

IN THE MATTER OF THE POLICE (CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2020

CONCERNING

PC 29807 MAGGS

OUTCOME

1) Having found a breach of the Standards in respect of Authority, Respect and Courtesy and Discreditable Conduct and on finding gross misconduct regarding the officer, the Panel moved on to consider outcome. The panel was provided with the officer's service record as personal mitigation.

The Panel reminded itself that it must consider less severe outcomes first before considering more severe outcomes, always choosing the least severe outcome which deals adequately with the issues identified, whilst protecting the public interest.

2) In assessing the seriousness of this case, the Panel is required by Fuglers LLP v SRA [2014] EWHC (as usefully summarised in the College of Policing Guidance) to keep at the forefront of its minds the purpose and objective of these proceedings, which is to maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the Police, uphold high standards, deter misconduct and to protect the public. It appreciates that the objective is not to punish the officer (although it may have that effect) and that the Panel should therefore do no more (although also no less) than that which is necessary to satisfy the key objectives of the proceedings. It must (and it has) considered the seriousness of the misconduct, the purpose of sanctions and have chosen outcomes which most appropriately meets that purpose. Assessing the seriousness is to be approached in terms of the four factors set out in the Fuglers decision which it has carefully considered and will come onto in some detail in a moment.

3) Fuglers LLP v Solicitors Regulation Authority [2014] EWHC 179 (Admin), paragraph 29 states: 'In assessing seriousness the most important factors will be (1) the culpability for the misconduct in question and (2) the harm caused by the misconduct. Such harm is not measured wholly, or even primarily, by financial loss caused to any individual or entity. A factor of the greatest importance is the impact of the misconduct upon the standing and reputation of the profession as a whole. Moreover, the seriousness of the misconduct may lie in the risk of harm to which the misconduct gives rise, whether or not the risk eventuates. The assessment of seriousness will also be informed by (3) aggravating factors (e.g., previous disciplinary matters) and (4) mitigating factors (e.g., admissions at an early stage or making good any loss).'

4) The Panel has therefore followed the structured approach as set out in the College of Policing Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings.

a. In summary, the Panel:

-Assessed the seriousness of the conduct and the behaviour of the officer by reference to 4 factors ((i) the officer's culpability for the

misconduct; (ii) the harm caused by the misconduct; (iii) the existence of any aggravating factors; and (iv) the existence of any mitigating factors).

-Reminded itself of the purpose of imposing sanctions, namely:

Maintaining public confidence in and the reputation of the police service;
Upholding high standards in policing and deterring misconduct and protecting the public.

-Arrived at an Outcome which most appropriately fulfils the purpose of imposing sanctions in the light of the seriousness of the officer's conduct (that is, to act proportionately).

b. The Panel is alert to the fact that the guidance does not override the discretion of the Panel, whose function is to determine the appropriate outcome. Each case depends on its particular facts and circumstances.

5)Culpability

Culpability was determined by considering the non-exhaustive list of culpability sub-factors in the Guidance on Outcomes and any others it deemed to be relevant.

a. Para 4.9 -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.

b. The Panel consider that PC Maggs's conduct was deliberate. He alone is responsible for his actions.

c. The Panel considers that the fact that PC Maggs behaved towards PC X as he did, after having been put on notice about maintaining professional boundaries after his inappropriate communications to PC A, is an aggravating factor which increases his culpability.

d. Certain types of misconduct should be considered especially serious:

-Violence, intimidation or sexual impropriety

Para 4.40 Misconduct involving sexual impropriety is serious and can significantly undermine public trust in the profession.

Sexual harassment in policing is serious due to the impact on colleagues, workplace culture, and public trust.

In respect of both officers, the Panel has found that the officer sexually harassed them.

The Panel has given attention to the degree of persistence, and notes that the officer's conduct involved two separate female colleagues within a relatively short period. This was not an isolated lapse of judgment but a repeated failure to recognise and respect appropriate professional boundaries.

The Panel did not find evidence of predatory behaviour, coercion or exploitation of vulnerability. Whilst the conduct demonstrated a repeated failure to respect professional boundaries and involved sexual harassment of two female colleagues, the Panel is not satisfied that the evidence establishes a calculated course of conduct designed to target or exploit vulnerable colleagues for sexual purposes.

In addition, whilst the Panel has found sexual harassment, it does not consider that the behaviour was driven by misogyny.

-Violence against women and girls

This refers to acts of violence or abuse that are known to disproportionately affect women and girls. Violence against women and girls perpetrated by a police officer, whether on-duty or off-duty, will always have a high degree of culpability, with the likely outcome being severe.

The Panel has found that the officer dragged his left open hand across PC X's bottom and that this was sexual in nature and without her consent. This conduct falls within the behaviours that VAWG strategies seek to prevent and address.

-Conviction or caution for a criminal offence

If the conduct found proven in the misconduct proceedings is criminal in nature, take this into account when considering the culpability of the officer, notwithstanding the absence of a criminal conviction.

While the officer was not the subject of a criminal charge nor did he receive a criminal conviction, our findings amount to conduct that is criminal in nature, being a sexual assault.

e. In conclusion, the Panel finds PC Maggs culpability to be high.

6)Harm

a. The College of Policing Guidance then addresses the harm caused by the officer's actions, indicating that this can be considered in various ways. The text refers to harm caused to particular individuals, but the guidance recognises that harm may also be caused on a wider basis:

“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. A factor of the greatest importance is the impact of the misconduct on the standing and reputation of the profession as a whole.”

b. How such behaviour would be, or has been, perceived by the public will be relevant, whether or not the behaviour was known about at the time.

The Panel has considered the scale and depth of local and national concern about the behaviour in question. Whether a matter is of local or national concern will be a matter for the person(s) conducting the proceedings based on their experience and the circumstances of the case. Several high-profile cases involving police officers' sexual misconduct have damaged public confidence, particularly amongst women and girls.

Sexual harassment within policing has rightly attracted significant public concern and conduct of this nature is liable to damage public confidence in the police service. A reasonable and informed member of the public would likely be concerned where an officer repeatedly directs unwanted sexualised behaviour towards colleagues.

c. Misconduct may affect particular individuals, in which case the harm caused may depend on the victim's personal characteristics and circumstances.

Both PC A and PC X were impacted by the officer's conduct, which the Panel has found amounted to sexual harassment. The conduct violated the dignity of PC A, who states that she was taken aback when the messages escalated and didn't know how to respond. She felt awkward seeing him at work.

PC X deemed the message sent to her to be inappropriate. This, together with the touching on the night out, suggested to her that his inappropriate behaviour was continuing and made her feel uncomfortable.

d. Given the facts as found by the Panel, we find the harm to PC's A and X to be at a medium level and the risk of reputational harm to be high.

7)The CoP Guidance then provides non-exhaustive lists of potential aggravating and mitigating factors.

a. The Panel considered the Guidance on Outcomes and reminded itself not to "double count" with matters already considered under culpability and harm. It concluded that the following additional aggravating features were present in this case:

- significant deviation from instructions, whether an order, force policy or national guidance.

- malign intent, such as sexual gratification.

b. Mitigating factors:

Whilst the Panel notes that the officer accepted that he sent the messages and that he “overstepped the mark and “went past the line”, any mitigation is reduced as he sought to submit that PC A flirted with him and that he innocently misinterpreted the nature of the friendship. The Panel has found that the officer appreciated there was a line where his behaviour would become inappropriate and deliberately chose to cross it.

c. In conclusion, the Panel find the overall level of harm to be high.

8)The CoP Guidance addresses personal mitigation.

Regulation 42(14) of the Conduct Regulations requires the Panel to take account of the officer’s personal mitigation, but the weight to be accorded to that mitigation: a) is less than it would be in a criminal trial; and b) is dependent upon the extent to which the officer’s misconduct threatens the public confidence.

The Panel is mindful of the need to ensure that a proportionate balance is achieved by acknowledging personal factors while still imposing a sanction with sufficient weight to uphold public confidence and reinforce professional standards.

The officer has an unblemished service record, but little weight can be attached to it in view of the severity of the proven misconduct and the scale of the threat to public confidence.

9)Outcome

a. Having followed the steps above, the panel went on to choose the disciplinary action which most appropriately fulfils the purpose of imposing disciplinary action considering the seriousness of the conduct in question (bearing in mind the need to act proportionately).

b. The Panel is mindful that any sanction must be a proportionate means of achieving the legitimate aim of imposing disciplinary action.

c. Mr Reed, representing the Appropriate Authority made the submission that the only possible sanction in view of our findings is that of dismissal without notice.

Mr Bridge for the officer did not address the Panel on outcome.

d. The Panel has carefully considered whether a sanction short of dismissal can maintain public confidence.

The Panel concludes that a Final Written Warning would not proportionately reflect the seriousness of PC Maggs' behaviour or maintain public confidence in policing.

Whilst the Panel has assessed this case solely on its own facts, it recognises that the public would rightly expect sexual harassment of police colleagues to be treated as serious misconduct. A failure to do so would risk undermining confidence in the police service.

e. The only possible sanction in view of the Panel's findings and the purpose of misconduct proceedings is one of dismissal without notice.

10)As a result of this Misconduct Hearing the following was found under Regulation 42(3) (b) and imposed with effect from the 11th of June 2026:

“A finding that the officer concerned would have been dismissed if he had not ceased to be a member of a police force”.

As a consequence of this outcome the officer will be placed on the College of Policing Barred List.

11) Right of Appeal

The Panel is required to notify PC Maggs that he has a right of appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal.

“Should you wish to appeal the decision of this panel, you must do so in writing to the Police Appeals’ Tribunal Manager, at conduct@staffordshire.police.uk. You must do so within 10 working days following the first working day after the receipt of this written outcome decision”.

Stuart Ellison, former ACC/Chair
Margaret Jolley/IPM
Laeeq Beg/IPM

10th July 2026

