



## The Sheku Bayoh Public Inquiry

### Witness Statement

Simon Rowe

Taken [REDACTED]

By MS Teams

On 8 December 2021

1. My name is Simon Rowe. I am <sup>41</sup> years old. My contact details are known to the Inquiry. I am a [REDACTED] However, at the time of the incident I was a [REDACTED] My eyesight is fine when corrected by glasses. I wear glasses for driving so obviously I had them on at the time of the incident.
2. I can't remember the date of the incident. I do remember that it was sometime in 2015 and it was seven o'clock in the morning. I remember it quite vividly. It was light and the weather was dry. I can't remember if the ground was dry but my window wipers were off. I was driving a silver, Ford Transit Connect, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I can't remember the registration possible [REDACTED] something. I was driving east from the Templehall shops area of Kirkcaldy along Templehall Avenue towards Hendry Road. That's when I saw Sheku sort of nearly three-quarters of the way along Templehall Avenue heading towards Hendry Road.
3. When I say I saw Sheku, I now know that that is his name. I did not recognise him or know him personally. I understand he was quite a well-liked boy within the community. I did taxiing for ten years but never came across him in all those years. I saw a black man wearing a white t-shirt. Well, he would have been about 5' 11" to 6' tall maybe as tall as 6' with a muscular physique or

Signed.....

[REDACTED]

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well-built: you could tell he looked after himself. He had what I believed at the time was a blade or knife in his hand. It wasn't a small knife but it wasn't like a machete size either. I can't be sure but I'm guessing maybe a 4-inch, 5-inch blade. I can't remember in which hand he was holding the knife. The way he was walking I could have seen the knife is either hand.

4. I saw him on the pavement to my left hand side at the junction between Templehall Avenue and Alloway Drive, just walking past there and heading east towards Hendry Road. I saw him through my passenger window [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] It was just it was quite early in the morning. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I find I'm quite nosey [REDACTED] You're looking about for people [REDACTED] This man just seemed like he was walking with purpose. He wasn't power walking with his arms flailing up and down but he was walking briskly with his arms swinging or certainly moving side to side. The speed limit on this road is 30 mph. However, I was driving slowly. From seeing first seeing Sheku from behind to driving past him I would have had sight of him for five or six seconds in total.
5. By the time I'd got to the end of Templehall Avenue, I'd phoned the police. I phoned the police because the man was carrying a knife in public. After I came off the phone to the police, I just carried about my work as normal. I turned right at the roundabout onto Hendry Road and then turned left into Hayfield Road and headed towards Victoria Hospital. At that time, there was a [REDACTED] at Whytemans Brae Health Centre. I picked up [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] at the health centre that was taking me up towards the top of the town, a street called Millar Street.
6. After I dropped [REDACTED] off, I just headed back along the top road, along Dunnikier Way. Then back down Hendry Road towards where I'd seen Sheku earlier. I went passed there and then turned back onto Hayfield Road. I was driving east along Hayfield Road just to the start-- I can't remember the name

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of the street but it's where the industrial estate is. Sheku was on my left hand side just at the junction there and appeared to be walking west towards the pub. He looked like he saw the [REDACTED] coming towards him. I looked at him, he looked at me, but I just drove past. I didn't see anything else. I didn't notice if he was still carrying a knife at that time. Hayfield Road is also a 30 mph road. I would have drove past Sheku at a quicker rate this time than when I saw him earlier. He would have been in my sights for a few seconds.

7. I just travelled back along Hayfield Road towards [REDACTED] the health centre and just sat there and then, [REDACTED] came along after that. [REDACTED] told me that "Some black guy has just tried to kung-fu kick the side of my car." You don't want to make assumptions but I thought it was the same guy that I saw. I probably mentioned the knife to [REDACTED] but I can't remember the detail of what I said to him.
8. We didn't see a police car until me and [REDACTED] were parked next to each other at the health centre and then that's when we heard the sirens, We seen the ambulance coming down from the depot at the top of Whytemans Brae screaming past us. Then we drove back along to where I'd seen Sheku the second time on Hayfield Road, near the junction with the industrial estate, but then by that time the police had cordoned it off the road. We got as far as the turning into Poplar Crescent (the one closest to Hendry Road). We could see police vehicles and police officers inside the cordon – I don't remember seeing anything else. We then took the left turn into Poplar Crescent and returned to the health centre.
9. I didn't see anything strange or aggressive about Sheku's behaviour, obviously other than the carrying the knife. The first time I seen him, he was just walking, there was nothing really, he looked at me and I looked at him because it was just a car going past. When I seen him the second time after I dropped off the customer, I wouldn't say he looked angry. He just looked like

Signed.....

[REDACTED]

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he was just heading back, walking back along the road. [REDACTED] said he tried to take a kick at his car but he never tried to take a kick at my car or never made any hand gestures or anything towards me when I drove back. He was just heading back along the road.

10. I've been shown a map of Kirkcaldy. I can see Templehall Avenue and its junction with Alloway Drive. I saw Sheku on the east side of that junction – just at the start of the trees that are visible on the map. Sheku had just crossed from the west to the east side of that junction. The number 1 is marked on the attached map showing Sheku's location.<sup>1</sup> On the map, I can also see Hayfield Road and its junction with Hayfield Place. This is the road I referred to earlier as going into the industrial estate. When I saw Sheku the second time, he was on the north side of Hayfield Road at the junction with Hayfield Place. He was on the east side of the junction, right on that corner. The number 2 is marked on the attached map showing Sheku's location.

11. I'm asked if I've been following reports in the media about this case. When there are reports in the media, it's on for a good few days or weeks so it's not something that I avoid. However, you do wish you'd never seen anything because of what it's dragged me through over the years and my wife who was pregnant at the time. You've got press turning up at your door and you don't know how they've got your address. It wasn't a great time to be honest and you kind of wish that you just hadn't seen anything.

12. I'm asked if I've spoken to any other witnesses in this case. Obviously, me and [REDACTED] worked together for years so, obviously, the two of us discussed what had happened that morning but I don't really know any of the other witnesses so the only witness that I would have discussed anything about the case with would have been [REDACTED]

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<sup>1</sup> Kirkcaldy Map – SBPI-00006

Signed.....

[REDACTED]

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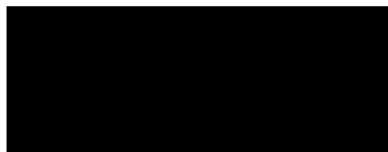
13. I'm told I gave a statement to the PIRC on 4 May 2015. I remember giving this statement. I would have been doing my best to give a truthful and accurate statement. I expect that my memory of what I seen to be better at the time of giving that statement than it is now, given the incident was some time ago. I'm told this PIRC statement says *"I remember noting that it was raining at this time and he looked to be soaking wet."* Having heard that, I now remember thinking, "Why's he just got on a t-shirt?" when I first was driving along, which would make sense if it was raining. I can't remember the weather now.

14. I'm also told that this PIRC statement says that *"In addition I could see that he was carrying what I believed to have been a kitchen knife in his right hand. The knife itself was about 8" in length, the blade being 6" at most."* I don't remember that; however, if I said that at the time then that will be right. As I've said, it was over six years ago now.

15. I'm asked about what I have said in my statement about seeing Sheku the second time. I'm told the statement says *"I observed the same male on the left side of the road in between Hayfield Place and the bus stop. I could see this male straight on, he was walking up the street towards the bus stop. I did not see any knife in his hands at this time."* This will be correct. If I said I did not see a knife, then that will be right. The way he was walking, I would expected that I would have seen a knife if he was carrying one in his hands.

16. If there is any difference between this statement and the statement I gave previously to PIRC in 2015, this earlier statement should be preferred. My memory of the incident was clearer at that time. I do not remember reading over my statement although it is possible that I did - it was a long time ago.

Signed.....



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17. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that this statement may form part of the evidence before the Inquiry and be published on the Inquiry's website.

Signed.....

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of the witness.

Date.....

05/03/22







