

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held by
Zoom on Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 7.00pm



- PRESENT:** Councillors John Bassett, James Boulton, Ian Brown, Peter Cooper, Gavin Horsburgh, James McCombie, Colin McGrath, Paul Roberts, Harry Tomczyk, Dean Weatherston (Chair) and Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson and Tom Weatherston
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Ally McGilvray (Radio Borders) and members of the public Anthony Abbott and Hazel Woodsell.
- APOLOGIES** SBC Councillor Simon Mountford and Tina Newton (Visit Kelso)

- *Please note questions to either the Scottish Borders Councillors or Kelso Community Councillors need to be submitted in writing to the Secretary seven days prior to meeting.*
- *All Councillors to make a declaration of interest prior to discussion.*
- *All correspondence to be circulated via the Secretary.*
- *All Councillors and attendees to act in a courteous manner and direct question through the Chairperson.*

Welcome

The Provost welcomed everyone to the February meeting being held by Zoom.

Visit Kelso

Tina Newton was unable to attend the meeting but had sent the following report. Although things are pretty quiet at the moment Visit Kelso are keeping up with social media and have been posting loads of gorgeous snowy pictures. Visit Kelso have been promoting businesses in the run up to Valentine's Day. The February Newsletter has been sent this week and contains loads of useful information, including information on coronavirus, SSDA, the Association of Self Caterers along with a plea to help with photography and their new email address to be used to promote events and such like. socialmedia@visitkelso.com

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2021

The minutes held on Tuesday 12 January 2021 were approved subject to a minor amendment. They were proposed by Councillor Gavin Horsburgh and seconded by Councillor Paul Roberts.

Matters arising

Local Development Plan

The Provost advised he had circulated draft comments for consideration which were submitted and acknowledged. He advised we had received a request from a member of the public in Peebles asking us to support their representation on climate change issues. As this had only been received the day before the submission was due there was not time to give consideration to it. It was agreed if there was an opportunity in the future to make comments we would.

Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

Police Matters

The Provost advised Police Scotland were not allowed to join meetings by Zoom and advised the Multi Member Ward Plan for Kelso and District for January 2021 had previously been circulated and if there were any comments or concerns to feedback to ourselves or Police Scotland.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised he had met with the local Police Sergeant and the main issues were complaints from the public regarding people breaking Covid related rules and not sticking to guidelines. As a result Police Scotland have set up a dedicated website for complaints which has been inundated.

Councillor McGrath commented he had an issue with Police Scotland not attending the local Community Council meetings via zoom as he felt he was losing touch with them and this concern had been raised amongst members of the Community Council Network. The Provost reminded Councillors that Police Scotland were only allowed to use Microsoft Teams as their meetings platform which was more secure.

Councillor Cooper commented that it was mandated by Central Government that the Police were not allowed to use zoom for their meetings due to issues of security. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised Police Scotland attended the Local Area Partnership meetings via Teams which was more manageable and any Councillor or member of the public could attend these and raise any questions or concerns.

Councillor Roberts commented SBC used Microsoft Teams for their meetings and asked whether if this could be made available to the Community Councils. The Provost advised he had previously asked this question but due to the number of Community Councils involved it was not financially viable.

The Provost advised Kelso Police Station had a generic website – KelsoDistrictCPT@Scotland.pnn.police.uk and any comments / concerns would be picked up by a local officer on duty.

Kelso Resilience Group

The Provost advised the three Committee members of the KRG were taking turns to man the mobile phone on a weekly basis. He commented things were working well and were manageable with minimum requests for prescription collection and shopping.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised SBC Executive Committee today had agreed to proposals for the allocation of Scottish Government funds targeted at supporting individuals facing financial hardship. In particular those families who were entitled to free school meals would benefit from this fund.

Kelso in Bloom

Councillor Horsburgh advised there was no update but he would be organising a committee meeting soon to see if plans could be put in place for the spring planting.

Councillor Tomczyk asked whether anyone was attending to the Kelso Community Memorial Garden and the secretary advised one of the volunteers, George Wilson, visited the garden on a weekly basis and maintains it.

Railway Committee

Councillor Tomczyk advised it was agreed at the last Community Council meeting to set up a Railway committee and the draft Terms of Reference had been circulated and are attached as an appendix. These were approved by the Community Council. Councillor Tomczyk advised the principle objective is to promote the reinstatement of the railway line from Tweedbank via St Boswells (Charlesfield) and Kelso to Berwick-upon-Tweed with the same priority as the line to Carlisle.

Councillor Tomczyk advised Visit Kelso had supported this initiative but he would like someone from Visit Kelso to sit on the Railway Committee. He also asked if this information could be added to the KCC Facebook pages to raise public awareness and get the public on board.

SBC Councillor Robson advised he had raised this with the Planning Department and there is a reference in the LDP. He advised he had raised the issue of East West travel when SBC had debated the Union Connectivity Review. SBC Councillor Robson commented he welcomed the formation of this committee and wished it well.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised in his experience the main priority should be to organise funding to get a feasibility study in place.

Secretary's Report

- Correspondence, consultations, planning, traffic regulations etc. had been circulated and captured and a summary would be attached to the minutes.

- The Equal Opportunity Policy – this had been previously circulated for comments. The Provost proposed this was adopted and was seconded by Councillor Tomczyk. The secretary advised this was reviewed on an annual basis and part of our Constitution. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised that every organisation that received SBC funding had to adhere to this Policy.
- Mainstreaming Report Consultation – it was agreed that Councillors should respond on an individual basis and no response would be submitted from the Community Council.
- Data Protection certificate – the secretary advised she had received the current certificate and briefing notes which had been circulated.
- Walking Festival 2023 – member of the public Hazel Woodsell had contacted the secretary for an update. The secretary advised although Kelso had expressed an interests in organising the 2023 walking festival she had contacted the SBC Ranger to see if this would be viable due to the current Covid restrictions as a great deal of planning would be involved. The secretary undertook to feed back any updates.
- Girlguiding Scottish Borders County – Thinking Day 2021 – The secretary advised she had been contacted to see if we could offer support in celebrating their event by illuminating in a colour blue a building, church or local feature within the town to connect their members and volunteers. The details had been circulated and Councillors were asked to feedback comments.
- Secretary Remuneration – the Provost commented that due to limited funds the secretary had only drawn £800 instead of £850 last year and proposed she was paid £850 this year plus £50 arrears. This was seconded by Councillor Horsburgh and unanimously approved. Councillor Horsburgh asked whether the secretary had her expenses paid and she replied that in addition to her remuneration she submitted expenses for phone, postage, cartridges etc. Councillor Tomczyk commented that as the secretary was an employee of the Community Council she should be paid an appropriate salary and asked the secretary to keep a note of the number of hours work she undertook. In response to a question on how much funds the KCC could hold the secretary advised they were permitted to have no more than two years funds in their accounts.

Provost's Report

The Provost advised there had been no official events but he was now a member of the Cheviot Area Partnership working group and would be attending a Scotland Town Partnership webinar next week.

Scottish Borders Council Community Network (SBCCN)

Councillor McGrath advised the Berwickshire Area Partnership had raised the matter of the Local Government Act versus the Community Empowerment Act. Jenny Wilkinson will report back in a fortnight on the Council's position. Councillor McGrath commented it could be argued the Community Empowerment Act is equal to the Local Government Act where it affects the community in which case this changes the whole relationship of the community and Elected members. He commented the Fit for 2024 work which Jenny Craig is working on relates to the Community

Empowerment Act. Councillor McGrath is writing to the Scottish Government with the encouragement of the Leader of SBC Shona Haslam to get their view on these important issues.

The Provost asked whether the SBCCN were holding meetings and Councillor McGrath advised he would call a meeting once he had received a response from the Scottish Government and the 5 Area Partnership working groups were complete to give a collective view.

Parking and traffic management

Noted there was no update due to current lockdown.

Any Other Business

Member of the public Anthony Abbott commented at the top of Station Road, opposite Ken Hope's is a piece of wasteland which appears to be for sale and the fences around the perimeter have all collapsed. He asked who was responsible for this as it is an eyesore. SBC Councillor Weatherston commented the owner would be responsible and he would have a look to ensure there was no risk to the public.

Councillor McGrath asked for an update on the Food Bank and Councillor Roberts advised that at the moment they had sufficient supplies and funds as everyone on the lead up to Christmas had been generous in their donations and as a result they had withdrawn their collection boxes from the supermarkets. He advised currently if anyone wished to make a donation they were directing these to other organisation in the town i.e. The Planet.

Scottish Borders Council Report

Home Schooling – the Provost advised SBC seem to be managing home schooling but he was aware some school staff, pupils and parents were struggling with home schooling during the winter lockdown. He was keen that support should be in place for all these people and that their mental wellbeing is being checked.

The Provost raised some issues parents had raised regarding technical issues with iPads and proxy server. Councillor Robson advised he had raised the issue and undertook to follow up and report back.

SBC Councillor Robson gave an update on the glass recycling area at the Tait Hall and advised he had chased up why one bottle bank been removed and not replaced. He advised his understanding is that any colour of glass can now go in any bank. If this is the case he asked that an appropriate notice be affixed to each bank. He commented that the area behind the bins is full of litter, broken glass and autumn leaves and whilst the third bin is missing asked for the site to be cleaned up especially the area behind the bottle banks next to the hedge. SBC Councillor Robson advised he has spoken to the contractor and the white bank was removed off site at the Tait Hall as it was broken and had fallen on its side, there was a delay in getting a replacement on site as they didn't have any spare white banks, however they have now put in a brown bank on site so that the capacity is there and it is

stickered to say mixed glass. When the contractor has a replacement white bank available then we will get this swapped over.

SBC Councillor Robson advised the funding issue with Cheviot Youth had been rectified at the last Area Partnership and they were now in receipt of a grant aid.

SBC Councillor Robson advised work on the Jedburgh Road had been complete and one of the reasons for the delay was because there were two separate teams – one to put up barriers, traffic lights and signage and one that did the actual work. Councillor Robson will speak to the Roads department to see if there could be some co-ordination between the teams to avoid unnecessary delays. He commented that similar delays had happened with the work in Bridge Street earlier in the year.

Councillor Roberts asked for clarification that if a group of people wished to register for allotments and none were available, then SBC had a legal obligation to provide land for this. Councillor McGrath advised under Part 9 of the Community Empowerment Act Councils need to provide allotments. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised currently there were allotments in Kelso which were privately ran and there waiting is a waiting list. However, under the Food Grown Strategy the Council were obliged to consider applications for allotments and to find suitable land. It was suggested that a garden in one of the SBHA plots could be used. It was noted the request came from the Orchard Park area where many elderly people live who could consider giving up their garden. Councillor Tomczyk suggested some areas in the town that could be considered and Councillor Horsburgh asked whether an area in the old High School grounds could be considered.

Councillor Tomczyk wished to place on record his congratulations to SBC staff for dealing with the recent adverse weather and keeping the roads and pavements clear. He commented as a result of the adverse weather there were a lot more pot holes. SBC Councillor Weatherston commented SBC had issued a press release asking road users to be patient as winter weather impacts on road conditions and repairs and SBC are aware of public concern regarding the rapid appearance of potholes this winter. SBC Councillor Robson and Weatherston advised SBC staff had worked extremely hard over the last few days.

The Provost raised the concern that the main trunk road at the Melrose bypass and many main roads in and into Kelso had not been cleared of snow as quickly as usual and wondered if there was an issue. It is a SBC policy that during severe weather priority is giving to keeping routes into hospitals clear. SBC Councillor Robson undertook to ask the question.

The Provost commented that when the Covid vaccination programme started at the Tait Hall there had been an issue with heating. He advised he had been contacted by a nurse and approached James Stewart and Son who had provided some heaters which he delivered to grateful staff and patients.

Councillor Boulton asked for an update on work at the old High School. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised the contractor had been held up due to Covid restrictions and was still working Angraflat road and once work was complete would move down to the site of the old High School.

Councillor Tomczyk commented the Borders Event Centre had applied to set up a permanent caravan site and wondered why he had not seen any planning applications. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised they had a licence and a change of wording would be required which would come to the Community Council or approval. Councillors Tomczyk and Roberts commented they would welcome a permanent caravan site at Kelso which would be a great asset to the town.

Consideration of Licenses

The Secretary advised there were no plans for consideration.

Consideration of Plans

The Secretary advised there were no plans for consideration.

The next Community Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 March 2021

KCC Railway Committee

Objective

To promote the reinstatement of the railway line from Tweedbank via St Boswells (Charlesfield) and Kelso to Berwick-upon-Tweed with the same priority as the Line to Carlisle, for example in the Local Development Plan and in essential support for the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Members

James Boulton, Peter Cooper, Harry Tomczyk (Chair)
SBC Councillor Euan Robson

Representatives of local organisations and individuals who support the objective may be invited by the committee to join.

Remit

1. To promote the reinstatement of the line to the SBC and other organisations responsible for transport planning in the Borders and North Northumberland and give it high priority.
2. Engage with our local MP, MSP and list MSPs to obtain and retain their support.
3. Promote the reinstatement of the line to the public and local organisations and develop local support.

APPENDIX

KELSO COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE/EVENTS/CONSULTATIONS JAN 2021		
Date	Event/Correspondence	Venue and comments
12.01.21	KCC approved Dec 20 minutes submitted to the KCC and Visit Kelso FB pages for posting.	For information
	John Lamont MP independent Union Connectivity Review consultation recirculated	For information
	Request to extend deadline on consultation on above submitted and accepted until the 22/01/21	For information
	Provost circulated cycle rack images	For information
13.01.21	Response with suggestion for Offer of help from the Unpaid Work Team	For information
	Community Council Complimentary Places for 6th Annual Scottish Transport Conference	For information
	Secretary wrote to insurers to see whether we need to include KRG in annual renewal insurance, although covered by SBC	For information
16.01.21	News Release: Efforts of young people, parents and staff acknowledged at end of first week of home learning	For information
	Live Borders Creative Writing for Wellbeing - a FREE webinar	For information
18.01.21	Community Council Scheme Review WG Meeting - 21 January 2021	For information
	Event - Discounted tickets for Community Councils - Scottish Empty Homes Partnership Conference	For information
20.01.21	Vaccination Rollout	For information
	Amber Weather Warning For Snow Issued For Scottish Borders 20/01/2021 15:19:34	For information
	Draft LDP Response	For comments
	News Release: Last chance for Borderers to take part in Council budget consultation	For information
	Mainstreaming Report Consultation	For comments by 28.02.21 Feb agenda
	Stopping Up Order - A6089 Angraflat Road, Kelso	For information
22.01.21	News Release: £670k Council fund established to further support Borders businesses	For information
	News release: Referrals open for CEDAR domestic abuse support programme	For information
	20mph Community Council Information EMAIL 4, SURVEY 1 FURTHER EXTENDED CLOSURE DATE	For information

25.01.21	Response to LDP	Circulated
28.01.21	Donation from Sainsburys supermarket	For information
	Civic week cancellation of declaration of Laddie	For information
02/02/21	News Release: £40m of coronavirus support accessed by Borders businesses	For information
	Acknowledgement of Consultation on Scottish Borders Proposed Local Development Plan	For information
	Papers for KCC meeting to be held on the 9.02.21	Circulated
04.02.21	News Release: Current weather warning removed, but more snow expected over the weekend	For information
	Reissued draft KCC minutes and agenda	For information
	Community Council ICO Renewal Certificate	For information
08.02.21	Scottish Land Commission Virtual Public Meeting - Scottish Borders – 17 February	For information
	News release: Applications now open for Council discretionary fund	For information
	News release: Road users asked to be patient as winter weather impacts on road conditions and repairs	For information
09.02.21	Live Borders Are you interested in joining an online reading group?	For information
	Girlguiding Scottish Borders County - Thinking Day 2021	For comments