



# THE RECORDER OF SHEFFIELD

## SENTENCING REMARKS

OF

THE RECORDER OF SHEFFIELD  
HIS HONOUR JUDGE JEREMY RICHARDSON KC

AT

THE CROWN COURT AT SHEFFIELD

ON

WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2026

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REX

V

PATRICK AARON BANKS

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### Preamble

You may remain seated. You must listen with care to what I am about to say.

In the printed version of these sentencing remarks there will be headings for ease of reference.

These sentencing remarks will be made available to you, your lawyers, the press and the public a short while after the conclusion of this hearing. I also direct that the printed version of these remarks shall be placed within the relevant section of the Digital Case System.

These sentencing remarks are being recorded for television news. It is very important the public understand why a particular sentence is being imposed.

The complainants in this case are two women. Both are entitled to lifelong anonymity.

The complainant in count 1 is protected because I have made an order pursuant to section 46 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999.

The complainant in counts 2 and 3 is protected by operation of law pursuant to the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 1992.

Both women will not be referred to by name in these sentencing remarks and have not been referred to by name in the hearing.

The complainant in relation to count 1 will be known as A (which is not one of her real initials). The complainant in relation to counts 2 and 3 will be known as B (which is not one of her real initials).

Nothing must be published or reported which in any way seeks to identify either of the complainants in this case, unless waived by that individual. That is extremely unlikely.

By referring to the complainants and A as B, I intend no discourtesy at all. It is simply a mechanism to ensure anonymity of each of them as victims of the defendant. That must be respected and maintained.

## **Introduction**

Patrick Banks, you are aged 42 years.

You fall for sentence in respect of your guilty plea to the following crimes: two Counts of Misconduct in Public Office (Counts 1 and 2) and Sexual Assault (Count 3).

Count 1 relates to A. This offending occurred in between December 2024 and May 2025.

Counts 2 and 3 relate to B. This offending occurred in March and April 2025.

A and B are completely unconnected complainants and do not know each other. Both were the victims of sexual crimes perpetrated by third parties against them. They each made separate complaints to the West Yorkshire Police in Leeds. You were the investigating officer in respect of the complaint made by each woman. You behaved deplorably towards each of them by your misconduct and in respect of B you sexually molested her.

You have betrayed every ounce of trust invested in you as a police officer by doing as you did. This was not a matter of police discipline. You committed very serious crimes in your capacity as a police officer. That is deserving of punishment – and it is punishment for your crimes that will be imposed today.

The maximum sentence for the crime of Misconduct in Public Office is Imprisonment for Life. The maximum sentence for Sexual Assault is 10 years imprisonment.

You pleaded guilty at an adjourned PTPH. In consequence the inevitable term of imprisonment may be reduced by one-quarter by reason of your plea and the stage at which it was entered.

A basis of plea has been submitted. That basis of plea is accepted and my summary of the facts of this case will embrace that.

A Pre-Sentence Report is unnecessary in this case as it plainly warrants an immediate custodial sentence, and all matters which could have covered in a PSR can be – and have been – covered by counsel in very helpful submissions today.

At all material times you were a police officer in the Safeguarding Unit of the West Yorkshire Police. That is a section of the police which has responsibility for investigating domestic and sexual crimes. The complainants who are referred to that section are usually vulnerable women.

You became a police officer in 2019 with the Essex Constabulary and transferred to the West Yorkshire Police in 2022.

You resigned as a police officer on 6<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

You have no previous convictions.

The offending in relation to count 1 came to light after the offending in respect of counts 2 and 3 were under investigation. I will, however, cover the facts in chronological order.

### **The Facts**

A had been sex worker in the past.

B was a single mother who had endured an abusive partner.

Both were vulnerable women and each had made a complaint to the police of sexual offences perpetrated upon them by other people.

In each case you were assigned as the investigation officer.

### **Count 1 – Complainant A**

In July 2024 A made a complaint of a sexual offence to the police in Leeds. She had been a sex worker and for a time moved elsewhere in the world and then returned to Lincolnshire. She wanted to escape from the third party who had allegedly sexually assaulted her.

During the course of the investigation – and whilst you were off duty – you sent her personal messages via WhatsApp. You also regularly visited her for coffee. The electronic chat was predominantly of a friendly kind, but was conducted in a manner which was comprehensively inconsistent with your role as a police officer in the case of a victim of crime.

You seized her mobile telephone – which would have been appropriate as part of the investigation – but in stead of handling it correctly – you retained it and it was never logged as an exhibit or a retained item.

You also asked her for a kiss – or a *peck on the cheek*, as it was put.

No complaint was made at the time.

When you were, eventually, interviewed about this matter, you denied any wrong doing.

It is accepted you did not purport to be a rabbi.

There is no personal statement from A.

### Counts 2 and 3 – Complainant B

In early 2025 B made a complaint of a sexual offence to the police in Leeds. She was a fluent French speaker from a French speaking country. She had a limited command of English.

B made an ABE interview for the purposes of evidence in the case against another individual. She needed a translator for this purpose.

Thereafter, you contacted her on 3 occasions and did the following:

1. Bought gifts for the children of B (these were low value items and included food and stationary).
2. You asked B to translate sexualised messages from your phone which were in French. You had deliberately contrived to place the French on to your telephone by use of a translation app as means to ask B to translate the messages. These messages read:
  - *“I like you a lot”.*
  - *“I want to take off your underwear with my teeth”.*
  - *“Do you miss sex?”*
3. Thereafter you sexually assaulted B when she was reading these messages. You did the following towards a vulnerable woman who was making a complaint of sexual misconduct against a third party.
  - You touched her breasts over her clothing
  - You touched her bottom over clothing whilst smelling her hair

- You tried to kiss her.
4. You were also over familiar with the children of B and also offered to take B out for a meal.
  5. You also looked at her social media account about 100 times.

You were arrested and interviewed following a complaint. You denied any wrongdoing.

It was during this investigation the police became aware of the offending in relation to count 1.

### Personal Statement of B

B has today bravely read her personal statement to the court.

She fully set out her vulnerability and the awful consequences that she had been forced to move from one sight to another to avoid abuse from a third party. She was homeless and had two daughters.

It was in these circumstances you committed the two crimes against her.

She has described graphically her feelings and how the psychological scars remain today. She stated "I no longer recognise myself in the mirror". She has been very badly affected by what you did. She was vulnerable to start with and you have exacerbated the situation.

### Sentencing Guidelines

There are no offence specific guidelines of the Sentencing Council in relation to Misconduct in Public Office. There is however the case of R v Nazir [2003] EWCA Crim 901. In that case it was explained that police officers who abuse the trust in them must expect to be sent to prison immediately. I must assess harm and culpability by reference to the general guideline in respect of sentencing.

There is also the case of R v Ali [2023] EWCA Crim 1464 which I have considered with some care. All of these cases are examples of sentencing in an individual way depending on the seriousness of the offending.

Deterrence and restoration of public confidence in the administration of justice are important aspects of sentencing in cases like this.

It seems to me I must assess the following:

1. The nature and degree of the breach of trust of the police officer.
2. The harm and consequences for the victim as caused by the misconduct.

3. The length and duration of the misconduct.

It is also the case the court must guard against double-counting when the misconduct overlaps with specific sexual offending.

I do not agree with the submission of Miss Parnham that the vulnerability of the victim and abuse of trust are effectively the same. Each is a different phenomenon. A victim may not be vulnerable, but there is a breach of trust when a police officer misconducts himself. An abuse of trust relates to the nature and texture of the misconduct. The vulnerability is referable to the situation of the victim. Notwithstanding, the two may be interlinked, and a sense of proportion is required when making an overall assessment of culpability and harm.

These cases are distinctly fact specific and circumstance sensitive. An individual approach is required subject to basic principles. The overall seriousness of the case is required to be assessed.

There is a guideline in respect of sexual assault.

In my judgment this case falls into category A2 with a starting point on count 3 of 2 years imprisonment with a range of 1 to 4 years.

In terms of harm, B was vulnerable due to her personal circumstances as she set out in her personal statement. She was a woman who was making a complaint to the police of sexual assault against another person. The case falls in to category 2 in terms of harm.

Your culpability is elevated due to the fact this criminality was perpetrated in her home and there was a gross breach of trust by reason of the fact you were a police officer who was investigating an allegation of a sexually related crime. The case falls into category A in terms of culpability.

### **Mitigation**

The mitigation advanced on your behalf by Miss Parnham consists of the following important points which can be summarised in this way:

1. Your guilty plea and remorse.
2. You have no previous convictions and a hitherto good character. You also had an unblemished police career until this criminality.
3. The principle of totality has been emphasised. I have also taken care not to double count factors. There is totality as between counts 2 and 3 which are two aspects of the same offending and there is the overall totality which must be considered at all stages of my task.

4. The fact your career is in ruin and it will be very difficult for you to rebuild any form of suitable career hereafter. You have lost friends and colleagues due to this offending. It is of note your family are supporting you at this very difficult time.
5. The fact that prison will be particularly hard for you as a former police officer.
6. I have considered the letter you have written to me where you set out your remorse. I accept that as genuine.
7. I have also considered the letters written by your father (who is a retired superintendent in the police) and from a friend who has known you for many years. Both speak well of you. Your family situation is also explained.
8. I am told you have been struggling with mental health issues. There is no report, however, it was a matter reported to your superior officers. You were referred for counselling. You correctly state in your letter to me, this does not mitigate what you did, but it may explain the context of your offending. You were a troubled and isolated man at the time.

## **Conclusion**

My conclusions are these:

First, it must be made very clear that any police officer who betrays the trust reposed in him or her and misconducts himself whilst in that position of immense responsibility must expect to be punished. This means an immediate custodial sentence is almost invariably imposed. For a police officer there is an inherent level of severity by such a course.

Second, in passing sentence upon you, I have paid close attention to the definitive guideline of the Sentencing Council in respect of sexual assault. I have also followed the guidance of the Court of Appeal in respect of the crime of Misconduct in Public Office where there is no offence specific guideline. There is the general guideline to which I have also paid attention.

Third, the principle of totality is front and centre of my consideration of sentence in this case.

Fourth, I have well in mind the mitigation advanced on your behalf and I am particularly conscious of the situation in which you will find yourself in prison as a former police officer. I have little doubt a special regimen will be required.

Fifth, it is a particularly aggravating feature of this case that you grotesquely abused your position as a police officer whilst working in the safeguarding unit of the West Yorkshire Police when you were supposed to be investigating sexual crimes perpetrated upon vulnerable women. It is bad enough to behave inappropriately in such circumstances. It becomes exceptionally

serious when the misconduct embraces a sexual crime. You were unhampered by scruples of any kind and your serious misconduct eclipsed your professional duty. I regard this aspect of the case as the most serious feature of this case.

Sixth, it is unquestionably the case that criminality of this kind, perpetrated by a police officer in the course of his duty, serves to seriously undermine the confidence of the public in the police force of this country. This form of corrosive conduct must, therefore, be punished with severity. Personal mitigation, although not to be ignored, has less weight than might otherwise be the case. It is inevitable the perpetrator of such a crime will be a person of previous good character.

Seventh, as in all cases, it is important to maintain a sense of proportion. It is equally important to declare a very clear message to the general public and to all those serving in the police force that such crimes will be met with condign punishment.

Eighth, it is likely this case will receive some publicity – that is inevitable – but it is always important to remember that the overwhelming majority of police officers are good, efficient, often courageous, and law abiding public servants. It is a tiny minority – of which you were one – who behave disreputably and translate from being reputable to a criminal. That is what you have become – a criminal. Punishment is one of the purposes of sentencing and in a case of this kind, that is at the forefront of my analysis. The court must do what it can to restore the confidence of the public in the rule of law and those who enforce it.

In this case punishment is demanded – and it will be imposed.

The following sentences would have been imposed, following a trial, had each crime stood alone, and absent any mitigation:

Count 1 – 2 years

Count 2 – 2 years

Count 3 – 3 years

As counts 2 and 3 are part of the same series of crimes affecting B, the principle of totality obtains and a total sentence of 3 years would have been imposed for those two crimes.

The sentence on count 1 must be consecutive as it involves a different victim – A.

The principle of totality must still be considered and an adjustment made. Accordingly, it is my view that a total sentence of 4 years and 6 months would have been imposed – absent any mitigation and following a trial.

I am prepared to make a very modest downward adjustment to reflect personal mitigation, before applying the one-quarter reduction to reflect the guilty pleas.

Following a trial the sentence would have been 4 years imprisonment, having made that modest reduction.

That must then be reduced by one-quarter for the guilty pleas.

This produces a total sentence of 3 years to reflect overall criminality.

In order to achieve this the following sentences will be imposed on each count in the indictment:

Count 1 – 1 year

Count 2 – 2 years consecutive

Count 3 – 2 years concurrent

### **Sentence**

You must now stand.

The statutory charge is imposed upon you in the appropriate amount with a collection order.

The total sentence I pass upon you is 3 years imprisonment. That sentence reflects overall criminality.

That sentence will be made up as follows:

Count 1 (Misconduct in Public Office) – 1 year imprisonment.

Count 2 (Misconduct in Public Office) – 2 years imprisonment consecutive.

Count 3 (Sexual Assault) – 2 years imprisonment concurrent.

I repeat – the total sentence is 3 years imprisonment.

You will be on the register of sex offenders for indefinitely; and, should you breach the terms of that, you are liable to prosecution and a sentence of imprisonment.

The following order is made:

- Restraining Order where you are to have no contact directly or indirectly with A and B for 7 years.

There will come a time when you are eligible for release. If you breach the terms of your licence you may be recalled to prison.

Take him down.