Social Work England

Case Examiner Decision

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FTPS-20802

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The role of the case examiners

The case examiners perform a filtering function in the fitness to practise process, and their primary role is to determine whether the case ought to be considered by adjudicators at a formal hearing. The wider purpose of the fitness to practise process is not to discipline the social worker for past conduct, but rather to consider whether the social worker's current fitness to practise might be impaired because of the issues highlighted. In reaching their decisions, case examiners are mindful that Social Work England's primary objective is to protect the public.

Case examiners apply the 'realistic prospect' test. As part of their role, the case examiners will consider whether there is a realistic prospect:

- the facts alleged could be found proven by adjudicators
- adjudicators could find that one of the statutory grounds for impairment is engaged
- adjudicators could find the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired

If the case examiners find a realistic prospect of impairment, they consider whether there is a public interest in referring the case to a hearing. If there is no public interest in a hearing, the case examiners can propose an outcome to the social worker. We call this accepted disposal and a case can only be resolved in this way if the social worker agrees with the case examiners' proposal.

Case examiners review cases on the papers only. The case examiners are limited, in that, they are unable to hear and test live evidence, and therefore they are unable to make findings of fact.

Decision summary

Decision summary	
Preliminary outcome 1	5 June 2026
	Accepted disposal proposed- removal order
Preliminary outcome 2	8 July 2026
	Accepted disposal proposed- removal order
Final outcome	3 August 2026
	Accepted disposal- removal order

Executive summary

The case examiners have reached the following conclusions:

1. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1a, 1b, 1c and 2 being found proven by the adjudicators. [redacted]

2. There is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1a, 1b, 1c and 2 being found to amount to the statutory grounds of misconduct.

3. For regulatory concerns 1a, 1b, 1c and 2, there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators determining that the social worker's fitness to practise is currently impaired.

The case examiners did not consider it to be in the public interest for the matter to be referred to a final hearing and that the case could be concluded by way of accepted disposal.

As such, the case examiners requested that the social worker be notified of their intention to resolve the case with a removal order. On 27 July 2026, the social worker accepted the case examiners' proposal.

The case examiners have considered all of the documents made available within the evidence bundle. Key evidence is referred to throughout their decision and the case examiners' full reasoning is set out below.

Anonymity and redaction

Elements of this decision have been marked for redaction in line with our Fitness to Practise Publications Policy. Text in [redacted] will be redacted only from the published copy of the decision, and will therefore be shared with the complainant in their copy. Text in [redacted] ill be redacted from both the complainant's and the published copy of the decision.

In accordance with Social Work England's fitness to practise proceedings and registration appeals publications policy, the case examiners have anonymised the names of individuals to maintain privacy. A schedule of anonymity is provided below for the social worker and complainant, and will be redacted if this decision is published.

The complaint and our regulatory concerns

The initial complaint	
The complainant	The complaint was raised by the social worker's former employer [redacted]
Date the complaint was received	24 June 2022
Complaint summary	The concerns were raised to the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) [redacted] on 11 November 2019. The concerns were not actioned by HCPC, and a new referral was submitted to Social Work England on 24 June 2022. The concerns relate to the safeguarding of two children, Child A and Child B. In the case of Child A, the social worker is alleged to have failed to assess risk by not visiting their home address and to have completed an assessment without seeing Child A at home as required. Further, social worker allegedly recorded that they had seen Child A's home when this was not the case, thereby acting dishonestly. In the case of Child B, the social worker is alleged not to have followed their care plan by allowing the child to have unsupervised contact with their father and to have informed the child there was a plan for reunification, despite management direction this was not agreed.

Regulatory concerns
Whilst registered as a social worker [redacted]

1. On or around January 2019 you failed to appropriately safeguard Child A by:

a. Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when evidence indicates the property was not fit for human habitation.

b. Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when you had not visited the child's home.

c. Completing an assessment on Child A without having seen Child A and/or without having seen Child A at home.

[redacted]

2. Your actions at 1b and/or 1 [redacted] were dishonest.

[redacted]

Preliminary issues

Investigation		
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has been notified of the grounds for investigation?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that the social worker has had reasonable opportunity to make written representations to the investigators?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that they have all relevant evidence available to them, or that adequate attempts have been made to obtain evidence that is not available?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Are the case examiners satisfied that it was not proportionate or necessary to offer the complainant the opportunity to provide final written representations; or that they were provided a reasonable opportunity to do so where required.	Yes	☒
	No	☐

Requests for further information or submissions, or any other preliminary issues that have arisen

The case examiners have made the following amendments to the regulatory concerns:

Whilst registered as a social worker working for Norfolk Council:

1. On or around ~~March~~ **January** 2019 you failed to appropriately safeguard Child A by:

a) Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when evidence indicates the property was not fit for human habitation.

b) Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when you had not visited the child's home.

c) Completing an assessment on Child A without having seen Child A and/or without having seen Child A at home.

The case examiners have amended the wording of regulatory concern 1 substituting March with January to accurately record the time in which the social worker allegedly failed to safeguard Child A. The original concern referred to the allegation taking place on or around March 2019, yet the case examiners note that the social worker was suspended since early February 2019. The case examiners are of the view that this amendment does not alter the substance of the concern, but it is necessary to provide accuracy regarding the dates related to the allegation.

The case examiners are satisfied that the amendments they have made are minor, and they therefore considered it to be unnecessary and disproportionate to delay consideration of the case by seeking additional submissions from the social worker.

The realistic prospect test

Fitness to practise history

The case examiners have been informed that there is no previous fitness to practise history.

Decision summary

Is there a realistic prospect of the adjudicators finding the social worker's fitness to practise is impaired?	Yes	☒
	No	☐

The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect of regulatory concerns 1(a), 1(b),1(c), and 2 being found proven, that those concerns could amount to the statutory ground of misconduct, and that the social worker's fitness to practise could be found impaired.

Reasoning

Facts

Whilst registered as a social worker working for Norfolk Council:

1. On or around January 2019 you failed to appropriately safeguard Child A by:

a. Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when evidence indicates the property was not fit for human habitation.

When considering Child A's property fitness for human habitation, the case examiners note ample pictorial evidence within the bundle which undeniably indicates inhabitable conditions within Child A's home due to high levels of hoarding and animal faecal matter throughout the property.

The case examiners then turned their minds to considering whether the social worker described the condition of said home as good enough. Within the Housing section of

Child A's assessment, the social worker recorded: "The property is rented from [redacted] housing; it is a two-bedroom house. The home conditions are **good enough**". In their initial and final submissions, the social worker explains that they referred to the grandmother's house when they recorded the property as being "good enough". However, the case examiners are of the view that the detail within the assessment referring to the property relates to Child A's home due to the following reasons:

- the property is described as two-bedroom home rented from [redacted] This is consistent with the description provided by the Housing officer in relation to Child A's home.
- four cats being present within the home that cause smells and Child A's mother trying to address this. This was a known issue in Child A's home address.
- Child A's mother and Child A feeling fearful of living close to the perpetrator of violence and wanting to be relocated. This was a known concern about Child A's home address.
- the social worker describing daily contact with grandmother and eating at their house every day. This narrative would not make sense if the social worker was describing the grandmother's property within the assessment as the social worker asserts.

The case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concern 1a proven.

b. Describing Child A's home conditions as "good enough" when you had not visited the child's home.

The case examiners note that the social worker has consistently stated to Social Work England that they did not visit Child A's home. The social worker added that they visited Child A at their grandmother's home to complete the assessment.

The case examiners have already considered that there is a realistic prospect that the social worker recorded the house was good enough, as explained within the case examiners' consideration of regulatory concern 1a.

It seems improbable that, had the social worker visited Child A's home, the social worker would have documented that the condition was 'good enough' in light of the extremely poor condition that is evidenced by way of photographs. The case examiners have explained above why the evidence does not support that the social worker was describing the grandmother's property as the social worker asserts. The evidence suggests that it is highly probable that the social worker did not assess either property,

rather than this being a case of the social worker visiting an address and making a poor assessment of the property's suitability.

As a result, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concern 1b proven.

c. Completing an assessment on Child A without having seen Child A and/or without having seen Child A at home.

The case examiners note that the social worker completed an assessment for Child A and that there is information to suggest that the social worker saw Child A alone and with their parents during the assessment. This is evidenced in the social worker's assessment. Moreover, the local authority, in their report, state that it is believed the social worker saw Child A as part of the assessment process. However, the social worker has admitted they did not visit Child A's home as the case examiners have covered above, alongside other reasoning that explains why the evidence suggests the social worker never visited Child A's home address at all.

As a result, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concern 1c proven.



When considering whether the social worker failed to safeguard Child A, the case examiners referred to the statutory duty placed upon social workers to assess the Child in their home environment. The case examiners are of the view that not visiting Child A in their own home as part of the assessment process, recording a description of the home without visiting it and stating living conditions were good enough when they evidently were not, could have placed Child A at risk.

Consequentially, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concern 1 proven.

2. Your actions at 1b and/or 1c were dishonest.

When considering dishonesty, there are two tests that case examiners must consider. The subjective test considers if there is anything that may demonstrate the social worker's actual state of knowledge or belief as to the facts. The objective test considers whether the conduct is likely to be deemed dishonest by applying the objective standards of ordinary decent people.

In respect of the subjective test, the questions the case examiners will consider are:

- Did the social worker know they had described Child A's home as 'good enough' as part of their assessment?

- Did the social worker know they had not visited Child A's home?

In respect of the first question, the social worker accepts that they described a property as 'good enough' but asserts they were referring to the grandmother's house. The case examiners have explained under their consideration of regulatory concern 1a why the evidence does not support the social worker's assertion, and clearly indicates that the social worker was describing Child A's home, and that they knew this.

In respect of the second question, it appears implausible that, had the social worker not visited Child A's home address as the evidence suggests, that the social worker would not have known this.

In considering the objective test for concern the case examiners believe it is reasonable to conclude that, if a social worker was proven to have recorded information within a Child's needs assessment regarding a Child's home whilst

knowing they had never visited this home, and in order to give the impression that they had, an ordinary decent person is likely to view that as dishonest.

As a result, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding regulatory concern 2 proven.

[redacted]

[redacted]





Grounds

The case examiners are aware that there is no legal definition of misconduct, but it generally would consist of serious acts or omissions, which suggest a significant departure from what would be expected of the social worker in the circumstances.

This can include conduct that takes place in the exercise of professional practice, and also conduct which occurs outside the exercise of professional practice, but calls into question the suitability of the person to work as a social worker.

To help them decide if the evidence suggests a significant departure from what would be expected in the circumstances, the case examiners have considered the following HCPC (the former social work regulator) standards, which were applicable at the time of the concerns.

6. Manage risk
6.1 *You must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to service users, carers and colleagues as far as possible***.**
6.2 *You must not do anything, or allow someone else to do anything, which could put the health or safety of a service user, carer or colleague at unacceptable risk*.

9. Be honest and trustworthy
9.1 *You must make sure that your conduct justifies the public's trust and confidence in you and your profession*.

10. Keep accurate records of your work
10.1 *You must keep full, clear, and accurate records for everyone you care for, treat, or provide other services to*.

The case examiners refer to concern 1 and the allegation that the social worker failed to safeguard Child A. The case examiners consider that if proven that the social worker did not visit Child A in their home environment, the social worker might have missed an opportunity to adequately inform their risk assessment for Child A. Moreover, if found proven that the social worker recorded that the home was good enough without visiting it when it was not suitable to human habitation; they might have placed Child A at risk as well as others visiting or living in the home. The case examiners are therefore of the view that if these allegations were proven, they are likely to be considered a significant departure from professional standards 6.1 and 6.2.

The case examiners note the importance of ensuring that records involving service users are accurate and updated as failure to do so, could impact on the quality of the decisions made for the service users and consequently have an adverse impact on them. The case examiners note that if these concerns were proven, Child A's assessment would not have provided an accurate reflection of the conditions and the presenting risks for them. If the concern in relation to recording within the

assessment were proven; this is likely to be considered a significant departure from standard 10.1.

If it was proven that the social worker acted dishonestly by recording false information regarding the home when they knew they had not visited it, this is likely to be considered a significant departure from standard 9.1. This is because being open and trustworthy is a tenet to the social work profession and acts of dishonesty are highly likely to damage trust in the profession.

The case examiners have noted their guidance which reminds them that, for an isolated matter to amount to misconduct, it would have to be considered particularly grave. While the alleged actions of the social worker in this case may be considered to involve one isolated incident, the case examiners consider that the alleged dishonesty in relating to safeguarding matters would be considered deplorable by others in the profession, and particularly grave more broadly.

If the matters were to be found proven, the case examiners conclude the alleged conduct is serious and is likely to be considered a significant departure from the professional standards detailed above.

As such, the case examiners are satisfied there is a realistic prospect of adjudicators finding these matters amount to misconduct.

Impairment

Assessment of impairment consists of two elements:

1. The personal element, established via an assessment of the risk of repetition.
2. The public element, established through consideration of whether a finding of impairment might be required to maintain public confidence in the social work profession, or in the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Personal element

With regards to the concerns before the regulator, the case examiners have given thought to their guidance, and they note that they should give consideration to whether the matters before the regulator are easily remediable, and whether the social worker has demonstrated insight and/or conducted remediation to the effect that the risk of repetition is highly unlikely.

There is no adverse history in this case.

Whether the conduct can be easily remedied

The case examiners do not consider the conduct to be easily remediable. The concerns raised are serious and include dishonesty that could indicate a behavioural, attitudinal or character concern. The case examiner guidance states that such concerns are inherently harder to remediate.

Insight and remediation

When considering insight, the case examiners are reminded to note when the insight started to develop. In their submissions to the regulator the social worker denies all allegations against them, as is their right. The social worker has engaged and has provided submissions. Though it is possible for a social worker to demonstrate insight whilst denying concerns, for example by acknowledging why the public would be concerned, the case examiners are mindful that this can be challenging. Given that the concerns are fundamentally disputed by the social worker, the focus on insight is lessened at the case examiner stage.

The case examiners then turned their minds to consider remediation. There is no objective evidence of any remediation by the social worker, though again it can be argued that this would not be expected in a case where a social worker essentially denies that the alleged conduct happened. Were the dishonesty allegation found proven, the nature of such conduct can present a significant challenge to remediation as it points to attitudinal issues. The social worker in their submissions states that they are retired and have been for several years. This would indicate that remediation is not possible.

Risk of repetition

In light of all the information the case examiners consider that, if the concerns were found proven, the risk of repetition is high.

Public element

The case examiners have next considered whether the social worker's actions have the potential to undermine public confidence in the social work profession, or the maintenance of proper standards for social workers.

Having carefully considered all the information presented to them, the case examiners are of the view that a fully informed and reasonable member of the public would be extremely concerned if a social worker was dishonest and failed to safeguard a child in the way that the regulatory concerns allege. Moreover, the case

examiners are of the view that the public's confidence in the profession would be seriously damaged.

The case examiners consider that a finding of impairment and an appropriate sanction would be expected by the public to maintain public confidence in the profession and maintain professional standards.

Accordingly, the case examiners have concluded there is a realistic prospect that a finding of current impairment would be made by adjudicators.

The public interest

Decision summary		
Is there a public interest in referring the case to a hearing?	Yes	☐
	No	☒

Referral criteria		
Is there a conflict in the evidence that must be resolved at a hearing?	Yes	☐
	No	☒
Does the social worker dispute any or all of the key facts of the case?	Yes	☒
	No	☐
Is a hearing necessary to maintain public confidence in the profession, and/or to uphold the professional standards of social workers?	Yes	☐
	No	☒

Additional reasoning

The case examiners have concluded that the public interest in this case is engaged. However, they are satisfied that this interest may be appropriately fulfilled by virtue of the accepted disposal process. Whilst the matter is serious, the case examiners are not of the view that a hearing might be necessary to maintain public confidence in the social work profession, or professional standards expected of social workers.

The case examiners have noted that the social worker has indicated to the regulator that they do not accept the facts and does not make clear if they consider their fitness to practise to be currently impaired. Where a social worker does not accept the key facts, or impairment, case examiner guidance suggests that a referral to a hearing may be necessary in the public interest.

However, the case examiners note that the guidance states the social worker must accept these matters at the point of *concluding* the case and are of the view that this does not prevent them offering accepted disposal prior to this.

The case examiners consider that it is reasonable to offer accepted disposal in this case because:

- There is no conflict in evidence in this case.
- The social worker does not dispute that they completed the assessment or that they wrote the comments that have given rise to this case. They have given an explanation though that would be considered a dispute of key facts. However the case examiners are of the view that the evidence presented to them, namely the assessment and the social worker's own words in respect of the property they assessed, are potentially objectively undeniable for the reasons set out in this determination. The social worker may be assisted by reading the case examiners' rationale before confirming their final position.
- The accepted disposal process will provide to the social worker an opportunity to review the case examiners' reasoning on impairment and reflect on whether they are able to accept a finding of impairment. It is open to the social worker to reject any accepted disposal proposal and request a hearing if they wish to explore the question of impairment in more detail.
- The case examiners note the impact that the social worker says has been caused to them because of the allegations and the ongoing process. Accepted disposal allows for a swifter conclusion, but the social worker retains the right to reject this if they are not in agreement with the case examiners' conclusions.

The case examiners are also of the view that the public would be satisfied to see the regulator take prompt, firm action in this case, with the publication of an accepted disposal decision providing a steer to the public and the profession on the importance of adhering to the professional standards expected of social workers in England.

Accepted disposal

Case outcome		
Proposed outcome	No further action	☐
	Advice	☐
	Warning order	☐
	Conditions of practice order	☐
	Suspension order	☐
	Removal order	☒
Proposed duration	Where a social worker is removed from the register, there is no defined end to the finding of impairment. A social worker that has been removed from the register may only apply to be restored to the register 5 years after the date the removal order took effect. The adjudicators will decide whether to restore a person to the register.	

Reasoning

In considering the appropriate outcome in this case, the case examiners have had regard to Social Work England's impairment and sanctions guidance and reminded themselves that the purpose of sanction is not to punish the social worker but to protect the public and the wider public interest. The case examiners are reminded by this guidance that that should consider mitigating and aggravating factors when considering which sanction may be appropriate or proportionate.

In relation to this case, the case examiners consider there to be limited mitigating factors, comprising:

- an absence of previous adverse fitness to practise history.

- the incident appears to be of an isolated nature.

The case examiners have identified the following aggravating factors:

- although this incident could be considered isolated, the dishonesty element attached to the concern is considered as serious by the regulator.

- limited evidence of insight

- limited evidence of remediation

In determining the most appropriate and proportionate outcome in this case, the case examiners have next considered the available options in ascending order of seriousness. The case examiners have determined that there is a realistic prospect that the social worker's fitness to practise would be found impaired. The sanctions guidance advises that if the personal element of impairment is found, "a sanction restricting or removing a social worker's registration will normally be necessary to protect the public". The case examiners are therefore led to consider sanctions which restrict the social worker's practice. They note that the guidance suggests it may therefore "be reasonable to move beyond the lower sanctions (no action, advice or a warning) on this basis alone".

The case examiners have determined that, there is a high risk of repetition were the concerns to be found proven. The case examiners are therefore of the view that sanctions of no further action, advice or a warning are inappropriate on the basis that these outcomes will not restrict practice and will not sufficiently protect the public.

Next, the case examiners turned their minds to a condition of practice order. The primary purpose of a conditions of practice order is to protect the public whilst the social worker takes any necessary steps to remediate their fitness to practise. Conditions are most commonly applied in cases of lack of competence or ill health. The sanctions guidance states that conditions are less likely to be appropriate in cases of character, attitudinal or behavioural failings. The case examiners carefully considered if conditions of practice may be appropriate in this case, but note that any conditions must be appropriate, proportionate and workable. In light of the aggravating factors identified in this case, the case examiners do not consider conditions of practice to be appropriate or workable, particularly given the dishonesty element of the concerns which relate to the character, attitude and or behaviour of the social worker.

As such, the case examiners went on to consider an outcome of a suspension order. The sanctions guidance states that suspension is appropriate where no workable conditions can be formulated that can protect the public or the wider public interest and where the case falls short of requiring removal from the register. The case examiners are reminded by the sanctions guidance that an outcome of suspension might be appropriate when the concerns represent a serious breach of professional

standards, there is evidence of some insight, and the social worker is willing and able to take remedial action.

The case examiners have considered the limited nature of the insight evidenced (though noting there is a dispute over facts), the lack of remediation present within the social worker's submissions and their own assertion that they have retired and do not intend to practise as a social worker in the future. As a result, the case examiners are of the view that the social worker is not able to remediate further. In addition, the nature of dishonesty is such that it can present a significant challenge to remediation even when a social worker does intend to practise.

The case examiners then moved to consider the suitability of removal as an outcome. Referring to the sanctions guidance, the case examiners note that removal might be appropriate in cases involving any of the following:

- criminal convictions for serious offences
- violence
- persistent lack of insight into the seriousness of their actions or consequences
- social workers who are unwilling and/or unable to remediate (for example, where there is clear evidence that they do not wish to practise as a social worker in the future)

The case examiners are of the view that as per above the social worker appears unwilling and/or unable to remediate as have stated they have retired from social work practice, have been for several years, and do not intend to practise again. , They consider removal from the register the most appropriate outcome in this case. They highlight that, even in the absence of the social worker's working status, this case would have been finely balanced and may still have led to a proposal of a removal order.

The case examiners have decided to propose to the social worker a removal order. They will now notify the social worker of their intention and seek the social worker's agreement to dispose of the matter accordingly. The social worker will be offered 28 days to respond. If the social worker does not agree, or if the case examiners revise their decision regarding the public interest in this case, the matter will proceed to a final hearing.

Response from the social worker to first preliminary decision

I have read the case examiners' decision and the accepted disposal guide. I understand the terms of the proposed disposal of my fitness to practise case and wish to suggest amendments.

Case examiners' response to request for amendments

The case examiners have read all of the social worker's comments that have been provided in response to the case examiners' proposal. They do not consider that there have been any factual inaccuracies highlighted, rather that the social worker disagrees with the case examiners' assessment of the evidence in parts. Whilst noting the areas of disagreement, the case examiners have already addressed within their decision why the evidence supports the concerns with a realistic prospect of being found proven. The case examiners do not consider that any amendments to the rationale provided is required.

The case examiners acknowledge the assertion from the social worker in their final comments that they do not dispute the case examiners' decision. However, the case examiners are of the view that within the same document provided by the social worker, there is evidence to suggest otherwise. Having rejected the request for amendments the social worker will be provided with a further opportunity to accept or decline the outcome reached and the sanction offered by the case examiners and to clarify their position in respect of accepting both the facts, and that their fitness to practise is impaired

The case examiners request that the social worker is notified of their proposal and seek the social worker's agreement to dispose of the matter accordingly. The social worker will be offered a further 14 days to respond. If the social worker does not

agree, or if the case examiners revise their decision regarding the public interest in this case, the matter will proceed to a final hearing.

Final response from the social worker

On 27 July 2026 the social worker accepted the proposed disposal, confirming that they had:

- read the case examiners' decision and the accepted disposal guide;

- admitted the key facts set out in the case examiner decision, and that their fitness to practise is impaired;

- understood the terms of the proposed disposal of their fitness to practise case and accepted them in full.

Case examiners' response and final decision

The case examiners concluded that the social worker's fitness to practise was likely to be found impaired, but that the public interest could be met through a prompt conclusion, published decision and removal order, rather than through a public hearing. They proposed a removal order and the social worker accepted in full the terms of this proposal.

Having been advised of the social worker's response, the case examiners have again turned their minds as to whether a removal order remains the most appropriate means of disposal for this case. They have reviewed their decision, paying particular regard to the overarching objectives of Social Work England, such as protection of the public, the maintenance of public confidence in the social work profession, and the maintenance of proper standards. Having done so, they remain of the view that an accepted disposal by way of a removal order is a fair and proportionate disposal and is the minimum necessary to protect the public and the wider public interest.