

## Rape allegations settled out of court

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**A DEFAMATION case brought by a Coleraine man against a woman who wrongly accused him of rape has been settled.**

The High Court case - the first of its kind in Northern Ireland - was brought by former chef David Brown over allegations which were said to have later been withdrawn.

But a judge was told last Wednesday that the action would not be proceeding after an agreement between the two sides was reached.

Although no details were disclosed, it is understood the terms of the order include a pledge by the woman not to make a claim of rape against 25-year-old Mr Brown. With no admission of liability, the case could still be reactivated in future.

Mr Brown's family had said they were prepared to remortgage their home in an effort to pay the legal costs and clear his name. He was detained in August 2007 over a rape allegation made following a party in Portrush.

Mr Brown is understood to have known the woman he says made the claims against him.

The libel action would not have covered any claims made to police as they are covered by privilege. Instead, it was to focus on what has allegedly been said about Mr Brown in the area where he lives and works.

Following the resolution to the case his mother, Alana Brown, told The Coleraine Times: "We are just glad to draw a line under this but it was something that had to be done.

"We couldn't just let a young lad's life be ruined by this. He was never charged or prosecuted but there was still a stigma and the only avenue open to us was a civil one.

"We are now trying to push for a criminal prosecution against this woman. We met with senior police officers five months ago and have heard nothing from them since then.

"Now that we have got this part settled, I will be contacting the Chief Constable directly to see if he can look at the case and shed any light on things."

Mrs Brown also stressed how real rape victims are hurt by those who make false allegations.

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