



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

Officer [REDACTED]

Decision of Sir Stephen Watson, Chief Constable

19th January 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 [REDACTED] the Officer [REDACTED].
2. [REDACTED] the Officer was in attendance and he was accompanied by Sgt Wood of the Police Federation. [REDACTED] the Officer in his Regulation 54 response, accepts that he was responsible for the communication instances that comprise the substance of these allegations. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], that he denies misconduct and accordingly rejects the AA's case with regards to gross misconduct.
3. I have determined that the allegations are proven in respect of breaches of the standards of professional behaviour that pertain to Authority, Respect and Courtesy; Discreditable Conduct; and Honesty and Integrity. I have determined that the proven breaches are sufficiently serious to justify dismissal thus I have found that they constitute 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, Ms Dzikira.
5. I have similarly given careful consideration to the submissions made by [REDACTED] the Officer [REDACTED] both with regard to his written submissions and in respect of his own verbal submissions; some of which were in answer to questions that I posed to him directly. I was additionally provided with the officer's personal record which contained several good work minutes which speak to some examples of commendable police work.

Outcome

- # the Officer

emerged. The messages were sent in great quantity through a variety of digitally generated telephone numbers to disguise the source of the communication in an effort to overcome the fact that Ms A had blocked his original telephone number. It is of note that in 16 of the 24 days reviewed, some 785 instances of communication were entered into, the vast majority of the same being generated by the Officer

12. I consider that the Officer's culpability must be regarded as high. His conduct was persistent, repeated and occurred over a protracted period of time. the Officer knew or ought to have known that his conduct was reprehensible, and morally indefensible and contrary to the standards and values of the Force. It is also my view, notwithstanding a CPS determination not to bring charges, that elements of the conduct were criminal in that breaches of section 179 of the Online Safety Act of 2023 would appear to have been evidenced. It is also clear that the Officer did act in certain cases with a degree of forethought and that some of the messages, far from being merely spontaneous appear to have been carefully calculated to achieve a cruel and distressing effect.
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 properly expected of a well conducted officer. That multiple breaches of the standards of professional behaviour have occurred, as opposed to a single isolated incident, constitutes an additional aggravating feature.
14. In respect of harm, I refer principally to the impact of the officer's conduct on the emotional well-being of Ms A. There is little doubt in my mind that this episode has caused a very high degree of distress to her and to those closest to her. Mine is not to make any moral judgement with regards to an affair being entered into by consenting adults but it is very clear that Ms A had come to the unequivocal decision that she wished to terminate the relationship and that she had revealed what she clearly felt to be an error of judgement to her husband. An unwillingness to accept this reality revealed a series of entreaties from the Officer which at best, could be argued to be demanding and insensitive, and at worst, threatening, distressing and exploitative.
15. In addition, I refer to the potential harm to the reputation and standing of the service. If the full facts of this case were to be fully understood by the general public, I consider that it would be inevitable that the Officer's conduct and actions would bring the profession into disrepute and damage the trust that the public have a right to expect of their police. In calibrating a sense of the public perception of this type of conduct; it would be wrong to deny the cumulative impact of similar cases which have, and continue, to cause

widespread concern as to the standards of conduct amongst police officers more generally.

16. With regard to mitigating circumstances, as set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, I have taken into account **the Officer's** record of service. I have noted that the record includes some testimony as to good police work and these are to the officer's credit. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I fully accept his assertion that he is genuinely sorry for the distress caused and that he is remorseful. I similarly have no hesitation in accepting the fact that the officer; at the time of the misconduct; was experiencing a very difficult time in his personal life.

17. [REDACTED]

18. I reiterate the point that the core purpose of these proceedings is to sustain public confidence in the police. As articulated above, there is no doubt that the facts of this case have the grave potential to substantially diminish public confidence. The actions of the officer need to be viewed, in the context of holding the trusted and powerful office of constable, through the prism of sustaining public confidence in the police more generally. In conclusion, I consider that the level of seriousness in this case is high.

19. **the Officer's** conduct in this matter clearly falls far below the behaviours and standards that the public have every right to expect. Notwithstanding the officers obvious and heartfelt remorse, the fact remains that he has, on multiple counts, demonstrably breached the standards of professional behaviour.

20. I have given thought as to whether a final written warning might be an appropriately lesser sanction than dismissal. I have however come to the conclusion that the conduct taken together creates an insurmountable hurdle to the primary imperative which is to sustain public confidence in the police. I consider that the maintenance of such confidence is likely to be incompatible with retaining the services of **the Officer** in the office of constable.

21. I have determined therefore that **the Officer** should be dismissed from the service with immediate effect.

22. I order that **the Officer's** name be added to the College of Policing's Barred List.
23. This concludes today's hearing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Watson', with a large, sweeping flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Sir Stephen Watson QPM
Chief Constable