

From: [Russell Hawker](#)
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Private and Confidential

Hi Mike

Thanks for your response.

I noticed that you have used a pale blue colour to put your replies against my questions. Although you put your answers in an attached Word document, I have reproduced the exact contents of your Word document to the email string below as this is easier for me to present to the Monitoring Officer. I am copying this back to you so that you can see for yourself that I have not changed anything you said.

Regards

Russell

From: Hawkeridge@aol.com [mailto:H [REDACTED]]
Sent: 24 September 2012 21:32
To: russell.hawker@[REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Private and Confidential

[Russell,](#)

[Please find attached:](#)

[I hope this is OK.](#)

[PS: Am about to retire for the night as I have another early start in the morning!!](#)

[Mike](#)

From: Russell Hawker [mailto:russell.hawker@t [REDACTED]]
Sent: 23 September 2012 20:47
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Private and Confidential

To:
Michael Hawkins

Dear Mike

As discussed recently, I am being investigated by a County Hall 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 question 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 answer the following questions as best you can:

1. When were you first elected to Westbury Town Council and which party were you a member of at the time?

[I was first elected to Westbury Town Council in May 2003 as a Conservative member.](#)

2. When were you re-elected to Westbury Town Council and which party were you a member of at the time?

I was re-elected in 2007 as a Conservative member

2a. When did you resign off the town council?

I resigned as a Councillor in April 2012

3. When were you the Mayor (with start and finish dates)?

I was town Mayor from May 2005 until May 2006 & from May 2008 until May 2009

4. When did you join the Laverton Management working group (aka "LITMC") and when did you leave?

To my recollection I served as a member of the LITMC from 2004 until 2011.

5. Were you involved on the LITMC during the period when Ian Taylor was involved between September 2006 and March 2009?

Yes

6. Do you recall the full town council meeting on 4th September 2006 when the Laverton Business Plan was adopted and what was unusual about the way that the councillors voted (ie. for or against)?

I do recall that meeting. The Business Plan was adopted unanimously.

7. Do you recall a meeting of LITMC that occurred by the end of September 2006 when Ian Taylor was presented to the group as a new neighbour of the Mayor (Cllr Pam Cox-Maidment) and did you attend that meeting?

I was present at the meeting when Ian Taylor was presented to the Group.

8. What did Ian Taylor say at the above mentioned first LITMC meeting with him about his ability to run all kinds of projects and, in particular, what did he say about his skills and ability to research and obtain grants that were needed to progress the refurbishment project?

I recall Ian Taylor giving a resume of his business experience, and his belief in his ability to obtain grants that may have been available.

9. Did he specifically say that he had the all round ability to apply for and obtain grants that the building qualified for and if they were available he could do the job of applying for and obtaining them for the project?

Yes.

10. Do you recall a LITMC meeting that both you and I attended in December 2006 or January 2007 when Ian Taylor announced that he had concluded his research on the Heritage Lottery Grant scheme and he told everyone that the project would not qualify for the HLF grant at all and that the business plan was fundamentally wrong and that we should be pursuing a Big Lottery Grant application instead? What did he say?

I recall this meeting. Ian stated (although now I cannot honestly recall his exact words) that he had been in discussions with the Lottery funding people and that they had stated that the LITMC would not qualify for a Heritage Lottery Grant, and that we should apply for a Big Lottery Grant. He also stated that our Business Plan was unacceptable for this!

11. As a result, what did the LITMC group vote to do?

To the best of my recollection, the committee agreed to pursue a grant through the Big Lottery Fund, (as advised by Ian) and to do whatever Ian said we should prepare in the way of documentation.

12. What did I say about his assertion that we should drop the HLF application and go for a Big Lottery Grant application?

You forcefully disagreed with his assertions, and re-asserted your belief that the Lottery Heritage Fund was the correct route to follow!

13. Is it true to say that the LITMC were very keen to obtain grants and that Ian Taylor had taken charge of grant applications by the end of 2006?

Yes. The LITMC recognised that grants were essential to move forward! Ian had certainly taken charge of grant applications.

14. Is it fair to say that I disagreed with all or most aspects of Ian Taylor's approach to applying for grants and that I refrained from being involved in this aspect of the project?

Yes.

15. Did Ian Taylor obtain any grants at all in any way?

I recollect no grants being obtained by Ian Taylor!

16. Did the process of obtaining grants make any positive forward movement during Ian Taylor's involvement in the project between September 2006 and March 2009? If so, how?

I have no recollection of any positive movement on grants during Ian's involvement in the project.

17. What were the consequences to for the project as a result of the failure to obtain grants?

The project stalled!

18. Do you feel that Ian Taylor failed to show that he was able to obtain grants?

Yes!

18a. How important to the project and the council was it that the person handling grant applications knew what they were doing and had the competence to apply for the right grants in the right way at the right time and were able to accomplish the task competently?

It was essential that any person handling grant applications was experienced in this work, and was completely aware of possible grant sources!

18b. Did LITMC members and / or the council believe that Ian Taylor was appointed to handle grant applications whilst he was involved as project co-ordinator (between October 2006 - May 2007) and then that he was leading the process whilst he was LITMC chair (between May 2007 - March 2009)?

I think that Ian Taylor believed he was the only member of the LITMC capable of obtaining grants, and that he was charged with this responsibility solely. This was not a view that I shared. However, due to my own inexperience in applying for grants, I was unable to determine at this time that his own experience and capabilities were also not as originally indicated. I have NO recollection that Ian was given sole responsibility through a vote of the LITMC or the Council.

19. Given that the project manager, John Parker, appointed in 2009 to lead the project and obtain grants had immediate success in obtaining a variety of grants during a recession when grants were in less supply and given that Ian Taylor had ample opportunity to apply for any grant he chose during 2006 - 2008 (before the recession when grants were abundantly available), do you feel that Ian Taylor failed to provide the skills and result in obtaining grants that he had claimed he would provide back in September 2006 when he first told the LITMC what he could do if appointed to help the LITMC?

Yes.

20. Did Ian Taylor misrepresent his abilities to obtain grants to the LITMC when he joined the LITMC? If so, why?

Ian Taylors' abilities were mis-represented. How much of this was deliberate and how much a mistaken belief in his own capabilities was, I cannot say. I do know however, that the original promises were not kept.

21. Would you find it odd that the town council now has no records of any LITMC meetings from May 2006 until May 2007? How many LITMC meetings do you think occurred during this period?

I find this strange. As regards the number of meetings – they were held, to my recollection, every two months unless a specific issues arose requiring an interim meeting. I would therefore suggest that at least 6 meetings would have been held during this period.

I look forward to your reply ASAP, please.

Regards

Russell

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