

Teesside man jailed for longer

A Stockton-on-Tees man has had his jail sentence increased following an intervention by the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP.

Aaron Chapman, 22, was charged with multiple counts of assault and wounding taking place in September 2020. On 10 September 2020, police were called by Chapman's partner after he returned to her flat following a physically violent argument the evening before. The two attending police officers formed the impression that Chapman was under the influence of drugs and advised that they would be searching him for weapons. Chapman then turned violent and attacked the two officers, kneeling and kicking them both, as well as head-butting one of them. It then required five officers to place him in leg restraints and physically carry him from the flat into a police van. He was subsequently bailed on the condition that he would not visit his partner's address and that he would not contact her, directly or indirectly.

On the morning of 30 September, Chapman was staying at a hotel with his partner, in contravention of his bail conditions. At 5am that morning, without warning, Chapman attacked his victim in a sustained and violent assault. He punched her repeatedly to the face, causing bruising to both the left and right cheek. He also punched her to the left eye, fracturing her left cheekbone and causing a cut above it, as well as punching her right eye, causing it to swell and fill with blood. He then bit her on her right arm, as well as biting her right index finger with force sufficient to make it bleed. He continued to attack her by biting her nose with such force that he bit the end of the victim's nose off. He then spat it at her and left his victim in the hotel room.

When Chapman was arrested, he sought to blame his victim, stating that she had caused those injuries to herself, and claimed that his victim had attacked him with a knife.

Chapman was convicted of two counts of assaulting an emergency worker, and one count of wounding with intent. On 12 April 2021, he was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment at Teesside Crown Court.

Following the Court's decision, the Solicitor General referred Chapman's sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme.

On 18 June the Court found Chapman to be a Dangerous Offender and ruled that the sentence was unduly lenient. The Court increased the original sentence to 8 years' imprisonment, followed by 3 years on license.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP, said:

"Chapman violently assaulted and abused his partner on multiple occasions and attacked two emergency workers who were simply doing their duty. I referred

his sentence because I felt it was too low, and to drive home how seriously this government takes both domestic abuse and violence against emergency workers. I am glad that the Court of Appeal has increased his sentence, and felt that the assaults on the two police officers should have been given more weight in the original sentence.”