

Nottingham drug dealer jailed for longer

A Nottingham man has had his jail sentence increased following an intervention by the then Solicitor General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP.

Francis Wellington, 37, was found guilty of conspiracy to supply drugs, possession of Class B drugs, blackmail and sending abusive text messages, and of inflicting grievous bodily harm. The offences took place between 2016 and 2020.

Wellington has 11 previous convictions, including several for supplying drugs.

In 2016 Wellington was arrested and charged with being part of a gang supplying cocaine from London to the Nottingham area. Wellington pleaded guilty to the charge in November 2020.

He also pleaded guilty in May 2017 to sending abusive and controlling texts to his partner.

In February 2020, he was arrested for assaulting a houseguest, breaking his jaw, smashing a mirror over his head and dragging him through the broken glass. He was charged in March 2020 and pleaded guilty in September 2020.

Finally, on 12 April 2020, while Wellington was incarcerated at HMP Nottingham, he sought to extract £5,000 from an old schoolfriend. He sent associates to the victim's house and that of his mother. They claimed that the victim owed money to Wellington and threatened violence unless he paid the supposed debt. Wellington was charged in July 2020 and pleaded guilty in September 2020.

On 16 December 2020, Wellington was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment at Nottingham Crown Court.

Following the court's decision, the Solicitor General referred the sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme. On 5 March 2021, the Court found the sentence to be unduly lenient and increased it to 9 years' imprisonment.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal the now Attorney General, Rt Hon Michael Ellis QC MP, said:

The trade in drugs is destroying lives across the UK, driven by criminals like Wellington. He was also willing to use and threaten violence against others. I welcome the decision by the Court of Appeal to increase his sentence.