack and defend himself. He also received a 4-5 cm scalp wound to the back of his head.

23. Teohna Grant was found on the balcony of her flat. She suffered cardiac arrest and despite efforts to save her, was pronounced dead at the scene at 8.09pm. She had received five sharp force injuries, one of which was a stab wound to the neck which severed her carotid artery and damaged her jugular vein, causing rapid loss of blood, loss of consciousness and death.
24. Bradley Latter was given emergency first aid in the hallway of the block of flats, where he was found. He received multiple sharp force injuries to his scalp, back, neck and ear; five to nine wounds to his right hand, thought to be defensive injuries; and blunt force trauma causing bruising. He had surgery the next day when his wounds were cleaned and sutured. He lost some blood but his injuries were not life threatening.
25. You even stabbed Joanne's dog Tilly, in her neck and chest. She was found outside in the street and taken to a vet for treatment by cleaning and stitching her wounds. She was in shock and lost blood but her vital organs were not damaged and she has survived.
26. Jazwell Brown, for the crimes of murder, I am required by law to sentence you to imprisonment for life. Unless a "whole life" order is appropriate, I have to determine the minimum term you must serve before being eligible to apply to the Parole Board to be considered for release. A minimum term is not the same as an ordinary sentence of imprisonment where a defendant serves half or two thirds of the sentence before being released on licence.
27. A minimum term is the term that must be served before your case may be referred to the Parole Board for a consideration of your release upon licence. It means the actual length of time that you will spend in prison before that process can take place. Whether or not you are released after that term has been served will be for the Parole Board to consider at the end of the term.
28. The Parole Board will not decide that you can be released unless and until it is satisfied you are not a risk to the public and are ready for release into society. If you are released at that time, or any later time, it will be on licence with specific conditions attached; you may be recalled to continue serving your life sentence if you breach any licence conditions imposed upon you.
29. Mr Brown, you are 49 years old, born in 1975. Before committing these crimes you had 10 convictions for 15 offences, going back to 1994. These include damaging property and one offence of battering your former partner, Jake's mother, in 2009.
30. I have carefully considered the report of Dr Cummings, the psychiatrist. You were born and brought up in north London and Milton Keynes. There is no history of mental health disorder in your family. You have no medical history

of mental illness yourself, but you have had kidney disease and had a kidney transplant in about 2017.

31. You are a long term user of Class A drugs and, as the toxicology shows, had taken them on the night of the killings. Dr Cummings considers, and I accept, that the use of illegal drugs was the immediate trigger for the commission of these offences and that they occurred “within a disturbed mental state best explained by intoxication”. That intoxication was voluntary.
32. I accept the suggestion of both parties that I should treat the two murders as the lead offences and the other offences as aggravating features and, applying the Sentencing Council Overarching Guideline on Totality, pass sentences that, taken together, reflect the justice of the case. The principle of totality means that I must impose an overall sentence which is proportionate to the seriousness of the overall offending.
33. It is agreed between the prosecution and the defence that a “whole life” order is not required. Cases where that order is imposed are very rare and, although your offending is of very great gravity, it is not among the rarest of rare cases where the court imposes a whole life order. It is agreed that the appropriate starting point is a minimum term of 30 years’ imprisonment, because this case involves the murder of two persons.
34. I will not say much more about the legal principles I must apply in deciding what sentences to pass for these crimes. For those listening or watching with an interest in legal learning, the written version of these sentencing remarks will have footnotes with the citations from case law for the propositions which I now mention.
35. First, two successive Chief Justices of England and Wales – the previous Lord Chief Justice and the current Lady Chief Justice – have recently said that sentencing judges must undertake a careful analysis of all the relevant facts; that the provisions of the sentencing code must be applied in a flexible, not rigid way to achieve a just result; and that comparisons with other cases are unlikely to be helpful.¹
36. Second, however, the Court of Appeal has more recently entertained and upheld a submission that a minimum term imposed by a judge in the Crown Court was out of kilter with other comparable cases, having discussed the facts and outcomes of several other cases; and commented that while each case depends on its own facts, comparison with specific facts of other cases is sometimes unavoidable in cases of this kind.²
37. I do not find the differing approaches easy to reconcile. I regard the first approach – that comparison with the facts of other cases is unlikely to be helpful - as authoritative. The second approach should not undermine the

¹ *R. v. Stewart* (and other appeals) [2022] EWCA Crim 1063, per Lord Burnett CJ at [19(vi)]; *R. v. Chapman (Connor)* [2024] EWCA Crim 190, per Lady Carr CJ at [39]; see also *R. v. Cashman (Thomas)* [2023] EWCA Crim 1349, per Dame Victoria Sharp P at [39].

² *R. v. Barrow (Jamie)* [2024] EWCA Crim 509, per Singh LJ at [58]-[74], [78]-[80]; see also *R. v. Jacques (Joshua)* [2025] EWCA Crim 574, per Jeremy Baker LJ at [25], [31], [34], [45]-[46].

first by encouraging a sentencing judge to fit the chosen minimum term within a range dictated by the facts of past cases. At most, it could be used as a cross-check to test the soundness of the judge's factual analysis.

38. I am required to consider the aggravating features of the two murders. The first is the use of weapons to commit the murders. Joanne Pearson was stabbed many times with a knife and beaten with a baseball bat. In the murder of Teohna Grant, the knife was taken to the scene, Flat 7, and used to stab her many times, killing her. The baseball bat was also taken to the scene.
39. The second murder, viewed in isolation, would warrant a starting point of 25 years for the minimum term, because the murder weapon was taken to the scene with the intention of using it to commit an offence. However, the starting point is higher, 30 years, because two people were murdered. This case is therefore particularly serious both because a knife was used and carried in public and because it was used to kill two persons, not one.
40. A further aggravating feature is that (as stated in the Sentencing Council Overarching Guideline on Domestic Abuse) the murders occurred in a domestic setting, in violation of the trust and security that normally exists between people in an intimate or family relationship. In the first murder, the setting was Flat 8, the shared home of murderer and victim. In the second, it was Flat 7, in the shared block occupied by murderer and victim, divided by the common landing; the victim being a friendly neighbour.
41. The ferocity of the violence used against Joanne Pearson is a further aggravating feature of her murder. She was stabbed 31 times as well as receiving cuts and blunt force injuries. The incident must have lasted at least six minutes, while Jake Brown was locked in the bathroom.
42. Both murders are aggravated by the four associated offences, with which I will deal separately in a moment. As already explained, because they will be the subject of sentences running concurrently with the offences of murder, they will be treated as aggravating features of the two murders, to the extent that the facts of those associated offences are not already taken into account in setting the minimum term for the offences of murder.
43. The two attempted murders were grave offences in themselves but I must be careful to avoid "double counting" in so far as elements of those offences are also treated as aggravating factors in the two murders. The stabbing of the dog is a further aggravating factor. The possession of the knife in a public place is already taken into account in sentencing for the two murders, except that you retained the knife during your attempt to escape by car.
44. It is a serious aggravating factor that these murders were committed under the influence of Class A drugs. Your attempt to escape by driving dangerously and lawlessly, without lights and under the influence of drugs, putting the public at risk, is a further aggravating factor. So are your previous convictions for less serious offences, one of which involved domestic violence against your then partner.

45. As for mitigating factors, there was no lack of intent to kill and therefore no mitigation in that regard. I am sure you intended to kill your two murder victims, just as you accept by your guilty pleas that you intended to kill Jake Brown and Bradley Latter. The defence submission is essentially that since intoxication underlies the offending, which occurred suddenly, out of the blue, it cannot have been planned or premeditated.
46. I accept that in the case of the murder of Joanne Pearson. The second murder of Teohna Grant did involve some brief moments of premeditation in your state of intoxication. Instead of stopping the violence after attacking Joanne and Jake, you took the knife and bat across the landing to Flat 7, the scene of the second murder.
47. The other points made on your behalf in mitigation are that you are a transplant patient and that you have pleaded guilty to all the offences. It is right that you admitted carrying out the killings, if not full responsibility for them, when you were arrested. You said that you had “gone crazy” and were “not well”. You pleaded guilty after the psychiatric assessment had ruled out any partial defence.
48. I accept that your guilty pleas mean that the victims’ families have been spared the further ordeal of a contested trial. I bear in mind the timing of your pleas and the guidance in the Sentencing Council’s guideline, Reduction in Sentence for a guilty plea, in the context of sentences for murder. A very modest reduction in the minimum term is appropriate, not a substantial one because these crimes are heinous and there were two murders.
49. Your leading counsel told the court on 15 April, when you pleaded guilty to all the charges, that you were remorseful. He repeated that today, saying you are very sorry. I find little support for that in Dr Cummings’ report. The only mention of remorse is in a prison medical note recording that on 4 February you asked to move wings because of people kicking doors and making noises.
50. Dr Cummings saw that note and commented that it also stated that on that occasion you “appeared to show remorse about the offence”. That is the only reference to remorse in the notes and in Dr Cummings’ report. Acceptance of guilt is not the same as remorse. Of the latter, there is little sign beyond your guilty pleas.
51. I will return to the minimum term for the two murders after I have considered the appropriate concurrent sentences for the associated offences, to which I now turn. For the two offences of attempting to murder first Jake Brown and then Bradley Latter, the Sentencing Council guideline for attempted murder applies. The categorisation of the offences is agreed.
52. The attempt to murder Jake Brown involved the use of weapons, a baseball bat and a knife. The level of culpability is category C, medium culpability. The harm is category 2 because the assault caused serious physical or psychological harm, albeit not at the level that falls into category 1. The range is 15 to 25 years’ custody, with a starting point of 20 years.

53. The defence do not accept that there is a history of violence towards Jake by you, his father. I will not sentence you on that basis, as I cannot be sure there was. There is evidence that you had previously been violent towards Jake, but not proof. This assault on Jake was a terrible betrayal of a son's natural trust in his father. It was sustained and committed under the influence of cocaine; and you have previous convictions including a conviction for violence, though less serious than on this occasion.
54. Those aggravating features would result in an uplift of four years from the 20 year starting point to 24 years. There is no relevant mitigation other than your guilty plea. I give you 25 per cent credit for that plea. The sentence for the attempted murder of Jake Brown is therefore 18 years' imprisonment, to run concurrently with the sentences for the two murders.
55. The offence of attempting to murder Bradley Latter is worse because you took a knife to the scene intending to use it to commit an offence or have it available to use as a weapon; and you used it to assault Bradley Latter. The level of your culpability is category B, high culpability. The harm falls within category 2 because, again, the assault caused serious physical or psychological harm, but not so as to fall within category 1.
56. The sentencing guideline range is therefore from 20 to 30 years' custody, with a starting point of 25 years. However, the offence is aggravated in several ways. Two weapons were used, the knife and the baseball bat. The assault on Bradley was sustained and was committed under the influence of Class A drugs. And you have previous convictions including one for a less serious offence of violence.
57. There is no relevant mitigation, apart from your plea of guilty. The aggravating features would impel me to impose a sentence 3 years higher than the starting point. I reduce that elevated figure by 25 per cent to give you credit for your guilty plea. The sentence for the attempted murder of Bradley Latter is therefore 21 years' imprisonment, to run concurrently with the sentences for the two murders.
58. For completeness, I have also considered whether the sentence for either or both attempted murders should be life imprisonment on the ground that you are a dangerous offender posing a significant risk to members of the public of serious harm by commission of further offences of the specified kinds.
59. I have concluded that there will be no significant risk to the public from you for a long time and that the statutory basis for a life sentence for the attempted murders is not made out. I do not find that life sentences for those two offences is required to protect the public or that it would be justified.
60. For the offence of causing unnecessary suffering to an animal, the sentencing guideline on animal cruelty applies. The level of culpability is high, in category A, because the dog, Tilly, was repeatedly and brutally stabbed in a deliberate attempt to cause suffering. The harm was in category 2, as Tilly sustained multiple stab wounds leading to loss of blood and shock, but the injuries were, as it turned out, not life threatening. The sentence of the court

after giving 25 per cent credit for plea is 9 months' imprisonment, to run concurrently with the sentences for the other offences.

61. You have also pleaded guilty to possessing a knife in a public place. The sentencing guideline on bladed articles and offensive weapons applies. The use of the knife has already been considered in relation to murder and attempted murder. It is agreed that for this offence the harm is in category 1, as serious harm or distress was caused. The level of culpability is in category A. The offence lies at the top of the range, which is imprisonment from 1 to 2 years. With 25 per cent credit for your guilty plea, the sentence is 18 months' imprisonment, to run concurrently with the sentences for the other offences.
62. I return to the two murders. Having set out the aggravating and mitigating factors and having decided the concurrent sentences for the associated offences, I must now weigh the aggravating and mitigating features of the two murders to arrive at the appropriate minimum term for each of the murders.
63. The starting point is 30 years. The aggravating factors far outweigh the mitigating factors. There must be a substantial uplift from the 30 year starting point to reflect this. I appreciate that you are already in middle age and will, inevitably, be an old man by the time you are eligible for release from prison. But that is of your own making because these were heinous crimes and you committed them at the age of 49.
64. The amount of the uplift from the 30 year starting point is the amount that I think is appropriate taking account of the aggravating features I have outlined. That includes the concurrent sentences for the non-murder offences. The uplift must then be subject to a modest reduction to take account of your past kidney disease and transplant, your admissions on arrest, a very limited degree of remorse and your guilty pleas last April.
65. Balancing all those factors, after careful reflection I have concluded that the appropriate uplift from the starting point is 9 years, which would produce a minimum term of 39 years.
66. I do not arrive at that figure having undertaken a comparison with the facts of other cases; but a term of 39 years does not (as a cross-check) appear to me out of kilter with the outcome in other cases of which I am aware, having regard to the facts of those cases.
67. I am required to deduct the number of days spent in custody on remand from what would otherwise be the minimum term. It is agreed that you have spent 171 days in custody up to and including today. The actual minimum term is therefore 39 years less 171 days, which is 38 years and 194 days.
68. Stand up please, Mr Brown. The sentences of the court are as follows.
69. For the murder of Joanne Pearson, the sentence is imprisonment for life with a minimum term of 38 years and 194 days.
70. For the murder of Teohna Grant, the sentence is imprisonment for life with a

minimum term of 38 years and 194 days.

71. Those two sentences will run concurrently with each other.
72. For the attempted murder of Jake Brown, the sentence of the court is 18 years' imprisonment.
73. For the attempted murder of Bradley Latter, the sentence is 21 years' imprisonment.
74. For causing unnecessary suffering to the dog Tilly, the sentence is 9 months' imprisonment.
75. For possessing a knife in a public place, the sentence is 18 months' imprisonment.
76. The sentences for those four offences will run concurrently with each other and with the sentences for the two murders.
77. Any statutory charges will be dealt with administratively.
78. On behalf of the court, I extend my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and my profound thanks to the officers of the police and ambulance service who attended the scene, and to the doctors and other medical staff who treated the injured.
79. I pay tribute to the dignity shown by the grieving families who are the living victims of these terrible crimes. The extent of the minimum term in any case, including this one, does not seek to reflect the value of the lives lost, which is incalculable.
80. My thanks go also to the teams of prosecution and defence lawyers and all the hard working court staff who have given their professional assistance to get us all through this difficult case.
81. That concludes this sentencing hearing.