



IN THE CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT

THE KING

V

AREECE LLOYD-HALL

Sentencing Remarks of Mr Justice Cavanagh

10 November 2025

1. Areece Lloyd-Hall, on 29 October 2025, you were convicted at this court, after a trial, of the murder of Harry Pitman. The trial was a retrial. The murder took place on the night of 31 December 2023, at Primrose Hill in London, where a large crowd had gathered to watch the New Year fireworks. You stabbed Harry Pitman to death. You were also convicted, at the first trial in October 2024, of the offence of possession of an offensive weapon in a public place, on the same occasion. It is now my duty to sentence you for these offences.
2. You were born on 31 July 2007. You were 16 years and 5 months old on the date of these offences. You are now 18. Harry was himself only 16 years old when you took his life.
3. There is only one sentence that the law allows me to pass for the offence of murder when it is committed by a person of the age you were at the time of this offence. It is a sentence of detention at His Majesty's Pleasure. This sentence is the equivalent to the sentence of life imprisonment for adults, and it has the same effect. That is the sentence that I will pass, but I am also required by Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020 to specify a minimum term which must elapse before you can be considered for release on licence.
4. It is important to stress two matters at the outset.

5. The first is that you – and everyone concerned with this case or reading or reporting this sentence – should understand what your sentence of Detention at His Majesty's Pleasure for murder in fact means. The minimum term is not a fixed term after which you will automatically qualify for release. Rather, it is the minimum time that you must spend in custody before your case can be considered by the Parole Board. There is no guarantee that an offender upon whom a minimum term order has been imposed will be released once the minimum term has expired, or at any particular time thereafter. The Parole Board will, when the minimum term has expired, consider whether your continued imprisonment is necessary for the protection of the public, or whether you are fit to be released. If and when you are released, you will be subject to licence, and this will remain the case for the rest of your life. If for any reason your licence were to be revoked, such as if you re-offend, you will be recalled to continue to serve your sentence in custody. You will, therefore, face the consequences for the rest of your life.
6. The second matter is this: I will say something about Harry and about the effect that his murder has had on his family and friends in a moment, but I should emphasise at this stage that the sentence that I am about to impose upon you should not be seen by anyone as being intended to be a measure of the value of Harry's life, or of the pain and suffering which his murder has caused. Nothing that I can do will provide recompense for the loss of this young man's life. No sentence that I can impose can restore Harry to his family or turn the clock back.
7. I should add that, in accordance with the law as set out in Schedule 21, the sentence that I will impose upon you will be very significantly shorter than it would have been if you had been an adult, or even just a year older, when you stabbed Harry Pitman.
8. I was the trial judge. I have heard evidence from a large number of eyewitnesses, although none of them saw every aspect of this incident. You yourself gave evidence. Unusually, there is a video recording of the stabbing, and of the events that immediately preceded it. This was taken on her phone by a young woman who was intending to film the fireworks, and who, bravely, turned her phone camera towards the incident as it started to unfold. The evidence at trial has enabled me to obtain a clear picture of what happened. I am satisfied so that I

am sure that what follows is an accurate description of the circumstances of Harry's murder and the events immediately before and after it.

9. On the late evening of 31 December 2023, hundreds if not thousands of people went to Primrose Hill in London to watch the New Year fireworks. The vantage point at the top of Primrose Hill was filled with revellers of all ages, including groups of teenagers, families, and older adults. There was a strong and visible police presence. There was a good and positive atmosphere.
10. Harry Pitman was one of those who made his way to Primrose Hill. He was a very popular young man and was there with a group of friends, boys and girls. He was tall for his age, over six feet tall, with distinctive red hair. He had had a bit to drink, but he was amiable and friendly. Harry wandered round greeting strangers and wishing them a good New Year. He was somewhat boisterous and exuberant that evening, but, in reality, he was acting like a normal, excited, 16-year-old boy. Witnesses said that he was cheerful and unthreatening. He did not have a knife or any other weapon with him.
11. Before I go any further, I want to say something about Harry Pitman. From the evidence that I have heard it is clear that he was a lovely and lovable young man, full of charm. Harry was a college student, a sixth former. He did not take illegal drugs. He had never been in trouble with the police. He and his friends had no connection with gangs. The court has been provided with a very moving Victim Impact Statement. This was read, with great courage, by Harry's older sister, Tayla. The statement was prepared by Harry's mother, with contributions from his father, Tayla and his other siblings. Harry was an affectionate young man with strong family values and morals. Harry was the heart and soul of his family, full of fun, with a radiant smile and unwavering positivity. His infectious laughter and boundless energy filled the family home with joy, and he was adored by his parents and his siblings. He had a big heart, and was a natural entrepreneur. As I have said, Harry was very popular, and his warm and outgoing personality meant that he had many friends, including a tight-knit group of life-long friends.
12. As the result of his murder, this young man was deprived of many years of happy and fulfilling life. Harry dreamt of joining the Army. The loss of a young man of promise at such a young age is particularly heartbreaking.

13. The effect of Harry Pitman's murder on his family has been devastating. Their grief is relentless and overwhelming. Harry's mother said that Harry's absence leaves a void in their lives that can never be filled. Every day is a struggle. They do not think that they will ever get over his loss. The ordeal of the two trials has made the experience even more painful.
14. Areece Lloyd-Hall, you also went to the top of Primrose Hill, with your girlfriend, your sister, and a small group of friends, to watch the fireworks. Unlike Harry Pitman, however, you had armed yourself with a knife. You took steps to get rid of the knife within a couple of hours of stabbing Harry, and it has never been recovered, and so I cannot give an exact description of it. But the sheath in which it was carried was found, and a number of things are clear from an examination of the sheath, and from other evidence. The first is that the knife was not a kitchen knife. Rather it was a hunting knife or something very like it, with a very sharp blade on one side, and a pointed end. Second, the blade was about 6 inches or 15 cm long. You had concealed the knife in the waistband of your trousers.
15. The reason that you gave in evidence at trial for carrying the knife was for your own protection. You had bought the knife from a friend a few weeks before, and had fallen into the habit of carrying it with you when you went to public places. Like so many young people in London nowadays, you had experienced, directly or at second-hand, the display or use of knives by other young people, and you had been the victim of some threatening behaviour. But that cannot and does not justify your decision to carry a knife yourself. By carrying a knife, you became part of the problem, not part of the solution. You were another immature, irresponsible, and sometimes short-tempered young man whose possession of a knife in public places posed a grave danger to other young people. In fact, you had never been the victim of serious knife crime, and you were not under any particularly significant threat. I stress that a misguided sense of self-protection is never a good reason to carry a knife in any event. The reality is that by carrying a knife a young man makes it more likely, not less likely, that they will become embroiled in a dangerous fight.
16. In any event, you were under absolutely no risk when you decided to take a knife with you to Primrose Hill on New Year's Eve. As you would have expected, a very

large and amiable crowd was gathered there to watch the New Year fireworks. As I have said, the crowd was made up of all ages, including families with small children. It was a safe place, with a strong police presence. You were there with a group of friends and had no reason whatsoever to anticipate trouble, either whilst you were on Primrose Hill or later that night. You said that you were planning to go on to Camden Town after the fireworks, and you were worried because gangs operate in that area, but that, too, was well away from where you lived, and there was no reason to think that you might be a target. In any event, you did not need to go on to Camden Town. I am fully satisfied that the main reason you carried a knife that night was because it gave you comfort and made you feel powerful, and out of bravado.

17. As I will describe in a moment, before you decided to become involved, the incident that ended with Harry's death was little more than a scuffle. Had you not had a knife with you, it would have been over within a few moments. If you had not taken a knife to Primrose Hill that night, Harry Pitman would still be alive, he would have his whole life ahead of him, and his family and friends would not have been plunged into the most profound and awful grief. What turned it into a terrible and tragic incident was your decision, for no good reason whatsoever, to arm yourself with a knife. This case is the clearest possible tragic illustration of the dangers of young people carrying knives in public. I hope that this case will serve as a warning and as a deterrent to young people who are thinking of carrying a knife, even if they delude themselves into thinking it is useful for self-defence. Far too many young people have been killed or horribly injured by knife crime in our cities, and many others spend what should have been the best years of their lives in prison because of their bad choices. I have no doubt that the young men – and they are almost always young men – who go out tooled up with knives have no real understanding of the devastation, pain, and suffering that results from the use of knives.

18. I now come on to describe the incident which ended with Harry's death. It happened just after 11.30 pm. It started off as something trivial. Harry had been larking about with his friends and accidentally stumbled backwards into a young man who was one of your friends. The young man retaliated by going up to Harry and tapping the back of his head. The two young men squared up to each other. There was pushing, and a few punches were thrown. Your friend fell to the ground and a brief brawl resulted. Harry punched another of your friends.

Neither of your friends was seriously hurt, and neither needed medical treatment. You were not involved at this stage. You were some metres away, with your girlfriend. You heard your sister call “Get up, get up” to one of your friends and you then waded in, without really knowing what was going on, save that a fight was underway and that your group appeared to be outnumbered by boys who were, on the whole, taller than your friends. You were aggressive from the outset of your involvement. You can be seen on the video barrelling in with determination and aggression to where Harry and his friends were standing. Your hands were already on your waistband, where your knife was kept. You were showing the knife with a view to making Harry and his friends back off. As is so often the case, however, the situation was confused and I have no doubt that Harry and his friends did not even see the knife, which was half hidden behind your shoulder bag. Harry was swinging around and wildly aimed a punch at you which only half-connected with your face, and which did not significantly injure you or even hurt you. You tried to dodge the punch and then, with a single movement, you pulled the knife out of your waistband and swung it up above your head and down into Harry’s neck, tip first. The sharp tip of the knife penetrated Harry’s skin and drove down into his lung, severing his jugular vein on the way. This blow is captured on the video. You then pulled the knife out again, in an equally quick motion. The whole incident took a very few seconds.

19. The knife had been in the sheath when it was in your waistband, but it was out of the sheath when it made contact with Harry’s neck. You claimed in evidence that you believed that the sheath was still on the knife when you struck the blow, but the jury rejected this version of events. I have no doubt that the jury was right to do so. There would have been no reason for you to inflict a blow on Harry’s neck, with a firm downward motion, tip-first, as you did, if you thought that the knife was still sheathed. You would have hit him with the flat of the blade. You intended to stab Harry with an unsheathed blade.
20. You claimed at trial that you stabbed Harry in self-defence and in defence of your sister and your friends. The jury has rejected this defence. At the time when you inflicted the blow, your sister and friends were no longer in any danger from Harry. You were under no great threat. You had just received one flailing punch. In any event, even if you had felt under threat, it was grossly disproportionate to stab Harry with a knife, let alone in the neck. He was unarmed and you confirmed in your evidence that you had no reason to think he had a knife or

other weapon. You could simply have gone backwards out of reach. You could have approached one of several police officers who were nearby for help. Or you could have run away. You stabbed Harry because you lost your temper with him, and you were acting the big man in front of your friends.

21. When you stabbed Harry, it took him a few seconds to realise how seriously he had been injured. He then went for aid from the police and collapsed on the ground, bleeding heavily. Despite the best efforts of the police officers and the other first responders, Harry died at the scene, within a few minutes. His friends were very distressed to see what was happening to him, and it must have been very distressing also for the many bystanders.

22. As for you, as soon as you stabbed Harry, you turned and fled. You told the jury that you were not sure if you had stabbed him or not, but you thought you might have done. I am fully satisfied that this, too, was untrue. You could not have failed to realise what you had done, having taken the knife out, plunged it into Harry's neck and then pulled the knife out again. This was the case, regardless of whether any blood was visible on the knife. You did not stop, however, to provide assistance or to call for aid. You ran away. You ran to a quiet location a few streets away from Primrose Hill, where you concealed the knife under some bins. You then met up with your friends, gave the knife to your girlfriend to hide under a scarf, took off the cap you were wearing, and took off your jacket. This was to conceal your appearance and to evade arrest. You then travelled back with your friends to your home address, and, according to your evidence, in the middle of the night you contacted the associate who had provided you with the knife and gave it back, so that it would not be linked with you. I am also satisfied that you had your phone with you that evening and took steps to dispose of it. You claimed that your friend had lent you his phone to look after and that, when you can be seen on CCTV using a phone, you were using his, but this lacks all credibility. There would have been no reason for your friend to give you his phone to carry that evening.

23. A couple of days after the stabbing, a still picture of the suspect, which had been taken from the video taken on the witness's phone, was printed in a national newspaper. The photo was plainly of you. You voluntarily attended Hammersmith Police Station with your father, but you then proceeded to tell a tissue of lies in your police interview, denying that you had fought with Harry or

stabbed him, and denying that you had a knife with you. By the end of your interviews, you were even lying that it was not you in the photo. You lied fluently and easily.

24. By the time of the trial, you admitted that it was you who had stabbed Harry, but you continued to claim that you had acted in self-defence and/or defence of others, that you had thought that the sheath was on the knife when you struck Harry, and that you had not intended to kill him or to cause really serious bodily harm.
25. I now move on to the considerations that I have taken into account when deciding upon the minimum term that I will impose for the offence of murder.
26. In deciding upon the minimum term that you must serve, I must take account of the starting point which is prescribed for this offending by Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act 2020. As you were over 18 at the date of conviction, the Sentencing Council's Definitive Guideline for Sentencing Children and Young People, does not, strictly apply, but, as you were 16 at the time of the offence, I take its principles into account. I have also taken into account the Definitive Guideline for Sentencing Offenders with Mental Disorders, Developmental Disorders, or Neurological Impairments. I have taken into account the aggravating and mitigating features which the Sentencing Act and the Definitive Guidelines require me to take into account. I have also taken account of such other aggravating and mitigating features as I consider relevant.
27. Even though the sentence for murder is fixed by law, and Schedule 21 takes account of the age of the offender in prescribing the starting point for the minimum term, it nonetheless remains important when considering the appropriate minimum term to consider the developmental and emotional age of the offender and to consider, in accordance with paragraph 4.10 of the Definitive Guideline for Sentencing Children and Young People, whether, and how far, the young offender has:

'the necessary maturity to appreciate fully the consequences of their conduct, the extent to which the child or young person has been acting on an impulsive basis and whether their conduct has been affected by inexperience, emotional volatility or negative influences.'

28. The Definitive Guideline states that there is an expectation that in general a child or young person will be dealt with less severely than an adult offender. The Definitive Guideline explains that, in part, this is because children and young people are unlikely to have the same experience and capacity as an adult to understand the effect of their actions on other people or to appreciate the pain and distress caused. This principle is reflected in the Sentencing Act, Schedule 21, which provides, as I have said, for different starting points for children and young persons, on the one hand, and for adults, on the other. I bear in mind also that, as has been stressed by the Court of Appeal on a number of occasions recently, an offender's level of maturity may not necessarily align with their chronological age. The sentencing judge must consider the offender's level of maturity at the time of the offence and assess the extent to which young age and lack of maturity reduced the offender's culpability in committing the murder. Every case, of course, depends on its own facts.

29. I begin by identifying the appropriate starting point for determining the minimum term in your case. The starting point depends upon whether I am satisfied so that I am sure that you brought the knife to the scene intending to have it available to use as a weapon. If so, then the appropriate starting point for the minimum term for an offender who was 16 years old at the time of the murder is 17 years. If not, the appropriate starting point is 10 years.

30. I accept that the mere fact that you were convicted by a jury of the offensive weapon offence does not necessarily mean that the first jury was sure that you had this intention. I have to decide this issue for myself. Having considered the evidence carefully, I am sure that you took the knife that you used to kill Harry Pitman to the scene, intending to have it available to use as a weapon. The Court of Appeal has made clear that it is not necessary, for this condition to be satisfied, that the offender intended in advance to use the knife at the scene, or that he expected to do so. It is not necessary that you were specifically contemplating trouble that night, or that you were actively seeking it out. It is enough that you intended to have the knife available for use as a weapon if and when the need arose. I am fully satisfied that this was the basis upon which you took the knife with you to Primrose Hill. You did not expect trouble, and you hoped that, if trouble arose, it would be enough for you to flash the knife to scare off your opponent. But I have no doubt that, when you went there that evening, you were

prepared to go further and to use the knife to stab if and when the need arose. I do not find it credible that you were carrying round this six-inch knife merely for show, and nothing more. The video shows that you had your hands on the knife from the outset of the incident. I am satisfied that either the knife was already undone from its restraining strap, or you undid the strap, in either case because you were fully prepared to use the knife if you thought you needed to do so. Furthermore, whilst I recognise that the fact that you used the knife does not automatically mean that you had all along intended to have it available for use as a weapon if and when the need arose, I consider that the fact that you were willing to make use of the knife so quickly when you joined the fight strongly indicates that you had this intention. You had no hesitation in using it a very few seconds after the incident began.

31. This means that the starting point is a minimum term of 17 years.
32. The starting point is not necessarily the end point, however. I must take account of the circumstances of the offence and the aggravating and mitigating factors before arriving at an appropriate minimum term.
33. I will begin with the aggravating features. None of the aggravating factors referred to in paragraph 9 of Schedule 21 to the Sentencing Act applies. The major aggravating feature that you took a knife to the scene is already taken into account in the starting point. However, there are a number of other aggravating factors.
34. First, the offence took place at night, in a crowded public place. This is a significant aggravating factor. That was the place to which you took the knife. It is clear that the murder of Harry Pitman had a traumatic effect on his friends, all teenagers, and on other members of the public who witnessed the attack or who saw the immediate aftermath, when Harry collapsed and was given CPR. I fear that the effects of this will be felt by Harry's friends for many years to come. Several of them had to give evidence in court during the two trials that have taken place.
35. A second aggravating factor, though not an uncommon one, is that you ran away immediately after stabbing Harry. You did not stop to give assistance.

36. Third, you took steps to conceal and then get rid of the knife, and you almost immediately altered your clothing, so as to evade recognition. You later got rid of the clothes that you had been wearing that night. Also, as I have said, I am satisfied that you had your phone with you that night, and that you got rid of it.
37. You had smoked cannabis and consumed alcohol earlier in the day, but the evidence was unclear as to whether you were still feeling the effects, and so I will not treat this as an aggravating factor.
38. These aggravating factors, taken together, would justify an increase of one year from the starting point.
39. I move on to mitigation. There are a number of mitigating factors which must be taken into account.
40. First, this offence was not planned or premeditated. It was impulsive. You and Harry were complete strangers to each other. There was no prior hostility. Your decision to stab Harry, and then to carry it out, was the work of an instant. There was a single blow. You acted on the spur of the moment, and without prior reflection. In your evidence, you said that you did the act without thinking, as if to distance yourself from it. But this mitigating factor only goes so far. The decision to go to Primrose Hill armed with a knife was not impulsive. It was a positive choice on your part to pull out a knife and to stab Harry in a very vulnerable part of his body, even if you had not spent much time thinking about it.
41. Second, I cannot be sure that you intended to kill Harry Pitman. This is some mitigation, but, in the circumstances of this case, it is relatively limited. It would be obvious to anyone who viewed the motion that you used to inflict the blow on Harry, forcefully driving the sharp tip of a knife downwards into your victim's neck, that this would be likely to result in death. It was bound to hit the victim's lungs or heart. Whilst I am satisfied that you acted so quickly that you did not think through the likely impact upon Harry, the fact remains that you made a positive choice to stab Harry, with force, in the neck, and you must have been aware, in that split second, that death or very serious injury would undoubtedly result. In the moment, you did not care if he lived or died.

42. Put another way, the mitigating value of the fact that you did not intend to kill Harry is to some extent undermined by the sudden and disproportionate violence that you inflicted upon him. It is also undermined by the fact that you had gone to the scene with a weapon, prepared to use it if you felt the need. This was despite the fact that, as you told a psychologist, you were aware that, when you get angry you get very angry, and your anger could go from 0 to 100 very quickly.
43. I do not consider that your stated desire to defend yourself, your sister, and your friends provides any significant mitigation. As I have said, by the time you stabbed Harry, neither your sister nor your friends were in any real danger. It is true that Harry had just punched you, but you had other options, apart from pulling out the knife and stabbing. You could have moved away. You could have gone to the police, who were nearby. You did not pull out the knife and wave it at Harry. You immediately stabbed him. Harry was completely unarmed, as were his friends, and you knew this. Your response was completely out of proportion to any threat you might have been feeling.
44. The third mitigating factor for which some allowance must be made is your immaturity. Your age has been taken into account already through the statutory starting point, which is substantially lower than it would have been if you had been 18, or even 17, at the time of the murder. However, I make some further allowance for the fact that it is clear that you were somewhat immature for your age. It is relevant, as regards maturity for your age, that you had some schooling difficulties and you had been the subject of a statement of special educational needs. Also, your parents are separated and I was told that you have witnessed some domestic violence in the past, but, having said that, you have not had the very difficult and chaotic upbringing that has been suffered by many defendants who appear before the Courts, having committed offences such as these.
45. The level of your immaturity must not be overstated, however. None of the expert reports I have seen refers to immaturity. Your decision to stab Harry was impulsive, but your actions thereafter were careful and calculating. When you were interviewed by the police after this incident, you showed cunning and presence of mind in concocting a false narrative and then by adjusting it as the police pointed out inconsistencies in it: this does not suggest a very great degree of immaturity.

46. The next issue in relation to mitigation is concerned with the evidence that was provided by the expert psychiatrists and psychologists about your mental state and related conditions. I have re-read their reports. Issues relating to your mental capacity are relevant for sentencing purposes only to the extent that they lower your degree of culpability.
47. There was no evidence that you were suffering from a psychotic disorder at the time of the murder. The experts all agree, and I accept, that you have an established diagnosis of ADHD, and that you have some cognitive difficulties. Three of them said that you met the criteria for a diagnosis of PTSD at the time of the offence, resulting from traumatic experiences in the past, and one said that you possessed some traits of PTSD but that they did not meet the diagnostic criteria. Looking at the expert advice, and drawing the strands together, the following main summary conclusions can be drawn. First, there is no suggestion that your mental state at the date of the offence was such as could give rise to a defence of diminished responsibility. Second, your mental state and any mental conditions from which you suffered, whilst relevant to your decision to carry a knife, did not change your ability to consider the risks and consequences of carrying a knife, and did not have an impact upon your decision to show a knife. Third, your PTSD symptoms, in particular, may have resulted in an exaggerated perception of threat, a lower tolerance to a perceived threat, an exaggerated fight, flight or freeze response to threat, and a greater likelihood that the response would be a fight response.
48. In my judgment, therefore, your PTSD symptoms, your ADHD, and your cognitive difficulties are likely to have contributed to your impulsivity and, as I have said, I take this into account as a mitigating factor. Accordingly, the expert psychiatric and psychological evidence provides some mitigation. However, you knew right from wrong. Your mental health conditions do not justify or explain your decision to carry and show a knife. Bringing the knife to the scene was a key aspect of this offence. Moreover, even if your PTSD symptoms led to an exaggerated perception of threat, a lower tolerance of it, and a greater likelihood of a fight response, none of this goes anywhere near to fully explaining your decision to pull out a knife and to stab Harry Pitman. This was an extreme reaction to the situation that you found yourself in, which cannot fully, or even

substantially, be explained by the impact your conditions had upon your perception of threat, or upon the way that you responded to the perceived threat.

49. One further mitigating factor is that you are of previous good character. You have no convictions, reprimands, warnings or cautions recorded against you. Prior to this incident, you were not known to police or identified as connected to any gangs.

50. These aggravating factors, taken together, justify a reduction of two years in what would otherwise be the sentence.

51. I now come to the sentences.

52. I will deal first with the sentence for possessing an offensive weapon in a public place. As the fact that you took a knife to the scene will be taken into account in your minimum term for murder, I will pass a concurrent sentence for this offence, and I can deal with it briefly. This is a category A1 offence under the relevant adult sentencing guideline. If you had been an adult offender, I would have imposed a custodial term of two years' imprisonment. There is a separate sentencing guideline for young offenders. As you were 16 years old at the time of the offence, and 17 at the time of conviction, I sentence you to a Detention and Training Order for 16 months for this offence. As you are now over 18, this is to be treated as if you were sentenced to detention in a young offender institution for the same term. However, as I have said, this will be served concurrently with the sentence for murder that I am about to pass.

53. I now come to the sentence for murder.

54. The qualifying days that you have spent in custody will count towards the minimum term for murder. The time spent in custody to date is 675 days. The appropriate statutory victim surcharge will be applied.

55. Areece Lloyd-Hall, for the murder of Harry Pitman, I sentence you to detention at His Majesty's Pleasure. Taking account of all the relevant circumstances, and the aggravating and mitigating factors that I have set out, the minimum term will be 16 years, minus 675 days to take account of time spent on remand. This results in a sentence of 14 years and 56 days.

56. Finally, I want to explain to you what this means in practice.

57. You have been sentenced for two offences. The sentence for possession of an offensive weapon in a public place is a 16 month Detention and Training Order, which will be served alongside the sentence for murder. You will not serve extra time for this offence. This is because the fact that you had brought a knife to the scene, which is the basis of the offensive weapon offence, has been taken into account in your sentence for murder.

58. The sentence for murder is fixed by law. This means there is only one sentence I can give you. For a person your age it is called detention during His Majesty's Pleasure. This is a custodial sentence, which will be spent in a young offender's institution and, once you reach the age of 21, in prison.

59. I have decided on the minimum term that you must spend in custody. The time that you have spent on remand since January 2024 will count towards this minimum term. I have decided that the shortest length of time you must stay in custody is 16 years, minus the 675 days that you have already spent on remand. The minimum term that is left is 14 years and 56 days.

60. This does not mean that you will automatically be released when the minimum term is over. That will be a decision for the Parole Board. The Parole Board are a group of people who decide if it is safe for a person to leave custody. After you have spent the minimum term in custody, they will decide if you can leave then or not. If they decide it is not safe, then you will stay in custody for a longer time. When you do leave custody, you will be on licence for the rest of your life. This means that if you commit further offences or do certain other things, you may be brought back to custody.

Commendations and thanks

61. The investigation which led to this trial and these convictions was complex and difficult. The police officers and investigators who played their part are to be commended for their exceptionally hard work, and for the extremely professional and skilful way in which they carried out their duties.

62. The officers and investigators from the Metropolitan Police whom the Court would like publicly to commend in particular are the following:

- **Detective Inspector Daniel Catmull**, the Officer in the Case, who played a central role in this investigation from the outset.
- **Detective Sergeant David Picken**, the officer in charge of CCTV investigations, who also took part in the interviews of the Defendant.
- **Detective Constable Melissa Jordan**, the lead interviewing officer who has also been in charge of witness liaison throughout these proceedings.
- **Detective Constable Paul Holmes**, the family liaison officer, who has played a pivotal and sensitive role in these proceedings.
- **Detective Constable Elizabeth Old**, the disclosure officer, who was responsible for reviewing all case material.
- **Retired Detective Constable Rob Burke**, who was the first attending specialist crime officer, responsible for scene direction and obtaining early witness accounts, and who then acted as exhibits officer.
- **Ms Lauren Dicker**, a civilian specialist in video multimedia, recovery, processing and analysis, who was responsible for the enhancement and presentation of the video evidence.

63. Finally, I would like to thank all members of the counsel teams and their solicitor colleagues, for their hard work, the skilful way in which they presented their cases, and for the positive and co-operative manner in which this case was conducted. I would also like to thank the Court staff, especially the dedicated usher, whose contributions to this case could not have been better.