



**WRITTEN DECISION OF ACCELERATED MISCONDUCT HEARING
AND NOTIFICATION OF ENTITLEMENT TO POLICE APPEALS
TRIBUNAL**

Regulation 63 Police (Conduct) Regulations, 2020

Officer's Name: Carl Edwards

Force No. 8264

Rank: Constable (Former)

**IN THE POLICE (CONDUCT) REGULATIONS 2020 AND IN THE CASE OF
FORMER PC CARL EDWARDS.**

Particulars of Fact

Between 13th July and 30th July 2026, you were the defendant in a trial at the Crown Court in Chester. You faced 3 counts of Misconduct in a Public Office, contrary to Common Law and 2 counts of knowingly obtaining personal data, without the consent of the controller, contrary to section 170(1)(a) and 196(2) of the Data Protection Act 2018 and you were found guilty in relation to all 5 counts, by a unanimous verdict.

Particulars of misconduct

Your said behaviour is in breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour of:

Honesty and Integrity

In that you dishonestly and without integrity, accessed force systems for a non-policing purpose, knowingly obtaining personal data when not authorised to do so, and while acting as a Police Constable of Merseyside Police, you wilfully and without reasonable excuse or justification misconducted yourself by engaging in inappropriate contact with 3 vulnerable females whilst on duty. Therefore you have compromised and abused your position as a police officer.

Authority, Respect and Courtesy

By engaging in inappropriate contact with 3 vulnerable females, whilst on duty and in full uniform, you acted without self-control and tolerance and failed to treat the 3 vulnerable members of the public with respect and courtesy.

Discreditable conduct

In that in accessing force systems for a non-policing purpose and knowingly obtaining information when not authorised to do so and while acting as a Police Constable of Merseyside Police, you wilfully and without reasonable excuse or justification misconducted yourself by engaging in inappropriate contact with 3 vulnerable females, for which you have now been convicted.

You have acted in a manner that has the propensity to bring the police service into disrepute.

Confidentiality

In that you dishonestly and without integrity, accessed force systems for a non-policing purpose, knowingly obtaining personal data when not authorised to do so in the proper course of your Police duties.

DECISION OF THE CHAIR

I have today (01.10.2026) heard details of the case against Fomer PC Carl Edwards. This is listed as an Accelerated Misconduct Hearing before me.

Prior to the hearing I have seen the following documentation:

- The Regulation 51 Notice.
- The Appropriate Authority's bundle.
- The Appropriate Authority's Opening Note.

I have heard submissions from Superintendent Reardon on behalf of the Appropriate Authority. The former officer has not attended today and has therefore made no oral submissions.

I am satisfied that the former officer has been properly notified of these proceedings. I am aware that he has tendered his resignation with effect from 07:00 01 October 2026 and that he is aware that the Hearing would proceed today.

I am also satisfied that, at the commencement of these proceedings, as a former officer he is subject via the former officer regulations to the provisions of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020. I am content that it is appropriate to proceed in his absence.

In relation to the substantive matters before me, I have considered all of the evidence contained within the Appropriate Authority's bundle. The former officer was convicted at Chester Crown Court following trial on 13 July 2026 of three

counts of Misconduct in Public Office and two counts of obtaining personal data without the consent of the data controller, contrary to section 170(1)(a) of the Data Protection Act 2018. He is due to be sentenced on 05th October 2026.

The convictions are not open to challenge within these proceedings. I am therefore satisfied that there is irrefutable evidence of the conduct set out within the Regulation 51 Notice, namely the criminal convictions.

Having regard to the Standards of Professional Behaviour, I am satisfied that the officer's conduct breached the standards relating to:

Honesty and Integrity

Police officers are entrusted with significant powers and access to sensitive information. The former officer unlawfully accessed and obtained personal data for reasons wholly unconnected with any legitimate policing purpose.

Further, the misconduct in public office convictions demonstrate a serious abuse of the position entrusted to him as a police officer.

I find the former officer acted without honesty and integrity and that this Standard of Professional Behaviour is breached.

Authority, Respect and Courtesy

The conduct for which the former officer was convicted included inappropriate interactions with members of the public whilst acting in his capacity as a police officer.

Such behaviour represents a misuse of authority and a failure to treat members of the public with the respect and professionalism expected of a police officer.

I find that the Standard of Authority, Respect and Courtesy is breached.

Confidentiality

The former officer knowingly obtained and accessed personal information from police systems without any lawful policing purpose.

The unlawful access and acquisition of personal data strikes directly at the heart of the obligation upon police officers to respect and maintain confidentiality in relation to information obtained through their office.

I find the Standard of Confidentiality is breached.

Discreditable Conduct

The former officer's conduct resulted in convictions for serious criminal offences.

A reasonable member of the public, fully informed of the circumstances, would regard such conduct as seriously damaging to the reputation of the police service and capable of undermining public confidence in policing.

I find that the Standard of Discreditable Conduct is breached.

Having considered the definition of gross misconduct, I am satisfied that these breaches are so serious as to justify dismissal. The conduct involved criminal offending, abuse of position, misuse of police information systems and behaviour capable of seriously undermining public confidence in policing.

In assessing the seriousness of the breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour I have followed the four-stage approach set out in the College of Policing Guidance on Outcomes.

Accordingly, I find that the breaches of the Standards of Professional Behaviour amount to gross misconduct.

Culpability

Former PC Edwards has been convicted of five criminal offences following trial at the Crown Court.

Criminal convictions are a serious matter for police officers because public confidence in policing depends upon officers demonstrating integrity, honesty and lawful behaviour.

I agree with the Appropriate Authority's submission that data protection offences and misuse of police information systems are matters of particular concern within the police service.

Further, the convictions for misconduct in public office demonstrate a serious abuse of the position entrusted to him as a police officer.

I assess the former officer's culpability as high.

Harm

I accept that there was the potential for harm both to the individuals whose information was accessed and to those involved in the inappropriate conduct that formed the basis of the misconduct in public office convictions.

Whilst there is limited evidence of actual harm having occurred, the risk of harm was significant. The conduct created the potential for misuse of personal information and involved behaviour towards vulnerable individuals whilst on duty.

In addition, I am satisfied that the conduct caused significant harm to the reputation of the police service and to public confidence in policing.

Members of the public are entitled to expect that police officers will exercise their powers only for legitimate policing purposes and will not exploit their position for personal reasons.

I therefore assess the level of harm as high.

Aggravating Factors

The Guidance identifies a number of aggravating features which I find are present in this case:

- Abuse of trust and position.
- Criminal convictions following trial.
- Repeated misconduct over an extended period between 2022 and 2023.
- Deliberate misuse of police information systems.
- Behaviour involving vulnerable individuals.
- Failure to conduct himself in accordance with the standards expected of a police officer whilst on duty.

I regard the repeated nature of the offending conduct and the abuse of position as particularly serious aggravating features.

Mitigating Factors

I can identify no mitigating factors relating to the misconduct itself.

The former officer has not accepted responsibility for his actions and was convicted following trial.

There are no admissions, expressions of remorse or other matters capable of reducing the seriousness of the misconduct.

Personal Mitigation

The former officer has provided no character evidence, testimonials or other personal mitigation.

In any event, I am guided by the observations in *Salter and Williams v Police Appeals Tribunal* that personal mitigation carries limited weight where serious dishonesty, abuse of position or conduct capable of undermining public confidence is concerned.

Accordingly, I attach little weight to any personal mitigation that might otherwise arise from the officer's service.

Outcome

In considering outcome, I remind myself that the primary purpose of police misconduct proceedings is not punishment but the maintenance of public

confidence in and the reputation of the police service, the upholding of high standards and the protection of the public.

Having considered all of the circumstances of this case, including the seriousness of the criminal convictions, the abuse of trust inherent in the former officer's conduct, the harm caused to public confidence and the absence of meaningful mitigation, I conclude that a Final Written Warning would be wholly insufficient.

The conduct is fundamentally incompatible with continued service as a police officer.

The appropriate and proportionate outcome, commensurate with the seriousness of the conduct and consistent with the purposes of these proceedings, is that:

Had PC Edwards still been serving ***he would have been dismissed without notice*** and his name shall be placed on the College of Policing Barred List.

Publication of Outcome

25. In accordance with Regulations 43(1) and (6) of the 2020 Regulations, the AA shall publish a report of the outcome of these proceedings on its website for a period of not less than 28 days.

Rob Carden



Chief Constable

2nd October 2026

The finding(s) of the Special Case Hearing and the outcome(s) imposed: -

Outcome	Indicate Below
Would Have Been Dismissed	x
Final Written Warning	
Gross Misconduct Not Proven – Case returned to Appropriate Authority	
Gross Misconduct Not Proven – Case dismissed	

Appeals

You have the right of appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal against any finding of gross misconduct made by the Chief Constable at this hearing unless that finding was made following acceptance by you that your conduct amounted to gross misconduct.

You also have the right of appeal to the Police Appeals Tribunal against any disciplinary action imposed as a result of that finding. The Tribunal can increase any outcome imposed as well as reduce or overturn the decision of the special case hearing.

Your appeal must be based on one or more of the following grounds:

- That the finding or decision to impose disciplinary action was unreasonable
- That there is evidence that could not reasonably have been considered at the special case hearing which could have materially affected the finding or decision on disciplinary action, or
- That there was a breach of procedures set out in The Conduct Regulations, the Complaints and Misconduct Regulations or Part 2 of the 2002 Act or unfairness which could have materially affected the finding or decision on disciplinary action.

You have **10 working days** beginning with the first working day after the day you have been served with this notice to provide the Police and Crime Commissioner with written notice of appeal. Application outside this period can be considered by the Chair of the Police Appeals Tribunal under Rule 9 of the Police Appeals Tribunal Rules 2020.

Should you wish to request a transcript of the misconduct proceedings (or part of the proceedings) then this should be made in your notice of appeal.

On receipt of your appeal notice the Police and Crime Commissioner will as soon as practicable supply the respondent (The Chief Constable), and in the case of a 'specified appeal' the IOPC, with a copy of the notice of appeal. The respondent shall then within 15 working days of receipt of the notice of appeal supply to the Police and Crime Commissioner a copy of this hearing decision notice, any documents made available to the panel who conducted your hearing and a copy of any transcript of the proceedings requested by you. A copy of any such transcript shall at the same time be supplied to you.

You are also required to provide to the Police and Crime Commissioner a statement of the relevant decision and your grounds for appeal, and any supporting documents. If your appeal is based on the ground that there is evidence that could not reasonably have been considered at the misconduct hearing which could have materially affected the finding or decision on disciplinary action then you must also supply a list of any proposed witnesses as defined in Rule 13(5)(c) and a witness statement from each of those witnesses. If you consent to the appeal being determined without a hearing, then this consent must be given in writing.

These documents shall be supplied before the end of 20 working days from the day on which you are supplied with a copy of the transcript, or if no such transcript was requested before the end of 35 working days from the day you gave notice of appeal to the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Police and Crime Commissioner shall then supply a copy of those documents provided to the respondent as soon as practicable.

The respondent then has 20 working days from receipt of those documents to supply the Police and Crime Commissioner with a statement of response to the appeal, any supporting documents, and a list of any proposed witnesses as defined in Rule 13(9)(c) together with a witness statement from each proposed witness. The respondent must also give in writing any consent for the appeal to be determined without a hearing.

At the same time as supplying the above documents to the Police and Crime Commissioner the respondent shall provide you with a copy of those documents save in the case of the supporting documents a list of those documents only need be supplied. The Police and Crime Commissioner will then provide to the Chair a copy of all documents supplied to it under these Rules.

Both you or the respondent may apply to the Police and Crime Commissioner for an extension to a relevant period as defined in Rule 14(1). This application must set out the reason for such application and the period of extension required. A copy of the application will be supplied to the other party who will be asked if they consent to the extension. If the other party does not consent then the application will be forwarded to the Chair who will determine if an extension shall be granted and for how long.

Under Rule 15, on receipt of the supplied documents the Chair shall determine whether the appeal should be dismissed on the basis that either the appeal has no real prospect of success or there is no other compelling reason why the appeal should proceed. If the Chair considers that the appeal should be dismissed, before making his determination, he shall give you and the respondent notice in writing of his view together with the reasons for that view. You and the respondent may make written representations in response to the Chair before the end of 10 working days and the Chair shall consider any such representations before making his determination. The Chair shall give you, the respondent and the relevant Police and Crime Commissioner notice in writing of his determination. Where the Chair determines that the appeal should be dismissed the notification shall include the reasons for the determination.

Where an appeal has not been dismissed under Rule 15, the Chair must determine whether the appeal should be dealt with at a hearing. The Chair may determine that the appeal should be dealt with without a hearing, but only if you have so consented. Where the appeal is to be dealt with at a hearing the Chair shall give you and the respondent his name and contact details.

At any time following the provision of the documents mentioned in Rule 13(5) and (9), you or the respondent (the "requesting party") may apply to the Chair for disclosure of any document by the other party which is relevant to the appeal. The Chair may request the disclosure of any such document by the other party and where it is disclosed, a copy must be given to the chair and to the requesting party. Where a party does not comply with a request to disclose under paragraph (2), the party must give the Chair and the requesting party his reasons for non-disclosure in writing.

The Chair must cause you and the respondent to be given written notice of the date, time and place of the hearing at least 20 working days, or such shorter period as may with the agreement of both parties be determined, before the date of the hearing. Where you or the respondent (or both) have proposed witnesses under rule 13, the Chair must determine which, if any, witnesses may give evidence at the hearing. No witness may give evidence at the hearing unless the Chair reasonably believes that it is necessary for the witness to do so, in which case the Chair must where the witness is a police officer, cause that person to be ordered to attend the hearing; and in any other case, cause the

witness to be given notice that his attendance is necessary and of the date, time and place of the hearing.

You have the right to be represented at a hearing by a relevant lawyer or a police friend. Where you are represented at the hearing by a relevant lawyer, you may also be accompanied at the hearing by a police friend. If you choose not to be represented, the hearing may take place and the appeal may be determined without you being represented. The respondent has the right to be represented at a hearing by a relevant lawyer or by an officer of the police force or by the chief executive of the relevant Police and Crime Commissioner.

Subject to these Rules, the procedure at a hearing shall be determined by the tribunal. The tribunal may proceed with the hearing in the absence of either party, whether represented or not, if it appears to be just and proper to do so and may adjourn it from time to time if it appears necessary to do so. Unless the tribunal determines otherwise, the evidence adduced by you must be given first. Witnesses giving evidence at the hearing may be subject to questioning and cross-questioning. Any question as to whether any evidence is admissible, or whether any question should or should not be put to a witness, shall be determined by the tribunal. A verbatim record of the evidence given at the hearing must be taken and the relevant Police and Crime Commissioner must keep such record for a period of at least two years from the date of the end of the hearing.

The hearing shall be held in private, however, the tribunal may allow a person to attend all or part of the hearing as an observer for the purposes of training. In certain circumstances as prescribed in the Rules, the complainant, an interested party, or a representative of the IOPC shall also be allowed to attend the hearing.

The tribunal must determine whether the ground or grounds of appeal on which you rely have been made out. The determination of the tribunal must be based on a simple majority but must not indicate whether it was taken unanimously or by a majority. The chair must prepare a written statement of the tribunal's determination of the appeal and of the reasons for the decision. As soon as reasonably practicable after the determination of the appeal the chair shall cause you, the respondent and the Police and Crime Commissioner to be given a copy of the written statement, but, in any event, you must be given written notice of the decision of the tribunal before the end of 3 working days beginning with the first working day after the day on which the appeal is determined.

Any request for an appeal must be forwarded to:

Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside.

Vetting of individuals is critical to manage risks to the Force, and to ensure the integrity of everyone who works for Merseyside Police. Vetting is completed in line with the Vetting Code of Practice and its associated National Guidelines, APP on Vetting 2021. Section 8.50.1 of APP on Vetting 2021 states that following the conclusion of a misconduct hearing or meeting where the officer, special constable or member of staff is not dismissed but has been issued with a written warning or a final written warning, a review of vetting clearance should be carried out. The review includes a consideration of the applicant's suitability to maintain the level of clearance held and to continue in the post they occupy.

I have been served with a copy of this notice:-

Signed: _____

Date: _____

I have been served with a copy of the R –v- Edwards notice:-

Signed: _____

Date: _____

CHIEF CONSTABLES MEMORANDUM

Regina –v- EDWARDS Disclosure of Disciplinary Convictions

I refer to Merseyside Police Special Order Dated 30th June 1993, regarding the above. The detail of the misconduct conviction recorded against you has already been served upon you.

You must reveal the **full details of the wording of the charge(s)** relating to these convictions to the Crown Prosecution Service in accordance with the instructions contained in Chapter 18 of the Disclosure Manual (see Merlin). Failure to reveal your disciplinary record and/or any criminal convictions recorded against you may render you liable to further disciplinary proceedings.

The earliest date of expunction from your personal record of these convictions is in line with the Police (Amendment) Regulations 2008. At the appropriate time the Personnel Department will arrange for the conviction to be expunged from your personal record. You should inform the Crown Prosecution Service accordingly, when this has been done.

If you have any queries regarding this matter, the staff in the Professional Standards Department will be pleased to assist you.
