

**In the matter of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020
and in the matter of**

Former Police Constable Jonathan Pickerill

Decision of Sir Stephen Watson, Chief Constable

Friday 7th August 2026

Preliminary matters

1. I have today conducted an accelerated misconduct hearing at Unit A, GMP Force Headquarters, and have given consideration to various breaches of the standards of professional behaviour as pertain to former PC Jonathan Pickerill.
2. Mr Pickerill was not present nor otherwise represented.
3. Mr Pickerill, despite having provided a written statement in which acknowledges his misconduct, has not indicated whether he accepts that he has breached the standards of professional behaviour namely: discreditable conduct; and that the circumstances amount to gross misconduct. I, having considered the evidence, have determined that the breaches alleged are proven and that the circumstances amount to gross misconduct.
4. In coming to a determination as to the most appropriate outcome, I have taken cognisance of the submissions of the appropriate authority as contained within the bundle of evidence submitted to me prior to this hearing, with elements of the same being amplified in invited verbal submissions by the representative of the appropriate authority, Mr Richard Black.

5. In assessing the seriousness of the misconduct found, it is a matter of fact that Mr Pickerill, at a hearing at South Cheshire Magistrates Court, on 22nd June 2026, pleaded guilty to an offence of driving with excess alcohol in his system. The officer received the following sentence:
 - Fine / court costs / victims surcharge totalling £627
 - 18 month driving disqualification
6. The circumstances surrounding this misconduct involved his having, whilst off duty, driven a motor vehicle on the public road whilst over the drink drive limit. These events occurred on 26th November 2025 during which the former officer drove various routes between his home address in Staffordshire and the location, in Cheshire, where he was caused to stop by patrolling officers who, having breathalysed him, were caused to arrest him. He subsequently provided a breath test that revealed the presence of alcohol at the level of 81 micrograms per 100 millilitres of breath. This markedly exceeds the prescribed legal limit.

Outcome

8. In considering the appropriate disciplinary action to be imposed, I received written and verbal submissions from the AA that the appropriate disciplinary outcome in this case, had the officer not resigned, would have been dismissal and for his details to be placed onto the College of Policing's Barred List.
9. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, I have had regard to the relevant provisions of the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Misconduct Proceedings. I do recognise that it does not automatically follow that where breaches of the code of conduct are found to be so serious as to justify dismissal, that dismissal can be the only sanction implied. Nevertheless, it remains very powerfully the case that the principal objective in the conduct of these hearings must be to preserve public confidence in the police service.
10. At the forefront of my mind has been the purpose of misconduct proceedings – these are expressly set out in the College of Policing's Guidance.

11. My approach has been to "adopt" the "3 stage approach" also referred to in the College of Policing's Guidance:
12. I have assessed the seriousness of the conduct. I consider that Mr Pickerill's culpability must be regarded as high. The officer having consumed a significant quantity of alcohol drove his vehicle on a public road. He now stands convicted of a criminal offence. His actions, in respect of the offence of driving with excess alcohol, were deliberate and carried out in the full knowledge that his conduct was both patently unlawful and entirely incompatible with the standards of behaviour required of a police officer.
13. With regard to the aggravating factors set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, I have already pointed to the fact that the misconduct was deliberate and unforced. By definition, the breach clearly implies a significant deviation from that required of a well conducted officer. It is a fact that in holding out until the last moment in judicial proceedings before entering a guilty plea that an element of obfuscation is apparent which was clearly designed to delay proceedings unnecessarily. Drink driving remains an enduring source of public concern and officers who are required to enforce the law can in no way themselves break the law.
14. In respect of harm, I refer principally to the risk of injury or worse that his conduct implied toward other road users in the case of his driving offence. His misconduct similarly brings harm to the reputation and standing of the service. Mr Pickerill's conduct and conviction inevitably brings the profession into disrepute and undoubtedly damages the trust and confidence that the public have a right to expect of their police.
15. With regard to mitigating circumstances, of those set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, I have taken into account Mr Pickerill's record of service. In Mr Pickerill's undated statement to this hearing, received yesterday, he makes various references to professional and personal issues within his life which he asserts to have undermined his mental health. With regard to various professional issues highlighted, I am satisfied that these were matters properly considered by competent senior authority within GMP and fairly resolved. It is of note that Mr Pickerill himself was found, at least in part, to have been a participant in some elements of inappropriate behaviour. Whilst I have no reason to doubt that Mr Pickerill was experiencing some difficult issues in his personal life, I cannot discover

that these issues were so insurmountable as to create an undeniable causal link to his offending behaviour. Notwithstanding my earlier commentary about his having submitted a very late guilty plea, it is of some belated credit to the former officer that he has accepted responsibility for his own actions and recognises the futility of blaming others for what he has done.

16. I reiterate the point that the core purpose of these proceedings is to sustain public confidence in the police and, in these hearings I am required to maintain the abiding imperative to sustain public confidence. I consider that there is no doubt that the facts of this case have the obvious potential to substantially diminish public confidence. In conclusion, I consider that the level of seriousness in this case is very high.
17. Mr Pickerill's offending behaviour was clearly unlawful, unwise and contrary to the clearest of instructions. It is clear that had Mr Pickerill been permitted to remain in the service that public confidence in policing would have inevitably suffered. I have therefore determined that had Mr Pickerill not resigned, he would have been dismissed from the service with immediate effect.
18. I order that Mr Pickerill's name be added to the College of Policing's Barred List.
19. This concludes today's hearing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Watson', with several long, sweeping diagonal strokes above it.

Sir Stephen Watson QPM
Chief Constable