

Social worker: Loretta Mary
Rogers
Registration number: SW14664
Fitness to Practise
Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 7 to 8 January 2026

Hearing venue: Remote

Hearing outcome:

Discontinuance application granted, fitness to practise not impaired, no further action

Introduction and attendees:

1. This is a hearing held under Part 5 of The Social Workers Regulations 2018 (as amended) (“the regulations”).
2. Ms Rogers did not attend and was represented by Mr Short.
3. Social Work England was represented by Mr Kirke, instructed by Capsticks LLP.
4. The panel of adjudicators conducting this review (the “panel”) and the other people involved in it were as follows:

Adjudicators	Role
Lesley White	Chair
Jacqueline Telfer	Social worker adjudicator
John Brookes	Lay adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	Role
Han Granger	Hearings officer
Jo Cooper	Hearings support officer
Zill-e Huma	Legal adviser

Service of notice:

5. The panel had careful regard to the documents contained in the final hearing service bundle as follows:
 - A copy of the notice of the final hearing dated 8 December 2025 and addressed to Ms Rogers at her email address which she provided to Social Work England;
 - An extract from the Social Work England Register as of 8 December 2025 detailing Ms Roger’s registered email address;
 - A copy of a signed statement of service, on behalf of Social Work England, confirming that on 8 December 2025 the writer sent by email to Ms Roger at the address referred to above: notice of hearing and related documents.
6. Having had regard to Rules, 44 and 45 of the FTP Rules 2019 and all of the information before it including the confirmation from Mr Short in relation to the service of notice, the panel was satisfied that notice of this hearing had been served on Ms Rogers in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the FTP Rules 2019.

Proceeding in the absence of the social worker:

7. Mr Kirke invited the panel to proceed with the hearing in the absence of Ms Rogers. He submitted that it was appropriate to do so in light of the confirmation from Mr Short, on behalf of Ms Rogers, that he was fully instructed to proceed in his client’s absence. The

panel was further informed that Ms Rogers had raised no objection to the hearing proceeding in her absence and had expressly consented to that course.

8. The panel took into account that Ms Rogers was represented by a fully instructed representative, that her absence was with her knowledge and consent, and that there was no application for an adjournment. Having reminded itself of the need to exercise caution when proceeding in absence, and having considered the interests of fairness and the public interest in the efficient disposal of proceedings, the panel was satisfied that it was fair and just to proceed with the hearing in the absence of Ms Rogers.

Allegations:

9. *"1. Whilst registered as a social worker:*

a. When, on or around 2 April 2019, Colleague 1 discussed the possibility of Service User A lodging with her:

i. You did not record the conversation;

ii. You did not contact Colleague 2 to let her know what Colleague 1 had said;

iii. You either did not recognise that Colleague 1's judgement might be impaired or, if you did, you failed to take appropriate action by bringing this to the attention of Colleague 2 and/or Colleague 3 and/or the HR department.

b. When, in or around November 2019, you took over management responsibility for the Council's Mental Health Service you did not inform yourself as to what had happened as a result of the prior disclosure(s) relating to Colleague 1's relationship with Service User A. In particular, but not exclusively:

i. You did not check whether there had been any disciplinary process;

ii. You did not raise the issue in the supervision you had with Colleague 3 on or around 7 November 2019.

c. When, on or around 6 January 2020, Colleague 1 made a further disclosure to you about her relationship with Service User A:

i. You did not record the conversation;

ii. You did not inform the Council's HR team;

iii. You did not check whether the contents of Colleague 1's disclosure was already known to Colleague 4 and/or the Council's HR team;

iv. You did not ensure that appropriate action was taken or had already been taken as a result of the information disclosed by Colleague 1;

v. You did not notify and/or seek advice from the safeguarding unit. d. When, on Friday 17 January 2020, you became aware that Colleague 1 had made a further disclosure

about her relationship with Service User A you did not ensure and/or check that Service User A was safeguarded for the weekend.

The matters outlined in paragraph 1 above amount to the statutory ground of misconduct.

Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct.”

Background:

10. At the material time, Ms Rogers was employed as a social worker by West Sussex County Council (“the Council”).
11. Ms Rogers had been employed by the Council since 1999. During that period, she undertook a wide range of frontline and management roles, both directly for the Council and historically while seconded to the Mental Health Trust and the Primary Care Trust. At the time relevant to these proceedings, she held the senior role of Head of Adult Operations for the Council.
12. The concerns in this matter arose from fitness to practise issues involving Virginia (“Ginny”) Morphy, a social worker employed by the Council, who was alleged to have allowed an inappropriate relationship to develop with Service User A. Service User A was a young female care leaver with a history of significant mental health difficulties, including self-harm, personality disorder, and substance misuse.
13. Ms Morphy became Service User A’s Lead Practitioner in June 2016 and, in that role, was responsible for coordinating Service User A’s care. Ms Morphy’s line manager was Sine Sayers, a Social Care Professional Lead.
14. At the material time, Marie Ann Bliss was Ms Sayers’ direct line manager with oversight responsibilities relevant to the concerns, and Ms Rogers was Ms Bliss’s direct line manager, holding senior managerial oversight of the service area in which the relevant events occurred.
15. Social Work England received a referral in respect of Ms Rogers on 22 July 2020. The allegations against Ms Rogers centre on an asserted failure to take appropriate action when she was presented with information concerning Service User A and Ms Morphy’s conduct.

Discontinuance application:

Social Work England:

16. Mr Kirke made an application to the panel on behalf of Social Work England to discontinue the proceedings against Ms Rogers under Rule 52 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended). He submitted that, whilst Social Work England maintains there remains a realistic prospect of proving the factual allegations and misconduct,

the thrust of the application is that, in light of new information obtained since the Case Examiners' decision to refer the matter to a hearing, there is now no longer a realistic prospect of establishing that Ms Rogers' fitness to practise is currently impaired.

17. By way of brief background, Mr Kirke explained that at the material time Ms Rogers was employed by West Sussex County Council and had been so employed since 1999. During her long career with the Council, she undertook a range of frontline and senior management roles, including roles when seconded to the Mental Health Trust and Primary Care Trust. At the relevant time she held the senior role of Head of Adult Operations for the Council. The referral against Ms Rogers arose in July 2020 and emerged from wider fitness to practise concerns relating to Virginia ("Ginny") Morphy, a social worker employed by the Council who was alleged to have allowed an inappropriate relationship to develop with a vulnerable service user, identified as Service User A. Mr Kirke explained that Service User A was a young female care leaver with a history of mental health difficulties, including self-harm, personality disorder and substance misuse. Ms Morphy was Service User A's lead practitioner and her line manager was Sine Sayers, a Social Care Professional Lead. Ms Bliss line-managed Ms Sayers, and Ms Rogers line-managed Ms Bliss. The allegations against Ms Rogers, as with Ms Bliss, therefore centre on an asserted failure to take appropriate action when information was available relating to the potential inappropriate relationship between Ms Morphy and Service User A.
18. Mr Kirke reminded the panel that, for the purposes of a Rule 52 application, the panel's task is not to determine the allegations or make findings of fact or misconduct, but to assess whether the new information means there is no longer a realistic prospect of a finding of current impairment. He submitted that Social Work England's Discontinuance Guidance supports discontinuance where new evidence indicates the concerns are now less serious, where new evidence undermines the realistic prospect of impairment being found, or where evidential concerns affect the likelihood of a regulatory finding. He also submitted that the panel should consider the application in a fully informed way and apply active scrutiny, consistent with established authority.
19. Turning to the new information in Ms Rogers' case, Mr Kirke submitted that Ms Rogers has provided up-to-date reflective summaries. He submitted that these reflections demonstrate a thorough appreciation of the facts, the risks involved, and the professional standards engaged. He submitted that Ms Rogers has shown a high level of insight, has taken full responsibility, and has clearly identified where her response should have been different. In particular, she acknowledged that she should have pressed for further information rather than assuming others would manage matters, and that she should have raised safeguarding concerns earlier. Mr Kirke submitted that Ms Rogers has critically evaluated her own judgment, reflected appropriately upon her professional obligations, and articulated a reasoned action plan to ensure learning is embedded and to avoid repetition.
20. Mr Kirke further submitted that Ms Rogers has provided evidence of relevant training undertaken since the events, including safeguarding training, management training and

unconscious bias training. He submitted that this training is directly relevant to the underlying issues in the case and supports the proposition that Ms Rogers has taken deliberate, targeted steps to remediate.

21. Mr Kirke submitted that a substantial body of character evidence has also been provided from a range of senior colleagues and professional contacts. He submitted that, taken together, these references describe Ms Rogers as a trusted, competent and knowledgeable senior leader and social worker, with high professional ethics, excellent communication skills and the ability to operate effectively under pressure. Several references describe her as willing to challenge poor practice, committed to social justice, and actively supportive of colleagues, including in safeguarding contexts. Mr Kirke submitted that the references also address learning and remediation arising from these proceedings, describing genuine reflection, peer learning, and continued professional development, as well as notable achievements in senior leadership roles.
22. Mr Kirke highlighted that the evidence also demonstrates Ms Rogers' ongoing professional contribution, including presentations she has delivered over the last five years, which illustrate her focus on service improvement, quality and the protection of service users. He also submitted that Ms Rogers has provided a detailed career history and curriculum vitae demonstrating sustained competency in leading teams successfully in demanding environments. Mr Kirke submitted that there have been no further concerns raised about Ms Rogers' practice since the events giving rise to the allegations and that, in light of her continued senior practice, training, reflections, and the breadth of supportive evidence, it cannot justifiably be argued that there is any ongoing risk of repetition. Accordingly, he submitted that there is no longer a realistic prospect of establishing personal impairment.
23. Turning to the public interest, Mr Kirke submitted that the same broad considerations apply as in Ms Bliss' case. He submitted that, although there may have been a stronger public interest in regulatory action when the allegations first arose, the passage of time and the absence of subsequent concerns substantially reduce the need for the case to continue. He submitted that the public interest is further reduced by the fact that the cases involving the individuals more directly involved in the underlying events have now been concluded by the regulator, meaning Ms Rogers' position is further removed from the central misconduct. He also relied on evidence from the Council indicating that no further internal action was required in relation to Ms Rogers, which he submitted is a further indicator that the regulatory purpose of continued proceedings is limited.
24. In conclusion, Mr Kirke submitted that, taking all matters together, there was no longer a realistic prospect of proving that Ms Rogers' fitness to practise is currently impaired on either personal or public interest grounds, and he therefore invited the panel to grant Social Work England's application and discontinue the proceedings against her in full; however, in the alternative, he acknowledged that if the panel did not agree that all of the regulatory concerns should be discontinued, it remained open to the panel, in accordance with Rule 52 and the applicable guidance, to determine whether some or

all of the concerns should be discontinued and whether any aspect of the case should proceed to a substantive fitness to practise hearing.

Social worker:

25. Mr Short, on behalf of Ms Rogers, referred the panel to the written submissions already before it and confirmed that those submissions were relied upon in full. He submitted that the panel had had the opportunity to read the material provided and invited the panel to take it into account when determining the application to discontinue.
26. Mr Short explained that Ms Rogers had previously declined to accept a proposed caution. He submitted that this decision was taken because, even had the case proceeded promptly to a final hearing, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to characterise Ms Rogers' conduct as serious misconduct. He submitted that Ms Rogers' position was not one of minimisation, but rather a principled view as to the proper categorisation of her actions in the context of the case as a whole.
27. Mr Short further submitted that, at the material time, the Council was experiencing significant organisational and leadership difficulties, including a challenging and chaotic management environment. He submitted that Ms Rogers was one of the senior leaders who played a key role in stabilising services and supporting the organisation during that period, a matter which was reflected in the evidence before the panel and acknowledged within the material relied upon by Social Work England.
28. Mr Short emphasised that the written evidence from Ms Rogers herself, including her reflections, demonstrated a high level of insight, accountability, and professional maturity. He submitted that Ms Rogers had engaged fully with the regulatory process, had reflected critically on her decision-making, and had articulated clearly what she would do differently, notwithstanding her position that her conduct did not amount to serious misconduct.
29. Mr Short further submitted that, having regard to the totality of the evidence now before the panel, a compelling case could be made that Ms Rogers is a social worker operating at the very top of her profession. He submitted that she is currently practising to the highest professional standards, with no restrictions, no subsequent concerns, and with extensive evidence of leadership, competence, and integrity.
30. Mr Short therefore supported Social Work England's application and invited the panel to conclude that there was no longer a realistic prospect of a finding of current impairment in respect of Ms Rogers and to discontinue the proceedings in full.

Legal advice:

31. The panel accepted and followed the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the determination of an application for discontinuance under Rule 52 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended). The legal adviser advised that the panel's role at this stage was not to determine the allegations or make findings of fact or misconduct, but to decide whether, in light of new information obtained since the Case Examiners'

decision, there remained a realistic prospect of a finding that the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

32. The panel was advised that the applicable test is whether there remains a realistic, as opposed to fanciful or remote, prospect that a fitness to practise panel would find current impairment, assessed as at the date of decision and not solely by reference to historic conduct. The legal adviser reminded the panel that the regulator must identify the new information relied upon and explain why that information undermines the realistic prospect of impairment.
33. The panel was directed to Social Work England's Discontinuance Guidance, which confirms that the regulator, acting in the public interest, should not pursue allegations that have no realistic prospect of resulting in regulatory findings. The panel was advised that discontinuance may be appropriate where new evidence reduces the seriousness of the concerns, undermines the prospect of proving impairment, or gives rise to evidential difficulties, and that the panel must apply active scrutiny to ensure it is fully informed before discontinuing a case.
34. The legal adviser reminded the panel that the assessment of impairment is forward-looking and concerned with present and future risk. The panel was advised, consistently with *Cohen v General Medical Council* [2008] EWHC 581 (Admin) and *R (on the application of Grant) v Nursing and Midwifery Council* [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin), to consider the likelihood of repetition, the extent of insight and remediation, the passage of time, and whether a fair-minded and informed member of the public would consider a finding of impairment necessary to maintain confidence in the profession and uphold professional standards.
35. The panel was further advised that the existence of evidence capable of proving the facts or misconduct does not, of itself, require proceedings to continue if there is no realistic prospect that current impairment would be found. If satisfied that there is insufficient evidence of impairment, the panel must determine that fitness to practise is not impaired and give reasons; otherwise, the matter may proceed to a substantive hearing.

Panel's decision on discontinuance:

36. The panel considered Social Work England's application to discontinue the proceedings against Ms Rogers pursuant to Rule 52 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended). The panel accepted the advice of the legal adviser that its task at this stage was not to determine the allegations or make findings of fact or misconduct, but to decide whether, in light of new information obtained since the Case Examiners' decision, there remained a realistic prospect of a finding that Ms Rogers' fitness to practise is currently impaired.
37. In doing so, the panel had regard to Social Work England's Discontinuance Guidance, which makes clear that, as a public body acting in the public interest, the regulator should not pursue regulatory concerns or allegations where there is no realistic

prospect of a finding of current impairment, and that discontinuance is appropriate where new evidence materially undermines that prospect.

38. The panel noted Social Work England's position, as advanced by Mr Kirke, that there remained a realistic prospect of proving the facts and misconduct, but that the application was made because there is now no longer a realistic prospect of proving current impairment. The panel also noted that the regulator identified the new information relied upon and explained how it materially affected the assessment of impairment at the date of this decision.
39. The panel reminded itself that impairment is a forward-looking concept, directed to present and future risk. The panel therefore focused on whether there was evidence of a current impairment on personal grounds, including risk of repetition, and whether, even in the absence of personal impairment, a finding of impairment would nevertheless be required on public interest grounds to uphold proper standards and maintain public confidence.
40. The panel took account of the background context to the matters, including that Ms Rogers was a very experienced social worker who had been employed by West Sussex County Council since 1999, had undertaken a wide range of frontline and management roles, and at the relevant time held a senior leadership role. The panel accepted that the allegations arose from concerns linked to the conduct of another social worker and that Ms Rogers was part of the management chain at the time. The panel further took into account evidence describing organisational instability and ambiguity in management arrangements during the relevant period, including the destabilised state of the Approved Mental Health Professional (AMPH) service, lack of handover, and uncertainty created by secondment arrangements. The panel treated that context as relevant background when considering how the case should be approached at this stage, though it did not treat it as determinative.
41. The panel considered carefully the new information relied upon by Social Work England in support of discontinuance. The panel attached significant weight to Ms Rogers' up-to-date reflective material, which it found demonstrated a thorough appreciation of the factual background and the risks involved, and showed robust reasoning and a high degree of professional insight. The panel accepted that Ms Rogers had taken responsibility for her decision-making and had clearly identified what she should have done differently, including that she should have pressed for further information, should not have assumed matters were being dealt with by others, and should have raised safeguarding concerns earlier. The panel was satisfied that these reflections were not superficial, but showed meaningful learning aligned to professional standards.
42. The panel also placed weight on evidence of remediation and continued professional development, including training records evidencing safeguarding-related learning as well as additional training relevant to her senior responsibilities. The panel was satisfied that this was consistent with a practitioner who had taken the regulatory

concerns seriously and had sought to ensure that learning was embedded in future practice.

43. The panel then considered the substantial body of character evidence provided on Ms Rogers' behalf. The panel found that the references were detailed, consistent, and came from a range of senior individuals who were well placed to comment on Ms Rogers' conduct and competence. The panel noted repeated descriptions of Ms Rogers as a trusted, knowledgeable, and respected senior leader with strong professional ethics, an ability to operate effectively under pressure, and a willingness to challenge poor practice. The panel noted that the references also spoke to her leadership during difficult organisational circumstances and to the positive impact she had on service delivery and on the development and support of colleagues.
44. The panel placed particular weight on evidence from Ms Rogers' current line manager, a statutory Director of Adult Social Services, who described Ms Rogers as open and honest about the allegations, accepting of errors of judgment, and someone who regularly reflects on the learning in supervision. The panel accepted that this evidence was of substantial probative value because it addressed current practice, current insight, and current professional standing. The panel further noted the evidence that the Council had previously undertaken a learning exercise internally and had concluded that no further action was required, which the panel considered to be a relevant indicator when assessing current impairment.
45. The panel took into account the additional evidence of Ms Rogers' continuing professional contribution, including presentations and work at a senior level focused on service improvement, safeguarding, learning from incidents, and raising standards. The panel regarded this as further corroboration that Ms Rogers has practised safely and effectively for a prolonged period and has continued to uphold professional values and responsibilities.
46. In relation to submissions made by Mr Short on behalf of Ms Rogers, the panel noted that he relied on the written submissions and emphasised that Ms Rogers' decision not to accept a proposed caution was not an attempt to minimise matters, but reflected his submission that it would have been difficult to characterise Ms Rogers' conduct as serious misconduct. The panel considered that submission in context. It noted that the question before it was not the correct classification of misconduct, but whether there remained a realistic prospect of a finding of current impairment. The panel was satisfied that, regardless of the position taken at that earlier stage, the evidence now before it demonstrated substantial reflection, insight, and a sustained commitment to safe practice.
47. Having considered all the material, the panel concluded that there was no realistic prospect of establishing personal impairment. The panel found that the concerns are now historic, that Ms Rogers has demonstrated significant insight and remediation, and that she has practised safely and to a high standard over a sustained period without

restriction or further concern. The panel concluded that, on the evidence before it, there was no realistic risk of repetition.

48. The panel then considered the public interest component. It accepted that the public may initially have expected regulatory action when the concerns first arose. However, the panel concluded that the passage of time, the extent of reflection and remediation, the sustained evidence of safe and effective senior practice, and the fact that other cases more directly connected to the underlying events have been concluded, materially reduced the public interest in continuing proceedings against Ms Rogers. The panel considered that a fair-minded and informed member of the public, aware of all the circumstances including the evidence of Ms Rogers' learning, her continued contribution, and the absence of any current risk, would not regard a finding of current impairment as necessary to maintain public confidence or uphold professional standards.
49. The panel considered whether any further regulatory purpose would be served by continuing the proceedings, including whether any further investigation could realistically alter the assessment of current impairment. The panel concluded that, given the strength and breadth of the new evidence concerning Ms Rogers' current practice and the lack of any continuing risk, further proceedings would not serve a meaningful regulatory function.
50. The panel therefore determined that, notwithstanding that there may remain evidence capable of proving the factual allegations and misconduct, there is no longer a realistic prospect of a finding that Ms Rogers' fitness to practise is currently impaired on either personal or public interest grounds.
51. **Accordingly, the panel granted Social Work England's application under Rule 52 and directed that the proceedings against Ms Rogers be discontinued in full, with no further action.**

The Professional Standards Authority:

52. Please note that in accordance with section 29 of the National Health Service Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002, a final decision made by Social Work England's panel of adjudicators can be referred by the Professional Standards Authority ("the PSA") to the High Court. The PSA can refer this decision to the High Court if it considers that the decision is not sufficient for the protection of the public. Further information about PSA appeals can be found on their website at:
<https://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/what-we-do/our-work-with-regulators/decisions-about-practitioners>.