

One of the UK's most wanted criminals was arrested in Spain after leading a "massive criminal enterprise" in his home country.

Joshua Hendry, 31, who led a drug chain transporting cocaine and heroin between Liverpool and Grimsby appeared in front of Sheffield Crown Court on Wednesday.

Along with his mother and brother - Leslie Aytoun and Scott Hendry - he used a phone line to arrange meetings between drug users and dealers in Grimsby.

Rupert Doswell, prosecuting, said: "It is thought that there was £1.38million worth of crack cocaine and heroin taken to Grimsby."

Hendry was first arrested for money laundering offences in 2018 after being found in possession of £11,000 in cash.

Later that year, he was linked to the drug chain after police detained him trying to escape a known drug user's property in Grimsby. The defendant made attempts to damage a mobile phone, which had messages confirming his involvement with the operation, before his arrest.

He fled to Barcelona before his trial in March 2019, with his brother Scott taking over the drug chain in his stead. Hendry was sentenced to 10 years in custody in his absence.

He was detained in the town of San Pedro de Alcantara in January, less than 24 hours after his face was published on the UK's most wanted criminal list. Hendry pleaded guilty to conspiring to supply class A drugs, before being jailed for 3 months for his escape.

Callum Ross, mitigating, said in court that prior to his arrest, Hendry had met a partner in Spain, who was now pregnant with his child.

Judge Roger Thomas said in his sentencing: "He knew at some point he would be apprehended. He knows that he only has himself to blame that he is going to miss a significant period of their childhood."

He sentenced Hendry to a further five years imprisonment, making his total sentence 15 years and 3 months. His mother and brother were previously jailed for 14 and 11 years respectively.