IN THE POLICE MISCONDUCT HEARING

PURSUANT TO THE POLICE (CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2020 (AS AMENDED BY THE POLICE (CONDUCT) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2024

IN THE MATTER OF:

Former PC 1056 Mark Robinson

And

Former T/DC 729 Bethany Wilkins

On 19th October 2026

PANEL'S REPORT

The Chair imposed a reporting restriction in this case, prohibiting the publication of any information that might lead directly or indirectly, to the identification of an Officer named in the proceedings, referred to as 'Person A'. That order is without limit of time.

DECISION OF THE PANEL

ACC James Avery (Chair)

Adrian Blomefield (Independent Panel Member)

and

Hannah Nandra (Independent Panel Member)

1. **A: Introduction**

2. The misconduct hearing for former officers Mark Robinson and Bethany Wilkins ("the Former Officers") was held in public at Northamptonshire Police Headquarters on 19th October 2026. Ahead of the hearing, a Notice of Hearing was published on the Northamptonshire Police website in accordance with the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations").

3. **B: The Allegations**

4. The Panel was referred to the Regulation 30 notices in respect of Former PC Mark Robinson ("Former PC Robinson") and Former T/DC Bethany Wilkins ("Former T/DC Wilkins"). These contained the allegations that their conduct amounted to gross misconduct, namely:

5. **Former PC Robinson:**

1) *"You joined Northamptonshire Police as a regular officer in February 2018. At all material times, your on and off-duty conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020."*

2) *"In April 2020, you were appointed a tutor constable. Between February and April 2023, you were the tutor constable for TDC 729 Bethany Wilkins."*

3) *"On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. During this meeting, you were asked whether you were in a relationship with TDC Bethany Wilkins. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship."*

4) *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

5) *"You were in a sexual and/or romantic relationship with TDC Wilkins while she was your tutee and prior to the 23rd March 2023. You knew that such a relationship was inappropriate and had been given training on the conduct expected of tutor constables."*

6) *"Your conduct amounts to Gross Misconduct in that it stands to undermine public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police and the profession and was dishonest."*

6. *"If proven, this is a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour for:*

   Honesty and Integrity (paragraph 3 and 4)
   Duties and Responsibilities (paragraph 5)."

7. **Former T/DC Wilkins:**

1) *"You joined Northamptonshire Police in October 2022 on the Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme. As part of that programme, you were posted to the Northern Accommodation Block in Kettering between February and April 2023. You were assigned a tutor, PC 1056 Mark Robinson. At all material times, your on and off-duty*

conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020."

2) *"On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. You were asked whether you were in a relationship with PC Robinson. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship."*

3) *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

4) *"On 26th April 2024 you gave a Criminal Justice Act 1967 witness statement in which you said that your relationship with PC Robinson had started in mid- June 2023."*

5) *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

6) *"Your conduct was a breach of the standard of Honesty and Integrity."*

7) *"Your conduct amounts to Gross Misconduct in that it stands to undermine public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police and the profession and was dishonest."*

8. *"If proven, this is a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour for:*

   Honesty and Integrity".

9. **C: Representations**

10. The Appropriate Authority ("the AA") was represented by Miss Lorena Veale of Counsel. Former PC Robinson was unrepresented. Former T/DC Wilkins was not present.

11. **D: Preliminary Matters**

12. The following preliminary matters were relevant to the proceedings:

13. **Non-Attendance of Former T/DC Wilkins.**

14. The AA submitted that Former T/DC Wilkins had resigned and made clear that she did not intend to take any further part in the proceedings. It was confirmed that T/DC Wilkins had received due notice of the hearing but had

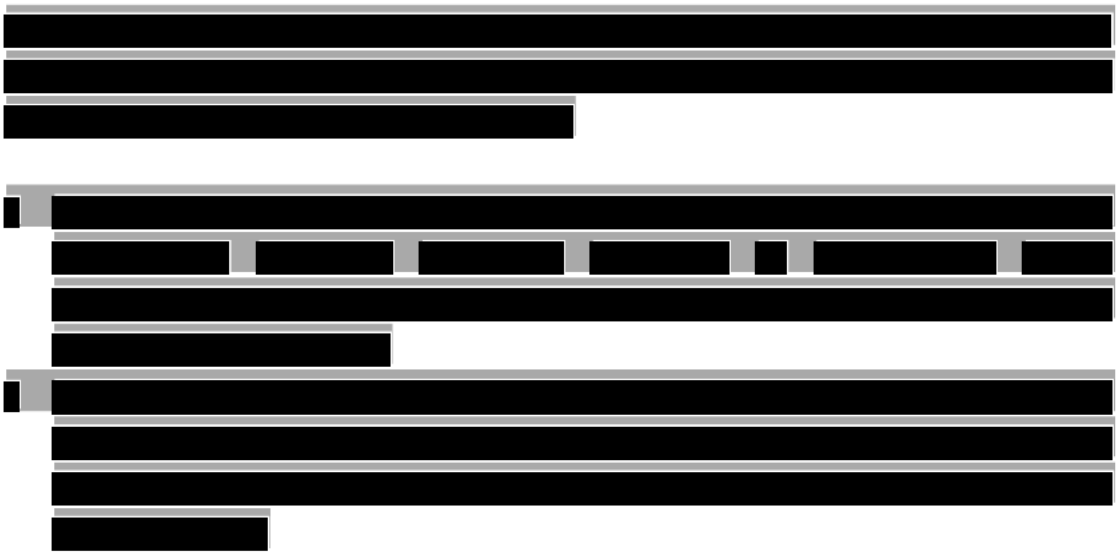
deliberately absented herself. In the interests of public interest, the AA invited the Panel to proceed in her absence. The AA submitted that an adjournment would not alter the position.

15. The Panel decided to proceed in the absence of Former T/DC Wilkins. The Panel was satisfied that she had been given the opportunity to attend and had elected not to partake in the proceedings. The Panel considered whether other viable means could facilitate her participation but was satisfied that she had chosen not to engage; regardless of any such arrangements being made. It, therefore, considered that delaying matters on this basis would serve no purpose and it was appropriate to proceed with the hearing.

16. In her Regulation 31 response, Former T/DC Wilkins disputed some of the alleged facts and denied breaching the Standards of Professional Behaviour. Therefore, the Panel treated the case as contested and the AA remained required to prove its case to the requisite standard.

17. **Reporting Restrictions**

18. The Chair confirmed that the reporting restrictions imposed on 17th July 2026,



19. **Disclosure of Documents**

20. Former PC Robinson sought further disclosure in order to support his abuse of process application. He submitted that, in light of the information received the week prior to the commencement to the proceedings, such material was fundamental to him advancing his arguments. His requests included the original e-mail from DS Pearl to DS McNally, dated 24th January 2024, as well

as interview notes relating to Person A, DS McNally, DC Smedley and Former T/DC Wilkins.

21. The AA reminded the Panel that an officer may request disclosure in circumstances where there is good reason to believe that it is capable of undermining or assisting a case. In terms of other enquiries, it submitted that the AA may provide further information where it considers these to reasonable and proportionate. The AA submitted that it had already responded to various requests and provided information. The AA resisted the further disclosure requests on the basis that insufficient or no justification had been provided for their relevance. Although the AA appreciated that Former PC Robinson was unrepresented, it described his requests for disclosure a "*fishing expedition*". The AA also reminded the Panel that the Chair had previously determined that the January 2024 interview notes were not relevant to the proceedings.

22. The Panel was referred to the Home Office Guidance, Conduct, Efficiency and Effectiveness: Statutory Guidance on Professional Standards, Performance and Integrity in Policing ("the HOG"). Paragraph 9.22, which relates to '*Documents which might reasonably be considered capable of undermining or assisting the case'* provides:

23. *'It is then for the appropriate authority to determine what material should be served on the officer with the notice, beyond those documents referred to in Regulation 30(1)(b) and (c)(i). The officer concerned may request any material from the schedule which has not been provided, if they have good reason to believe it might reasonably be capable of undermining or assisting their case, notwithstanding the appropriate authority's assessment…The officer concerned may also request such material which does not appear on the schedule. The appropriate authority may ask the investigator to make inquiries to recover such material if the appropriate authority considers the requests to be reasonable and proportionate.'*

24. In response to clarification sought by the Chair, Former PC Robinson confirmed that the material was solely required to support his abuse of process submissions. He stated that DS McNally had described him a "*predator*" and questioned what information had informed that description. Former PC Robinson submitted that the e-mail dated 24th January 2024 might assist him. He also questioned how DS Pearl had been informed that the matter was closed if it had been anonymous. He submitted that the information should be provided to enable him to develop his arguments about alleged unfair treatment.

25. Following enquiry by the Chair, Former PC Robinson confirmed that he could still advance his abuse of process application without the material, although he considered its absence would weaken his arguments.

26. The Panel adjourned to consider the disclosure application. It considered the nature of the requests, the reasons advanced and whether the material might reasonably be considered capable of undermining or assisting Former PC Robinson's case.

27. Having considered Former PC Robinson's reasons for seeking disclosure, the Panel found that the suggested connection between the requested material and these proceedings was speculative. The Panel found that Former PC Robinson had not sufficiently established its relevance to the current allegations. Moreover, the "*predator*" comment arose from a separate interview concerning a complaint made by Former T/DC Wilkins to PSD.

28. The Panel reminded itself that its task was to determine the allegations. The requests concerning the circumstances leading to DS Pearl's statement were peripheral to the issues requiring determination. The account of DS Pearl could be tested during the hearing. The Panel found that Former PC Robinson had not identified how the requested documents might reasonably be considered capable of undermining or assisting his case. The Panel did not consider that a general wish to explore the background to the investigation sufficiently established the relevance required.

29. The Panel was not persuaded that the requested material would assist in resolving issues that were relevant to the proceedings or that its absence would prejudice Former PC Robinson's ability to answer the allegations. The Panel considered that to be admissible, the evidence must be relevant; evidence is relevant if it is logically probative or disprobative of some matter which requires proof. The Panel was not satisfised that this was the case.

30. The Panel did not consider it essential in the interests of a fair hearing that the requested material be obtained and disclosed.

31. Former PC Robinson's application for disclosure was therefore refused.

32. **Abuse of Process**

33. Former PC Robinson applied for the hearing to be stayed as an abuse of process. He relied on alleged prejudgement, a lack of impartiality, incomplete enquiries, inconsistencies in the investigation documents and delay in the proceedings. He also stated that he had insufficient time to consider information received during the week preceding the commencement of the hearing.

34. Former PC Robinson submitted that the investigation had not been approached with an open mind. He referred to the description of him as a "*predator*" by DS McNally and a separate comment made by DI Gray on 24th June 2024 that the matter was "*straightforward*" and the relationship already apparent. He emphasised that neither of the Former Officers had been interviewed at that stage and the relevant messages had not been put to Person A.

35. Former PC Robinson questioned why those messages had not been put to Person A before his interview and submitted that, had they been put to her before his interview, the outcome may have been different. He submitted that a response could have affected the course of his interview and questioned why it had not been delayed until that information was obtained.

36. He also submitted that witnesses who might have assisted his defence had not been pursued. This included DS Osborne who he believed to be an independent witness to the conversation in which the "*predator*" comment was made by DS McNally. He questioned why DS Osborne had not been contacted following the complaint made about the *"predator"* comment.

37. Former PC Robinson alleged that he had been treated differently from other officers facing comparable allegations. He submitted that the statement of DS Pearl made in March 2023 alluded to two other officers facing comparable allegations; which he considered had been ignored. He believed that the difference in treatment arose from the age difference between him and Former T/DC Wilkins.

38. Former PC Robinson challenged alleged discrepancies between original witness statements and the MG5 investigative summary, together with aspects of DC Fleming's MG11 statement, dated 29th July 2026. He submitted that dates had been transposed and information added which he believed fundamentally altered part of the original account. He submitted that he disagreed with the AA's description of these discrepancies as "*minor*".

39. Former PC Robinson disputed the assertion that he had denied hotel stays. He maintained that he had not been asked about this in interview and invited DC Fleming to identify where such denial appeared. He also questioned why the MG5 referred to a joint hotel stay when DC Fleming had indicated that this could not be evidenced.

40. Former PC Robinson also relied on alleged delays in interviewing Former T/DC Wilkins. He stated that papers were initially served in June (2024) and she was interviewed in August (2024). He submitted that there were delays in serving the Regulation 30 notice. He referred to the duration of the proceedings [redacted]

41. Former PC Robinson informed the Panel that he had limited time available to consider the documents served the week prior to the commencement of the hearing.

42. The AA opposed the abuse of process application and invited the Panel to consider its written and oral submissions together.

43. It submitted that Former PC Robinson had not demonstrated either that a fair hearing was impossible or that there been unconscionable conduct warranting a stay. It maintained that allegations of prejudice were unsupported by the evidence and relied upon case law (set out in it written response to the abuse of process application) establishing that delay alone was insufficient without resulting prejudice. The AA submitted that any delays identified by Former PC Robinson did not warrant staying the proceedings as an abuse of process.

44. Further to its written response to the abuse of process application, in relation to unconscionable conduct, the AA referred to cases involving abduction or the illegal bugging of a vehicle as examples. It denied that any unconscionable conduct had occurred in this case and submitted that there was no evidence to support this contention. It further argued that, even taken at its highest, Former PC Robinson's allegations did not amount to unconscionable conduct justifying a stay.

45. The AA submitted that many of the matters raised concerned dissatisfaction with investigative decisions or the handling of other investigations. It argued that these matters did not establish unfairness in these proceedings and that any challenges to investigative decisions should be pursued through the judicial review process.

46. In relation to the MG5 statement, the AA emphasised that this was a summary. The Panel had both the investigation report and the underlying evidence and was not being asked to determine the allegations by reference to the summary alone. The AA denied that DC Fleming, who had conducted the substantive investigation, had been prejudiced or biased in her approach.

47. The AA disputed that the "*predator*" comment demonstrated prejudgements in the investigation. The AA maintained that determining that statement was irrelevant to the purposes of this hearing. It submitted that, nevertheless, that conversation arose during a separate investigation and that the detective concerned, namely, DS McNally had limited involvement in the present matter, limited to arranging matters by e-mail. The AA submitted that it was inappropriate for the Panel to consider decisions by other investigations. It maintained that there was no evidence of bias by DC Fleming who undertook the substantive investigation.

48. The AA explained that DS Pearl, the author of the original "*Bad Apple*" report, had received an automatic closure notification through the electronic reporting system, prompting a follow up e-mail. It disputed that this demonstrated impropriety in the commencement or continuation of the investigation.

49. The AA also rejected the suggestion that the proceedings arose from the officers' ages and submitted that this was irrelevant to these proceedings. Its case concerned the relationship between a tutor and student and their alleged dishonesty about that relationship. It submitted that the treatment of officers in other investigations did not determine the issues before this Panel.

50. As to the hotel stays, the AA maintained that their relevance had been clear and that Former PC Robinson had opportunities to address them in interview and his Regulation 31 response. It disputed the assertion that he had not seen the content of that response. Whilst acknowledging that these matters were more appropriately addressed in closing submissions, the AA relied on evidence concerning its preparation, review and submission through his representative. It submitted that Former PC Robinson had sent the response to his former representative, who forwarded it to the AA. This, it argued, demonstrated that the response had been in his possession and he had clearly reviewed it.

51. The AA also referred to an e-mail from Former PC Robinson to his representative dated 17th December 2025, which was included in his defence

bundle and addressed both hotel stays. The AA submitted that the e-mail did not suggest that his Regulation 31 response was incorrect and that his account of the hotel stays differed from the account he now advanced. It maintained that these inconsistencies were matters for determination at the substantive hearing and did not prevent a fair hearing. The Panel was invited to properly consider the Regulation 31 Response in due course.

52. In reply, Former PC Robinson maintained that the disclosure sought earlier would assist him in establishing whether "*predator*" comment was made as part of a different investigation and whether there might have been information provided by DS Pearle which led McNally to believe the comment was true. He repeated his earlier submissions.

53. During the submissions, both parties referred to material submitted on 16th October 2026 which, although had been considered by the Chair, had not yet been provided to the full Panel. The Chair identified that material and, neither party objecting, arranged it for it to be provided to the two Independent Panel Members.

54. The AA also identified pages 287-298 of the bundle as material no longer relied upon. The Chair confirmed that the earlier decision to exclude that evidence had concerned its relevance, rather than a finding that it was inaccurate. Its continued inclusion in the bundle was an error and the Panel would disregard it.

55. The Panel adjourned to consider the application. It examined whether the process had been manipulated through unconscionable conduct and whether any failure to follow proper procedure prevented a fair hearing. It assessed the grounds individually and cumulatively.

56. In considering the complaints about the investigation, the Panel distinguished between general complaints about the investigation and any matters affecting the fairness of the proceedings. In this regard, it accepted the AA's submissions that it was not its task to remake the decision of the investigation. It noted the AA submission that a challenge to the lawfulness of the decision to proceed with an investigation was a matter of the judicial review. Nevertheless, it considered whether the matters raised demonstrated unfairness in these proceedings and was not satisfied that they did.

57. The Panel considered the "*predator*" comment by DS McNally and the suggested failure to obtain an account from DS Osborne; who was described by Former PC Robinson was being an independent witness to that conversation. The Panel was satisfied that the conversation arose in an investigation which was separate to these proceedings. DS McNally was not the designated investigator in these proceedings, this role was assigned to DC Fleming. The Panel was satisfied that DS McNally had only limited involvement in sending emails. Former PC Robinson's suggestion that information underlying the comment might have influenced this investigation was speculated by nature. The Panel was not satisfied that these matters established prejudgement affecting the fairness of the hearing.

58. The Panel considered the age difference irrelevant to the issues requiring determination in these proceedings. It did not consider it appropriate to determine complaints about the handling of other investigations or the treatment of other officers. It considered whether such comparisons advanced by Former PC Robinson demonstrated unfairness in the present proceedings and was not satisfied that they did.

59. The Panel considered the alleged failure to put the messages to Person A before Former PC Robinson's interview. This did not prevent the messages or Person A's account from being examined at the hearing. Person A's evidence could be tested through questioning and Former PC Robinson remained able to address the messages and explain their significance when presenting his case. The Panel was, therefore, satisfied that this did not prevent a fair determination of the allegations.

60. The Panel considered the alleged discrepancies between the original evidence, the MG5 summary and the investigator's MG11, including the disputed assertion that Former PC Robinson had denied hotel stays. It considered his challenge to the Regulation 31 response. These were matters which could be examined against the underlying evidence. The Panel could determine the accuracy of the material during the substantive hearing. It reached no conclusion on these disputes at this stage and was satisfied that they did not prevent a fair hearing.

61. The Panel considered Former PC Robinson submission that he had insufficient time to consider recently supplied material. It took into account the fact that the additional material had been obtained and provided in direct response to his request. It assessed its volume and nature, its relevance to the issues and the

preparation reasonably required to address it. The Panel considered that any additional time could be addressed through the management of the hearing rather than a stay. The question of the time required was addressed separately when determining Former PC Robinson's adjournment application.

62. The Panel considered the chronology and the alleged delays Former PC Robinson said he had encountered during the proceedings. It did not accept that there had been any unreasonable or inordinate delay. Nor was it satisfied that Former PC Robinson had demonstrated any resulting prejudice which prevented a fair determination of the allegations or made continuation of the proceedings untenable.

63. Having considered the grounds individually and cumulatively, the Panel was not satisfied that unconscionable conduct had occurred or that any procedural failing, taking into account both the 2020 Conduct Regulations and HOG, justified a stay.

64. The Panel, therefore, refused the application and was satisfied that the proceedings could continue fairly.

65. **Witnesses and Special Measures**

66. The AA confirmed that it relied on the written statements of three witnesses; namely, DS Pearl, Person A and DC Fleming. As former PC Robinson had indicated that he wished to challenge their evidence, the AA considered their attendance necessary, subject to the Chair's determination. The AA asked that questioning to be confined to relevant issues as opposed to peripheral matters.

67. The AA also referred to DS Osborne, whose statement was provided the previous week. It did not intend to call DS Osborne, considering that the AA's position was that her evidence was neither necessary nor proportionate. [redacted]

68. The AA applied for Person A to give evidence behind a screen so that she and Former PC Robinson could not see one another. Having spoken to Person A that morning, the AA reported that she was anxious about the proceedings, taking account of the nature of the allegations, her involvement in the investigation and Former PC Robinson's strongly expressed views about the case and its weaknesses. It submitted that a screen would assist her to give her best evidence without prejudicing Former PC Robinson.

69. The AA referred to paragraphs 11.60 - 11.62 of the HOG concerning witness welfare, individual needs and appropriate support and adjustments, including screens or video links for witnesses who may be vulnerable or feel intimidated.

70. The AA also sought a reporting restriction protecting Person A's identity, with any reporting referring to her as "Person A". It relied on Regulation 39 (3) and the considerations identified in paragraph 11.84 the HOG, including transparency, the public interest and witness welfare.

71. The AA submitted that identifying Person A would cause further distress and interfere with her private life. Her involvement was peripheral to the central allegations and concerned bringing information to the AA's attention. It argued that naming her would provide no material public benefit and could discourage her and others from coming forward in future. The hearing could otherwise remain open and transparent.

72. The Chair confirmed that, should any such directions be made, a screen could be arranged.

73. The AA also requested that any questions from Former PC Robinson be provided in advance or put through the Chair, submitting that this would further alleviate Person A's anxiety.

74. Former PC Robinson raised no objection to the proposed screen, anonymity or arrangements for questioning. He indicated that he did not wish proceedings to cause difficulties in Person A's private life.

75. Former PC Robinson stated that he did not require Person A to attend if he was provided with the questions asked during the interview. His concern remained the refusal to disclose the original interview notes.

76. The AA maintained that the disclosure issue had already been determined. It submitted that any questions for Person A should concern her statement and matters relevant to the proceedings, rather than hypothetical or speculative enquiries designed to obtain further information. The AA had no questions beyond her written evidence and submitted that attendance would be necessary only if Former PC Robinson wished to challenge it.

77. The Chair clarified that Person A's evidence was contained in her statement. Former PC Robinson indicated that he wished his dissatisfaction concerning the original notes to be recorded.

78. The Chair granted the unopposed applications for Person A to give evidence behind the screen and for her identity to be protected in reporting, using the designation "*Person A*".

79. When asked whether he wished to call any additional witnesses, Former PC Robinson stated that he could not confirm his position because he had not finished reviewing the recently received material. In response to the Chair's enquiry about the time required, he requested the remainder of that day. He submitted that it was unfair to require him to identify witnesses before he had been provided with the opportunity to consider the material,

80. The Panel considered the request for further preparation time, taking account of the time already available to prepare for the proceedings as well as the limited volume and content of the three statements and information provided on 16th October 2026. The Panel noted that the substantive evidence had been available for a considerable period and that the witnesses had initially been agreed on 13th October 2026.

81. In light of the above, the Panel was not persuaded that further preparation time was indeed necessary. It did, nevertheless, afford Former PC Robinson an additional opportunity over a one hour lunch period to finalise his position on witnesses and provide his proposed questions. The Chair declined Former PC Robinson's request for a further hour. The Chair's decision was based in the interests of justice and accorded with his duty to ensure the proceedings were conducted in a timely, fair and effective manner.

82. **Anonymity Request by Former PC Robinson on behalf of Former T/DC Wilkins**

83. Former PC Robinson attempted to request anonymity on behalf of Former T/DC Wilkins, which he said had previously been refused. The Chair explained that Former T/DC Wilkins was not present, Former PC Robinson was not permitted to represent her and, therefore, was unable to make representations on her behalf.

84. **Adjournment Application**

85. Former PC Robinson sought an adjournment to obtain legal advice and consider information received the previous week, including DS Osborne's MG11 statement. He submitted that proceedings without this opportunity would prejudice him and referred to himself as being in a vulnerable position in the proceedings.

86. The AA opposed the application. It submitted that DS Osborne's statement had been obtained at Former PC Robinson's request, despite the AA's position that it was unnecessary. It argued that obtaining and providing that material did not justify an adjournment and was wholly inappropriate.

87. The AA maintained that it had reviewed the material and complied with its disclosure obligations. It had also sought information not already in its possession to respond fairly to Former PC Robinson's requests, taking account of his unrepresented status.

88. The Chair considered Former PC Robinson's request to adjourn to obtain technical advice and review information received the previous week. He took account of the considerable time Former PC Robinson had held the hearing bundle and the opportunity available to obtain legal advice. The additional information had been sought and provided at Former PC Robinson's specific request. Having considered its volume, nature and relevance, the Chair was satisfied that it did not justify the adjournment sought. In reaching his decision, the Chair balanced fairness to Former PC Robinson with the efficient and effective conduct of the proceedings. The Chair was satisfied that Former PC Robinson had reasonable opportunity to present his case and that a adjournment of the proceedings was neither necessary nor appropriate.

89. **Resignation of Former PC Robinson**

90. During the lunch adjournment, Former PC Robinson tendered his resignation with immediate effect. His letter cited alleged prejudgment, age-related prejudice, investigative failures and discrepancies, disclosure failures and procedural unfairness, including the refusal of his applications that morning.

91. When the hearing reconvened, Former PC Robinson was absent. His resignation letter was placed on the record and it was confirmed that he did not intend to participate further.

92. The AA invited the Panel to proceed in his absence on the same basis previously advanced in relation to Former T/DC Wilkins. The Panel determined that Former PC Robinson was aware of the date and time of the hearing and had chosen not to participate further. The AA submitted that continuing with the proceedings was in the public interest. The Chair invited any reasons for why the hearing should not proceed; none were identified. It was determined that the hearing would proceed in the absence of now both Former Officers.

93. The AA indicated that it no longer proposed to call the witnesses unless the Panel wished to hear from them. It submitted that oral evidence was neither necessary nor proportionate, given their written evidence available and the absence of any further questioning by Former PC Robinson. The Chair confirmed that further witnesses were not required to attend and their evidence would be considered in writing.

94. **E: Regulation 30 Notices and Regulation 31 Responses**

95. The facts set out in the Regulation 30 Notice were read out for both Former Officers. These were as follows:

96. **Former PC Robinson:**

97. Facts:

98. *"1. You joined Northamptonshire Police as a regular officer in February 2018. At all material times, your on and off-duty conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020.*

99. *2. In April 2020, you were appointed a tutor constable. Between February and April 2023, you were the tutor constable for TDC 729 Bethany Wilkins.*

100. *3. On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. During this meeting, you were asked whether you were in a relationship with TDC Bethany Wilkins. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship.*

101. *4. You knew that statement to be untrue.*

102. *5. You were in a sexual and/or romantic relationship with TDC Wilkins while she was your tutee and prior to the 23rd March 2023. You knew that such a relationship*

was inappropriate and had been given training on the conduct expected of tutor constables.

103. *6. Your conduct amounts to Gross Misconduct in that it stands to undermine public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police and the profession and was dishonest."*

104. Standards of Professional Behaviour Engaged:

105. *"Honesty and Integrity"*

106. *"Duties and Responsibilities".*

107. "*Based on the information available at this time the conduct described above if proven or admitted has been assessed as amounting to:*

108. *Gross Misconduct*".

109. **Former PC Robinson Regulation 31 Response:**

110. Former PC Robinson Accepted the factual particulars save that he denied knowing his statement at the meeting on 23rd March 2023 was untrue. At that meeting, he had denied being in a romantic relationship with Former T/DC Wilkins and stated that the relationship was solely that of tutor and student.

111. Former PC Robinson also denied commencing a romantic relationship with Former T/DC Wilkins before 23rd March 2023 while acting as her tutor, knowing that such a relationship was inappropriate and having received training on the conduct expected of tutor constables.

112. Former PC Robinson denied that his conduct was dishonest, undermined the public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police or amounted to gross misconduct.

113. **Former T/DC Wilkins**

114. Facts

115. *"1. You joined Northamptonshire Police in October 2022 on the Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme. As part of that programme, you were posted to the Northern Accommodation Block in Kettering between February and April 2023. You were assigned a tutor, PC 1056 Mark Robinson. At all material times, your on and off-*

duty conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020.

116. *2. On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. You were asked whether you were in a relationship with PC Robinson. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship.*

117. *3. You knew that statement to be untrue.*

118. *4. On 26th April 2024 you gave a Criminal Justice Act 1967 witness statement in which you said that your relationship with PC Robinson had started in mid-June 2023.*

119. *5. You knew that statement to be untrue.*

120. *6. Your conduct was a breach of the standard of Honesty and Integrity.*

121. *7. Your conduct amounts to Gross Misconduct in that it stands to undermine public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police and the profession and was dishonest."*

122. Standards of Professional Behaviour Engaged:

123. *"Honesty and Integrity"*

124. "*Based on the information available at this time the conduct described above if proven or admitted has been assessed as amounting to:*

125. *Gross Misconduct*"

126. **Former T/DC Wilkins Regulation 31 Response:**

127. Former T/DC Wilkins accepted the factual particulars save that she denied knowing her statement at the meeting on 23rd March 2023 was untrue. At that meeting, she had denied being in a romantic relationship with Former PC Robinson and stated that their relationship was solely that of tutor and student.

128. Former T/DC Wilkins also accepted that she had provided a witness statement on 26th April 2024, in which she stated that the relationship began in mid-June 2023, but denied knowing that statement was untrue.

129. Former T/DC Wilkins denied that her conduct was dishonest, breached the Standard of Honesty and Integrity, undermined public trust and confidence in Northamptonshire Police and the profession, or amounted to gross misconduct.

130. **F: Evidence**

131. The Panel considered all the material presented to it, including the following documents:

a) The Regulation 30 bundle, comprising 345 pages, which included the Regulation 31 responses.
b) The defence bundle, comprising 28 pages.
c) Relevant e-mail communications sent by Former PC Robinson in advance of the hearing including his abuse of process arguments and the AA's response.
d) Additional information supplied by the AA in response to Former PC Robinson's requests.
e) The AA's updated opening note.
f) The service records for both Former Officers

132. No oral evidence was heard.

133. **G: Evidence**

134. The Chair read the allegations set out in the Regulation 30 notices for both Former Officers respectively.

135. The AA then presented its case, relying on its updated opening note, which it did not read out in full and invited the Panel to consider. The AA confirmed that the allegations remained unchanged from the commencement of the hearing in July 2026.

136. Former PC Robinson faced allegations of breaches of Honestly and Integrity and Duties and Responsibilities. Former T/DC Wilkins faced an alleged breach of Honesty and Integrity. Both accepted that the meeting on 23rd March 2023 had taken place but maintained that their responses in respect of their relationship had been truthful. They acknowledged a subsequent relationship and the AA submitted that they both gave different accounts of its

commencement during June 2023. Both denied breaching the Standards of Professionals Behaviour. In respect of Former T/DC Wilkins, it was submitted that she had further been untruthful in her statement provided on 26th April 2024.

137. The AA invited the Panel, in the first instance, to determine whether the alleged facts were proved, whether they amounted to breaches of the relevant Standards of Professional Behaviour and, if so, whether the conduct constituted misconduct or gross misconduct or neither.

138. The AA referred to the officers' service histories and Former PC Robinson's appointment as Former T/DC Wilkin's tutor. It submitted that a "Bad Apple" report received on 22nd March 2023 raised concerns that they were in a relationship. Both were spoken to the following day by PS Godrey and Inspector Farrant and expressly asked about this. They denied a relationship beyond that of tutor and student. The AA also referred to four further occasions on which concerns were raised and an anonymous letter sent to the Chief Constable.

139. The AA relied on DS Pearl's screenshots of messages which, it submitted, indicated a relationship beyond that of a tutor and student and referred to a hotel stay on 19th March 2023. It also relied on Person A's account, including her belief that the relationship existed between February and July 2023 and her recollection of a conversation about a hotel stay which she believed occurred on 23rd April 2023.

140. The AA acknowledged that the Former Officers disputed this evidence and characterised the concerns as gossip. It submitted, however, that the evidence had to be considered as a whole. Further hotel evidence had emerged following a disclosure request made by the representative then acting for Former DC Wilkins.

141. The AA relied on a photograph showing the Former Officers kissing, which had been sent by Former PC Robinson from his personal e-mail address to his work e-mail address on 18th March 2023. It submitted that the photograph necessarily predated the meeting on 23rd March 2023 by five days and supported its case that an intimate relationship had already begun.

142. The AA submitted that the evidence was such that there was no doubt that the Former Officers commenced an intimate relationship before 23rd March

2023 and during the tutorship. It therefore maintained that both Former Officers knowingly gave untruthful answers at the meeting. It referred to Former T/DC Wilkins's account, dated 26th April 2024, as further dishonesty concerning the commencement of the relationship.

143. In relation to Former PC Robinson's Duties and Responsibilities, the AA referred to his acknowledgement in his interview that he understood the professional boundaries of the tutor role and that his training had made clear that such a relationship was unacceptable. It submitted that he was responsible for providing guidance and support and could not be said to have been diligent in the exercise of his duties.

144. The AA submitted that both Former Officers understood the requirement to act honestly, particularly with answering direct questions from supervisors. It referred to Former PC Robinson's experience and Former T/DC Wilkins's knowledge of the expected standards from the beginning of her training.

145. The AA argued that deliberate concealment increased the seriousness of the conduct. In Former PC Robinson's case, it also relied on the power imbalance inherent in the tutor-student relationship and the particular care required of him as a tutor.

146. The AA submitted that the conduct fell significantly below the required standards and would undermine public trust and confidence in policing. It invited the Panel to find gross misconduct in respect of both Former Officers.

147. The witnesses were stood down and the Panel adjourned in order to deliberate as to Stage 1.

148. **H: Findings of Fact**

149. In reaching its findings of fact, the Panel had regard to all the evidence before it. This included the documents contained within the Regulation 30 bundle, including the Regulation 30 notices and the Regulation 31 responses. It also considered the defence bundle, the additional information supplied by the AA in response to former PC Robinson's requests and the relevant e-mail communications. The Panel took into account the parties' oral and/or written submissions, including the AA's updated opening note. The absence of an express reference to a particular document or piece of evidence in this

determination should not be interpreted as not having been carefully considered by the Panel.

150. The Panel reminded itself of the following regulations and guidance when reaching its decision:

a) The 2020 Regulations including the Standards of Professional Behaviour, set out in Schedule 2.

b) The 2018 Home Office Guidance on Conduct, Efficiency and Effectiveness (the "HOG") including Chapter 2, which provides guidance relating to the Standards of Behaviour.

151. Under the Conduct Regulations, the Panel was required to review and determine the facts, establish what, if any, of the Standards of Professional Behaviour have been breached and decide whether the conduct amounted to misconduct, gross misconduct or neither.

152. The burden of proof rests on the Appropriate Authority. The standard of proof is the balance of probabilities. Conduct will be proven on the balance of probabilities if the Panel is satisfied, on the evidence, that it is more likely than not to have occurred. The balance of probabilities is a single unvarying standard; there is no sliding scale.

153. In determining whether the AA has discharged the burden of proof, the Panel must consider the reliability and credibility of the evidence as a whole.

154. Findings must be based on the evidence, including inferences properly drawn from the evidence and not conjuncture or speculation. As the decision must be based on the evidence, it is the role of the Panel to determine what evidence is accepted and what evidence is rejected. However, the Panel must be mindful that it is entitled to draw proper inferences. That is, to come to common sense conclusions, based upon the evidence which it accepts as reliable, but it must not speculate. Similarly, it must not speculate about what other evidence there might have been.

155. The Standards of Professional Behaviour referred to are set out in Schedule 2 of the Conduct Regulations. The Standard of Professional Behaviour relevant to these proceedings is as follows:

156. Discreditable Conduct, which provides:

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

158. Honesty and Integrity, which provides:

159. *"Police officers are honest, act with integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position".*

160. The Panel had regard to Paragraph 2.15 of the HOG, which provides:

161. *'Discredit can be brought on the police by an act itself or because public confidence in the police is undermined, or is perceived to be undermined. In general, it should be the actual underlying conduct of the police officer that is considered under the misconduct procedures, whether the conduct occurred on or off-duty…'.*

162. Under the Conduct Regulations, misconduct means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour that is so serious as to justify disciplinary action. Gross misconduct means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour that is so serious as to justify dismissal.

163. **Former PC Robinson**

164. Facts:

165. Particular 1

166. *"You joined Northamptonshire Police as a regular officer in February 2018. At all material times, your on and off-duty conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020."*

167. Accepted Fact.

168. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

169. Particular 2

170. *"In April 2020, you were appointed a tutor constable. Between February and April 2023, you were the tutor constable for TDC 729 Bethany Wilkins".*

171. Accepted Fact.

172. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

173. Particular 3

174. *"On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. During this meeting, you were asked whether you were in a relationship with TDC Bethany Wilkins. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship."*

175. Accepted Fact. The Panel noted that Former PC Robinson consistently maintained this position throughout the proceedings.

176. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

177. Particular 4

178. *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

179. The Panel finds this particular proven on the balance of probabilities.

180. The Panel accepted DS Pearle's evidence, whilst recognising that it included third hand information and was peripheral to the central allegations. His account, however, provided important context for the concerns raised.

181. The Panel attached weight to the screenshots of messages which appeared to record an exchange between Former T/DC Wilkins and Person A. This read as follows and, in the extracts below, "@" represents a laughing emoji:

182. Former T/DC Wilkins: "It's so weird he's 55 haha".

183. Person A: "@@@@@@@@@@".

184. Person A: "Only 30 years between you@".

185. Former T/DC Wilkins: "I know @ but he is very funny and when we are in the car we are constantly laughing haha plus literally throws me around if you know what I mean haha @".

186. The Panel considered the captured exchange as a whole, including the discussion about age and the references which followed. In this context, it found that the messages referred to a relationship that went beyond that of a

tutor and student. As the messages were dated 18th March 2023, they supported the finding that such a relationship existed before 23rd March 2023.

187. The Panel found that the hotel evidence provided further support. The invoice, sent to Former PC Robinson's work e-mail, recorded a hotel booking in both Former Officers' names for 19th – 20th March 2023. DS Pearl's statement recorded that he had received a message from Person A on 20th March 2023, at 18.24, stating:

188. Person A: "Beth just messaged and confirmed the hotel stay last night!!!!!!!!!!!!".

189. This message corresponded with the booking evidence. Considered together, they satisfied the Panel, on the balance of probabilities, that both Former Officers stayed at the hotel on the relevant date.

190. The Panel considered Former PC Robinson's explanation that he had booked the room for Former Officer Wilkins as a "nice thing" to do but had not stayed himself. In her statement, DS Osborne recalled receiving a similar account from Former T/DC Wilkins. The Panel attached limited weight to that evidence because DS Osborne was recounting an explanation given to her by Former T/DC Wilkins towards the end of 2024, notably a considerable period after the stay, rather than events she had witnessed herself. It did not displace the combined weight of the booking evidence and the messages from March 2023. The Panel rejected Former PC Robinson's explanation that matters had been misunderstood and/or were as a result of gossip.

191. The Panel also attached significant weight to the photograph showing the former officers kissing on the lips in a vehicle. The photograph was sent by e-mail on 18th March 2023, from Former PC Robinsons personal e-mail to his work e-mail, five days before the meeting at which they denied being in a romantic relationship. Its content and timing provided compelling and credible evidence that a relationship, beyond that of tutor and student, had already begun. The Panel also noted that the Premier Inn booking was made nine minutes after the e-mail was sent. That sequence reinforced its finding when considered alongside the messages and hotel evidence.

192. The Panel considered Former PC Robinson's explanation concerning the photograph but found that it did not account for the evidence of a relationship

beyond that of tutor and student before 23rd March 2023. The photograph directly contradicted the position that such a relationship began in June 2023.

193. The photograph, messages and hotels stay all concerned events shortly before the meeting on 23rd March 2023. Former PC Robinson was a participant in those events and knew that the relationship extended beyond that of tutor and student. The Panel was satisfied that, when directly questioned by supervisors, he knowingly denied a romantic relationship which already existed. His statement was, therefore, knowingly untrue.

194. Denied Fact.

195. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

196. Particular 5

197. *"You were in a sexual and/or romantic relationship with TDC Wilkins while she was your tutee and prior to the 23rd March 2023. You knew that such a relationship was inappropriate and had been given training on the conduct expected of tutor constables."*

198. The Panel noted that, in interview, Former PC Robinson acknowledged that it would be inappropriate to commence a romantic relationship with an officer he was tutoring. He had received training on the conduct expected of tutor constables and was familiar with the Standards of Professional Behaviour. His acknowledgment demonstrated that he understood the professional boundary applicable to his role.

199. For the reasons provided, the Panel was satisfied that Former PC Robinson entered into their relationship during this tutorship knowing that it was inappropriate. It found this particular proven on the balance of probabilities.

200. Denied Fact.

201. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

202. **I: Breach of Standards of Professional Behaviour**

203. Having found the factual allegations proven, the Panel considered whether the conduct established amounted to a breach of the Standards of

Professional Behaviour concerning Honesty and Integrity and Duties and Responsibilities.

204. In relation to Honesty and Integrity, the Panel noted that police officers are required to be honest, to act with integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position. Former PC Robinson had stated at the meeting on 23rd March 2023 that he was not in a relationship with Former T/DC Wilkins and that their relationship was solely that of tutor and student. The Panel found that he knew this statement was untrue. By knowingly giving a false account when directly questioned about his conduct, Former PC Robinson breached that standard.

205. With regards to Duties and responsibilities, the Panel noted that police officers are expected to be diligent in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities. Former PC Robinson entered into the relationship with Former T/DC Wilkins whilst she was his tutee and before 23rd March 2023, despite knowing it was inappropriate and having received training on the conduct expected of tutor constables. In doing so, he failed to maintain the professional boundaries required of his role and breached that standard.

206. **Panel finding: The Panel found breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour concerning Honesty and Integrity and Discreditable Conduct proven.**

207. **J: Decision on Misconduct, Gross Misconduct or Neither**

208. The Panel considered the nature and seriousness of the proven breaches of the Standards of Professional behaviour and whether the conduct was so serious as to justify dismissal.

209. The Panel found that Former PC Robinson was dishonest in that he had knowingly given an untrue account of his relationship with Former T/DC Wilkins and had failed to maintain the professional boundaries required of him as a tutor. His conduct represented a significant departure from the standards expected of a police officer, despite his training and knowing of those responsibilities. Such conduct was liable to undermine public trust and confidence in the police service.

210. For these reasons, the Panel was satisfied that the proven breaches, taken together, were so serious as to justify dismissal and therefore amounted to

gross misconduct. As such, the Panel determined the conduct constituted gross misconduct.

211. **Former T/DC Wilkins**

212. Facts:

213. Particular 1

214. *"You joined Northamptonshire Police in October 2022 on the Detective Degree Holder Entry Programme. As part of that programme, you were posted to the Northern Accommodation Block in Kettering between February and April 2023. You were assigned a tutor, PC 1056 Mark Robinson. At all material times, your on and off-duty conduct was subject to the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020."*

215. Accepted Fact.

216. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

217. Particular 2

218. *"On 23rd March 2023, you attended a meeting following concerns being raised about your conduct. You were asked whether you were in a relationship withn PC Robinson. You said that you were not and that your relationship was only a tutor/student relationship."*

219. Accepted Fact.

220. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

221. Particular 3

222. *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

223. The Panel's findings concerning the messages, hotel stay and photograph apply equally to Former T/DC Wilkins. When considering all the material, the Panel found the evidence established that she and Former PC Robinson were in in a relationship that went beyond student and tutor before the meeting on 23rd March 2023.

224. In particular, Former T/DC Wilkins's messages to Person A on 18th March 2023 described their interactions, including the reference to him "literally throws me around if you know what I mean". The photograph, sent by e-mail that same day, show Former T/DC Wilkins and Former PC Robinson kissing on the lips. The hotel booking in both their names for 19th – 20th March 2023, together with Person A's message on 20th March 2023 reporting that T/DC Wilkins had confirmed their stay "last night", supported the Panel's findings that both Former Officers had stayed at the hotel. These were events which occurred only days before Former T/DC Wilkins described the relationship to supervisors as solely that of tutor and student.

225. The Panel was therefore satisfied that Former T/DC Wilkins knew that the relationship went beyond that of tutor and student when she gave her account on 23rd March 2023. Her own messages describing her relationship with Former PC Robinson demonstrated her knowledge of its nature at that time. The Panel rejected her account that the relationship began in June 2023, which was entirely inconsistent with the evidence and chronology already established. The Panel accordingly found that she knew her statement on 23rd March 2023 was untrue.

226. Denied Fact.

227. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

228. Particular 4

229. *"On 26th April 2024 you gave a Criminal Justice Act 1967 witness statement in which you said that your relationship with PC Robinson had started in mid- June 2023."*

230. Accepted Fact.

231. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

232. Particular 5

233. *"You knew that statement to be untrue."*

234. In a statement dated 26th April 2024, Former T/DC Wilkins placed the commencement of the romantic relationship in mid-June 2023. The Panel had found that the relationship went beyond that of tutor and student before 23rd

March 2023. That finding was supported by Former T/DC Wilkins's own messages to Person A, dated 18thMarch 2023, the photograph showing her and Former PC Robinson kissing, sent that same day, and the evidence of their hotel stay on 19th – 20th March 2023. This evidence clearly contradicted the commencement date given in her statement.

235. The Panel considered her knowledge when making the statement on 26th April 2024. Former T/DC Wilkins's own contemporaneous communications and participation in the hotel stay demonstrated that she knew the relationship had gone beyond that of tutor and student before June 2023. The Panel therefore found that she knew that the stated commencement date was untrue and had further lied in her subsequent declaration on 26th April 2024.

236. Denied Fact.

237. **Panel finding: The Panel has found this proven.**

238. **K: Breach of Standards of Professional Behaviour**

239. Having found the factual allegations proven, the Panel considered whether the conduct established amounted to a breach of the Standard of Professional Behaviour concerning Honesty and Integrity.

240. In relation to Honesty and Integrity, the Panel noted that police officers are required to be honest, to act with integrity and do not compromise or abuse their position.

241. On 23rd March 2023, Former T/DC Wilkins stated that her relationship with Former PC Robinson was solely that of tutor and student, knowing that it went beyond that. By knowingly giving a false account when directly questioned about her conduct, she failed to act honestly and with integrity.

242. In her witness statement dated 26th April 2024, Former T/DC Wilkins stated that the relationship began in mid-June 2023, knowing that this was untrue. This was a further false account concerning matters within her knowledge.

243. The Panel therefore found that Former T/DC Wilkins had been dishonest on two separate occasions. When providing her later witness statement, she had a further opportunity to give a truthful account but instead

maintained an account inconsistent with the relationship she knew had existed before 23rd March 2023. Both instances breached the standard of Honesty and Integrity.

244. **Panel finding: The Panel found breaches of the Standard of Professional Behaviour concerning Honesty and Integrity proven.**

245. **L: Decision on Misconduct, Gross Misconduct or Neither**

246. The Panel considered the nature and seriousness of Former Wilkins' proven breaches of Honesty and Integrity. She knowingly gave an untrue account when questioned by supervisors on 23rd March 2023 and again in her witness statement dated 26th April 2024. The later statement provided a further opportunity to give a truthful account, but she instead gave a commencement date which she knew was false.

247. This repeated dishonesty concerned her own conduct and undermined the ability of supervisors and investigators to rely on her accounts. It represented a significant departure from the standards expected of a police officer and was liable to undermine public trust and confidence in the police service.

248. The Panel considered both proven breaches together and were satisfied that the conduct was so serious as to justify dismissal and therefore amounted to gross misconduct.

249. **M: Outcomes**

250. Following the findings of gross misconduct, the AA invited the Panel to determine that both Former Officers would have been dismissed had they remained serving officers. It addressed seriousness, the purpose of the disciplinary regime and the appropriate outcome, assessing culpability, harm, aggravating factors and mitigating factors as well as mitigation.

251. In relation to Former PC Robinson, the AA submitted that culpability was increased by his abuse of a position of trust and authority as a tutor. It referred to paragraphs 4.14 and 4.44 of the Outcomes Guidance and relied on the sexual nature of the relationship and Former T/DC Wilkins's vulnerabilities.

252. In relation to both Former Officers, the AA characterised the dishonesty as deliberate and intentional. Referring to paragraph 4.26 of the Outcomes Guidance, it submitted that dishonesty was inherently serious and that both officers' culpability was high.

253. The AA identified the primary harm as damage to public confidence. It submitted that the public was entitled to expect honesty and integrity from police officers and appropriate professional boundaries within tutor-student relationships.

254. Referring to paragraphs 4.75 to 4.78 of the Outcomes Guidance, the AA relied on the deliberate steps taken to conceal the relationship, the sustained nature of the conduct and its continuation after the officers had been questioned. It also relied on dishonesty in their respective Regulation 31 responses and in the separate witness statement provided by Former T/DC Wilkins.

255. In Former PC Robinson's case, the AA additionally relied on his departure from the instructions and training applicable to tutors, his responsibility to act as a role model and the breaches of more than one Standard of Professional Behaviour.

256. The AA identified no mitigation relating to the conduct and submitted that neither officer had demonstrated remorse or accountability.

257. The AA stated that it was unaware of any personal mitigation and submitted that, given the seriousness of the conduct, any such mitigation would carry limited weight.

258. The AA maintained that both former officers had failed to meet the high standards required of police officers and that the only appropriate outcome was a finding that each officer would have been dismissed had they remained serving.

259. **N: Decision on Outcome**

260. In determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel applied the structured approach set out within the 'Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings', as issued by the College of Policing. The Panel:

1. Assessed the seriousness of the misconduct.
2. Kept in mind the purpose of imposing sanctions.
3. Chose the sanction which most appropriately fulfilled the purpose of imposing sanctions in light of the seriousness of the Officer's conduct.

261. **O: Seriousness of Misconduct**

262. The Panel reminded itself that seriousness is assessed by considering culpability, the harm caused and the existence of any aggravating and mitigating factors.

263. **Former PC Robinson**

264. **Culpability**

265. The Panel assessed Former PC Robinson's culpability for the proven misconduct.

266. Culpability denotes the 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.

267. In this case, the conduct was intentional and deliberate. Former PC Robinson knowingly lied when asked by supervisors about his relationship with his student officer. He could have told the truth but chose to be dishonest.

268. Former PC Robinson's culpability was increased by his position of trust and responsibility as a Tutor Constable at the relevant time. Cases involving any form of dishonesty are always serious because of the importance of maintaining public trust and confidence in the police service. The Panel recognised the power imbalance, with Former T/DC Wilkins being relatively young in service and, to some degree, vulnerable because of her personal circumstances at the time.

269. The Panel assessed Former PC Robinson's culpability as high.

270. **Harm**

271. A cornerstone of British Policing is honesty and the public expect the police to tell the truth. The Panel considered that the dishonesty in this case had the potential to cause serious harm to public trust and confidence of the public.

272. The Panel assessed the potential for harm as high.

273. **Aggravating Factors**

274. The Panel had already taken the abuse of trust or position into account when assessing culpability and did not count it again as a separate aggravating factor.

275. The Panel considered that Former PC Robinson's conduct was an attempt to conceal an inappropriate relationship for personal gain.

276. Throughout the investigation, Former PC Robinson has failed to take responsibility for or admit the conduct. The Panel considered that the dishonesty had been regular and repeated over a period of time, continuing after he realised, or should have realised that it was improper.

277. **Mitigating factors**

278. The Panel carefully considered the mitigating factors listed within the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes and whether any other mitigating factors arose from the material before it. It identified none.

279. **Overall Seriousness Outcome**

280. For the reasons provided, the Panel determined that the overall seriousness of the misconduct was high.

281. **P: Personal mitigation**

282. The Panel had not been provided with any character references and Former PC Robinson had made no representations concerning personal mitigation. His service record was provided and taken into consideration.

283. The Panel took into account paragraph 4.74 of the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes which confirms that, where gross misconduct has been found and the behaviour has caused – or could have caused – serious harm to individuals, the community and/or public confidence in the police service, dismissal is likely to follow.

284. The Panel considered that, because of the importance of maintaining public confidence in, and respect for the police service, the potential of any personal mitigation was necessarily limited. This was a case which significantly threatens the public's confidence in, and respect for, the police service.

285. **Q: The Threefold Purpose**

286. Before determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel reminded itself that the purpose of misconduct proceedings was not to punish the Former Officer but to protect the wider public interest. In doing so, the Panel had regard to the College of Policing Guidance on Outcomes, including the authorities citied therein and to the threefold purpose of disciplinary proceedings; namely:

- Maintaining public confidence in and the reputation of the police service
- Upholding the high standards in policing and deterring misconduct and
- Protecting the public

287. The Panel also attached weight to the authorities cited within paragraphs 2.4 and 2.7 of the College of Policing Guidance, including Bolton v Law Society [1994] 1 WLR 512, Redgrave v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2003] 1 WLR 1136, R (Green) v Police Complaints Authority [2004] UKHL 6, R (Coke-Wallis) v Institute of Chartered Accountants [2011] UKSC and Raschid v General Medical Council [2007] 1 WLR 1460.

288. In determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel applied these principles to the facts of the case. The Panel was mindful that the outcome must maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service, uphold the high standards expected of police officers and deter similar conduct whilst protecting the public. In determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel took into account the principles of proportionality and weighed the interests of the public with those of the Former Officer. The Panel bore in mind that its central concern was the reputation and standing of the profession rather than the punishment of the Former Officer.

289. **R: Selecting Available Outcomes: Least Serious First**

290. Two outcomes were available to the Panel and these were:

1) Gross misconduct recorded and no action taken.
2) Gross Misconduct recorded and a finding that the Former Officer would have been dismissed had he still been serving.

291. The Panel first considered the least serious available outcome; namely, recording gross misconduct and taking no further action. Having considered the seriousness of the proven conduct, the Panel was not satisfied that taking no further action would sufficiently fulfil the purposes of the police misconduct regime. Such an outcome would not adequately maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service or uphold the high standards expected of police officers.

292. The Panel found no exceptional circumstances justifying that outcome and therefore rejected it.

293. Given its findings concerning the seriousness of Former PC Robinson's conduct, the Panel determined that a finding that he would have been dismissed had he still been serving was the least severe available outcome capable of achieving the legitimate purposes of the police misconduct regime. It was therefore the appropriate and proportionate outcome.

294. **Former T/DC Wilkins**

295. **Culpability**

296. In this case, the Panel found the conduct was intentional and deliberate. Former T/DC Wilkins knowingly lied when asked by supervisors about her relationship with Former PC Robinson. Former T/DC Wilkins had the opportunity to tell the truth but instead chose to deliberately conceal the relationship by giving an untrue account.

297. The Panel assessed Former T/DC Wilkins culpability as high.

298. **Harm**

299. Honesty is fundamental to British Policing and the public expect the police to tell the truth. The panel considered it likely that the dishonesty in this case is likely to cause serious harm to the trust and confidence of the public.

300. The Panel assessed the potential for harm as high.

301. **Aggravating factors**

302. The Panel found that Former T/DC Wilkins lied when questioned by supervisors and further lied in her subsequent written witness statement. Throughout the investigation, Former T/DC Wilkins failed to take responsibility for or admit the conduct. Her dishonesty was repeated over a significant period of time, continuing after she realised, or should have realised, that it was improper.

303. **Mitigating factors**

304. The Panel took into account that Former T/DC Wilkins was relatively young in service and a student officer being tutored by Former PC Robinson. However, it gave limited weight to these factors in light of the persistence of her dishonesty and her knowledge that such behaviour was incompatible with the role of a police officer, regardless of length of service.

305. **Overall Seriousness Outcome**

306. For the reasons provided, the Panel determined that the overall seriousness of the misconduct was high.

307. **S: Personal mitigation**

308. The Panel was not provided with any character references and Former T/DC Wilkins made no representations concerning personal mitigation. Consideration was given to Former T/DC Wilkins's service record.

309. The Panel took into account paragraph 4.74 of the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes, which confirms that where gross misconduct has been found and the behaviour has caused – or could have caused – serious harm to individuals, the community and/or public confidence in the police service, dismissal is likely to follow.

310. The Panel considered that any personal mitigation would necessarily have carried limited weight, given the importance of maintaining public confidence in, and respect for, the police service. The proven conduct posed a significant threat to that confidence and respect.

311. **T: The Threefold Purpose**

312. Before determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel reminded itself that the purpose of misconduct proceedings was not to punish the Former Officer but to protect the wider public interest. In doing so, the Panel had regard to the College of Policing Guidance on Outcomes, including the authorities citied therein and to the threefold purpose of disciplinary proceedings; namely:

- Maintaining public confidence in and the reputation of the police service
- Upholding the high standards in policing and deterring misconduct and
- Protecting the public

313. The Panel also attached weight to the authorities cited within paragraphs 2.4 and 2.7 of the College of Policing Guidance, including Bolton v Law Society [1994] 1 WLR 512, Redgrave v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis [2003] 1 WLR 1136, R (Green) v Police Complaints Authority [2004] UKHL 6, R (Coke-Wallis) v Institute of Chartered Accountants [2011] UKSC and Raschid v General Medical Council [2007] 1 WLR 1460.

314. In determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel applied these principles to the facts of the case. The Panel was mindful that the outcome must maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service, uphold the high standards expected of police officers and deter similar conduct whilst protecting the public. In determining the appropriate outcome, the Panel took into account the principles of proportionality and weighed the interests of the public with those of the Former Officer. The Panel bore in mind that its central concern was the reputation and standing of the profession rather than the punishment of the Former Officer.

315. **U: Selecting Available Outcomes: Least Serious First**

316. Two outcomes were available to the Panel and these were:

1) Gross misconduct recorded and no action taken.
2) Gross Misconduct recorded and a finding that the Former Officer would have been dismissed had he still been serving.

317. The Panel first considered the least serious available outcome; namely, recording gross misconduct and taking no further action. Having considered the seriousness of the proven conduct, the Panel was not satisfied that taking no further action would sufficiently fulfil the purposes of the police misconduct regime. Such an outcome would not adequately maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service or uphold the high standards expected of police officers.

318. The Panel found no exceptional circumstances justifying that outcome and therefore rejected it.

319. Given its findings concerning the seriousness of Former T/DC Wilkins's conduct, the Panel determined that a finding that she would have been dismissed had she still been serving was the least severe available outcome capable of achieving the legitimate purposes of the police misconduct regime. It was therefore the appropriate and proportionate outcome.

320. **Summary**

321. There is no place for such behaviour in policing. Honesty and integrity underpin everything the public rightly expect from the police officers who serve and protect them. Dishonesty is fundamentally incompatible with every aspect of the role required of all officers. Both Officers failed to meet the high standards rightfully expected of them by the public by virtue of their conduct in this case.

322. As a consequence of the above, Former PC Robinson's and Former T/DC Wilkins's details are to be included within the Police Barred List (Regulation 3(2) of the Police Barred List and Police Advisory List Regulations 2017).

323. **V: Right of Appeal**

324. In accordance with Regulation 43(2) of the Conduct Regulations, the AA shall provide the Former Officers with a copy of this report and a notice of the right of appeal. The Former Officers are reminded they have a right to appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal. ("PAT"). The PAT may increase or decrease any penalty or overturn this decision. The Former Officers should provide notice of their intention to appeal to the AA within 10 working days of receipt of this written determination.

ACC James Avery

Chair Police Misconduct Panel

28th October 2026