

PC's Taylor and Cooper

I have reviewed the facts of this case and my findings in respect of PC's Amy Taylor and April Cooper's conduct are as follows:

On the 26 April 2020 a conduct notification was received by Professional Standards in respect to 3 videos that had been posted on the website TikTok by Pc April Cooper and Pc Amy Taylor using account their personal accounts. These videos had been sent to C/Insp Anderson and showed both officers in police uniform.

On the 22nd April 2020, a complaint was received into the demand hub at Cambridgeshire from a member of the public wishing to make a complaint against two Cambridgeshire Officers who were later identified as PC's Cooper and Taylor. It was alleged that both officers had been recording and posting multiple Tiktok videos whilst on duty and in uniform. The member of the public highlighted that in their opinion the videos were 'unprofessional' and placed a risk to Cambridgeshire Constabulary, in that they could be manipulated by the public or media and that officers were producing videos instead of attending incidents, providing a visible reassurance, preventing crime and anti-social behaviour. The member of the public had themselves been a victim of crime.

They subsequently sent video clips to Professional Standards which have been discussed at this Hearing today.

These videos, which I have seen, range from dancing, in uniform in a police station whilst on duty, to being within a marked police vehicle, in uniform, on duty, using offensive language. In addition, one video where specific mention is made to coronavirus virus, and whilst made off duty in what appears to be a residential property, Pc Cooper is clearly in uniform. Other videos clearly show both officers running up and down steps of a police station, again clearly in uniform and at work.

The reach of these videos through the social media platform has been extensive.

I have read through this investigation file and listened to the case put before this Hearing today. It is alleged that you have breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour notably: Authority, Respect and Courtesy, Duties and Responsibilities and Discreditable Conduct.

In my determination as to whether this case amounts to misconduct or gross misconduct a central part of my reasoning is focused upon four specific video clips.

Firstly, exhibit JCH 8. A video clip showing you both in a police vehicle in uniform, shouting offensive language. I note you admit that this amounts to misconduct relating to discreditable conduct. In my view this breaches the standards expected relating to discreditable conduct in that your behaviour undermines public confidence specifically due to the content of the language used which is wholly offensive and the manner in which it is shouted across the video. The clip also breaches the standards of professional conduct relating to Authority, Respect and Courtesy in that you did not act with self-control. In

addition, Duties and Responsibility, in that you were on duty at the time of this recording and set aside how long it took to make the clip, it cannot be right that you conducted yourself in this manner in which the public would not perceive that you were acting with diligence and responsibility.

Secondly, exhibit JCH10 (PC Cooper). This shows a conversation again whilst in uniform in which offensive language is used. PC Cooper you admit this amounts to misconduct through a breach of standards specifically discreditable conduct. This clip brings the service into disrepute; the language used is unacceptable and you are clearly in uniform. I do not agree that this breaches duties and responsibility – my rationale for this is that this behaviour was off duty in a private dwelling. I do find that it breaches authority, respect and courtesy; your behaviour cannot be seen to demonstrate that you treat the public, whom you are referring to in the clip, with any respect or courtesy.

Thirdly, exhibit JCH 11 (PC Cooper). This clip shows you in uniform shouting down a phone shouting coronavirus with the words, 'when calling in sick at work and they ask what's up'. This clip was made in the height of a pandemic which is still on-going yet you appear to be insensitive to the many thousands who have suffered and the vital role that emergency services and other agencies played in this outbreak, and continue to do so. This clearly shows a lack of respect and sensitivity to those that were suffering or indeed their families and friends. This brings the service into disrepute and damages public confidence. You did not treat the public or your colleagues with respect or courtesy. I do not find that there has been a breach of standards with regards to duties and responsibility. I note that you do not admit that this breaches the standard of professional behaviour.

Finally, exhibit JCH 9. Both officers in full uniform dancing in an inappropriate way utilising fire marshal tabards. This was done on duty, in uniform within a police station. Again, is this the behaviour the public expect? I note that you both do not admit this amounts to a breach of the professional standards as outlined. This clip was referenced in the public correspondence which raised a question over whether this is acceptable. In my view this is not acceptable behaviour and breaches the standards of professional behaviour with regards to discreditable conduct and the fact you are not exercising self-control this falls short of authority, respect and courtesy. You are on duty, you are clearly in uniform and you are not showing to act with any responsibility expected of a police officer.

Exhibits JCH2 and JCH4 I have ignored in any determinations they are clips of you off duty and not relating to police activity or indeed any reference to police activity. I have noted comments with reference to Article 8 and I agree that neither clip breaches and code of professional behaviour or standard.

Exhibits JCH1, JCH 3, JCH 5, JCH 6, JCH 7 all show dancing, singing or words spoken which are made whilst in uniform and within either a police vehicle or police station. The videos are made over several days, not just one day so to the public, together with the above references, undermine their confidence in policing within this county. The respect shown to your colleagues in behaving this way demonstrates a lack of respect for them and a lack of self-control by you both. It cannot be said that this was a momentary lapse of

concentration. The public expect police officers to act with diligence and responsibility whilst on duty and these clips demonstrate the opposite and breach the standards expected. I note you do not admit that any of these clips amount to any breaches of the standards of professional behaviour.

I have also considered your conduct against the Codes of Ethics, a Code which fundamentally underpins and expands on the Standards of Professional Behaviour set out in Schedule 2 of the Conduct Regulations. I as the Chief Constable of Cambridgeshire Constabulary have also set out the organisational values by which I expect all officers and staff to adhere to.

Under Regulation 3(1) Gross Misconduct means a breach of the Standards of Professional Behaviour which is so serious that dismissal would be justified.

The police service and the public expect that all its officers and staff to act in manner that does not bring discredit to the service or harm its reputation. The public expect that these standards are upheld and in addition officers to show respect, courtesy and take responsibility for their duties. The conduct that you both have displayed falls way short of these standards.

I have considered this case in full and find that both your conduct amounts to gross misconduct.

Chief Constable Nick Dean

Cambridgeshire Constabulary

8th September 2020