

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

Former Constable Officer X

Decision of Sir Stephen Watson, Chief Constable

2nd June 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 Officer X .
2. Officer X was not in attendance nor otherwise represented. Officer X has provided no indication as to whether he accepts that he has breached the standards of professional behaviour namely: orders and instructions; honesty and integrity; authority, respect and courtesy; equality and diversity; confidentiality; and discreditable conduct. I, having considered the evidence, have found the breaches alleged to be proven and these breaches are so serious as to justify dismissal and thus they amount to gross misconduct. I note that Officer X resigned from GMP on the 11th May 2026.
3. 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 Black.

Outcome

4. 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 matter, had **Officer X** not resigned, would have been dismissal without notice.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. My approach has been to "adopt" the "3 stage approach" referred to in the College of Policing's Guidance:
8. I have assessed the seriousness of the conduct. It is a matter of fact that **Officer X** has, over a protracted period, exchanged numerous group chat messages with a variety of his personal associates. Such messages included texts, photographs and voice messages. The contents in question include materials which are demonstrably and incontrovertibly; racist, misogynistic and ableist. In addition, the content speaks to the officer having consumed illegal drugs; being inclined to misuse his position to pursue inappropriate sexual relationships; and ignoring and/or failing in any way to censure or disassociate himself from similar content being posted by his associates. Worryingly, the content implied a willingness to ignore the possibility of criminal offences being conducted in respect of vulnerable females on the part of an associate and a wilful disinclination to declare any notifiable association. Taken together, the content is grossly offensive and shocking.

9. I consider that **Officer X**'s culpability must be regarded as very high. His conduct was persistent, repeated and occurred over a protracted period of time. By his own admission, **Officer X** knew that his conduct was contrary to the standards and values of the Force and was of the character that if discovered, would likely result in his dismissal.
10. With regard to the aggravating factors set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, the misconduct in question was deliberate and unforced. By definition, the breach clearly implies a significant deviation from that properly expected of a well conducted officer. As the College Guidance makes clear, evidence of clear racism or other forms of discrimination will always be considered to constitute an aggravating factor. It is also clear that this type of behaviour falls squarely into that which understandably concerns the public greatly in the light of contemporary failures of police standards, discipline and behaviour.
11. In respect of harm, I refer principally 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 **Officer X**'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.
12. With regard to mitigating circumstances, as set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, I have taken into account **Officer X**'s record of service. I am unable to find any mitigation in this matter whatsoever.
13. 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. In conclusion, I consider that the level of seriousness in this case is very high.

14. Officer X's conduct in this matter clearly falls far below the behaviours and standards that the public have every right to expect. In considering the significant volume of that presented by the AA in making reference to the former officer's chat group content, one is confronted with material which is puerile, base and borderline illiterate. This former officer has conducted himself in a manner which reflects almost entirely precisely that which has given rise to recent public concern as to similar examples of egregious misconduct. Whilst Officer X was a probationary officer, it is apparent to me that he ought never to have been recruited in the first instance. It is clear that the public whom we serve would take a definite view that Officer X's conduct is incompatible with that required of those who hold the office of constable.
15. I have accordingly determined that had Officer X not already resigned, I would have dismissed him from the service with immediate effect. Both the public and the Force are well served by the departure of this man.
16. I order that Officer X's name be added to the College of Policing's Barred List.
17. This concludes today's hearing.



Sir Stephen Watson QPM
Chief Constable