

In the Woolwich Crown Court

The King v Temitope Adeyinka

Sentencing comments

Mr Justice Bennathan

13 November 2025

1. Robert Powell was murdered on 13 June 2020. Had he lived, today would have been his 55th birthday. I now have to sentence you, Temitope Adeyinka, for manslaughter for your criminal role in his killing.
2. There is guidance from the Sentencing Council for this offence. I will pass a determinate sentence as your previous convictions do not include any for the infliction of serious violence such as would justify any other form of sentence. Under the current statutory regime, you will serve two-thirds of the sentence then be on licence for the remainder: That said, even if the regime changes, I pass what seems to me the proper sentence without regard to release provisions. The statutory surcharge applies. You spent ten days in custody awaiting extradition and those will count towards the time you have to serve.
3. Robert Powell was 50 when he was killed. Members of his family and friends have attended Court throughout this trial, as they did the previous trial, and I pay tribute to their calm courage and dignity in sitting and listening to what at times must have been terribly upsetting evidence. While Mr Powell had been in trouble with the law, there was another side to him as a loving son, brother, father and grandfather. His loss has devastated and traumatised his family. His sister, Jennifer Johnson, has told the Court of the effect on the family: The gap at family parties and events, the sleeplessness and ill health, and her and Mr Powell's mother, reduced to playing old voicemail messages just to experience again the sound of her son's voice. Storm Powell, Mr Powell's daughter, read her statement this morning. She too spoke movingly of the grief, the

shock, and its effect on her and her brothers: She anticipates the time when she has her own children, and has to decide when and how to tell them that their Grandad was gunned down before they were born, because crimes as serious as this echo down through the generations. Nothing I can say, and no sentence I can pass, can stop their grief or lessen their sense of loss.

4. In order to decide on the proper sentence I need to proceed on the facts as I find them to be established to the criminal standard of proof and consistent with the jury's verdicts on count 1 and count 2, acquitting you of murder and the possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life, but finding you guilty of manslaughter. On that basis my conclusions are:
 - (1) You were close friends with Nana Oppong and had previously been a drug dealer, like him and like Israar Shah. It may have been that after your release from prison in December 2019 you did not go back into selling drugs. From the verdicts in this case and the previous trial, Israar Shah was more deeply involved possibly because he and Oppong were active drug dealers with a live motive to want to attack Robert Powell.
 - (2) You were so close to Nana Oppong that you must have known of his animosity towards Mr Powell.
 - (3) I cannot be sure that you were recruited for the fatal attack on Mr Powell when Nana Oppong first planned it, so I assume in your favour it was only in the hours before the shooting. You must have known by about 1.30am on the morning of 13 June when Oppong learnt of the location of the party where Robert Powell was to be killed. You, he, and Shah all headed south to leave Oppong's phones somewhere distant from the scene of the attack.
 - (4) The three of you drove north, contrary to your dishonest evidence, and you must have realised a team was being assembled with two other cars involved, a Ford Kuga and a Vauxhall Zafira.
 - (5) By the time you arrived at the party in Essex you must have known the plan was to find and attack Robert Powell. In the light of the jury's verdict I must proceed on the basis you did not know a gun was involved but you must have anticipated he

would receive a very serious beating, even if it was to fall short of really serious harm or death.

- (6) Your knowing and willing role was, with Shah, to position yourselves to locate Robert Powell and tell the others. I do not know the mechanism by which that news was communicated, and the options would seem to be internet based messaging or other burner phones, but the movements of the car you were in, of Mr Powell, and of the Kuga make me sure you and Shah carried out that role.
 - (7) I cannot be sure it was you who was talking to Oppong as your vehicle headed away from the scene but even if it was Shah it is inconceivable that you did not then learn Mr Powell had been shot: Even on your account, you were in a small car with a series of long calls between your criminal accomplice and your best friend. It defies belief that you did not then realise what had happened.
 - (8) From the fact you continued to associate extensively with Oppong after Mr Powell had been shot, I am sure you then knew of that attack and were untroubled by it.
 - (9) You fled justice and managed to evade capture for several years. You were arrested and extradited just late enough to avoid being on trial with Oppong and Shah.
5. I have considered the Sentencing Council guidance and a number of decisions of the Court of Appeal referred to by the Prosecution and Defence. The guidelines are drafted in terms that apply most easily to the principal rather than an accessory, so I consider the correct category and any aggravating factors on the basis of what I can be sure you knew or anticipated.
6. In my view you must have realised the attack on Mr Powell was aimed at causing him very significant harm falling just short of really serious bodily harm. In addition, it would have been obvious to you that a serious attack would have carried a high risk of either death or really serious harm to Robert Powell. In the Court of Appeal decision of *NH* [2023] EWCA Crim 241 the Court made clear that while there is a degree of overlap between those two findings they are logically and conceptually separate. A finding of both elements might elevate this case into the highest category, but given the element of overlapping I have concluded that you fall into category culpability B

but at the top end of that categorisation. On that basis the starting point, I stress starting point, is 12 years' imprisonment with a range of between 8 to 16 years.

7. There are a number of serious aggravating factors but I need first to explain why I have rejected some of the submissions made to me:

- (1) I do not think I should sentence you on the basis you knew a gun was being carried in another car, given both your acquittal on Count 2 and the sheer implausibility of a manslaughter verdict if a gun was within your contemplation (I discussed this more fully in a ruling in the first trial, DCS X94, paragraphs 2 to 10).

- (2) I do not think the statutory test for dangerousness is met given the lesser offence of which the jury convicted, your few, elderly and relatively minor previous convictions for violence or weapons, and because the long custodial sentence I am about to impose will adequately address the risks.

- (3) Reference has been made to a previous event when you were with Nana Oppong when taking a man who had been shot to hospital: That event must have confirmed that Oppong was a man with a close connection to very serious violence, which adds yet more support to my reasons for the findings that place this offence in culpability category B, but does not add anything else to a calculation of the proper sentence in your case.

- (4) Being under the influence of drink when committing an offence is a specified aggravating factor in the guidelines. In your trial you gave evidence that you were very drunk at the time before and after the shooting. That was part of your dishonest defence. I cannot be sure you were actually drunk, so I do not treat this as an aggravating matter.

8. There is virtually no mitigation in your case. Having kept out of trouble and worked as a personal trainer for 5 months between leaving prison and committing the offence of manslaughter is of very limited significance.

9. There are three significant aggravating factors from among those listed in the relevant Sentencing Council guideline:

- (1) Others were put at risk of harm by the offending. You knew this attack was on a man at a party, it must have been obvious others could have been hurt. When you arrived at the scene of the crime you saw there were dozens of young men and women moving around the area. Any forceful violent attack in those circumstances put others at risk. In the event two others were indeed injured, even though I accept you were not aware of the type of weapon that in fact wounded them.
- (2) Death occurred in an offence that was planned and premeditated. By the time you were outside Hills House you must have known for many hours that you were joining in an elaborately planned attack.
- (3) You were on licence. You had only been released from a lengthy sentence for serious drugs offences for just over five months. I have been urged to put this to one side because you have paid a price already as your time on remand, I am told, will not count towards the time you will now have to serve. That is a circumstance entirely of your own making but I will slightly temper the effect of what remains a serious aggravating factor.

10. I take the figure at the top of the guideline's range for this category of offence, 16 years, and add a further three years for the aggravating factors. Therefore, for the offence of the manslaughter of Robert Powell, the sentence I pass is one of 19 years' imprisonment.

Joel Bennathan

13 November 2025