

THE KING versus BRC, SHU and NTG

BOLTON CROWN COURT

SENTENCING REMARKS OF MR JUSTICE GRIFFITHS ON 21 MAY 2026

*****REPORTING RESTRICTIONS**

Orders under section 45 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 have been made in this case. No matter relating to the defendants may be published that would identify any of them, including their name, address, any educational establishment or any workplace they attend, and any picture of them. This order lasts until the youth in question reaches the age of 18.***

Introduction

Mohanad Goobe was 15 years old when he died, a beloved son and brother, and a popular boy with his friends in Manchester. His mother has made in court today a very moving statement about him and about the impact of his death on many people.

I recognise and regret that no sentence I pass will bring Mohanad Goobe back to life.

He had got into arranged fights which were sometimes shared with boys from several schools on social media. No weapons were used. There were no serious injuries. This was jockeying between schoolboys for status and bragging rights, the winners and the losers changing places from fight to fight, and not much damage done except injured pride.

But you, BRC and SHU, took it to another level, got a combat knife, and murdered Mohanad in the street. You, NTG, lent active support to the joint attack, guilty of manslaughter.

I am now going to set out the facts I am sure of which are relevant to your sentences. Then I will explain to each of you in turn the sentence you must serve. I will give this to you in writing afterwards because I know it is a lot for you to process now.

The facts

Mohanad was murdered on 15 September 2025.

Three weeks before, on 25 August, a fight took place between BRC and another boy. They had an argument on TikTok and agreed to have a fight about it. They met in an alleyway and BRC won.

News of this spread and soon there was talk of a re-match.

The next fight was between BRC and a different boy. It was a planned fight. It took place at 6 pm on Saturday 30 August in Alexandra Park in Manchester. Other boys looked on. Video footage was taken on phones. At the end of the video the other boy had BRC pinned to the ground underneath him.

It looked as if BRC had lost. Everyone was talking about it. SHU had been in the park backing BRC. Mohanad Goobe had been in the park backing the other boy. NTG was in London with relatives and thought he was missing out when he heard about it.

BRC was humiliated. He decided to raise the stakes and start fighting dirty by introducing ambush tactics and knives. That very evening, later on 30 August, he caught the other boy in an alleyway when he wasn't expected. This time BRC had a knife. He didn't use it and no-one was hurt. But there was more to come.

You, SHU, although only 15, had started dealing in knives for money. SHU called up one of his contacts and arranged to meet him with BRC and some others. When a knife and sheath were produced for them to look at, they were filmed on SHU's phone. Somehow, SHU got cut by the blade. He went to the local hospital for treatment, and took BRC and another boy with him. The wound was 2 or 3 cm long. A doctor stitched it up. SHU told the hospital he

had been cutting fruit or onions.

The next day, on Sunday 31 August, BRC got in touch with Mohanad to arrange what BRC said would be just a one on one fight. Mohanad and his friends were rightly suspicious, after BRC had produced a knife against Subhan, and they were worried that next time BRC and his friends might “jump” or ambush them, and use knives.

A few weeks went by with feverish chatting and speculation about what might come next.

By Saturday 13 September, BRC and SHU were ready to bring it on. They planned a group, surprise attack, with knives, while suggesting to Mohanad and his group that it would be a fair fight between one or two on each side without weapons like the one before.

BRC set up a TikTok group chat which he called Somali Central to gather supporters for the real, larger scale attack. He put 26 people into this group, including himself, SHU and NTG. Messaging also flowed across other platforms, including an existing Instagram group chat including BRC, SHU, NTG, and 26 others.

At 1.37 am on Sunday 14 September BRC asked the group who was coming after school. One of the first to respond was NTG who said “Me”. NTG picked up on someone else’s suggestion that they might bring a dog, saying it would be for “intimidation”. Chat came thick and fast from various participants, including BRC and SHU. NTG was one of the noisiest. He said “Come just pull up and slap them up” and “Come bring bare man”, meaning “many men”. He said he wanted at least 30 to turn up.

SHU said “Come fight with hands”. Neither he nor BRC wanted it generally known that they were preparing to produce a knife when it wasn’t expected.

SHU suggested getting a six-seater Uber to bring people to the fight. He picked up on NTG’s talk of 30 boys on their side and suggested names for the 10 up front, the 10 in the middle

and the 10 at the back.

On 1.15 pm on Sunday 14 September 2025, BRC posted on the Somali Central TikTok chat: "It's happening."

Mohanad was still suspicious and did not want to agree to a planned fight. He sent a message to the BRC group through the intermediary saying "Just do something when you see us". One of Mohanad's friends also sent a message, saying "I ain't stepping to no set up. [meaning I'm not coming to a set up]. You know what school I go [to]. Pull up there."

BRC and SHU would not be put off. NTG managed to get into the inner circle, although he was subordinate to BRC and SHU. NTG had only just got back to Manchester that weekend after a stay in London and he felt he had missed out on the earlier fights and chat. He wasn't going to miss the next one.

BRC and SHU put pressure on Mohanad to agree to a fair, arranged fight against his better judgment so as not to lose face. This was done through intermediaries and through direct calls. There was a merged Facetime call shortly before 2 pm on Sunday in which the only participants were Mohanad on one side and BRC, SHU and NTG on the other side.

Did NTG know that BRC and SHU were planning to bring knives to the fight? There is no direct evidence of that. I will not make that finding against him.

Did NTG know there was a possibility that there would be knives at the fight? In the Instagram group chat on Sunday 14 September at 2.10 pm SHU posted (about the Mohanad party) "They said come AG at 6 shank fight". He meant "Mohanad's group said come to Whitworth Park Art Gallery at 6 pm knife fight". NTG was active in that chat and (contrary to his evidence) he certainly saw and read that. The very next post in the group was from him saying: "Alright, we know, so when today, or are we staying at gaff" (meaning "at home").

However, based on NTG's acquittal of murder although guilty of manslaughter, I can say that NTG neither knew or intended that Mohanad would suffer really serious harm or be killed in the attack. So I accept his evidence that he did not expect it to be a knife fight when the time came. I reject his evidence was that he did not see this message. But I accept his evidence that, if he had seen it, he would not have taken the reference to knives seriously.

BRC and SHU did not let on to the rest of the group the full extent of their real plan: which was to ambush Mohanad Goobe and his friends with a bigger group of boys and knives.

To create the opportunity for this, agreement was reached between the two sides on an arranged fight in Whitworth Park next to the Art Gallery in Manchester after school the next day, Monday 15 September 2025.

The fight would be between two people on Mohanad's side and two people on BRC's side (SHU promised at 1.39 pm on Sunday "We will be 2 man up"). Only BRC and SHU knew that this was set up as a trap for a later joint attack on Mohanad and his friends, involving a big mismatch in numbers, a surprise attack, and knives. When someone on Instagram challenged BRC "Why you gonna kill another man?" BRC answered "Who said I'm gonna kill another man?". He didn't want it generally known. But he was intending to kill.

Shortly before midnight, SHU was sourcing large blades for the next day.

Monday 15 September was the day of the arranged fight and the day of the murder. At 8.39 am, SHU told the Somali Central Instagram group "Yes lads, today a big day. Be there." He was recruiting the boys.

A 14 year old witness who was at the same school as Mohanad was told by one of his friends about an arranged fight to take place after school between two people on Mohanad's side and BRC and his friends on the other side. He went to see it.

BRC cut school, and spent the day getting ready. In the afternoon, he was at SHU's house, with one or two others, not including NTG. BRC and SHU had two knives and sheaths laid out on SHU's bed. SHU took a picture of them being handled by BRC. BRC picked the bigger combat knife, which was 26.8 cm long with a 14.5 cm blade. The knife was never recovered by police. But the matching sheath was later found at the scene.

Shortly before 3.30 pm they set off for Whitworth Park. BRC had the combat knife in his waistband, ready.

NTG had gone to school as usual. In the afternoon, he made his own way to Whitworth Park with two friends.

Mohanad arrived at Whitworth Park with his friends before 3.30 pm.

What happened next is from the unchallenged account of the 14 year old bystander who came to watch the arranged fight. He saw BRC and one of Mohanad's friends facing each other about 1 or 2 metres apart. They both looked angry. Mohanad's friend had his fists clenched. But BRC did not want a fight at that point. He succeeded in calming the situation down.

For about an hour, the two groups – the large one linked to BRC, and the smaller one linked to Mohanad, came together in Whitworth Park and dispersed a few times. But there was never any fighting. BRC and SHU did not want a fair fight. The boy who was expected to fight on their side had not been brought with them. If there had been a fair fight, their side might have lost again, and they weren't going to risk that.

The police turned up at 4.10 pm. A policeman spoke to the boys, including BRC. No-one was searched. There was some banter with the policeman caught on his body worn camera. Then the police went away, leaving the boys in the park.

Soon after this, Mohanad and two of his friends left Whitworth Park. They thought it was all over. They walked down the street together.

This was BRC and SHU's moment. The real attack was about to begin, the attack in which Mohanad would be outnumbered and stabbed when he was not expecting even a fight.

All the boys gathered by BRC and SHU were sent out of the park after Mohanad. They merged into a pack on the street, with BRC, SHU and NTG moving to the front as leaders. It is all on CCTV.

Mohanad and his two friends saw the crowd of boys approaching. They stopped and turned to face them. SHU was out in front of the group, with NTG next, and BRC moving up to join them at the front.

The pack of boys advanced. Mohanad and his two friends started backing off. The pack carried on towards them. There was no escape. Mohanad and his friends turned to face what was coming.

BRC put his hand on the knife in his waistband. SHU got hold of Mohanad from behind. He threw him to the floor. BRC stood over Mohanad. NTG took a run at Mohanad and kicked him with his shod foot as hard as he could as he lay on the ground. Mohanad got back up and threw punches at NTG.

Then BRC raised his knife and stabbed Mohanad with deliberate, lethal force. He caused a 6 cm wound to his head which exposed the underlying muscle and skull. He also stabbed him right through his heart, which was fatal. BRC did not flash the knife to impress, or threaten or warn. He pulled it out from where it had been hidden and used it instantly to kill. There is no room for doubt. The messaging, the planning, the bringing of the biggest knife, and the way in which it was used to stab through the heart make me sure of the intent to kill.

Mohanad got up but 10 seconds later he collapsed. He died in the street while the group dispersed. His friends immediately called emergency services but nothing could be done to save his life.

Sentencing

BRC, SHU and NTG:

I will now explain the sentences I am going to pass on each of you. I will keep what I say as short as possible, because of your age. But there are three of you, you are all under 18, and I have taken a lot of material into account, both factual and legal, although I am just giving you the main, headline points.

I have thought long and hard. I have read all the documents submitted to me. I have listened to the submissions made to me. I have reflected on the evidence at trial, including your own evidence. I have re-read Schedule 21 of the Sentencing Act, the sentencing guidelines for each offence, the Guideline on Sentencing Children and Young People, the Guideline on Sentencing offenders with mental and developmental disorders and neurological impairments, the Benchbook on Child Defendants in the Crown Court, the Equal Treatment Benchbook and cases including *R v ZA* [2023] EWCA Crim 596 and *R v Kamarra-Jarra* [2024] EWCA Crim 198, in order to apply them thoroughly and specifically to you as individuals and on the facts of your offending.

BRC and SHU:

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. This means that today you will go back to a secure place. You will not be allowed to leave that secure place until you are told you can.

As well as passing that life sentence, I must decide the shortest length of time you **must** stay in custody. This is called a minimum term.

The Parole Board decide when 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. So you may be in custody for longer than the minimum term. 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 there are rules, or conditions, that will be decided when you leave custody. You will have to follow those rules for the rest of your life. If you break those rules, you may have to go back into custody.

I now explain how I have decided what the minimum terms should be for each of you. I will start with BRC.

BRC

BRC: Your life has been spoiled by exceptional levels of trauma and disadvantage. They have had a major impact on your mental health and functioning, as set out in the Pre Sentence Report and the report of Dr Richard Jones. Your upbringing has been dysfunctional, violent and unstable. Your education has been disrupted. Your older sister died suddenly in tragic circumstances.

Before the murder, you had recognised difficulties with emotional regulation, anger, communication, and impulse control. You have a diagnosis now of ADHD. Your friends included drug dealers and knife hunters. You have no previous convictions but you do have some history of violence, not just to the arranged fights. This includes an out of court disposal for assault in 2024.

In the five months before the murder, your behaviour went from bad to worse: stealing, going missing from home, and pushing your mother down the stairs.

I am sure that you planned the murder of Mohanad Goobe in advance and that you

intended to kill him with the knife you got with SHU's help. You did this because of wounded pride. You did not stab him on impulse or as a result of any immediate provocation. You were executing a plan.

You took a knife to the scene. Paying due regard to the Sentencing Act and your chronological age of 15, I adopt a starting point for the minimum term in your case of 17 years. But I will move up or down from that depending on other factors.

There are things in your case which make it worse. We call these "aggravating factors".

- First, there was a very significant degree of planning and premeditation (without double counting the bringing of the knife).
- Second, your victim was taken by surprise when he was vulnerable, unarmed and defenceless. He was outnumbered. He was only 15 years old.
- Third, you committed the murder in the presence of other children who were brought there to give force of numbers.
- Fourth, you took a leading role in the group.
- Fifth, the murder was committed in daylight on a public street. It shocked at least one member of the public who drove through it and saw the stabbing.

On the other hand, there are things that count in your favour. We call these "mitigating factors".

- First, you are not, I find on the evidence, immature for your chronological age, but you are 15 rather than 16. So you are in the lower half of the age range for the starting point of 17 years.
- Second, although not immature for your age, your poor mental health and the effects of your traumatic childhood meant that you were not able fully to think through the devastating consequences of killing another boy, although you did

intend to kill him. This significantly reduces your culpability.

- Third, you are responding to support being provided to you in custody and you are now feeling genuine remorse.
- Fourth, you have no previous convictions, although you are not of positive good character. I have read your character references.
- Fifth, your personal mitigation, based on your troubled background, is exceptionally strong. Although various agencies had become aware of you, you had not benefitted from any intervention before the time of the murder.

I have not listed the aggravating and mitigating features in order of importance and they are not of equal weight. I do not simply count them up. I am assessing all the facts in the round. The minimum term must, on balance, be higher than the starting point in your case.

You must pay the statutory surcharge of £41.

You have spent 243 days in custody already, on remand. I will take those days off the minimum term starting today. That will make it shorter by the number of those days.

Stand up now, BRC. I am going to pass the life sentence required by law, and I'm going to tell you how long the minimum term will be before the Parole Board looks at your case.

For the murder of Mohanad Goobe, I sentence you to detention during His Majesty's pleasure with a Minimum Term before the Parole Board can look at your case of 19 years less the 243 days you have already spent in custody before today, which leaves a Minimum Term from today of 18 years and 122 days.

You may go down.

SHU

SHU, I will now tell you what your minimum term will be.

You did not personally stab Mohanad Goobe. But you led the planning and execution of the joint attack which led to his death. You supplied the knife to BRC. You were responsible for it being brought to the scene. Paying due regard to the Sentencing Act and your chronological age of 15, I adopt a starting point for the minimum term in your case of 17 years. I will then move up or down from that depending on other factors.

The things which make your case worse (the “aggravating factors”) are:

- First, the significant degree of planning and premeditation on your part (without double counting the bringing of the knife). This was not a spontaneous attack and it was unprovoked.
- Second, your victim was taken by surprise when he was vulnerable, unarmed and defenceless. He was outnumbered. He was only 15 years old.
- Third, the murder was committed in the presence of other children who had been invited to the scene to give force of numbers.
- Fourth, you took a leading role in the group. You brought the victim to the ground and you knew and intended that a knife would be drawn on him.
- Fifth, the offence was committed in daylight on a public street in front of members of the public.
- Sixth, you have one previous conviction for attempted robbery of a scooter and a phone from another male. This was a group attack when you were 14. The victim was punched and kicked but kept hold of his possessions. You pleaded guilty and received a 9 month referral order in April 2025 which targeted the behaviours you showed when committing the later crime.
- Seventh, the murder was committed during the period of the referral order imposed for the attempt robbery. You were ignoring efforts to get you back on track.

On the other hand, the things in your favour (the “mitigating factors”) are:

- First, although you intended and foresaw that the knife you had supplied to BRC would be used to cause really serious injury in the joint attack, you did not intend or expect that anyone would be killed. This is the most significant mitigating feature in your case.
- Second, you are not immature for your chronological age of 15. However, you are, like BRC, in the lower half of the age range for the starting point.
- Third, you had a much more stable upbringing than BRC, but you witnessed domestic violence in the home.

You continue to deny responsibility and I am not persuaded by the Pre Sentence Report or your letter to me that you yet feel any sincere remorse.

I assess all the facts and circumstances of your case in the round, as before. BRC intended to kill, and you did not. But you have much less personal mitigation than him. You were also in breach of a referral order which had targeted the behaviours you showed when committing this crime.

The minimum term must, on balance, be higher than the starting point.

You must pay the statutory surcharge of £41.

You have spent 203 days in custody before today. I will take those days off the minimum term starting today. That will make it shorter by the number of those days.

Stand up now, SHU. I am going to pass the life sentence required by law, and I’m going to tell you how long the minimum term will be before the Parole Board looks at your case.

For the murder of Mohanad Goobe, I sentence you to detention during His Majesty's pleasure with a Minimum Term before the Parole Board can look at your case of 18 years less the 203 days you have already spent in custody before today, which leaves a Minimum Term from today of 17 years and 162 days.

You may go down.

NTG

I now sentence you, NTG, for manslaughter.

You played a leading role in the joint attack on Mohanad Goobe which caused his death. You were at the forefront of the discussions over the weekend, you were at the front of the pack on the day, and you personally kicked Mohanad when he was down.

Your acquittal of murder means you are entitled to be sentenced on the basis that you did not know or intend that he would suffer really serious bodily harm. But you are guilty of manslaughter because you took part in a joint attack which any reasonable person would realise was bound to subject him to the risk of some physical harm.

Applying the Sentencing Guideline for Unlawful Act Manslaughter, your culpability is in Category B, which is high. This is because I am sure the harm you intended and expected from the joint attack, given the difference in numbers, and given your savage kick to Mohanad when he was down, was only just short of really serious harm. You did not know anyone would have a knife. But, even so, there was a high risk of serious harm which ought to have been obvious to you.

This joint attack was not going to be like the earlier one-on-one fights. You knew that from the chat and the other discussions leading up to it. The other boys were intended to be

participants and not just onlookers this time. It was 25 against 3, and you had talked about as many as 30. It was an ambush, a surprise attack on the street, as they walked away from the park. You knew it was going to happen.

You ran to the front and kicked Mohanad as soon as SHU had brought him down. This was part of a joint attack which you did not intend or expect to stop there, even though you backed off yourself when you were at the receiving end of some retaliatory punches from Mohanad.

I recognise that there is no evidence that Goobe suffered any significant injury from your kick. But there was a high risk of really serious harm which ought to have been obvious to you, both from your kick and from the joint attack as a whole, although you did not actually intend or foresee really serious harm.

You were brought up in a supportive family. You had a good relationship with both your parents although they were separated.

The Pre Sentence Report and your references do not fully reflect your character. I have been separately informed that, after moving to a good secondary school where you did well academically, you got into trouble from Year 8 onwards. Between the ages of 12 and 14, from November 2023 to June 2025, you were excluded from school 11 times. The reasons for exclusion included acting as the aggressor in fights against other boys, and verbally abusing staff and pushing one member of staff, as well as stealing a fob and being absent from lessons.

You are not in my judgment remorseful. You presented a false picture of yourself at the trial as a model and well-behaved student. To the writer of the Pre Sentence Report you continue to understate your responsibility for and involvement in the death of Mohanad Goobe.

Based on my assessment of your culpability from the Sentencing Guideline categories, I take the starting point of 12 years in a range between 8 and 16 years for a mature adult offender.

I then move down, based on a full application of all the things discussed in the Guideline on Sentencing Children and Young People, to reflect your age and immaturity.

Although you are young you are not immature for your age. In some ways, you are quite mature for your age. However, that still made you very immature, as any 14 year old would be, compared with a mature adult. You were at an age when you were more prone to risk taking and peer pressure. You were less able to grasp in advance the full consequences of your choices and actions.

Your sentence must aim to prevent future offending by you and consider your welfare and the impact of the sentence on you, as well as reflecting the gravity of the crime you committed.

Having seen you give evidence, and considered all the materials available to me about you, I take a different view from the writer of the Pre Sentence Report. This is a very serious case and your culpability and involvement make it impossible to pass on you anything less than a custodial sentence.

You have a taste for violence and you are untruthful whilst at the same time you are the most intelligent and articulate of the three defendants and able to do better, if you take the opportunities now given to you in custody to change the course of your life.

I will move from the adult starting point of 12 years down to a term of 5 years to reflect your youth and immaturity before considering other movements required by the aggravating and mitigating features.

The aggravating features are:

- First, your leading role in the group. I recognise that your leading role was behind the role of the two main leaders, BRC and SHU, and you did not intend such serious harm as they did. In treating your leading role as an aggravating feature, I recognise and compensate for a degree of overlap with the points which placed in you category B culpability within the Sentencing Guideline.
- A second aggravating feature is the significant level of planning and premeditation in which you were involved.

A mitigating feature I have not already given you credit for in my movement down from the 12 year starting point is that you have no previous convictions.

That mitigation is outweighed by the aggravating features.

The shortest sentence I can pass on you is 6 years.

You must pay the statutory surcharge of £41.

Stand up now, NTG.

I have to decide what is the lowest sentence that is the right for you. I have decided that for the unlawful act manslaughter of Mohanad Goobe in a joint attack I must sentence you to custody for six years. This is called long-term detention under s.250 of the Sentencing Act. This means that instead of going home today you will go to a secure place. You will not be allowed to leave until half-way through the six years. This means you will not be allowed to leave for three years. After you leave, you will be on licence until the end of the six years. Being on licence means that there are conditions – that is, rules – which you will have to follow. If you break any of the licence rules you may have to go back to custody for the rest of your sentence, or some of it.

You have already spent 203 days in custody for this offence. This is called remand. Those days count as part of your six year sentence. That means you have 5 years and 162 days left from today. Any mistake as to time on remand can be corrected without you having to come back to court.

You may go down.

Before leaving this case, I want to express my sincere condolences to the family of Mohanad Goobe, and to everyone who has been affected by his death.

I wish especially to commend Mark Safranauskas of the Greater Manchester Police serious crime division. His remarkable and painstaking work made sense of limited and poor quality CCTV footage. This was essential in allowing the jury to understand exactly who did what during a fast-moving incident involving many people. His contribution to obtaining justice for Mohanad Goobe was exceptional. He is entitled to be recognised for it.