

Social Worker: Janet Elaine
Redmond
Registration Number: SW80220
Fitness to Practise: FTPS-17071
Final Hearing

Date(s) of hearing: 1-10 August 2022

Hearing Venue: Remote hearing

Hearing outcome: Removal order

Interim order: Interim suspension order (18 months)

Introduction and attendees

1. This is a hearing held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018.
2. Ms Redmond attended the hearing until 4 August 2022 and was not represented. From 4 August 2022, the hearing proceeded in Ms Redmond's absence as a result of her written decision to withdraw from the proceedings on that date.
3. Social Work England was represented by Ms Louisa Atkin, as instructed by Capsticks LLP.

Adjudicators	Role
Hilary Nightingale	Chair
Tracey Newson	Social Worker Adjudicator
John Brookes	Lay Adjudicator

Harry Frost	Hearings Officer
Thanvi Hoque	Hearing Support Officer
Gerrard Coll	Legal Adviser

Service of Notice:

4. Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England submitted to the panel of adjudicators (the panel) that Ms Redmond had not raised any issue in regard to service of the documents in accordance with the rules. Ms Redmond had attended the hearing remotely in person between 1 and 3 August 2022 without representation. Accordingly, no issue of service arose or had to be determined.
5. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser who agreed with Ms Atkin. The panel was satisfied that no issue of service arose in circumstances where Ms Redmond had responded to the notice, had attended the hearing, and had participated in person until 4 August 2022.
6. Ms Redmond decided in a written submission to the panel on 4 August 2022 that she did not wish to continue to participate in the hearing. Ms Redmond was not professionally or otherwise represented. Ms Redmond wrote *'I have not taken this decision lightly, but I will not be returning to the hearing room. I have attached a closing written submission for the panel; could you present that to them. Forgive me for the lateness of the Document. Regards, Janet.'*

Proceeding in the absence of Ms Redmond from 4 August 2022:

7. The panel heard the submissions of Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond had expressed a clear and unequivocal intention to disengage from the proceedings in her email of 4 August 2022. Ms Redmond referred the panel to the closing written submission by Ms Redmond referred to in paragraph 4 above. Ms Redmond wrote ‘

‘I apologise to the panel for being unable to present in person; I did attempt to obtain legal advice and representation I had to make a decision to pursue this or prepare for the hearing.

I agree to the process concluding in my absence; I need to prioritise my health and wellbeing therefore I will not be returning to the hearing room.’

8. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond had not applied for an adjournment. On 3 August 2022 the issue of adjournments had been discussed in the hearing and legal advice offered to the panel regarding the factors that the panel should consider in the event of an application for an adjournment. Ms Redmond was therefore fully aware of her right to apply for an adjournment. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond had not expanded on her health-related reasons for disengaging or submitted any medical evidence to support her decision. Instead, she had agreed to the hearing proceeding in her absence. Ms Atkin invited the panel to proceed in the interests of justice and the expeditious disposal of this hearing.
9. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the factors it should take into account when considering this application. This included reference to the cases of *R v Jones* and *General Medical Council v Adeogba* [2016] EWCA Civ 162 and rule 43 of the Social Work England (Fitness to Practise Rules) 2019 as amended (the rules).
10. The panel considered all of the information before it, together with the submissions made by Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England. The panel considered that Ms Redmond had made a conscious and voluntary waiver of her right to participate in the hearing. The panel concluded that Ms Redmond had chosen voluntarily to absent herself for reasons that were unelaborated upon by her. The witnesses had already been called to give evidence and had been released. There was no issue of inconvenience to them. Ms Redmond had already stated that she would not give evidence during the time that she had attended the hearing. She had submitted her written responses to the allegations and had submitted a final written submission for the panel to take into account. The panel considered that the prejudice, if any, to Ms Redmond of continuing in her absence had been lessened by these factors.
11. The panel had no reason to believe that an adjournment or a postponement of the hearing would result in Ms Redmond’s return to participate in the hearing. Having weighed the interests of Ms Redmond in regard to her attendance at the hearing with those of Social Work England and the public interest in an expeditious disposal

of this hearing, the panel determined to proceed from 4 August 2022 in Ms Redmond's absence. The panel directed those copies of the substantial decisions reached by it incrementally as the hearing progressed would be sent to Ms Redmond by email. Ms Redmond would then be afforded the opportunity to consider whether she wished to return to participate at later stages of the hearing.

Allegations

12. The allegations are that Ms Redmond while *registered as a social worker in the period between March 2019 and April 2020* you: -

1. *Failed to notify Social Work England of your suspension and/ or dismissal from Wolverhampton Council.*
2. *Did not communicate appropriately and/ or effectively with one or more of your colleagues while working for Wolverhampton Council, in that you:*
 - a. *were dismissive on one or more occasions when they spoke to you, including by putting your hand up to their face(s);*
 - b. *made a comment to EB which implied that you did not have anything positive to say about her;*
 - c. *made a comment to EB that you had "as little to do with you as possible" or words to that effect;*
 - d. *did not conduct supervision sessions with EB and/ or LG in a reflective or supportive manner;*
 - e. *made a comment to LG that she "gave you a headache" or words to that effect.*
3. *Did not take sufficient and/ or timely action to safeguard one or more service users while working for Wolverhampton Council in that you;*
 - a. *Did not hold a strategy discussion in respect of Service User TR despite a management instruction to do so on 17 June 2019;*
 - b. *Did not agree to hold a strategy meeting in relation to Service Users LS and CLS when safeguarding concerns were raised on 22 March 2019.*
4. *Did not provide appropriate management oversight / instruction while working for Wolverhampton Council, in that you;*
 - a. *Did not authorise assessments and/ or manage the desktop in a timely way on one or more occasions;*
 - b. *Did not record management decisions and/ or actions agreed in supervision to children's case files on one or more occasions;*

- c. *Did not identify an appropriate plan of action;*
 - i. *In relation to service user HB within a management decision recorded on 8 April 2019;*
 - ii. *In relation to Service User ARN within a management decision recorded on 6 June 2019;*
 - iii. *In relation to Service User LRM in response to concerns noted on 8 April 2019 and/ or 13 May 2019.*
 - d. *Attempted to send a newly qualified social worker on a child protection visit on or around 17 May 2019;*
 - e. *Did not ensure that cases and /or tasks were appropriately allocated / re-allocated on one or more occasions, namely;*
 - i. *by not allocating or reallocating cases in a timely manner on one or more occasions;*
 - ii. *in relation to Service User LS(2);*
 - iii. *in relation to Service User AB.*
5. *Did not fulfil your management responsibilities while working for Wolverhampton Council in that you;*
- a. *Did not provide supervision notes to one or more staff members in a timely manner;*
 - b. *Did not provide any, or any appropriate, support to EB in connection with the completion of a Rule 12 statement, which you told her to complete on the day it was due to be submitted to the court, despite her having no prior knowledge of the request;*
 - c. *Did not authorise payments on Agresso in a timely manner.*
6. *Asked a social worker on or around 20 June 2019 to collect Service user CK to come into care when the child's father had not yet signed the section 20 agreement.*

The matters outlined in allegations 1, 2 and/ or 6 above amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

The matters outlined in allegations 3, 4 and/ or 5 above amount to the statutory ground of misconduct and/ or lack of competence.

Preliminary matters

13. On 1 August 2022 Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England invited the panel to decide four preliminary matters.

Amendment of the allegations

14. Ms Atkin invited the panel to exercise its powers to amend the anonymity identifier of the service user referred to in allegation 4e, element ii from HD to LS(2).
15. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that rule 32 gave the panel power to regulate its own procedure in the interests of fairness and to deal with matters as preliminary issues where appropriate. Ms Atkin submitted that the rules do not contain a specific reference to amendment. Typically, such amendments should be made at the earliest point in the process possible and preferably before fact-finding. Ms Atkin reminded the panel of the factors identified by the Court of Appeal in the case of *PSA v Doree* [2017] EWCA Civ 319 including that any amendment should not prejudice the fairness of the hearing and should be made where it was necessary to allow the panel to fulfil its obligation of public protection. Allegations should not be lost' on a technicality of pleading.
16. Ms Atkin submitted that the amendment proposed was intended only to correctly identify, anonymously, the service user referred to in the exhibits and the witnesses' statements. Ms Redmond had received information on 18 July 2022 of the proposed amendment. She had been given an updated supplementary statement on 6 July 2022 reflecting the proposed amendment. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond would not lose the right to challenge or cross-examine witnesses as a result of rectifying the allegation in this way, and so suffered no prejudice.
17. Ms Redmond submitted that she had made responses to Social Work England to date in relation to a different child than the one anonymously identified in the proposed amendment. However, Ms Redmond said that she had no objection to the proposed amendment. Ms Redmond said that she would respond in writing in her written submissions.
18. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice in relation to its powers of amendment. The panel considered that it would not be unfair to allow the proposed amendment and that Ms Redmond would not be caused any identifiable prejudice as a result. The panel therefore allowed the proposed amendment to be made.

Subsequent amendment by the panel

19. On 3 August 2022, the panel recognised that the service user CF referred to in allegation 6 should be referred to as CK. The panel invited submissions from Ms Atkin, who agreed that the allegation should be amended in this way. Ms Redmond

raised no objection and the panel noted that in her written submission she had referred to service user CK.

20. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice. The panel reminded itself of the powers available to it and the factors it should take into account as set out by Ms Atkin earlier. The panel considered that no unfairness arose as a result of making the amendment either to Ms Redmond or to Social Work England. Accordingly, the panel amended allegation 6 to refer to service user CK.

Supplementary statement and exhibit

21. Ms Atkin invited the panel to admit the supplementary statement and exhibit by EB referred to by Ms Atkin in her application to amend allegation 4. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that it had power to admit evidence more widely than might be the case in civil proceedings under rule 31. Under rule 32, the panel could admit new evidence, even if late, provided it was fair to do so.
22. Ms Atkin said that the statement was dated 26 July 2022 and was served on Ms Redmond by email that day. Social Work England had sought to explore the extent of other records relating to service users with the witness. The witness had responded by providing numerous additional exhibits. Social Work England had limited the number of new documents to those directly relevant and obtained the updated witness statement to explain their purpose in the evidence. Ms Atkin submitted that the new materials were helpful to the panel in deciding the issues and were relevant. The witness had been called to attend and could be cross-examined by Ms Redmond if she wished. In the circumstances, Ms Atkin submitted that it would not be unfair for the panel to admit the new materials into evidence.
23. Ms Redmond did not object to the supplementary statement and additional exhibits being introduced into evidence.
24. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice. The panel understood that the supplementary statement and exhibits had been served very late but no objection had been made by Ms Redmond. The panel could not identify any material prejudice to Ms Redmond. In the circumstances, the panel decided to admit into evidence the supplementary statement and additional exhibits referred to in the statement.

Application to proceed partly in private

25. Ms Atkin said that at some point in the hearing confidential matters relating to Ms Redmond's health and private life might arise. The potential for this had been identified by Ms Atkin in the written responses made by Ms Redmond. In the event that any such private matter was about to be discussed, Ms Atkin submitted that the panel had power to decide to proceed partly in private in order to protect Ms

Redmond's right to respect for her private and family life. Ms Redmond said that rule 38 gave the panel a wide discretion in this matter.

26. Ms Redmond did not make any positive submission on this issue.
27. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice. The panel decided that the principle of open justice pointed towards Hearings always being conducted in public. However, the panel recognised that it had a discretion to depart from this default position where it was appropriate and fair to do so. The panel decided that where private matters relating to Ms Redmond's health and wellbeing or family life arose, the hearing should be conducted in private to that limited extent.

Unused material

28. Ms Redmond also made an application for late materials to be added and made available in evidence. These were materials that she had identified in the unused material supplied to her. She wished to have part of the unused material added to her responses in writing in order to support her defence.
29. Ms Atkin did not object to Ms Redmond's application. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that not all evidence served on registrants was placed before the panel because it might have the potential to undermine the case against the registrant or to support the defence case. Ms Redmond had identified materials which would support her case, Ms Atkin said it would not be unfair to admit it, even if late.
30. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice. The panel decided to admit Ms Redmond's additional materials for the same reasons that it had admitted the additional materials relied upon by Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England.

Summary of the evidence

31. Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England introduced evidence in person from the following witnesses:
- (a) EB, Senior Social Worker;
 - (b) EG, Social Worker;
 - (c) VE, Business Support Team Leader (formerly Social Worker Unit Administrator);
 - (d) KEG, former Service Manager.

32. In relation to allegation 1, Ms Atkin also relied upon the witness statement and associated exhibits by RC, lead investigator, Social Work England by having this read into the record. Ms Redmond did not object to this, observing that she admitted this allegation.

Social Work England

Allegation 1

33. RC (referred to above) was provided with information by the council which confirmed that Ms Redmond had been suspended from her role on 17 July 2019 and that Ms Redmond had been dismissed on 3 February 2020.

34. RC checked Social Work England's case management system which revealed that there was no record of Ms Redmond having notified Social Work England of her suspension and subsequent dismissal. In response to an initial letter to Ms Redmond outlining the concerns under investigation, Ms Redmond accepted that she had failed to notify Social Work England of her suspension and dismissal. She said that this was as a result of an oversight on her part and that she was awaiting the outcome of her appeal.

35. RC stated that that the relevant standards at the time of Ms Redmond's suspension were the HCPC 2016. Standard 9.5 stated *"You must tell us as soon as possible if you have had any restrictions placed on your practise, or been suspended or dismissed by an employer, because of concerns about your conduct or competence."* At the point that Ms Redmond was dismissed, her regulator was Social Work England. Standard 6.6 of Social Work England's standards for social workers set out the expectation that in such these circumstances Ms Redmond should have notified Social Work England of her dismissal.

36. Within the response form completed by Ms Redmond on 17 July 2022, she confirms that this allegation is admitted.

Allegation 2

37. Social Work England relied on the evidence of witnesses EB, EG, VE, and KEG.

Allegation 2a

38. EB's evidence was that from the beginning, Ms Redmond was *"was different to other managers I had experienced since 2013"*. Ms Redmond *"was reluctant to discuss anything"* and *"would be quite closed off when discussing cases and making decisions."* EB stated that she found it difficult to speak to Ms Redmond about anything work related and found that Ms Redmond was *"often blunt and unapproachable and if I tried to talk to her, she would put her hand up to my face."*
39. EG said that when Ms Redmond did not like something she would *"put her hand up in front of your face and say, 'thank you that is enough'"* and would also put her hand up to your face if she was busy and when she did not want to speak. EG said that she found this to be oppressive.
40. VE stated that other people in the team raised concerns with Ms Redmond about the way Ms Redmond communicated with them. VE said that the staff had been *"...used to different management styles and they adapted easily to management styles"* but that she found Ms Redmond difficult to work with. When VE attempted to offer assistance to Ms Redmond, she found that Ms Redmond would *"rebuff and used to put her hand up to my face and say, 'I will do it'"*. Contact had not been made physically, but the gesture *'would put a physical barrier and rebuff any help I would offer'*.
41. KEG said that she had been the service head who was responsible to several teams led by managers that she line-managed including Ms Redmond. She said that a number of social workers had raised concerns about Ms Redmond's style of management of them. A common thread was the report that Ms Redmond would put her hand up to their face and dismissed them if the social workers spoke directly to Ms Redmond, raising their concerns.
42. KEG said that Ms Redmond also made this gesture towards her and turned her head away at the same time. There was no proximity of Ms Redmond's hand to KEG's face but the gesture was dismissive of her.
43. Ms Redmond's written response was that she did not accept that she had acted in this way. Ms Redmond said that such a gesture would have been disrespectful and inconsistent with how she practiced as a social worker.

Allegation 2b and Allegation 2c

44. EB recalled an occasion on 24 May 2019 when she was due to go on leave and one of the admin workers complemented her, saying that they would ‘...miss her’ while EB was absent on leave. Ms Redmond, who was not taking part in the exchange then interjected that *“My mother always said if I do not have anything nice to say do not say anything at all”*. EB said that she was embarrassed and humiliated by this. She understood Ms Redmond’s interjection to mean that Ms Redmond would not miss EB and that EB’s value to the team did not merit the complement. In a supervision with Ms Redmond on 30 May 2019, EB tried to raise the incident with Ms Redmond, but was told *“I try to speak to you as least as possible”*.

45. Ms Redmond’s written responses accepted that she made a similar but different remark which was *“a flippant comment that ‘my mother said if you have nothing positive to say, say nothing’”*. Ms Redmond said that she intended the remark to avoid being drawn into a conversation between EB and another member of staff, and that she later explained to EB that her comment was not intended to offend her. Ms Redmond later completed a response form in which she then denied (in regard to limb c) that she had made a comment which implied that she did not have anything to say about EB. She accepted that she had made a comment about having as little to do with EB as possible.

Allegation 2d and Allegation 2e

46. KEG explained in her evidence that supervision should be a supportive and safe place for a social worker to discuss progress of cases and the matters that had been done well or could be improved. Supervision should be part of encouraging a social worker to develop reflective practice.

47. EB stated that she felt that Ms Redmond inappropriately and damagingly. She said that Ms Redmond would berate her and would not discuss EB’s cases with her. Supervision had been misused so as not to focus on EB’s practice or development. She found Ms Redmond to be oppressive and unsupportive.

48. In an email to KEG on 5 June 2019, EB referred to incidents in supervision in May 2019, and stating that *“[e]very supervision I had experienced with [Ms Redmond] to*

date has been negative". She said that within her most recent supervision with Ms Redmond she felt it was used as *"an opportunity to demoralise her"* and stated that *"[i]t offered no opportunity to discuss case progression, guidance, or restorative reflection"*. EB also wrote that *"I feel unable to clarify or discuss issues with [Ms Redmond] without it becoming a petty tit-for-tat debacle that offers no resolve, through my supervision I was repeatedly told to 'be quiet and listen as she was speaking' this created a one-way dialogue that was neither supportive nor encouraging"*.

49. EG describes her supervision meetings with Ms Redmond as *"horrendous"* and stated that she would go home frustrated. She stated that Ms Redmond used to tell her *"You give me a headache you do"*. She said that Ms Redmond would *"laugh a lot and when I tried to explain something she would sigh as if the matter was not progressed"*. She describes this as *"very hard going"*.

50. EG said that *"there was no scope to have any reflection"* in supervision with Ms Redmond. Ms Redmond would employ negative and unsupportive questions and assertions such as;

- *why didn't you?*
- *don't you think you should have?* and
- *you got it wrong.*

51. EG said that she would feel tired and deflated by Ms Redmond's supervision sessions. EG would come out of supervision with a long list of things to do and an overwhelmed feeling of not knowing where to start. EG said that she took sick leave to avoid a supervision meeting in June 2019. EG said that she *felt demoralised, there was no reflection, and I could not sit there for four hours straight as if I said something that [Ms Redmond] did not agree with on a case there would be an argument.*

52. Ms Redmond's written response form dated 17 July 2022 denied both of these limbs of the allegation. She stated that she had a responsibility to challenge as well as being reflective and supportive and believes that her response was balanced. Ms Redmond accepted having had two lengthy supervision sessions with EG but in the context of a concerning *'number of inactive cases on her caseload and drift on several of the cases'* EG did not accept that there was substance in this response.

Allegation 3

Allegation 3a

53. KEG explained to the panel that a vulnerable service user, TR, had been missing for a significant period of time, longer than 3 days. in relation to this allegation. She said that there were concerns that TR had been co-opted by criminal gangs to act as a courier in the 'county lines' transport of illegal substances for unlawful supply. KEG wrote emails to Ms Redmond including one dated 13 June 2019 raising a number of issues on this case and asking Ms Redmond to contact a named person to discuss TR 'today please'.

54. The Head of Service, AM, completed an audit of Service User TR on 17 June 2019 and emailed Ms Redmond requesting her to complete a strategy discussion that day and provide an updated management decision. The email from AM marked as high importance read:-

'Janet, I am concerned about this young person, [he] has been missing a considerable period of time. Actions on the file are limited to telephone calls, there is no strategy discussion on file, there is no management oversight.

Action.

MDR to be placed on file today.

Strategy discussion to take place today.

Telephone liaison with family, including mother- today.'

55. KEG asked Ms Redmond to keep her updated with the progress that she was making on this matter, but instead had to be copied-in by AM to Ms Redmond's reply, which was:-

"I attempted to follow up the strat last week but SD and SP [both social workers in the vulnerable young persons team] were on leave from Friday just gone; I have unsuccessfully attempted to contact someone else in the team.

Mother is out of the country therefore contact with her is not possible at present. Ms has contacted father frequently and I will ask her to do this again. MDR can be updated by tomorrow."

56. KEG said that Ms Redmond did not ever add to the record a strategy discussion nor a management decision which were expected in order to action the case effectively. KEG requested an update from Ms Redmond via email on 18 June 2019 which she did not respond to. The allocated social worker advised KEG that in supervision with Ms Redmond she had advised Ms Redmond not to delay pursuing a 'strat' meeting urgently given the length of time that TR had been missing. KEG observed in an email by her dated 19 June 2019 *'Strat still not completed'*.

57. KEG observed that Ms Redmond had failed to undertake a strategy discussion despite being given an instruction to do so by the Head of Service. KEG said that she had offered Ms Redmond help and guidance in the task but despite this Ms Redmond persisted in her own approach and was unwilling to change or adapt her style of working. KEG said the lack of management oversight meant there was no plan, no direction, no action, and no safeguards in place thus leaving the young person at risk of harm. *'In addition, there was no evidence of joint working being initiated to access the necessary support of relevant agencies, namely the police, to protect and safeguard Service User TR.'*

58. Ms Redmond admitted the allegation in her response form dated 17 July 2022.

Allegation 3b

59. EB explained that concerns were reported in relation to Service Users LS and CLS on Friday 22 March 2019 by their school, who advised that the children had presented with bruising. The police had raised concerns the week earlier after visiting Service Users LS and CLS and had advised the children to contact a member of the team if they were worried. EB stated that Ms Redmond advised her and the Senior Strengthening Families worker to go out and do a 'safe and well' check, but EB was concerned that there was no clear plan in the event that the situation escalated. EB considered that a strategy meeting was necessary in part because a visible mark had been observed on one child consistent with having been struck. She considered that a safe and well check fell short of what was demanded, especially as there were pre-existing police concerns. *A 'safe and well check is concerned with the immediate safety of the child, whereas a strategy discussion and CP medical ensures that any medical evidence is captured and decides whether or not police need to be involved, this is to ensure thresholds are met and no evidence is lost.'* Ms Redmond insisted that a safe and well check be carried out in place of a strategy meeting.

60. EB said that the child's father had become aggressive and verbally hostile in the safe and well check. The child's mother was dismissive of the concerns raised. Accordingly, having arranged support from a friend of the children's family, EB called Ms Redmond for assistance. Ms Redmond however down-played EB's concerns and described the mother as a protective factor. Ms Redmond was not open to the idea of a strategy discussion and advised that she would think about it on the Monday. EB emailed Ms Redmond that evening recording a summary of the safe and well check, her discussion with Ms Redmond and the decision that a strategy discussion was not necessary at that time, such were her concerns.
61. EB said that on the Monday following the visit, Ms Redmond asked her to take off her case notes from the system. She refused this instruction and said that she *'wanted it logged what I had advised'*. EB spoke to KEG about the case who said that a strategy discussion should have been conducted. A strategy discussion was then arranged which decided that the child had been assaulted and that the police contacted her later to ask why her manager had not alerted them and that it was *'...basic to let the police know.'* EB concluded that Ms Redmond had not understood the significance of the child being injured and questioned if Ms Redmond recognised the threshold for a strategy meeting. Ms Redmond considered that this was basic to social work practice.
62. KEG said that it was evident from the circumstances of a child assault that a strategy meeting should have been chaired by Ms Redmond. KEG was sufficiently concerned that she contacted the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) requesting that they complete the strategy meeting due to the already unnecessary delay. Mash would have immediate access to all partner agencies including the police within their team.
63. KEG raised this matter in supervision with Ms Redmond and offered practical and direct assistance. Ms Redmond did not do this and in KEG's view Ms Redmond saw paperwork, such as doing strategy discussions and assessments, as unnecessary, not relevant or needed. It was not a priority for Ms Redmond.
64. Ms Redmond's written response to this matter was to assert that MASH had decided that the appropriate course was a safe and well check rather than a strategy meeting. Ms Redmond added that *'I was of the view that my professional judgement was proportionate with the nature of the incident; I accept that a strategy discussion*

could have been held to make a multi-agency instead of a single agency decision. The multi-agency network would have agreed with my decision or we would have formulated an alternative plan'.

Allegation 4a

65. KEG stated that Ms Redmond *was responsible for authorising single assessments which covered core assessments, initial assessments, child reports for conferences, reports for Looked After Children and all reports undertaken by the team.*

Assessments would appear on the manager's desktop which Ms Redmond and EB had access to. The first screen that would come up when logging into the system would be the desktop which would have a message for each manager saying that the manager has assessments waiting for authorisation. Ms Redmond "should have known to clear the desktop as it was in her job description. This had been part of her one-week handover with her predecessor. Care First training referred to this and KEG had spoken to Ms Redmond about authorising assessments both in supervision and at various team manager meetings chaired by Head of Service.

66. KEG explained that the importance of clearing the desktop daily as a priority in that without that work cannot be allocated appropriately, there is not a true reflection of caseloads and there is a risk of losing information. The desktop could include a serious safeguarding concern where a child has an injury, or the child has been removed overnight. That could be missed if the desktop contents had not been read and action taken. Support that might be required in a case may not be progressed quickly enough and cases cannot be progressed while the assessment is dormant on the desktop waiting to be authorised.

67. KEG exhibited a note of a three-way discussion which took place on 26 March 2019 between her, Ms Redmond, and EB. KEG *"shared with [Ms Redmond] that I had picked up some concerns in regard to desktop management as there are currently 41 assessments/plans awaiting authorisation".* The note concludes with a section 'Actions agreed moving forward' and includes an action for the "Desktop to be managed effectively signing off assessments, plans and summary's etc in a timely way".

68. KEG stated that Ms Redmond rarely authorised assessments and that she allowed the desktop on several occasions to grow to 40 plus assessments awaiting

authorisation. The effect of this would have been to delay case progression including case closure and or implementing actions to safeguard or support the children. Assessments should be authorised within five days and child protection assessments should be authorised within three days of completion so that the assessment is authorised prior to the conference. KEG said that she had discussed the need to authorise assessments in supervision with Ms Redmond on several occasions, shared internal processes and policies and spoke about the need to authorise in a timely way.

69. KEG exhibited notes of supervision between Ms Redmond and KEG on 30 April 2019, noting that Ms Redmond now feels she is able to authorise reports and use Care First appropriately and had developed a system for authorising work which was not in place at the time.
70. KEG also explained that Team Managers were responsible for completing strategy discussions and she *“would expect a strategy discussion to be written up at the time of the meeting or within 24 hours of the initial referral”*, depending on the degree of perceived risk at the time. She notes that they could be written up by a social worker or admin person but would need to be checked, amended, and authorised by the team manager, (Ms Redmond). Within supervision with Ms Redmond on 13 June 2019 that there were activities awaiting authorisation on Ms Redmond’s desktop, including four strategy discussions which require completion and should be written up within 24 hours which were then weeks overdue.
71. VE explained that the desktop is a management tool to monitor and manage work, which is key to the management of caseloads within the unit. She stated that Ms Redmond was not managing this essential task daily as required.
72. EB stated that authorising assessments is a primary role. Managers need to authorise them to provide management oversight and actions for the next assessment or conference report. The timeframe for authorising assessments was 24 to 48 hours, after which time the rating turns from Green to Amber and then Red as significantly outstanding. This ensures that managers can see any out-of-time authorisations and take action. Assessment needs to be authorised before the next one is due or before the next conference meeting.

73. EB stated that Ms Redmond *was supposed to clear assessments for her workers but due to* Ms Redmond not addressing the desktop, EB had to authorise assessments for Ms Redmond's workers. EB added that this became an untenable trend. EB stated that Ms Redmond would occasionally authorise assessments but she was not managing the task and there was no sense of urgency observable in her approach.
74. EB stated that on 29 May 2019 there were over 68 unauthorised assessments. She and another worker had to work over the bank holiday weekend to clear them. She also stated that *"this was difficult for me because I had to go through all the case notes and supervision records to make sure everything had been done as I did not know the cases."* EB said that there can be drift and delay without management oversight.
75. EB said that the delays created by Ms Redmond's inaction in authorising assessments meant that *"the family did not have the chance to read or action the plan"*.
76. KEG exhibited emails exchanged on 20 May 2019 which state that she had raised concerns with Ms Redmond about the number of assessments awaiting authorisation. KEG had asked Ms Redmond to *"prioritise the assessments and summaries, leaving the plans until tomorrow"*. It goes on to say that KEG had looked at the desktop *"in the hope that you had followed instruction but note that there are now 59 awaiting authorisation and it is now almost 4.30"*. She asked Ms Redmond to *"please ensure assessments and summaries are authorised today and that tomorrow you authorise the plans"* and advised that Ms Redmond needed to *"adopt a strategy of authorising assessments on a daily basis and not leaving these to grow"*. She also noted that there were assessments there that had already had the conference. That raised other concerns in regard to the report being presented to conference without quality assurance or management oversight in addition to having not been shared with family.
77. KEG discussed concerns that Ms Redmond was not addressing the desktop on 21 May 2019. On 23 May 2019 KEG wrote that *'60 assessments and activities [are] awaiting authorisation'*. She asked that Ms Redmond *'make a conscious effort on clearing the desktop'* over the course of the day and the following day.

78. On 29 May 2019, EB wrote to KEG to report the effort that she and a colleague had made to clear the desktop over a bank holiday weekend. Mr Bradbury wrote that she would ask Ms Redmond *if we can discuss a plan moving forward to ensure this does not happen again as this is the second time, we have had to clear a backlog of overdue authorisations.*
79. EB stated that on 23 May 2019 a strategy discussion for a child protection case had not been authorised in respect of Service User CJ, and that on 10 June 2019 an assessment had not been authorised in relation to Service User DJ. These were examples of cases which had not been authorised until the day of the conference and were still not authorised.
80. EG details in her statement an occasion when she submitted a report to Ms Redmond in advance of a review child protection conference. She explained that she sent the report to Ms Redmond on a Tuesday, with the conference due to take place on the Wednesday of the following week. She explained that she mentioned to Ms Redmond that she needed to take the report to the family a few days before the conference, and that Ms Redmond indicated that this was not a problem. She goes on to say that the report had not been checked by Ms Redmond when she went out to see the family.
81. EG said that the report had not been checked by Ms Redmond by the day of the conference, and that Ms Redmond stated she had not received it. However, the report had been sent to Ms Redmond's personal manager inbox. Ms Redmond said in response that she did not look in that inbox, although it was part of Ms Redmond's job to check the personal manager inbox.
82. Ms Redmond stated that she *acknowledged '...there was a build-up of assessments at 3 points including the day I took responsibility for the team; MEG's [KEG's] notes of the meeting of 25 March records 41 assessments 5 days into my management when I had not completed the training'*. Ms Redmond comments that *'no build-up is noted between end March and mid-May'* and that *'[w]hen the authorisations reached 68 in May; I had become distressed by the actions of my manager. I also had several other tasks to complete, particularly 3 strategy discussions, 2 of which were high risk. EB was due to clear some of the authorisations but did not do so. The probation plan clearly stated that this is part of her role'*. Within the response form completed by Ms

Redmond on 17 July 2022, she denies the allegation and stated that the management of the desktop was monitored in her supervision.

Allegation 4b

83. KEG explained that “[a]fter or during social work supervisions the child’s records should be updated if cases have been discussed” and stated that it is “the manager’s responsibility to put the management decision on the child’s record”.
84. EB also stated that the responsibility for updating actions plans / actions on case files after supervision was with Ms Redmond as her line manager.
85. The actions arising out of the meeting involving KEG and Ms Redmond on 26 March 2019 included ‘Supervision on all children to be evidence via Care First every month’ and “Any case discussion leading to decisions being made should be recorded on Care First’.
86. EB stated that part of her supervision with Ms Redmond should have been used to discuss cases, but that Ms Redmond would not discuss her cases during supervision.
87. KEG said that Ms Redmond “rarely updated the child’s record with actions agreed to progress the case”. She stated that “on more than one occasion when records had not been updated by [Ms Redmond] with the actions agreed, social workers would copy me into an email they had sent to [Ms Redmond] containing the actions requested by [Ms Redmond]’.
88. EG sent an email to KEG dated 1 May 2019 in which she noted ‘I have not had sight of any supervision notes and there is a lack of supervision notes on the individual child’s file. I have discussed something in supervision and a couple of days later disused [sic] an action which I have been told was not in the supervision. This is the main reason why I am feeling unsafe’. Within a further email to KEG on 31 May 2019, EG noted that “I raised in supervision yesterday that I had not seen any supervision case notes on the children we have discussed in the previous supervisions. I am concerned about this as there are actions which need to be addressed although I have not been able to check on the children’s file to see what needs addressing.”

89. Ms Redmond admitted this allegation within the response form completed by her on 17 July 2022.

Allegation 4c

90. KEG said that she reviewed decisions recorded by Ms Redmond as part of her responsibility to audit children's files. She stated "*[o]ften when [Ms Redmond] recorded decisions these were not what I would class as decisions given, they did not evidence how the plan was to be progressed*".

i. in relation to service user HB within a management decision recorded on 8 April 2019

91. KEG exhibited examples including an entry relating to service user HB dated 8 April 2019. KEG comments that this record "*suggests the plan needs reallocating and that it needs to progress*" but that "*no worker is identified at this stage, no clear update regarding status and how the case is progressing together with any improvements or concerns that are evident at the time of writing.*"

92. Within the response form completed by Ms Redmond on 17 July 2022, she denied the allegation. She asserted that the plan of action was identified although she accepts that Michele Earp-Gaskell was not happy with the quality of the recording.

ii. in relation to Service User ARN within a management decision recorded on 6 June 2019

93. KEG exhibited a record relating to Service User ARN dated 6 June 2019. She noted that "*[f]rom the recording completed by [Ms Redmond] it is unclear who is undertaking the actions requested, in what timescale and what the plan of support is following mother and babies discharge from hospital*".

94. Within the response form completed by Ms Redmond on 17 July 2022, she denied the allegation. She that the plan of action was identified although she accepts that Michele Earp-Gaskell was not happy with the quality of the recording.

iii. in relation to Service User LRM in response to concerns noted on 8 April 2019 and/or 13 May 2019

95. In relation to Service User LRM, KEG exhibited a case note dated 8 April 2019 stated that the writer *'had had a discussion with [Ms Redmond] and shared concerns together with suggesting a strategy discussion was necessary. [Ms Redmond] had instead advised Mariam Ahmed to visit and if the children had an injury to take them to hospital opposed to having a child protection medical'*. KEG commented on Ms Redmond's in the record of 8 April 2019, describing this as *'a clear indication of [Ms Redmond] not following the child protection procedure'*.
96. KEG also commented on the note made on 13 May 2019 where a social worker updated the record and advised Ms Redmond of a bruise that was observed. KEG said that Ms Redmond *"advised no further steps were to be taken that day and that the case would need to be re-allocated"* but *"did not deal with the safeguarding issue"*. KEG explained that there were ongoing concerns regarding neglectful parenting and allegations of unexplained bruising, and that as immediate safeguards were not put in place, the child remained potentially at further risk of harm.
97. Within the response form completed by Ms Redmond on 17 July 2022, she denied the allegation. She stated that the plan of action was outlined and that Michele Earp-Gaskell did not raise concerns about the quality of the recording with her in supervision.

Allegation 4d

98. EB said that on 17 May 2019 Ms Redmond tried to send a newly qualified social worker, on a child protection visit involving Service User PH.
99. This was not good practice because the social worker was inexperienced and was still within her assisted and supported Year of employment (ASYE year). Further the social worker was understood to be anxious about making the visit and needed support. It was agreed with the Advanced Practitioner, MR, that the social worker should not have been asked to do the visit. It was subsequently made clear in a team meeting that *'if a newly qualified social worker had not been involved in child protection they must go out with an experienced worker and they need to be taken with support'*. EB said that this incident was a cause for concern which she discussed with Ms Redmond on the same day. However, Ms Redmond *'...did not want to hear it'*.

100. KEG had the incident drawn to her attention by EB in May 2019. In response KEG said that she had then made it clear in her supervision with Janet Redmond that a newly qualified social worker should not be allocated to child protection cases. They could shadow and co-work with someone more experienced but not case hold.

101. Ms Redmond admitted this allegation in her written response dated 17 July 2022.

Allegation 4e

i. By not allocating or reallocating cases in a timely manner on one or more occasions

102. VE stated that she raised concerns about the allocation of cases with Ms Redmond. She stated that Ms Redmond was not allocating cases and was leaving them to be looked after by duty workers. VE stated that her concern was that cases were not being allocated within timeframes and expressed concern that families would not have an allocated worker to build a relationship with and make sure that things improved.

103. VE exhibited a copy of the Children and Young People Social Work Assessment Policy and Procedure which sets out the requirement for the child or young person to be seen within 5 days from the date of the referral or step up from early intervention. The policy also established that child protection enquiry assessments should be completed within 15 days of the strategy discussion and that all social work assessments should be concluded within a maximum of 45 working days from the date the referral is accepted (normally within 24 hours of a referral being received).

104. KEG exhibits the minutes of a child in need (CIN) audit review which took place on 7 June 2019. In relation to Service User RJL, the case had been allocated to the social work unit on 7 May 2019 and had remained unallocated. The minutes go on to note that:-

“[Ms Redmond] stated there were observations recorded that she had questioned whether the case met threshold with the CAT team. [MG] stated

that this had not been agreed by the CAT team. [MG] advised that, in future, when a case is presented from CAT where there is a question mark over threshold, a discussion with Early Help takes place as soon as the case is on the desktop and if Early Help agree, a request is made to MASH/CAT team to change it. If this does not happen then it is to be escalated to a Service Manager."

105. EB stated that "[w]e had cases coming in that required allocation and they were not being allocated". EB exhibited an initial assessment had been done by the MASH completed by the Children Assessment Team '*and it was agreed to be on a plan, so it was sent over to our team.*' The case however did not progress and was unallocated for weeks without anyone working on it or overseeing it. EB stated that Ms Redmond told her to allocate the case, which she did, but then Ms Redmond had deallocated it and stated she, Ms Redmond, was responsible for all allocations.

106. EB exhibited an email dated 3 June 2019 in which she asked Ms Redmond if she could discuss a case where a TAF meeting had taken place and no worker was allocated. Ms Redmond responds to the email stating "*I'm on training Ms and don't know of this family*", however the email chain indicates that a worker had sent emails about the case to Ms Redmond on 20 May 2019 and 22 May 2019. The email of 22 May 2019 asked Ms Redmond if she can "*advise if you have accepted them*" and refers to the TAF meeting arranged for 3 June 2019. EB said that the case was never allocated. The children were not seen, and a visit [sic] was not completed.

107. Ms Redmond denied this allegation in her written response dated 17 July 2022, she denies the allegation, stating that allocations were noted in her supervision notes and were timely. She stated that re-allocations were initially done in a timely manner but that absent workers impacted on this.

ii. in relation to Service User LS(2)

108. EB stated that the case "*had come over on a CIN plan and was allocated to us on 29 May 2019*". The worker who got allocated to the case was on leave on 29 May 2019 and then went on sick leave on 11 June 2019. EB said that '*[m]eetings were coming up and no one was attending them, and emails were not being picked up*'. She told Ms Redmond they needed to reallocate the case until the worker came back as no one was working on the case, but that Ms Redmond responded verbally with

words to the effect of *'no just leave it we will see what happens'*. The case was only finally re-allocated on 25 June 2019.

iii. in relation to Service User AB

109. EB stated that Service User AB was allocated to her without discussion on 2 May 2019. EB exhibited an email exchange dated 1 May 2019 in which she flagged up that concerns had been raised about the progress of the case. Ms Redmond and a social worker had been working on the case. The email goes on to query whether Ms Redmond would be attending a core group meeting on 7 May and stated, *'I would think this would be the most reliable option as you have the most recent and significant insight into the case and have been overseeing'*. Ms Redmond responded with an email *'What do you think about allocation to you til [the social worker] returns... [w]e can discuss your capacity'*.
110. EB exhibits further emails which were exchanged regarding Service User AB on 2 May 2019. The email stated that EB had read Ms Redmond's case note in relation to Service User AB, and *"as discussed yesterday afternoon I am concerned that you have now stated the case to be re-allocated to me or a duty worker 2 working days before conference. As you are aware we discussed oversight of this case 3 weeks ago and you stated that you had wanted to manage this case as you and Gina had discussed the case and therefore you had the most up to date information. As a result you nominated yourself to complete the assessment on the 15th April in Gina's absence and also present the concerns at legal gateway. At no point have you re-allocated the case or discussed the case with any other workers"*.
111. Within her statement EB stated *'[i]f I remember rightly, in the end [KEG] got involved and told [Ms Redmond] that she needed to provide me with the information and support me.'* She stated that Ms Redmond completed the report in the end and comments that *'[i]f I was to complete the report this would have meant the author of the report was not the workers involved in the case'*.
112. Ms Redmond denied the allegation in her response form dated 17 July 2022. She asserted that the re-allocation to EB was appropriate as she had management oversight for at least 7 months, both as the supervisor for the social worker and the oversight of the duty system.

Allegation 5a

113. VE stated that she received three supervisions from Ms Redmond over a four or five month period but that copies of the supervision notes that should have been sent to her were not. She received notes only in draft form later from Ms Redmond. Completed notes, which should have been made available within 24 hours were not given to VE.
114. EB stated that she never saw her supervision records after supervision. Copies should have been sent to her for her to read, sign and amend if necessary and that she would expect these to be sent within a week or so.
115. EG stated that she had three supervision meetings with Ms Redmond but did not receive the supervision notes. She stated that she was surprised that she was not getting any notes as Ms Redmond would type and talk during supervision. EG challenged Ms Redmond about this and was told that Ms Redmond was too busy and refused to provide her with even a copy of her rough notes. EG said that Ms Redmond did provide her with one supervision note after she had challenged her which was of good quality. EG explained that it is necessary to receive copies of supervision notes to make sure that she and her manager are 'in sync' and contains a faithful record of what was discussed.
116. KEG, as Service Manager, was responsible for an audit of supervision records bi-monthly. She asked Ms Redmond to send her two copies of supervision for EB and another worker during KEG's supervision with Ms Redmond in May 2019. KEG followed up this request with emails prompts but never received these supervision notes despite requesting them on at least three occasions.
117. Ms Redmond's response asserted that the supervision notes were recorded, and indicates that VE, KEG, and EB had access to them in her confidential folder in the teams system. Ms Redmond claimed that the notes were updated and circulated when workers requested them. However, later in Ms Redmond's response form dated 17 July 2022, she admitted this allegation.

Allegation 5b

118. EB said that service users NM and KM were re-allocated to a social worker and Ms Redmond due to the original social worker being off sick. EB stated that the social worker was on a plan to help support her work as she was struggling and Ms Redmond was overseeing her work at the time. A court order was sent to Ms Redmond on 25 March 2019 to produce a Rule 12 statement (an updating statement for where there has been a change in circumstances) by 11 April 2019. Ms Redmond tried to give the case to EB on 11 April 2019, the day the Rule 12 statement was due. The legal department emailed Ms Redmond to say they needed the Rule 12 statement. Ms Redmond then asked her if she had done it, but EB said that she did not know anything about it.
119. EB said that Ms Redmond was insistent that emails had been addressed to EB, but when asked for these to be forwarded to her, Ms Redmond was unable to do so. EB said that Ms Redmond insisted that EB complete the task that day but refused to assist her saying it was 'not her problem'. When complete, Ms Redmond declined to quality assure check the Rule 12 statement although later the legal department insisted that she did this.
120. Ms Redmond denied the allegation and her response was that she re-allocated the task from the nominated social worker to EB on 9 April 2019 and asked her for progress on 10 April 2019.

Allegation 5c

121. VE's evidence was that she showed Ms Redmond how to use Agresso, which is *"a system where financial payments are made and it covers issues within HR, such as annual leave being authorised by a manager and if someone is off sick this would be logged onto Agresso."* She stated that it was Ms Redmond's responsibility to authorise payments on Agresso.
122. VE explained that she would put through purchase orders to pay external suppliers for goods and that these would go to the manager for authorisation, but that Ms Redmond was not authorising these payments. She explained that no payments can be made without a purchase order and she was being chased for payment. She offered to help Ms Redmond who said that she did not have time and would do it later. The system would also send a reminder email to the manager if the

payment was not addressed within 24 hours. VE chased Ms Redmond regarding three requisitions which were awaiting authorisation on Agresso.

123. VE said that the council make payments on certain days of the week and the payment runs to meet requirements in terms of the supplier. She stated that payments were waiting for longer than the requirements and she was being chased by the supplier. She goes on to say that the impact of payments not being authorised on time meant that there were delays in payments to the supplier which has a detrimental impact on the relationship with the council, which may get a bad reputation of late payment.

124. Ms Redmond's response on 17 July 2022 denied this allegation, stating that authorisation was undertaken in conjunction with other priorities once she had access to Agresso.

Allegation 6

125. KEG explained the significance of a section 20 authorisation which *refers to a child becoming looked after and being accommodated by the Local Authority*. Where a child cannot live with their guardian or parents, they will normally agree to allow the council to accommodate the child, but if they do not agree the council will need to get a court order. In circumstances where the carer is not co-operating but the child is likely to suffer significant harm, the council go to the court to get an emergency protection order. An alternative is to rely on a police protection order ("PPO") but this expires after only 72 hours. If a court order had not been obtained in this time, the children could be picked up by their parents and taken back home. KEG explained that there are no other possibilities and that a child cannot be picked up to be accommodated without a lawful order or authorisation under section 20.

126. EB became aware that a child, Service user CK, was being removed and picked up from school. She was told by EG that the child was being picked up without a section 20 authorisation or a lawful order. EB told EG and the allocated worker to contact KEG and AM.

127. EG said that she was told by Ms Redmond at 15:10 to collect the child (aged 17) from school that day. CK was to be taken to the office before being taken into care. When asked what the legal basis was for taking this action, Ms Redmond told

her *'just go collect her'*. EG was told by Ms Redmond or the social worker that CK's *father would give his authority*. EG told Ms Redmond that she would not collect the child without the paperwork and Ms Redmond then instructed the allocated social worker to obtain this.

128. KEG said that Ms Redmond attended training when she joined the council which included the session 'an indication to admission to care and legal gateway'. KEG considered that Ms Redmond was accordingly aware what was required in such a situation but chose to do other things. The position adopted by Ms Redmond in instructing staff to collect a child without lawful authority was contrary to her training and accepted practice.

129. Ms Redmond denied the allegation in her written response dated 17 July 2022. She asserted that CK's father signed the section 20 agreement on 20 June and Service user CK was accommodated on 21 June.

Ms Redmond

130. Ms Redmond did not offer evidence in person under oath or affirmation.

131. Ms Redmond's written response for the hearing and her written submissions dated 4 August 2022 are attached in full in appendix 1.

Finding and reasons on facts

132. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser. The panel was aware that the burden of proving the facts was on Social Work England. Ms Redmond did not have to prove anything. The individual limbs of each head and subhead of the allegations could only be found proved if the panel was satisfied on the balance of probabilities. In reaching its decision, the panel took into account all of the testimony given under oath or affirmation by the relevant witnesses and all of the witness statements. The panel had full regard to the extensive documentary evidence contained within the bundles including the response bundle provided by Ms Redmond and her written submissions.

133. The panel paid close attention to the nature and quality of the contemporary records relied on by Ms Atkin on behalf of Social Work England. The panel considered that there was nothing to suggest that the records were not complete in regard to the relevant entries or that they had later been altered. The entries

appeared to have been made routinely and with internally consistent detail which pointed to their reliability as records of events.

134. The panel made the following assessment of the witnesses.

EB

135. EB impressed the panel as being a good witness who was fair and balanced in her testimony. She responded thoughtfully to the points made by Ms Redmond in her written response. She was measured in dealing with questions from the panel. The panel decided that she was an open and straightforward witness who did not appear to give evidence out of any sense of ill will towards Ms Redmond.

EG

136. The panel considered that EG was an honest and truthful witness who gave her evidence in an objective and fair manner. There was no sense that she had organised her evidence in order to support the case against Ms Redmond.

VE

137. The witness impressed the panel as a credible and reliable witness who had been present in the workplace throughout these events and was well placed to assist the panel. The panel considered that VE was not a biased witness in any way.

KEG

138. KEG was the Service Manager for the children and family unit and was responsible for supervising Ms Redmond and the other managers in her service. KEG impressed the panel as being a fair and objective witness who gave her evidence in a straightforward and unembellished way. KEG was no longer in the post of service head and accepted that the passage of time since these events in 2019 had affected her recollection. Appropriately, KEG responded to questions saying that she was unable to comment on some matters, including matters raised by Ms Redmond in her written response, due to the passage of time. The panel considered that she did so openly and transparently. The panel had no sense that KEG was anything other than a professional and objective witness. She was helpful in giving a number of insights into Ms Redmond's abilities as a manager and explained the steps she had attempted to put in place to support Ms Redmond.

Other matters

Adverse motive

139. Ms Redmond submitted that her referral to her former regulator, the HCPC, was motivated by malice. An alleged data breach had occurred and Ms Redmond

believe that one of the Social Workers that she was managing was responsible. Ms Redmond asked the panel to consider that the complaints against her were sponsored by a tit-for-tat retaliation for her pursuing the data breach issue. The panel considered that the evidence did not support this proposition. Complaints by the social worker who was managed by Ms Redmond were made at least six weeks before the alleged data breach.

Office dynamics

140. The panel considered whether there was a basis to support that the complaints against Ms Redmond had been inflated or distorted by a mean-spirited response by social workers who resented incomers, unfamiliar working practices, and a new management style. The panel recognised that Ms Redmond had been identified as a manager who was unapproachable at times and perhaps more business-like than her predecessor. The panel considered however that this did not explain Ms Redmond's colleagues concerns about her. In any event, Ms Redmond's co-workers impressed the panel as being willing to adapt to Ms Redmond's fresh approach. There was no suggestion that the panel detected of a collaborative approach by Ms Redmond's co-workers in their evidence. The panel considered them to be objective witnesses who reported their complaints factually.

Lack of training

141. Ms Redmond had accepted some of the allegations in the case against her. She explained in her written response and in her written submissions that she felt unsupported by her seniors when she was beginning her first management role. She said that her training and induction was inadequate and that this background explained both the admitted matters and was a factor in the other complaints raised against her which she did not accept.
142. The panel recognised that the unit in which Ms Redmond worked was very busy. The picture was of the unit which received urgent matters daily for immediate attention which had to be accommodated in the existing workload, all of which was pressing and related to child protection or children in need matters. Priorities had to be established and Ms Redmond had accepted a post based on her past experience in child welfare and her personal development which had been set out in her CV.
143. The panel recognised that the training opportunities available to Ms Redmond during working hours would be limited. Further, the suggestion by KEG, that Ms Redmond had to find time to prioritise her familiarity with internal policies and procedures and training was somewhat optimistic. KEG had not offered to explain how Ms Redmond could secure protected time to achieve this. However, Ms Redmond had explained her own extensive experience in child protection matters.

The panel accepted that the policies and working practices were likely to be familiar to her from her previous working posts. The panel did not consider that a lack of training affected Ms Redmond's ability to meet the tasks demanded of her in a timely way.

The allegations

Allegation 1

144. The panel found this allegation proved by Ms Redmond's admission. Her admission was supported by a number of contemporary documents which established that Ms Redmond had been suspended by her employer and then dismissed prior to the matter coming to the attention of her then regulator, the HCPC.

Allegation 2a

145. The panel found this allegation proved. The panel accepted that a number of witnesses described Ms Redmond's hand gesture differently. Some witnesses recalled Ms Redmond placing her hand palm outwards very close to her colleague's face. KEG described a similar gesture but much less proximate to her face. All of the witnesses however describe the gesture as being dismissive and often accompanied with a curt phrase, tersely delivered, such as "I don't want to hear that". The witnesses agreed that they were treated in a dismissive fashion and that the contribution to the discussion relating to children was understood by them to be worthless to Ms Redmond who preferred her own opinion. The gesture was associated with Ms Redmond rebuffing a view on the matter which was at variance with her own. Ms Redmond's approach towards KEG could have been explained by KEG being a very senior colleague where the others were Ms Redmond's subordinates.

146. The panel considered that this was neither appropriate nor effective communication by Ms Redmond. In the panel's view Ms Redmond's communications were disrespectful and unprofessional.

Allegation 2b

147. There was a live dispute between EB's evidence and Ms Redmond's written response. The panel preferred the version offered in sworn testimony by EB. She explained that the incident arose as EB had been complemented by another worker who said that she would miss EB during her upcoming annual leave. Ms Redmond then intruded, unasked, interjecting to the effect that the co-workers view was wrong and that EB made no positive contribution to the work of the unit.

148. EB said that she felt belittled and demeaned. The panel considered that EB's straightforward and unembellished recounting of the incident provided a simple and natural explanation for her reaction. Ms Redmond's written response which attempted to neutralise the expression was not credible. Further, the panel concluded that Ms Redmond's written response supported EB's account, unintentionally. In the panel's view, Ms Redmond's response contained an inference that EB had misunderstood or exaggerated the incident, which was consistent with EB's impression that Ms Redmond disregarded her abilities and judgement. Ms Redmond's written response carried a disguised dismissiveness of her former colleague, EB.

Allegation 2c

149. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. Ms Redmond accepted that the incident occurred and the words were used by her towards EB. KEG observed in her testimony that this was not an appropriate statement to make towards a colleague. The panel considered that it was entirely inappropriate. The expression demonstrated poor judgement and decision making by Ms Redmond.

Allegation 2d

150. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. The panel had available to it the supervision policy document which included the instruction that the managers supervision of co-workers was to be conducted as a safe space for the co-workers self-reflection. It was to be used as an opportunity to improve professional practice by encouraging insightful self-evaluation and by identifying meaningful means of improving things which might have been done better. The panel considered that co-workers were in a vulnerable position during supervision.

151. The context of supervision as explained above was intended to prevent supervision from becoming misused. The panel was satisfied that Ms Redmond had conducted supervisions in an entirely negative way. The panel found that there was nothing developmental and reflective which will allow the co-worker to take away meaningful and supportive reflections. The witnesses gave a consistent and troubling narrative of coming to dread what should have been a valuable and professionally instructive process. Some workers had taken sick leave, explaining in their reasons that Ms Redmond's supervisions were demeaning, with sick leave partly been used as a means of avoiding this. EG in particular went to some lengths to avoid supervision by Ms Redmond.

152. The supervision protocol required that Ms Redmond would make written notes of the supervisions available to the supervised co-worker within 24 hours. All of the witnesses being supervised complained that this had never occurred. Some

supervision notes had been reluctantly and incrementally produced, but late and were made in handwritten abbreviated note format. The witnesses complained that these notes were inadequate and were also inaccurate in that they did not properly reflect what had been discussed during supervision. Ms Redmond had submitted in writing that she had provided supervision notes contrary to the sworn testimony. The panel accepted the evidence of the live witnesses which provided complimentary but differently expressed testimony to the same effect.

Allegation 2e

153. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. The witness EG gave a simple and persuasive account of the words being directed towards her during an interaction which had become routinely unpleasant and dismissive. Ms Redmond again asserted in her written submission that the witness had misheard or misremembered what was said. Ms Redmond's assertion, not given in sworn testimony, was that she had simply explained that she had a headache. The panel considered that this was another instance of the somewhat condescending approach adopted by Ms Redmond towards her co-workers, their opinions, perceptions, and complaints about her. This had the effect of supporting the workers' account of Ms Redmond's inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour.

Allegation 3a

154. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. Ms Redmond had admitted not conducting a strategy discussion which she was expected to chair, contrary to the management instruction.

Allegation 3b

155. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. KEG had discussed the relevant policy. She explained the circumstances which made the strategy meeting necessary and the requirement for Ms Redmond to chair that meeting. There was a foreseeable possibility of harm to the service users which ought to have been explored at the strategy meeting. The mother of the children at risk, was known to have begun slapping the children in the face. When the matter first came to the unit's attention, a decision had been made by the MASH that the issue could be dealt with by referring the matter to the Early Help unit, a separate unit which was on the same floor as a unit that KEG was responsible for. KEG regarded this as a wrong decision, and she explained succinctly and cogently her reasons for coming to that view. KEG supported her views by reference to the policy which stated that if there was reasonable evidence of harm to a child a strategy meeting should be convened. KEG noted that there was a history of involvement with this family including neglectful parenting. KEG was clear that appropriate procedure had not

been followed in this case at the beginning and said that the relevant threshold which pointed towards a strategy meeting was not in doubt.

156. KEG recalled that Ms Redmond had disputed with her that the wrong decision had been made. Ms Redmond continued to take that view in her written submissions. Ms Redmond, then a new manager although an experienced social worker, persisted in her views, in the face of opposing views by senior and equally experienced social workers. Accordingly, the panel accepted that Ms Redmond had not agreed to hold the strategy meeting.

Allegation 4a

157. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. The panel found that there was clear and consistent testimony, contrary to Ms Redmond's written assertions, that a very significant backlog of assessments had built up on Ms Redmond's desktop, which had not been actioned. The expectation was that assessments, which related to child protection and children in need matters would be authorised very quickly so that the steps identified in the assessments could be implemented efficiently. The panel had available to it a number of contemporary emails expressing concern and dissatisfaction regarding Ms Redmond's failure to action authorisations in a timely way. There was documentary evidence that on at least one occasion an essential meeting had taken place and concluded while the assessment remained dormant on Ms Redmond's desktop.

158. Ms Redmond accepted the truth of this complaint to an extent. She sought to explain it as her not having been properly trained on the relevant software. However, the panel accepted evidence that EB and one of her co-workers had cleared the significant backlog on Ms Redmond system over the course of a bank holiday weekend in May 2019. Ms Redmond therefore began afresh thanks to her workers' efforts. Despite that, and despite reminders and offers of assistance from KEG, Ms Redmond's backlog of assessments built up again to the same unacceptable extent. At this point, Ms Redmond had the opportunity of seeking assistance to help her understand how to use the system properly, if that really was the root cause of the backlog. She did not do this. Complaints continued as before, and as before Ms Redmond dismissed or ignored them.

Allegation 4b

159. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. Ms Redmond admitted this allegation and her admission was supported by witness testimony. Ms Redmond asserted in her written submissions that she had employed the wrong pro forma. The witnesses said however that Ms Redmond's approach to records on the relevant software reflected her neglect rather than her misunderstanding of the software.

The panel had access to the minutes from Ms Redmond's handover with her predecessor in which she had been supported by her predecessor in the first week of her appointment. It was noted in the minutes that management oversight should be recorded on the Care First system during supervision of families and that Ms Redmond should ensure that there is regular oversight recorded following any decision made.

Allegation 4c

i.

160. The panel found this element of the limb of allegation proved. The panel accepted the testimony of KEG that plans of action have to be completed in respect of service users which are 'smart'. KEG's position was that nothing in the plans prepared could be described as smart. The panel considered that the plans did not contain any methodical analysis of the issues to be addressed, a plan for how those matters were to be tackled, by whom and within what timeframe. The plans which did exist were, as KEG observed, little more than an observation that particular difficulties had been identified. The relevant management decision for service user HB dated 8 April 2019 fell far short of an appropriate plan of action.

ii.

161. The panel found this limb of allegation proved. Service user LRM was a new-born child already subject to child protection measures. The period of time which had elapsed without the child being seen was a cause of real concern. Other complimentary agencies including health visitors were visiting the child who was still in hospital. No plan and no child protection measures were in place during most of the time that the child was in hospital. The plan that finally was prepared by Ms Redmond was nowhere near sufficient to meet the issues in this case. The child had significant care needs and what had been done was far from an appropriate plan. Among other deficiencies, there was no timely coordination of the multiplication of services visiting the child and its parents. There was the potential for the child's parents to become overwhelmed and to respond badly to attempts to help them as a result.

iii.

162. The panel found this allegation proved. Ms Redmond's colleague prepared the case notes and suggested that a strategy meeting was necessary. The concerns raised included that the child had been taken to hospital rather than to a child protection medical visit. The plan that Ms Redmond was responsible for fell very far short of what was necessary in the circumstances.

Allegation 4d

163. The panel found this allegation proved. Ms Redmond had admitted the facts. The newly qualified social worker was still undergoing her ASYE. The panel accepted the witness testimony of KEG that it was wholly inappropriate for such a new social worker to be sent to conduct such an important visit alone and unsupervised. The visit by the new social worker did not take place because EB intervened to prevent it.

Allegation 4e

164. The panel found this limb of allegation proved in respect of the first two elements, but not in respect of the third, as noted below.

i.

165. The panel had not been provided with testimony which identified a timescale within which cases such as child protection or child in need should be allocated to an appropriate social worker. The panel therefore relied on the professional judgement expressed in the witnesses' testimony, which the panel accepted as both credible and reliable. Criticism had been expressed by the witnesses that one service user, RJJ, had come to the attention of the unit on 7 May 2019 but was not seen until 7 June 2019. The witnesses were consistent that the time delay involved was inappropriate. There was a live disagreement in this case as to the appropriate threshold for action. KEG was clear that such a disagreement required to be 'thrashed out' very quickly by Ms Redmond with the Early Help unit which shared the floor with Ms Redmond's unit.

ii.

166. The concerns in relation to child service user LS(2) included the child's carers misusing alcohol and the child suffering unexplained injuries which the child was reluctant to discuss. Ms Redmond's inaction resulted in this case not being moved forward. Ms Redmond asserted in her written responses that she had asked the duty social worker to visit. Ms Redmond however had not followed this up or pressed for progress. On this occasion, the panel did not accept Ms Redmond's assertion. The panel was satisfied that there was not a timely re-allocation of this matter in circumstances where the child was very plainly at risk.

iii.

167. In this case, a social worker colleague that Ms Redmond was responsible for supervising had been allocated the case but had gone on sick leave before action could be taken. The issue for the panel was its assessment of the evidence relating to the appropriateness or otherwise of a re-allocation decision. The panel observed that there appeared to be a disagreement on this. The case was re-allocated just

before the core group meeting. Ms Redmond justified her re-allocation decision on the basis that the social worker identified, EG, had some prior involvement with the family. Timescales were very tight. The panel was not persuaded that it would have been appropriate for Ms Redmond to take case ownership of this matter as a team manager. In this case, the panel was not able to say that this element of the allegation was proved on balance of probabilities.

Allegation 5a

168. The panel found this limb proved. Ms Redmond admitted that she had not provided supervision to her co-workers in a timely manner.

Allegation 5b

169. The panel found this limb proved. The facts were not in dispute. The panel was satisfied that Ms Redmond allocated the case to EB on the day that the report was due to be presented to the court. The panel did not accept Ms Redmond's unsworn assertion that she had allocated the case earlier than that to EB.
170. The panel understood that Ms Redmond could have offered to assist EB to complete the report given the urgency of its completion for court. The panel was unable to find, and Ms Redmond had not offered to produce, any emails or contemporary documents setting out how she would support EB. The panel accepted EB's recollection that Ms Redmond had refused to give her any practical assistance, using the words *'it's not my problem'*.

Allegation 5c

171. The panel found this limb proved. Ms Redmond had not offered to challenge the evidence in relation to this limb. The panel was satisfied by the clear and consistent testimony of witnesses that payments which should have been authorised by Ms Redmond through the appropriate software had not been done. Ms Redmond appeared to assert that she did not know how to operate the software. This assertion was not supported by the contemporary documents which included an email dated 4 June 2019 to KEG from a senior colleague in which it was said,

'In regards to financial payments, I have requisitions on Agresso that have not been authorised since early May 2019. I showed her how to do this and suggested that she check Agresso daily just to keep on top of things. This is clearly not happening and on Friday she once again asked me to show her how to use Agresso. Unfortunately, she has not been available for me to show her to date.'

Even taking Ms Redmond's assertion at face value, the panel was clear that she had not taken advantage of training opportunities. The email concluded *"I will continue to offer support to Janet but whether she wishes to accept it is another matter."*

Allegation 6

172. The panel found this allegation proved. The witnesses were consistent and clear that the events as narrated had occurred. Service user CK was a 17 year old child who was, in effect, homeless having been refused a return to the emergency accommodation offered to her under another statutory provision, allegedly because of her behaviour. Ms Redmond did not appear to materially dispute that she had instructed a social worker to collect CK from school before CK's father had signed the necessary section 20 authorisation. Ms Redmond had supported an instruction, when challenged, that CK's father would sign the authorisation later, after CK had been removed under section 20. Ms Redmond's co-worker refused to carry out this instruction because in the absence of a signed authorisation, it would have been unlawful for her to do so.

Finding and reasons on grounds

173. Having found all of the allegations proved with the exception of allegation 4(e) iii, the panel went on to decide whether, under rule 32, Ms Redmond's actions amounted to one of the statutory grounds for impairment in terms of regulation 25(2); in this case misconduct and, concerning allegations 3, 4, and 5; a lack of competence.

174. Ms Atkin made an application to introduce a new document for the panel's consideration at this stage. This was an HCPC final hearing decision and order in respect of Ms Redmond following a hearing which concluded on 9 March 2016. The allegations which were found were:

Whilst registered as a Social Worker employed as a Case Manager / Court Officer by Nottingham City Council in the Youth Offending Team from April 2010 to June 2012, you:

1. Did not complete assessments in a timely manner and/or maintain adequate documentation in respect of the following service users:

- a) Service User 1
- b) Service User 2
- c) Service User 3
- d) Service User 4
- e) Service User 7
- f) Service User 10
- g) ...
- h) Service User 12
- a) ...
- j) ...
- k) Service User 15

- l) Service User 16
- m) ...
- n) Service User 18
- o) Service User 20
- p) Service User 21
- q) Service User 22

2. On 22 and/or 23 November 2011 you failed to file an intensive supervision and surveillance assessment in court in respect of Service User 5.

3. Were unable to practice autonomously in that you did not manage your caseload without the frequent intervention of your managers.

175. Ms Atkin submitted that the decision, which is a public document, is helpful to the panel at this stage in deciding on whether the facts found proved in this case amount either to misconduct or to a lack of competence.

176. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that in the same way that the panel was not bound to follow the decision making of a workplace disciplinary hearing, the panel was also not bound to follow the decision making process in the HCPC proceedings. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond's regulatory history was relevant for the panel's decision making on the nature and quality of Ms Redmond's actions in this case. She submitted that the panel was entitled to find that Ms Redmond's regulatory history revealed a pattern and theme of conduct which had been repeated in 2019 when she was employed as a manager with the council.

177. Ms Atkin told the panel that Social Work England had provided a copy of the HCPC decision to Ms Redmond in a notice which advised her that, if material facts are found proved, an application would be made to introduce this document at this stage. Ms Redmond had not responded to that notice and had not objected.

178. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser. The panel recognised that its decision making at this stage in the proceedings was one of judgement and impression, and not restricted by the rules of evidence that applied at the fact-finding stage. The panel reminded itself that its obligation to protect the public extended to ensuring that its consideration of misconduct and impairment was not artificially restricted by excluding relevant material.

179. The panel considered that it could admit the HCPC decision at this stage to ensure that all of the relevant matters for deciding misconduct and impairment, together with anything that flowed from that were available to the panel. The panel considered that it was not unfair to admit the document at this stage and that Ms Redmond would not be caused prejudice.

180. Ms Atkin submitted that all of the matters found proved, individually and taken together could be regarded as misconduct, particularly when seen against the context of findings of misconduct from 2016. The issues had resurfaced despite action having been taken by Ms Redmond's then regulator to restrict her practice. Ms Redmond had returned to unrestricted practice, taking up a role as a manager and had repeated actions which amounted to misconduct.
181. Ms Atkin said that there was no dispute by Ms Redmond that she should have made the registrar at Social Work England aware of her suspension and dismissal. She said that having particular regard for Ms Redmond's regulatory history, her failure to do so was misconduct.
182. Ms Atkin submitted that effective communication is a core skill for social workers. Ms Redmond had said that she understood the need for good and effective communication. Although Ms Redmond had denied the allegations, she had accepted that (had the hand gestures been made) it would amount to conduct which was unacceptable and unprofessional.
183. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond had demonstrated an unwillingness to change her approach even when challenged by very senior colleagues. Ms Redmond had defended her approach to her co-workers by suggesting that her decision not to engage with EB had been a temporary strategy to allow their professional relationship to become established. Despite Ms Redmond's regulatory history, she had issued instructions that Service user CK should be collected despite the absence of a section 20 authority to do so or any other lawful warrant. Ms Redmond had placed colleagues at risk in issuing these instructions and had demonstrated that despite knowing the appropriate procedure, she had insisted that her instructions should be conducted.
184. In all of the circumstances, Ms Atkin submitted that the panel was entitled to find all of the allegations found proved amounted to misconduct. She said that it was open to the panel to consider whether the conduct set out and found proved in allegations 3, 4 and 5 was explained by a lack of competence.
185. The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser. The panel recognised that with findings of lack of competence, it must be satisfied that the allegations found proved was a fair sample of Ms Redmond's professional practice over a sufficient period to allow it to be satisfied in this regard. The panel considered that the four months of professional practice and the review, when Ms Redmond was in the post of manager for the first time, spanned the whole period of her practice in that capacity. Allegations 3, 4, and 5 did, in the panel's view, give a sufficiently broad understanding of Ms Redmond's capability in the post of manager which would leave it open to it to make findings of a lack of competence.

186. The panel recognised that it was not open to finding a lack of competence and also misconduct in respect of the same matters. A lack of competence was an alternative finding open to it with allegations 3, 4, and 5.
187. The panel understood that a finding of misconduct was a matter of the panel's independent professional judgement. There is no statutory definition of misconduct, but the panel had regard to the guidance of Lord Clyde in *Roylance v GMC (No2)* [2001] 1 AC 311: *'Misconduct is a word of general effect, involving some act or omission which falls short of what would be proper in the circumstances. The standard of propriety may often be found by reference to the rules and standards ordinarily required to be followed by a ...practitioner in the particular circumstances.'* The conduct must be serious in that it falls well below the required standards. The panel recognised that breaches of standards in and of themselves might not necessarily amount to misconduct.
188. At the time that Ms Redmond was employed as a manager at the council, the professional standards which applied to her were the HCPC Standards of Proficiency. The panel considered that the following standards were engaged in its decision on whether Ms Redmond's conduct amounted to misconduct:-
- 1. Be able to practise safely and effectively within their scope of practice**
 - 1.1 know the limits of their practice and when to seek advice or refer to another professional*
 - 1.2 Recognise the need to manage their own workload and resources effectively and be able to practise accordingly*
 - 1.3 Be able to undertake an assessment of risk, need and capacity and respond appropriately.*
 - 1.5 be able to recognise signs of harm, abuse and neglect and know how to respond appropriately, including recognising situations which require immediate action.*
 - 2. Be able to practice within the legal and ethical boundaries of their profession**
 - 2.1 Understand current legislation applicable to social work with adults, children, young people and families*
 - 2.3 Understand the need to protect, safeguard, promote and prioritise the wellbeing of children, young people and vulnerable adults*
 - 2.6 Be able to exercise authority as a social worker within the appropriate legal and ethical frameworks and boundaries*
 - 3. Be able to maintain fitness to practise**
 - 3.1 Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct.*

- 4. Be able to practise as an autonomous professional, exercising their own professional judgement**
- 4.1 be able to assess a situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and call upon the required knowledge and experience to deal with it
- 4.3 Recognise that they are personally responsible for, and must be able to justify, their decisions and recommendations.
- 4.4 be able to make and receive referrals appropriately
- 8. Be able to communicate effectively**
- 8.2 Be able to demonstrate effective and appropriate skills in communicating advice, instruction, information and professional opinion to colleagues, service users and carers
- 9. Be able to work appropriately with others**
- 9.1 Understand the need to build and sustain professional relationships with service users, carers and colleagues as both an autonomous practitioner and collaboratively with others
- 10. Be able to maintain records appropriately**
- 10.1 Be able to keep accurate, comprehensive, and comprehensible records in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols, and guidelines
- 10.2 Recognise the need to manage records and all other information in accordance with applicable legislation, protocols, and guidelines
- 11. Be able to reflect on and review practice**
- 11.1 Understand the value of critical reflection on practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection appropriately
- 11.2 Recognise the value of supervision, case reviews and other methods of reflection and review
- 12. Be able to assure the quality of their practice**
- 12.1 Be able to use supervision to support and enhance the quality of their social work practice
- 12.3 Be able to engage in evidence-informed practice, evaluate practice systematically and participate in audit procedures
- 14. Be able to draw on appropriate knowledge and skills to inform practice**
- 14.3 Be able to prepare, implement, review, evaluate, revise and conclude plans to meet needs and circumstances in conjunction with service users and carers.

14.9 Be able to change their practice as needed to take account of new developments or changing contexts

189. The panel considered that the following HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics were engaged:-

2. *Communicate appropriately and effectively*

2.5 You must work in partnership with colleagues, sharing your skills, knowledge and experience where appropriate, for the benefit of service users and carers

3. *Work within the limits of your knowledge and skills*

3.3 You must keep your knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to your scope of practice through continuing professional development.

3.4 You must keep up to date with and follow the law, our guidance and other requirements relevant to your practice.

3.5 You must ask for feedback and use it to improve your practice.

4. *Delegate appropriately*

4.1 You must only delegate work to someone who has the knowledge, skills and experience needed to carry it out safely and effectively.

4.2 You must continue to provide appropriate supervision and support to those you delegate work to.

6. *Manage risk*

6.1 You must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to service users, carers and colleagues as far as possible.

6.2 You must not do anything, or allow someone else to do anything, which could put the health or safety of a Service User, carer or colleague at unacceptable risk.

7. *Report concerns about safety*

7.2 You must support and encourage others to report concerns and not prevent anyone from raising concerns.

7.3 You must take appropriate action if you have concerns about the safety and wellbeing of children or vulnerable adults.

7.6 You must acknowledge and act on concerns raised to you, investigating, escalating or dealing with those concerns where it is appropriate for you to do so.

9. *Be honest and trustworthy*

9.5 You must tell us as soon as possible if:

- you have had any restriction placed on your practice, or been suspended or dismissed by an employer because of concerns about your conduct or competence.

10. Keep records of your work

10.1 You must keep full, clear, and accurate records for everyone you care for, treat, or provide other services to.

10.2 You must complete all records promptly and as soon as possible after providing care, treatment, or other services.

190. The panel recognised that there was no allegation of dishonesty made against Ms Redmond. Standard 9.5 above was relevant only to whether taken alone or in the context of the other matters proved and Ms Redmond's regulatory history (which had not been disputed), her actions in Allegation 1 were sufficiently serious to amount to misconduct.

191. The panel decided to treat each allegation separately because it would be fair to Ms Redmond. Each allegation in turn was considered by the panel in the light of all of the information available including Ms Redmond's regulatory history. The panel considered that in that respect, each allegation carried the potential to be misconduct in its own right. Accordingly, the panel began by considering misconduct.

192. Allegation 1. The panel considered that Ms Redmond's actions in not notifying the registrar at HCPC of her suspension in 2019 and the registrar at Social Work England of her dismissal in 2020 were not oversights on her part. These were deliberate choices made by Ms Redmond who must have understood the importance of advising the respective registrars of the significant matters. In the panel's view, every registrant is expected to be aware of the need to disclose these especially important matters to the registrar. Ms Redmond's actions were serious and amounted to misconduct.

193. Allegation 2. The panel considered that Ms Redmond's dismissive action towards her professional colleagues, including very senior colleagues was misconduct. It was concerning that Ms Redmond had expressed the view about an experienced social worker in her team that she had nothing good to say about her colleague. Ms Redmond must have understood that her actions harmed EB's ability to practice safely and effectively as a social worker, particularly in the light of her obligation as a manager to provide EB with a safe place for reflective practice and a supportive environment to discuss EB's concerns and professional judgements about vulnerable service users.

194. Ms Redmond chose to continue with her hurtful and damaging course of conduct even when told by others that her actions were inappropriate. The panel did not accept that Ms Redmond's actions were a temporary strategy to support a developing relationship with EB. Further, her misuse of supervision of her team members fell far short of what was expected of her as a manager and as a social worker. Ms Redmond's actions in telling a professional colleague that she was managing that the colleague "gave her a headache" was unprofessional and out of place in a social work team. The panel decided that individually and taken together Ms Redmond's actions fell far short of what was expected of her and amounted to misconduct.
195. Allegation 3. The panel considered that, in its judgement, Ms Redmond's actions amounted to misconduct rather than a lack of competence. Ms Redmond's defiance of clear management instructions did not suggest an absence of capability, but was a deliberate, knowing choice on Ms Redmond's part. The panel considered that Ms Redmond understood what she was expected to do. Had she disagreed with KEG's decisions, Ms Redmond was obliged to discuss that openly, frankly, and professionally.
196. Taking all of the matters in allegation 3 together, Ms Redmond's actions in putting a child at risk despite knowing better was misconduct on her part. Ms Redmond was a new manager but she was a very experienced social worker and the issues raised in allegation 3(b) took place in the context of Ms Redmond's managerial position, but also fell within the scope of practice of any experienced social worker. Ms Redmond's decisions were not explained by a lack of competence and were explained by misconduct.
197. Allegation 4. The panel recognised that not all of the matters had been proved and accordingly did not consider allegation 4(e) iii. the panel decided that Ms Redmond fully understood what was expected of her in all of these situations. In the panel's judgement, Ms Redmond had made a decision not to find time to prioritise her work appropriately. Time management and balancing the demands of a busy social worker are basic social worker skills. In the panel's judgement, Ms Redmond's actions were deliberate misconduct.
198. The panel recognised that Ms Redmond was acting in a different role, as a social work manager rather than a social worker. However, Ms Redmond had previously been an advanced social work practitioner. In the panel's view, any social worker would understand that if they struggled to prioritise work and were at risk of

being overwhelmed, the vulnerable service users that they were responsible for might be placed at risk.

199. Ms Redmond acknowledged that she struggled to adapt to her new role and juggle the competing demands on her time in a busy team. Any social worker would have identified an obligation to reach out to professional colleagues for support and assistance. It was clear however that Ms Redmond had deliberately rejected that course of action. She had been offered several opportunities to find her feet including having the benefit of a one-week handover with her predecessor. She had been offered training on the relevant software which was intended to help her clear the backlog of assessments for approval on her desktop, without repetition. She was given targeted training on the software to permit her to approve payments in a timely fashion. She had rejected or avoided opportunities to repeat training or to seek out support.
200. Allegation 5. The panel considered that in different circumstances, Ms Redmond's actions concerning the rule 12 statement and non-authorisation of payments could be explained by a lack of competence. The panel considered that it was not possible to explain Ms Redmond's actions in this way. Had Ms Redmond been unable to operate the appropriate software effectively she should have taken advantage of the opportunities made available to her to address her lack of skill. Further, Ms Redmond's actions taken together in this allegation included that she had deliberately decided not to record adequately and accurately supervision records.
201. Ms Redmond was observed to make typed entries on her desktop computer during supervision, giving her professional colleagues the impression that supervision notes were being made. Ms Redmond was unable, when challenged, to produce any computer-based notes. The extent of Ms Redmond's notes were abbreviated handwritten observations which Ms Redmond's professional colleagues found to be inaccurate and inadequate. The notes did not reflect, in the recollection, the discussions that had taken place.
202. Ms Redmond had not used the Agresso software appropriately. Ms Redmond had repeatedly failed to authorise appropriate payments in a timely fashion which caused significant difficulties to her professional colleagues. Her actions put vulnerable service users at risk. She neglected training opportunities and decided not to accept offers of help. The panel decided that Ms Redmond's actions fell far short of what was expected of her and amounted to misconduct.

203. Allegation 6. The panel considered that Ms Redmond's choices and actions were not explained by a lack of competence. Ms Redmond although new to the role of manager was a very experienced social worker and was familiar with the issues which arose in this situation. In this case, the panel considered that the sole matter of judgement for it to determine was whether Ms Redmond's actions were sufficiently serious to amount to misconduct.
204. The panel was not satisfied that Ms Redmond's actions were sufficiently serious in this situation to amount to misconduct. The service user, CK, was a 17-year-old who could consent to her removal. CK had become a priority because the temporary accommodation offered to her was no longer available, allegedly because of CK's conduct.
205. CK was at school and the school day was ending, at which point CK would be expected to vacate the buildings. The options for Ms Redmond and her team were unenviable. Ms Redmond had decided to instruct that CK should be collected without appropriate lawful authority. CK's father was allegedly too unwell to sign the authority at this point but was likely to do so later. In the panel's judgement, this was not as critical an issue as Ms Redmond's colleagues believe it to be. CK could have agreed to come voluntarily with the social worker sent to collect her. CK was homeless, and the potential existed that she might disappear untraced unless action was taken to secure accommodation for her immediately. In the panel's view, substantial questions might have been asked of the council's actions had such a situation arisen.
206. In the panel's judgement, Ms Redmond's management of the situation was suboptimal but not incompetent. Ms Redmond's dealings with her professional colleagues in this situation may have been influenced by Ms Redmond already having alienated her professional colleagues. However, in the panel's judgement, Ms Redmond's decision making regarding the matter at hand, was not sufficiently serious or fell short of what might have been expected of her, as to amount to misconduct.

Finding and reasons on current impairment

207. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond's fitness to practise is currently impaired. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that its decision is a matter of professional judgement for the panel. Ms Atkin told the panel that a finding of impairment was justified based on Ms Redmond's lack of insight and reflection and her repeated misconduct despite having been subject to earlier disciplinary measures taken by the HCPC in 2016. Similar themes had been repeated by Ms Redmond for four months in 2019 during her employment as a manager with the council.

208. Ms Atkin also submitted that a finding of impairment was necessary to support the wider public interest aspects of the statutory objective. Public trust and confidence in the profession would be undermined if the panel did not make a finding of impairment in the circumstances. Further, standards for social workers in England would not be declared and upheld.
209. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond's failings were remediable, in theory. However, Ms Redmond had demonstrated that she repeatedly rejected offers of assistance to improve her professional practice. She had refused to adapt or change her style of work and management even when the need to do so was pointed out to her on many occasions. It ought to have been obvious to an experienced social worker in a promoted post that the approach being taken by Ms Redmond was harmful to her professional colleagues. Ms Redmond however had not demonstrated the necessary level of insight which would suggest that Ms Redmond's failings could be remedied.
210. Ms Atkin submitted that the opposite was true. Ms Redmond had already undergone a disciplinary process for similar matters including an obstinate refusal to adapt her style of work and practice even with offers of help and assistance to allow her to do so. Ms Redmond had not shown the necessary degree of recognition of the potential harm and risks that service users might be placed in by her continued actions.
211. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond's declared strategy of having as little as possible to do with her professional colleague EB had the potential to reduce Ms Redmond's ability to safeguard children and vulnerable service users. Effective communication with professional colleagues is an important aspect of safeguarding and is a fundamental tenet of the profession. Further, Ms Redmond had made the working lives of other professional colleagues intolerable, to the point that they had to take sick leave, partly to avoid the damaging experience of Ms Redmond's supervision. These absences were likely to have an immediate impact on the unit's ability to act promptly in response to emergencies and to promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of vulnerable service users.
212. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond had shown only a limited ability to reflect on the shortcomings in her professional practice. One example was the MASH unit's decision to refer a child, probably the victim of an assault at home, to the Early Help unit. Ms E G later became aware of that decision and took steps to reverse it appropriately. At that point, further information had become available to Ms Redmond suggesting that Early Help was inappropriate. Despite that, Ms Redmond persisted in maintaining that a decision to refer to Early Help was the correct decision. Ms Redmond did not agree with Ms E.G.'s decision. Ms Redmond had maintained that position in her written responses for this hearing.

213. Ms Atkin submitted that in the circumstances, Ms Redmond was unlikely to change her approach in future, spontaneously or voluntarily.
214. Ms Atkin submitted that Ms Redmond's attitude and actions should not be regarded as confined to her four-month period of employment as a manager. The issues had been evident in 2016 as set out in the HCPC final hearing determination. Ms Atkin submitted that it was likely in future that Ms Redmond would continue to refuse to adapt, refuse to accept help and be unable to develop insight unless a finding of current impairment was made.
215. Ms Atkin told the panel that Ms Redmond had been supplied with a copy of the panel's determination in respect of misconduct but had not responded. Equally, she had not responded to the panel's determination on the facts.
216. The panel had no submissions from Ms Redmond.
217. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice. The panel took into account relevant passages in the Sanctions Guidance published by Social Work England. It considered whether Ms Redmond's conduct is remediable, whether it has been remedied by her and what was the current risk of repetition. It also considered the wider public interest and the guidance in the case of *CHRE v NMC and Grant* [2011] EWHC 927 that *'the relevant panel should generally consider not only whether the practitioner continues to present a risk to members of the profession in his or her current role, but also whether the need to uphold proper professional standards and public confidence in the profession would be undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in the particular circumstances.'*
218. The panel considered the material that pointed to the level of Ms Redmond's insight. There was some evidence before the panel that Ms Redmond has reflected on her past behaviour which gave rise to the determination made by the HCPC panel in 2016. Ms Redmond had been suspended from practice for nine months by the panel. Ms Redmond had returned to practice without restriction. She must have been able to persuade a reviewing panel that she had fully reflected on her past misconduct and had taken steps to ensure that it would not be repeated. However, that had not been sustained and had resulted in this matter arising out of only four months of employment as a manager at the council.
219. Ms Redmond had not supplied the panel with any testimonials or references. In her written submission dated February 2022 she stated that she had attended CPD courses and had a record of this. However, Ms Redmond had not supported that assertion by producing anything in confirmation to the panel. The panel considered that it was troubling that Ms Redmond had again become the subject of regulatory

proceedings for matters which were closely similar to failings which had occurred in an earlier period of employment as a senior social worker and advanced practitioner.

220. Ms Redmond has had 20 years of experience as a social worker. The panel had some evidence from Ms Redmond's written submissions of a limited appreciation of the extent of her shortcomings. A limited measure of insight had been shown by Ms Redmond in submissions made to interim order review panels in April and July 2022, which had been made available to the panel for this hearing. However, Ms Redmond's insight fell far short of what would have been sufficient to persuade the panel that Ms Redmond had;

- grasped all of the risks that she had created for children and vulnerable service users,
- the impact of her inappropriate style of communication,
- that she had reflected meaningfully and measurably, and
- had demonstrated practical steps which she could take to ensure that, finally, there would be no repetition.

221. The panel was concerned that Ms Redmond had insisted in her written submissions that a large measure of responsibility for these matters lay with others. Ms Redmond asserted that she had not been trained to conduct her manager role effectively. She had suggested in writing that her professional colleagues acted malignly towards her. Ms Redmond had not disputed that two of her professional colleagues, including witness EB, had devoted a bank holiday weekend in May 2019 to clear a significant backlog of assessments from her desktop, that Ms Redmond had allowed to build-up unattended. The panel had no evidence of Ms Redmond's appreciation of the effort that her professional colleagues had taken in dealing with unfamiliar matters in their own time. Ms Redmond had shown no appreciation of the laudable professional commitment demonstrated by this. Instead, Ms Redmond had allowed a similarly large and unsustainable backlog to quickly redevelop. Despite what had already been done, Ms Redmond appeared not to have taken any practical or effective steps to resolve this.

222. The panel considered that Ms Redmond's stubborn insistence that she had not been trained, despite evidence of training that she had refused or avoided and that her professional colleagues were responsible for the criticism she faced was illuminating. It was clear evidence of the unbridged gap between what was required of Ms Redmond to demonstrate insight and what little insight she seemed capable of.

223. The panel took into account the Sanctions Guidance published by Social Work England and in particular pages 8 to 12 which outlined the factors to be taken into account when determining impairment.

224. The panel also took into account the guidance provided in *Cohen v General Medical Council* [2008] EWHC 581. The panel considered:

- (i) whether Ms Redmond's conduct was easily remediable;
- (ii) whether she had remedied it; and
- (iii) whether it was highly unlikely that she would repeat it.

The panel concluded that it would not be easy for to remedy her misconduct, which had revealed a troubling, underlying attitudinal predisposition.

225. In allegation 1, Ms Redmond had not taken the opportunity to explain why she had not disclosed to the registrar her being suspended and then dismissed from employment. In the light of Ms Redmond's earlier hearing at the HCPC, the panel were keen to understand Ms Redmond's thinking then and whether it has changed. Ms Redmond had not offered any explanation for her behaviour which explained or mitigated her conduct in any material way.

226. The panel considered that there had not been any material recognition by Ms Redmond of the extent of her misconduct, and the impact that it had on vulnerable service users, their families, their carers and her professional colleagues.

227. The panel considered and applied the following test borrowing from the Fifth Shipman Report and formulated in the High Court by Cox J in *Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence v Nursing and Midwifery Council and Grant* [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin) at paragraph 76:

'Do our findings of fact in respect of [Ms Redmond's] misconduct, ... show that her fitness to practise is impaired in the sense that she:

has in the past acted and/or is liable to act in the future so as to put a [service user] or at unwarranted risk of harm; and/or

has in the past brought and/or is liable in the future to bring the [social work] profession into disrepute; and/or

has in the past breached and/or is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the [social work] profession; and/or

...'

228. The panel was in no doubt that Ms Redmond's misconduct, in this case, engages the first three limbs in the Grant test.
229. The panel considered that Ms Redmond had not taken the opportunity to wrestle with her lack of insight in four critical areas;
- the risks to which she had exposed children and vulnerable service users,
 - the damage that might be caused to public trust and confidence in the profession arising from her unremedied and unrecognised misconduct, and
 - the response necessary to support and uphold standards for social workers in England,
 - that she understands the impact of her past behaviour, and that she has accepted a need to act differently in the future.
230. The panel considered the test recommended in the case of Grant;

Risk of harm

231. Ms Redmond has acted in the past (as a manager at the council in 2019) in a way to put several vulnerable service users and children at real risk of harm. For the reasons set out above, the panel could not be satisfied that Ms Redmond is not liable to do so in the future. Her superficial insight and entrenched attitudes of belief in the rightness of her actions and approach suggest that repetition in the future is highly likely. Ms Redmond had shown no deeply felt remorse about the issues that mattered in this case and her commitment to ensuring no repetition was (if it existed) unexpressed.

The reputation of the profession

232. Ms Redmond has in the past brought and is liable in the future to bring the profession into disrepute because of her incomplete insight set out above. The panel considered that Ms Redmond had failed to offer any real understanding of the harm that her actions could cause for the reputation of the profession, which is an essential part of the profession's ability to safeguard children and vulnerable service users.

The fundamental tenets of the profession

233. Ms Redmond has in the past and, in the panel's judgement, is liable in the future to breach one of the fundamental tenets of the profession.

234. The taking of decisive and timely action to safeguard children and protect vulnerable service users is one of the profession's fundamental tenets. Ms Redmond had acted contrary to this tenet by her unwillingness to communicate effectively with colleagues, including senior managers. She had resisted clear management instructions. She had isolated and silenced her professional colleagues. She had neglected essential aspects of her manager's role including allowing payments for service users to be unactioned. She had allowed a repeat of an unacceptable backlog of assessment approvals to lie unattended on her computer desktop.
235. The panel considered that Ms Redmond had acted to prioritise her concept of what she was required to do despite the risks that arose from that. It could be said that this was the only matter that Ms Redmond had proved that she really could prioritise. The panel considered that in this situation there remained a risk that Ms Redmond would again decline to adhere to the fundamental tenets of the profession. More is needed from Ms Redmond to satisfy the panel on this. Ms Redmond offered little.
236. The panel next considered the wider public interest considerations including the need to maintain confidence in the profession and to uphold proper professional standards.
237. The panel considered that Ms Redmond's fitness to practise is impaired as a result of her incomplete insight concerning the public interest as set out above.
238. The panel also decided that a finding of impairment was required to mark the seriousness of Ms Redmond's breach of the required standards for social workers, including the breach of fundamental tenets of the profession.
239. The panel found Ms Redmond's fitness to practise is impaired having regard to the need to protect the public about the wider public interest considerations of the statutory objective.

Decision on sanction

240. Ms Atkin submitted that the panel's findings in respect of Ms Redmond's impairment required that a sanction be imposed in order to protect the public. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that the statutory objective of public protection includes protecting vulnerable service users, the public and Ms Redmond's professional colleagues from risk of harm. It extends also to supporting and preserving the public's trust and confidence in the social work profession, and it serves to declare and uphold the standards to which social workers in England are held.
241. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that a sanction was not intended to punish a social worker but to protect the public in a proportionate way and, if possible, to

restore Ms Redmond to unrestricted professional practice. Her professional restoration however depended on Ms Redmond taking the elementary steps of

- first, acknowledging the gravity of her disregard for her duty to communicate effectively with colleagues in order to safeguard children and vulnerable service users,
- second, expressing an appropriate level of regret and remorse, and
- third, beginning practical remediation aimed directly at addressing her attitudes and the professional breakdowns for which she had been responsible.

Ms Atkin asked the panel to consider that Ms Redmond had not shown evidence of having begun to approach any of these things.

242. Ms Atkin addressed the panel on relevant sections of the sanctions guidance published by Social Work England and submitted that the appropriate and proportionate sanction tended towards a removal order rather than a suspension order. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that the sanctions guidance draws a distinction between a shorter period of suspension which would allow Ms Redmond a period of constructive re-evaluation of her professional practice and a longer period which carried the risk of professional deskilling. The latter tends to suggest that a removal order more appropriately protects the public.

243. Ms Atkin pointed out that Ms Redmond had already completed a nine-month suspension final order which elapsed only two years before Ms Redmond took up her manager role with the council. The entrenched attitudes demonstrated by Ms Redmond had not been addressed by her, Ms Atkin said. This was evidenced by the same themes re-emerging in a manager role context in the current allegations. Ms Atkin submitted that these included;

- being resistant to help and guidance even from senior colleagues,
- resolutely adhering to her own professional judgement, even where it was contrary to the evidence,
- an inability to communicate effectively in order to protect vulnerable service users. or at least inflexible unwillingness.

244. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that it has found that harm to service users had been caused by Ms Redmond's actions. The panel had found that the risk of repetition of misconduct causing harm to service users had been judged to be highly likely.

245. Ms Atkin invited the panel to consider that no substantial proof of remorse, only superficial insight and an absence of remediation had been found. Accordingly taking no action, giving advice, or issuing a warning would be inappropriate or unworkable. In any event, such a sanction was regarded as exceptional. No exceptional circumstances existed in Ms Redmond's case.
246. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that its findings in respect of Ms Redmond's underlying attitudinal issues were likely to make a conditions of practice order impractical. That was because conditions of practice were more often appropriate in matters confined solely to clinical failings or ill-health. That was not the case here. Ms Redmond's underlying attitudinal failings suggested that she was unlikely to respond positively and constructively to conditions of practice. In any event, there was such a wide range of issues which called for a restriction in Ms Redmond's practice that conditions of practice quickly became so restrictive as to be unworkable and impractical.
247. Ms Atkin submitted that a suspension order was open to the panel for up to three years. She reminded the panel that Ms Redmond's failings had impacted harmfully on service users.
248. Ms Atkin reminded the panel that a lengthy suspension might have a deskilling effect and can, in certain circumstances, be counter to an effective and safe return to practise. However, in Ms Redmond's case a short suspension might not serve to fully protect the public, including sustaining the public's trust and confidence in the profession.
249. Ms Atkin submitted that one of the aggravating features of Ms Redmond's case included that she had already been the subject of a nine-month period of suspension. This had been ineffective due to Ms Redmond's unwillingness to learn and adapt her practice.
250. The panel accepted the legal adviser's advice.
251. The panel reminded itself that the purpose of imposing a sanction is not to punish Ms Redmond, but to protect the public which included securing the wider public interest of maintaining trust and confidence in the profession. The panel's objective was to consider what sanction, if any, was necessary in order to fully protect the public, applying the least restrictive but equally effective alternative in every case.
252. Before considering the individual options open to it, the panel identified what it considered to be the relevant aggravating and mitigating features in the case.
253. The panel identified the following mitigating factors:

- limited, if undeveloped insight;
- Ms Redmond had engaged in this process until the end of the third day of the hearing. The panel reminded itself that this was no more than her professional duty to assist her regulator. It was however creditable.

254. The panel identified the following aggravating factors:

- Ms Redmond had a previous regulatory history causing harm and risk of harm to vulnerable service users;
- She had not learned from or profited from the 2016 HCPC final hearing determination setting matters out explicitly for her;
- She had not expressed remorse or empathy for the service users that she had endangered and failed;
- There is a real risk of repetition with harmful consequences for service users.

255. The panel had regard to paragraph 1 of the sanctions guidance which states:

‘Social Work England’s overarching objective is to protect the public. We do so by protecting, promoting, and maintaining the health and wellbeing of the public; by promoting and maintaining public confidence in social workers in England; and by promoting and maintaining proper professional standards for social workers in England. Our fitness to practise powers enable us to deliver this overarching objective through proportionate sanctions where an individual social worker’s fitness to practise is impaired.’

256. The panel then went on to consider each of the available sanctions in ascending order of restrictiveness.

257. The panel first considered whether this was an appropriate case for it to take no further action, or to impose an advice or a warning order. In the panel’s view, the misconduct found proved in this case was very serious. The panel had identified a continuing risk to the public caused by Ms Redmond’s continuing lack of insight. Ms Redmond had not remediated her misconduct, nor had she given any indication of a willingness to do so.

258. The panel noted that these sanctions would place no active restriction on Ms Redmond’s practice should she return to the profession. Accordingly, the panel concluded that to take no further action, or to impose an advice or warning order

would be insufficient to protect the public and would fail to address the wider public interest concerns in this case.

259. The panel next considered the imposition of a conditions of practice order. The panel had regard to the sanctions guidance and noted that such orders are more commonly appropriate in cases involving errors in clinical practice, a lack of competence, or ill-health. In this case, misconduct was found.
260. Ms Redmond had not demonstrated any understanding that her failures were rooted in her entrenched attitudinal-based unwillingness to recognise that the needs of very vulnerable people required an open and collaborative communication with professional colleagues. Ms Redmond had not shown any remorse or any commitment to act differently if the opportunity arose. Ms Redmond had subverted the workplace supervision and management process from the outset of a short managerial career which was abruptly ended. Ms Redmond's inadequate insight suggested that a conditions of practice order would be treated in the same way. The panel could have no confidence that Ms Redmond would meaningfully engage with a conditions of practice order.
261. In any event, nothing submitted by Ms Redmond to Social Work England in the period leading up to her disengagement contained any expression of Ms Redmond's wish to embark on the essential, searching steps necessary to attempt to rebuild confidence and trust in her as a social worker. In her written submissions, the blame for these events largely lay with others who appeared to be willing, she believed, to engage in a conspiracy to oust her from her management role only to serve their interests in not being exposed to a new and less relaxed style of management.
262. Ms Redmond had not shown any appreciation that her actions had the potential to erode the public's trust and confidence in the profession. The panel therefore concluded that in all of these circumstances, it was not possible to formulate any workable conditions that would address this misconduct, protect the public or address the wider public interest concerns in Ms Redmond's case.
263. The panel gave careful consideration to the imposition of a suspension order. The panel noted that a suspension order would protect the public as it would temporarily remove Ms Redmond from the register. The panel also noted that in suitable cases, a suspension order could also mark the wider public interest concerns, including upholding standards and maintaining confidence in the profession. The panel had regard to paragraph 96 of the sanctions guidance which states:

'...If the suspension is aimed primarily at maintaining confidence in the profession

or setting the professional standards to be observed, then a sanction of suspension up to one year may be appropriate. Given the risk of deskilling, decision makers should consider whether a case warranting a period of suspension longer than one year on the grounds of public confidence might be more appropriately disposed of by means of a removal order.'

264. The panel also had regard to paragraphs 106-109 of the sanctions guidance. In the panel's view paragraph 106 is of particular significance in this case. It provides:

'Social workers are... also routinely trusted to manage budgets including scarce public resources.'

The panel considered that these observations had direct relevance for Ms Redmond's harmful failure to approve payments for service users on the Agresso system and her failures to prevent a damaging backlog of assessments on the desktop. The consequences of failing to arrange meetings for child protection and failing to approve assessments meant that other scarce resources had to be stretched to cover her failings. Two colleagues had given up a bank holiday weekend to clear an unmanageable backlog, such was their commitment to service users. It was evident from this that the backlog, once unmanageably large, was impossible to resolve within the resources available to the team.

265. Ms Redmond's case had revealed a long list of repeated professional failures largely rooted in her unaddressed attitudinal flaws, despite already being subject to a final order of nine months suspension. The panel was satisfied that these failures in professional obligations not only had the potential to place service users at risk of significant harm but would unquestionably undermine public confidence in the profession.

266. In the panel's view, these circumstances weighed heavily against the imposition of a suspension order that could avoid the risk of professional deskilling due to the length of the order.

267. The panel had no evidence that Ms Redmond had properly reflected on and understood the seriousness of her misconduct. There was nothing material in regard to genuine insight, other than the effects on her of being badly managed, as she saw it. This was not a case where a social worker had been shamed or brought up short by the realisation of her failures. The panel agreed that in all of the circumstances, it would be failing in its duty to protect the public if it were to support Ms Redmond's return to practise.

268. Taking all of the above factors into consideration, the panel concluded that a suspension order, even for the maximum of three years, would not be the appropriate and proportionate sanction in Ms Redmond's case.

269. The panel had particular regard to paragraph 97 of the sanctions guidance which reads:

'A removal order must be made where the adjudicators conclude that no other outcome would be enough to protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession or maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England. A decision to impose a removal order should explain why lesser sanctions are insufficient to meet these objectives.'

270. Accordingly, for the reasons set out above, the panel concluded that a removal order was the only sanction that would sufficiently protect the public, maintain confidence in the profession and maintain proper professional standards of conduct and behaviour for social workers in England.

Interim order

271. Ms Atkin made an application under Schedule 2 paragraph 11(1)(b) of the Regulations for an interim order of suspension for a period of 18 months to cover the appeal period before the substantive order comes into effect, or if Ms Redmond appeals, until such time as the appeal is withdrawn or disposed of. Ms Atkin made the application on the ground of public protection, which includes promoting public confidence in the profession and maintaining proper professional standards.

272. Having heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser, the panel was satisfied that an interim order was necessary to protect the public for the same reasons as set out in the substantive decision, particularly having regard to the risk of repetition and the consequent real risk of significant harm to service users and damage to the public's confidence in the profession.

273. The panel next considered what type of interim order to impose. For the same reasons as set out in the substantive decision, the panel considered that there were no workable conditions, and that conditions would be insufficient to protect the public and address the wider public interest considerations.

274. In all the circumstances, the panel decided to make an interim suspension order for 18 months. In deciding on that length of order (which will expire in 28 days if no appeal is taken) the panel took account of the time that any appeal might take to be heard and resolved.

Right of Appeal

1. Under paragraph 16 (1) (a) of schedule 2, part 5 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018, the Social Worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:
 - (i) to make an interim order, other than an interim order made at the same time as a final order under paragraph 11(1)(b),
 - (ii) not to revoke or vary such an order,
 - (iii) to make a final order.
2. Under paragraph 16 (2) schedule 2, part 5 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018 an appeal must be made within 28 days of the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.
3. Under regulation 9(4), part 3 (Registration of social workers) of the Social Workers Regulations 2018, this order can only be recorded on the register 28 days after the Social Worker was informed of the decision or, if the social worker appeals within 28 days, when that appeal is exhausted.
4. This notice is served in accordance with rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practise Rules 2019.

Review of final orders

5. Under paragraph 15 (2) and 15 (3) of schedule 2, part 4 of the Social Workers Regulations 2018:
 - 15 (2) – The regulator may review a final order where new evidence relevant to the order has become available after the making of the order, or when requested to do so by the social worker.
 - 15 (3) A request by the social worker under sub-paragraph (2) must be made within such period as the regulator determines in rules made under regulation 25(5), and a final order does not have effect until after the expiry of that period.
6. Under rule 16 (aa) of Social Work England's fitness to practise rules, a registered social worker requesting a review of a final order under paragraph 15 of Schedule 2 must make the request within 28 days of the day on which they are notified of the order.