

Accelerated Misconduct Hearing Finding and Outcome

Officer Name: PC William Woolston

Warrant No: P 205382

Date of Hearing: 22nd December 2025

Alleged Standards Breached: Discreditable Conduct; Authority, Respect and Courtesy;

Finding

I have had the benefit of the papers in advance of today and read them carefully before the hearing started. I am satisfied that the required notices under the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 have been served.

The hearing was held in **Private**

PC Woolston did not attend the hearing but was represented by his Federation Representative Chris Brinsley

By an email dated 12th December 2025 the Solicitor for the Police Federation JMW Solicitors indicated that there would be no response to the Regulation 54 Notice for the reasons “alluded to in the representations.”

Accordingly I am satisfied that the Officer had notice of the hearing and has voluntarily absented himself. In the circumstances I decided to proceed to deal with this matter in his absence.

I have listened to the case presented on behalf of the Appropriate Authority by Aaryan Sattani

The allegation against PC Woolston is that between 27th and 28th June 2025, you engaged in a sexualised conversation with a female adult, who you met in the course of your duties as a police officer.

Particulars

- i. You attended a female adult’s address on 18th June 2025, to carry out enquiries, as part of your policing duties.
- ii. You took the female’s mobile number to make further contact, in relation to your enquiries.
- iii. Between 27th and 28th June 2025, you sent messages to the female, via your MPS Android Device, which were flirtatious and/or sexualised in nature.

Standards of Professional Behaviour

In the circumstances, the Appropriate Authority contends that PC Woolston’s actions breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour as set out in Regulation 5 and

Schedule 2 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 (as amended by the Police (Conduct) (Amendment) Regulations 2024, namely:

- Discreditable Conduct
- Authority, Respect and Courtesy

In that his conduct may bring the police service into disrepute and damage the relationship of trust and confidence between the police and the public.

As a result of that stated herein, if proven, his conduct individually or cumulatively amounts to gross misconduct and his dismissal may be justified.

Facts

The main issues of fact which I have to decide is whether the Appropriate Authority has proved on the balance of probabilities whether PC Woolston between 27th and 28th June 2025, engaged in sexualised conversation with a female adult, who he met in the course of his duties as a police officer.

Particulars

- i. He attended a female adult's address on 18th June 2025, to carry out enquiries, as part of his policing duties.
- ii. He took the female's mobile number to make further contact, in relation to his enquiries.
- iii. Between 27th and 28th June 2025, he sent messages to the female, via his MPS Android Device, which were flirtatious and/or sexualised in nature.

If these allegations are proven, then I must decide whether they amount to breach of the following standards of behaviour:

- Discreditable Conduct – Police officers behave in a manner which does not discredit the police service or undermine public confidence in it, whether on or off duty
- Authority, Respect and Courtesy – Police officers act with self-control and tolerance, treating members of the public and colleagues with respect and courtesy. Police officers do not abuse their powers or authority and respect the rights of all individuals.

Decision on Finding

I have listened to the case presented by the Appropriate Authority and carefully considered all the documentary evidence provides, including screenshots of the relevant messages. Also reviewed was body worn video relating to the original contact as part of his policing duties.

I remind myself that the AA has the burden of proving the case and that the standard of proof is on the balance of probabilities.

I find the particulars **proven** in total.

Breach of Professional Standards

I bear in mind that the burden of proving this rests upon the AA and that it must satisfy me on the balance of probabilities.

I find this proven in total.

I now go on to make a provisional assessment of seriousness by reference to Culpability and Harm.

Culpability

PC Woolston purposely and intentionally sent messages of a flirtatious/ sexualised nature to a member of the public that he had met in the course of his duties for his own sexual gratification. He was responsible for his own actions.

I assess the culpability as High

Harm

Harm is caused both to the adult female member of the public who might reasonably expect the Officer to act diligently in investigating the whereabouts of the female's ex-partner. His behaviour also undermines public trust and confidence in policing and the MPS when the force is attempting to raise standards in light aftermath of the murder of Sarah Everard, other high profile police misconduct cases and Baroness Casey's report. This is reprehensible behaviour.

I assess the Harm as High

Gross Misconduct

I have reminded myself that gross misconduct is a breach of the *Standards of Professional Behaviour* so serious that it could justify dismissal. Applying that definition, I am satisfied that PC Woolston did breach of the standards of Authority, Respect and Courtesy and Discreditable Conduct that his conduct individually and cumulatively this does amount to gross misconduct.

Outcome Decision

In making my decision on outcome I adopt the three-stage process, as outlined in the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings to determine the appropriate sanction.

The first stage is to assess the seriousness of the conduct.

This is assessed by reference to:

- i. The officer's culpability
- ii. The harm caused by the misconduct
- iii. The existence of aggravating factors
- iv. The existence of mitigating factors

The second stage is to keep in mind the purpose of the police misconduct regime.

I remind myself this has three elements:

- i. To maintain public confidence in and the reputation of the police service
- ii. To uphold high standards and deter misconduct, and
- iii. To protect the public.

I further remind myself that the police misconduct regime is not designed to punish police officers – it is about the reputation and standing of the profession as a whole.

The third stage is to choose the outcome that most appropriately fulfils that purpose given the seriousness of the conduct in question.

I start by assessing the seriousness of the conduct:

Stage 1: the seriousness of the conduct

Culpability

PC Woolston purposely and intentionally sent messages of a flirtatious/ sexualised nature to a member of the public that he had met in the course of his duties for his own sexual gratification, using his work issued mobile phone to do so. He was responsible for his own actions.

The officer has obtained the telephone number of Miss A whilst in the course of his duties and then abused her trust by using it to make subsequent contact unrelated to the investigation. It took Miss A's intervention to ask the officer to focus on updates only in relation the police investigation.

I assess the culpability as High

Harm

Harm is caused both to Miss A, an adult female member of the public who might reasonably expect the Officer to act diligently in carrying out his investigation relating to her ex-partner. His behaviour also undermines public trust and confidence in policing and the MPS in particular when the force is attempting to raise standards in light aftermath of the murder of Sarah Everard, other high profile misconduct cases and Baroness Casey's report. This is reprehensible behaviour.

I assess the Harm as High

Aggravating Factors

When considering aggravating factors, I am mindful not to double count matters that have already formed part of my assessment of harm and culpability.

I do however note that PC Woolston has been the subject of a Misconduct finding for similar conduct in 2019 for which he received a 2-year written warning, which expired in 2024. This is a significant aggravating factor, demonstrating similar conduct and therefore a complete lack of insight.

Mitigating Factors

There are no mitigating factors

Conclusion on Seriousness

Taking all these matters into consideration, I assess the seriousness of the conduct as high.

Personal Mitigation

No personal mitigation was advanced but, in any event, I am mindful of the limits to the weight I should attach to personal mitigation as identified in the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings, and that the interests of the police service, and the protection of the public, are more important than those of the individual officer.

Stage 2: the purpose of the misconduct regime

I have reminded myself of the threefold purpose of the police misconduct regime carefully in considering the appropriate outcome in this case.

I further remind myself that the police misconduct regime is not designed to punish police officers – it is about the reputation and standing of the profession as a whole.

I do acknowledge that the outcome imposed can have a punitive effect: accordingly, the outcome should be no more than necessary to satisfy the purpose of the proceedings.

Stage 3: the appropriate outcome

I have considered the officer's record of service.

As the matter came to the attention of the Appropriate Authority *after* the implementation of the 2025 Regulations which came into force on 28th May 2025 I have to consider whether there are exceptional reasons which would rebut the presumption of dismissal. I have found that there are not.

OUTCOME:

Therefore, the sanction I impose on PC Woolston is dismissal **without notice** and that he be placed on the College of Policing's barred list

Commander Stephen Clayman

Metropolitan Police Service

22nd December 2025