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Street Dealers Avoid Prison After Years Without Reoffending

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– Categories: Crime



Two men caught with cannabis in Bradford almost five years ago have avoided a prison sentence after a court heard they had kept out of trouble since their arrest.

Shiraz Ali, 29, and Ahmed Shahid, 24, were stopped by police while traveling in a car on the evening of December 17, 2020. Officers discovered several bags of cannabis and a black iPhone inside the vehicle.

Searches were later carried out at both men's addresses. At Shahid's home, officers uncovered what was described as a large quantity of cannabis, valued between £6,000 and £7,000. A black bin liner containing cannabis roughly the size of two footballs, was found on a bed in a bedroom linked to him. Police also found weighing scales, various bags for packaging, lists of names and numbers, and a significant sum of money that was not counted.

In the vehicle, officers recovered four bags of cannabis weighing 17.23 grams, £150 in cash, and three mobile phones. Analysis of the phones revealed messages, including advertisements, connected to cannabis customers and sales.

Ali, from Lime Tree Square in Saltaire, admitted to being concerned in the supply of cannabis. Shahid, of Carlisle Road in Bradford, pleaded guilty to possessing cannabis with intent to supply.

When the case reached Bradford Crown Court, Miss Recorder Catherine Silverton highlighted what she described as "a lengthy and unacceptable delay" in the proceedings. She noted that Ali, who had no previous relevant convictions, had received "glowing" references and had not committed any offences since the incident. Shahid had also remained free of offending since 2021.

The court was told that the cannabis offences represented "an uncharacteristic period" in Ali's life, one from which he had moved on years ago. Shahid was described as "still a very young man" who had not been in trouble for several years.

Both men were handed 12-month community orders and ordered to complete 80 hours of unpaid work each. Recorder Silverton warned them: "If you don't do the work, or breach the order in any other way, the probation service may bring you back before this court. If they do that, you will be dealt with for the breach, and you may be re-sentenced for the offence."

In addition to the sentences, the court ordered the destruction of the cannabis seized during the investigation and the forfeiture of the cash found.

The decision not to impose custodial sentences was influenced by the long delay in the case and the fact that neither man had reoffended in the years since their arrests.