

In the Crown Court at Wolverhampton

His Honour Judge Jonathan Gosling

4th July 2025

R V Sharjeel Shazad

1. The Defendant will remain sitting whilst I set out how I have arrived at the sentence I must pass. I shall then explain, so that he and everyone with an interest in this case understands, what the sentence means.
2. Sharjeel SHAZAD faces an indictment containing 5 counts. The offences charged arise from quite separate incidents on two separate days. Count 5 deals with the events of 10th June 2024. Counts 1 to 4 deal with events 6 months later, on 14th December 2024. I shall address the incidents chronologically.
3. The history begins with 23rd May 2024. The Defendant was before the Magistrates Court for driving uninsured and without a driving licence. He was fined for those offences, and 8 points applied to his record. He had never applied for a driving licence.
4. On 10th June last year, three weeks after that court appearance, this Defendant was 29 years old. That day he was driven to the Belton area of Leicester by a friend on the pretext of buying a car advertised on Facebook. As he was pretending to inspect the car, he suddenly made off at speed, followed by his friend in the second car. The stolen car the Defendant was driving was an Audi A4 Avant. It was a powerful model. He pulled over, within minutes of the theft, and changed the plates. He drove on, but was very soon spotted by an officer on mobile patrol, who had received a report of the theft moments earlier. The officer, himself driving a high powered police car, gave chase. The Defendant was determined not to be stopped, both because he was of course driving the stolen car, but also because he had been arrested only the previous day for driving offences including dangerous driving. In a terrifying chase, which started on A roads and continued onto the M42, the Defendant disregarded red traffic lights, reached 92 mph in a 40 mph zone, then switched off the lights, making his vehicle exceptionally hazardous to other road users. Once on the motorway, he accelerated to almost 150 mph. He used the hard shoulder to undertake other vehicles. He tried to evade the pursuing police car by leaving at junction 9, then rejoining the motorway in the opposite direction. He came across traffic ahead slowing for roadworks, and slewed to the left, within the cones of the closed lane. He was only stopped when the officer behind was able to crash into the

Audi, spinning it around. He tried to run off but was caught and detained. The chase had lasted almost 20 minutes, over a distance of 30 miles, and one officer suffered injury in the collision. There were, throughout the pursuit, several near misses of other vehicles and pedestrians.

5. Following an interview at the police station, the Defendant was released. He of course knew he would be prosecuted for his driving that night.
6. On 20th October 2024, 4 months later, the Defendant was stopped by police officers for driving without due care and attention. He was found to be a provisional licence holder. He was prosecuted, and two days later appeared before the Magistrates. He pleaded guilty to both offences, and was fined and disqualified from driving for 6 months, that is until April this year.
7. A month passed. A notice of the charges for the offences on 10th June, and a court date for the hearing of those charges, was sent to his home on 27th November 2024. That included the offence now indicted as count 5 – dangerous driving, and other offences: failing to stop for a police officer and driving uninsured. He was also unlicensed at the time of the June offences. He was due to be at court for those offences on 23rd December 2024.
8. 9 days before that court appearance, he went on to commit the offences in counts 1 to 4. He was now a disqualified driver, following his conviction on 22nd October. He has never taken a test, and had few driving lessons. It was a Saturday night, at 10.45. The Defendant was driving a high powered car, a Porsche Cayenne. This car had been stolen 10 days earlier in a theft which was a copycat of that on 10th June. The police do not have sufficient evidence to establish that Sharjeel SHAZAD was the thief. But he had certainly come by it, and was driving it, on 14th December. As with the stolen Audi Avant on 10th June, by the time of this incident, this car too was displaying false plates. The Defendant's fingerprints were found on those plates, so he had applied them, at least knowing the vehicle had been stolen.
9. The Defendant drove the Porsche along Dartmouth Road in West Bromwich. He was alone. The road is governed by a 30 mph limit. Subsequent calculation shows that he was driving, moments before the collision, at 50 over mph, close to twice the speed limit. He came upon a vehicle ahead, which he overtook on the approach to a blind sweeping left hand bend. He failed to correct the path of the car after that overtaking manoeuvre and, possibly because of his speed, lost control of the car, veering onto the wrong side of the road, and colliding head on with a Toyota Aris. That car was being driven by Baljeet Singh, with his wife

Pavanpreet Kaur in the front passenger seat. In the rear were three passengers: Amritpal Singh and his wife Kushpreet Kaur. Amritpal Singh had the couple's 2 year old child Shehbaz in his arms. The impact was catastrophic. The driver was seriously injured. Kushpreet was badly injured too, but tragically their little boy suffered fatal injuries in the collision. Desperate attempts were made, both at the scene, and the hospital to which he was rushed, to save his life, but he died that same day. The driver and Kushpreet were treated at hospital. Baljeet had sustained serious internal injuries, a fractured spine and perforated bowel, which required urgent surgery. Kushpreet suffered serious skull and facial fractures and fractures to her right leg and left hand. There was bleeding into, and bruising around the brain. All her injuries required emergency surgery under general anaesthetic. She remained unconscious for the ensuing months. The present position, I am told, is that she has not recovered from her head injury and is still being treated in hospital. The injuries are life changing and her diagnosis remains uncertain. Her husband is having to deal with the appalling consequences of losing their young son. It is a measure of the seriousness of his wife's condition that she is too unwell to be told that she has lost her son. The psychological and emotional effect on them, and indeed Baljeet and his wife, are devastating. Baljeet Singh and his wife Pavanpreet Kaur have attended this hearing. I have heard a statement read out from the Liaison Officer who has spoken about the total destruction of this family unit as a result of these offences. There can be no recovery.

10. In the collision, the airbag was deployed in the Porsche, but the Defendant got away unscathed. He got out of his car and, completely disregarding the consequences to those in the Toyota, ran away from the scene. He ignored the challenge of one of the motorists who had stopped to help. His only interest was to disappear.
11. The Defendant was arrested two days later. He was taken to the police station and interviewed. He denied being in the Porsche at the time of the collision. It was necessary to hold an identification procedure, at which he was picked out by a witness at the scene. Subsequently he has claimed that he was being compelled to drive in this way by other men of whom he was in serious fear. He was the sole occupant of the car on each occasion. Nobody compelled him to drive like that.
12. I move from what happened to the sentence I must pass. Everybody assembled here, and many others who are not, feel deeply the grief which has been caused to the family of Shehbaz. Life cannot be restored. He was a toddler with his whole life ahead of him. There are no words I can say, and no sentence I can

pass, which could reconcile his parents, his family and their friends to their loss, or begin to assuage their anguish and torment.

13. The sentence must reflect two factors: first the Defendant's culpability, or degree of blame; secondly the harm resulting from what he did. I am required to apply the Sentencing Guidelines issued by the Sentencing Council. There are separate Guidelines governing a number of the different specific offences indicted here. The principal Guideline, for causing death by dangerous driving, is the one to inform this sentence. It sets out the weight to be given to each of the factors in turn. Culpability first: there are two indicators of high culpability here: by overtaking on a blind bend, a deliberate disregard for the risk of danger to others, and executing an obviously highly dangerous manoeuvre. The speed itself – in excess of 50 mph – is a relevant contributory factor. The case falls into category A. As to harm, the loss of life, itself of the utmost seriousness, is to be considered along with the wider consequences. Here, I am required to reflect the additional very serious injury to Kushpreet Kaur, and to Baljeet Singh, not by way of separate penalty, but as a factor increasing the seriousness of the principal offence. The injuries are not simply physical. Those victims, and of course Shehbaz's father Amritpal Singh also, have suffered terrible psychological consequences. The combination of these factors puts the case well above the starting point of 12 years indicated in the Guideline.
14. Next, I must put into the balance any aggravating features, being careful not to double count such factors as have already been included. First, although the Defendant was not on bail at the time, he had received a summons for the dangerous driving offence committed on 10th June. He had also been stopped on 9th June for a similar offence which at that time had not been discontinued (though I am told today that this allegation is no longer pursued). The offending history, especially for driving offences, is a substantial factor. He was a disqualified driver, having been banned only two months earlier. Thirdly, he was driving uninsured, and failed to stop at the scene, individually charged offences in this case. He was also driving a recently stolen, high powered and valuable car, on cloned plates. Finally, and this factor is the most egregious, he left his car and ran from the scene, defying a challenge by another motorist, knowing that he must have at least caused very serious injury to those in the Toyota.
15. In mitigation, a very helpful note has been uploaded by his counsel Mr Berry. I have read letters – moving letters – from the Defendant's mother, who has come to this hearing along with the Defendant's father, and I have also read letters from his two younger brothers. All are yet further victims of the Defendant's behaviour in this case. They speak of a caring and gentle side to this young man,

in stark contrast to his behaviour behind the wheel and his attitude to this prosecution. He also impressed his employer who has written a testimonial for him. I have also read the Defendant's own letter, handed to me this morning and now uploaded to the case system. It contains expressions of apology and regret. He is using his time in custody positively. There is no other mitigation.

16. I have next to decide how to deal with the separate offences of dangerous driving, failing to stop and driving unlicensed and uninsured, again in a stolen car on cloned plates, on 10th June. I shall treat those offences as a further aggravation of the principal offence, thus passing a global penalty on count 2 to reflect his criminality overall. I shall then impose appropriate concurrent sentences on the remaining counts. The combination of aggravating factors I have set out, and the other offences committed on the same occasion (which I shall reflect in the global sentence on count 2) puts the case at the top end in the category range.
17. In my judgment the least appropriate sentence, had this Defendant been tried for these offences, is 19 years imprisonment. I am required to reduce that sentence on account of his guilty pleas. Given the stage at which those guilty pleas were indicated, I agree with the Prosecution and the Defence that the appropriate level of reduction is 20%. That reduces the overall term to 15 years and 4 months. That is the sentence I pass on count 2. On count 1, the sentence (on this count reduced by 25%) is 15 months. Counts 3 and 4, (20% credit) 3 years on each. Count 5, (20% credit) 4 months. All those sentences will be concurrent to the 15 years and 4 months. On each of the summary offences, apart from endorsement, there will be no separate penalty.
18. Next, I have to decide whether the Defendant is a dangerous offender. That means asking whether he poses a significant risk of serious harm to members of the public by the commission of further specified offences. I must take into account all the information I have about the offences – their nature and circumstances – and may have regard to any information about his pattern of offending, the nature of that offending, and what is known about the Defendant himself. The only Court of Appeal decision I have identified on this question, in the context of causing death by dangerous driving, is R v Peart (2012) EWCA Crim 3240. But it provides no particular guidance, being decided on its own facts, which were significantly less serious than here. I am assisted by the pre sentence report at T 4. The author says this:

“The Defendant has continually demonstrated that he has the capacity to act recklessly and impulsively, which acted as a catalyst for the unfortunate events

on 14th December. He has a clear and entrenched pattern of offending, with a past conviction and a disqualification failing to deter him committing further serious offences. (He is) reckless, impulsive and dangerous. (Given that he committed) two separate offences of dangerous driving 6 months apart, the risk of serious further offending (is) high”.

The author goes on to point out that the Defendant is in denial of responsibility for the offences, and lacks insight into his own actions and their consequences. I agree with the Probation Officer’s assessment. The Defendant accepts only a minimum level of responsibility, shows little real remorse, and even that is superficial. In spite of Mr Berry’s skilful submissions on the topic, I have no hesitation in concluding that this Defendant is dangerous, in the sense in which that term is defined. An extended licence period is in my view the only way I can ensure that his risk, when he is released, is minimised. The appropriate extension is 3 years.

19. The final step required by the Guideline is for me to decide whether the sentence, taken overall, is proportionate, or rather whether it is too long in total. I have reflected carefully on that. In my judgment it is a proportionate overall term, in particular having regard to the concurrent sentence on count 1.

20. I next have to deal with endorsement and disqualification. I endorse the defendant’s licence for each of the offences. For the offence on 10th June 2024 (count 1) I disqualify him for 3 years. For the offence in count 2, I disqualify him for 8 years. Disqualifications cannot be ordered to run consecutively, so the total period is 8 years. He must also take an extended driving test before being permitted to hold a full licence. I am required to add an extension period. The purpose is to ensure that the disqualification is not subsumed by the time he will spend in prison. In his case, as I shall come to, he cannot be released until the two thirds point of his sentence, so I shall extend the disqualification by that period – 10 years and 3 months - making a total disqualification period of 18 years and 3 months.

21. The statutory surcharge applies.

22. *To the Defendant:*

You have destroyed the lives of Amritpal Singh and his wife Kushpreet Kaur, and devastated their family and friends. You killed that little boy and seriously injured the other people in the car. Your true character is revealed by what you did afterwards: just as you tried to do on 10th June, you ran away. You are not only a

dangerous man, you are callous and cowardly. The only thing in your favour is that you admitted your guilt, though you should have done that sooner.

The sentence on you is 18 years and 4 months, made up of 15 years and 4 months' imprisonment in the way I have explained, plus 3 years' extended licence. You must serve two thirds of the prison term – that is, in round terms, 10 years and 3 months, less the time you have been on remand. You will not automatically be released at that point. The Parole Board will consider your application. They will release you only when they decide that is safe. That means you may have to serve the whole of the 15 years and 4 months.

When you are released you will be subject to licence for whatever remains of the sentence, plus 3 years. If, during your licence, you commit any other offence, or break the licence conditions, you will be returned to prison to continue serving the sentence.

You are disqualified from today for 18 years and 3 months. At the end of that period you are not entitled to drive. You must take an extended retest. If you drive a vehicle before you pass that test, you will be driving whilst disqualified and liable to an additional prison sentence.

23. I commend two people who, despite the appalling challenge, did everything they could to help at the scene. They are Jagdeep Singh and Mehran Babaei. I make a High Sheriff's award to each in the sum of £500.

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