

From: [Russell Hawker](#)
To: ["John Parker"](#)
Subject: FW: Private and Confidential
Importance: High

Hi John

Thank you very much indeed for such a thorough response.

I will send this email string, exactly as seen below to the monitoring officer shortly.

Many thanks
Best regards

Russell

From: John Parker [mailto: [REDACTED]]
Sent: 29 September 2012 13:05
To: russell.hawker@[REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Private and Confidential

Russell,

See below. I'm happy that my responses are accurate.

Kind regards,

John Parker

From: Russell Hawker [mailto:russell.hawker@[REDACTED]t]
Sent: 29 September 2012 10:48
To: 'John Parker'
Subject: Private and Confidential
Importance: High

To:
John Parker
Project Consultant

Dear John

As discussed recently, I am being investigated by a Wiltshire Council standards investigator on behalf of the monitoring officer in relation to an allegation of a breach of the code of conduct made by former town councillor Ian Taylor.

It would be helpful if you would please answer some questions (see below) by replying to this email so that I can forward the information to the monitoring officer to help him understand the relevant circumstances that occurred at certain times in relation to the Laverton Refurbishment Project whilst Ian Taylor was involved.

Please put your answers in blue text below my questions.
Please answer the following questions as best you can:

1. What has been and is your role with the Laverton Refurbishment Project (stating dates when you started and / or finished)?

I have been employed as a specialist Consultant by Westbury Town Council since 2006/7.

I started to assume responsibility for the Laverton Project in January 2008.
I was commissioned to pick up and review past fund raising efforts and explore ways and means of taking the project forward following a period of inactivity.

2. What prior experience do you have of running or advising on similar projects?

I have 26 years of Consultancy experience, including specific expertise in the Museums sector at National level, education, publishing, heritage, fund raising and Project Management.

3. Which councils have you or do you provide project management consultancy services to?

I have worked with Wiltshire County Council, Wiltshire Council, WWDC, Trowbridge TC, TCAF, Warminster TC & Westbury TC.

4. Do you have particular experience in applying for grants to improve and renovate civic / community buildings including those with particular heritage merits?

Yes

5. Do you agree that the letter from HLF dated 3rd July 2004 represents a successful reply to a normal HLF preliminary application which is encouraging The Laverton Institute (ie. its trustee, Westbury Town Council) to proceed to submit a full application for HLF funding and to make sure that the application covers all the necessary heritage details (also called a "heritage plan" at the time)?

Yes - the letter represents an encouraging response at that particular time.

6. Are you familiar with the September 2006 Business Plan that was adopted by WTC?

Yes.

7. After adopting the 2006 business plan, and given the reductions in funding availability that HLF were anticipating would occur from late 2007 onwards (which they were indicating widely to all by late 2006) would it have been important to proceed without delay toward an HLF application to maximise the chance of obtaining a significant HLF grant towards the project.

HLF would later go through a change in its remit/funding etc in late 2007 / early 2008, so it would have been important in late 2006 to proceed with preparing a suitable application without delay.

8. Would the HLF funding criteria have been the same throughout 2006 - 2008? When did the criteria change?

I re-established in-depth contact with the HLF Regional Office (Exeter) in Feb 2008 - the circumstances governing their operations/funds etc had just changed. The key criteria for projects remained the same but funding available for major projects had become very restrictive - at this time Lottery backed funding was starting to be diverted towards the 2012 Olympics

9. When you were first brought in to consider the correct way forward for the project in 2008, what did you say in relation to possible HLF funding?

My initial report to the LITMC (issued May 08) clearly presented options to consider to take the Laverton Project forward which include still looking at a major HLF bid but with less chance of success as circumstances had changed by then.

10. If the project had proceeded towards submitting a full HLF grant application by mid 2007 and if we had packaged up the right elements of the overall project that would have been relevant to the HLF

criteria, would you have expected us to succeed in obtaining a substantial HLF grant, assuming the project was set up in a professional way as a result of using professional quality advice?

Yes - if not all, at least a good level of support. Of course, it would have been essential to ensure that the proposed project, as presented to HLF in the application, fully met the HLF criteria.

11. Would it have been sensible to select the right parts of the project for presenting to the HLF and asking further advice rather than just asking them if they would fund the whole project (as actually happened in Dec 2006/Jan 2007).?

Most definitely yes.

Its worth noting at this point that major projects of a similar profile/circumstances have been successful, even in more recent times (Bridport Town Council - Bridport Town Hall). In this case a project specialist and community team (including BTC) ran a sophisticated/coordinated/well researched bid including robust local consultation. The eventual project was funded mostly by HLF.

12. Given that LITMC had already submitted a preliminary application to HLF and received the letter dated 3 September 2004, what would you think would have been the next logical step for obtaining HLF grants for LITMC?

I would have suggested - establishing a practical working group (LITMC, Experts, Potential Partner Orgs etc) to explore how the Proposal could be worked up to meet the HLF criteria/advice.

13. The last paragraph of page 2 of the letter from HLF makes clear that Disability Discrimination Act ("DDA") compliance works could not be included in a HLF funded project if they must be done anyway to achieve DDA compliance. The letter goes on to say that works that go beyond reasonable DDA adjustments could be considered for HLF grant funding. As you know, LITMC had received a DDA report that made clear that DDA compliance could be achieved with signs and a powered chair using the rear access ramp but the proposed project, as explained at the beginning of Section 3.3 (Condition of the Building) of the 2006 business plan, would include a platform lift to enhance accessibility to the first floor hall, bar and kitchen facilities etc, which would have enhanced accessibility to the heritage merits of the building for the purposes of a HLF project. Do you agree that the project stood a good chance of including the lift in the HLF grant as part of a wider project that enhanced accessibility to the heritage in the building on the basis that the lift was intended to take the building beyond simply essential DDA compliance?

Our eventual solution was to include the lift as part of the Phase 1 works (funded through a Public Works Loan Board loan) but given that a lift was vital to developing the building for community use beyond pure DDA compliance, I would have thought it worth including this in a HLF major bid, even if perhaps other funding was eventually sourced to run alongside the project.

14. The 2006 business plan had several aims (page 2), one of which was to facilitate discussions with grant funders. Given that the 2006 business plan was mainly written for internal council purposes and was not specifically tailored for submission with a HLF grant application, would it have been wise to send the business plan as written off to HLF asking if they were still interested in our project (and not properly explaining that our intended lift would be additional to essential DDA compliance)?

Not really - its a good basic plan and has proved very useful to my work but perhaps it would have made more sense to include it either in its entirety or in segments as an annexe to a structured enquiry that related more to the HLF guidance criteria.

15. Ignoring the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Big Lottery Fund, is it reasonable to say that there were and are plenty of alternative sources of funding for the project that could have been applied for and successfully obtained throughout 2007- 2008?

Yes, but the HLF was an obvious key source to try first at the time because it had funding available and the Laverton refurbishment project could have been adapted to qualify against the then HLF

criteria.

Thank you for your help.

Regards

Russell

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