In the matter of the Police (Conduct) Regulations2020
and in the matter of

a 'Former Police Officer'

Decision of the Independent Chair Catherine Hankinson 9th November 2026

Preliminary matters

1. I have today conducted an accelerated misconduct hearing online for Greater Manchester Police and have given consideration to an allegation and a number of breaches of the standards of professional behaviour as pertain to the former officer.

2. Prior to the hearing today, I received an application for the hearing to proceed in private and, if that was not allowed, to award anonymity to the former officer. After careful consideration and with regards to the guidance and case law in this area, I directed that the hearing would go ahead in public, but that the officer would be granted anonymity for the purpose of publicity and reporting. Hence the officer will be referred to throughout as 'the former officer'.

3. The Appropriate Authority was represented by Mr Hanna. The former officer has chosen not to attend this hearing and has indeed resigned from Greater Manchester Police, the last day of service being 8th November 2026. The former officer is aware that this hearing is taking place and has had opportunity to attend so I am satisfied it is appropriate for me to continue in their absence.

4. The allegations against the former officer are that on Friday, 3rd July 2026, they completed a 'With Cause Drugs Test' (WCDT) at Wigan Police Station. On 13th July 2026 the results from said WCDT revealed a positive result with a level of 85 ng/ml of THC – indicating that the former officer had consumed cannabis prior to the urine sample being provided. It is contended that their actions breach the following Standards of Professional Behaviour as set out in Regulation 5 and Schedule 2 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 (as amended) namely:

   Discreditable Conduct: Police officers behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence in it, whether on or off duty.

   Orders and Instructions: Police officers abide by police regulations, force policies and lawful orders.

   Fitness for Duty: Police officers when on duty or presenting themselves for duty are fit to carry out their responsibilities.

   The matters set out above are contended to amount to gross misconduct, in that they are so serious as to justify dismissal.

5. The former officer has not provided a response to the allegations and as such we have no indication as to whether they accepted the allegations or breaches, nor did they indicate if they accepted these allegations amounted to gross misconduct or not.

6. Having considered the evidence and the verbal submissions of the Appropriate Authority, I have determined it is appropriate for me to hear this case in that there are sufficient grounds as evidenced in the bundle that the former officer has breached the standards for professional behaviour.

7. I also conclude that the breaches alleged are proven and that they are so serious that they do indeed amount to gross misconduct.

Outcome

8. In coming to a determination as to the most appropriate outcome, I have considered the submissions of the Appropriate Authority as contained within the bundle of evidence submitted to me prior to this hearing. I also heard verbal submissions by Mr Hanna of the Appropriate Authority and have been provided with the former officer's record of service.

9. In determining the appropriate outcome, I have had regard to the relevant provisions of the College of Policing 's guidance on outcomes in misconduct hearings. 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 and the reputation of the police service.

10. My approach has been to "adopt" the "3 stage approach" also referred to in the College of Policing's Guidance. Namely to assess the seriousness of the misconduct, to keep in mind the purpose of imposing sanctions and to choose the sanction that most appropriately fulfils that purpose bearing in mind the seriousness of the conduct in question.

11. I received written and verbal submissions from the Appropriate Authority that the appropriate disciplinary outcome in this case, had the officer not resigned would be dismissal without notice and the placing of his details onto the College of Policing's Barred List.

12. It is a matter of fact that the former officer provided a sample for a drugs test which was subsequently shown to be positive for cannabis. Once the test had been

taken, the former officer said to one of their supervisors 'that will come back as cannabis'.

13. So, turning to assessing the seriousness in terms of culpability, harm, aggravating and mitigating factors I find the following:

14. Culpability: Culpability denotes the officer's blameworthiness and responsibility for their actions. In this case the actions were clearly intentional and deliberate. As a new recruit, the former officer would have had very recent input around the standards expected of a police officer. They would or would ought to have foreseen the risk associated with drug use and its incompatibility with being a police officer. There is no mitigation offered by the former officer to suggest any other reason for the positive sample. I find culpability to be MEDIUM.

15. Harm: In this case, no harm was actually caused to a victim. However, the College of Policing guidance at 4.68 reminds us that despite this, I must consider the risks attached to the officer's behaviour and the likelihood of harm occurring. Drug use can hamper a person's ability to react and make sound judgements. Despite the fact that the officer has anonymity in this case, this outcome will still be a matter of public record and will undoubtedly have a negative impact on the publics trust and confidence in Greater Manchester Police and the wider policing service. I find harm to be MEDIUM.

16. Aggravating factors, being those that worsen the actions of the former officer. Having taken account of the comments made by the officer to their supervisor at point 12, I do not consider there to be any other aggravating factors.

17. Mitigating factors are for the officer to put forward – I have not heard any as the former officer or his representative have not attended today. In terms of personal

mitigation, I have had regard to the record of service. This former officer had only been in the service since November 2025, so this offers nothing further.

18. Throughout my considerations on outcome, I have kept in mind the threefold purpose of imposing outcomes in misconduct proceedings.

19. I am considering outcome for a former officer. Given that the finding is that the former officer's actions amount to gross misconduct, and having assessed the seriousness as medium, it is clear to me that there must a follow a disciplinary sanction

20. I remind myself that, had the former officer remained a serving officer and gross misconduct been found proven, the statutory framework provides that dismissal without notice is the presumed outcome, unless any exceptional circumstances warrant a deviation from said presumption. In the circumstances, I am not satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances capable of displacing that presumption and therefore, had this former officer not resigned, they would have been dismissed without notice.

21. I also order that the former officers name be added to the College of Policing barred list.

22. This concludes the hearing.

ACO Catherine Hankinson

Greater Manchester Police Independent Chair