

Parole Board Decision Summary

Name: Glyn Razzell
Decision: No direction for release on parole licence

INTRODUCTION

As required by law, Mr Razzell's case was referred to the Parole Board by the Secretary of State for Justice to determine whether he could be safely released on parole licence.

The panel could only direct release if it was satisfied that it was no longer necessary for the protection of the public that Mr Razzell remained confined in prison. As he was already in an open prison, the panel was not asked to provide a recommendation to the Secretary of State about whether Mr Razzell remained suitable for a place in the open estate.

The case was considered at an oral hearing held over two days on 24 August 2023 and 25 August 2023, which took place in the prison where Mr Razzell was being held. Mr Razzell indicated through his legal representative that he hoped to be released as a result of the Parole Board review. Following the oral hearing, the panel considered further written evidence and written closing representations from Mr Razzell and from the Secretary of State prior to it concluding the case.

The first day of the oral hearing was held in public, with proceedings live streamed at the Royal Courts of Justice. The second day of the hearing was held in private to allow sensitive matters about the proposed release plan to be discussed.

In reaching its decision, the panel considered the contents of Mr Razzell's dossier, prepared by the Secretary of State. At the hearing, the panel took oral evidence from Mr Razzell's probation officer based in the community, the official supervising his case in prison, a psychologist employed by the prison service and a psychologist commissioned by Mr Razzell's legal representative. Mr Razzell, who was legally represented at the hearing, also gave evidence to the panel. The Secretary of State was legally represented at the hearing and confirmed that he did not support release in this case.

The panel had the benefit of victim personal statements which clearly conveyed the impact of Mr Razzell's crime and the consequences of his offending. All but two of the victim personal statements were available to the panel and had been disclosed to Mr Razzell. They were read to the panel before the hearing. The contents of all statements were given careful consideration by the panel.

SENTENCE DETAILS

On 14 November 2003, Mr Razzell received a mandatory life sentence following his conviction for murder. The victim was his wife, and her body has never been found. Mr Razzell has never admitted responsibility for the murder and was convicted at trial. The panel assessed his case on the basis that he was properly convicted by the courts. The panel also considered the Prisoners (Disclosure of Information About Victims) Act, commonly referred to as 'Helen's Law'.

At the oral hearing, Mr Razzell conceded to the panel that the victim “*must be dead*” whereas in the past he has chosen to suggest that she is still alive. Nevertheless, he maintained that he did not kill the victim and the panel considered his concession to be half-hearted.

The sentencing Judge described the offence as being planned and that Mr Razzell was an obsessive planner. His motive was considered to be partly money and partly anger that the victim was getting the better of him in their divorce.

He was 44 years old at the time he was sentenced and was aged 64 when his case was reviewed. The sentencing court determined that he must serve a minimum of nearly sixteen years before his release could be considered. Mr Razzell reached that eligibility date on 12 September 2019, and this was his third review by the Parole Board. The Parole Board’s regular reviews have meant that Mr Razzell has so far spent an additional four years in prison for the protection of the public.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Having considered the index offence, relevant patterns of previous behaviour and the other evidence before it, the panel listed as risk factors those influences which made it more likely that Mr Razzell would reoffend. His risk factors had included his behaviour within relationships and his difficulties in managing extreme emotions.

The index offence had been characterised by instrumental violence, significant planning, and boundless deception. The panel considered that Mr Razzell’s attitude towards the index offence meant that professionals might not be able to rely on his accounts of his behaviour in the community if he were to be released.

The panel explored allegations that had been made about Mr Razzell in the past and concluded that it was more likely than not that he had committed abusive, threatening, and violent behaviour towards the victim, particularly in the latter part of their deteriorating marriage. Mr Razzell has denied any violence towards the victim and does not believe that this is an area of risk that needs to be addressed.

Evidence was presented at the hearing regarding Mr Razzell’s progress and custodial conduct during this sentence. Little, if any, work in terms of accredited programmes had been undertaken to address identified risk factors.

In November 2017, Mr Razzell was moved to an open prison, and he has remained there ever since. In that time, he has undertaken extensive periods of temporary release in the community, including overnight stays in probation accommodation. With the exception of two speeding contraventions while working as a prison driver, no significant concerns have been raised about his behaviour in this time, and he has held trusted positions at the prison.

Since the last review of his case in 2020 Mr Razzell has completed individualised work with a psychologist during his time in the open prison. It was hoped that the work would explore Mr Razzell’s views of himself, the world, and other people. This would have helped him to better understand his emotions and himself.



Mr Razzell completed eight sessions with a psychologist. He had initially been reluctant to engage but then embraced the challenge, albeit that later on he questioned the need for the work. At the conclusion of the work, in May 2022, it was considered that Mr Razzell would need to reflect on what had been completed and work with the official supervising his case in custody to consolidate his learning.

Mr Razzell then declined to complete the check-in sheets which formed a part of his self-reflection. He told the panel that the work with the psychologist had been *"ill-conceived and unhelpful ... I don't think it addresses risk ... I don't think it has reduced risk going forward"*. He said that he had not completed the check-in sheets because no one had encouraged him to do so, and he had not taken the initiative himself because of his *"laziness"* and because he saw no value in them.

No consolidation work had been completed and the panel concluded that Mr Razzell had not done what had been recommended by the previous review of the Parole Board or by the professionals involved in his case. In its decision, the panel stated that Mr Razzell's unwillingness to complete the work *"...evidence at best, his potential for non-compliance, at worst, his false compliance and continued deceit. He has, it seems still 'got something to hide'"*.

In the panel's assessment, there remained a need for Mr Razzell to address the risk factors that led to his offending and to his abusive behaviour in relationships.

The panel examined the release plan provided by Mr Razzell's probation officer and weighed its proposals against assessed risks. The plan included a requirement to reside in designated accommodation as well as strict limitations on Mr Razzell's contacts, movements, and activities. The panel noted that there would be extensive monitoring of Mr Razzell in the community, however, it had concerns that his compliance with the release plan would be superficial. The panel considered that risk would need to be managed by the external controls of the release plan because Mr Razzell is yet to evidence that he has developed any internal controls to manage himself safely.

DECISION

The panel considered that Mr Razzell evidenced a desire to control the narrative surrounding his detention. It noted concerns raised about his conduct towards female professionals who have been involved in his case, and it considered this to be evidence of a continuing risk.

The panel considered 'Helen's Law' with great care. The panel did not know how or where the victim's remains were disposed of, and it believed that Mr Razzell had information about this. The panel therefore took into account Mr Razzell's non-disclosure and the reason, in its view, he had failed to disclose information.

The panel agreed with an earlier panel's assessment of the case. Mr Razzell had not disclosed information because he continues to deny killing the victim, does not want to lose his desired status of being a *'wrongly convicted murderer'* and he has



been attempting 'self-preservation' to keep himself 'psychologically intact' by keeping control of the narrative.

The panel concluded that the reasons behind Mr Razzell's non-disclosure do have significant bearing on his risk. It stated that there was "*...ample evidence that Mr Razzell is capable of wholesale deceit; that his wilful and deliberate withholding of the relevant information indicates that he continues to be a risk; that the reasons for his non-disclosure are relevant to the risk he presents, and the reasons carry great weight when examining the assessment of his risk should [he] be released*".

Mr Razzell has been in prison for almost 20 years since being sentenced for the index offence. The panel found that he had done little work to address his assessed risk factors and that he does not acknowledge that he has any risk factors, despite overwhelming evidence. The panel was mindful that denial of offending is not a bar to release, however, the panel was not satisfied that release at this point would be safe for the protection of the public. It did not direct Mr Razzell's release.

Mr Razzell's continued placement in the open prison is a matter for the Secretary of State and not the Parole Board. Mr Razzell will be eligible for another parole review in due course.

