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Plodcast problem leads to PC sacking

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A Surrey Police officer was dismissed without notice after he made a podcast in which his wording suggested he “condoned committing criminal acts of domestic abuse”. The officer, who cannot be named due to reporting restrictions and is referred to as Officer A, uploaded an episode of his podcast in January 2022 in which he discussed a non-crime domestic incident with his ex-partner that took place on Christmas Day 2021, following an argument over child contact that day.

A Surrey Police misconduct hearing on 8 February 2023 found his behaviour was a breach of discreditable conduct and dismissed him without notice. During the podcast uploaded to Spotify on 10 January 2022, but since deleted, Officer A discussed the Christmas Day 2021 incident, and “made a number of inappropriate comments referring to his ex-partner”, according to the hearing outcome.

The report into the hearing said: “During the podcast he also used discussion and wording which suggested that he condones committing criminal acts of domestic abuse.” Surrey Police said the officer accepted the allegations made against him, but that he had experienced a “difficult break-up with his former partner”. He said this as well as “frustrations regarding his access to their child” were the context in which he recorded the podcast.

Surrey Police said: “The panel accepted the officer’s explanation that by the words he used he was not condoning domestic abuse but the impact on the public view may well be different given the ongoing national concern regarding violence against women and girls and the level of mistrust some have with the police in such matters.”

The officer, who cannot legally be named because of restrictions put in place at the hearing, identified himself as a police officer in the podcast on April 23, 2020 and as a Surrey officer in the introduction of a previous podcast.
The panel found him to have breached the professional standard of duties and responsibilities (being diligent in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities) in this regard.

A member of the public alerted Surrey Police to “inappropriate content on social media” on April 23, 2020, which was dealt with by the officer’s senior management team and the content was removed.

Surrey Police add: “The officer is not being named to protect the welfare of his former partner and child, who played no part in the officer’s alleged misconduct. This will ensure the correct balance is maintained between the open process as envisaged by the Regulations and Home Office Guidance and the welfare of either the officer or others”.

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