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Date: 5 September 2022

Dear all,

Councillors Christine Baker, Steve Cosser and Peter Nicholson, being three members of the Council's Standards and General Purposes Committee who had not been involved in the original panel nor the decision it reached about Haslemere Town Councillor Nikki Barton's conduct, met on Monday 5 September 2022 to consider an appeal by Cllr Barton against the decision of the Standards Panel held on 21 July 2022.

The decision of the Panel is set out below.

The Panel carefully considered all the evidence before it contained in the papers of the original Standards Panel meeting on 21 July 2022 and the grounds of appeal submitted by Councillor Barton which are addressed as follows:

1. The Panel considered that a valid complaint had been made that was worthy of investigation and therefore whether the complaint had been made in good faith was not germane to the Panel's considerations.
2. The Panel felt that based on the evidence, it was unlikely that Councillor Barton's objectivity had not been impaired at the Town Council meeting in November 2019. The Panel could find no evidence to contradict the view of the original Panel that Councillor Barton had breached the Code of Conduct.
3. The Panel felt that the original Panel had applied the Code of Conduct properly and that it was difficult to see how any reasonable person could have concluded that Councillor Barton did not have an interest to declare.
4. The Panel felt that given the nature of the organisation, it was difficult to see how any reasonable person could have reached the view that the membership of the HSRA did not need to be registered.

**The Panel unanimously agreed that the appeal against the decision of the Standards Panel on 21 July 2022 should be dismissed.**

**Robin Taylor**  
Head of Policy and Governance  
and Monitoring Officer

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