

Rhyl mum made thousands of hoax calls

A MOTHER of four pretended to be a 14-year-old rape victim as she made thousands of hoax calls to hospitals and police, a court was told yesterday.

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A MOTHER of four pretended to be a 14-year-old rape victim as she made thousands of hoax calls to hospitals and police, a court was told yesterday.

Rachel Marsh rang most of the police forces in the country and numerous hospitals with a false story which caused great distress to health workers and police officers.

She told a desperate tale of how she had been raped by her stepfather who was going to snatch her baby and throw it into a canal.

Marsh, 28, of Rhyl, formerly of Kinmel Bay, appeared before Chester magistrates yesterday to be sentenced after admitting harassment and wasting police time.

After consideration of medical and psychiatric reports Marsh was given a three year supervision order, a 9pm to 7am daily curfew for three months, and ordered to pay £300 costs.

Cheshire policewoman Yvonne Ouseley spent 350 hours investigating her story while about 500 hours were wasted by another eight Cheshire officers, who were the first to receive the hoax calls.

Twelve days after the first Cheshire calls, Marsh made similar calls to North Wales Police and midwives.

She even texted police from the custody suite where she was being questioned, magistrates heard.

Prosecutor Anne Rouse told the court Marsh “appeared” pregnant, but when she was strip searched police found she was wearing a padded bra, and a swim suit encasing a carefully folded blanket to give the appearance of pregnancy.

Gynaecologist Sara Brigham, of the Countess of Chester Hospital, received calls from Marsh claiming she was a 14-year-old who had given birth three days earlier.

The consultant spent an extra six and a half hours on her shift trying to get to the truth.

In a statement she said: "At the time I felt upset, helpless and also frustrated. I was concerned someone eventually was going to find a young girl dead."

PC Ouseley extended her shifts fearing for the life of the caller and her baby.

Ms Rouse said: "The investigation heightened because later conversations and texts said this stepfather had taken the baby and it was suggested he was going to get rid of the baby by throwing it in the canal."

By June last year Marsh admitted what she had done and she pleaded guilty to the offences in August.

Elen Parry, defending, said Marsh, who is currently six months pregnant, was still adamant a 16-year-old girl was "equally involved" in the hoax calls.

Despite that, she accepted her role in what was a "strange and unusual case" and described her actions as "infantile and stupid".

A psychiatrist had been unable to pinpoint the exact motivation, but the death of her "very supportive" grandfather in November 2006, the sudden death of her 44-year-old mother in November last year, and her move from Blackpool to North Wales after her husband left her, may all have been factors.

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