

**Nursing and Midwifery Council
Fitness to Practise Committee**

Substantive Order Review Hearing

Monday, 9 February 2026

Thursday, 12 February 2026

Virtual Hearing

Name of Registrant: Heather Elisabeth Taylor

NMC PIN: 16B2518E

Part(s) of the register: Registered Nurse – Sub Part 1
Adult Nursing - Level 1 - 25 May 2016

Relevant Location: Staffordshire

Type of case: Misconduct/Conviction

Panel members: Susan Ball (Chair, registrant member)
Daniel Harris (Registrant member)
Philippa Hardwick (Lay member)

Legal Assessor: Ruth Mann

Hearings Coordinator: Monowara Begum

Nursing and Midwifery Council: Represented by Alice Hands, Case Presenter

Miss Taylor: Not present and not represented at the hearing

Order being reviewed: Suspension order (12 months)

Fitness to practise: Impaired

Outcome: **Suspension order (3 months) to come into effect on upon expiry of the current order, namely, at the end of 12 February 2026 in accordance with Article 30 (1)**

Decision and reasons on service of Notice of Hearing

Ms Hands, on behalf of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), addressed the panel by referring to the background of the case in order to explain the NMC's position regarding the service of notice of hearing.

Ms Hands told the panel that the regulatory concerns in this case are in regard to Miss Taylor's conviction for driving under the influence of alcohol and failing to preserve patient safety. She told the panel that a fitness to practise panel found Miss Taylor's actions amounted to misconduct and that she was impaired on both public protection and public interest grounds. She told the panel that an order was imposed on 16 January 2025 which came into effect on 13 February 2025 and is due to expire on 12 February 2026.

Ms Hands told the panel that a meeting to review the order was held on 16 January 2026. However, due to an error with Miss Taylor's contact details and the fact that Miss Taylor did not attend nor was represented at that meeting, the service of the notice of the review meeting was deemed not effective.

Ms Hands told the panel that the current position of this case is that the suspension order lapses in three days. She told the panel that given the unusual circumstances around the discovery of the email address error on 16 January 2026 meeting, meant that 28 days notice for today's hearing could not have possibly be given by the NMC.

Ms Hands told the panel that the meeting did not proceed on 16 January 2026 due to non-compliant Notice (it having being sent to an email address other than that recorded for Miss Taylor on the register), and the decision letter dated 21 January 2026 was sent to Miss Taylor (also to the email other than the one recorded for her on the register). She told the panel that it is possible for Miss Taylor to waive the 28 days notice period and accept a shorter period of notice. She told the panel that in that regard the NMC contacted Miss Taylor on 22 January 2026 by email (now including the registered email address) and telephone to see if she would waive the 28 days notice period to allow for this substantive order review hearing to take place before it would lapse, but there was no response. Following that the NMC proceeded to serve short notice on Miss Taylor otherwise in accordance with Rules 11 and 34 by email on 2 February 2026.

Ms Hands told the panel that Miss Taylor has not engaged with the NMC since 8 February 2023 and submitted that it is very unlikely that she would have engaged or responded at this stage in any event.

Ms Hands submitted that the NMC had made all reasonable efforts to ensure that Miss Taylor did have notice of this hearing. She told the panel that the NMC are in a position where they do accept that notice has not been provided in accordance with the Rules, however it has made all attempts to engage Miss Taylor in this hearing and its process.

Ms Hands submitted that the NMC's position is to ask this panel to adjourn the hearing today with a direction to be given to grant a short extension for the suspension order that is currently in place.

Ms Hands submitted that with regard to the extension of the order, the NMC are seeking a short extension of four to six weeks to allow proper notice to be served for a full substantive order review. She submitted that there remain serious public protection risks arising from the regulatory concerns if the order were allowed to lapse this week and that Miss Taylor would effectively be able to practise without any restrictions. Ms Hands submitted that an extension is necessary to uphold the overriding objective in Article 3(4)(a) in the protection of the public.

Ms Hands submitted that the NMC relies on the case of *R (Hill) v Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales* [2013] EWCA Civ 555. She submitted that the NMC's case is that by asking the panel to grant a short extension of the order is not prohibited by the Rules and that it would be in line with natural justice and uphold the overarching objective.

Ms Hands submitted that by adjourning the hearing today and extending the suspension order for a short period with the direction that notice be served in good time, would allow Miss Taylor time to prepare and get representation and give her a fair opportunity to engage. She submitted that it would not be appropriate or proper to allow the order to lapse. She submitted that Miss Taylor would have the ability to appeal any decision should she wish. She submitted that the current situation is unusual and is unfortunate however,

the NMC's case is that by applying the overarching objective, the panel does have the jurisdiction and the power to ensure the public remains protected and this can be done by a short extension. She submitted that the NMC are not asking the panel to carry out a full review today or to make a finding of impairment, and that Miss Taylor's rights would be protected and it would be fair to her if she was given another opportunity by proper service of a notice to attend for the full substantive order review hearing at a later date.

The panel heard the advice from the legal assessor who referred to Rule 11 of the Rules which states that at least 28 days notice of the hearing shall be given. The legal assessor advised that less than 28 days notice would appear to amount to a procedural irregularity. The meeting on 16 January 2026 had not been effective, and the panel had determined they were not '*seized of the matter*' due to service being ineffective. The legal assessor referred the panel to the NMC Order, and the overarching objective as set out in Article 3(4) which states that the overarching objective of the Council in exercising its functions is the protection of the public. The legal assessor referred to Article 30(1) of the NMC Order which states that before the expiry of an order made under article 29(5)(b) or (c) the fitness to practise committee shall review the order and may, subject to paragraph (5) (a) with effect from the date on which the order would, but for this provision, have expired, extend, or further extend the period from which the order has effect.

The legal assessor advised the panel that it appeared what the NMC were asking the panel to do was effectively deem service to be effective despite the deficiency and then proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor to extend the current order. The legal assessor advised that the NMC Order only allows for an extension of a substantive order following a review, as set down in the primary legislation.

The panel asked Ms Hands to obtain further instructions from the NMC regarding the approach they wanted to ask the panel to adopt and whether any consideration had been given to an interim order.

Ms Hands addressed the panel on two matters. The first was in regard to the possibility of an interim order and it is the NMC's position that this would not be an appropriate course of action on the basis that they would need to make a new referral and this case would

need to go through the screening process and the case examiners again. Therefore, this would not be a timely nor appropriate solution.

Ms Hands submitted the NMC's alternative position, if the panel were not persuaded to grant a short extension of the suspension order without making a finding of current impairment, would be to proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor and make a finding that she is currently impaired and impose a sanction such as a short suspension order to then allow Miss Taylor to engage. Ms Hands invited the panel therefore to deem that notice had been effective notwithstanding that 28 days notice had not elapsed.

The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

The panel had regard to all of the information before it. It undertook a careful balancing exercise which included a thorough review of the overarching objective of protecting the public, fairness to Miss Taylor and Ms Hands' submissions. The panel took the view that before they could proceed with the hearing, they had to consider the issue of notice and service. It noted that this is an unusual and unfortunate circumstance as the order is due to expire on 12 February 2026.

The panel noted that the burden with regard to notice is on the NMC. It noted the steps the NMC has taken to serve the notice of this hearing to Miss Taylor albeit not within the 28 days notice period. This included the following communications:

- An email was sent to Miss Taylor at the incorrect @hotmail email address on 21 January 2026 with the letter attached that confirmed that the 16 January 2026 meeting did not proceed due to notice being served to the incorrect @hotmail email address.
- An email was sent on 22 January 2026 requesting Miss Taylor to waive the 28 days notice period to enable the rescheduling of a substantive order review hearing prior to 12 February 2026. This communication went to both of Miss Taylor's emails, @hotmail and @live accounts, the latter being her registered email address on the register currently.
- An email was sent to Miss Taylor's @live email address on 2 February 2026 confirming the substantive order review hearing on 9 February 2026.

- Further attempts were also made via telephone call on 22 January 2026 and twice today, 9 February 2026. Following a question from the panel, Ms Hands stated that when telephone calls were placed to this number today, 9 February 2026, there was no dial tone and so no message could be left. The NMC were unable to reassure the panel that they had Miss Taylor's correct telephone number.

In reaching its decision regarding the Notice, the panel reminded itself of the overarching objective of public protection, this being stipulated in the primary statutory legislation of the NMC Order 2001. The panel were conscious that not being able to review the substantive order before 12 February 2026 would mean that it would lapse leaving a real risk that the public would not be protected as the order would lapse without review.

The panel considered that it was the right of Miss Taylor and to ensure confidence in the regulatory proceedings that Rules would be followed to promote fairness. The NMC had not, in this instance given the full 28 days notice, although some notice had been given, this being from 2 February 2026. The panel acknowledged that efforts had been made to request that Miss Taylor waives the required notice period. Whilst this is not specifically provided for in the Rules the panel considered this may have mitigated potential unfairness to Miss Taylor.

The panel considered that the primary statutory legislation states that a substantive order shall be reviewed before it expires. This is mandatory and is not discretionary given the use of the word '*shall*'. The panel determined that, on balance it was clear Miss Taylor had been given some notice of the hearing and had been given the opportunity to attend. The panel considered that not being able to proceed to hear the case would result in the panel not acting in accordance with the overarching objective. The panel had regard to the serious nature of the misconduct which led to the initial sanction. The panel took into account the unique set of circumstances and imminence of the substantive order lapsing. In reaching its decision in deeming service to be effective the panel took the view they would continue to mitigate any potential unfairness to Miss Taylor in the decisions that would follow.

The panel considered in relation to service, the Notice sent on 2 February 2026 had been sent in accordance with Rule 34, namely to the email address recorded against Miss Taylor's name on the register.

Therefore, the panel decided to accept the service of notice of hearing despite the defect highlighted above. The panel was satisfied that this would be the most appropriate and proportionate action in the circumstances of this case, to ensure protection of the public as outlined as the overarching objective of the NMC Order 2001, noting as it did, that the substantive order is due to expire at the end of 12 February 2026.

Decision and reasons on proceeding in the absence of Miss Taylor

The panel next considered whether it should proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor. The panel had regard to Rule 21 and heard the submissions of Ms Hands who invited the panel to continue in the absence of Miss Taylor.

Ms Hands referred the panel to the case laws of *Zia v General Medical Council* [2011] EWCA Civ 743 and *General Medical Council v Adeogba* [2016] EWCA Civ 162.

Ms Hands submitted that the NMC had made all reasonable efforts to serve the notice of hearing. On 22 January 2026, the NMC contacted Miss Taylor via email and telephone to see if she would waive the 28 days notice period so the substantive order review hearing could take place before the expiry of the order, but there was no response. She submitted that the NMC proceeded to serve the notice by email on 2 February 2026. The notice of hearing did ask Miss Taylor to respond within 14 days, confirming if she would be attending, and to email any documents she wishes to rely on at the hearing or present to the panel at least seven working days before the hearing date. Miss Taylor was also warned that the panel could proceed in her absence.

Ms Hands submitted that Miss Taylor has not engaged throughout the process nor attended the hearing today, and that it is very unlikely that if there were an adjournment it would secure her attendance on some future occasion. She submitted that Miss Taylor has been given the opportunity on multiple occasions to present her case, and she has a duty to engage with the regulator which she has not done.

Ms Hands submitted that if the panel decides not to proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor today, then the order would lapse without any review, the overarching objective would not be achieved, the public would not be protected and the confidence in the regulators would be at a significant risk.

Ms Hands submitted that when considering fairness to both parties, Miss Taylor should not be allowed to frustrate the process by continuing to disengage, with the consequence being that the public are not protected. She submitted that fairness would dictate proceeding in Miss Taylor's absence.

The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

The panel has decided to proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor. In reaching this decision, the panel has considered the submissions of Ms Hands and the advice of the legal assessor. It had regard to relevant case law and to the overall interests of justice and fairness to all parties. It noted that:

- The suspension order is due to expire at the end of 12 February 2026;
- The charges found proved by a fitness to practise committee panel were serious;
- No application for an adjournment has been made by Miss Taylor;
- The NMC has attempted to serve the Notice of Hearing, albeit the notice was not within the 28 days notice period;
- The NMC called Miss Taylor on 22 January 2026, and twice today, 9 February 2026 to ask her to waive the 28 days notice period (albeit there remains some doubt the telephone number was that of Miss Taylor);
- The NMC email correspondence on 22 January 2026, 2 February 2026 and 9 February 2026 was sent to Miss Taylor's registered email address;
- It is necessary on the grounds of public protection and the wider public interest to review this case before the order lapses on 12 February 2026;
- There is a need to exercise care and caution and consider the overarching objectives of the regulator around public protection and fairness to the regulator and Miss Taylor;

- There is no reason to suppose that adjourning would secure her attendance at some future date; and
- There is a strong public interest in the expeditious review of this case.

The panel considered the unique and difficult position in view of the Notice. However, the panel concluded that any unfairness to Miss Taylor could continue to be mitigated throughout the proceedings. In exercising care and caution the panel balanced the overarching objective with fairness to Miss Taylor. In these circumstances, the panel has decided that it is fair to proceed in the absence of Miss Taylor.

Decision and reasons on review of the substantive order

The panel decided to extend the suspension order for a period of three months.

This order will come into effect at the end of 12 February 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1) of the 'Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001' (the Order).

This is the first review of a substantive suspension order originally imposed for a period of 12 months by a Fitness to Practise Committee panel on 9 January 2025.

The current order is due to expire at the end of 12 February 2026.

The panel is reviewing the order pursuant to Article 30(1) of the Order.

The charges found proved which resulted in the imposition of the substantive order were as follows:

'That you, a registered nurse:

- 1) *On 24 January 2023 were convicted at Telford Magistrates' Court of driving a motor vehicle after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion of it in your breath, namely 75 microgrammes of alcohol in 100 millilitres of breath, exceeded the prescribed limit on 13 December 2022.*

- 2) *On 13 December 2022, intended to attend your work shift under the influence of alcohol.*
- 3) *Failed to disclose you were charged with the offence set out in charge 1 above to your employer between 13 December 2022 and 25 January 2023.*
- 4) *Your actions at charge 3 lacked integrity in that you failed to inform your employer in a timely manner that you had been charged with a criminal offence.'*

The original panel determined the following with regard to impairment:

'The panel had regard to this test and found limbs a, b and c were engaged.

The panel did not have any evidence before it to suggest that Miss Taylor has demonstrated sufficient insight into her misconduct and conviction. Miss Taylor has failed to engage with the NMC since the interim order hearing on 8 February 2023, nearly two years ago. The panel noted that there was no information from Miss Taylor to demonstrate her understanding of her misconduct and conviction or any suggestion from her about how she would act differently should a similar situation arise in the future. Further, the panel had no information before it to evidence Miss Taylor's understanding of how her actions have affected her role as a nurse and the reputation of the nursing profession in general. It is therefore not guaranteed that a member of the public in Miss Taylor's care would be safe, or indeed, feel safe, in her care. The panel therefore determined that, in the absence of any up-to-date information from Miss Taylor or evidence of the necessary reflection and insight into her misconduct, she is liable to place patients at a risk of harm in the future. The panel therefore decided that a finding of impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection.

The panel went onto consider the question of public interest. It determined that Miss Taylor's conduct which led to a conviction is such that it would be difficult, although not impossible, to remedy and falls so far short of the standards the public expect of professionals caring for them that public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions could be undermined if a finding of impairment was not made. Should such conduct be repeated, there is a risk of further damage to the reputation of the profession.

The panel bore in mind that the overarching objectives of the NMC; to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety, and well-being of the public and patients, and to uphold and protect the wider public interest. This includes promoting and maintaining public confidence in the nursing and midwifery professions and upholding the proper professional standards for members of those professions.

The panel therefore concluded that public confidence in the profession would be seriously undermined if a finding of impairment were not made in this case and therefore also finds Miss Taylor's fitness to practise impaired on the grounds of public interest.

Having regard to all of the above, the panel was satisfied that Miss Taylor's fitness to practise is currently impaired.'

The original panel determined the following with regard to sanction:

'The panel next considered whether placing conditions of practice on Miss Taylor's registration would be a sufficient and appropriate response. The panel is mindful that any conditions imposed must be proportionate, measurable and workable. Whilst there are some aspects of Miss Taylor's case which are capable of remediation, namely in relation to her misconduct, the panel had not received indication that Miss Taylor would be willing to engage with any conditions which might be formulated. Furthermore, the nature of the conviction and associated misconduct did

not easily lend itself to workplace conditions of practice. The panel was mindful that there had been no clinical concern raised about Miss Taylor's nursing practice, which made this a case where a conditions of practice order was not appropriate. In any event, the panel determined that the placing of conditions on Miss Taylor's registration would not adequately address the seriousness of this case and would not protect the public nor address the public interest concerns identified.

The panel then went on to consider whether a suspension order would be an appropriate sanction. The SG suggests that a suspension order may be suitable where certain factors are present. The panel has taken account of all of the circumstances surrounding the case and considered the factors as set out in the SG in respect of a suspension order. The panel has considered that the conviction related to a single incident, but one that is serious enough that a lesser sanction would not be sufficient to maintain public confidence in the nursing profession. The panel gave very careful consideration to the delay in Miss Taylor communicating the fact that she had been charged to her employer. While it was true that Miss Taylor failed to disclose the charges to her employer for over six weeks, the panel was of the view that this all related to a single and apparently isolated event. It had no evidence before it that Miss Taylor had driven under the influence of excess alcohol either before or since 13 December 2022.

The panel took careful account of the statement made by Dr 1, who confirmed that there had been no previous clinical concern about Miss Taylor's practice, stating that "during Heather's employment no concerns have been raised about her professional conduct or practice, fitness to practice or appearing under the influence of alcohol at work".

The panel gave serious consideration to a striking off order, due to Miss Taylor's lack of engagement with the regulatory process and the aggravation of the original offence through the failure to make a timely disclosure to the employer, but it ultimately concluded that the

misconduct and conviction were not fundamentally incompatible with remaining on the register. It could also not be satisfied that the behaviour was indicative of a deep-seated attitudinal issue that was impossible to remedy. It was mindful that Miss Taylor had made oral submissions at the interim order hearing in February 2023 that indicated that there may be some mitigating circumstances surrounding the conviction, although it had not had direct sight of any documentation in relation to this. The panel considered that, should Miss Taylor complete the necessary reflection and develop good insight into her conviction and misconduct, it might be possible for her to return to unrestricted practice. It considered that a suspension order for 12 months would give her sufficient time and opportunity to decide whether this is something that she wished to attempt.'

Submissions on current impairment

Ms Hands invited the panel to find that Miss Taylor remains impaired on both public protection and public interest grounds.

Ms Hands submitted that there is no new information either in writing or orally before the panel to suggest that the situation has changed since the suspension order was imposed. She submitted that the fitness to practise panel set out expectations when the order was imposed and there is no evidence before the panel today to suggest that Miss Taylor has completed or met any of those expectations.

Ms Hands invited the panel to take into account Miss Taylor's continued lack of engagement and evidence of remediation, insight and attitude when considering whether the concerns have been addressed and are highly unlikely to be repeated. She submitted that there is no evidence before the panel today of any meaningful reflection from Miss Taylor, including risk of her actions and damage to the public confidence in the profession. She submitted that Miss Taylor presents a continuing risk to the public if there were no restrictions in place and therefore should be found currently impaired on the public protection ground.

Ms Hands submitted that it would undermine the public confidence and trust in the regulatory process and the NMC as a regulator if Miss Taylor were allowed to practise unrestricted at this time, given the seriousness of the concerns, and therefore should be found currently impaired on the public interest ground.

Submissions on sanction

Ms Hands submitted that the aggravating features that the fitness to practise committee panel found still exist with no evidence before the panel today to mitigate them. She submitted that Miss Taylor has failed to attend hearings or engage with the fitness to practise process without good reason, in any event since 22 January 2026 when she received correspondence about this review at her registered @live email and therefore invited the panel to take this into account.

Ms Hands submitted that there is no evidence from Miss Taylor of any updating mitigating features.

Ms Hands submitted that no action or a caution order would be inappropriate given the seriousness of the concerns and the risk to the public is continuing as there is no evidence to show that Miss Taylor has understood the gravity of the seriousness of her actions. She submitted that this is not a case at the lower end of the scale of impaired fitness to practise.

Ms Hands submitted that a conditions of practice order would not be sufficient to protect the public or the public interest on the basis that the charges do not relate to Miss Taylor's clinical practice. She submitted that there are no conditions that could be put in place to address the concerns, particularly given Miss Taylor's lack of engagement, and therefore it is unlikely that she would comply with them.

Ms Hands submitted that this remains a case where there is no evidence of repetition or harmful deep-seated attitudinal issues. However, the lack of insight, reflection and engagement may suggest that Miss Taylor poses a significant risk of repeated behaviour and that a short extension of the current suspension order with a review would be an appropriate and proportionate sanction.

Ms Hands drew the panel's attention to the fact that Miss Taylor is only being kept on the register due to these proceedings. She referred the panel to the NMC guidance REV-2H and submitted that these circumstances set out in the guidance do not apply in this case.

Ms Hands submitted that with regard to a striking-off order, this is a misconduct case, therefore this sanction is available to the panel without the suspension order needing to have been in place for two years, as it does for other types of impairment. She submitted that the public would be protected if the panel were to make a finding that Miss Taylor is currently impaired. She submitted that the panel may consider whether Miss Taylor should be struck-off on the basis that she is only being kept on the register due to these proceedings.

The panel heard and accepted the advice of the legal assessor.

Decision and reasons on current impairment

The panel has considered carefully whether Miss Taylor's fitness to practise remains impaired. Whilst there is no statutory definition of fitness to practise, the NMC has defined fitness to practise as a registrant's suitability to remain on the register without restriction. In considering this case, the panel has carried out a comprehensive review of the order in light of the current circumstances. Whilst it has noted the decision of the last panel, this panel has exercised its own judgement as to current impairment.

The panel has had regard to all of the documentation before it, including the NMC bundle. It has taken account of the submissions made by Ms Hands on behalf of the NMC.

In reaching its decision, the panel was mindful of the need to protect the public, maintain public confidence in the profession and to declare and uphold proper standards of conduct and performance.

The panel considered whether Miss Taylor's fitness to practise remains impaired.

The panel determined that limbs a, b and c of the *Grant* test remains engaged.

The panel noted that Miss Taylor had demonstrated some insight at the early stages of the process in 2023, as she had self-referred herself to the NMC and entered a guilty plea to the charges in court. Further, Miss Taylor had informed an interim order panel in February 2023 the steps she had taken then to address the concerns: had investigated courses, had reflected, and was then taking a break to '*strengthen herself*'. The panel further noted that the burden was on Miss Taylor in this regard and noted that there was no updated information before it as to what Miss Taylor's insight is at this current time.

The panel noted that Miss Taylor had demonstrated early engagement at the initial stages when she self-referred herself to the NMC. However, it noted the continuing duty on registrants to stay in contact with the NMC about matters relevant to their registration and Miss Taylor's lack of engagement with the regulatory process. The panel noted that it has been three years since Miss Taylor last engaged, albeit recognising that it remained unclear what if any communication she may have received in relation to this process between February 2023 and 22 January 2026 given the use by the NMC of an email address other than the one currently on the register for her.

In its consideration of whether Miss Taylor has taken steps to strengthen her practice, the panel determined that there was no evidence before it from Miss Taylor of strengthening of practice or any recent reflection.

The panel determined that due to the potential ongoing risk to the public in the context of an imminent lapse of the order, and complications in relation to communication identified at the beginning of this hearing arising from the NMC's failure over an unknown period between February 2023 and January 2026 to use Miss Taylor's registered email address, and in fairness to Miss Taylor and the regulator, another proper review of this case is required.

The panel therefore decided that a finding of continuing impairment is necessary on the grounds of public protection.

The panel has borne in mind that its primary function is to protect patients and the wider public interest which includes maintaining confidence in the nursing profession and

upholding proper standards of conduct and performance. The panel determined that the misconduct in this case is serious relating to a conviction for drink driving and want of integrity in relation to its non-disclosure, and that a member of the public would be concerned to learn Miss Taylor were permitted to practice unrestricted, therefore a finding of continuing impairment on public interest grounds is also required.

For these reasons above, the panel finds that Miss Taylor's fitness to practise remains impaired.

Decision and reasons on sanction

Having found Miss Taylor's fitness to practise currently impaired, the panel then considered what, if any, sanction it should impose in this case. The panel noted that its powers are set out in Article 30 of the Order. The panel has also taken into account the 'NMC's Sanctions Guidance' (SG) and has borne in mind that the purpose of a sanction is not to be punitive, though any sanction imposed may have a punitive effect.

The panel disagreed with the NMC that an aggravating feature should include Miss Taylor's lack of engagement with the regulatory process in January 2025 and since, due to the communication issues noted above.

The panel first considered whether to take no action but concluded that this would be inappropriate in view of the seriousness of the case. The panel decided that it would be neither proportionate nor in the public interest to take no further action.

The panel also considered allowing the order to lapse with a finding of impairment, however, determined that this was not appropriate at this stage.

It then considered the imposition of a caution order but again determined that, due to the seriousness of the case, and the public protection issues identified, an order that does not restrict Miss Taylor's practice would not be appropriate in the circumstances. The SG states that a caution order may be appropriate where *'the case is at the lower end of the spectrum of impaired fitness to practise and the panel wishes to mark that the behaviour was unacceptable and must not happen again.'* The panel considered that Miss Taylor's

misconduct was not at the lower end of the spectrum and that a caution order would be inappropriate in view of the issues identified. The panel decided that it would be neither proportionate nor in the public interest to impose a caution order.

The panel next considered whether a conditions of practice on Miss Taylor's registration would be a sufficient and appropriate response. The panel is mindful that any conditions imposed must be proportionate, measurable and workable. The panel bore in mind the seriousness of the facts found proved at the original hearing and concluded that a conditions of practice order would not adequately protect the public or satisfy the public interest. The panel was mindful that that there had been no clinical concerns raised about Miss Taylor's practice and given Miss Taylor's lack of engagement there were no reasons to suggest that she would comply. The panel determined that there were no workable conditions of practice that could be formulated that would adequately address the concerns relating to Miss Taylor's misconduct and conviction and suitably protect the public and the wider public interest.

The panel considered the imposition of a further period of suspension. It determined that there was no evidence before it today to demonstrate that Miss Taylor addressed the regulatory concerns or has sufficiently reflected on her actions and the impact it may have had on patient safety or the nursing profession. It was of the view that a suspension order would allow Miss Taylor further time to demonstrate that she has fully reflected on her previous conviction and her related misconduct. The panel concluded that a further three months suspension order would be the appropriate and proportionate response and would afford Miss Taylor adequate time to further develop her insight and take steps to address the regulatory concerns. It would also give Miss Taylor an opportunity to approach past and current colleagues to attest to her honesty and integrity in her workplace assignments since the substantive hearing.

The panel determined therefore that a suspension order is the appropriate sanction which would continue to both protect the public and satisfy the wider public interest. Accordingly, the panel determined that imposing a suspension order for a period of three months would provide Miss Taylor with an opportunity to engage with the NMC, obtain testimonials and references to support her case and to provide evidence of compliance with the

suggestions put forward by today's panel. It considered this to be the most appropriate and proportionate sanction available.

The panel determined that a strike-off order at this stage would be unfair and disproportionate. Given that the panel is trying to mitigate any unfairness to Miss Taylor, and whilst strike-off is an option, it would be in fairness to her in allowing this period of time to engage with the regulator and these proceedings. However, this is an option available to the next panel to consider if there is a continuation of lack of engagement from Miss Taylor.

The panel noted that Miss Taylor can request for an early review in order that she can attend and/or provide further evidence to support her case.

This suspension order will take effect upon the expiry of the current suspension order, namely at the end of 12 February 2026 in accordance with Article 30(1).

Before the end of the period of suspension, another panel will review the order. At the review hearing the panel may revoke the order, or it may confirm the order, or it may replace the order with another order.

Any future panel reviewing this case would be assisted by:

- Miss Taylor's attendance and engagement with the regulatory process;
- A thorough and detailed reflective statement using a recognised reflective model that demonstrates Miss Taylor's:
 - insight into her misconduct and conviction;
 - its impact on her profession and the wider public;
 - what she has done differently since her conviction in January 2023;
- Testimonials relating to Miss Taylor's integrity from either paid or unpaid work in the last three years; and
- An attendance certificate for drink drive and rehabilitation course.

In order to progress this case in fairness to Miss Taylor, the panel made the following directions to the NMC:

- List the next review hearing in a timely manner to ensure that the service of notice of hearing is adhered to in accordance with the Rules;
- Communicate this determination to Miss Taylor via email to both of her email addresses and via first class recorded delivery to her registered home address.

This will be confirmed to Miss Taylor in writing.

That concludes this determination.