

IN THE MATTER OF MISCONDUCT PROCEEDINGS CONCERNING:
THE POLICE (CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2020
as amended by POLICE (CONDUCT) (AMMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2024.

BEDFORDSHIRE POLICE

DETECTIVE CONSTABLE LAUREN HUBBOLD

(Case reference: CM/127/25)

Written Report Pursuant to S.63(1) Police Conduct Regulations 2020

Dated: 18th March 2026

Chair – Assistant Chief Constable Vaughan Lukey

Introduction

The purpose of the misconduct regime is:

- 1. To maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service***
- 2. To uphold high standards in policing and deter misconduct***
- 3. To protect the public***

An accelerated misconduct hearing (The hearing) was held in relation to DC Lauren Hubbard (The officer) on 13th March 2026, at Lysander House, Bedfordshire.

I have delegated authority to chair such hearings, from the Chief Constables of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, and Hertfordshire.

The hearing was recorded and this is the written report I am required to produce within 5 working days of the hearing.

Role of the chair

Stage 1

(A) First, determining the facts, based upon what is admitted by the officer, or proven on the balance of probabilities;

(B) Second, determining whether on the basis of those facts the officer breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour alleged;

(C) Third, deciding whether any such breach, amounts to gross misconduct;

Stage 2

(D) Fourth, deciding what the outcome should be.

Attendance

The hearing was a public hearing, with the rationale for that position provided to the Professional Standards Department Hearings Manager.

The Appropriate Authority was represented at the hearing.

The officer did not attend the hearing and was not represented.

The Appropriate Authority outlined the schedule of contact made with the officer, to ensure she was aware of the date and time of the hearing, and that relevant papers and information required under the regulations had been brought to her attention.

The officer did not provide a response to the Regulation 51 notice and indicated that she would not be engaging with the misconduct process.

I remind myself of the legal case of *R v Jones & Hayward [2002] UKHL 5* and *GMC v Adeogba and Visvardis [2016] EWCA Civ 162*.

The case of *Adeogba* being that the Chair's primary objective is the protection of the public and the public interest, and that the "*Fair, economical, expeditious and efficient disposal of allegations made against medical practitioners is of very real importance*" and that "*where there is good reason not to proceed, the case should be adjourned; where there is not, however, it is only right that it should proceed*".

"There is a burden on all professionals subject to a regulatory regime, to engage with the regulator, both in relation to the investigation and ultimate resolution of allegations made against them. That is part of the responsibility to which they sign up when being admitted to the profession."

In deciding whether to proceed in the absence of the officer, I balanced responsibility for public protection and the expeditious disposal of the case, against the officer's right to be present at the hearing.

Paragraph 106 of Home Office Guidance 2020 confirms:

"The hearing may be conducted and concluded in the absence of the officer whether or not they are represented".

I was satisfied that all reasonable efforts had been made to notify the officer of the hearing details, and she was provided with the evidence and allegations against her.

I was satisfied on the evidence presented on behalf of the Appropriate Authority, that the officer had of her own volition, elected to neither attend, nor be represented.

My decision was that the hearing would proceed in the officer's absence.

Accelerated Misconduct Hearings (Special conditions)

It was determined by the Appropriate Authority that:

- (i) There is sufficient evidence, in the form of written statements or other documents, without the need for further evidence, whether written or oral, to establish on the balance of probabilities that the alleged conduct constitutes gross misconduct;
- (ii) It is in the public interest for the officer to be placed on the Barred List without delay.

The above are known as “Special Conditions” and as the Appropriate Authority has determined these to have been met, the hearing is convoked.

The allegations

The Appropriate Authority brings the allegations, and it is for the Appropriate Authority to prove them. The standard of proof is the balance of probabilities, that is to say whether they are more likely than not to be true. The balance of probabilities is a single unvarying standard. (Home Office guidance paragraph 9.10).

It is alleged that the officer breached the following Standards of Professional Behaviour as set out in Schedule 2 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020:

- Honesty & Integrity
- Fitness for Duty
- Duties & Responsibilities
- Discreditable Conduct

The alleged conduct below breaches the above Standards of Professional Behaviour:

Whilst a victim of a criminal investigation the officer engaged with a suspect, who had bail conditions not to contact her. The officer encouraged the suspect to breach these conditions and assisted them in breaching the conditions.

During this activity, the officer took steps to conceal the activity by deleting messages on her mobile phone.

The officer ignored her duties as a police officer to report a suspect breaching their bail conditions, therefore, potentially damaging the integrity of the criminal investigation.

The officer failed to manage their alcohol consumption following previous instances, which stated it needed improvement and support was provided.

The Appropriate Authority sets out that the facts alleged above amount to gross misconduct and are so serious as to justify dismissal.

Evidence

The evidence used to prove the facts in dispute is in the material served with the Regulation 51 Notice.

The Appropriate Authority presented their case assisted by an 'opening note' outlining the evidence which was read into the record.

I carefully considered all of the material provided to me, which contains some personal information, which I do not recite here.

As the officer did not provide a response to the Regulation 51 notice, or attend, or be represented at the hearing, she did not contend whether her conduct amounted to gross misconduct, or otherwise.

A. Determination of facts

The Appropriate Authority presented evidence that was clear and it was not contested at the hearing.

I received no submissions on the officer's behalf.

When considering evidence presented by the Appropriate Authority, I give regard to Police Conduct Regulations 2020, Home Office Guidance, College of Policing code of ethics, and College of Policing guidance on outcomes in misconduct proceedings.

The Appropriate Authority has proven all allegations on the balance of probability.

B. Determination of whether the facts proven amount to a breach of the standards of professional behaviour

- **Honesty & Integrity** - The officer maintained and encouraged contact with an individual, who was subject to criminal investigation. This contact was contrary to court bail conditions, and the officer went to lengths to conceal the activity, undermining her honesty and integrity.

- **Fitness for Duty** – The officer failed to manage her alcohol consumption, appearing unfit or impaired, to police witnesses. Importantly, this follows previous instances of similar nature, where support was provided.

- **Duties & Responsibilities** – The officer failed to fulfil her duties and responsibilities, by failing to disclose unlawful behaviour, and by disposing of information that may have supported either prosecution or defence in ongoing criminal investigations.

- **Discreditable Conduct** – The officer's conduct, engaging and encouraging unlawful behaviour, brings discredit to the police service and undermines public trust.

I find the above standards of professional behaviour to be breached.

I am cognisant that in order to prove a breach of the standard relating to discreditable conduct, it is not necessary to prove that actual discredit was brought to the police service; it is sufficient that the conduct had the potential to do so.

I consider the circumstances of the officer's conduct and whether that conduct could be considered reasonable. The officer's conduct would not be reasonable in the eyes of fair-minded members of the public, who's trust and confidence underpins policing by consent, and must be maintained.

C. Seriousness assessment

Having determined these breaches of the standards, I then consider whether such breaches constitute gross misconduct.

I have regard to regulations 2(1) which states:

“Gross misconduct means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour that is so serious as to justify dismissal”.

I again remind myself of the purpose of police conduct regulations:

- 1. To maintain public confidence and the reputation of the police service***
- 2. To uphold high standards in policing and deter misconduct***
- 3. To protect the public***

In reaching a determination, I draw upon the College of Policing guidance on outcomes in Police misconduct, following the steps described. I have considered **culpability**, **harm** along with factors that I find have **aggravated** or **mitigated** the officer's conduct:

Culpability denotes an officer's blameworthiness or responsibility for their actions. The more culpable or blameworthy the behaviour in question, the more serious the misconduct and the more severe the likely outcome. Conduct that is intentional, deliberate, targeted, or planned will generally be more culpable than conduct that has unintended consequences, although the consequences of an officer's actions will be relevant to the harm caused.

Culpability will be increased if an officer was holding a position of trust or responsibility at the relevant time. All police officers are in a position of trust, but an officer's level of responsibility may be affected by specific circumstantial factors, such as rank, their particular role and their relationship with any persons affected by the misconduct.

- The officer was aware of the consequences of the unlawful behaviour.
- The officer's conduct was intentional and deliberate.

Culpability is HIGH

***Harm** will likely undermine public confidence in policing. Harm does not need to be suffered by a defined individual or group to undermine public confidence.*

Where an officer commits an act that would harm public confidence if the circumstances were known to the public, take this into account.

Always take misconduct seriously that undermines discipline and good order within the police service, even if it does not result in harm to individual victims.

- The officer's conduct undermines trust and damages the reputation of policing.
- The officer's conduct risked harm to potential prosecution.

Harm is HIGH

Aggravating factors:

- There are multiple Standards of Professional Behaviour engaged.
- The conduct was not a momentary lapse and was prolonged.
- The officer's conduct is a significant deviation from instructions, aggravated by the officer realising it was improper and attempting to conceal wrongdoing
- There is ongoing national concern regarding misconduct within the police.

Mitigating factors:

- The officer was facing personal challenges, outlined in the evidence.
- The officer made admissions regarding her conduct.
- The officer showed a degree of remorse and insight.

I am satisfied that the matters set out above do amount to gross misconduct and are so serious as to justify dismissal.

D. Outcome

In line with college of policing guidance, I must have due regard to the purpose for which disciplinary action is imposed, namely the need to maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the police service, to uphold high standards, deter misconduct and protect the public.

The purpose of professional disciplinary action is not, primarily, punishment, but to maintain the reputation of the profession and thus public confidence.

I have kept in mind that I should choose the outcome which deals adequately with the issues identified and protects the public interest.

I have considered available sanctions, and what would be proportionate with regards to this specific case.

I have given careful consideration to the officer's record of police service and everything that has been said, acknowledging the officer's personal challenges outlined in the evidence. I note that she has resigned and has shown some insight and remorse.

I do acknowledge these mitigating factors and in accordance with guidance, I must balance that acknowledgement with the need to maintain public confidence and high standards, reminding myself of the approach regarding personal mitigation:

In the case of R (on the application of Williams) v the Police Appeals Tribunal ((2016) EWHC 2708 (Admin)) Holroyde, J said that:

"The importance of maintaining public confidence in and respect for the police service is constant, regardless of the nature of the gross misconduct under consideration. What may vary will be the extent to which the particular gross misconduct threatens the preservation of such confidence and respect. The more it does so, the less weight can be given to personal mitigation..."

This does not mean, of course, that personal mitigation is to be ignored.... On the contrary, it must always be taken into account.... But where the gross misconduct threatens the maintenance of public confidence and respect in the police – as gross misconduct often will – the weight which can be given to personal mitigation will be less than would be the case if there were no such threat and if the disciplinary body were a court imposing a punishment. The appropriate outcome will depend on an assessment of all the circumstances, with proper emphasis being given to the strong public interest in the maintenance of respect and confidence in the police and consequently less weight being given to personal mitigation."

I am clear that I do acknowledge the officer's contribution to policing, as outlined in the record of service and whilst not included in her record of service, I note that the officer is well regarded by colleagues.

The officer had the opportunity to provide the hearing with any additional material that she may have wished to include with the record of service - She did not provide any.

Having used the college of policing guidance on outcomes in misconduct proceedings, to make my assessment of gross misconduct, and assess culpability and harm as high, I adopt this assessment, when considering disciplinary action.

In doing so, I remind myself that this is not solely to punish the officer, but to maintain public confidence and the reputation of the police service, uphold high standards in policing and deter misconduct, and protect the public.

Mitigation does not outweigh the seriousness of the officer's conduct and as a result:

Disciplinary action will follow.

To deal adequately with the seriousness of the conduct, and in order to maintain public trust and confidence in policing, the following is found and imposed:

The officer is dismissed without notice.

The officer will be notified formally, within no more than 5 working days and in writing, of the decisions made in this hearing, along with details regarding right of appeal.
