

NJC/EB

14th August, 2009

The Worshipful the Mayor of the
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead,
Councillor Jesse Grey,
Mayor's Parlour,
Town Hall,
St. Ives Road,
Maidenhead, SL6 1RF.

e-mail copy

Dear Mr. Mayor,

Jesus Hospital, Bray

The Prime Warden has seen your letter of 6th August and asked me to reply. We note the contents of the Motion which was passed at the Council meeting held on 28th July. We entirely reject the suggestion that the proposed transfer "is a betrayal of the aims that William Goddard laid out". The Company takes very seriously its obligations as Trustee of the Jesus Hospital Trusts and has fully discussed this issue with the Charity Commission.

I enclose a briefing note on the subject, together with a copy of a self-explanatory letter which I have today sent to Councillor Leo Walters, responding to the request mentioned in the final paragraph of your letter.

We very much hope that the Royal Borough will support and facilitate a solution to this problem in the best interests of present and potential future beneficiaries of the Trusts. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Cox
Clerk

Encs.

NJC/EB

13 August 2009

Councillor Leo Walters, JP,
Little Tudor,
The Green,
Holyport,
Maidenhead,
Berks., SL6 2JB.

Dear Councillor Walters,

Thank you for coming to Fishmongers' Hall on 5 August with Mr Michael Hughes to explain your concerns about the Company's application to transfer trusteeship of the Jesus Hospital Trusts. You made two requests:

- a) that the Company should ask the Charity Commission to suspend action for a short period on our application for transfer of trusteeship, so that local people can see if they can draw up a workable alternative proposal; and
- b) that the Company should provide the local people with information about the almshouses, eg regarding running and maintenance costs and future plans, to help them draw up such a proposal.

I have reported your requests to the Trustees' representatives, and we have discussed them with representatives of Bristol Charities, and I can now respond as follows.

First, the Company wishes to state that it has taken note of the reaction in the village since it announced its proposals. Although some of this seems to have focussed on preservation of the existing almshouse buildings (which are of course protected anyway by their Grade 1 Listed status), it also shows that many local residents are keenly interested in the Jesus Hospital Trusts and are willing to take practical action to support the charity and its beneficiaries.

Whilst it remains the Company's clear view, based on the extensive consideration which it has given to this matter, that the proposals which it has announced are in the best interests of the charity's present and future beneficiaries, the Company is willing to explore with an open mind how the willingness of local residents to support the charity can be channelled to best effect for the charity. Bristol Charities fully share this approach.

In doing so, however, the Company wishes to minimise the period of uncertainty for the residents of Jesus Hospital. Delay may also result in the charity's missing possible opportunities for local reprovisioning on advantageous terms.

The Company is not aware of the constitution or membership of the "Friends of the Almshouse at Jesus Hospital". However on the understanding that you and Councillor Burbage, as elected representatives, recommend that we cooperate with them, and in the light of the letter to the Prime Warden of 6 August from the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, the Company is prepared:

- (a) to agree to advise the Charity Commission not to take further action on the proposed transfer of trusteeship until 30 November 2009, by when it should be clear whether an alternative scheme involving local trustees is likely to be feasible, and
- (b) to provide the Friends of the Almshouse at Jesus Hospital with information about the running and maintenance costs of Jesus Hospital and future maintenance plans and other information relevant to the decision to favour a transfer of trusteeship and subsequent sale and reprovisioning of the almshouses.

The Company wishes to stress that its continuing cooperation in these ways will be conditional on the Friends of the Almshouse at Jesus Hospital refraining from making or propagating false or defamatory statements about the Company (or Bristol Charities) or publicly impugning their motives. This is not of course to question the right of this or any other group or individual to form their own conclusions about the Company's approach.

The financial and other information which will be shared in this way has been prepared in good faith for the Trusts' internal accounting and planning purposes, but the Company can accept no responsibility for the consequences of outside parties' reliance on it.

The Company trusts that, in addition to studying the information to be provided by the Company, the Friends of the Almshouse at Jesus Hospital will also consult the Charity Commission, the Almshouse Association and others with current experience of providing good quality accommodation for older people in need. Bristol Charities would be willing to share their experience in this respect and, if asked to do so, would cooperate in good faith.

The Company also wishes to make clear that, at the end of this process, it will only support a transfer of trusteeship to new trustees if satisfied that this would be in the best interests of present and future potential beneficiaries, offering a sound basis for the long-term future of the charity. A proposal which could settle matters only for five or ten years would clearly not be acceptable, especially for a charity which has been in existence for nearly four centuries.

The Company trusts that if the Friends of the Almshouse at Jesus Hospital prove unable to put together a workable and financially sound proposal, they will then support the Company's proposals, so as to ensure their early implementation in the interests of present residents and potential future beneficiaries.

The Company wishes to emphasise that its proposals were made following extensive research and reflection on the current and future environment for providers of almshouse accommodation and following careful consideration of the interests of present residents of Jesus Hospital. It hopes that a new phase of constructive cooperation among all concerned can now begin.

I am copying this letter to Councillor David Burbage. I shall also be sending a copy to the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

Yours sincerely,

Nigel Cox
Clerk

cc: Councillor D. Burbage

Alison Singleton

From: SCW-Taunton
Sent: 24 August 2009 15:48
To: Alison Singleton
Subject: Jesus Hospital Almshouses at Bray (Charity Number 217365) - Transfer of Trusteeship
CC:00840082

For the attention of Councillor Jesse Grey - Mayor, The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Dear Councillor Grey

Thank you for your letter of 6 August 2009, addressed to Dame Suzi Leather, which has been passed to me as the Senior Case Officer with responsibility for this case.

The Charity Commission has a policy of responding to letters by email where possible in order to give a faster service, save costs and to benefit the environment. I have therefore taken the liberty of responding to your letter by email.

The Commission has been asked to consider a change of trusteeship for the above charity. (We also understand that proposals were being developed to seek our authority to sell the property at Bray and to re-provide more suitable accommodation elsewhere in the charity's area of benefit. However, we have not as yet received any such proposals.)

After considerable local opposition to their plans, the Fishmongers' Company have officially asked us not to process their request until a further period of consultation is undertaken. It is our understanding that the Fishmongers' Company have agreed to work with the "Friends of Jesus Hospital" until December 09, to allow them time to develop their own proposals.

We would also be happy to meet with the "Friends of Jesus Hospital" to discuss trusteeship, governance and the management of almshouse charities.

I hope that this update helps to make the current situation clearer. If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me further.

Yours sincerely

Graham Divers
Charity Commission

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24/08/2009



THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR
ALDERMAN IAN LUDER

THE MANSION HOUSE, LONDON EC4N 8BH

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FACSIMILE 020-7623 9524

LM/ccw

25 August 2009

Yours Worship

The Fishmongers' Company
Jesus Hospital Almshouse, Bray, Berkshire

I write in response to your letter of the 6 August advising me of the motion concerning the Jesus Hospital Almshouse at Bray, Berkshire, which was passed at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's Council meeting of the 28 July. I regret that your letter was received whilst I was away from the City during the August recess and I am only now able to respond to it.

I am most grateful to you for informing me and others (including the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Livery Committee) of this motion and of the Council's opposition to the Company's proposals. Nevertheless, the administration of the Almshouse would seem to me to be very much a matter for the Fishmongers' Company in which it would be inappropriate for me to intervene.

In my absence my office has spoken to the Clerk of the Company who has advised that since the passing of the motion the Company has agreed in principle to the request that the Charity Commission take no further action on the application for transfer of Trusteeship until December, so that local residents could have an opportunity to try and work up an alternative proposal involving local trustees. I further understand that Bristol Charities fully support this position and have offered to provide support and advice if required. I do hope that this cooperation results in a solution which is acceptable to all interested parties.

Yours sincerely

The Worshipful the Mayor of the
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Councillor Jesse Gray
Mayor's Parlour
Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead SL6 1RF

c.c. Mr Nigel Cox, Clerk to The Fishmongers' Company
Mr Geoffrey Bond, Chairman of the Livery Committee
Deputy William Fraser, Deputy Chairman of the Livery Committee

The Mansion House

Alderman Ian Luder
The Rt Hon The Lord Mayor of the City of London



Telephone 020 7397 9329
Email chris.whyte@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Date 18 August 2009

The Worshipful the Mayor of the
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Mayor's Parlour
Town Hall
St Ives Road
Maidenhead SL6 1RF

Dear Councillor Gray

I write to acknowledge receipt of your letter to the Lord Mayor of the 6 August, which we have just received, concerning the Fishmongers' Company's proposals for the Jesus Hospital Almshouse, Bray. The Lord Mayor is currently away from the City during the August recess but I hope to provide you with a more substantive reply upon his return next week.

Yours sincerely

Chris Whyte
Senior Executive Officer