Social worker: Anthony David Holloway
Registration number: SW27248
Fitness to Practise
Final Hearing

Dates of hearing: 21 September 2026 to 07 October 2026

Hearing venue: Remote hearing

Hearing outcome: Fitness to practise impaired, 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 (as amended) ("the Regulations").

2. Mr Holloway attended and was represented by Mr James Wilson, Counsel, up to and including the impairment stage. At the sanction stage Mr Holloway was self-represented.

3. Social Work England was represented by Ms Llewellyn-Waters KC, case presenter instructed by Capsticks LLP acting on behalf of Social Work England.

4. The panel of adjudicators conducting this hearing (hereinafter "the panel") and the other people involved in it were as follows:

Adjudicators	**Role**
Debbie Hill	Chair
Glenys Ozanne-Turk	Social worker adjudicator
Dr Lee Longden	Lay adjudicator

Hearings team/Legal adviser	**Role**
Molly-Rose Brown	Hearings officer
Anne Briggs	Hearings support officer
Natalie Amey-Smith	Legal adviser

ID Key

5. For ease of reference the following identification is used throughout the decision:

- Person A – the complainant.
- Person B - the complainant's father.
- Person C – the complainant's sister.
- Person D – who at the relevant time was an adult working at the club and who was a family friend of the complainant's family.
- Person E – the son of Person D.
- Person F – a friend of the complainant.
- Person G – a friend of the complainant.
- Sophie Tweed- who at the relevant time, worked for Bradford Council as a manager of the learning disability service.
- RB- who at the relevant time, worked as an investigator for Social Work England.
- Fazeela Hafejee- Assistant Director in Adults with Disabilities, Bradford Council.

- AG – an employee at Capsticks who provides a production statement.

Preliminary matters:

Application to proceed partially in private

6. Ms Llewellyn-Waters KC applied for the panel to proceed in private when matters relating to Person A's health are heard for the protection of her private life.

7. The application was supported by Mr Wilson.

8. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser and had regard to rules 37 and 38 of the Fitness to Practise Rules 2019 (as amended) (the "Rules").

9. The panel was satisfied that parts of the hearing should be held in private in respect of any matters concerning the health of Person A, in order to protect her private life and having balanced that interest against the principle of open justice.

Application for a short adjournment

10. Having opened the case, Ms Llewellyn-Waters sought for Person A's Achieving Best Evidence video interview ("ABE") to be played in the hearing. It was expected that the ABE would be an audio and visual recording, however, only the audio was playing.

11. Ms Llewellyn-Waters made enquiries during a pause in the hearing and submitted that the ABE was held in visual format by the police and that it could be provided to the hearing by 12 noon on day two. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that whilst this would inevitably build in some delay, the panel should balance this against the need to ensure the best evidence is placed before it. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the visual format of the ABE would be the best evidence in this case as it would allow the panel to see the demeanour of Person A whilst giving her interview to the police.

12. Mr Wilson raised no objection to the proposed course of action.

13. The panel were satisfied that it would be fair to allow an adjournment for the ABE interview to be obtained. It considered that the slight delay in hearing from Person A was unlikely to jeopardise the timetable, particularly given that the timetable already required some amending as Person C was not now available to give her evidence until day four.

Inter hearing application:

14. Ms Tweed was the final witness to give evidence in the case on behalf of Social Work England, after which Ms Llewellyn-Waters closed the case.

15. Shortly after Ms Tweed was released from her affirmation, and prior to Mr Holloway presenting his case, Social Work England received an email from Ms Tweed. The email sought to clarify a matter about which she had been asked in relation to her attendance at a meeting. Ms Tweed's email indicated that as soon as she had left the hearing, she had recalled the information.

16. The parties were in agreement that the email should be provided to the panel as part of its evidence.

17. Ms Llewellyn-Waters applied to recall Ms Tweed, to enable her to give evidence on the contents of the email. This application was not opposed by Mr Wilson.

18. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser with reference to rule 32 of the Rules, and consideration of fairness.

19. The panel were satisfied that it was fair and appropriate in the circumstances to allow Ms Tweed to be recalled, on affirmation for the purpose of giving evidence relating to the email. Ms Tweed could then be cross examined and asked questions by the panel if required.

Allegations:

20. The allegations arising out of the regulatory concerns referred by the Case Examiners on 9 December 2022 are:

> *'1 a. Between October 2006 and March 2008 you had an inappropriate relationship with Person A, in that you;*
>
> *i. Engaged in sexual activity with Person A, when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 16 years old between approximately May 2007 and 18 September 2007, and /or*
>
> *ii. Provided Person A with cigarettes, when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 16 years old, and/or*
>
> *1 b. Between October 2006 and March 2008, you provided Person A with alcohol when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 18 years old*
>
> *2. Your actions at Paragraph 1 were sexually motivated.*
>
> *3. Whilst registered as a social worker you failed to inform the Health and Care Professions Council as soon as possible on or around:*
>
> *a. 6 April 2017, that your employer imposed restrictions on your practice.*
>
> *b. 7 August 2017, that you were suspended from work by your employer.*
>
> *The matters outlined in paragraphs 1 to 3 amount to the statutory ground of misconduct*
>
> *Your fitness to practise is impaired by reason of your misconduct.'*

Admissions:

21. Rule 32c(i)(aa) of the Rules states:

> *Where facts have been admitted by the social worker, the adjudicators or regulator shall find those facts proved.*

22. Following the reading of the Allegation the panel chair asked whether Mr Holloway admits any of the Paragraphs of the Allegation.

23. Mr Wilson, on behalf of Mr Holloway, informed the panel that Mr Wilson admits Paragraphs 3a and 3b.

24. The panel therefore found Paragraphs 3a and 3b proved by way of Mr Holloway's admissions.

25. The panel noted that Mr Holloway denied Paragraphs 1(a) (i), 1 (a) (ii), 1 (b) and 2.

26. In line with rule 32c(i)(a) of the Rules, the panel then went on to determine the disputed facts.

Background

27. On 9 April 2019, the Health and Care Professions Council ("HCPC") received a self-referral by the Respondent social worker, Anthony "Tony" Holloway.

28. At the relevant time, Mr Holloway's role was that of a "Best Interests Assessor" working within Adult Social Care. He was employed by Bradford Council ("the council") but suspended, at the time of the referral to the HCPC.

29. In Mr Holloway's self-referral, it was stated that he was under investigation by the police for sexual activity with a minor in 2005. He had attended a voluntary interview with the police on 29 April 2017. The council had restricted his practice in April 2017, and he had been suspended in August 2017.

30. The matters under investigation by the police related to allegation from Person A that in 2007, when she was 15 years of age, she was in a sexual relationship with Anthony Holloway, who at the time was 38 years of age.

31. Person A was ABE interviewed by the police on 8 March 2017.

32. On 31 March 2020, Mr Holloway notified Social Work England that he had been charged with two counts of sexual activity with a child (Person A).

33. In May 2021, Mr Holloway was found not guilty of two counts of sexual activity with a child at Leeds Crown Court, following a criminal trial.

Summary of evidence:

Social Work England

34. Social Work England relied upon evidence from five oral witnesses and the hearsay evidence of 5 witnesses. A summary of the evidence of each witness is provided below.

Person A

35. Person A gave evidence on affirmation. She adopted the contents of her witness statement prepared for these proceedings and dated 1 August 2022.

36. Person A's statement states that she gave an ABE interview to the police on 8 March 2017 and that the information she provided is true and accurate to the best of her knowledge.

37. Person A's statement describes that on 4 May 2021; she gave evidence at Mr Holloway's criminal trial and that the transcript exhibited to her statement is true and accurate to the best of her knowledge.

38. In the ABE Person A states that she had a relationship with Mr Holloway when she was 15 years old and that he was a family friend. She states that she never told anybody about that at the time as she thought it was okay but that she'd come to realise that it wasn't. Person A states that the relationship was sexual and went on for 8 months until she ended it when she was aged 16. She states that she stopped contact with him a couple of years later, when she was 18.

39. In the ABE Person A explains that she and her family had lived in Bradford until she was about 12 years old after which the family moved away from the area. Whilst living in Bradford, the family had regularly attended a social club and her mother and father had both worked there. Person A states that Mr Holloway knew her family because he also worked and socialised at the same social club.

40. In the ABE Person A describes regularly visiting Bradford on weekends and during school holidays to see friends and her older sister (Person C) who remained living in the local area. Person A states that when she visited Bradford, she always went to the social club because she knew people there. Person A states that when in Bradford she had been staying with Person D, a family friend who also worked at the social club and his son Person E (who was a similar age to her). Person A states that there was a falling out with Person E and Mr Holloway offered for her to stay at his house so that she could continue visiting.

41. In the ABE Person A states that Mr Holloway had told her that he had a sofa bed that she could use. Person A describes that on the first night she stayed with Mr Holloway they had both been at the social club, and she'd had quite a lot to drink, and its hazy, but they ended up having sex that evening and from the next morning onwards it became like a regular thing and they treated it like it was a relationship but obviously didn't tell anybody about it.

42. Person A's evidence is that her parents knew and consented to her staying with Mr Holloway but were not aware that they were in a sexual relationship.

43. Person A states that before she stayed that first night with Mr Holloway, they were in regular contact with messages. In her ABE, Person A states that, "*... we talked a lot erm never that I thought in a sort of flirtatious way or anything I always thought it was more like a sort of protective role. He knew quite a lot about the problems I'd been having at home erm like I wasn't going to school because I didn't have any friends which was why I was visiting Bradford so much erm he'd been in contact with my mum about the fact that I wasn't doing very well so he knew all of that erm and he would message me quite*

often but never in like a flirtatious way or anything. I never, it never crossed my mind really.'

44. Person A's evidence is that there was repeated sexual activity with Mr Holloway during their intimate relationship which lasted for 8 months. Person A believes that she was visiting Bradford at least once a month for the weekend and over the summer holidays for a week or two.

45. Person A's evidence is that she eventually started to make friends with people her own age in the area she lived. She states that in November or December 2007, she decided that she did not want to go to Bradford to visit and instead, went to see her mother, who lived in [PRIVATE] as she usually resided with her father in [PRIVATE]. Person A recalls that Mr Holloway drove to [PRIVATE] that weekend where he met with Person A and her mother. He then drove her back to Bradford to see a band who were playing at the club.

46. Person A's evidence is that in January 2008, she ended the relationship. Person A states that Mr Holloway said that he had been expecting it. Person A states that they had sex once more in March 2008.

47. Person A states in the ABE that she was relieved that the relationship was over. She felt guilty due to the deception of her family.

48. In the ABE, Person A states that (in approximately 2012), she confided in a close friend, Person F about the relationship. A couple of years later she had then told another friend, Person G.

49. Person A states that she had been confronted about the relationship with Mr Holloway by Person D, saying he had seen them kissing. Person D had written her a poem about it. Person D had also raised this with her mother. Person A states that she denied anything happened. Person A states that she believed that Person D had fallen out with Mr Holloway over it.

50. Person A states that during the relevant time, social services had visited her due to a malicious complaint made by her grandmother in relation to numerous males at the club. Person A states that she denied anything had taken place even though she was in a relationship with Mr Holloway as she did not want to get him into trouble.

51. Person A recalled a discussion they had about their ages as she was reading an article in a magazine about a girl who had reported somebody because he was much older and she was underage and she remembered Mr Holloway saying that he hoped that she wouldn't one day regret everything and turn on him.

52. Person A states that she had drank alcohol on the first night she had stayed with Mr Holloway. In the ABE, she states that Mr Holloway had served her alcohol and that was something that would normally happen. Person A states "*... there was sort of a few of us that were under age but we got served because we were known to, like we were either children of or known to the bar staff*.".

<u>Person B</u>

53. Person B gave evidence on affirmation. He provided two Social Work England statements. The first dated 20 January 2025 and the second dated 1 June 2026.

54. Person B's statement sets out details about the club. He states that most people he knew belonged to and attended the club and several had children around Person A's age. He knew of Mr Holloway as his wife at the time, Person A's mother, knew him reasonably well and they had other acquaintances in common including Person D.

55. Person B states that he provided a witness statement to the police on 24 May 2017 and gave evidence at Mr Holloway's criminal trial in May 2021.

56. Person B states that Person A came to live with him in [PRIVATE] after he split with her mother. He knew Person A liked visiting Bradford as she had friends there. He was aware that Person A was talking to Mr Holloway at the time and that she visited him as Person B no longer lived in the area. Person B states that Person A had known Mr Holloway for some time as someone who was at the club and a friend of her mother. Person B states that he believes he learned from Person A's mother that Mr Holloway and Person A were getting on well and that speaking with Mr Holloway was helping Person A.

57. Person B states that when Person A was visiting Bradford in 2006 / early 2007, he knew she was struggling and was not opening up to him. He knew that Mr Holloway was someone she could speak to. He recalls Person A telling him that he was helping her. He was aware that they spoke on the phone. He had no concerns about their friendship and took what he was told at face value.

58. Person B knew that Person A visited Mr Holloway and stayed with him as he took her to his house on one occasion.

59. Person B describes that in early February 2017, he received a call from Person A in the middle of the night, and she started to tell him what had been going on. A couple of days later she confirmed that she had had a sexual relationship with Mr Holloway when she was 15. [PRIVATE]. Person B states that Person A told him she was ashamed and thought people would think badly of her, and even that he would.

60. Person B encouraged Person A to come forward herself (to the police). He told his wife about the disclosure Person A had made. His wife, Person A's stepmother, worked for social services, so she then reported it to Bradford Social Services.

61. Person B states that he did not observe Mr Holloway serving alcohol or providing cigarettes to anyone under the legal age, whilst Mr Holloway worked at the club. He does not recall being told about that happening either. He states that when Person A told him in 2017 about her relationship with Mr Holloway, she also told him that he was providing her with both alcohol and cigarettes during the time she was visiting Bradford, even at times when she was not staying with him.

<u>Person C</u>

62. Person C gave evidence on affirmation. Person C provided a Social Work England witness statement dated 2 September 2022.

63. Person C states that her mum used to work in the club. Person C states that all the family including her sister (Person A) used to go to the club, and she recalled this being 3 or 4 times a week after school and sometimes on a Saturday. Person C thinks she was around 17 years old when she stopped going.

64. Person C states that they did not require ID to enter the club because her parents were members. She states that Person D did not check ID as "*we were classed as part of the family*".

65. Person C states that Mr Holloway worked in the two bars in the club, and she knew him from him working behind the bar. She recalled seeing Mr Holloway serve Person A alcohol whilst Person A was under 18 years old, once or twice in the club.

66. Person C states that she moved to Leeds when she was 16 years old and remembers that Mr Holloway used to send her flirty messages. She also remembers that when he was around her and Person A, without their parents, he would put his arm around her and Person A.

Person D

67. Person D's statement was admitted as hearsay evidence, by direction of a case management meeting held on 1 September 2026.

68. Person D's statement is an electronically signed police witness statement dated 12 April 2017. Person D also gave evidence at Mr Holloway's criminal trial.

69. Person D states that he has known Person A since she was born and that she was friends with his son Person E. He states that he was friends with Person A's mother and that Person A would often stay with himself and his son.

70. Person D states that Person A and her family moved away in 2003. He recalls in around 2006 he was told by Person A's mother that Person A had some problems at school with bullying. He states he was asked if Person A could come up and visit and stay as she hated where she lived [PRIVATE].

71. Person D states that during 2006 when Person A visited him, she would sometimes meet with Mr Holloway, and they would watch horror films together. At the time he never thought anything about their relationship other than they were friends. He became concerned about their relationship in around April/May 2007 when Person A had come to visit on Friday night and they had agreed that she went to Mr Holloway's to visit for the weekend and to return on the Sunday night, but Person A didn't return until the Thursday night and he recalled that he couldn't contact her and did not know where Mr Holloway lived.

72. Person D states that he became increasingly concerned about Person A and Mr Holloway's relationship during 2007 and when she came to visit, she would often just

drop her bags at his house without any real conversation and then spend the time at Mr Holloway's.

73. Person D states that he spoke to Mr Holloway about his concerns that Person A was only 15 or 16 years old meeting up with a 40 year old man and he said, *"she's more mature than her age and she can make her own decisions"*.

74. Person D states that he also told Person A's mother about his concerns and they had a long chat over the fact that Mr Holloway appeared to have a real protective issue over Person A. He recalled that Mr Holloway and Person A did not appear over affectionate when he saw them together, but during this time Person A became quite secretive and introvert and wouldn't talk about Mr Holloway.

75. Person D recalled that Person A had got Mr Holloway's watch on and when he questioned how she had got it she'd said that she went into his bedroom for it.

Person F

76. Person F's Social Work England statement is dated 12 August 2026. It exhibits the statement she gave to the police on 25 May 2017. Person F's police evidence was read to the jury in the criminal proceedings as agreed.

77. Person F was not called to give evidence as Mr Wilson confirmed that the statement was unchallenged.

78. Person F states that she had met Person A at college in 2008. In approximately 2012, Person A had told her about a relationship she had with an older man.

79. Person F states that Person A was crying as she disclosed this, that it had been a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship and that she was a teenager at the time.

80. Person F states that Person A told her that he used to pressure her to do things and that he had manipulated her telling her not to go out and to stay with him.

81. Person F recalls that Person A hates the smell of '*Head and Shoulders'* shampoo as it reminded her of him, and that she can't use it.

Person G

82. Person G's police statement dated 25 May 2017 was admitted as hearsay by direction of a case management hearing on 1 September 2026. Person G's police evidence was read to the jury in the criminal proceedings as agreed.

83. Person G states that she has known Person A as a friend for approximately 10 years and was aware of a friend of hers called "*Tony*". Person G recalls being told by Person A about being in a sexual relationship with an older man and that it was not right. Person G recalls Person A telling her that Tony worked at the club and that he would buy her drinks.

84. Person G recalls an occasion when she was out at a gig with Person A, who had asked her for chewing gum. Person G gave Person A blue '*airwave*' gum and Person A

immediately had a panic attack in the cab. Afterwards Person A told her that Tony always used to chew this gum.

Sophie Tweed

85. Sophie Tweed gave evidence on affirmation. Her Social Work England witness statement is dated 19 August 2022.

86. Ms Tweed's statement states that she was Mr Holloway's line manager from January 2015 to January 2018.

87. Ms Tweed's statement details that her manager was made aware of the allegations against Mr Holloway on 6 April 2017 and a meeting was held with Mr Holloway in which he was restricted from his employment whilst an investigation took place. A letter outlining the meeting was sent to Mr Holloway on 6 April 2017.

88. Ms Tweed states that Mr Holloway was formally suspended from his employment on 7 August 2017, until further notice. He was notified of that suspension by means of letter dated 7 August 2017.

RB

89. RB gave evidence on affirmation. RB's Social Work England statement is dated 15 June 2022.

90. RB exhibits Mr Holloway's self-referral to the HCPC dated 8 April 2019.

Fazeela Hafejee

91. Ms Hafejee's Social Work England statement is dated 2 May 2025, and it exhibits the employer investigation report and a witness statement from the investigation.

92. Ms Hafejee was not called to give evidence as Mr Wilson confirmed that the statement was unchallenged.

93. Ms Hafejee states that when the concerns regarding Mr Holloway came to light in 2017, she was not employed by the council and had no involvement.

AG

94. AG provided two Social Work England statements, dated 7 May 2025 and 22 June 2026. These are both production statements exhibiting documents obtained from the Crown Prosecution Service.

Mr Holloway

95. Mr Holloway provided a witness statement dated 24 July 2026. Mr Holloway provided a bundle of supporting evidence, which included his criminal defence statement dated 4 March 2023, and Proof of Evidence.

96. Mr Holloway gave evidence under affirmation.

97. Mr Holloway denies that he had a sexual relationship with Person A. He denies that he engaged in sexual activity with her. He denies that he provided her with alcohol or cigarettes. He denies that any of his conduct towards her was sexually motivated.

98. Mr Holloway accepts that he did not notify the HCPC as soon as possible when restrictions were placed on his practice in April 2017 and when he was suspended in August 2017. Mr Holloway's evidence is that he did not intend to conceal anything from the regulator. He believed, wrongly as he now understands it, that the multi-agency/LADO process meant that the regulator would be aware.

99. Mr Holloway states that he undertook an Access to Higher Education course at Bradford University in 2007/2008. Then he started his BA Social Work degree in 2008 and qualified on 19 July 2011 with a First-Class Honours degree.

100. Mr Holloway states that he started attending the Club in or around 1983 and later became involved in bar work and in the gig collective, including putting on events, helping with arrangements for bands, sound equipment and sound engineers. He states that he knew Person A's mother, through the Club, as she also worked behind the bar. He states that they got on well and had similar political and social views and were friends.

101. Mr Holloway states that he did not have a close relationship with Person A when she was a child. His recollection is that when Person A later attended the club as a teenager, she introduced herself to him, with reference to her mother. Mr Holloway states that he did not initially recognise her.

102. Mr Holloway's recollection is that Person A stayed at his house on no more than about four or five occasions. He does not accept that she came to Bradford every couple of weeks. His recollection is that her visits were much less frequent, usually during school holidays or at intervals of a few months.

103. Mr Holloway states that on the first occasion Person A stayed at his house, she approached him while he was working behind the bar and told him that she had fallen out with Person D and needed somewhere to stay that night. He was reluctant to agree because of her age and not knowing her well. He states that he told her to speak to her mother. His recollection is that she showed him a response from her mother on her phone. He understood from that response that her mother consented to Person A staying at his house. He states the information reassured him.

104. Mr Holloway states that on the first occasion Person A stayed, she slept downstairs on the sofa. He recalls that she did not unfold the sofa bed, and that because she was short, she slept on the sofa itself. He gave her something to use as a cover. He slept upstairs in his bedroom.

105. Mr Holloway states that Person A did not spend most of her time with him when she stayed. She was independent and would go out to see friends or her sister. She also visited people she knew in and around Bradford and Leeds.

106. Mr Holloway accepts a level of text communication with Person A and states that his concern for Person A was welfare-based. He did not view her as someone with whom he had, or could have, a sexual or romantic relationship. He understands why, with hindsight, an adult allowing a teenage girl to stay at his house may be viewed as unwise and as creating safeguarding concerns. At the time, he believed he was responding to a practical and immediate welfare situation, with the knowledge and consent of her mother.

107. Mr Holloway does not accept that Person D ever confronted him. Mr Holloway does not accept that he said the words about Person A being mature for her age to Person D. His position is that Person D was upset that Person A had stopped staying with him and that this may have affected his view of the situation.

108. Mr Holloway recalls a visit to [PRIVATE] whereby Person A's mother had invited him to visit. He recalls this being at least a year after he had last seen Person A. He agreed to give Person A a lift back to Bradford to see a band called '*Random Hand*'. His evidence states that this issue is important because it affects the chronology. He does not accept Person A's account of the timing of that visit if it is said to have been part of the alleged relationship or close to its end. His written evidence stated that the visit took place in 2009.

Finding and reasons on facts:

109. Having heard all the evidence, the panel invited closing submissions on facts from Ms Llewellyn-Waters followed by Mr Wilson.

110. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser in respect of the approach to take in determining findings of facts and the burden and standard of proof, including inherent probability. The burden of proof rests on Social Work England and it is for Social Work England to prove the Allegation.

111. The legal adviser provided advice on the issues of credibility and reliability, as per the guidance in *R (Dutta) v GMC [2020] EWHC 1974 (Admin), Byrne v GMC [2021] EWHC 2237 (Admin)* and with reference to the cases of *Demanya v GMC [2025] EWHC 247* and *NMC v Njoku [2026] EWHC 2282 (Admin).*The legal adviser also addressed the panel with directions adapted from the Crown Court Compendium – updated March 2026 - on hearsay evidence, delay, and the dangers of assumptions in relation to sexual offences.

112. The legal adviser also provided advice on the specific wording of the Allegation, including the sexual motivation. The legal adviser set out the definition of the word "sexual" as per the Sexual Offences Act 2003 ("SOA"), s78. The legal adviser referred to the cases of *Basson v General Medical Council [2018] EWHC 505 (Admin), GMC v Haris [2020] EWHC 2518 (Admin),* and *Haddon v UK council for Psychotherapy, [2025] EWHC 1628 (KB).*

113. The legal adviser provided the two-limb good character direction relating to Mr Holloway's evidence.

Panel decision

114. The panel commenced its deliberations with an overall reasoned assessment of the witnesses and their evidence and had regard to the unchallenged facts.

115. The panel took into account that the following facts were not disputed between the parties:

(a) The club was a community club run by its members and was referred to as a "*community hub*".

(b) Mr Holloway was a member of the club and worked behind the bar. His involvement with the club dates back to the 1980's.

(c) Person A's immediate family had attended the club since before her birth, and Person A subsequently attended with them.

(d) Person A's mother worked at the club alongside Mr Holloway for approximately 20 years.

(e) Person B also knew Mr Holloway from the club, but they were not close.

(f) Mr Holloway had a daughter of a similar age to Person C.

(g) Person A and her parents left the area when Person A was approximately 12 years old and her parents subsequently separated.

(h) Person A was experiencing bullying at her new school and was unhappy. As a result, Person A travelled back to the Bradford area alone, and/or with family, to see friends. The frequency of her visits is a point of contention.

(i) Person A and Mr Holloway had each other's mobile numbers and were in text communications. The circumstances in which the numbers came to be exchanged, when the text exchanges commenced, and the nature and extent of those exchanges are all in contention.

(j) [PRIVATE]. Person A texted Mr Holloway to inform him [PRIVATE] and Mr Holloway responded to offer advice. What remains in contention is when this [PRIVATE] occurred within the overall chronology of the events.

(k) Mr Holloway was aware that Person A was being bullied, that her family had split, [PRIVATE] and was therefore vulnerable. What remains in contention is the chronology of when he was made aware of that information.

(l) Mr Holloway and Person D were in the games team.

(m) Person D was a family friend of Person A's family, having worked with Person A's mother at the club.

(n) Person D's son, Person E, was a similar age to Person A and they were friends. Person A stayed at Person D's house when she visited Bradford. At some point Person A and Person E fell out and thereafter she no longer stayed with them.

(o) Mr Holloway lived alone in a one bedroomed property.

(p) Mr Holloway allowed Person A to stay at his house on multiple occasions. The frequency remains in dispute.

(q) Person B and Person C were aware that Person A was staying with Mr Holloway. Whilst there is no evidence from Person A's mother, it is agreed by the parties that she was aware that Person A was staying with Mr Holloway.

(r) There was at least one visit by Mr Holloway to [PRIVATE] to see Person A's mother. The date and purpose are in dispute, but both parties agree that the outcome was that Person A travelled back from [PRIVATE] with Mr Holloway to Bradford.

116. In terms of the overall assessment of the witnesses, the panel considered that both Person B and Person C had done their best to assist the panel with their recollection of what they saw or were told about the matters in dispute. The panel found that their evidence remained largely consistent and that any inconsistencies relating to more specific details were attributable to the passage of time rather than any deliberate attempt to mislead.

117. In relation to Person A's and Mr Holloway's evidence, the panel recognised that in relation to whether there was a sexual relationship, there is no independent witness who can corroborate either account. It took into account that neither may be deliberately untruthful. One may have forgotten, reconstructed events, or remembered only part of what occurred.

118. Having considered the evidence as a whole, including its consistency, detail, and compatibility with the established chronology, overall, the panel found Person A to be a reliable witness. Whilst there were some inconsistencies within Person A's evidence, the panel did not consider these to undermine the quality of her evidence or the weight to be attached to it. It considered that the inconsistences primarily arose as a result of the passage of time, given the historic nature of the allegations. The panel found that it was entirely plausible given the context of the allegations, and the historic nature of them, for Person A's evidence to lack clarity about dates and other peripheral matters. It considered that if her account had been specific to the minutiae, this might have been suggestive of evidence which had been rehearsed or planned. However, this was not the case.

119. In relation to Mr Holloway's evidence, the panel took into account his good character, noting that there have been no other regulatory findings against him. However, it afforded this little weight due to the nature, context and chronology of the allegations. The panel considered that good character does not necessarily establish how Mr

Holloway would have behaved during this period of time, when he was working as a barman at the club, as well as working for *'Terex'*, and had not commenced his social work training.

120. The panel considered that whilst Mr Holloway's denial of the events had been consistently maintained, his evidence of the details surrounding the chronology was at times implausible and did not in the panel's view withstand cross examination.

1 a. Between October 2006 and March 2008 you had an inappropriate relationship with Person A, in that you; i. Engaged in sexual activity with Person A, when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 16 years old between approximately May 2007 and 18 September 2007, and /or

Paragraph 1a(i) is found proved.

121. The panel noted that Person A's date of birth is not disputed. She was born on 19 September 1991 and therefore between May 2007 and 18 September 2007 she was 15 years old. Mr Holloway was born on 3 March 1969, and he was therefore 38 years old during the period specified.

122. The panel first considered whether Mr Holloway engaged in sexual activity with Person A. It noted, as an unchallenged objective fact, that the conduct proved amounted to sexual offending against a child, namely engaging in penetrative sexual activity with a child contrary to section 9 SOA 2003. It noted therefore that whatever the subjective understanding of the parties at the time, as a matter of law, as sexual activity did take place, consent is irrelevant to the ingredients of the offence being made out.

123. The panel had regard to Person A's evidence and the undisputed background facts as set out above.

124. Person A's evidence is that the first time she stayed with Mr Holloway was following the falling out with Person E which had resulted in her having nowhere to stay. In her ABE interview, Person A states that Mr Holloway was in contact with her mum and made the suggestion that Person A could stay with him.

125. Person A recalls that this was May/June time in 2007 and remembers this because of the songs on the radio. Person A describes arriving in Bradford and going straight to the club, drinking throughout the evening and then getting a taxi back with Mr Holloway to his house.

126. In describing the lead up to the events, Person A states that she and Mr Holloway "*talked a lot*". She thought their relationship was "*more like a sort of protective role"* and that he knew quite a lot of the problems she had been having at home and school. Person A states that Mr Holloway would message her quite often but never in a flirtatious way.

127. In the ABE, Person A describes that Mr Holloway had said that he had a sofa bed that she could use. Then on the first night that she went to stay she'd had quite a lot to drink, and its hazy, but they ended up having sex that evening. She states that from the next morning onwards it was a regular thing and they treated it like it was a relationship but obviously didn't tell anybody about it.

128. In the ABE, Person A states that from what she can remember Mr Holloway could not get the sofa bed to work, and he suggested that they both sleep in his bed which was a mattress on the floor. Person A did not recall how but that led to them having sex, and that it was hazy because she'd had quite a lot to drink and it almost felt a bit surreal.

129. Person A states that she consented to the sexual intercourse and that she had only had sex once before, [PRIVATE].

130. Person A describes that after the first night, Mr Holloway behaved more affectionately and said that he was attracted to her. She did not recall any specific conversations about what had happened, it just sort of stuck and then happened again the following night.

131. Person A details repeated sexual activity, stating that the relationship lasted for 8 months and that Mr Holloway continued to be a family friend. During the time she was seeing Mr Holloway, Person A states that she would visit Bradford at least once a month for the weekend and over the summer holidays for a week or two. She largely stayed with Mr Holloway during those visits. Her parents were aware of her staying with Mr Holloway, who they trusted. They were not aware of the sexual activity.

132. Person A describes the relationship coming to an end when she started to make new friends in the area where she was living. She believes that she ended the relationship in January 2008. However, she had remained in contact with Mr Holloway until past her 18th birthday.

133. In the ABE interview Person A states that the first person she had confided in about the relationship was a close friend, namely Person F. In her Crown Court evidence, Person A states that she told Person F in 2011/12.

134. In the ABE, Person A stated that she had also told a schoolfriend, Person G, about being in a sexual relationship with an older man and that it was not right. Person A recalled that she was probably about 22 or 23 when she told Person G. In her Crown Court evidence, Person A states that she told Person G a few years after she had told Person F.

135. The panel placed significant weight on the evidence of Person A. The panel found that her account was cogent and entirely plausible. Whilst the panel noted that there were inconsistencies in part, these did not in the panel's view undermine her evidence overall. The panel considered that inconsistencies could readily arise in the context of a sexual allegation, which she perceived as shameful and which she has come to see as a traumatic confusing experience, which occurred when she was still a child.

136. The panel considered that the plausibility of Person A's account was strengthened by the narrative she provides about the sexual activity. Person A considered the sexual activity to have been consensual, she had not shown any malice towards Mr Holloway, either then or now, and her initial report to the police arose as a result of her father reporting the incident rather than from her own incentive.

137. In oral evidence, when challenged in cross-examination, the panel's impression was that Person A remained factual and measured. She did not seek to embellish or exaggerate matters or portray Mr Holloway in a negative light.

138. The panel found Person A had maintained an internally consistent formal account of the relationship being sexual, beginning with her ABE interview and continuing through the criminal proceedings as well as the Social Work England proceedings. The panel took into account that Person A's evidence in this regard has remained consistent for 9 years.

139. In relation to consistency with previous accounts, the panel noted that Person A states in her ABE that she first told Person F when they were staying in [PRIVATE] together. Person F's witness statement, dated 12 August 2026, exhibits the statement she provided to the police. This supports Person A's assertion that she had told her friend (Person F), whilst on a beach walk, that she had been in a relationship with an older man when she was in her teens. Whilst Person F described this relationship as being a *"controlling"* one, the panel did not find this to undermine Person A's account on the core aspect of the complaint. The panel took into account that Person F's evidence is hearsay and was not tested by cross-examination. The panel considered it entirely plausible that Person F could have misremembered detail or perceived matters in a different way, given the passage of time.

140. In the ABE interview, Person A also reports telling her friend Person G when she was about 22 or 23. Person G's evidence is contained within a police witness statement dated 24 May 2017, admitted into these proceedings as hearsay. The statement corroborates that Person A did tell Person G about the sexual relationship she had with an older man and that the relationship "*wasn't right"*.

141. In relation to the reason for telling Person G, Person A describes in her ABE having "*these, sort of, like, little things that would set me off that reminded me about it*." The panel noted that this evidence is supported by both Person F and Person G who both describe products that seem to have triggered Person A into being reminded of Mr Holloway. The panel considered that this detail supports the reliability of Person A's account. The panel considered it entirely plausible that seeing or encountering a particular product may trigger a memory of a person or past event.

142. The panel also had regard to the account that Person A had given to Person B. Whilst the panel accepted, (as with Person F and G's evidence) that this is not direct evidence that sexual activity happened, it is supportive evidence that Person A's account has remained consistent in what she has alleged.

143. The panel considered Person B to be a reliable witness in relation to his recounting of the events as he recalled them. The panel was satisfied that his confusion relating to whether he contacted the police was entirely understandable. It was also consistent with the police records which show that whilst it was he who made the call, it was as a result of his wife having already reported the matter to social services. The panel considered Person B's evidence to be measured. He showed no malice towards Mr Holloway and stuck to the facts as he recalled them. He was willing to make concessions on matters he was unsure about. These factors supported his credibility.

144. The panel had regard to the delay in Person A reporting the allegations to the police. It acknowledged that Person A had not wanted to formally report Mr Holloway and had maintained that position, due to her own feelings of shame and not wanting to get Mr Holloway into trouble. The panel noted that the formal reporting to the police in 2017 was something that Person A was therefore initially reluctant to do. However, she was encouraged to do so, by Person B and her stepmother, having been made aware that Mr Holloway was a social worker, thus raising a potential for harm to others. The panel accepted the rationale for this was entirely plausible.

145. The panel took into account that Person A had not reported any allegations to social services in 2007, when they were investigating a referral about several staff members at the club. The panel noted that it had very little contemporaneous evidence about this social services investigation. However, it is not in dispute between the parties that it happened, nor that Person A was spoken to as part of the investigation. Given that the sexual activity between Person A and Mr Holloway is said to have taken place during this time period, the panel accepted this would have been an opportunity for Person A to talk about the relationship. However, the panel considered that not reporting it at the time did not undermine Person A's evidence that sexual activity did occur between her and Mr Holloway. Person A's evidence about the sexual allegations is that she felt her mum would be angry with her if she knew about it and that she did not want to get herself or Mr Holloway into trouble. The panel had regard to the evidence that in her mind, Mr Holloway was her boyfriend, she wasn't being 'abused' in any way, and so, knowing (despite no specific conversation about it that she recalls) that they would both be in trouble if she said anything, it is entirely plausible that she said nothing. The panel considered such evidence to be entirely consistent with Person A having been persuaded by Mr Holloway into believing this relationship was appropriate.

146. The panel took into account that Person A gives detailed evidence about Person D challenging her about the relationship with Mr Holloway and raising his concerns. In the ABE, Person A provides a description of Person D writing her a poem, because he was a poet. The panel considered this to be an unusual detail for Person A to have focused upon and, in the panel's view, this added support to the credibility of her account.

147. The panel found that in Person A's evidence there are a number of places where she recalls specific points as a result of referencing them to other information. By way of example, she remembers the songs on the radio in May/June 2007 as being the start of

her sexual relationship. The panel considered that this detail adds to the plausibility of Person A's evidence as it provides an anchor point for her recall.

148. The panel had regard to Person D's evidence which consists of a statement given to the police on 12 April 2017, admitted as hearsay, as well as the excerpts of his Crown Court evidence. The panel accepted that Person D's account to the police and in subsequent cross-examination does not recount having any conversation with Person A about his concerns about her relationship with Mr Holloway. However, the panel did not find this to undermine the evidence of Person A. The panel considered that the key aspect of Person D's evidence was that he did have concerns about the relationship between Person A and Mr Holloway and he did raise those concerns at the time, albeit he says with Mr Holloway and Person A's mother. That key aspect of the evidence is entirely in keeping with the substantive recollection of Person A who states that Person D had voiced concerns about her relationship with Mr Holloway. It is entirely plausible that given the passage of time that Person D would not necessarily recall every detail.

149. The panel had regard to the circumstances of the trip to [PRIVATE] as this remained a point of contention between the parties. The panel noted that Person A's evidence is that this occurred in November/December 2007, after she had turned 16. Person A recalls going back with Mr Holloway for the purpose of seeing her favourite band who were playing at the club.

150. Mr Holloway's evidence is that he only went to [PRIVATE] once which was to see Person A's mum, and this would have been in 2010. The panel had regard to the digital forensic evidence showing the Mr Holloway's satnav only showed one entry for a journey to [PRIVATE]. The panel also noted the evidence that the electoral register records Person A's mum as living at the address in [PRIVATE] between 2009 and 2010. The panel also considered the evidence of Person C who recalls Mr Holloway visiting her mum in [PRIVATE]. Person C's evidence was that the timing of this was around the time of the birth of her second son, in June 2010. At that time Person A would have been 18.

151. The panel considered that the apparent inconsistency about the date Mr Holloway visited [PRIVATE] does not undermine the other evidence provided by Person A. The panel considered that the trip to [PRIVATE] is not a detail that is at the heart of the trauma Person A suffered or indeed something the case turns on. The panel considered it to be entirely plausible that with the passage of time she has confused the dates of that visit. A date is much easier to forget than an event like having sex for the first time with someone. The panel also considered it plausible that Mr Holloway is more likely to remember that date if it was the only time he went to [PRIVATE]. Whereas Person A was back and forth to Bradford on multiple occasions and had seen the band Random Hand on other occasions as well, so remembering on which date she travelled to Bradford by car to see them rather than on the train could easily be mistaken. Whilst Person A recalls this visit as being towards the end of their sexual relationship, her evidence is that they remained in contact until after she had turned 18. Therefore, even if the date

was later than she recalled it was within a period of time that she had remained in contact with Mr Holloway.

152. In relation to Person A's age and whether Mr Holloway knew or ought to have known Person A to be under 16 years old, the panel placed significant weight on the evidence of Person A. She recalls the first night she stayed over and they had sex as happening in May/June 2007. That Person A was staying with Mr Holloway around this time accords with the evidence of Person D who recalls her first staying with Mr Holloway in around April/May 2007. At this point in time, Person A was 15 years old.

153. The panel accepted Person A's evidence that Mr Holloway knew she was underage because he had known her family since she was young and spoken with her parents regularly. Furthermore, Person A's evidence is that she told him how old she was in 2006 and was open about it.

154. The panel also placed weight on the undisputed evidence that Person A was still in school, that she was experiencing problems with bullying and that was part of the reason she was travelling to Bradford as well as confiding in Mr Holloway.

155. As part of its deliberations the panel also had close and careful regard to the evidence of Mr Holloway, given that he presents a fundamentally different account to that of Person A. Mr Holloway maintains that he did not have sex with Person A, and that she had stayed at his home with the agreement of her parents and that this had arisen at short notice, in circumstances where she had nowhere else to stay.

156. The panel considered Mr Holloway's evidence to be implausible in relation to certain aspects. His assertion, that he did not remember Person A when she first arrived back at the club, seems entirely at odds with the evidence of the club being a community hub and him having a long-established friendship with Person A's mum.

157. Whilst Mr Holloway accepts he became a confidant for Person A, he states that he did not have a pre-existing friendship, prior to her staying with him. The panel considered this to be implausible. Unlike the arrangement with Person D and his teenage son, by his own account Mr Holloway was a man in his late 30's who lived alone in a one-bedroom property. In those circumstances, it is implausible that a young girl, unaccompanied by her parents, sought to stay at his home, without a friendship having already developed. The panel accepted that this relationship would have been built during the period Person A was visiting the club and staying with Person D and his son, from around October 2006.

158. Mr Holloway states that he only allowed Person A to stay on the first occasion as she had nowhere to go. Whilst the panel accepted that such an explanation was theoretically plausible, namely that he had allowed Person A to stay to avoid her being left without accommodation, the circumstances in this case do not support that account. If this was a one-off emergency situation, then why did Mr Holloway, by his own account, ask to see consent from Person A's mother before allowing her to stay?

The whole premise of seeking consent prior to it happening suggests that it was not an urgent and immediate situation. Furthermore, it suggests that Mr Holloway was fully aware that she was under the age of 16 and therefore not of an age to make her own accommodation arrangements without parental consent. The panel considered that, if the first occasion had genuinely arisen as a one-off emergency and was an arrangement with which, on his own evidence, he felt uncomfortable, it was improbable that he would have allowed Person A to stay at his home on subsequent occasions, particularly given his evidence that there was no existing relationship between them and his knowledge that she had other friends in the area.

159. Whilst Mr Holloway's evidence is that he did not know Person A's exact age, the panel considered this implausible. Firstly, Mr Holloway had known Person A's family for years and he had a daughter of a similar age. Secondly, he was a confidant to Person A, and she chose to contact him about her personal vulnerabilities [PRIVATE]. Thirdly, he knew that she was having problems at school with bullying. In those circumstances, it is improbable that he did not get told her age or ask her age. The fact that Mr Holloway knew her age, is further supported by the way in which Person A recalls that they kept their sexual relationship a secret and avoided physical contact in front of others at the club. If Person A was over the age of consent, then there would have been no requirement for them to do so.

160. Whilst the panel recognises that demeanour alone is often an unreliable guide to truthfulness or accuracy, it did consider that during cross examination, Mr Holloway sought to minimise his conduct and on occasions sought to answer a different question to that being posed. Such an approach, in the panel's view, undermined the credibility of his evidence.

161. Overall, and for the reasons set out above, the panel preferred the evidence of Person A in finding it more likely than not that sexual activity did occur between Person A and Mr Holloway, at a time when Mr Holloway knew that Person A was 15 years old.

162. Considering the evidence holistically, and taking into account the passage of time, the panel could not say exactly how many times and on what dates Person A did stay with Mr Holloway from May 2007 to September 2007. However, it accepted that it was on multiple occasions, and was frequent enough that, as a 15-year-old girl, Person A considered it to be a boyfriend and girlfriend sexual relationship.

163. The panel noted that in relation to the stem of the Allegation, the dates relied upon are those relating to the time that Person A started to visit Bradford, unaccompanied by her parents, and that by when she states the sexual relationship with Mr Holloway ended. The panel was satisfied that having found that Mr Holloway had engaged in sexual activity with Person A, when he knew her to be under 16 years of age, he had engaged in an inappropriate relationship with her.

Paragraph 1a(i) is found proved.

1 a. Between October 2006 and March 2008 you had an inappropriate relationship with Person A, in that you; ii. Provided Person A with cigarettes, when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 16 years old, and/or

Paragraph 1(a) (ii) is found proved.

164. The panel had regard to the evidence of Person A in relation to this Paragraph of the Allegation. The panel also took into account the unchallenged objective fact that the legal age to purchase cigarettes was 16 up until 1 October 2007, when it changed to 18.

165. In the ABE, in response to a question about whether Mr Holloway ever bought her anything or sent her cards, she states that most of the stuff he bought me was "*cigarettes and alcohol. Never cards or anything*."

166. In cross-examination in the criminal proceedings, Person A accepted that Mr Holloway did not buy her gifts but stated that "*he would pay for drinks and cigarettes, if I didn't have the money."*

167. Person A's witness statement indicates that as well as serving her in the club, Mr Holloway also gave her alcohol and cigarettes at his house during their relationship. During cross-examination by Mr Wilson, Person A explained that she had no interest in jewellery or traditional gifts, but that Mr Holloway would buy her vodka and cigarettes. Later in her cross-examination she said that Mr Holloway would get her the cigarettes from the garage or the ASDA near his house. She said that she couldn't get them herself from ASDA as they would ask for ID, and she was underage.

168. In re-examination, Person A stated that Mr Holloway bought her cigarettes frequently and that she "*smoked a lot especially when she drank*".

169. The panel had regard to the evidence of Person B. He did not observe Mr Holloway providing cigarettes to anyone under the legal age, whilst he worked at the club, nor does he recall being told about it happening. Person B states he recalls that when Person A told him about the relationship with Mr Holloway in 2017, she also said that he provided with both alcohol and cigarettes during the time she was visiting Bradford, even at time when she was not staying with him.

170. Mr Holloway denies providing cigarettes to Person A. Mr Holloway states that he has never smoked. Mr Holloway provided medical evidence from his GP practice dated 25 October 2010 which records '*Never smoked tobacco'*.

171. The panel placed significant weight on the evidence of Person A and preferred her evidence over that of Mr Holloway. The panel found that her account was cogent and entirely plausible and it withstood cross-examination. The panel took into account that Person A had maintained an internally consistent account in relation to the provision of cigarettes, including when she had first disclosed the relationship to her father (Person B) in 2017, before any knowledge that formal proceedings would follow.

172. The panel considered that whilst Person A's earlier accounts contained less detail than that which was provided during cross-examination, this may be explained by the fact that she was not asked specific questions about those matters. The panel did not consider that the difference in the level of detail undermined Person A's credibility.

173. Whilst the panel accepted the medical evidence that Mr Holloway had never smoked, such evidence does not establish that he did not provide cigarettes for Person A, nor therefore make it implausible that he did so.

174. The panel was satisfied on the evidence before it that Mr Holloway provided Person A with cigarettes, when he knew or ought to have known her to be under 16 years old.

175. Whilst the panel considered each Paragraph of the Allegation individually, the evidence relating to the overall context and circumstances overlaps each Paragraph. The Allegation refers to the period of time when Person A was visiting Bradford, during which time she was aged 15-16 years. The evidence the panel relied on in relation to Paragraph 1 (a) (i) regarding Mr Holloway's knowledge of Person A's age, is that which it also relies on in relation to this Paragraph of the Allegation. Given that this evidence is already set out at paragraphs 151 -153, it is not reproduced here.

Paragraph 1(a) (ii) is found proved.

176. In finding sub-Paragraph 1(a) (i) and 1 (a) (ii) proved, the panel considered the stem of Paragraph 1 (a), which refers to Mr Holloway having an inappropriate relationship with Person A. The panel paid specific attention to the relationship between the overarching dates contained in the stem and the specific dates given under each sub-Paragraph. It considered the conduct alleged in each sub-Paragraph specifically in relation to the relevant dates given for that sub-Paragraph. Given the findings it made, the panel then concluded that the conduct found proved within each sub-Paragraph supported a finding of Mr Holloway having an inappropriate relationship with Person A, within the overarching dates given under the stem of the Paragraph.

1b. Between October 2006 and March 2008, you provided Person A with Alcohol when you knew or ought to have known her to be under 18 years old

Paragraph 1(b) is found proved.

177. The panel had regard to the evidence of Person A in relation to this Paragraph of the Allegation. The panel also took into account the unchallenged objective fact that the legal age to purchase alcohol was at the time, and remains, 18.

178. In the ABE, in response to a question about whether Mr Holloway ever bought her anything or sent her cards, Person A states that most of the stuff he bought her was "*cigarettes and alcohol. Never cards or anything."* When asked about being drunk on the night she first stayed with him, Person A states that Mr Holloway had served her the alcohol. She states that this was something that would have normally happened

indicating that, "*there was sort of a few of us that were underage, but we got served because we were known to… Like, we were…known to the bar staff.*"

179. In cross-examination in the criminal proceedings, Person A maintained that Mr Holloway did provide her with alcohol and that, "*a lot of other staff did too*".

180. Person A's Social Work England statement states that she was first served alcohol in the club by Person D. She states that Person D first served her alcohol sometime after October 2006 when she was 15 years old and that he would usually serve her when she visited him. Person A describes that Mr Holloway also served two of her friends, both of whom were underage at the time. Person A also described that they would drink alcohol together at Mr Holloway's home. Person A maintained this account in oral evidence.

181. The panel had regard to Person C's evidence which states that she was 16 when Mr Holloway served her alcohol. It further states that she had seen Mr Holloway serve Person A alcohol when she was under 18 years old, once or twice. Person C states that Mr Holloway knew how old she was as he had seen her and Person A grow up.

182. The panel had regard to Person B's evidence. He states that he wasn't aware of Person A drinking alcohol underage. However, when Person A told him in 2017 about her relationship with Mr Holloway, she also told him that Mr Holloway had given her alcoholic drinks when she was staying with him while she was 15.

183. Mr Holloway denies providing alcohol to Person A. Mr Holloway states that he would not risk the club's licence serving underage children, especially as the club was well known to the police.

184. In finding this Paragraph proved the panel preferred the evidence of Person A to that of Mr Holloway. The panel considered Person A's evidence to be reliable having tested it against the wider evidential picture.

185. The panel considered that Person A's evidence about being provided with alcohol had remained consistent, both within her formal evidence, and within the accounts she gave to others, prior to her ABE. Person A had told Person B about the alcohol, as set out above, and had told Person G that 'Tony' would "*often buy her drinks*" at the club.

186. The panel considered that Person A's evidence is also supported by other evidence, namely that of Person C. Whilst the panel acknowledged that under cross-examination Person C accepted confusion and mistake in relation to dates, she remained clear that she and Person A had both been served alcohol underage. In her evidence Person C anchored her age in relation to when she had moved to live with her grandmother and also the birth of her children. The panel did not find that Person C's confusion or mistake in relation to parts of her evidence undermined her evidence as a whole, given the passage of time since the events.

187. The panel also considered the evidence provided by Person A that she and her friends were provided with alcohol entirely plausible, in the context of being in a members' club

where drinking alcohol was part of the environment and being the child of an ex-employee who remained friends with the staff. The panel considered that Person A's evidence that other bar staff also served her and her friends, supported its credibility. The panel considered this suggested no motive to fabricate her account and was not specially aimed at pointing the finger at Mr Holloway.

188. The panel took into account that it is not suggested that Mr Holloway was serving under-age members of the public, more widely. It is entirely probable that whilst the official line was not to serve underage drinkers, if it was to someone the staff knew and trusted, their age would be deliberately overlooked. Furthermore, the plausibility is supported by the ease in which alcohol within a drink can be disguised, such as a vodka and coke, which is indistinguishable from just coke.

189. Having regard to the evidence before it, the panel was satisfied that between October 2006 and March 2008, Mr Holloway provided Person A with Alcohol when he knew or ought to have known her to be under 18 years old.

Paragraph 1(b) is found proved.

2. Your actions at Paragraph 1 were sexually motivated

Paragraph 2 is found proved.

190. The panel took into account that the state of a person's mind is not something that can be proved by direct observation. A person's state of mind can only be proved by inference or deduction from the surrounding evidence.

191. The panel considered its findings at Paragraph 1 holistically. It took into account Person A's evidence that she had not been interested in traditional gifts but was a smoker and liked an alcoholic drink. It had regard to its findings that Mr Holloway had provided Person A with cigarettes and alcohol, when she was underage and was therefore not legally able to purchase them herself.

192. It took into account that the provision of cigarettes and alcohol had started in October 2006 and this was in the run up to the sexual relationship that commenced in May/June 2007. The provision of cigarettes and alcohol had then continued during the entirety of the sexual relationship, with drinking alcohol at Mr Holloway's home being a feature of their relationship.

193. Whilst the provision of cigarettes and alcohol is not in isolation obviously sexual in nature, the panel had to consider it within the wider context of what did occur. The panel inferred from the evidence, that the provision of cigarettes and alcohol was a process which served to entice Person A into trusting Mr Holloway. Having built that trust, it made it easier to later manipulate Person A into a sexual relationship. Once in an intimate relationship, the continued provision of cigarettes and alcohol served to maintain that sexual relationship.

194. The panel therefore considered that the provision of cigarettes and alcohol to Person A was sexually motivated, in pursuit of sexual gratification and pursuit of a future sexual relationship. The actual sexual activity that did take place between Mr Holloway and Person A was self-evidently sexually motivated.

3. Whilst registered as a social worker you failed to inform the Health and Care Professions Council as soon as possible on or around: a. 6 April 2017, that your employer imposed restrictions on your practice. b. 7 August 2017, that you were suspended from work by your employer

Found proved by admission.

195. Towards the end of his closing submissions, the panel was asked by Mr Wilson to make a finding in relation to whether Mr Holloway was told at the outset of his employer's investigation that the LADO would raise matters with the HCPC.

196. At the outset of the hearing, when admissions were made to Paragraph 3, it was not on a partial basis.

197. Ms Llewellyn-Waters did not make closing submissions on this Paragraph of the Allegation, understanding it to have been admitted, and therefore already found proved by the panel.

198. In those circumstances, the panel did not consider fair or appropriate to make a finding at this stage as to whether Mr Holloway had been informed that the LADO would raise matters with the HCPC.

199. The panel accepted that the wider context and circumstances of the admitted conduct would form part of its deliberation and findings on misconduct.

Finding and reasons on grounds:

Submissions

200. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the facts found proved amount to misconduct. She submitted that the applicable standards are the HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (2016) and the Standards of Proficiency for Social Workers in England (2017), in respect of Paragraph 3 of the Allegation. She submitted that the General Social Care Council Code (2002) is applicable in respect of Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Allegation.

201. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the conduct found in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Allegation would put Mr Holloway in breach of the General Social Care Council Code (2002)- Standard 5.8 – '*Behave in a way, in work or outside work, which would call into question your suitability to work in social care services*.'

202. In relation to the conduct at Paragraph 3 of the Allegation, Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that this puts Mr Holloway in breach of the HCPC Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics 2016, namely:

- Standard 9.1 – '*You must make sure that your conduct justifies the public's trust and confidence in you and your profession.'*
- Standard 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*.'

203. Ms Llewellyn-Waters also submitted that Mr Holloway was in breach of the HCPC Proficiency Standards (2017), namely:

- Standard 3.1 – *'Understand the need to maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct.'*
- Standard 8.9 – '*Be able to communicate in inter-professional and inter-agency communication.'*

204. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the facts found proved do not amount to transient or fleeting lapses in judgement. Rather they are all serious and amount to misconduct in the circumstances of the case. She submitted that the nature of Mr Holloway's relationship with Person A was fundamentally inappropriate. Person A was 15 years old at the time of the sexual intercourse. The Social Worker was 38 years old. She submitted that Person A's clear vulnerabilities, as outlined in the panel's decision at facts stage, were known to Mr Holloway. She submitted that Person A relied on Mr Holloway for emotional support and trusted him. Her parents also trusted him in permitting Person A to stay at his house. She referred the Panel to the evidence of Person B, in particular the gratitude he had expressed that Person A had someone she could talk to and who could support her, at a time when he was unaware of what was occurring.

205. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that Mr Holloway exploited Person A's vulnerability in order to pursue and maintain a sexual relationship with her. He had provided Person A with cigarettes and alcohol during the course of their relationship whilst she was underage. On the evening leading up to their first sexual encounter at his house, he had been serving her alcohol, knowing that she was underage.

206. Ms Llewellyn-Waters referred the panel to the harm the conduct has caused to Person A who has endured the distress, self-blame and shame for two decades.

207. In relation to Paragraph 3 of the Allegation, Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that his omissions meant that Mr Holloway did not tell his regulator that serious allegations had been made against him and that he was subject to an ongoing police investigation.

208. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that this is far from an oversight, such as someone not informing the regulator of a change of address. She submitted that it falls into a different category. She submitted that the public policy grounds arising from such conduct are self-evident.

209. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that despite Mr Holloway asserting that the LADO was informing the HCPC, there was no attempt by him to speak with the LADO nor any effort to revisit this with his line manager. Furthermore, despite no communications from the HCPC about the allegations, he made no enquiry with them to check.

210. Ms Llewellyn-Waters reminded the panel of its question to Mr Holloway in which he informed the panel that he had re-registered with the HCPC during the relevant period and had made no reference to the allegations. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that it is sheer common sense for an experienced social worker to have known he should have declared this. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that this conduct was an abrogation of responsibility and amounted to misconduct.

211. Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway concedes that the conduct found proved at Paragraphs 1 and 2 amounts to misconduct.

212. In relation to Paragraph 3, Mr Wilson invited the Panel to find that such conduct does not amount to serious professional misconduct. He asked the panel to have careful regard to Mr Holloway's evidence that he did not conceal this information, simply he had understood that this was to be shared by the LADO as part of a multi-agency approach. Mr Wilson invited the panel to make a finding that Mr Holloway was told at the beginning of his employer's investigation that the LADO would liaise with the HCPC. Mr Wilson submitted that witness RB had sought to make enquires about this on behalf of Social Work England, to ascertain whether this was correct. Mr Wilson reminded the panel of Ms Tweed's evidence that she was not in the meeting so was unable to confirm whether this was said to Mr Holloway. He submitted that the only direct evidence comes from Mr Holloway who states he was told in the meeting that LADO would inform the HCPC. Therefore, his actions thereafter were based on that information. Mr Wilson submitted that there is no direct evidence that Mr Holloway was told the opposite.

213. Mr Wilson submitted that the evidence supports that a LADO was involved, as it was the LADO who passed information to Mr Holloway's management which in turn triggered the employer response.

214. Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway's account is further supported by objective features, such as Mr Holloway not seeking any other employment, during his employer's suspension. Mr Wilson submitted that there was no reason not to tell the regulator.

215. Mr Wilson submitted that the rationale provided by Mr Holloway for his self-referral in April 2019, is supported by the British Association of Social Workers magazine article, dated April 2019, relating to the issue of self-referral.

216. Mr Wilson submitted that as Mr Holloway had thought the HCPC had been informed by the LADO, his failure to self-refer was an inadvertent regulatory failure arising from misunderstanding. It was not a deliberate concealment and therefore it falls short of misconduct.

Legal advice

217. In relation to misconduct, the legal adviser referred the panel to the cases of *Roylance v GMC (no.2) [2000] AC 311, R (Remedy UK Ltd) v GMC [2009] EWHC 2294 (Admin)* and to the regulatory standards (as set out above). The panel was advised that there is no settled definition of misconduct, and it is for the panel to say in the circumstances of the case whether the behaviour crossed the threshold properly to be categorised as misconduct. The panel could approach the question by deciding whether an act or omission on the part of Mr Holloway represented a serious falling short of the standards to be expected of a registered social worker. However, it is important to note that not every omission or wrongdoing necessarily constitutes misconduct.

Decision

218. The panel at all times had in mind the overriding objective of Social Work England which includes its duty to protect the public, promote and maintain public confidence in social workers in England and to promote and maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England. The panel took into account the standards which were in place at the dates to which the findings relate. The panel bore in mind that a departure from the standards alone does not necessarily constitute misconduct.

219. Based on all the information before it, the panel found Mr Holloway's behaviour did amount to serious professional misconduct.

220. The panel took into account that the sexually motivated actions of Mr Holloway as set out in Paragraph 1 did not occur in the exercise of his professional social work practice. Nonetheless, the panel considered that it was conduct of a morally culpable or otherwise disgraceful kind, and whilst it occurred outwith the course of professional practice itself, it brings the profession into disrepute.

221. The panel considered that Mr Holloway's sexually motivated conduct towards Person A, who was a 15-year-old child at the time, was very serious. It represented a course of conduct that was exploitative in nature, given the substantial age difference and the known vulnerabilities of Person A. Furthermore, the panel considered the conduct to amount to a breach of trust. Whilst Mr Holloway was not a social worker at the time, he did have trust placed in him by Person A, who considered him a shoulder to cry on and someone to speak to about the difficulties she was experiencing. Trust was also placed in Mr Holloway by Person A's parents who were grateful that he was providing support

and accommodation to their daughter enabling her to continue to visit the city she considered her home. In acting as he did, Mr Holloway failed to respect or uphold the responsibility that existed as a result of Person A and her family placing their trust in him.

222. The panel took into account that Mr Holloway's sexually motivated conduct had caused harm to Person A who has endured two decades of "*shame*". In her evidence she described the profound and lasting impact Mr Holloway's actions have had on her.

223. The panel found that Mr Holloway's actions were fundamentally inconsistent with what is expected of a registered social worker, falling far below the standards.

224. The panel concluded that the conduct found proved at Paragraphs 1 and 2 does amount to serious professional misconduct.

225. In relation to Paragraph 3, the panel took into account that this was not a one-off omission. It relates to Mr Holloway failing to inform the HCPC as soon as possible that his employer had imposed restrictions on his practice and subsequently failing to inform them that he was suspended from work.

226. The panel was asked by Mr Wilson to make a finding that Mr Holloway had been told in his initial meeting with the employer, that the LADO would liaise with the HCPC. However, it did not consider that it was necessary to do so in order to reach its decision as to whether the actions amount to misconduct. Whilst context is relevant to misconduct, the panel considered that regardless of what Mr Holloway was told about the LADO, it was incumbent on him to have taken a proactive approach in contacting the regulator, as the standards are clear that the onus is on the registered individual to self-report. The panel considered that given the nature and gravity of what was alleged against him, it would have been a matter of common sense, for an experienced social worker, as he was, to inform his regulator.

227. The panel took into account Mr Holloway's evidence that he did re-register during the relevant period, and as he did not have a conviction, or caution, did not say anything about the allegations. The panel considered that this was therefore a conscious decision not to mention the allegations he faced, rather than an error or slip.

228. The requirement to inform the regulator is to ensure public safety by declaring any changes which would impact on an ability to work safely and effectively as a registered social work professional. By not informing the HCPC, Mr Holloway deprived the regulator of an opportunity to consider what, if any, action it needed to take to ensure public protection in accordance with the overarching objective. Failing to disclose information of this nature to the regulator, in a timely manner, erodes public trust in the profession and the regulator body. Therefore, the panel did consider Mr Holloway's omissions at Paragraph 3 to be serious such as to amount to serious professional misconduct.

Finding and reasons on current impairment:

Submissions

229. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that in relation to personal impairment the conduct found against Mr Holloway, at Paragraphs 1 and 2, is attitudinal in nature. She submitted that such conduct is extremely difficult to remediate particularly when it relates to a course of conduct rather than a single episode.

230. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that there is a dearth of evidence as to remediation.

231. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that, whilst Mr Holloway was entitled to deny the Allegation, in doing so he had ridden roughshod over Person A, including, at times, by seeking to attribute the allegations she had made to her health.

232. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the factors identified in the *'Grant'* case are present. She submitted that Person A had been harmed on a continuing basis and such harm was aggravated by the trust that had been placed in Mr Holloway. She submitted that there remains a risk of repetition as the panel has before it no evidence of insight. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that although this Allegation is historic, due to the attitudinal nature of it, there remains a risk.

233. In relation to the public interest considerations, Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that this is just the sort of case which engages public interest. She submitted that the public have a right to expect that a social worker will not have sex with a child.

234. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the lack of professional practice concerns does not undermine the seriousness of the misconduct found in Mr Holloway's private life.

235. In relation to Paragraph 3 of the Allegation, Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that by failing to notify the HCPC of the serious sexual allegations that had been made against him, Mr Holloway had abdicated any responsibility. She submitted that, despite his assertion that the LADO was dealing with this, he failed to make a single enquiry despite no communication from the HCPC. She submitted that this shows an ongoing lack of judgement. She submitted that his omission in notifying the HCPC was a deliberate failure in the hope that it would all just go away.

236. Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway concedes public impairment in relation to Paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Allegation, but personal impairment is not conceded.

237. Mr Wilson submitted that neither personal nor public impairment is conceded in relation to Paragraph 3 of the Allegation.

238. Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway has been practising without any concerns since 2011, and following his initial suspension from work, he returned to his role in April 2024. Mr Wilson referred the panel to the testimonials within the bundle, including from Mr Holloway's manager, who is aware of the Allegation, and who provides positive

feedback relevant to the issues in the case. Mr Wilson submitted that this is important evidence to take into account when considering future risk.

239. Mr Wilson submitted that the panel should have careful regard to the 'Impairment and sanctions guidance' and in adhering to that, should not treat Mr Holloway's denial as evidence of a lack of insight. Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway's statement provides evidence of reflection and of an understanding of professional boundaries.

240. Mr Wilson submitted that he was not seeking to minimise the Allegation, but that the issue of future risk in relation to personal impairment is an entirely separate factor to public interest impairment, which is conceded.

241. In relation to the conduct found at Paragraph 3, Mr Wilson submitted that Mr Holloway had remediated this conduct seven years ago when he made the self-referral to the HCPC. Mr Wilson submitted that having lived this regulatory experience since 2019, it is obvious that Mr Holloway is now well aware of the requirements and there is no basis to suggest such conduct would be repeated. Mr Wilson submitted that public interest is not engaged in relation to Paragraph 3, as the conduct was not dishonest nor done to evade regulation.

242. In response to a question from the panel, Mr Holloway confirmed that he was working as a social worker from 2011 until his suspension in 2017, then returned to his role in April 2023 to present. Mr Wilson also confirmed that Mr Holloway's social work practice is with vulnerable adults, not with children under the age of 18.

Legal advice

243. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to impairment. The legal adviser reminded the panel that it should have regard to both the personal and public elements of impairment. The legal adviser directed the panel to have careful regard to the 'Social Work England Impairment and sanctions guidance' updated 26 April 2026, which includes guidance on assessing impairment. The panel was referred to the cases of *CHRE v (1) NMC & (2) Grant [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin), Cohen v GMC [2008] EWHC 581* (*Admin), Meadow v GMC [2007] 1 WB 462* and *Yeong v GMC [2009] EWHC 1923*.

Decision

244. The panel considered Mr Holloway's current fitness to practise firstly having regard to the personal element and secondly with regard to the public element. The panel had careful regard to the 'Social Work England Impairment and sanctions guidance' updated 23 April 2026.

245. In relation to the personal element, the panel considered whether the conduct in this case is easily remediable, whether it has been remedied and whether it was highly unlikely to be repeated. The panel had regard to both the sexually motivated conduct

found at Paragraphs 1 and 2 and separately considered the omission to notify the HCPC as found at Paragraph 3.

246. The panel kept in mind that sexual misconduct is seen as one of the most serious allegations by all the health and care regulators. Furthermore, that allegations of this nature are often seen as a fundamental character flaw that is difficult to remediate because it points to deep-seated attitudinal problems. The nature of character flaws and attitudinal problems is that they are difficult to remediate fully.

247. The panel had regard to its findings that Mr Holloway had engaged in a course of sexually motivated conduct towards Person A, whom he knew to be a vulnerable child, 23 years his junior, and with whom he was considered a trusted person, not only by her but also by her parents. The panel considered that the contextual factors of this conduct, which only stopped when Person A began to realise it was wrong, suggest a clear attitudinal issue. The panel considered that his actions undermine his trustworthiness, his integrity, his respect for the law, his judgement, and his respect for others.

248. The panel took into account that Mr Holloway's conduct had caused harm to Person A, who had endured 20 years of shame. Person A described the impact the conduct had on her self-esteem as well as on her relationship with certain members of her family because she could never be honest with them.

249. The panel had regard to whether Mr Holloway's sexually motivated conduct has been remedied.

250. The panel found that there is limited evidence of insight, remediation, remorse or reflection. Whilst Mr Holloway has fully engaged in the proceedings, and whilst he is entitled to deny allegations made against him, the panel had minimal information to demonstrate Mr Holloway's understanding of how he would reduce the risk of repetition. His written evidence states that if he were faced with a situation now where a young person had nowhere to stay, he would not deal with it informally by allowing them to stay at his house. Instead, he would contact appropriate services and would ensure that any action was properly recorded. The panel considered this observation to be superficial, and it fails to address the harm that Person A has endured or provide any empathy towards her. He has not provided information, even in generic terms, as to what made him vulnerable to acting as he did, and what strategies he would use to prevent this from occurring again. The panel took into account that he has practised safely since 2011, and he has provided positive professional testimonials. However, his practice has been working with adults, not children, and accordingly, the panel considered that only limited weight could be placed on it as evidence of a reduction in the relevant risk.

251. The panel took into account all it had read and heard about the misconduct. The facts found show that Mr Holloway conducted a pattern of sexually motivated behaviour. The

panel found that given the lack of insight and remediation, there remains a risk that Mr Holloway will behave in a sexually motivated manner again.

252. In relation to the omission to notify the HCPC, the panel considered that such conduct is easily remediable, providing that it is not indictive of a deep-seated attitudinal issue. The panel took into account that no direct harm to service users had been caused, as Mr Holloway had remained suspended by his employer during the relevant investigation period, and had not sought other work. The panel also took into account that Mr Holloway had admitted his conduct and that following reporting to the HCPC in 2019, he has remained fully engaged with the regulator and these proceedings. The panel found that Mr Holloway has shown insight into his conduct, recognising the importance of taking personal responsibility, and demonstrating an understanding of the importance of self-referrals in the regulatory context. In these circumstances, the panel did not find the conduct in Paragraph 3 to be a deep-seated attitudinal issue. It considered that Mr Holloway had demonstrated sufficient insight and remediation, such that it is unlikely the conduct would be repeated.

253. In conclusion, the panel decided that in relation to the personal element, Mr Holloway's fitness to practise is currently impaired, with regard to the sexually motivated misconduct, but not in relation to the omission to inform the regulator.

254. The panel next considered public impairment. The panel was mindful that the public interest encompassed not only public protection but also the declaring and upholding of proper standards of behaviour as well as the maintenance of public confidence in the profession.

255. It took into account the guidance in the case of *CHRE v NMC & Grant [2011] EWHC 927 (Admin)* at paragraph 74:- '*In determining whether a practitioner's fitness to practise is impaired by reason of misconduct, the relevant panel should generally consider not only whether the practitioner continues to present a risk to members of the public 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*.'

256. The panel had regard to its finding that Mr Holloway had behaved in a sexually motivated manner towards Person A, over a prolonged period, which involved providing her with cigarettes and alcohol and having sex with her whilst she was under the age of 16. The panel had before it both written and oral evidence of the impact Mr Holloway's conduct had on Person A and the harm that it caused. Such conduct involved an inherent power imbalance, given the significant age gap. Furthermore, there was a breach of trust in that Mr Holloway knew that Person A was vulnerable, and he was trusted by her and her family to offer support and guidance to Person A, which he took advantage of by acting as he did. The panel considered that without question, given the serious nature, Mr Holloway's sexual misconduct brought the profession into disrepute and breached fundamental tenets of the profession.

257. The panel concluded that the public interest would be undermined if there were to be no finding of impairment in this case. Social workers hold privileged positions of trust. It is essential to the effective delivery of social work that the public can trust social workers to practise with honesty, integrity and respect for the law. The panel considered that not to make a finding of current impairment of fitness to practise in relation to the sexually motivated misconduct would seriously undermine public trust and confidence in the profession and would fail to uphold and declare proper standards.

258. The panel also considered that a finding of public impairment was required in relation to Mr Holloway's failure to inform the HCPC of the allegations against him at the relevant time. The panel took into account that this occurred on two occasions, firstly when he was placed on restricted practice by his employer and secondly when he was suspended a few months later. The panel considered that the failure to notify was significant as it related to very serious allegations. It considered that in these circumstances, the failure to notify showed a disregard for regulation. The requirement to inform the HCPC is to ensure public safety, and in failing to declare the allegations, Mr Holloway deprived the HCPC of an opportunity to consider what, if any, action it needed to take to ensure public protection in accordance with the overarching objective. The panel considered that a finding of impairment is therefore required in the public interest in relation to the proved conduct at Paragraph 3.

259. In conclusion, the panel found that Mr Holloway's fitness to practise is currently impaired, on the public impairment element, in relation to all aspects of the misconduct.

Decision and reasons on sanction:

260. Following Mr Wilson's submissions on misconduct and impairment, he informed the panel that Mr Holloway would thereafter be unrepresented due to financial constraints.

261. Having handed down its decision on misconduct and impairment, the panel, in the interests of fairness, afforded Mr Holloway time to read and consider the decision and the relevant guidance on sanction, and to formulate his submissions.

Submissions

262. Ms Llewellyn-Waters drew the panel's attention to the Social Work England Impairment and sanctions guidance and the general principles the panel should have regard to when reaching its decision on sanction.

263. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the following mitigating factors are relevant in this case:

- Admission of Paragraph 3 of the Allegation.
- Absence of previous fitness to practise history and evidence of good character.

264. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that in relation to aggravating features the following factors are relevant:

- Mr Holloway failed to adhere to the fundamental tenet of social work which is to keep people safe. Instead, his conduct amounted to a pattern of behaviour involving sexual intercourse with a child, who he knew to be vulnerable. The conduct included the provision of cigarettes and alcohol to facilitate the development of their relationship.
- The disparity in age as Person A was 15 and Mr Holloway was 38.
- The breach of trust that had been placed in Mr Holloway by Person A and her family.
- The impact and harm caused to Person A.
- The limited insight and lack of evidenced remediation.
- The failure to notify the regulator especially given the gravity of concerns.

265. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that in the circumstances of this case, the only appropriate and proportionate sanction is a removal order. She referred the panel to paragraphs 232 – 234 of its decision. She submitted that, in essence, the submissions contained in those paragraphs reflect the reason why a removal order is necessary.

266. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that taking no further action would be insufficient to protect the public including the wider public interest. She submitted that giving advice or a warning would not restrict Mr Holloway's practice and would therefore not be sufficient to protect the public and wider public interest.

267. Ms Llewellyn-Waters referred the panel to paragraphs 114, 118 and 119, of the Impairment and sanctions guidance. She submitted that conditions of practice are not appropriate for the following reasons:

- The panel has found limited evidence of insight and the conduct is attitudinal which is harder to remediate.
- The Allegation relates to Mr Holloway's conduct outside of social work practice.
- The factual findings include sexual misconduct and an abuse of trust.

268. As to a suspension order, Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that this would not be appropriate. She reminded the panel of its finding that Mr Holloway has demonstrated limited insight. She submitted that there is no evidence that Mr Holloway is willing or able to remediate the sexually motivated conduct. Additionally, she submitted that a suspension order would be insufficient in the circumstances of this case to meet the overarching objective.

269. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that the panel should impose a removal order, as no other outcome would be enough to:

- Protect the public.
- Maintain confidence in the profession.
- Maintain proper professional standards for social workers in England.

270. Ms Llewellyn-Waters stated that the conduct found against Mr Holloway includes sexual misconduct against a vulnerable child, which in her submission, sits at the serious end of the spectrum of sexual misconduct.

271. Ms Llewellyn-Waters emphasised that the panel's decision on sanction should be consistent with its findings and decisions to date. She invited the panel to bear in mind the serious nature of this case and the harm caused to Person A, as captured in paragraphs 221, 245-247, and 249-250 of the decision. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that notwithstanding this conduct having occurred pre-registration, and no concerns having been raised since, the underpinning factors are such that a removal order should be imposed.

272. Mr Holloway informed the panel that he had prepared written submissions, and he proceeded to read them aloud to the panel. He stated:

> *"I respectfully highlight the clear contrast between the panel's findings and my 2021 Crown Court acquittal. While I maintain my innocence, I recognise the lower standard of proof applied in these proceedings and acknowledge the panel's authority.*
>
> *I appreciate the gravity of these findings, the impact allegations of sexual misconduct have on public trust, and the weight of the sanction the panel must now consider. While this represents a devastating moment in my career, my personal conscience remains intact.*
>
> *I will always take pride in my years as a social worker, the service I provided to the community, and the individuals and families I was privileged to support."*

Legal advice

273. The panel heard and accepted the legal advice from the legal adviser on all the available options on sanction as set out in the Regulations. The panel was advised to consider the Impairment and sanctions guidance dated April 2026. The panel was advised that the purpose of any fitness to practise sanction is to protect the public which includes maintaining confidence in the profession and upholding professional standards. The sanction imposed should be the minimum necessary to protect the public.

Decision

274. The panel applied the principle of proportionality by weighing Mr Holloway's interests with the public interest and by considering each available sanction in ascending order of severity.

275. The panel considered the mitigating and aggravating factors in determining what sanction, if any, to impose.

276. In relation to the mitigating factors, the panel considered that Mr Holloway has an absence of fitness to practice history and he has provided testimonials from his employer referencing his good character. However, the panel afforded this mitigation limited weight as his practice has been working with adults, not children. Furthermore, the absence of a fitness to practise history does not take away from the gravamen of the findings of sexually motivated conduct towards a child. The panel considered that Mr Holloway's admission to Paragraph 3 was also a mitigating factor. However, it placed limited weight on this when considering sanction as this aspect of the Allegation is far less serious than the sexually motivated conduct.

277. The panel identified the following aggravating factors:

    a) Mr Holloway's conduct amounted to a pattern of behaviour involving sexual intercourse with a child, who he knew to be vulnerable. The conduct included the provision of cigarettes and alcohol to facilitate the development of their relationship.

    b) The disparity in age as Person A was 15 and Mr Holloway was 38.

    c) The breach of trust that had been placed in Mr Holloway by Person A and her family.

    d) The impact and harm caused to Person A.

    e) The limited insight and lack of evidenced remediation and remorse.

278. The panel had careful regard to the seriousness of the findings of fact it had made, and its findings on misconduct and impairment. It had specific regard to paragraphs 161 to 165 of the sanctions guidance in relation to the sexual misconduct.

279. The panel took into account that Mr Hollway's sexually motivated conduct was not isolated, it represented a pattern of conduct over a period of months. The conduct only ceased when Person A began to realise it was wrong. The panel also took into account that the sexual conduct involved Mr Hollway having sex with a child, who he knew to be vulnerable due to her individual circumstances. By acting as he did, he misused the trust that was placed in him by Person A and her family.

280. The panel recognised that this conduct occurred prior to Mr Holloway's registration as a social worker and occurred in his private life. Nonetheless, the panel considered that whatever the context, having sexual intercourse with a child is self-evidently wrong.

Taking into account all the factors identified above, the panel considered that Mr Holloway's sexually motivated conduct is at the higher end of seriousness.

281. Considering the serious nature of the findings of fact it had made, the panel decided that taking no further action, issuing advice or a warning, would not be appropriate as these sanctions would not restrict Mr Holloway's practice and would therefore not protect the public from the risk that the panel has identified nor would these sanctions satisfy the wider public interest.

282. The panel went on to consider whether a conditions of practice order would be appropriate. The panel considered that it is difficult to see how a conditions of practice order might address and safeguard members of the public from the risk of the sexual misconduct. The panel took into account that the conduct was attitudinal in nature, it was repeated and it occurred in Mr Holloway's private life. Mr Holloway has shown only limited insight, and he has not demonstrated remediation or remorse beyond the impact on his own career in relation to the sexual misconduct. With this in mind the panel considered that conditions of practice would not be sufficient to protect the public from risk of harm, nor would it be sufficient to satisfy the public interest element.

283. The panel next considered whether a suspension order should be imposed to protect the public and the wider public interest. The panel took into account that a suspension order can be imposed for a period of up to three years. The panel had in mind that the purpose of a suspension order is not to punish but to protect the public and wider public interest.

284. The panel asked itself whether this was a case which fell short of requiring removal, having regard to its findings on misconduct and impairment. It took into account that in relation to his sexually motivated conduct, Mr Holloway has provided no acknowledgment or acceptance of fault, provided limited reflection, and has not demonstrated any remediation or remorse beyond the impact on his own career.

285. The panel considered what a period of suspension would seek to achieve in Mr Holloway's case. A period of suspension would provide an opportunity for Mr Holloway to seek to address the misconduct findings made against him. However, the panel had no evidence to suggest that Mr Holloway is willing and able to resolve or remediate his failings, firstly because allegations of this nature are inherently difficult to remediate and secondly because he maintains that he has done nothing wrong and that his *"conscience remains intact"*. Mr Holloway continues to maintain his innocence of all sexual allegations against him.

286. The panel took into account that social workers hold positions of trust. Their role is to listen to and support individuals, families, and communities, helping them find solutions to challenges and promoting their human rights and wellbeing. Social workers also protect people from harm when necessary.

287. The panel considered its findings that Mr Holloway's actions undermined his trustworthiness, his integrity, his respect for the law, his judgement, and his respect for others. Given the serious nature of the findings it had made, the panel determined that a suspension order was not sufficient to protect the public, uphold public confidence in the profession, nor to mark the public interest in declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct and behaviour.

288. The panel took into account the sanctions guidance which states that:

> *'A removal order may be appropriate in cases involving (any of the following):*
>
> - *abuses of position or trust*
> - *sexual misconduct*
> - *sexual abuse of children*
> - *persistent lack of insight into the seriousness of their actions or consequences*
> - *social workers who are unwilling and/or unable to remediate.'*

289. The panel acknowledged that a removal order is a sanction of last resort and should be reserved for those categories of cases where there is no other means of protecting the public and the wider public interest. The panel decided that Mr Holloway's case falls into this category because of the nature and gravity of his sexually motivated conduct, the limited insight into the seriousness and consequences of his actions, the absence of remorse beyond the impact on his own career, and the indication that he is unwilling to remediate given that he maintains his "*innocence*". The panel was also satisfied that any lesser sanction would undermine public trust and confidence in the profession, considering the gravamen of the misconduct. The panel concluded that the misconduct found in this case is fundamentally incompatible with continued registration.

290. The panel had regard to proportionality and balanced the public interest against Mr Holloway's interests. The panel considered the potential consequential personal, financial, and professional impact a removal order may have upon Mr Holloway but concluded that these considerations are significantly outweighed by the panel's duty to give priority to public protection and the wider public interest.

291. The panel concluded that the appropriate and proportionate order is a removal order.

Interim Order

292. In light of the panel's findings on sanction, Ms Llewellyn-Waters applied for an interim suspension order to cover the appeal period before the final order of removal becomes effective. Ms Llewellyn-Waters submitted that in accordance with the findings the panel

has made thus far, an interim order is necessary for the same reasons. She submitted that the appropriate length for the order is 18 months which provides sufficient time for the appeal, if one is made.

293. Mr Holloway submitted that he had no objection to the imposition of an interim order.

294. The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal adviser in relation to the test for interim orders at a final hearing stage. To impose an interim order in the present circumstances it needed to be satisfied that such an order was necessary for the protection of the public which includes the public interest.

295. In light of its decision on sanction the panel decided that it would be wholly incompatible with its earlier findings if an interim suspension order was not made.

296. Accordingly, the panel concluded that an interim suspension order is necessary for the protection of the public, including the wider public interest. It concluded that 18 months would be an appropriate and proportionate length to enable an appeal to be dealt with.

297. When the appeal period expires, this interim order will come to an end unless an appeal has been filed with the High Court. If there is no appeal, the final order of removal shall take effect when the appeal period expires.

Right of appeal:

298. Under Paragraph 16(1)(a) of Schedule 2 of the regulations, the social worker may appeal to the High Court against the decision of adjudicators:

    a. 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.

    b. the decision of the regulator on review of an interim order, or a final order, other than a decision to revoke the order.

299. Under Paragraph 16(2) of Schedule 2 of the regulations an appeal must be filed before the end of the period of 28 days beginning with the day after the day on which the social worker is notified of the decision complained of.

300. Under Regulation 9(4) of the regulations this order may not be recorded until the expiry of the period within which an appeal against the order could be made, or where an appeal against the order has been made, before the appeal is withdrawn or otherwise finally disposed of.

301. This notice is served in accordance with Rules 44 and 45 of the Social Work England Fitness to Practice Rules 2019 (as amended).

The Professional Standards Authority:

302. 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.