



Laura Hocknell

Year of Call: 2005



Recommended in Chambers and Partners 2016

Exclusively criminal defence practice, equally as comfortable defending in sensitive sexual allegations as in complex fraud cases.

Frequently instructed to defend complex fraud allegations, often involving the most complicated and voluminous evidence. In the last three years has been instructed as led junior counsel for the second defendant in an £8million 'boiler room' fraud, an allegation of conspiracy to defraud a Primary Care Trust by a dentist and his employees, a two-month money laundering trial and a five month complex VAT 'missing trader' fraud. Also instructed as junior counsel alone on frauds relating to eBay and banks and building societies and a 'confidence' fraud in which elderly and vulnerable people's bank details were obtained and used over lengthy periods of time. in 2016 instructed as junior counsel for the first defendant in a case alleging conspiracy to make corrupt payments within the Royal Household.

Experience in defending in all types of sexual allegation. Recent instructions include representing a man accused of raping his two daughters over many years, a 17 year old who was alleged to have raped a vulnerable teenager, and a defendant who was accused of being part of a 'grooming' gang, who was said to have targeted a 13 year old girl with learning difficulties.

Homicide and Corporate Manslaughter

R v JF (2018) (Central Criminal Court) - instructed as junior alone on charges of assisting an offender following alleged targeted gang related 'execution'.

R v Erroll Hanson (2017) (Southwark Crown Court) - led by Queen's Counsel in murder trial. The defendant was a man of good character, diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, who stabbed a burglar over fifty times. Acquitted of murder and manslaughter. Media coverage here:

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5197493/amp/Homeowner-killed-drunk-burglar-cleared-murder.html>

<http://metro.co.uk/2017/12/20/home-owner-spared-jail-killing-burglar-stabbed-50-times-7174074/amp/>

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/murder-right-charge-for-errol-hanson-man-who-killed-burglar-dz7rn3w69>

R v Ullah (2015) (Leeds Crown Court) – instructed as junior counsel for second defendant in murder trial involving double shooting of two brothers

R v Ronald Edwards (2011) (Chelmsford Crown Court) – Led junior in murder trial. The defendant, a man of 65 years of age and previous good character, had stabbed his long term partner twelve times. His case was that he was not guilty of murder but accepted manslaughter on the basis of provocation. Acquitted of murder.

R v Whyte (2009) (Court of Appeal Criminal Division) – Led junior on appeal against conviction for murder in gang related shooting. Complicated issues were raised in respect of the Crown's simultaneous application to quash a co-defendant's acquittal. Appeal allowed.

Fraud and Financial Crime

R v Montes (2017) (Southwark Crown Court) - defendant stole over £100,000 worth of watches from her employer, a billionaire Russian oligarch. Guilty plea, suspended sentence.

R v Harper (2016) (Southwark Crown Court) - currently instructed as junior counsel for first defendant in allegations of conspiracy to make corrupt payments by members of the Royal Household. Due for trial in April 2016.

R v Salter and others (2013) (Kingston Crown Court) Operation Chert - led junior for defendant in MTIC fraud – conspiracy to cheat the Revenue and money laundering. The prosecution case in this five month trial was that the defendant's company had attempted to cheat the revenue of £23million through fraudulent VAT reclaims.

R v Symes and others (2014) (Chelmsford Crown Court) Operation Hailite – led junior for defendant in allegation of fraudulent trading. The defendants are alleged to have systematically targeted elderly and vulnerable people by cold calling at their houses and persuading them to sign up for building works. The Crown's case is that such works were either unnecessary or overcharged for and that through this method the defendants fraudulently obtained over £1million over a 4 year period.

R v Butt and others (2012) (Liverpool Crown Court) - junior counsel for employee of dental practice charged with conspiracy to defraud the Primary Care Trust and conspiracy to falsely account. Count 1 stayed as an abuse of process following two days of defence submissions on the basis that there had been no loss to the Primary Care Trust and that the defendants had in fact been acting to enable as many patients as possible to obtain dental treatment at NHS rates. The prosecution then offered no evidence in respect of the second count.

R v Sherman and others (2012) (Ipswich Crown Court) - junior counsel for mother of alleged drug dealer, who was charged with money laundering the proceeds of crime through various bank accounts. Crown offered no evidence on fifth day of trial.

R v Murphy and others (2011) (Ipswich Crown Court) – Led junior in 3 month SFO prosecution for 'boiler room' fraud with cross jurisdictional issues. The SFO's case was that over £8million had been fraudulently obtained from would be investors in a sham biodiesel company.

R v M (2011) (Reading Crown Court) – Junior alone in case concerning several counts of benefit fraud and money laundering running to over £200,000. Defendant is profoundly deaf with significant mental health issues.

General Crime

R v JH (2017) (Inner London Crown Court) - historic rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault allegations reopened by police following a 'cold case review'. The Crown's case was that the defendant drugged and raped a vulnerable teenage boy. Acquitted of all counts after trial.

R v John Dawson and others (2017) (Southend Crown Court) - defendant charged together with others with s18 GBH following a break in into a block of flats and stabbing of a young man in a case of mistaken identity. Defendant was alone in being acquitted of s18 after trial. He received 15 months for a s20 offence; the other defendants were sentenced to 5 and 6 and a half years respectively.

R v CS (2017) (Liverpool Crown Court) - defendant, a university student of good character charged with

assault by penetration and sexual assault on his female flatmate. Acquitted after trial.

R v VV (2016) (Hove Crown Court) - led junior in allegations of child exploitation and gang rape. Acquittal.

R v MW (2015) (Inner London Crown Court) - represented man of good character charged with rape of 13 year old girl with learning difficulties. The Crown's case was that he was part of a gang who had deliberately targeted her and 'groomed' her over a period of time before the alleged rape. Acquittal.

R v SH (2015) (Croydon Crown Court) - represented one of 12 year old twins accused of campaign of harassment against neighbours, culminating in adult neighbour being stabbed by twins on doorstep of his home. The defendant was charged, together with his twin and mother, with s18 wounding with intent and harassment offences. He was acquitted of all counts after trial.

R v OA (2015) (Northampton Crown Court) - represented father accused of raping and sexually abusing his two daughters over a period of years. Defendant was convicted of counts of common assault only.

R v JS (2015) (Lewes Crown Court) - 17 year old boy charged with raping a vulnerable teenager in supported accommodation. Acquittal.

R v Khanum (2014) (Kingston Crown Court) – successful defence of duress in respect of defendant charged with multiple count of banking fraud.

R v BS (2014) (Reading Crown Court) – defended client charged with counts of knife point rape and threats to kill, within context of marriage.

R v JM (2014) (Snaresbrook Crown Court) – client charged with ABH - beating 12 year old daughter with wooden spoons and cutting her hair off.

R v Bradley (2013) (Isleworth Crown Court) – defendant charged with arson with intent to endanger life/arson being reckless as to whether life endangered. Defendant set fire to fence in between her home and that of her neighbour. Fire spread to neighbour's house. The defendant was said to have made simultaneous threats to kill the neighbour. She was acquitted of both arson with intent and arson being reckless after trial and her sentence in respect of simple arson, to which she had pleaded guilty, was reduced by a further third by the Court of Appeal.

R v DN (2012) (Chelmsford Crown Court) - represented teacher accused of sexually assaulting his friend whilst she slept. Acquittal.

R v CC (2010) (Enfield Youth Court) – 14 year old charged with sexual assault on 11 year old girl in context of 'gang attack', who was stabbed when she refused to comply. Guilty plea.

R v AC (2011) (Portsmouth Youth Court) – 17 year old charged with rape and assault by penetration of 11 year old girl in woods.

R v SK (2010) (High Wycombe Youth Court) – 13 year old alleged to have conducted 'campaign' of sexual assaults on his female classmates.

R v McMaster (2011) (Woolwich Crown Court) – domestic allegation; s18 GBH with intent. Crown offered no evidence following defence bad character application.

R v VA (2010) (Blackfriars Crown Court) – domestic threats to kill and s20 GBH; 11 year old son called by the Crown as witness. Acquitted.

R v Jones (2011) (Snaresbrook Crown Court) - possession of firearm with intent. Acquitted.

Appeals and CCRC

Regularly instructed as fresh counsel to advise on grounds of appeal against conviction and sentence.

Organised Crime

R v DK (2018) (Chelmsford Crown Court) (Operation Unsafe) - led junior in allegation of importation of over £8million of amphetamine oil.

R v Mubasher Iqbal (2015) (Manchester Minshull Street Crown Court) - instructed in eleven handed allegation of conspiracy to launder proceeds of crime. The Crown's case is that the members of an extended family have sought to conceal the proceeds of drug trafficking and other offences by purchasing properties and transferring them from one family member to another. Listed for 8 week trial.

R v Usman and others (2011) (Bradford Crown Court) – Led junior in conspiracy to supply heroin across the North East.

R v Nevard and others (2010) (Isleworth Crown Court) – Junior alone in conspiracy to steal high value cars to order.

Public and Prison Law

Parole Board v P (2009) – represented 20 year old convicted of child sex offences at his Parole Board hearing. The Parole Board argued that he was an ongoing danger to young girls and produced evidence of his alleged continued 'grooming' of several girls over the phone whilst he had been in prison.