

Press release: Meat cleaver wielding Somerset shoplifter ordered into immediate custody

A man who robbed a convenience store with a meat cleaver to pay for his drug habit has had his sentence increased after the Attorney General's Office referred it to the Court of Appeal for being too low.

On 8 February 2018, Stephen Brennan, 32, entered a convenience store in Yeovil with a meat cleaver. He placed the cleaver on the counter and demanded the female cashier give him money. Although Brennan wore a hood, the cashier recognised him by his accent as someone who had been banned from the premises, and told him to leave.

Eventually Brennan did exit the store, taking three bottles of wine on his way out. Although the financial loss to the store was minimal, the crime has had a lasting effect on the cashier.

Brennan was originally sentenced at Taunton Crown Court in May, where he was given a 3 year Community Order, drug rehabilitation requirements, and a restraining order from the convenience store. Today, after the hearing, the Court of Appeal increased his sentence to 3 years 6 months' imprisonment and imposed a victim surcharge.

Speaking after the hearing, Attorney General Geoffrey Cox QC MP said:

"In order to pay for his addictions, Brennan subjected a woman to a traumatic experience which has had a lasting effect on both her work and home life. I am now satisfied that justice has been done thanks to the Court of Appeal's decision today."