

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION OF MISCONDUCT HEARING

18 January 2021

Due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic this Hearing will take place in line with the Government social distancing guidelines as well as using video link for remote access. Owing to the logistical and technical issues of running a Hearing in this manner, members of the public will be unable to observe these proceedings directly. However, in the interests of transparency, accredited members of the media may attend using the video link subject to the following conditions:

- The taking of photographs and the use of film or sound recording equipment during the hearing, except for official use, is prohibited;
- Any accredited member of the media wishing to attend by the video conference link must give notice thereof to Sussex Police Professional Standards Department by 16.00 on the 16 January 2021;
- Any accredited member of the media attending the hearing by the video conference link must produce valid identification if required to do so; and
- Any accredited member of the media must adhere to reporting restrictions (in relation to the identities of any members of the public involved in the allegations against the Officer) as directed by the Legally Qualified Chair.

Under regulation 36(5) of The Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020, any representative of the media may make written representations to the chair by 16:00 on Thursday 14 January, as to the exclusions and restrictions set out above, by contacting Sussex Police Professional Standards Department.

A suitably redacted version of the final reasons of the disciplinary Panel hearing this case will be published after the hearing pursuant to regulation 43(6) of the same regulations.

Former Officer, DC Damian Cotgreave CC632, faces 21 allegations whereby it is alleged that he engaged in conversations via social media with 12 female members of the public using his personal mobile telephone, whilst on duty, over a period of several months from December 2019 to February 2020. Some of these conversations included inappropriate content, such as sexual images or exhibits, or were sexual in nature. On one occasion, the Officer is alleged to have attended the address of one female for in excess of 1 hour whilst on duty, for a non-policing purpose, and engaged in sexualised behaviour. On another occasion, he is alleged to have failed to act when the female he was corresponding with made threats to self-harm. One of the allegations involves off-duty conduct.

The relevant professional standards alleged to have been breached multiple times include the following: "Discreditable Conduct", "Duties and Responsibilities", "Authority, Respect and Courtesy" and "Confidentiality".

It is further alleged that each allegation and/or the cumulative effect of all allegations taken together are so serious as to amount to gross misconduct.

