In the matter of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020
and in the matter of

Former Police Sergeant James Evans

Decision of Sir Stephen Watson, Chief Constable

19th December 2025

Preliminary matters

1. I have today conducted an accelerated misconduct hearing at Unit A, GMP Force Headquarters, and have given consideration to various breaches of the standards of professional behaviour as pertain to Former Sgt James Evans. Mr Evans resigned from GMP with effect from 18th December 2025.

2. Mr Evans was not in attendance at the hearing nor was he otherwise represented. It is the case that the former officer has not engaged with this process and I received no indication from him as to whether he accepts that he has breached the standards of professional behaviour. I, having heard the evidence, and having considered all of the information provided, have determined that the breaches alleged are proven and that they amount to gross misconduct.

3. In coming to a determination as to the most appropriate outcome, I have taken cognisance of the submissions of the appropriate authority as contained within the bundle of evidence submitted to

me prior to this hearing, with elements of the same being amplified in invited verbal submissions by the representative of the Appropriate Authority, Ms Dzikira.

4. The appropriate authority has submitted that the most appropriate outcome in this matter, had Mr Evans not resigned, would have been dismissal without notice and that his name should be placed on the College of Policing's Barred List.

5. In assessing the seriousness of the misconduct found, it is a matter of fact that Mr Evans, following off-duty conduct and having pleaded guilty, was convicted, at Liverpool Magistrates Court on 8th July 2025, of an offence of criminal damage to property (value of £5000 or less) contrary to the Criminal Damage Act 1971.

6. The broad circumstances surrounding the offence were that Mr Evans acted to destroy property belonging to Person A [redacted]

Outcome

7. In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, I have had regard to the relevant provisions of the College of Policing's Guidance on Outcomes in Misconduct Proceedings. I do recognise that it does not automatically follow that where breaches of the code of conduct are found to be so serious as to justify dismissal, that dismissal can be the only sanction implied. Nevertheless, it remains very powerfully the case that the principal objective in the conduct of these hearings must be to preserve public confidence in the police service.

9. At the forefront of my mind has been the purpose of misconduct proceedings – these are expressly set out in the College of Policing's Guidance.

10. My approach has been to "adopt" the "3 stage approach" referred to in the same guidance.

11. I have assessed the seriousness of the conduct. I consider that Mr Evans' culpability must be regarded as high. He now stands convicted of a criminal offence. His actions were deliberate and calculated. His training and experience ought to have served as a warning to him that his actions were patently unlawful, ill-judged and indefensible.

12. With regard to the aggravating factors set out in the College of Policing's Guidance, I have already pointed to the fact that the misconduct was deliberate and unforced. Elements of his actions; aside from being criminal, were morally reprehensible and appeared cruelly designed to maximise the intended psychological harm upon Person A. It is also the case, that at the time of his offending behaviour, Mr Evans held the rank of sergeant and therefore bears an additional responsibility to behave as a role model. I consider that these elements taken together constitute aggravating features in this case.

13. In respect of harm, I refer principally to the harm that his actions brought to Person A. Person A distress at the implications of Mr Evans' conduct is entirely understandable and justified. I also refer to the potential of this case to diminish wider public confidence in the police. It is undoubtedly the case that the public hold strongly to the notion that police officers cannot, in any circumstances, commit criminal offences themselves.

14. In respect of mitigation, I have considered the officer's personal record. The officer has not engaged with the process and thus has made no submissions on his own account. I am however aware of an early guilty plea which implies a recognition and acceptance of his wrongdoing. In considering the evidence within this bundle; I am able to detect amongst various messages and written

communications that the former officer has expressed a degree of remorse and has acknowledged that his conduct was morally reprehensible.

15. Notwithstanding all of the above, I reiterate the point that the core purpose of these proceedings is to sustain public confidence in the police. There is no doubt that the facts of this case have the obvious potential to substantially diminish public confidence. In conclusion, I consider that the level of seriousness in this case is high.

16. Mr Evans' offending behaviour has been held to be clearly unlawful and is therefore contrary to the clearest of standards required of our officers. It is also entirely likely, that if the public were to be fully apprised of the full circumstances of Mr Evans' offending behaviour, that confidence in the wider service would be appreciably diminished.

17. In short, the facts of this matter are such that had Mr Evans not resigned; I would have had no hesitation in dismissing him from the service with immediate effect. It is clear that Mr Evans has paid a high price for what amounts to a catastrophic lapse in judgement and decent behaviour.

18. I order that Mr Evans' name be added to the College of Policing's Barred List.

19. This concludes today's hearing.

Sir Stephen Watson QPM
Chief Constable