

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held in the Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 13 February 2108, at 7.00pm



PRESENT: Councillors Ian Brown, Peter Cooper, Betty Hodges, Gavin Horsburgh, James McCombie, James Boulton, Colin McGrath (part), Harry Tomczyk, Provost Dean Weatherston and Scottish Borders Councillors Simon Mountford and Euan Robson

IN ATTENDANCE: PC Suzanne Howgego (Police Scotland), Alan Livingstone (Chamber of Trade), Shirley Redgrave (Secretary) Kirsty Smyth (Southern Reporter) and Paul Roberts (member of the public).

APOLOGIES: Councillors John Bassett and Kerry Yule and SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston

- 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.

Welcome

The Provost welcomed Councillors and member of the public Paul Roberts to the meeting.

Police Matters

PC Suzanne Howgego advised there were some personnel changes at Kelso Police Station and although Inspector John Scott had overall responsibility for the Cheviot Area he would now be based at Jedburgh. Acting Inspector Jacqueline Mcguigan would no longer have responsibility for Kelso and was being replaced by Tomas Quinn. PC Rachel Stark had moved to a different area for six months and had been replaced by Joanne Flynn. PC Howgego advised there would be no impact on community policing.

It was noted Police Scotland report for February 2018 had previously been circulated and PC Howgego asked for feedback. PC Howgego commented there appeared to be an increase in antisocial behaviour but this was attributed to a small minority group and some assaults were still under investigation.

Under the Road Safety section Councillor Horsburgh asked for clarity on non-reportable accidents. PC Howgego reminded Councillors in the event of a road accident if details were exchanged between parties the incident was not recorded on the Police database unless personal injury was involved.

Councillor Tomczyk asked for an update on the thefts from Sainsbury's supermarket and PC Howgego advised these were still under investigation.

Councillor Horsburgh advised he had heard a report on Radio Borders that funding would be available for additional policing in the Borders. Councillor Mountford commented he would give an update under Scottish Borders Council section.

Chamber of Trade report / Visit Kelso

Alan Livingstone reminded Councillors voting was now open for the Localities Bid Fund until the 28 February 2018. The Kelso Chamber of Trade had been successful in being shortlisted to bid for funds to develop a new marketing toolkit to promote business, community groups and events in Kelso and surrounding areas. It was noted voting could be done on line and there were ballot boxes situated at the swimming pool, Cloud Nine, Swans and Seasons.

Alan advised members the Chamber of Trade AGM had been moved to May 2018.

Alan advised Visit Kelso were actively planning events for the forthcoming year and they would be attending Tourism Fairs at Alnwick and Hexham to promote the town of Kelso.

The Provost advised he had taken over the management of the Events Page on the Visit Kelso website. Should anyone have any events to add they just need to contact him.

Councillor Tomczyk asked for an update on the car sticker. The Provost advised although quotes had been received no progress had been made due to lack of funds. It was noted traders paid an annual subscription of £50.00 and it was hoped the number of traders who were members could be increased.

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 January 2018

Subject to one minor error the minutes held on Tuesday 9 January 2018 were approved. They were proposed by Provost Dean Weatherston and seconded by Councillor Gavin Horsburgh.

Matters arising

Parking at Kelso Broomlands Primary School

Councillor Robson advised he had attended a meeting with SBC officers to see how parking could be improved at the School. Councillor Robson advised five different departments from SBC were involved and it was proposed once the old building was demolished the current drop off circle area could be expanded and developed to

allow a co-ordinated drop off area with pedestrian access, footpaths and better signage. He advised the traffic regulations department were currently speaking with residents to gain their views and would bring this subject back to the Community Council once a proposal had been agreed.

Campaign for Borders Railway

Councillor Robson advised he was still waiting for conclusive information regarding ownership of the land on which the old line ran. He had been advised it was owned by Highways Agency Historical Railways Estate in York and there may be a protection order on the line. Councillor Robson advised he would push for an early meeting and once the update was received he would contact Councillors Tomczyk and Boulton to meet to see how to progress matters.

Memorial Garden

Councillor Mountford on behalf of Councillor T Weatherston advised matters were in hand to carry out the work and it was anticipated the Memorial Garden would be open early summer.

Kelso in Bloom – Floral Gateway Competition

Councillor Hodges advised Kelso in Bloom subcommittee had met and plans were being put in place to develop the Coldstream Road entrance by adding an additional mirror bed, extend the wild flower beds at Jedburgh road end and develop the bed at Rose Lane.

Cinema

Councillor Cooper advised there would be a new screening on Friday 16 February of Coco and the Darkest Hour. Peter advised a meeting would be held on Wednesday 14 February of volunteers.

NHS/Social Services integration

This item was deferred as Councillor McGrath was not in attendance at this part of the meeting.

Questions from the public

Paul Roberts member of the public raised the issue of social housing in Kelso and asked the Community Council whether they would consider inviting some of the social housing providers to come to a future meeting of the Council to explain how they allocated social housing. Mr Roberts advised it was important to have an understanding on how social housing was allocated as it had an impact on the community.

Councillor S Mountford suggest the Community Council wrote inviting a representative from Waverley Housing, Eldon Housing and Scottish Borders Housing Associations to a future meeting. Councillor Mountford advised housing policy was set out by law and was regulated. Mr Roberts commented it was important their accountability was understood and Councillor Mountford advised they were accountable to their Board and not to the community.

Secretary's Report

Secretary's Honorarium

The Provost advised the Honorarium had been agreed at £750 per annum last year and asked for approval for this amount this year.

Councillors asked, in view of the amount of work the Secretary undertook, whether they could increase the Secretary's Honorarium and the Secretary advised there were insufficient funds as the grant from SBC barely covered her present Honorarium and Council expenses, eg stationery, advertising.

Community Councillors asked for the Secretary's Honorarium to be increased by £50.00 and this was unanimously agreed to increase this to £800 for this year. This was proposed by Councillor Tomczyk and seconded by the Provost.

The Secretary advised the grant from SBC had been set at £1,365 for at least four years. It was noted one high item of expenditure was advertising the AGM in the Southern Reporter and Councillors asked whether this could be done via Kelso Life and Facebook to reduce costs. The Secretary undertook to contact officers at SBC for clarity and guidance.

Councillor McGrath commented he would bring up the issue of annual grants for Community Councils at the next Scottish Borders Community Council Network meeting.

Insurance Renewal

It was noted the Community and Social Organisations Block Policy Renewal was due by 16 February 2018. The Secretary and Councillor Tomczyk had completed the form and circulated it to Councillors for approval. Risk assessments would be submitted to cover the activities of Kelso in Bloom. The Secretary would also advise the insurers that Kelso Community Council would be custodians of the new Memorial Garden later in the year.

This was proposed by Councillor Harry Tomczyk and seconded by the Provost.

Equal Opportunity Policy

The Secretary reminded Councillors we had adopted an Equal Opportunities Policy which needed to be reviewed on an annual basis. The Secretary had circulated last year's copy to Councillors. Councillors agreed this was still relevant and was proposed by the Provost and seconded by Councillor Horsburgh.

Correspondence

- No correspondence had been received.

Provost Report

The Provost advised he had submitted his expenses for the year (£378.60).

The Provost advised SBC Convenor Parker had hosted a reception for a group of Canadian Curlers at Kelso on the 31 January 2018 to which he, the Vice Chair and SBC Councillors had been invited to. Councillor Tomczyk requested that members be advised when such events were going to happen.

Mens Shed

This item was deferred due to Councillor Bassett's apologies. Councillor McGrath advised locating the Men's Shed to the Co-op, Roxburgh Street had been delayed due to a change of management at the Co-op and there had been an issue with reinforcing an internal door for fire regulations. It was noted the Co-op had the tenancy of the building until 2035.

Cheviot Area Partnership

Councillor McGrath advised Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer and Communities SBC had attended a meeting of the Scottish Borders Community Council Network in November 2017 to give a presentation on the new Area Partnerships.

Councillor McGrath advised SBCCN's main concern is Community Councils have no voting powers in decision making and this is not in line with the Community Empowerment Act. In December 2017 Councillor McGrath on behalf of SBCCN had written to the SBC Chief Executive, Tracey Logan outlining concerns. The presentation and letter were discussed in January 2018 at the first meeting of the SBCCN since its AGM. Councillor McGrath advised the SBCCN had unanimously agreed that the Area Partnership as proposed did not meet the requirements of the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) Act 2015.

Councillor McGrath advised as Chairman of the SBCCN he had written to SBC expressing concerns and suggested CCN and SBC should work together to finalise a proposal acceptable to both parties. Councillor McGrath undertook to report back to the Community Council.

The Provost reminded members that Councillors McGrath and Cooper were Kelso Community Council's representatives on the SBCCN, however any community council could attend the meetings.

Kelso High School sports facilities

Councillor McGrath had asked for this to be included on the agenda as he had been contacted by one sports group who had been unable to secure its regular booking at the High School since Christmas. Prior to the meeting the Provost had spoken to the Head Teacher who wasn't aware of any issues. Subsequently the Provost had written to the individual concerned putting him in touch with the Chair of Sports Kelso who was assisting with the switch over on behalf of users.

Any Other Business

Councillor Horsburgh raised the issue of repairs to Jedburgh Road, he expressed concern at it's worsening state over this winter. Kelso Community Council have

raised this with SBC several times over the last few years and ask again that they review it's condition.

Site of old Kelso High School - Councillor McCombie asked for an update on the old Kelso High School. Councillor Mountford advised the site should be on the market for expressions of interest. It was recommended Neil Hastie be invited to a future Community Council meeting in the autumn to give an update to Councillors.

Councillor McGrath reminded Councillors the site had potential to be used as a Retirement Village and he was currently in discussion with the Chief Executive of SBC. Councillor Robson commented the site was a public asset and would need to be sold at market value.

Councillor Tomczyk asked whether additional public parking could be included in the development of the site. Councillor Mountford suggested the Community Council write to Neil Hastie at SBC outlining concerns regarding parking at this area of the town viz a viz congestion in Bowmont Street - Rugby Club and Church and ask that this be taken into consideration when offers of purchase are considered.

Scottish Borders Council

Cheviot Area Partnership – SBC Councillor Mountford advised the Area Partnership had been held at the new High School in Kelso and it had been well attended. Councillor Mountford advised future meetings would be themed and the next meeting would be on “economic development”. He advised interested stakeholders would be invited to the meeting.

Councillor Mountford advised the next Area Partnership would take place in Jedburgh on the 28 March 2018.

SBC Budget Proposals- Councillor Mountford advised the Administration and Opposition had put forward similar budget proposals. The highlights include:

- £1.2m additional funding towards teenage mental health provision
- £2.8m over four years for new and improved outdoor community spaces
- £0.282m for a community policing team to prevent low level criminal activity and deal with issues such as parking
- Over £22m investment in roads and bridges over three years, with £79m planned investment over the next 10 years
- £0.5m for youth intervention work
- £0.350m for shared access paths
- £4.125m over 10 years to provide grants for home adaptations to enable people to live at home for longer
- £0.2m to improve access to youth opportunities, through travel and digital initiatives

Councillor Mountford commented he welcomed the additional spending for a community policing team which would include a Sergeant and six Constables who would be allocated to SBC to do community policing. Councillor Mountford advised the funding would be for a 12 month period and these additional police personnel

would be responsible to the Police Inspector. The Provost welcomed the introduction of additional resources and hoped some of the parking and antisocial issues would be addressed.

Councillor McGrath commented there was a big push to increase the number of Special Constables.

Parking / Traffic Management – Councillor Robson advised he would be attending a meeting of the SBC Parking sub group in March. He acknowledged increased capacity was essential and the group would be looking at new potential developments and report back.

Councillor Tomczyk commented it was unrealistic to expect existing parking to cope with new residential developments in the town. The Provost suggested Woodside Park could have potential for providing additional parking if the current layout was altered.

Cleaning of pavements – Councillor Mountford had made enquiries regarding the removal of chewing gum from the pavements in Kelso. He commented officers at SBC last year had trialled a hot pressure washer on a few areas which were affected by significant concentration of chewing gum. However concerns were raised about the possibility of causing damage to the surface of the slabs and making them unstable. Councillor Mountford commented he was disappointed there was no immediate solution but hoped this could be resolved in the future.

Questions to SBC Councillors

Councillor McGrath asked whether a permanent solution could be found to address the pot holes on the roads. Councillor Robson advised SBC were aware of the issue and there was a two year window for the reinstatement of roads.

Councillor Tomczyk asked whether the Tait Hall provided income for the Common Good Fund and Councillor Mountford advised the income was negligible as the Council had to pay to maintain it.

Councillor Tomczyk noted that repairs were being carried out from Tweed House to Windy Gowl and pointed out that other parts of Roxburgh Street were also in need of repair, including the area from Union Street to Tweed House, and asked when this would be undertaken.

Councillor Robson advised the Council were aware of the issue of the cobbles on the roundabout at the end of Rose Lane and suggested this area be levelled off and a circle painted on it.

Councillor Horsburgh asked whether there was any update on the sale of Trinity Church which was currently under offer. Councillor Mountford advised there was no update.

Councillor Cooper asked how often street cleaning took place and was advised this was a daily occurrence.

Consideration of Licenses

No new applications have been received.

Consideration of Plans

The Council considered the following plan –

Extension to dwellinghouse 3 Sutherland Gardens, Kelso TD5 7BF. The Community Council had no objections to the plans.

Change of use from office and alterations to form three residential units on first and second floors, Stormont Darling WS 8-9 The Square, Kelso TD5 7HQ. The Community Council had no objections to the plan.

The next meeting of Kelso Community Council will be held in the Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 13 March 2018 at 7.00pm