

IN THE MATTER OF MISCONDUCT PROCEEDINGS UNDER THE POLICE
(CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2020.

B E T W E E N:

THE CHIEF CONSTABLE OF POLICE
FOR GREATER MANCHESTER

Appropriate Authority

And

PC 08222 MATHEW BARLOW

Allegation

Between May and November 2023, whilst a police officer serving with Greater Manchester Police, working in the Bury District Investigation Team office, you mimicked the accent of PC Y, along with PCs Granby, Rani, Green, Holt, Hill and PC A.

It is alleged that the conduct set out above constitutes a breach of the following Standards of Professional Behaviour:

a. Authority, Respect and Courtesy

Police officers act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy.

Police officers do not abuse their powers or authority and respect the rights of all individuals.

b. Equality and Diversity

Police officers act with fairness and impartiality. They do not discriminate unlawfully or unfairly.

c. Challenging and Reporting Improper Behaviour

Police officers report, challenge or take action against the conduct of colleagues which has fallen below the Standards of Professional Behaviour.

d. 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.

PC 08222 MATTHEW BARLOW

The Evidence

1. The evidence was put forward in a 552-page bundle.
2. The panel had the benefit of an Opening Note dated 8th August 2026 (received 12th August 2026), which outlined how the AA put its case.
3. The panel considered the bundle in its entirety.
4. The AA called oral evidence from PC Y, PC Azam, PC Green, PC Cooper-Fox and PC Stansfield.
5. Each of the Officers and former officers were called to give oral evidence.
6. The proceedings were recorded, and a transcript may be obtained. Accordingly, following is a summary of the evidence involving the individual officer. The panel took account of all the evidence read and heard.

PC Y

7. PC Y confirmed the contents of her statements dated 13th December 2023, 20th December 2023, 29th July 2024 and an undated statement which appears to have been made on 8th August 2025. (Contained at pages 58, 63, 67 and 71 of the Bundle). The 4 statements provided by PC Y stood as evidence in chief within these proceedings and provided the basis for the allegations against each Officer as outlined above.
8. In relation to the intervention by PC Stansfield, PC Y explained that when PC Stansfield intervened, he challenged PCs Rani and Granby, and said that "*if the bosses hear them doing that, they'll be into trouble*". PC Y could not recall their reaction.
9. In relation to the intervention by PC Azam, PC Y explained that that was in relation to PC Hill and Holt. When challenged by PC Azam, PC Y stated that FPC Holt blamed PC Hill, but PC Hill just laughed it off, as if they had not been challenged or as if their conduct had not been serious.

10. PC Y stated that she did not think it was funny. She found it quite upsetting and it made her uncomfortable and nervous. Although she may have laughed at the time, she explained that she tended to laugh when feeling anxious or uncomfortable and that was her standard reaction. However, she found it upsetting when others mimicked her and she did not like it, although she accepted that she would have laughed it off at the time.
11. PC Y stated that as things got worse, she went quiet as she became more uncomfortable when the mimicry happened every day. She stated that it got to a stage where they would copy whatever she said and would laugh about it.
12. PC Y confirmed that when the mimicry happened, it happened as a group and not as individuals. Her relationships with the officers 'one to one' was great and she confirmed that she had no issues with any of the officers one to one. However, she stated that because the mimicry occurred as a group, she felt like she was being bullied.
13. PC Y confirmed that she had been referred to Talking Therapies and that she had received treatment because she had become quite stressed and her blood pressure had become high.
14. PC Y was cross examined on behalf of PC Green. PC Y accepted that the whole team had got on well and that sometimes went out for coffee and when PC Y was unable to go out for coffee, some of the team often brought her coffee back.
15. She agreed that some of the team thought of her as their "work mum" and that she supported them and had a good relationship with them.
16. In relation to the photograph of the suspect accepting a parcel, it was put to PC Y that she also had curly hair and thick glasses at the time that the photograph was being shown around the team. PC Y could not remember whether she had curly hair at that time, but she stated that her glasses were not thick.
17. She stated that she accepted that the comments had been relayed to the whole team and that it was possible that she had laughed at the time and had not raised any concerns.
18. PC Y did not accept the mimicking of her accent was part of "office banter" where all the members of the team mimicked each other. She did not recall any specific mimicking of other members of the team and did not recall any mimicking of FPC A's or of PC Green's accent.

19. It was put to PC Y that the only mimicking that occurred was in relation to her use of the word “okay” and this was more a copying of an intonation of her voice rather than a mimicking of her accent. PC Y stated that it was more than that one word. PC Y stated initially that she did not recall saying the word ‘okay’. She did recall other people saying the word “okay” and laughing at it, but she did not say anything about it because she was upset, although on some occasions she did tell them to stop doing it. When it was explained to her, PC Y accepted that she sometimes said the word ‘okay’ differently, as it was explained to her.
20. It was put to PC Y that it was not the whole team who had mimicked her accent, but PC Y disagreed with that assertion.
21. Upon re-examination PC Y stated that one of the reasons that she moved department was because of the mimicking of her accent by the whole team.
22. PC Y was then cross examined by Ms Barlow on behalf of PCs Granby and Rani. PC Y confirmed that she and PCs Granby and Rani had known each other for a long time and that she had worked with them before. PC Y accepted that they were quite close friends and that, on the whole, the 2 officers were very supportive of her. She accepted that she and PC Rani were particularly close because they had struggled with the physical side of the job and at times had helped and encouraged each other in that regard.
23. PC Y stated that PC Granby was the same age as her son and that it was correct that she had a “work mum” relationship with her. PC Y was taken through various scenarios where PC Rani and Granby had been supportive with her, on some occasions even after these allegations had been made known to the 2 officers.
24. PC Y was asked about the time towards the end of 2022 when the issue of the mimicking of her accent had been raised with PC Granby. She accepted that both PC Granby and PC Rani had apologised to her via WhatsApp and in person. PC Y was taken through the texts that had passed between herself and the 2 officers. These texts occurred on 6th and 7th December 2022, and in relation to both text exchanges, PC Y accepted that she had indicated that she had not been offended by the officers’ behaviour and had told them not to worry and that they were “fiiiine xx”.
25. PC Y accepted that the 3 of them had lots of jokes and fun and that she occasionally joked with them in the same way that they joked with her. However, PC Y stated that she had felt awkward and nervous about the text messages and did not know how to respond. She stated that she had been offended by the mimicry but felt that as it was now in the open, it would be the end of it, and she didn’t want the officers to think that she had been offended. She stated that

sometimes she did not know how to express herself and that she had hoped, at the time of writing the text messages, that it was the end of that type of behaviour. She accepted that she had not raised the issue directly with the officers but that the apologies had been the result of another officer talking with PC Granby.

26. PC Y stated that she had then hoped that the mimicking would end, but it had continued. It was put to her that she had given the officers the impression that they did not need to change their behaviour and that they should carry on as normal, and PC Y accepted that that was the impression she may have given. However, she stated that following that text exchange nothing changed in relation to the mimicking, although she accepted that the 2 officers were more careful with her.
27. PC Y confirmed that she had not raised these issues with any of the officers and that it was only as a result of her “stay interview” that matters had been passed to PSD. She confirmed that which she had said in her statement that she did not want officers dismissed as a result of these matters and accepted that she had never spoken to the officers personally about it. However, PC Y stated that she knew that the officers had been spoken to and had hoped that it would be the end of their behaviour and genuinely thought it would stop.
28. Upon re-examination PC Y stated that she would ask PC Granby and PC Rani to “stop it” but they would very often copy how she said “*stop it*”. She stated that she found it upsetting that no matter what she said, they wouldn’t hear her. She reiterated that she did not consider their behaviour to be respectful and that the mimicking was not confined to the words “okay” and “cheeky”. She maintained that there were other words that were mimicked, in particular the word “hello” when she answered the phone. This meant that PC Y had to go and use the phone elsewhere, because she knew that when she spoke on the phone she would be mimicked.
29. PC Y stated that she believed the apology made by Lucy Granby had been sincere, but that she expected that there would be a change, and that hadn’t been the case.
30. PC Y was then cross examined by Ms Alam Cheetham on behalf of PCs Barlow and Hill.
31. In relation to PC Barlow, PC Y accepted that they had had a good relationship since PC Barlow had joined the team in April/May 2023, and that they had shared banter and spoke as friends. She accepted that PC Hill had joined the team in or

around August 2023 and that she had provided help and assistance to him and that they had worked closely and got on well together.

32. PC Y accepted the same in relation to FPC A and FPC Holt, in that she was the more experienced officer and had provided help and guidance to them. PC Y accepted that they were a closeknit working group and that when FPC A had joined the group in around about 2023, they had worked closely together and shared personal matters. PC Y accepted that she and FPC A were good friends, and that she had made no complaints to FPC A about her conduct. PC Y accepted that FPC Holt had also joined the team in 2023 and that he was new and inexperienced, and that they also had had quite a close working relationship.
33. PC Y was unable to describe specific incidents (apart from the incident involving PC Azam, PC Hill and FPC Holt) involving PCs Holt and PC A and she was unable to recall any specifics in relation to their alleged mimicry of her.

PC AQEEL AZAM

34. The panel then heard from PC Aqeel Azam. PC Azam had provided a statement on 10th July 2024, a statement which he confirmed and which was entered into evidence on behalf of the AA. Within that statement PC Azam outlined an incident in November 2023 when he had visited the DI Team at Bury HQ. PC Azam explained that whilst working in the office with PC Y, PC Hill and PC Barlow or PC Holt, he noticed PC Hill imitating PC Y's accent in a way which was loud enough for him to hear it and for it to capture his attention. PC Azam could not recall exactly what was being said and stated that the words in themselves were not offensive, but in PC Azam's view, the officer was clearly pretending to speak like PC Y.
35. PC Azam noticed that PC Y had her head down and, in his view, he felt that her expression was that she was uncomfortable with the mimicry. He remembers the other officer laughing as PC Hill imitated PC Y as he was sat no more than 2 metres away from her. PC Azam outlined that in his view the mocking was not an overheard private joke between 2 officers, it was loud and directed at PC Y.
36. PC Azam confirmed that he challenged PC Hill telling him that he should not speak to PC Y like that and that it was not appropriate to mock her accent.
37. PC Azam later spoke to PC Y about the incident, and she confirmed that she did not like it when she had her accent mocked but also confirmed that it had happened "by her DIT shift". PC Y had specifically identified PCs Hill, Holt, Barlow, Granby and Rani, as being people who had mocked her accent by imitating it, or had laughed when it had happened whilst joining in. PC Azam

outlined that he could see that PC Y was not happy with what had happened but did not report the matter, as PC Y had asked him not to.

38. Under cross examination PC Azam accepted that he had not heard the conversation that preceded the incident he described, nor did he hear what was said. He stated that the words he heard were not offensive, but they were said loud enough for both him and PC Y to hear. He was of the view that that it was not a private joke, and he took the view that the officers should not speak to or mock PC Y like they had done. He said that when he spoke to PC Y after the incident, she had said that she was upset and although he accepted that he had a duty to report any such behaviour he had decided not to after speaking with PC Y.
39. Under re-examination, PC Azam stated that it was his impression that PC Y had been uncomfortable and upset and had her head down when the mimicking had taken place. PC Azam was unable to identify the other officer with PC Hill but was certain that the officer had blonde hair.

PC MITCHELL GREENE

40. PC Greene confirmed his statement dated 25th July 2024 which outlined that he worked from Bury HQ in the PPU Team between August and November 2022 and then in the Divisional Investigation Team (DIT) from November 2022 to January 2023.
41. PC Greene stated that during his time within those teams which included PC Y, PCs Rani, Watton and Granby, and he believed the team got on “wonderfully”.
42. He confirmed that in or around January 2023, he had been told that officers were potentially mimicking the accent of PC Y. He was unsure how he had heard that information.
43. He also recalled walking out of the Police Station and calling PC Granby on the phone telling her that any mimicking of voices in regard to PC Y should now stop, as he had heard a rumour that she may not like it.
44. PC Greene told the panel that his memory of the phone call was vague and that he couldn’t recall how he came to know about the mimicking of PC Y’s accent. He could not remember details of the phone call to PC Granby.
45. Under cross-examination PC Greene stated that he had no idea of the date of the call, but that he was aware that PC Granby and PC Y were good friends, and he stated that he was concerned that PC Granby would not have wanted to upset

PC Y. He agreed that during the call PC Granby had been upset and concerned that she may have upset PC Y and that she was glad that he had given her the “heads up”.

PC COOPER FOX

46. The panel then heard from PC Cooper-Fox who had made her statement on 24th July 2024, within which she outlined that she had worked with the DI Team in October 2023 and worked alongside PC Y on D Relief.
47. At that time, PC Y was the most experienced officer on the team, and everyone would go to her for help. PC Cooper-Fox outlined in her statement that at the time of working with PC Y she witnessed a number of occasions when the other officers would mock how she laughed. She stated that it was difficult to describe, but PC Y has a deep laugh which is quite unusual and had a really soft talking voice. She stated that some of the male officers from the team would mock this by trying to recreate it when they were in her presence. In particular, PCs Hill, Barlow and Holt did this. PC Cooper-Fox stated that this would happen very regularly by all 3 of the officers, and that it got to the point where it would happen literally every time they walked past her in a corridor. She stated that PC Barlow was probably one of the worst for doing this, but the other 2 were nearly as bad as they would all “egg each other on”.
48. She outlined that PC Y would laugh it off but that she could tell by her face that she did not like it. She stated that PC Y was a really bubbly, nice person, and that it was unusual to see her down or upset, but after some of the incidents, she remembered PC Y being quite quiet. She specifically outlined a comment in relation to PC Y’s car, and that the male officers were making fun of her saying that it was like a taxi and she would have all of her children in the back of the car. PC Cooper-Fox also stated that other than the officers making fun of PC Y’s laugh, she had not witnessed any behaviour towards PC Y that was inappropriate or racist.
49. PC Cooper-Fox told the panel that the officers had egged each other on, and their conduct had been carried out together and individually.
50. Under cross-examination, PC Cooper-Fox accepted that she was unaware of any jokes that passed between the officers before she joined, and that PC Y had laughed off the officers’ behaviour and had never said anything about it. She believed that if the behaviour had merited reporting, she “would have reported it – 100%”.

51. Under re-examination the officer stated that the officers' behaviour was not acceptable, but that she had not reported it.

PC STANSFIELD

52. The panel then heard from PC Stansfield who confirmed his statement dated 12 August 2024, which was read into the record.

53. Within his statement PC Stansfield recalled an incident which he indicated was over approximately 18 months prior to the making of statement in August 2024, when PC Y was sitting in her office away from the rest of her colleagues, on her shift, and seemed to be in a sombre mood. When PC Stansfield asked PC Y what was bothering her, stated that she did not want to sit with her team as they had been mocking her and made her feel upset. She stated that all of the team had been mimicking her accent and that she had found it very offensive.

54. PC Stansfield had outlined that a couple of days later, whilst on shift with PC Y he had heard multiple people on that team impersonating PC Y, by speaking in an African accent, and although he was unable to say exactly who it was, he remembered it was a female's voice doing the impersonations. PC Stansfield told the officers that PC Y was offended by this and that he wanted it to stop.

55. PC Stansfield confirmed that the time of the conversation could have been late 2022 or early 2023. He told the panel that there was more than one person present when the conversation took place and that what he had heard was officers pretending to speak like PC Y. He could not remember the exact words or what the officers were doing, but he was told by PC Y that supervision had been notified. He was unable to remember the reaction of the officers to what he had said but confirmed that he had heard mimicking and officers "taking the micky" out of PC Y's voice and making a joke out her voice.

56. Under cross examination PC Stansfield confirmed that his statement was made 18 months after the conversation took place and that his memory now was the same as he had outlined in his statement. He confirmed that because PC Y had stated that she had informed supervision, he believed that the matter had been dealt with.

57. The panel then heard from the officers and the former officers.

THE OFFICERS AND FORMER OFFICERS

58. All the officers confirmed that the contents of their interviews and their Regulations and 31 Responses, were truthful and honest. The officers who were

alleged to have mimicked PC Y's accent maintained their position that they had not sought to mimic PC Y based on her ethnicity. They denied that any mimicking that took place was racist in nature and maintained that the only word that they had mimicked was the word "okay" apart from PC Granby who had stated that she may have mimicked the word "cheeky".

59. All of the officers confirmed that they had got on well with PC Y, and apart from PC Abid, the officers described a very close and professional relationship with PC Y. They maintained that they would not have knowingly or intentionally offended or upset PC Y as she was known as and treated like the "work mum".
60. All of the officers confirmed that if they had mimicked PC Y's accent, then that could be considered to be racist as it would be based upon her ethnicity and that if that mimicking persisted it could be considered as bullying but all of the officers stated that PC Y had always been laughing along when the mimicking of the word "okay" had taken place, and had never complained to any of them about it or expressed that she was upset, offended or hurt by it.

PC GREEN

61. PC Green confirmed that the contents of her interview with PSD and her Regulation 31 Response were truthful and honest. She outlined that she had joined the DIT in April 2023 for a couple of weeks and later rejoined in or around August 2023.
62. She stated that the culture on the team was that everybody got on with each other and that there were a lot of crimes to deal with. She said they liked to have a bit of a joke and a laugh as a coping mechanism for the hard work that they had to carry out. She outlined that she had a Bolton accent and FPC A had a strong northern accent and that PC Y and everyone on the team mimicked those accents.
63. In relation to the fraud file containing the photograph shown to Sergeant Bick, PC Green stated that she had discussed the file with the team and everybody found it humorous because the suspect in the photograph had denied ever receiving stolen goods, but the picture showed her holding the goods.
64. PC Green stated that she put the picture in front of Sergeant Bick, and he stated that the person in the photograph looked like PC Y's mum. PC Green stated that at that stage she did not think anything of what the Sergeant had said, and that they had not laughed about the photograph. PC Green stated that she believed the photograph genuinely looked like PC Y, not only due to the colour of skin but due to her curly hair and build. She stated that she and Sgt Bick discussed the

case further and she then returned to the team at which time she told the team what Sergeant Bick had said. PC Green stated that PC Y had laughed and whilst there were other members of the team there and possibly heard it, she could remember PC Y had laughed.

65. PC Green stated that if she had known that PC Y was upset, she would have been upset herself.
66. PC Green stated that she did not consider her actions to be racist and that she had no intention to be racist, although she accepted that what she had said could be perceived as racist. She maintained that that PC Y never raised it with her and never raised any issues about the team with her other than issues with her diploma.
67. PC Green stated that she had copied the way PC Y used the word "okay". She described how PC Y said it in a high-pitched way, different to how she would normally speak. She said that it was not about the accent, it was the tone which was high-pitched. She could not remember copying other words and specifically could not remember copying the word "hello". She said that all of the team copied the word "okay" but she did not believe that that isolated PC Y or that it was racist. They were all good friends with PC Y and she wouldn't have wanted to make her feel that way. She stated that she had never seen PC Y quiet or withdrawn, nor had PC Y told her to stop copying the word "okay". She maintained that if she had been told to stop, she would have stopped and was never made aware that PC Y was upset with it. She stated that she would have challenged others if she had known PC Y was upset, as PC Y was described as their "work mum".
68. PC Green said that PC Y was not quiet and that she was a confident officer, and that she would have expected PC Y to tell her if she was upset.
69. PC Green was not aware of any apology from any members of the team to PC Y and outlined that when PC Y had moved teams, she had said that she had missed working with the DIT.
70. Under cross examination by Mr King, PC Green confirmed that Sergeant Bick had not instructed her to tell other members of the team about what he had said about the photograph.
71. Under cross examination PC Green again confirmed that she had only copied the word "okay" and had only mimicked the high-pitched tone of voice and that when PC Y had said the word "okay" she had said it in a different way to how she usually spoke.

72. However, PC Green accepted that when PC Y spoke her accent was always present. Although she stated that when PC Y said the word “okay” she was putting on a false voice.
73. When asked if PC Y was telling lies about the mimicking, PC Green replied that she was. She again accepted that she had been good friends with PC Y and that whenever they had copied the word “okay” she had laughed with them. PC Green indicated that they had mimicked FPC A and the way in which she said “file”, and that meant that PC Y was not singled out.
74. PC Green denied bullying and that PC Y had ever told her to stop copying her words. PC Green stated that she did not believe that she should have challenged Sergeant Bick in relation to his words about the photograph and repeated that when she had said it to PC Y, she had laughed. PC Green denied that she was a racist or a bully.

PC HEENA RANI

75. PC Rani confirmed that the answers given in her interview contained at page 520 of the bundle and in her Regulation 31, were truthful and honest.
76. PC Rani outlined her career history and explained that she had met PC Y when they were on the Prisoner Processing Unit (PPU) and that they had made friends straight away. She stated that PC Y had taught her a lot and that PC Y was the same age as her mother. She stated that they had attended female BAME events together, and that they had both struggled with the Police Fitness Test, this meant that they had both gone to the gym together and supported each other in trying to pass the beep test.
77. PC Rani believed that she and PC Y got on really well and she was the colleague that she saw the most. She stated that she relied upon PC Y a lot and spoke to her about personal matters, their family lives, cultures, heritages, countries and religion, and that they were comfortable talking about this. She said that when they joined the DIT, Lucy Granby was on their team, and that they considered themselves to be a trio of friends. She knew that Lucy was very close with PC Y, and the 3 of them became a close knit team sharing jokes and helping each other, with PC Rani relying upon the other 2 officers because she was station bound.
78. When asked about the mimicking, PC Rani stated that she only mimicked the way that PC Y said the word “okay”. She said it was in a sarcastic high-pitched tone and the way in which it was said was a joke between the 3 of them, and they

all laughed about it. She said that PC Y said it in a certain way that was different to how she said “okay” in a normal conversation. She stated that she adopted the way that PC Y said it in those circumstances. PC Rani accepted that PC Y had an accent, but her intention of copying the word was by copying the tone and high-pitched manner, and PC Y never said anything about it.

79. She stated that PC Y had never appeared upset by it and was quite a happy person and that none of the team was offended by the jokes that they had. She stated that PC Y had never told her to stop doing it.
80. In relation to the text/WhatsApp message, PC Rani stated that she could not remember when the “jokes” started, but that her text message was referring to her mimicking the word “okay”. She stated that PC Granby had spoken to her and told her that an officer on the team had said that PC Y was upset by us and the jokes we were making. By that she stated that she took the word “jokes” to mean the mimicking of the word “okay” and multiple other small jokes including about the beep test.
81. PC Rani said that when she received PC Y’s response to her text, she was relieved, as she had been worked up that she had upset PC Y. She believed that they had a close friendship and that they all enjoyed the banter and she had no reason to think PC Y did not enjoy it. She stated that on the day following her text message she apologised to PC Y in person and PC Y had again reassured her that there was no issue between the 2 of them. Following that day, she stated that the relationship between them had not changed and that they worked together as normal, but that PC Rani did not continue with copying the word “okay”. She stated that the last thing she wanted to do was upset PC Y, and that understanding she had, was why she accepted that she had breached the Professional Standard of Authority, Respect and Courtesy. She said that she understood that PC Y was upset and had considered that she had been disrespected, although she wasn’t aware of that at the time.
82. PC Rani then went on to outline an incident where PC Y had reached out to her when she was off sick, at a time following PC Y’s complaint being made known to PC Rani. This was in February 2024.
83. PC Rani stated that she and PC Y had spoken a lot about discriminatory issues that they had suffered and that they had both been victims of racism. PC Rani stated that she was upset that PC Y had been upset, and that she thought that they had lost their friendship and that she wanted to apologise to PC Y. She stated that she did not blame PC Y and that PC Y had a right to report what she had reported.

84. Under cross-examination PC Rani reiterated that following her apology in December 2022, there had been no repetition of her copying the word “okay” and denied that she had mimicked more words than the words “okay”. She stated that she did not witness any other officers copying the word “okay” and stated that the “jokes” did not carry on after she had made her apology to PC Y. She stated that although she accepted that others may have used the word “okay” in the same intonation as PC Y, she did not witness that after her apology.
85. PC Rani stated that she was not suggesting that PC Y was lying, and that she accepted that PC Y was upset. However, she stated that PC Y had never told her to stop doing it and she denied that she had been racist in any way. She stated that PC Stansfield had never spoken to her about PC Y at all and maintained that she had only copied the word “okay” in a sarcastic tone and that it was not related to PC Y’s ethnicity, but due to the sarcastic way in which she said it.
86. Following questions from the panel, PC Rani maintained that she had not heard any mimicking after her apology.

PC LUCY GRANBY

87. PC Granby confirmed the contents of her interview with PSD and the contents of her Regulation 31 Response.
88. She outlined to the panel that she was 23 years old, having joined the police in August 2021.
89. She stated that she had met PC Y when in the PPU and had at that time also met PC Rani. She stated that she got on incredibly well with PC Y, who lit up a room with her smile which was infectious, and that PC Y was a very warm person, she stated that she thought of her as her “work mum” partly because PC Y had a son the same age as PC Granby.
90. She stated that working on the DIT with PC Y and PC Rani was quite positive, even though they had a big work load the team had a very good morale. She said that they were very busy, but they were dynamic, close and jokey, and there was a nice working atmosphere. She described that when she came back to the team she also got on well with PCs Green and Duckworth, and she would pop back to see the team now and again, and when she did, she spoke to the female officers.
91. PC Granby accepted that she had mimicked the words “okay” and “cheeky” and that she mimicked the word “okay” only when PC Y said it in a “sassy” way. She stated that the mimicking of the word “cheeky” was an inside joke which had started on the PPU with another officer and would be said if someone had put a

difficult crime file in her name, and PC Y would respond that it was “cheeky”. She stated that PC Y had never stated that she had had a problem with PC Granby mimicking those words in that way. She accepted the PC Y had an accent and that it was possible that when she said those two words, she had copied PC Y’s accent. However, she stated that that had nothing to do with PC Y’s ethnicity. It was mimicked in the same intonation as the way PC Y said it.

92. In relation to the text message on 6th December 2022, PC Granby outlined that she had received a phone call from PC Mitchell Greene who worked 2 shifts ahead of her, and that he gave her the “heads up” that PC Y was upset about the mimicking of her accent. PC Granby stated that she was devastated that she had upset such a close friend and messaged her to say that she was sorry. She stated that she had understood that PC Y had taken offence and that jokes can go too far, but that she had had no previous indication from PC Y that she had been upset, and that she had never looked upset.
93. PC Granby stated that when she received PC Y’s response to her text, she felt better and it put her at ease and she was happy with PC Y’s response.
94. The following day PC Granby stated that she told PC Y personally that she was really sorry and said that the matter was never spoken of again.
95. PC Granby stated from that time she was always incredibly careful about what she did around PC Y as she would not have wanted to hurt her or feel isolated in any way.
96. PC Granby confirmed that she accepted the breach of Authority, Respect and Courtesy, because her mimicking of the 2 words was not acceptable and she should have known that she was causing upset. She stated that she accepted that she was in the wrong and did not use the words again and did not hear anyone else use those words.
97. From April 2023 PC Granby stated that she did not see PC Y as much, as she was serving on the response team, but did still exchange messages, as she classed PC Y as a valued friend. She stated that she did not blame PC Y for reporting these matters.
98. Under cross-examination PC Granby accepted that there was no animosity between her and PC Y and that PC Y had no reason to make anything up. She accepted that PC Y’s accent was part of her ethnicity and that the mimicking of PC Y’s accent in a way relating to her ethnicity would be racist, and that persistent repetition would amount to bullying. However, PC Granby maintained

that she had only said the words “okay” and “cheeky” and when she said them, she may have mimicked PC Y’s accent.

99. At that stage PC Granby became upset and later indicated that she was not able to continue to give her best evidence.

PC MATTHEW HILL

100. PC Hill confirmed his interview at page 311 and his Regulation 31 Response at page 543, as truthful and honest accounts of his response to this allegation.

101. He told the panel that he was 30 years of age and joined the DIT - D Relief in July 2023, after serving on the Neighbourhood and Response Teams. At that time the team consisted of PC Y and PCs Barlow and Holt. PC Hill joined the team at the same time as PC Demi Green.

102. He told the panel that he and PC Y had a professional relationship and that they got on well. He stated that he drove her to interviews and that when they spoke, they were friendly and they spoke about work and personal matters.

103. PC Hill stated the only time he saw PC Y upset was in September 2023 when she was struggling with her diploma. He stated that he understood her difficulties because he himself felt the pressures of completing the diploma.

104. It was PC Hill’s understanding that PC Y had attended the “stay team interview” because of the problems she was having with her diploma. He explained that PC Y had moved off the team in November 2023, without giving a reason. He outlined that he spoke to her shortly after she had left the team and she had told him that she actually had more work to do than she had previously, and she would have preferred to stay on the DIT.

105. PC Hill agreed that he did mimic PC Y, but the only word mimicked was the word “okay” and in doing so he said it in a “sassy, high-pitched way”. He explained that PC Y said the word in that way in certain scenarios. For example, where there was a certain type of prisoner or crime, PC Y would say the word then, she did not say it in the same way if she spoke normally. He said that he was not able to mimic her accent and that he was not targeting her ethnicity. He said that he only said the word “okay” in that way because of how differently PC Y said it. PC Hill stated that the first person he heard say the word in that way was PC Y.

106. When asked if he mimicked PC Y’s laugh, PC Hill stated that he didn’t know how he would mimic someone’s laugh.

107. PC Hill accepted that PC Y was upset about the way she had been mimicked but stated that he had never been aware that she was upset.
108. PC Hill stated that even after the allegation was made, he apologised to PC Y and when he did so, she accepted his apology and suggested that they move on. He maintained that PC Y had never told him to stop mimicking, and he denied behaving in a racist manner.
109. PC Hill denied the incident where he was allegedly confronted by PC Azam. He stated that the conversation did not happen.
110. PC Hill stated that he had reflected on the allegations and he was quite sad about the whole situation because he was extremely sorry that PC Y had become upset. He said that he did not blame her for reporting what she had.
111. Under cross-examination PC Hill accepted that he had enjoyed a close personal relationship with PC Y, that there was no animosity between them and that she had helped him like a tutor. He accepted that PC Y had no reason to make anything up.
112. He was asked about his interview (page 326 of the bundle) where he had stated that he did not think that PC Y had an accent. PC Hill stated that he had forgotten that PC Y had an accent when he was interviewed. He accepted in oral evidence that PC Y had a strong Zimbabwean accent but stated that at the time of his interview he had not heard PC Y speak for so long, that he had forgotten that she had a strong accent. He denied that he was minimising the position. He accepted that if he had mimicked her accent, it would have been disrespectful, bullying, mocking and racist. However, he denied mimicking any other words other than the word "okay". He stated that that was a shared joke, and that was the only word he or any of the other officers copied.
113. PC Hill stated that the culture of copying accents was established when he arrived on the team, but he first heard the word "okay" from PC Y.
114. In relation to the mimicking of PC Y's laughter, he stated that PC Y laughed first and then the officers laughed.
115. Under cross-examination PC Hill again denied the conversation with PC Azam had taken place, or that he had ever been challenged by PC Azam in relation to the way he mimicked PC Y. He stated that he did not know how someone would mimic somebody else's laugh and he denied that he had mimicked PC Y's laugh at all.

PC MATTHEW BARLOW

116. PC Barlow confirmed the contents of his interview at page 206 of the bundle and the Regulation 31 Response at page 531 of the bundle and confirmed that he had provided honest and truthful answers.
117. PC Barlow told the panel that he was 26 years of age and had joined the police at the end of March 2022. He had joined the DIT on D Relief in May 2023 and at the time the officers on the team were PC Y, PCs Holt, Rani and Ashak.
118. He told the panel that the team enjoyed a good working relationship and that they were always joking and laughing and that PC Y was a very pleasant person once you got to know her. He confirmed that they would discuss work and home life and a broad spectrum of subjects.
119. When asked if he mimicked PC Y, PC Barlow accepted that he copied the word “okay” but would not say that he had mimicked the way that PC Y said it. He said it was a word used within the team when an undesirable job had been handed to one of the officers and it would be used when making a light-hearted comment upon certain things. He stated that it would be said in a sassy and slightly elongated way – not conversational. He said that PC Y would use the word when making light of a situation. However, PC Barlow stated that he did not mimic her accent or her ethnicity when he copied the word in that way.
120. He denied that he copied the word “okay” every time PC Y said it and denied ever mimicking her laugh.
121. He said that PC Y never complained to him and stated that they were really close and that she had been really good to him during his time on the team.
122. He maintained that he would not want PC Y to be upset and that even after he was made aware of the allegation, PC Y was completely fine with him. He did not apportion any blame to PC Y for making her disclosure.
123. Under cross-examination, PC Barlow accepted that he had breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to Authority, Respect and Courtesy, but denied the breach of the Standard of Discreditable Conduct. When asked why he had accepted the breach of the Standard of Authority, Respect and Courtesy he stated that he had accepted it because PC Y had said that she was upset and that she felt disrespected and that was why he felt he had breached the Standard. However, PC Barlow maintained that he had never been disrespectful to PC Y and that the only time he copied the word “okay” was to

make a joke of a situation, and usually after PC Y had said it. He said that he did not copy how she said it, but it was said in a similar way.

124. However, PC Barlow accepted that he had upset PC Y but reiterated that he had not intentionally disrespected her.

125. PC Barlow believed that the intervention by PC Stansfield had happened before he was on the team, but he understood that PC Y was not really bothered about what had occurred. He stated that PC Stansfield could be in a bad mood sometimes. However, he thought that PC Y was the first person he heard say the word “okay” in that way, and that she would not usually speak like that, and it was not said with a Zimbabwean accent. He stated that when she said the word “okay” she changed her accent.

126. PC Barlow stated that he did not hear anyone else mimic PC Y’s accent and stated that the saying of the word “okay” in the manner that they said it, was part of a shared joke. He denied that he mimicked the word “hello”, that he mimicked PC Y’s laughter, or that he had been racist in any way.

PC JAKE HOLT

127. FPC Holt confirmed the contents of his interview (page 121 of the bundle) and the contents of his Regulation 31 Response (page 538 of the bundle), as both true and honest accounts. He confirmed that he had no recordings of misconduct against him.

128. FPC Holt told the panel that he had joined the DIT in January 2023 and at that time the team consisted of PCs Rani, Granby and PC Y.

129. FPC Holt stated that whilst working he sat next to PC Y and that she was a caring and compassionate work colleague who would ensure that he knew what he was doing and that he would also help her for example in complicated interviews. They would ask each other questions and discuss personal and professional matters.

130. FPC Holt stated that he was from Lancashire and although he could not recall specifics, he described how the team thought that he sounded like a farmer.

131. FPC Holt accepted that he copied the way in which PC Y said the word “okay”. He said this was said in a high-pitched tone, elongated and exaggerated, and would be used for example, when they had a complex prisoner. It would not be said in ordinary conversation as PC Y would say the word “okay” normally in

normal conversation. He said that he only ever mimicked the way in which PC Y exaggerated the way she said the word “okay”.

132. He outlined that the team used the word in that way even when PC Y was not there. He said that he said it in his own way without an accent. FPC Holt accepted that PC Y had an accent but stated that that had nothing to do with it and that her nationality was no relevance to the way in which they mimicked the way she said “hello”.

133. He said that he had never been challenged about the way in which he had said this word, nor had he been told to stop by PC Y. He stated that he never saw PC Y upset, and if he had he would have apologised and challenged any further behaviour.

134. In relation to the incident involving PC Azam, FPC Holt stated that he was not on the same team as PC Azam and had no recollection of the incident in November 2023. He stated that if he had heard officers speaking in an African accent, he would have challenged them himself. In relation to the description of the officer as provided by PC Azam, FPC Holt stated that he had light brown hair and always had and that he had always worn a full beard.

135. FPC Holt accepted that he had breached the Professional Standard of Authority, Respect and Courtesy because on reflection, he could see that he had upset PC Y, and that the way he had copied the word “okay” did not “land” as he would have wanted” although he did not understand that at the time.

136. He denied that he had breached the Standard of Equality and Diversity because he said he did not copy the word with an accent. He felt that PC Y was entitled to feel how she felt and that he wanted to apologise to her and right the wrongs. He was of the opinion that she was a lovely person and that he never intended to be racist or be a bully. He stated that when he got the email saying that he had been involved in the behaviour which forms the foundation to these allegations, he was gutted and sad and did not believe it was true.

137. Under cross-examination FPC Holt stated that PC Y was on leave when he joined in January 2023. When she returned there was 4 on the team which was PCs Granby, Rani, PC Y and himself.

138. FPC Holt agreed that he heard other officers copy PC Y in the way that she said the word “okay” in January 2023 and after that date, for as long as he was on the team. At the time he joined the team it was made up of PC Y and PS’s Granby and Rani. He stated that he did not start it as it was practice on the team to say the word in that way and that it was used quite frequently. He denied that

he had ever been told by PCs Granby or Rani that they had been asked to stop the mimicking, nor had he been told that they had apologised to PC Y in December 2022.

139. FPC Holt accepted that he had a good relationship with PC Y and that there was no animosity between them and she had no reason to make anything up. He denied that he had copied her accent or that it was related in any way to her ethnicity. He stated that no other word was copied and that the use of the word “okay” was a shared joke within the team. He denied that he was present when other words were copied. It was put to FPC Holt that PC Y had stated that he had been present when PC Azam had intervened, but FPC Holt denied that he had been present at that time.

FPC A

140. FPC A confirmed the contents of her interview at page 428 of the bundle and her Regulation 31 Response at page 548 of the bundle.
141. FPC A stated that she had joined the DIT in June 2023 and remained there until November 2023.
142. FPC A outlined that she had been in the army for 6 years and that all her family had been in the police or the military. She stated that she had been discharged from the army with PTSD and that it had not been a good experience because she had been severely bullied.
143. She confirmed that when she joined the DIT the team consisted of PCs Holt, Barlow and Granby. She outlined that she had no time to learn the administrative side of police work whilst being on Response, so she had asked to move to the DIT. She stated that PC Y and PC Granby taught her how to work on files, and she would help PC Y by going out of the office and carrying out enquiries for her. She believed that they had a good professional and personal relationship and that she saw PC Y as her “work mum”.
144. FPC A described that she was from Lancashire and that her colleagues on the team would repeat the way in which she said the word “file” and the word “eh” and copied those and other words. She stated that even her supervisors and those on the Response team would copy her in that way and when she said the word “file” the team copied her and pronounced it in a way that they believed she said it which was “farl”. FPC A stated that she was not bothered by this and that people who were from the south would routinely and frequently repeat her words.

145. FPC A accepted that she had copied the word “okay” but that it was the pitch and tone that she copied, and it was said in a cheeky, sassy way. It was long and high-pitched. She stated that if PC Y had said the word “okay” in normal conversation, it would not be repeated in that way, only when she said it in an exaggerated way. She stated that when it happened PC Y would often laugh, but that when FPC A said it, she said it in her own accent, and she did not put on a Zimbabwean accent, as it was never about the accent.
146. She denied that she had ever copied the way PC Y spoke on the telephone and that said that she had never been challenged, and had never seen anyone else challenged about copying PC Y. She explained that whilst she had been in the army she had been bullied quite badly and that “never in a million years” would she bully somebody else because she knew what it felt like to be made to feel small and that she would never do it. She said that she knew how traumatising it was to be bullied.
147. FPC A was asked if she stood by the words she provided in her interview at page 458, that PC Y was trying to deflect from the problems she was having with her diploma, when making the disclosure in November 2023. She described how she had felt angry about being interviewed and said that she did not stand by her words.
148. She did not believe PC Y was lying and accepted the breach of the Professional Standards of Behaviour of Authority, Respect and Courtesy because she realised she had upset PC Y. However, FPC A maintained that she did not know that PC Y was upset at the time. She believed that PC Y was entitled to the way that she felt and said that if she had the opportunity she would apologise and say to PC Y that she had no intention to cause her offence or hurt. FPC A did not accept that she had been racist in any way. She explained that she had kept in touch with PC Y after the complaint had been made, and that PC Y had indicated that she wanted to carry on working with the team.
149. Under cross-examination FPC A stated that the word “okay” was being copied on an ongoing basis at the time she joined, and that she did not start it. She stated that the copying was well established and that although she couldn’t specifically remember any particular officer copying the word, she said that it was said when needed but not every day and was random. She stated that she had heard PCs Hill, Barlow, Holt, Green and Granby all copying the word, she stated that she had never worked with PC Rani, so had not heard her say it. She had not been told that PC Granby had apologised to PC Y and had only learned of that apology when she had seen the evidence.

150. FPC A said that she had never have any bad feeling towards PC Y and accepted that PC Y had no reason to make up these allegations. She accepted that PC Y had a Zimbabwean accent and that if somebody were to mimic that accent it would be offensive and racist, and that if it was repeated and carried on after being asked to stop it would represent bullying.

151. FPC A denied that she had copied the way PC Y had spoken on the phone, that she had copied her accent or the way in which she said “hello” or found her accent funny, or had been racist in any way. She denied that she was present when other officers had mimicked other words apart from the word “okay”.

The Findings

152. The Panel considered its findings having taken into account the fact that none of the officers had any previous disciplinary findings against them, and that all officers were of good character.

153. The Panel recognised that the onus of proving of any of the allegations was the responsibility of the AA, and the allegations must be proven on the balance of probabilities. The Panel was clear that it was not for any of the officers to show why things might or might not have been said by a witness.

154. The Panel took account of the agreed facts as produced and agreed by Counsel in this case.

155. The Panel also took account of the legal directions, submissions and guidance contained in the submissions made by officers’ Counsel and the legal submissions on behalf of the AA.

156. The allegations before the Panel all relate to the officers’ and former officers’ behaviour towards PC Y. The allegations can be broken into 3 separate parts, namely the allegations in relation to the mimicking of PC Y’s accent by all of the officers involved, apart from PC Abid and Sergeant Bick, and the discreet allegations in relation to the photograph of a suspect involving PS Bick and PC Green and an allegation in relation to an alleged comment by PC Abid in relation to PC Y’s hair.

157. This was a case in which the complainant, PC Y, had not formally complained about any of the officers’ and former officers’ behaviour, or raised it with senior officers, until she underwent a “Stay Team Interview” in November 2023. PC Y had made it clear in her statement that she did not want anybody to lose their job but wanted the officers educating about the effects of their behaviour.

158. All the officers and former officers apart from PC Abid have accepted that their behaviour breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to Authority, Courtesy and Respect and Discreditable Conduct. However, none of the officers accept that their behaviour breached the Professional Standard of Equality and Diversity or the requirement to Challenge and Report Improper Behaviour.

159. Dealing with the allegation involving the mimicking of PC Y's accent, the Panel had the benefit of four statements made by PC Y, two in December 2023, a statement in July 2024 and a further statement which appears to have been made in August 2025.

160. Within her 4 statements, PC Y outlined how, between November 2022 and November 2023, various members of her team had mimicked her accent to the point where the mimicking continued on a regular basis by various members of the team. PC Y outlined that the team was transitional throughout that time and was made up of PCs Granby, Rani, Holt, Barlow, Hill, Green, PC A and Cooper-Fox (and others not subject to these proceedings). She stated that PC Granby left the team in or around April 2023 but would return to the office and would carry on mimicking PC Y with the rest of the team.

161. All of the officers alleged to have mimicked PC Y's accent, have accepted breaches of the Professional Standard of Authority of Respect and Courtesy and Discreditable Conduct on the basis that the only word used by which they mimicked PC Y was the word "okay". The officers have denied that they mimicked the accent of PC Y but accepted that they copied the intonation of the word "okay".

162. In summary, it is the officers' case that this was not a copying of PC Y's accent, nor did it have anything to do with her race or her heritage. It has been submitted by the officers that the mimicking was part of a mutual joke shared by the team and that it would be said in a high-pitched elongated and a dramatic tone. It was also submitted by the officers that when the mimicking of this word took place, PC Y would laugh with the officers, and that she never in any way indicated that she was upset, uncomfortable or offended by this.

163. Within her statements PC Y outlined the mimicking of her accent to a much larger degree. PC Y had stated that the first few times her accent was imitated she did not really like it but hoped that it would stop and that everyone would move on to something new. However, she told the panel that the mimicking kept happening including whenever she answered the phone. She stated that she could feel people listening to what she was saying and that the copying of how she spoke would happen all the time such that it got to the stage where people

would laugh at anything she said. She felt that whenever she talked about anything, serious or social, they would imitate her words and that even though she might have been talking about a sensitive, personal matter, but they would just copy the words that she had said. She stated in her written evidence that this made her feel worthless and that what she had to say did not matter as she was just there to be laughed at.

164. The difference between the allegations based upon PC Y's statements were, therefore, significantly different from the behaviour accepted by the officers. The Panel had to consider whether it could rely upon PC Y's written and oral evidence or whether the Panel preferred the officers' assertions that they had merely copied the way in which PC Y said the word "okay", in the same way that they had copied other members of the team as, effectively, office banter.

165. The Panel considered the statements and oral evidence of PC Y. The Panel noted that PC Y's first 2 statements were made within 5 days of each other in December 2023, which was approximately 5 or 6 weeks after the "Stay Interview" during which she had disclosed the alleged behaviour of the officers.

166. PC Y's evidence was that the mimicking had started with PC Granby and PC Rani, two officers with whom PC Y accepted that she enjoyed a close working relationship. They had worked with each other previously on other teams, and in November 2022, they were placed in the Divisional Investigation Team (*the DIT*).

167. In her statement, dated 13th December 2023, PC Y stated that "*it started with Lucy and Heena mimicking me about my accent and the way I pronounced some words*". She outlined that if she used the telephone, she could sense that they were waiting for her to speak, such that it got to the point where she did not like to use the phone in front of them, as it made her feel uncomfortable, despite their friendly relationship.

168. PC Y detailed that PC Stansfield from A Relief had overheard PCs Granby and Rani and had said that their behaviour was unacceptable. She believed that PC Mitchell Greene, also from A Relief, had overheard the conversation with PC Stansfield, during which PC Y reported he had said that "*if the bosses hear them doing that, they'll be in trouble*". She stated that PC Mitchell Greene had said that he would speak to Lucy and Heena, but PC Y didn't want things to be awkward and didn't want him to mention her name, so asked him to say that he had just overheard.

169. The Panel noted that PC Stansfield made his statement in August 2024, some 9 months after PC Y had made her initial statement. He was unclear as to when the incident had occurred, but within his statement he details that approximately

18 months prior to him making his statement, he witnessed PC Y sitting on her own, away from the rest of her colleagues on her shift and seemed to be in a sombre mood. PC Stansfield outlined that, at this stage he had known PC Y for approximately for 5 years and classed her not just as a colleague, but as a friend. He asked her what was bothering her and she disclosed to him that she did not wish to sit with her team as they had been mocking her and had made her feel upset. He asked what they had done to upset her and PC Y told him that all of the team had been mimicking her accent and that she had taken it to be very offensive.

170. PC Stansfield had advised PC Y to notify her supervising officers of the situation and PC Y indicated that she had already done that.
171. PC Stansfield detailed that a couple of days later he remembered hearing multiple people on that team impersonating PC Y by speaking in an African accent. PC Stansfield was unable to say exactly who it was but could remember that it was female voices doing the impersonations. Accordingly, he walked over to them and informed them that PC Y was offended by this and wanted it to stop.
172. PC Stansfield was unsure of the names of the people involved and he was unable to ensure the accuracy of what was said and who said it.
173. Officer Mitchell Greene had made a statement in late July 2024 in which he stated that at a time during January 2023, he was told that officers were potentially mimicking the accent of PC Y. He made it clear that he had not heard it happen himself, but he was told that PC Stansfield may have heard this. PC Greene was unable to name the source of his information but stated that he *"vaguely remembered word that PC Y may have felt uncomfortable or wished for any innocent jokes to stop"*.
174. PC Greene outlined in his statement that upon learning this information he called PC Granby on the phone and, although he was unable to provide detail to the conversation, he stated that he had told PC Granby that "any mimicking of voices in regards to PC Y should now stop" as he had heard a rumour that she may not like it.
175. PC Granby agreed that this telephone conversation took place. As a result of the conversation, a text message was sent by PC Granby to PC Y on 6th December 2022, in which PC Granby apologised to PC Y for any upset that she may have caused.
176. Neither PC Stansfield nor PC Greene could be certain as to the timings of their involvement with PC Y in this regard. However, the Panel notes that PC Y

made her statement in December 2023, outlining a situation whether PC Stansfield had intervened and, also, that she believed that PC Greene had overheard the situation. PC Y outlined that she believed that this intervention had led to PC Granby being informed that she had been offended by the mimicking of her accent.

177. Given the evidence of PC Y, the recollections as outlined by PCs Stansfield and Greene, the acceptance of PC Granby and the text messages dated 6th and 7th December, the Panel found as a fact, on the balance of probabilities, that the intervention by PC Stansfield which led to the phone call between PC Greene and PC Granby and the subsequent text messages, must have taken place in late November or early December 2022.
178. The Panel found that the evidence of PCs Greene and Stansfield, and the resulting text message apologies from PCs Granby and Rani supported and corroborated PC Y's statement and her oral evidence in relation to that incident.
179. PC Stansfield had provided clear written and oral evidence in relation to the incident, and the Panel found that it could rely upon his evidence. The Panel found PC Greene to be a reluctant witness, who was vague in his oral evidence, but found that his statement was consistent with the evidence of PC Stansfield, and with the text/WhatsApp messages sent by PC Granby, who had agreed that PC Greene spoke to her on the phone and conveyed that PC Y might not like the "*innocent jokes*" or "*mimicking of voices*" (quoting PC Greene), and consequently, PC Granby notified PC Rani, and both officers apologised to PC Y by text and in person.
180. The Panel found the contents of the text/WhatsApp messages sent by PCs Granby and Rani to PC Y to be noteworthy. Both apologies related to '*jokes*' that had gone too far. Neither apology enquired as to how each officer may have offended PC Y, and neither apology referred to the mimicking of the word 'Okay'.
181. PC Y had responded by effectively telling the 2 officers that all was well between them and that they had not offended her. However, PC Y stated in her oral evidence that she was just relieved that somebody had spoken to them, and she had hoped that their behaviour would stop.
182. Both PC Granby and PC Rani when giving oral evidence to the Panel, indicated that following their apology to PC Y, the behaviour which they had believed had caused PC Y to be upset stopped, (albeit limited according to their evidence, to the way in which PC Y said the word "okay"). PC Granby outlined that it was always in the back of her mind that she had upset PC Y and did not wish to continue, and PC Rani also gave evidence that she was certain that any

behaviour which may have upset PC Y prior to the text messages on 6th and 7th December 2022 had stopped.

183. PC Y made clear in her statements that their behaviour did not stop, and that from that time, all of the members of the team began impersonating and mimicking PC Y's accent, such that she felt uncomfortable answering the phone, had set up 2 screens to create "a wall" between her and other officers, and felt the need to go into another room to make phone calls. PC Y stated "*I realised I wasn't part of the joke, I was the joke.*" She felt that the officers had taken away her words and nothing that she said was taken seriously.

184. Under cross examination by Ms Salter, it was put to PC Y that the only mimicking that took place related only to the word "okay". PC Y had replied that it was "*more than just that word.*" It was put to PC Y that when she said the word "okay" that she would change the intonation of her voice. Initially, PC Y responded that she did not recall that but then stated that she recalled saying it and that people would laugh. She stated that if she was told how she said it, she may recall it. She later accepted, when cross examined by Ms Barlow, that she would say 'OK' differently but maintained that there was more to the mimicking behaviour.

185. In January 2023 FPC Holt joined the team. He confirmed in his evidence that when he joined the team, the only other members of team were PC Y and PCs Granby and Rani. FPC Holt accepted in his evidence that he had also copied the way in which PC Y had said the word "okay". However, under cross examination he stated that he had heard other officers copy the way in which PC Y said the word "okay" in January 2023 and accepted that the copying of that word continued for as long as he was on the team. The Panel noted that FPC Holt's acceptance of copying the way in which PC Y said the word "okay" was, he submitted, said in his own words without any accent, but he accepted that copying PC Y in that way was common practice on the team at that time and happened quite frequently.

186. The Panel found this admission to be significant, as it provided corroboration for PC Y's statement that the copying and mimicking carried out by PCs Granby and Rani continued after the text message apologies, which was inconsistent with their evidence that such behaviour had stopped.

187. The Panel noted that in or around February 2023 PC Green joined the DIT for approximately 2 weeks and joined again in August 2023.

188. According to the statement of PC Y, PC Granby moved from the DIT to Response in April 2023, but returned to the office on occasions and continued the mimicking whenever she returned to the office.
189. In May 2023, PC Barlow joined the DIT. He stated at that time that the mimicking of the word “okay” was used to make a joke of a situation, but PC Barlow maintained that he would not copy how it was said by PC Y and would say it in his own words. He gave evidence to the effect that the use of the word in that context was “*invented by*” PC Y, as she was the first person he had heard say it and it was said in a way that she would not usually speak. He stated that it was not said in a Zimbabwean accent, and that she changed her accent when she said it. PC Barlow stated that he did not hear any other officer mimic PC Y’s accent, and that he knew of the apologies made by PCs Granby and Rani but had been informed that PC Y had not been bothered by whatever had caused their apology.
190. In June or July 2023, former FPC A, joined the DIT. She confirmed that at that time the team consisted of PC Holt, PC Y and PC Barlow. She also accepted that the team had mimicked the use of the word “okay” but stated that the team had also made fun of the way in which she, herself, used the word “file”, in that she pronounced it “FARL”. FPC A stated that she wasn’t bothered by being made fun of in that way. She accepted also that the repeating of the word “okay” by the team was routine and frequent. She stated that it was said in a way which had nothing to do with accent or nationality, and that whenever it was said it was nothing to do with PC Y’s accent.
191. Under cross examination it was put to FPC A that officers Hill, Barlow, Holt, Green and Granby, had all said the word “okay” in the manner outlined in her presence, and she accepted that they had. She stated that she had never been on the team when PC Rani was present.
192. In August/September 2023 PC Hill joined the DIT. At the time he joined the team it consisted of PC Y, PC Barlow and PC Holt, and he had joined at the same time as PC Green. He also stated that he repeated the word “okay” in the same high-pitched way as said by PC Y, and that that was the only word he ever repeated to her. He stated that it was used in a scenario where a certain type of prisoner or crime had been allocated to one of the officers. He stated that he couldn’t mimic her accent and stated that PC Y was the first person he had heard say the word in that way. It was put to PC Hill that he had mimicked PC Y’s laugh. He stated that he did not know how he would mimic someone’s laugh.
193. In October 2023 PC Cooper-Fox joined the DIT. PC Cooper-Fox had made a statement in July 2024 in which she outlined that whilst working with PC Y she

witnessed a number of occasions when other officers would mock how PC Y laughed. She outlined that PC Y had quite a deep laugh which was quite unusual and that her laugh was louder than her speaking voice. PC Cooper-Fox stated that some of the male officers from the team would mock this by trying to recreate it whenever they were in her presence. She was clear that the officers she witnessed doing this were PCs Hill, Barlow and Holt. She could not recall any specific occasion to describe, but the mocking would happen very regularly by all 3 officers to PC Y, if they happened to bump into her at any point of the shift. She stated that it got to the point that it would happen every time they walked past her in a corridor. She stated that PC Barlow was probably one of the worst for doing this, but the other 2 were nearly as bad as they would all “egg each other on”.

194. Within her original statement (13.12.23), PC Y had described that just before her Stay Team Interview (1st November 2023), another colleague from A Relief, PC Azam, had overheard them mimicking her and had challenged Matt Hill and Jake Holt, by saying ‘*I am challenging this behaviour*’, whilst in her presence, and that they just laughed at him with FPC Holt saying “*it’s not me, it’s Matt*”.

195. The Panel heard and read evidence from PC Aqeel Azam about an incident which he believed happened in November 2023, when he was working as part of A Relief at the DIT at Bury HQ. He recalled entering the DIT area with PC Y working at her laptop. PC Hill and either PCs Barlow or Holt were sat close by to PC Y. He was unsure which officer was present with PC Hill, but remembered that the officer had blonde hair, and he believed it to be either PC Barlow or PC Holt.

196. PC Azam outlined to the Panel that he had set up to begin his work and after walking over to the cupboard, he noticed PC Hill imitating PC Y’s accent in a way which was loud enough for him to hear, and for it to capture his attention. He could not recall exactly what was said and was clear that the words in themselves were not offensive or of note, but that PC Hill was clearly pretending to speak like PC Y.

197. PC Azam outlined that PC Y had her head down and appeared to be uncomfortable with the fact that her accent was being mimicked. He stated that the mocking wasn’t an overheard private joke between 2 officers, it was loud and directed at PC Y. He then challenged PC Hill stating that he should not talk to PC Y like that and that it wasn’t appropriate to mock her accent.

198. PC Azam told the Panel that he spoke to PC Y about the incident and she confirmed that she did not like it when she had her accent mocked and confirmed that it “*happened by her DIT shift*”, specifically identifying PCs Hill, Holt, Barlow,

Granby and Rani as being people who had mocked her accent by imitating it or laughed when it had happened and joined in.

199. The Panel found that the account provided by PC Azam was consistent with and provided corroboration for the account of the same incident detailed by PC Y in her original statement.

200. The Panel noted that PC Y had stated that PC Cooper Fox had joined the team in or around October 2023, but had never taken part in the mimicking.

201. The Panel noted that PC Y had not specifically described the mocking or mimicking of her laughter in either her oral or written evidence, but she had consistently described being mocked and the 'mimicking behaviour' of the officers.

202. Accordingly, the Panel found that the evidence of PC Cooper-Fox provided support for the alleged mimicking behaviour of the officers in the DIT.

203. PCs Granby and Rani had indicated to the Panel that their apology to PC Y in December 2022 was based upon their belief that they had mimicked the word "okay" and that that was what had upset PC Y and which had led to them being indirectly challenged by PC Stansfield. However, both officers had stated that the behaviour which they believed had caused offence to PC Y had stopped after the text message apologies. However, the Panel found that the evidence of FPC Holt contradicted that evidence, as did the evidence of FPC A. PC Cooper-Fox had outlined how she had regularly witnessed the mimicking of PC Y's laugh and PC Azam had outlined that even in November 2023 (1 year after the alleged behaviour began) he had witnessed officers clearly mimicking PC Y's accent.

204. The Panel did not accept that this behaviour was limited to the repeating and copying of the word "okay". The Panel did not accept the evidence of PCs Granby, Rani, Hill, Barlow, Green, Holt and PCA in that regard. PC Y had given oral evidence that the mimicking was "*more than just that word*" and the Panel accepted her evidence. PC Y had outlined that she had been mimicked persistently and continuously, and the Panel found that the evidence of the 3 independent officers Stansfield, Azam and Cooper-Fox provided corroboration for that assertion.

205. The Panel found it noteworthy that PC Y had not mentioned the mimicking of the word 'okay' within any of her 4 statements. Neither PC Stansfield, PC Greene, PC Cooper-Fox or PC Azam had mentioned overhearing the use of the word 'okay' within their evidence. Nor was it referenced by Inspector Jones or PC Mottershead. PCs Stansfield and Azam had clearly described the officers

imitating PC Y's accent, pretending to speak like PC Y and '*speaking in an African accent*'.

206. In the circumstances, the Panel found that it could rely upon PC Y's written and oral evidence. The Panel accepted that there were some minor inconsistencies within PC Y's evidence, but found that these were not significant to the overall allegations and that there should be no criticism of the fact that PC Y had been asked to make further statements outlining more detail, if necessary, even in 2024 and 2025. PC Y had been asked to provide more detail and context and she had done that. Any minor inconsistencies did not, the Panel found, relate to the material facts and allegation, which were that the officers had mimicked PC Y's accent. The Panel found that this did not mean that her evidence could not be relied upon.

207. PC Y had given an example of the mimicking. She stated "For example if I even say 'Hello' on the telephone this will be mimicked, and this kind of thing would occur most days. D Relief team at this time would be Heena Rani, Jake Holt, Matt Barlow, Matt Hill, Demi Green, FPC A, Lucy Cooper-Fox.....Of these, Heena, Jake and both Matts, Jake (sic) are involved. Emma not as much as them. Lucy Cooper-Fox has never joined in. Even though Lucy Granby had left she would still chat to the team and would take part."

208. The allegations as they have been put require the Panel simply to consider whether the officers mimicked the accent of PC Y. The Panel found that they had all mimicked PC Y's accent. But the Panel found that the officers' behaviour in mimicking PC Y's accent was not limited to the way in which she said the word "okay". PCA and FPC Holt and PC Green had all outlined that it was common for accents to be mimicked within the team. The officers' assertion that this did not apply to PC Y's accent, and that the only aspect of her vocabulary that was copied was the word "okay", which, when it was copied was said without an accent, was not credible. The Panel found that this assertion was an attempt to minimise the extent of the mimicking behaviour which was directed at PC Y for almost a year between November 2022 and November 2023.

209. The Panel accepted PC Y's evidence that her accent had been continuously mocked and mimicked by various members of her team during that time. The Panel did not accept that the mimicking of PC Y's accent was part of friendly office banter. It was much more serious than that. The Panel accepted that PC Y had never complained to any of the officers about the behaviour. She had accepted that, on occasion, that she very often laughed when they were mimicking her. The Panel accepted PC Y's oral explanation that she had trouble expressing herself when she was uncomfortable, nervous and anxious and that she would often laugh along with the officers as a result.

210. The Panel also accepted that the mimicking made PC Y feel uncomfortable, upset and bullied, even if this had not been the intention of the officers. The panel found that this was not the intention of the relevant officers/former officers.
211. The panel have not found that the relevant officers' behaviour was not a deliberate targeting of PC Y by reason of her race. The panel have found that the misconduct as found caused unintentional harm to PC Y, and that the harm caused was reasonably foreseeable had any of the officers considered their conduct.
212. PC Y's evidence was at odds with 7 of the officers, in that her evidence was that the mimicking was persistent, repeated and carried out by all members of the team.
213. The Panel found that the evidence of the 4 independent officers corroborated PC Y's assertion that the behaviour was persistent and repeated and continued over a period of approximately 11 or 12 months. None of the 4 officers' evidence supported the assertion of the officers that their mimicking related only to the word "okay" and was part of friendly office banter.
214. The Panel found PC Y's evidence to be compelling even though she had not particularised conversations or detailed particular incidents, the Panel found that where she had recalled specific incidents involved PC Stansfield and PC Azam, they had been corroborated by the officers' independent statements made sometime after the alleged behaviour had taken place. The Panel found that despite the lack of specificity the Panel could rely upon PC Y's evidence and it was understandable that she was unable to provide a detailed account as the behaviour complained of was happening on an ongoing and repeated basis. The Panel found that PC Y was a clear victim of bullying and that she had a desperate need to fit in with the team, and this helped to explain why she was unwilling to challenge the officers' behaviour and to complain to her superiors.
215. All of the officers outlined that they enjoyed a good relationship with PC Y and that there was no animosity between them and PC Y. The Panel found it therefore unlikely that PC Y would choose to make such allegations against her work colleagues, when it was clear from her own evidence that she enjoyed working with the officers in the main, but objected to their constant mimicking and mocking of her accent. Nevertheless, the Panel accepted PC Y's evidence that she had on occasion told officers to stop mimicking her, and that on one occasion it led to her swearing at them which was unusual for her, as she had outlined in her statement.

216. The panel found that the relevant Officers' acceptance of the breach of Authority, Respect & Courtesy and Discreditable Conduct was based upon the impact on PC Y as opposed to an acceptance of the inappropriate conduct itself.
217. The Panel found that culture of mimicking PC Y's accent was so engrained in the DIT that new members of the team were infected with it within weeks of them joining the team.
218. The Panel noted that PC Mottershead and Sergeant Jones had provided evidence that they had not witnessed any racist or inappropriate or concerning behaviour within the DIT during their time working on the team. However, the Panel found that this did not mean that the behaviour had not happened. It simply meant that it had not been witnessed by Sergeant Jones or PC Mottershead.
219. In the circumstances, the Panel accepted the evidence of PC Y. PC Y had given her evidence calmly, consistently and fairly. She had made it clear that she did not wish for the other officers to get into trouble and agreed with the officers' Counsel that other than the mimicking, the DIT Team was friendly and supportive. The Panel accepted PC Y's evidence that she had close working relationships with almost all of the members of her team. This did not appear to be in dispute. All of the Officers accepted that there was no animosity between them individually or as a group with PC Y. But as far as PC Y was concerned there was an aspect of their relationships which she did not like and found offensive, upsetting and uncomfortable and this was the constant mimicking and mocking of her accent.
220. PC Y had been a reluctant complainant and had made it clear that she did not wish the officers to know that she had complained. Her first disclosure of the officers' behaviour towards her had been during her Stay Team Interview on 1st November 2023, but the Panel found that any delay in the reporting of these matters did not undermine her evidence in that regard.

PC Barlow

221. It was alleged that between May and November 2023, PC Barlow mimicked the accent of PC Y, along with PCs Granby, Rani, Green, Holt, Hill and PC A.
222. The Officer denied that he mimicked the accent of PC Y whilst at Bury Police Station, or at all. He accepted saying the word "okay" in a high-pitched voice. This would be said in a dramatic, sassy and playful way, with attitude, as a joke.
223. This would be in a similar way to which PC Y would say the word "okay". The word "okay" would be said in a high-pitched voice, only in specific circumstances.

For example, where there was a dramatic incident, or to attract other members of the team's attention to something that had taken place. This became a running joke within the team.

224. The officer therefore accepted copying the intonation of PC Y when she would say the word "okay" but stated that this was not a copying of an accent, nor did it have anything to do with race or heritage.

225. PC Barlow accepted that he had breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to Authority, Respect and Courtesy, but denied in his oral evidence that he had accepted the breach of the Standard of Discreditable Conduct. The Officer had accepted, in his R31 Response, that his admitted conduct amounted to a breach of the SPB in relation to Authority Respect and Courtesy (and therefore by definition the standard in respect of Discreditable Conduct).

226. The Panel accepted PC Y's evidence that PC Barlow had started in the office within a month of her returning from holiday and that he used to mimic her accent in the office as the others did, pretty much straight away.

227. Accordingly, the Panel found that PC Barlow had breached the Professional Standards of Behaviour in relation to Authority, Respect and Courtesy and Discreditable Conduct. However, the Panel found that the breach of those standards was much wider than that had been admitted by PC Barlow in relation to the sole use of the word "okay". The Panel found that PC Barlow had joined in with the mocking of PC Y's laugh and the mimicking of PC Y's accent and by mimicking her accent, which was related to her race and her nationality, he had breached the Standard of Professional Behaviour relating to Equality and Diversity.

228. The Panel found that PC Barlow and all those subject to these proceedings, continued to mock and mimic PC Y's accent and that, as PC Y had outlined, it happened so regularly that there was a duty on each of the officers to challenge or report their colleagues when displaying behaviour, which fell below the Standards of Professional Behaviour, in particular in relation to the mimicking and mocking of PC Y's accent. PC Barlow did not report that conduct, she continued to take part in it.

229. On the basis that the Panel has found that PC Barlow has breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour in relation to

- a) Authority, Respect and Courtesy
- b) Discreditable Conduct

- c) Equality and Diversity
- d) Failure to report or challenge

230. The Panel considers that PC Barlow 's behaviour amounts to gross misconduct.

Outcome

231. In determining Outcome the panel have adopted the structured 3 stage approach outlined in the Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings.
232. The panel reminds itself that the primary purpose of imposing disciplinary action is to protect the public confidence in the reputation of policing. When considering outcome the panel must remember that the most important purpose of imposing disciplinary sanctions is to maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the policing profession as a whole.
233. The panel understands its duty when imposing disciplinary action in police misconduct proceedings, to maintain high professional standards by demonstrating to other officers that misconduct of a certain kind and /or of certain seriousness will be dealt with by disciplinary action.
234. The panel must consider the appropriate sanction in the particular circumstances in each case.
235. The panel had regard to PC Y's wishes in relation to sanction when considering each officer's outcome but found that her wishes had to be balanced with the panel's overriding duty.
236. The panel also considered that there was clear local and national concern about racist or discriminatory behaviour within the Police Force, and that any race related misconduct whether intentional or not, would severely damage its reputation.

The Seriousness of the Misconduct

Culpability

237. The panel found that the officer was individually responsible for his actions. When considering the officer's culpability, the panel took into account the following:
- PC Y had been made to feel targeted
 - the mimicking was intended and deliberate, persistent and repeated.
 - The panel has accepted the evidence of PC Cooper Fox in relation to the mimicking of PC Y's laugh, which was also deliberate and repeated.

- The officer took part in unconscious racial discrimination which created an offensive and bullying working environment for PC Y

238. The panel noted that PC Barlow joined the DIT in May 2023 and so joined the team when there was a culture of mimicking PCY already established, but he was on the team for a number of months and instead of challenging that culture, he joined in with it.

239. The panel found these factors to represent serious misconduct.

240. Taking all of these matters into account the panel found the officer's culpability to be high.

Harm

241. The panel found that the officer's misconduct caused PCY to be (using PC Y's words):

- *was very upset and hurt*
- *made to feel uncomfortable*
- *It made me anxious about going into work when before I used to look forward to going into work. The behaviour made me question whether I actually wanted to be a police officer anymore as I didn't want to work in an environment where I could be treated in such a way.*
- *Even though I have left that team now I am still anxious and still try and keep to myself as I am afraid of it happening again. I am fearful of something happening again and I do not feel relaxed in my role even though I am now not working with the same people.*
- *This whole series of events made me question being in the police. I didn't want this dream anymore.*
- *I was reserved and quiet. I remember crying in the toilet on a break as I felt so self-conscious sitting in a room full of people. I didn't want to share even though I had plenty to say. All this due to having my accent laughed at so much. They've taken so much at such a cost*
- *I've changed how I am with people. I have never said but I always work with two screens now. I don't need them but I use them as a wall around me. I want to hide and not be seen. I always manage when I'm doing calls so people don't hear how I speak.*
- *I'm also so anxious about speaking to people now. If there is someone new it takes me time to trust them and be happy to speak to them. My confidence is very low much lower than when I joined. The job shouldn't do this to you.*
- PC Cooper-Fox, PC Azam and PC Stansfield all outlined that they noticed a deterioration in PC Y's happy and pleasant demeanour when they described the incidents they witnessed

242. The panel accepted the harm caused as described by PC Y and the independent witnesses.

243. As stated previously, the panel found that the public trust in policing will have been damaged by the officer's actions and that there will have been reputational damage and/or a potential for reputational damage.

244. The panel found that although the harm caused was not intentional, in this case it was foreseeable.

Aggravating Features

245. The panel found there were no aggravating features in relation to PC Barlow.

Mitigating Features

246. The panel had regard to the officer's age and inexperience of the officer when considering the misconduct as found.

247. The panel took into consideration that PC Barlow expressed a limited degree of remorse and insight in relation to his misconduct.

248. The panel took account of the officer's service record during his time as a police constable.

Personal Mitigation

249. The panel took account of the numerous character references put forward on the officer's behalf and his previous good character, in particular the comments provided by the referees Bowman and Marshallsea.

Seriousness

250. The panel found, after considering the officer's culpability, the harm caused and the potential for harm, the aggravating and mitigating features that the officer's misconduct was **very serious**.

251. As stated previously the panel had regard to the Purposes of Imposing Disciplinary Action in Police misconduct proceedings.

Appropriate Disciplinary Action in this Case

252. The panel considered the sanctions available to it. As it is required to do, the panel considered whether the lesser sanction put forward by Ms Alam-Cheetham was appropriate in this case. In particular, the panel considered whether it could take a step back from the ultimate sanction not to dismiss in this case. The panel found that it could not.

253. It found that the most appropriate sanction in this case and that which reflected the evidence, the officer's culpability and the very serious nature of these findings, the panel had no alternative but to find that **dismissal without notice** was the most appropriate sanction.