



JUDICIARY OF
ENGLAND AND WALES

Rex

-v-

Anthony Fear

Fears Animal Products

Mark Hooper

Azar Irshad

Ali Afzal

SENTENCING REMARKS

1. At the outset, all five defendants meaning Mr Fear, his company Fears Animal Products Ltd, Mr Hooper, Mr Irshad and Mr Afzal were charged in count 1 of the Southwark conspiracy, that between 01 June 2020 and 22 September 2020, they conspired together, and with a deceased person called Ashrad Akhtar and with others unknown, to defraud consumers by diverting poultry and meat categorised as Animal by-product, and which was therefore not fit for human consumption, into the human food chain.
2. By day 5 of the trial, Mr Hooper and Mr Irshad entered guilty pleas to count 1. Mr Irshad also pleaded guilty to various regulatory offences. Mr Afzal also entered a guilty plea to

count 2 – a regulatory offence. Those guilty pleas were accepted by the prosecution. I should add that I sentenced Mr Afzal on Friday 22 August.

3. The guilty pleas meant that only Mr Fear and his company were tried. At the conclusion of the trial, they were found guilty by the jury who tried them.
4. On the 30 April 2025, Mr Hooper also entered a guilty plea to the Aylesbury conspiracy. That conspiracy is framed in similar terms to the Southwark conspiracy. Mr Hooper is charged with others who are yet to be tried. The Aylesbury conspiracy extended between about 21 July 2020 and 02 December 2020 so overlapped with the Southwark conspiracy for a significant portion of its operational period.
5. In the Southwark conspiracy, the evidence proved that Mr Irshad made 16 trips from London to Fears Animal Products in Bridgewater to collect Animal by-products. The Aylesbury conspiracy shows that 30 trips were made by one of the conspirators to Fears Animal Products in Bridgewater, also to collect Animal by-products.
6. Whereas in the Southwark conspiracy, telephone contact was predominantly between Mr Fear and Mr Irshad, in the Aylesbury conspiracy, the evidence shows 62 calls between Mr Hooper and the person collecting the Animal by-products.

The offending

7. Red meat and poultry can be categorised as ‘category 3 animal by-products’ for a variety of reasons such as the item falling on the floor in the preparation hall or having an insufficient shelf-life or being discoloured or in the case of poultry, having an excess of feathers attached or for a variety of other commercial reasons.
8. At the time of categorisation, the meat or poultry is not necessarily unfit or detrimental for humans to eat but once so categorised, the meat and poultry can never again enter the human food chain. It is therefore regarded as being unfit for human consumption. It must be noted that once categorised as a category 3 by-product, the meat and poultry in question is no longer dealt with in accordance with the very strict criteria for the

handling, storage and distribution of meat and poultry destined for the human food chain.

9. The business of Fears Animal Products in the context of this case was to either collect or arrange the collection of category 3 animal by-products from meat and poultry slaughter houses; to either trans-ship the category 3 by-product to pet food producers in the Midlands or to store the animal by-products at its premises in Bridgewater so as to consolidate loads onto lorries and then ship full lorry loads to pet food producers.
10. Despite being the holder of a licence issued by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to “operate a Category 3 intermediate plant on his premises to handle category 3 Animal By-products” as defined by the relevant regulations and in accordance with the terms of his licence and in accordance with the terms of his contractual obligations with the pet food producers, Mr Fear, his company and Mr Hooper engaged in an operation to steal poultry belonging to the pet food producers and to either steal or buy back meat from the pet food producers and divert that meat and poultry into the human food chain via Mr Irshad.
11. For reasons which were explained in evidence in the trial, pet food producers operated a very loose check to ensure they received what they had purchased from the slaughter houses. On a national basis the tolerance level was around £5000 per month. A weekly discrepancy of say 1 – 2 tons would not attract any attention. It was this lax or perhaps trusting approach which Mr Fear and his business exploited.
12. The evidence in the case, as supported by the evidence of Mr Hooper at the sentencing hearing, proved that in the course of 2020, Mr Irshad made at least 16 trips from London to Bridgewater and that on each occasion, at the premises of Fears Animal Products, in the region of 1 ton of poultry and/or meat was loaded onto his large Mercedes Sprinter van.
13. The poultry and meat obtained by Mr Irshad from Mr Fear’s business was taken by him to what can only be described as a disgustingly filthy cutting room on the Walworth road, a

cutting room which was well hidden from prying eyes. There in utterly unhygienic conditions it was portioned for onward sale to fast food outlets.

14. So disgusting were the conditions in the cutting room that members of the public made complaints to Southwark Trading Standards about the stench emanating from the area of the cutting room and provided Trading Standards with photographs of large bins containing chicken standing uncovered, in an open alleyway, in the blazing June sunshine.
15. In the course of his mitigation, it was accepted on Mr Irshad's behalf that much of this poultry and/or meat, which by this stage was not either safe to eat or Halal, was sold as Halal meat thereby deceiving customers who, not only believed they were receiving hygienic meat and/or poultry but also meat and/or poultry that conformed to their religious beliefs. I regard the Halal element of the case as a further and serious aggravating factor.
16. As the guilty pleas of Mr Irshad demonstrate, the process employed by Mr Irshad ran a coach and horses through the stringent regulations required for the sourcing, storage, handling and distribution of meat and poultry and especially Halal meat and/or poultry.

The defendants

Mr Anthony Fear

17. Mr Fear is 64 years of age. He has convictions for offences of dishonesty dating back over 40 years. He also has a more recent conviction for 'soliciting for the purposes of sexual services'. I will ignore Mr Fears antecedents in any sentence I pass.
18. In his evidence, Mr Fear agreed he was the sole director of Fears Animal Products Ltd. The company Fears Animal Products Ltd has been trading for over 25 years. Mr Fear was a licenced Animal By-product operator from at least October 2010. This means he was

entrusted to receive, store and consolidate category 3 animal by-products from poultry and meat slaughter houses and to transport Animal By-products to pet food producers.

19. During the trial Mr Poskitt, the head of Supply Chain of Saria Ltd – the parent company of Sarval who are a major pet food producer, told the court something about the nature of the relationship between the Saria/Sarval business and Mr Fear. Fears Animal Products had a contract with Saria/Sarval which was worth well over £1 million per annum. As well as being the owner of Fears Animal Products, Mr Fear was also on a retainer from Saria as a consultant. This required him to visit and inspect abattoirs on behalf of Saria in order to check on quality. Mr Poskitt informed the court that Mr Fear was employed in this capacity because of his extensive knowledge of the meat industry. For this role, Mr Fear was on a retainer of just short of £10,000 per month.
20. Mr Poskitt told the court that Saria have had a relationship with Mr Fear for many years; Saria had purchased Mr Fear's business Frome Vale from him and that they had retained his services to aid their understanding of the meat industry and to deal with dead animals on farms. Mr Poskitt said Saria/Sarval is a large reputable company with a huge turnover; Fears Animal Products had a contract with Sarval (a Saria subsidiary) to transport animal by-products to them and that Fears Animal Products also had similar contracts with other similar companies.
21. The business of Fears Animal Products appears to have been well established, successful and lucrative. Mr Fear told the court he needed to do little to keep the business going and that the day-to-day operation of the business was in the hands of his manager Mr Hooper. Mr Fear told the court that save emergencies and the need to make important commercial decisions, he mainly attended his business premises in order to wash his car.
22. In addition to the substantial business of Fears Animal Products and the retainer he received from Saria, it also became clear during the trial that Mr Fear is a man of financial substance. He told the court that he owned AG Fear trading as Frome Vale Properties who are based at The Rebels Retreat – a large building in Bridgewater. He also told the

court that he owns several other properties in Bridgewater as well as his home, Rowden Farm, which is about 8 miles outside Bridgewater.

23. Mr Fear's affluence is significant. He had absolutely no need, whether financial or in any other way, to involve himself in the criminality in this case. He is highly experienced in the meat trade. He knew, better than almost anyone else, the wrong he was doing and the risk to human health by diverting, animal by-products into the human food chain in the manner in which it was done. He was trusted by both the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to conduct his business in accordance with the relevant regulations and by Saria/Sarval to operate within the terms of his contract with them.
24. Mr Fear chose to divert meat and/or poultry in the manner in which he did because it was easy; because he could and in order to make a small profit. This was, in my judgment, sheer greed and a gross dereliction of the trust placed in him.
25. The judgment I formed of Mr Fear from the matters placed before me in the course of the trial, both from the evidence in the case and from potential areas of bad character which were not ultimately admitted into evidence, is that Mr Fear is a risk taker; anxious to make a quick profit wherever he can and irrespective of any potential consequences to others. In short, a greedy man who was prepared to place his greed above (i) the trust placed in him by his licence (ii) the trust placed in him via his contractual relationship with Saria/Sarval and (iii) the very extensive knowledge and experience he had in the meat trade and (iv) irrespective of any potential harm to members of the public.
26. As part of his mitigation, Mr Hooper gave evidence and when asked why he had assisted Mr Fear in this fraud, he told the court it was because staff at Fears Animal Products were ordered by Mr Fear to do it. Initially Mr Jessop who represents Mr Fear was reluctant to cross-examine Mr Hooper on this issue but when he did so, and when he challenged Mr Hooper that he had not been ordered by Mr Fear he replied "why would I do it" and later "the whole company was told to do it by Mr Fear".

27. When mitigating on behalf of Mr Irshad, Mr Howard described Mr Fear as a 'Svengali' and said Mr Irshad had been "bewitched" by Mr Fear. I do not for a moment accept Mr Irshad was "bewitched" by Mr Fear into committing precisely the same type of offences he had committed in 2018. I will come to Mr Irshad's role in a moment but having seen and heard from Mr Hooper, I have no hesitation in concluding that as Fears Animal Products was a family run company with Mr Fear as its head, staff there did his bidding. In short, but for the connivance of Mr Fear, the offences in this case will not have occurred.

Mr Azar Irshad

28. Mr Irshad is 40 years of age. In March 2023 he was convicted of 9 offences of contravening or failing to comply with Food Safety Regulations. Those offences were committed on August 2018. It is clear therefore that the present offences occurred after the commission of the earlier offences but prior to the conviction and sentences for those earlier offences. These offences therefore appear to be part of a continuum of breaching or not complying with Food Safety Regulations by Mr Irshad.

29. Mr Irshad is a butcher. At the material time, he ran both a butcher's shop and a wholesale meat business in north east London: EA Burgess Ltd., and Barking Halal Meat and Fish Ltd. At the time of the offending he too had very extensive knowledge of and experience in the meat trade. Moreover, in his case, he specifically advertised one of his business as providing Halal foodstuffs.

30. Mr Irshad operated the cutting room on the Walworth Road. I accept the prosecution submission that Mr Irshad was the London end of the conspiracy.

Mr Mark Hooper

31. Mr Hooper is 64 years of age. He has a conviction for an offence of dishonesty dating back to the mid 1980's. I will ignore Mr Hooper's antecedents in any sentence I pass.

32. Mr Hooper was the hands-on manager at Fears Animal Products. He was responsible for the day to day operation of the business and the issuing of relevant paperwork.
33. Mr Hooper told the court he had been employed by Fears Animal Products Ltd for around 30 years. He is someone who is highly experienced in the meat industry and in the regulations that governed the operation of the business he worked for.

The sentencing guidelines

34. I must have regard to the relevant sentencing guidelines. The offence of conspiracy to defraud is covered by the Fraud guidelines. The categorisation of an offence within the guidelines is based on assessments of 'culpability' and 'harm'.
35. The assessment of 'harm' under the guidelines "is assessed by the actual, intended or risked financial loss and the impact on the victim". In this case, there is no clear evidence in either the Southwark or the Aylesbury cases of the actual or intended or risked financial loss. In this respect the relevant guideline is extremely unhelpful.
36. At the outset and by reference to the meat and poultry found at the cutting plant in the Walworth Road, it was contended on behalf of the defendants that 'harm' fell into category 4 – a loss of between £5000 and £20,000. As the sentencing hearing progressed, it was gradually conceded on behalf of all defendants that the minimum value of identifiable financial loss, based on 16 trips and 1 ton of meat and/or poultry per trip together with the meat and poultry found in the cutting room was in the region of £53,000 taking harm squarely into category 3.
37. That said, each of the Southwark and the Aylesbury conspiracies were not 'fixed' in terms of their operational periods. Each was brought to an end by the intervention of the authorities. The figure of £53,000 must therefore be seen as a bare minimum figure in respect of the intended loss.

38. No figures have been provided for the Aylesbury case but on the basis of 30 trips, the financial loss figure is likely to be significantly higher than the figure for the Southwark case.

Culpability

Mr Fear

39. In my judgment, the following 'high culpability' factors apply in respect of Mr Fear:

- a. This was group activity and Mr Fear played a leading role in that group activity. I am quite sure that without his encouragement and involvement, the offending in the Southwark case will not have taken place.
- b. Mr Fear instructed Mr Hooper to participate. Mr Hooper as his employee did as he was told to. In his evidence at the sentencing hearing, Mr Hooper informed the court he was instructed to do what he did by Mr Fear as were other members of the business.
- c. In committing this offence, Mr Fear blatantly abused his position of power and responsibility as the owner of Fears Animal Products; he abused the trust placed in him as an Animal By-product licence holder and he abused the trust placed in him by Saria/Sarval.
- d. The fraudulent activity in the Southwark case took place over many months, involving 16 trips by Mr Irshad and with Mr Fear in direct telephone contact with Mr Irshad at the times of those trips.
- e. The victims of the conspiracy were members of the public at large. There were a very large number of potential victims.

Mr Irshad

40. In my judgment, the following 'high culpability' factors apply in respect of Mr Irshad:

- a. Mr Irshad played the leading role in respect of the London end of the conspiracy;
- b. As the operator of a Halal butcher he was trusted to provide Halal meat to his customers. He abused this trust;
- c. The fraudulent activity in the Southwark case took place over many months, involving 16 trips by Mr Irshad and with Mr Fear in direct telephone contact with Mr Irshad at the times of those trips.
- d. Mr Irshad blatantly breached the regulations applying to his trade in the manner and condition in which the cutting room was operated.
- e. The victims of the conspiracy were members of the public at large and included members of the Muslim community who were expecting Halal meat and poultry. What the public received was unclean and unhygienic meat and poultry which was not fit for human consumption and in no way was it Halal. There were many, many potential victims.

41. In terms of role, as I have said, without Mr Fear, none of this would have occurred. While Mr Irshad also falls into 'high culpability' Mr Fear falls to be sentenced on a higher level to Mr Irshad.

Mr Hooper

42. In his two basis of pleas Mr Hooper contends he falls into 'lesser culpability'. In my judgment, the following factors apply in his case:

- a. He was the manager at Fears Animal Products and the person who was in direct contact with the person making collections in the Aylesbury conspiracy. He also participated in the Southwark conspiracy and there was evidence of some contact between him and Mr Irshad. I find Mr Hooper played "a significant role where the offending was part of a group activity". This is medium culpability.

- b. Having heard from Mr Hooper in the sentencing hearing and for the purposes of sentence only as opposed to any confiscation proceedings, I do not sentence Mr Hooper on the basis he received any personal gain apart from his usual salary. That fact is not, in my judgment, sufficient to remove Mr Hooper's role into 'lesser' culpability.

Sentence

- 43. Before turning to the sentences which I am about to pass, it must be clearly understood by all those who are engaged in the process of providing meat and poultry for human consumption that they carry the safety and well-being of members of the public in their hands.
- 44. The facts in this case show that not only was there a wholesale avoidance of the regulations designed to ensure that the cleanliness and quality of meat and poultry entering the human food chain was safeguarded, the actions by the defendants in this case also significantly undercut the trading capability of legitimate traders thereby harming their businesses. The Halal element of this case is also highly significant.
- 45. Where vital safeguards in the preparation, storage and marketing of meat and poultry are ignored, especially where they are ignored in the wholesale manner as has happened in this case, the courts must and will take a very serious view of those responsible.

Mr Fear

- 46. Mr Fear, I have considered with care the submissions made on your behalf and the documents served in support of your case. I note in particular that while you have continued to maintain your innocence, you have shown not the slightest insight into your offending nor expressed the smallest degree of remorse. Instead, you have insisted on seeking to justify your innocence to the Probation Officer who prepared the pre-sentence report.

47. As I have said, the offence of conspiracy to defraud will not have been committed without your personal involvement and encouragement. You are a wealthy man with a successful business. Save pure greed and the arrogance to think you could get away with it, you had not the slightest other motive to commit this offence.
48. You instructed Mr Hooper to become involved thereby criminalising a long-standing employee.
49. Your role is so serious that it comes at the very highest end of category 3. Moreover and despite the submission made on your behalf that the meat and poultry leaving your premises was not, at that time necessarily harmful to humans, the process you facilitated ensured the meat and poultry being diverted from your premises wholly by-passed all the rigorous checks required for meat and poultry intended for human consumption. You didn't much care what happened to it.
50. In fact what happened to it is that it went to a filthy cutting room where it was portioned in wholly unhygienic conditions and then sold on to the many, many members of the public, many of whom will have believed they were purchasing good quality Halal meat. It is your utter lack of care against the background of your very extensive experience in the meat trade that makes your position so very serious.
51. I therefore take not 4 years but 50 months imprisonment as the appropriate starting sentence in your case.
52. The prosecution invite me to aggravate your sentence by reference to their assertion that you deleted your WhatsApp account when officers were at your premises, having returned to your vehicle to retrieve your mobile phone. You lied about this in court and were forced to return to the witness box having completed your evidence in an attempt to explain away your earlier lie.
53. While I am quite sure you did delete your WhatsApp account to hide relevant evidence from the investigators, having taken 50 months as my starting sentence, I do not believe it would be either just or fair to further increase that sentence.

54. The principal matter argued on your behalf by way of mitigation is the impact any sentence of imprisonment will have on your son. I was very moved by the plight of your son who, I accept, has a serious condition and who, through no fault of his, now risks being deprived of your support, overnight stays with you and/or his mother and car drives in your company.

55. I will refer to your son by his first name but ask that any press report into this case does not identify him by name.

56. I make it clear at the outset that I have no wish to, in any manner, harm your son or to make his mental state more uncomfortable. I have therefore given very careful consideration to your son's position and his entitlement to the comfort and support you and his mother provide to him. I have considered the judgement of the then Vice President in R v Petherick [2012] EWCA Crim 2214.

57. In addition I have also given careful consideration to the witness statement of Mr Matthew Young, the Care Manager of the establishment where your son is detained under a 'Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Order'. Mr Young, having set out the issues which his carers encounter when dealing with your son, says as follows:

- a. Ordinarily the parents and family of our residents, although encouraged to be part of their lives, are not directly involved in the care of the people we support. The position in terms of Harry and his parents is significantly different.
- b. Tony and Kirsten are the only people Harry does not routinely attack, and their presence allows others to interact with Harry. Most of the time Harry is confined to his secure self-contained flat, within the care home.
- c. Every week, normally on Tuesday or Wednesday Harry goes for an overnight stay at one of his parents' houses. This is normally at Kirstens (his mother's) house. I believe this is because Tony has a new partner. Tony will have Harry overnight if Kirsten is away. Kirsten, however, will only have Harry stay overnight if Tony, who

lives nearby, is also home, so she can call him for help if Harry becomes challenging.

- d. On the day of an overnight stay, it is normally Tony that will collect Harry from The Grange in the early afternoon. He takes him for a long drive, sometimes up to five hours. The following morning Kirsten takes him on a shorter drive and returns him to the care home. Sometimes the roles will be reversed.
- e. Harry's mother, Kirsten, has said that if Tony does go to prison, she would not be happy for Harry to go and stay at her house or to go on day trips alone with her, due to difficulties she may encounter having to manage his behaviour. She has said that she would only be willing to take Harry out for drives within an hour's radius of The Grange, so that she could call on Lightsky staff for support if he became challenging.
- f. The importance of the 24 hour home visits cannot be understated. As well as the direct benefits for Harry, the trips also allow our staff and maintenance team to go into his flat and do cleaning and maintenance.

58. I note from Mr Young's statement and the other material provided to me that:

- a. You are not the sole or primary carer for your son who lives in secure accommodation under a court order.
- b. Your son's mother appears to be principally involved in providing your son and the care home with some form of relief via overnight stays one day per week though you play a vital role in ensuring this can take place.
- c. Your son will undoubtedly miss you and the drives you take him on. Harry's mother will undoubtedly miss the fact of knowing you are nearby. I am informed in the course of delivering this sentence that Kirsten lives about ½ mile from your home.

- d. I very much hope that sensible arrangements can be put in place during the currency of any prison sentence you receive to ensure your son continues to benefit from overnight stays away from the care home.
- e. It seems to me to be wholly possible, given sufficient reasons, the Governor of any prison you may be detained at will facilitate video link engagements between you and your son.

59. I heard evidence from Mr Young via video link this morning. From this I note:

- a. Medication and the type and dosage can have a significant impact on Harry's behaviour and
- b. On a Friday Harry is taken from the care home by his mother, alone, with a member of staff from the Lightsky Group in a separate vehicle. That works well,

60. I have also considered the moving letters provided by Harry's mother and grandmother.

61. It is plain any prison sentence I pass on you will amount to an interference in your son's right to family life and his wellbeing. Before passing such a sentence I must ensure the sentence is in accordance with law, necessary and proportionate given the various competing factors.

62. One way in which the effect of a custodial sentence might be mitigated in respect of other family members is by reducing the length of the appropriate sentence.

63. I will therefore mitigate the sentence I pass on you by reducing the overall term so that you are re-united with your son sooner than would otherwise be the case.

64. For the reasons which I have identified, your offending is so serious in the context of the facts in this case that only an immediate sentence is appropriate.

65. I will therefore reduce the 50 months to 45 months to lessen the effect of your absence on your son.

66. This case dates from 2020. It has taken 5 years to resolve. Had you admitted your guilt at an early stage, the delay will have been considerably shorter. That said, in view of delay and prison overcrowding, I will reduce the 45 months to 42 months.
67. You will go to prison for 42 months. You will serve up to 40% of that sentence in custody before being released on licence. You must comply with your licence conditions otherwise you will be recalled to prison.
68. I am persuaded that your cavalier attitude towards the running of your business for a prolonged period is such that I must disqualify you from acting as the director of any company or being in any way, whether directly or indirectly concerned in or take part in the promotion, formation or management of any company.
69. I have considered with care the submissions made on your behalf about the period over which you ran a successful business and that while the pre-conditions for the making of a Director's Disqualification Order were met, I should exercise my judgment to either not disqualify you at all or to do so for a period under 5 years.
70. Having given the appropriate length of disqualification careful consideration, I am quite sure the disqualification must be for a period of not less than 6 years from today.
71. I adjourn the making of a victim's costs order to the conclusion of the confiscation proceedings.

Mr Irshad

72. You fall below Mr Fear in terms of culpability. I must also sentence you for breaching four regulatory offences. You were responsible for the cutting room on the Walworth Road and its disgusting condition. Via your learned counsel, you have accepted that meat and poultry diverted from Mr Fears premises and portioned in the cutting room was provided to customers as Halal meat.

73. I will regard the breach of the regulatory offences as aggravating your criminality in the fraud. Moreover, I also factor in that you breached regulatory offences in 2018 though you were not sentenced for them until 2023.

74. In your case, I take as my starting sentence 45 months imprisonment.

75. I will give you a 15% discount in view of your guilty plea. That reduces the 45 months by 7 months rounding down in your favour to 38 months. I further reduce the 38 months to 35 months to reflect delay and prison overcrowding.

76. You will go to prison for 35 months. You will serve up to 40% of that sentence in custody before being released on licence. You must comply with your licence conditions otherwise you will be recalled to prison.

77. In respect of each of the regulatory offences (counts 4, 8, 9 and 19) you will go to prison for 6 months on each, those sentences to run concurrently with each other and with the 35 months.

78. I have been asked to vary the Criminal Behaviour Order imposed upon you after your conviction in 2023. That order will expire on 23 March 2026.

79. On your behalf no opposition has been raised to my doing so.

80. I therefore make a new Criminal Behaviour order:

a. It is hereby ordered that you must not:

- i. Sell any food products to any person, whether by yourself or through any other person and
- ii. Be involved or connected in any way to any food business, including the purchasing of food intended for retail sale.

This order will run until further order

81. Having made this new order, I revoke the order made in 2023.

82. I adjourn the making of a victim's costs order to the conclusion of the confiscation proceedings.

Mr Hooper

83. I must sentence you for two similar overlapping conspiracies to defraud. The monetary value in the Aylesbury conspiracy is unclear but must be greater than the monetary value of the Southwark conspiracy as there were more trips.

84. I have assessed your role as falling into 'medium' culpability.

85. In your case I take 32 months imprisonment as my overall starting sentence. You are entitled to a 25% discount for your guilty plea to the Aylesbury offence and a 15% discount for your plea to the Southwark offence. I will simply give you a 25% discount which reduces the 32 months to 24 months.

86. I am aware you have suffered from mental health issues but not such as to have in any manner impeded your ability to participate in this crime. That said you are 64 years of age and the pre-sentence report makes it clear that you pose a low risk of re-offending and that you are manageable in the community.

87. In view of the nature of the relationship between you and Mr Fear, and the delay in the concluding of these proceedings, I am able, exceptionally, to suspend the sentence in your case.

88. You will go to prison for 24 months for each of the Southwark and Aylesbury cases. Those sentences will run concurrently with each other and each sentence will be suspended for 2 years from today. That means if you commit any offence in the next 2 years, you will go to prison for 2 years for these offences in addition to any sentence you receive for the new offence.

89. In addition, you must:

- a. Cooperate with the probation service in the monitoring of your sentence;
- b. Engage with the probation service for 25 days of rehabilitation activity requirement to address your problematic consequential thinking and your emotional wellbeing;
- c. Undertake 200 hours of unpaid work within the next 12 months.

90. I adjourn the making of a victim's costs order to the conclusion of the confiscation proceedings.

91. I have already adjourned the making of other financial orders and have set a confiscation timetable.

HHJ Noel Lucas KC

26 August 2025