



From:	Chief Constable Richard Cooper
Ref:	Special Constable Hodgson.....
Our Ref:	
No:	
Date:	17 July 2026

FINDINGS and OUTCOME FORM

ACCELERATED MISCONDUCT HEARING – SC Luke Hodgson

17 July 2026: Hindlip Hall, Hindlip Headquarters

In accordance with Regulation 63 of the Police (Conduct) Regulations 2020 (as amended), below listed are the findings and any disciplinary action imposed in the above case. This document must be supplied to SC Hodgson before the end of 5 working days beginning with the first working day after the conclusion of the misconduct proceedings.

Hearing members:

Chair: Chief Constable Richard Cooper

Details of the conduct alleged to have breached the Standards of Professional Behaviour:

On 12th December 2025 you were summarily dismissed for gross misconduct by Sainsbury's Ltd after a disciplinary hearing found that you had failed to pay for carrier bags belonging to your employer on 3 separate occasions.

It is believed that the Standards of Professional behaviour breached are:

Honesty & Integrity Discreditable Conduct

Findings:

It is accepted by all parties that there were three occasions when SC Hodgson failed to pay for bags whilst purchasing shopping. The total value of these bags was £1.20. It is also accepted that SC Hodgson was dismissed.

One area of fact that is disputed is the suggestion from Mr Fortey that on one of the occasions SC Hodgson had acknowledged that he had latterly realised he had forgotten to pay for a bag and yet failed to rectify this point. SC Hodgson denies making such an admission. There is no contemporaneous record available to me of such an admission being made and, given the reliance on hearsay evidence, I disregard this element of the case.

RESTRICTED

In establishing a view on dishonesty, I have used the two-stage approach in *Ivey*. Firstly, considering what was SC Hodgson's knowledge or belief regarding payment being needed at the time of 'checking out' and secondly whether an ordinary person would consider the conduct to be dishonest.

On the first point, I have considered the following factors:

- That the behaviour was repeated three times in the space of 12 days
- That, as evidenced by receipts submitted, that there were other occasions when SC Hodgson paid for bags properly, including one instance at the end of a late shift
- That SC Hodgson had received training in the operation of self-service tills that were used in the respective transactions
- That each transaction required active confirmation by SC Hodgson that 'no bag' had been purchased
- That the transactions took place at the end of shifts when SC Hodgson may have been tired
- [REDACTED]

I do not consider the issue of SC Hodgson paying for the rest of his shopping and not concealing his identity to be of any probative relevance either way.

I have weighed up those factors and reached a view, on the balance of probabilities, that SC Hodgson did know that payment was required for the bags and chose not to offer such payment. [REDACTED] the factors that lead me to my view are the three repeated occasions in quick succession where SC Hodgson has actively confirmed that no bag had been used. This is in the context of him clearly being able to navigate the checkout system adequately, given it is straightforward, he had been trained in its use, and as a customer he had done so successfully, on one occasion paying for his bag at the end of a late shift in August.

An ordinary person would consider this action, to avoid payment when it was obviously required, to be dishonest.

I have considered the 2023 College of Policing Guidance on Outcomes in Police Misconduct Proceedings and the Home Office Guidance concerning Conduct, Efficiency and Effectiveness. I have adopted the three-stage process to assist my decision making. The first of those three stages is assessing the seriousness of the proven conduct with reference to culpability, the harm caused and any aggravating and mitigating factors.

In terms of culpability, the responsibility for his actions rests with SC Hodgson and him alone. This was not a one-off event but three occasions.

Regarding harm, some harm has been suffered by his former employer, primarily in the form of going through the necessary disciplinary process as the monetary value was low.

RESTRICTED

There is also the greater harm to the police service, where officers must act honestly given the reliance on reliable testimony in the gathering of evidence. The public expect nothing more from the police service than for them to be trustworthy.

By way of aggravation, whilst this was not operational dishonesty, it does represent an abuse of trust given SC Hodgson's position as an employee of the store.

There are some mitigating factors. SC Hodgson has latterly repaid the amount. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I have found he acted dishonestly rather than inadvertently as claimed. He has also cooperated fully with the investigative process.

My finding is that SC Hodgson knowingly took bags belonging to his employer without paying for them on three occasions. This is theft. This breaches the standards of professional behaviour relating to honesty and integrity and it discredits the service, both to a level that amount to gross misconduct.

I have reflected on the purpose of the misconduct regime. It exists not be punitive but to:

- maintain public confidence in, and the reputation of, the police service
- uphold high standards in policing and to deter misconduct
- to protect the public

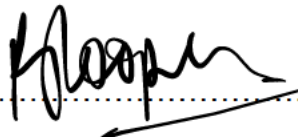
I have also considered the Regulation 42A implications that the starting point is dismissal where gross misconduct is found unless exceptional circumstances apply.

I have found SC Hodgson to have acted dishonestly and to have committed theft, which fundamentally undermines his ability to function as a police officer. This is not compatible with the high standards of integrity that are required of the service. There are no other recorded matters of concern in SC Hodgson's brief service before this episode, but I do not believe that exceptional circumstances exist that would lead to deviation from the presumption of dismissal. Indeed, dismissal is the necessary outcome. Having arrived at the conclusion of deliberate dishonesty amounting to theft, public confidence cannot be maintained by SC Hodgson retaining the office of constable. He will therefore be dismissed without notice. As a consequence of this finding, he will be included on the barred list held by College of Policing.

I acknowledge that these proceedings will have been difficult for SC Hodgson but ultimately my greatest concern must be the integrity of the service. [REDACTED]

RESTRICTED

I confirm that the above is correctly recorded. I also confirm that the officer's personal record was considered before a decision was reached on any disciplinary action to be imposed.

Signed:


Date:


Chief Constable Richard Cooper

If you wish to receive a copy of the record of the proceedings, please contact the Professional Standards Department.

You have a right of appeal against the finding. Should you wish to exercise this right you must do so in writing to the Chairman of the Police Appeals Tribunal within ten days of this notice. Please note that the tribunal can increase any outcome imposed as well as reduce or overturn the decision of the panel. You have the right to be legally represented at the appeal hearing.

Form of receipt to be completed by officer subject of proceedings:

I acknowledge receipt of this written notice of the misconduct proceedings, dated2025 of which this is a true copy.

Signed.....

Date.....