Sligo Champion
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Had hair extensions pulled out in assault

Incidents took place on St Patrick's Day in centre of Sligo

GERRY MCLAUGHLIN

A woman, who pulled out hair extensions from another woman in a St Patrick's Day assault has been given a suspended jail sentence, at Sligo Circuit Court.

Stacey Carty (37) of Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, was given a four month jail sentence suspended or five years.

She pleaded guilty to assault causing harm to Sally McAleenan at the Bourbon Bar, Rockwood Parade on March 17 last year and also to a second charge of assault at the same venue.

Carty also pleaded guilty to damaging hair extensions to the value of €180 belonging to Sally McAleenan. Carty further admitted assaulting Ms McAleenan at Queen Maeve Square on the same date.

Outlining the evidence Sergeant Keith Marron, led by Mr Leo Mulrooney BL instructed by Ms Elisa McHugh, State Solicitor said Ms McAleenan (33) was in Queen Maeve Square with her partner on March 17 last year at a concert.

She noticed that Stacy Carty was "hanging around." The defendant then came in her face and asked her where a certain person was. Carty then hit her three times in the face and also pulled her hair.

Ms McAleenan then went to the Bourbon Bar and Carty was there also, the court heard.

Carty went up to her again and pulled her hair and only let go when the victim's partner went to get a bouncer. But Carty later pulled her hair again over a barrier ripping out hair extensions which her with a bald patch.

One of the assaults on the victim took place at Queen Maeve Square.

Garda D'Arcy investigated the incident and Carty made admissions, the court heard. She said she knew Sally McAleenan and had given her dance lessons.

When asked if there were any issues between the parties, Carty said Ms McAleenan had gone on holiday with Carty's ex partner.

Carty said she had made contact with the victim, but initially denied pulling the victim's hair.

When shown CCTV she made admissions. The defendant had no previous convictions.

In her Victim Impact Statement read by Sergeant Marron, Ms McAleenan said the incident had a profound effect on her.

It made her afraid to go out and left her very anxious. She needed medical attention for her bald patch and had to take medication. Her scalp was very sore, and she was wanting to avoid Carty

Ms McAleenan stated she had a short relationship with Stacey Carty's ex partner which she ended in 2021.

But she had since been confronted by Carty on many occasions.

Mr Des Dockery SC with Eoin McGovern BL instructed by McGovern/Walsh Solicitors said his client had co-operated fully with gardai.

The defendant also had a lot of drink taken. But it was a total over reaction from the defendant.

Mr Dockery said the history of the matter was that Ms McAleenan had a short relationship with Carty's ex- partner but this did not justify her actions.

Carty and her partner separated, and they have two children.

She took the break-up badly and needed counselling and this was the context for this matter before the court.

The defendant was a 37-year-old mother of two.

She and her partner had been together for ten years and the aftermath of the break-up had a big effect on her.

The defendant had €1,000 in court as a gesture of remorse to the victim.

Mr Dockery read out a short, handwritten note of apology from the defendant to the victim which said she was very sorry for the hurt she had caused Ms McAleenan.

"I hope you have recovered, and we can both move on," she said.

Character references were handed into court, and she was assessed as being at a low risk of re-offending.

The defendant was not suitable for a community servicde order as she had vertigo, Mr Dockery added.

Judge Ronan Munro said the defendant had shown "complete obsessive behaviour" on the date of the incident.

He said he did not like the tone of her apology which said;

"I hope we can both move on."

This was an undercurrent to the case.

In sentencing the defendant, Judge Munro said it was "bizarre behaviour" from the defendant.

The most serious part of the offending was where the defendant pulled Sally McAleenan's hair very hard, ripped off her extensions and leaving a bald patch.

The defendant was determined to leave her mark on Ms McAleenan

Ms McAleenan was out enjoying herself when she was the victim of "this obsessive attack" which was investigated by Garda D'Arcy.

The background to the assault was that Ms McAleenan had gone out with Carty's ex-partner.

Under questioning by gardai, the defendant said she had pulled the hair of the victim and took pleasure in it.

Ms McAleenan was left with a strong reminder of the incident which is what Carty intended.

And at no time did Carty show remorse, the judge said.

A letter of apology said she was deeply sorry but the judge said he did not feel it in any way.

Also, the line that they hoped they could put it behind them and they could both move on was strange.

It was implying that Ms McAleenan should move on and that was clearly not the case.

It was a bizarre matter, the judge added.

The judge said he was taking the early plea into account but was taking the remorse with a pinch of salt given the defendant's wording of her apology.

But she had no previous convictions, and it was an aberration in an otherwise blameless life.

The Probation Report said she was not suitable for a community service order due to medical difficulties as she suffers from vertigo.

The defendant needed a structure in place as he did not want a repeat of this behaviour.

The judge said that to ensure that the peace was kept he was jailing the defendant for four months suspended for five years.

She was to have no direct or indirect contact with Sally McAleenan or her family and was to pay €1,000 to Ms McAleenan.

Carty was also ordered to enter a bond of €500 to keep the peace and be of good behaviour for five years.

The €1,000 was not compensation but it was hoped that something positive could come out of what the judge called was "this bizarre situation."