

**Denton, Pam**

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**From:** Sue & Ian Taylor [mailto:ianstaylor@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** 26 November 2011 07:48  
**To:** Gill  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Re: Laverton GIG Agenda for 6.30pm Wednesday 7 December  
**Attachments:** WHN letter 2.doc; HLF and BLF bids 2006, 20077.doc; LTIMC Chairmanship 2007 to 2009.doc

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Gill et al,

Thank you for the agenda. I look forward to the meeting and to further supporting The Laverton.

Since receiving your invitation I (and et al) have had Russell's email. Sorry about this but I feel obliged to take up the cudgels once more. I hope you find my contributions beneath at least amusing, succinct and informative. I had hoped Attachment ! would appear in the last issue of the White Horse News but that didn't happen.

Regards to all

Ian taylor

On 25 November 2011 09:35, Gill <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Colleague

Please find attached agenda.

Best wishes

Gill

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The Editor  
White Horse News

12<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Dear Sir,

I'm writing to you to admit defeat in my efforts to ruin The Laverton .

Westbury's own dynamic duo, Messrs Hawker and Parker foiled my key strategy, i.e. to divert all bids for restoration funding to Santa Claus at the North Pole. My other idea, to put back the project by several years, failed when I couldn't fit the Hall into my time-machine. Finally I admit my other schemes to ensure the Hall's downfall, such as locating it on an awkward bend of a busy road and preventing it from having it's own car-park, have not really worked out.

From now on I will concentrate my energy on prayer and good works, possibly drowning kittens and breaking children's toys in my spare time.

Ian Taylor

## The HLF and BLF bids

In September 2006 WTC signed off a 5 year business plan for the hall. The plan proposed a major refurbishment project which encompassed all outstanding repair & maintenance work. 70% of the project funding was to come from a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant.

On the 1st November 2006 the Committee asked me to coordinate a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to be submitted, considered and if possible, granted by end April 2007. Using the Business Plan, see excerpt at Attachment 1, I submitted a pre-application to the Fund, see Attachment 2, on 12<sup>th</sup> November. We received their belated response on 5<sup>th</sup> January saying we should apply to the Big Lottery Fund Community Buildings Programme, see Attachment 3.

We submitted a bid to the BLF shortly before the end of April and before the May election of a new Council.

Between November 2006 and Aril 2007 Russell Hawker, who was a member of the LTIMC, contributed nothing to either bid.

## Introduction, paragraph 5

The LTMC has assessed options for the future maintenance, operation and management of the building. The main proposal is a **major comprehensive refurbishment project in 2007/8** making use of expected grant funding from several sources, but particularly the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). The HLF has sent a letter encouraging The Laverton Institute to work in partnership with Westbury Heritage Society to help tell the story about the importance of the heritage of the building. This is necessary to qualify for HLF grant funding.

### 3.3 Proposed Refurbishment Project

King Sturge prepared a Schedule of Works to undertake all outstanding works arising from the condition survey report, except for the heating system. In addition, the Schedule of Works included:

- a) Installation of a “Companion Prestige” (disabled) platform lift within a new lift shaft;
- b) Refurbishment of the Ladies WCs to provide two modern WCs and hand basins with baby-change and a separate Unisex disabled WC;
- c) Refurbishment of the Gents toilets to provide two modern WCs with hand basins and three modern individual urinals;
- d) Refurbishment of the Ground Floor Entrance Hall and Stairway area.

The heating system was originally left out on the basis that the existing system, albeit somewhat inefficient, could last another five years and another project could be undertaken later for a new heating system. The idea was to ensure an affordable initial refurbishment project.

King Sturge obtained three formal tenders for the works from reputable building contractors in February 2005. Although all three tenders were quite similar, the two lower tenders came out at very similar figures after adjustments for minor errors

The highest tender was £223,665.00 plus VAT. King Sturge recommended the adjusted tender of **£190,120.94** plus VAT as the most competitive tender received.

Drawings have been prepared and Listed Building Consent has been obtained for all the proposed works.

During 2005 and most of 2006, LTMC has explored opportunities for grants. At the same time, it was considered that the original idea for the refurbishment was inadequate and that it would now be better to aim for **one comprehensive refurbishment project in 2007/8** which would now also include the following works:

- e) Refurbished Kitchen (including upgrading of equipment to modern standards);
- f) Refurbishment of Bar Room;
- g) Refurbishment of Lounge / Meeting Room;
- h) Refurbishment of the Dressing Room;
- i) Refurbishment of the Main Hall (mainly redecorating);
- j) Refurbishment of the Reading Room (as the Hall Manager’s Office);
- k) Refurbishment of the Lower Hall (currently the Snooker Hall);
- l) Installation of new modern central heating boiler and new pipe work and radiators throughout.

None of the proposed works involves creating new accommodation or new facilities. It is all intended to bring existing accommodation back into good condition at an acceptable modern standard, so that the facilities are widely attractive to the public.

King Sturge have prepared an Outline Schedule of Works for the above items e – k.

LTMC proposes to now proceed to obtain fresh tenders for all the works in one go. This entails the outstanding maintenance and repair works (from the Condition Survey Report) and all works listed above from a – 1 inclusive.

For budget purposes in this business plan, the following estimates have been made:

Original February 2005 best tender £190,120.94 now say, £ 210,000

Pre-tender estimates for works e – 1 listed above £ 121,000

Professional Fees and contingencies £ 19,000

**Total Estimated Cost of Refurbishment Project £ 350,000 plus VAT.**

**Q6**

**Describe briefly what your project will do and what you will spend our grant on (up to 150 words).**

We plan to restore Laverton Hall, a listed victorian hall built in venetian gothic style, so it can fully meet its original purpose (see below).

Although 'The Laverton' has been improved in recent years to meet regulatory standards, work is needed to enhance its facilities so that it can attract and serve the entire community. An HLF Grant will be spent on a major comprehensive refurbishment of the fabric of the building. In addition to the refurbishment of five principle rooms, the kitchen, two WCs and the central heating system, work will include the purchase and installation of a platform lift to the 1st floor where the Main Hall is located.

**Q7**

**Please tell us why you believe that your project is relevant to the heritage (up to 150 words).**

The Laverton was gifted to the people of Westbury in 1886 by Abraham Laverton. Mr Laverton was a mill-owner, a leading member of Westbury society and noted philanthropist. He gifted several buildings to the town, the most distinguished being the Hall which became known as The Laverton. He intended that it should be a community centre for the use of the inhabitants of the town without distinction of political, religious or other opinions, including use for meetings, lectures, classes and other forms of recreation and leisure-time occupation. Much of Westbury's 19th Century history derives from Mr Laverton's industry and philanthropy and The Laverton in many ways is Westbury's heritage made manifest. Our project will ensure the continued use, maintenance and enjoyment of The Laverton and by doing so will help the whole community celebrate that heritage.

5<sup>th</sup> Jan. 7.30pm.

Dear Mr Taylor,

Firstly, may I apologise once again for the delay in responding to your enquiry. I do hope that it hasn't caused too much inconvenience.

As discussed on the telephone, please find attached the web page for the Big Lottery Fund's Community Buildings Programme.

Although Laverton Hall is obviously of clear heritage merit, if the emphasis of the project is the upgrading of facilities and refurbishment to improve and increase its general use by communities, then the Heritage Lottery Fund is not the best funder. I would suggest talking to the Big Lottery Fund to see whether it would fit within what they can fund. It seems as if this project has the potential to fit within the aims of the Community Buildings Programme, but they would need to advise. As we discussed this afternoon, if they say that they would be unable to help, then please come back to me and we'll talk further.

Our priorities for funding focus more on the restoration of the heritage, and learning about and access to the heritage. We would be able to look at a project to increase understanding about Laverton and the history of Westbury in a project separate from the Big Lottery Fund and the refurbishment project in due course.

I'm sorry this advice is not more positive, but wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Nerys Watts  
Regional Manager, South West



Chairmanship, LTMC June 2007 – March 2009

I was elected to WTC in May 2007 and as Chair of the LTMC in June. I immediately put in place the following:

1. I invited Peter Ezra, who opposed the council's trusteeship of the Hall to join the committee and its Project Group.
2. I persuaded the Project Group (see Attachment 1) to address the following contentious issues:
  1. Dissolution of the Trust & Hall disposal process (Peter Ezra)
  2. Additional/alternative sources of funding (Russell Hawker but see Attachment 2)
  3. Future management organisation (Horace Prickett)

I reviewed the Hall's finances and recommended to WTC Management Committee that we make the hall manager and her assistant redundant, see Attachment 3.

Peter Ezra identified and described the steps necessary if WTC determined to dispose of the Trust. Russell produced nothing. Horace Prickett and I developed an options paper to put before the WTC outlining alternative ways forward for the Hall.

In September Russell went ballistic, see Attachment 4.

In November 2007 we held an extraordinary meeting of the WTC to examine and agree on a way forward for the Hall, see Attachment 5. The council voted, as recommended by the LTMC, to agree to option 4 and to continue to be the Trustee. Also in November 2007 we received advice from Stone King solicitors in reference to termination of the snooker club tenancy, see Attachment 6.

Throughout 2008 the LTMC focussed on:

1. Resolving the snooker club issue
2. Identifying short-term hall repair and maintenance needs (Wind & Waterproofing)
3. Exploring with John Parker ways and means of achieving Hall renovation
4. Stabilising the financial relationship between the Trust and the WTC

By July John Parker had begun work re renovation needs/funding sources and we resolved to remove the snooker club and use the space for new WTC accommodation, see Attachment 7. A new future management structure was devised for discussion, see Attachment 8.

By November much progress had been achieved, see Attachment 9. I continued in the chair until March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 when I resigned due to ill health.

LITMC Chair report to WTC 29<sup>th</sup> June 2007

BLF Application (copy available in Clerk's office)

Stage One bid decision expected mid-September

Project group tasks begun (results to be ready for LITMC use by October)

Dissolution & disposal process (PE)

Additional/alternative sources of funding (RH)

Future management organisation (HP)

Nothing further to report

9<sup>th</sup> June 2007 Email to me from Russell

*This is a very difficult time for me to get anything done quickly, which is the only reason I did not put myself forward for chairman of the Laverton committee. As you know, I see you as the best alternative (once you get up to speed I think you will be excellent).*

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29<sup>th</sup> June 2007

To Messrs

C Finbow, Mayor, WTC  
M Hawkins, Deputy Mayor, WTC  
D Hulin, Chair, HPD Committee, WTC  
H Prickett, Chair, GP Committee, WTC

cc Les Fry, Town Clerk and RFO, WTC

Laverton Institute

As the recently elected Chair of the LITMC I have reviewed the Trust's current status and in particular its financial position. I now believe that position can radically be improved.

Given that their current and foreseeable activities have a negligible effect on the Hall's income I have concluded the continued employment of Helen McKinnon and Peter Ferguson is not in the best interests of the Charity nor a prudent use of WTC resources. They should be made redundant forthwith.

Without Helen and Peters costs, as the attached spreadsheet shows, the Charity and the Council could be expected to achieve a sustainable medium-term financial relationship. From that base-line the Hall's long-term viability, arising from refurbishment, and its subsequent fitness for purpose and marketability becomes at least possible.

For those reasons I ask you to consider and act on my recommendation as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully

Ian Taylor  
Member, Westbury Town Council and Chair, LITMC

**Attachment 3**

## **Emails from Russell to everyone**

25<sup>th</sup> September

*It is my contention that Ian has systematically destroyed the project, as fully described in the current adopted business plan, through misleading the "committee" about what he can do for the committee, which is what he was co-opted to do in the first place last Autumn.*

*It is abundantly clear that Ian has misled the committee and council on numerous significant issues about the credibility of the project (as set out in the current business plan). At this stage, I am not saying that Ian has deliberately set out to mislead or destroy progress. I am open to the idea that Ian simply never understood what he was doing properly enough and is now simply acting in response to what he sees as everyone else's failings.*

*I am setting this out in writing so that my position is clear and recorded.*

*I will be campaigning to save The Laverton from the likes of Ian and you can expect a well-written report from me in response to the options report when it comes out.*

8<sup>th</sup> October

*Ian Taylor should be removed from the Laverton working group due to the incredible damage he has caused to the project, involving clear loss of reputation with key funding sources, as a direct result of his incompetent and reckless approach to the job required to secure crucial funding.*

*It is incredible that Ian Taylor actually has not the slightest embarrassment at the colossal damage and display of incompetence he has shown after he himself offered to project manage the job of obtaining funding last Autumn despite knowing nothing about the project.*

*Ian Taylor is not fit to act as a spokesperson for the project team, not least because of his vested interest in covering up the damage he has himself caused to the project.*

*I am more qualified to handle the project than everyone else in the council put together.*

**Attachment 4 page 1 of 2**

Later on 8<sup>th</sup> October

*As far as I am concerned, I am still the person who most understands the project properly.*

13<sup>th</sup> October

*I am reminded of when Ian Taylor joined the working group to handle the funding application last Autumn. I am told that instead actually getting on with the job, he simply went into a robotic re-organisation and over-administered the job by breaking things up into groups with jobs given to each member of the whole working group. Apparently, this failed to produce any result at all. Not a surprise to me, but it seems that the lesson was not learnt.*

*We need to root out the main source of ineptitude in this project as soon as possible.*

**Report to Westbury Town Council concerning the Laverton Hall**  
November 2007

**Introduction**

**The Laverton Business Plan was signed off by WTC in September 2006. The Plan commits WTC to substantial funding support for the Hall until lottery-funded grants enable major refurbishment including required repair and maintenance. It was intended that such works would lead to substantial improvement of the Hall's rental income and eventual financial viability. However an application to the Big Lottery Fund (BLF) has been rejected (see Appendix 1).**

**Given the above, WTC is asked to review the Hall's current status and direct the LITMC on a course of action. The following proposes a decision needed now and options for the Laverton's long term disposition.**

**Decision needed now**

- 1. Stay as is re staff and Snooker Club, abandon refurbishment project (see Appendix 2)**
- 2. Stay as is re staff and Snooker Club, find funding for refurbishment project (see Appendix 2)**
- 3. Reduce costs, increase revenue, abandon refurbishment project (see Appendices 3 and 4)**
- 4. Reduce costs, increase revenue, find funding for refurbishment project (see Appendices 3 and 4)**

**Long-term options**

**WTC remains Trustee, accepts need for long-term subsidy of Hall**  
**Transfer Hall to new Trustee**  
**Sell Hall, wind up Trust**

**Issues**

**Funding of required Repair and Maintenance (see Full Survey and Business Plan)**  
**Terms offered by WTC to any new Trustee**  
**Conditions of Sale if Hall put on the market (see Appendix 5)**  
**Use of proceeds arising from sale of Hall**  
**Possible WTC move from the Hall**  
**Possible purchase of the Hall by WTC**

### **Potential opportunity**

**Leigh Pickering, landlord of Horse & Groom Public House, has substantial experience of providing bar facilities for Laverton Hall social events. He has proposed, in principle, an agreement whereby he would market, manage and run all social events at the Hall without a fee in exchange for the opportunity to earn profit from the revenues generated by events undertaken.**

### **APPENDICES**

- 3. HLF Pre-application and emailed rejection, BLF application response**
- 4. Financial Forecast – Stay as is re staff and Snooker Club**
- 5. Financial Forecast – Reduce costs, increase revenue**
- 6. Stone King advice re Snooker Club**
- 7. King Sturge advice re sale of Hall**



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 Westbury Town Council  
 The Laverton  
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Dear Les

**The Laverton Institute Snooker Club ("the Snooker Club")**

It was good to meet you and Mr Taylor today. As you know this matter has been going on for a long period of time so I felt it would be useful to draw together previous advice along with points that arose out of our meeting today. This will enable us to have a clear idea of where we are heading and the action agreed to move this matter forward.

At present the Snooker Club is holding over pursuant to the lease entered into on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1993. The current rent that is paid by the Snooker Club is well below what is considered a true commercial rent which I understand is between £8,500 to £10,000 (on the advice of Sandoes Chartered Surveyors back in January 2007).

Termination

For ease of reference I enclose letters dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004, 24<sup>th</sup> August 2004 and 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007 which set out the steps required to terminate the lease in detail. To sum up, in order to terminate the lease (whether the Council oppose a new Lease or not) a formal prescribed form of Notice must be served on the Snooker Club giving not less than 6 months notice prior to a date of termination. If a new tenancy is to be unopposed we will have to serve a s.25 Notice setting out the Heads of Terms of the new Lease (with revised term/rental etc) and state that you are not opposed to a new lease. If you wish to oppose a new lease, again we would have to serve a s.25 Notice setting out the grounds on which we oppose the Lease (please see letter of 24<sup>th</sup> September setting out s.30 Landlord & Tenant Act 1954 in more detail).

It appears that ground under s.30(f) 'that the Landlord intends to demolish or reconstruct the premises, or a substantial part of those premises and cannot reasonably do so without obtaining possession of the holding' would be most appropriate in the circumstances if you were to oppose a new Lease. However, as stated previously (see letter of 24<sup>th</sup> August 2004) to do this the intention must be genuine, firm and settled, therefore it would be prudent to have all the necessary plans, specification, drawings and finance in place.

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## **Laverton Report July 2008**

### Heritage Lottery Fund bid

John Parker, WTC Project Manager has produced an interim report which has been discussed by the working group. We will meet with John in the near future to discuss next steps.

### Question & Answer Session 29<sup>th</sup> May

See Report attached

### Snooker Club – planning application for change of use

An application for listed building consent has been submitted to WWDC

### Hirings update

The Hall has been very busy due to the Bypass Enquiry. Given that this overlaps with the Street Fayre and the Hall's use by other hirers, the additional workload on the Town Clerk and his staff has been very considerable and is much appreciated. As agreed, a detailed report on hirings will be produced for Council in October.

### 'Wind & Waterproof' evaluation and cost estimate

See the Question & Answer Report, paragraph 4. It was agreed this should be commissioned as soon as possible.

## Approach to a 'normal' Trust/MC structure July 2008

### Target

Trustee

**Committee** - RFO, representative Councillor, Chair of LITMC, co-opted other/s if needed, eg Heritage expert

**Responsibilities** - RFO co-signs payments made by Trust from Trust funds together with Chair, LITMC; Committee sets policy, e.g guidance on grants made by Trust; agrees Trust financial management and budget, hiring and firing of staff, major works; manages relationship between Trust and WTC.

LITMC

**Committee** – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Booking Clerk, Caretaker, representative Councillor, volunteers

**Responsibilities** – Day-to-day running of Hall including bookings, accounts, cleaning, repair & maintenance, minor works, Hall tariffs, funding operations e.g HLF

### Process

Outline agreement between RFO and IT

Agreement, sign-off by LITMC

Agreement by WTC

Set up financials

Co-opt future Chair, assign other 'officer' roles, recruit volunteers

Adopt new structure

## **Laverton Report November 2008**

### **a) Possible future development of the Hall - John Parker's Report**

John has done an excellent job and we support the positive way forward he proposes. It should be noted that the cost of the activities for which approval is requested are modest and included in the 2009/10 budget proposed below. The committee commends the Report to the Council.

### **b) Conversion of Snooker Club space into office accommodation for WTC's own use**

Following the granting of planning permission, the Committee recommends the Snooker Club's lease be terminated and the proposed work be undertaken as soon as possible. The space currently occupied by the Council is inadequate for its purpose and some portion of the increased capacity will be occupied as soon as it is available; the remainder will be put to either Council or community hire use. It should be noted that the additional cost in Council rent proposed in the 2009/10 budget for this extra capacity is fully off-set by an equivalent reduction in the Council Grant requested, compared to previous years. The Committee ask the Council to approve this recommendation.

### **c) Laverton Budget**

In 2007/8 the Laverton cost £61,000, over-spending an approved budget of £52,000. Hall Hiring income and Snooker Club rent raised about £10,000. The remaining £51,000 was supplied by the WWDC (£10k) and Westbury Council.

Also in 2007/8 the Council agreed to make redundant the two staff members who managed the Hall. It also agreed in principle to termination of the Snooker Club lease and approved the un-supervised use of the Hall by suitable Hirers. These actions are having a profound effect on the Hall's current and future finances.

This year, 2008/9, the budget is £38,275, a reduction of almost £14,000 from last year's budget. Given £25,000 from the Council and over £5,000 from WWDC, together with Hall Hirings to date, including the Public Enquiry, and committed bookings to March 2009, we expect to stay within this planned expenditure. This year has been exceptionally costly. Utility costs have rocketed, and provision for legal costs and repair and maintenance account for almost half the total budget; both these items are reduced to more normal levels in the proposed 2009/10 budget.

Our proposed 2009/10 expenditure is just under £31,000, a reduction from this year of more than £7,000 and half the spend in 2007/8. Given our projected income from this year's Hall Hirings, a target for 2009/10 of £6,000 seems achievable. We propose the remaining £25,000 costs are met by the Council but that, rather than paying £10,000 in rent, utilities, cleaning and use of this Hall and a Grant of £15,000, the distribution should be in the form of £20,000 for the entire ground floor plus a Grant of £5,000. Note that prior to this year the Laverton has cost WWDC and the Council an average of £42,000 per annum since we took on the Trusteeship.

**Attachment 9, page 1 of 2**

This new funding arrangement is intended to achieve a sound basis for the Laverton's finances in the future. The cost to the Council is in my view the minimum that is prudent whilst yielding the best value possible. It provides the opportunity for the Trust to increase Hall Hirings and thereby to reduce, then eliminate the need for a Grant. If in future the Council decides to invest in the development of the Hall, say by the installation of a lift or by pursuing the possibilities outlined in John Parker's report then so be it. Nothing that the Council is being asked to commit to tonight prevents these options, nor does it require their undertaking. I commend the proposed budget to the Council.