

Minutes of a Meeting Between Uppingham Town Council and Uppingham Bowls Club on 10th July 2023

Present: For UTC:- Cllr Sam Findlay, Cllr David Ainslie
 For UBC:- Phil Whay, David Herne, Francis Cooper

At the beginning of the meeting Cllrs Ainslie and Findlay stated that the meeting was being held on a “without prejudice” basis for both sides and the idea was to explore some options that could be taken back to the Bowls Club membership and to the Town Council for further consideration.

Purpose of Meeting

Following the insistence of UTC auditors to charge a commercial rent for the Bowls Club premises in 2010, the Club has been paying an annual rent of £1,500, a very appreciable increase from the past. To offset this, the Council has been making a grant of around £500 pa to the Club. It is the aim of the Council to find a simpler long term arrangement that was acceptable to both parties.

Alternatives for the Future

Cllr Ainslie explained that the Council was minded to sell the premises to the Club, and two different methods of payment were suggested:

- 1) The Club could obtain finance from external sources, and purchase it from the Council as soon as the premises were registered with the Land Registry and a contract approved,
- 2) The Council could provide a loan, repayable at the current rental rate of £1,500, which, although interest free, would take many years to repay.

The value of the property was £75,000 in 2010, and the Council was in a position to make a discretionary reduction in price as the Club is a community asset for Uppingham. This reduction would be potentially more if option (1) was taken.

Alternatively, if the Club were interested, they could put forward an application to build a new club on the Bloors land on Leicester Road, and there would be a possibility of some funding from CIL monies.

Other Possibilities

The Club is currently considering the installation of solar panels on the premises to reduce fuel costs. Use of CIL monies could be considered to pay for part of the cost.

The Club would welcome assistance with the cost of insurance.

Next Steps

The Club will need to consult with their members to see if any of the alternatives are acceptable to them.

It was agreed that, if any alternative was attractive to the membership, UTC were available to meet again as soon as was convenient.