

**MINUTES of the MEETING of Kelso Community  
Council held in the Town Hall, Kelso  
on Tuesday 13 October 2015, at 7.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** Provost John Bassett (Chair), Councillors Dean Weatherston, Harry Tomczyk, Colin McGrath, Tamzin Thomas, Betty Hodges, Peter Cooper and Alan Hall and Scottish Borders Councillors Alec Nicol, Tom Weatherston and Simon Mountford.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Alan Livingstone (Chamber of Trade), and Craig Blackie and Stuart Young (Neighbourhood Services Managers SBC)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Fiona Scott and John King and Suzanne Howgego (Police Scotland)

- 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**

Provost John Bassett welcomed members to the meeting and Craig Blackie and Stuart Young (SBC).

### **Presentation on Neighbourhood Operations Review**

Craig Blackie reminded the Councillors the review is to identify and implement changes to the way services are delivered to communities. The review would cover public toilets, third party responsibilities, disposal of land, grassland biodiversity and community empowerment opportunities. Craig Blackie advised savings of £450,000 across Scottish Borders Council would need to be achieved and any money from the proceeds of land sale would go to SBC and not Kelso. The following areas are for consideration but SBC would welcome comments from Councillors and members of the public for other areas.

Disposal of Land – Mayfield - the sale would be carried out by SBC estates department. Councillors asked whether this land could be used for additional car parking.

Disposal of Land – Pinnaclehill Park - the sale would be carried out by SBC estates department. It was noted these land could be sold to neighbouring properties to extend their gardens.

West Broomlands Plantation (The Meadows) - SBC propose to plant wild flowers and let it grow, only cutting the grass twice a year.

Bridgend Park - SBC propose to plant wild flowers and allow the grass to grow cutting it just twice a year. This would be the area at the river side of the stairs. The rest of the park would be cut once a fortnight.

Eshiehaugh from Pipewell Place to Broomlea - SBC propose to let the Broomlands Plantation grow further down and only cut it back twice a year.

The Cobby – it was noted SBC do not own the Cobby, however, historically this has been a public space and maintained by Kelso Town Council and today SBC. The owners are the property owners in Roxburgh Street, their land goes right down to the river edge. SBC advised they are no longer in a position to maintain land they don't own and they propose to let it grow wild and only cut a pathway through. Another option they suggest was that the owners paying for its upkeep. Councillor D Weatherston raised concerns about asking the owners to pay and if even just one says no and reinstates their boundary down to the river then the entire area would be impassable. It was noted this area is part of the Borders Abbey Route.

Croft Park Banking - SBC propose to reduce the cutting of the banking to twice a year.

Croft Park - Third Party Takeover – SBC would be interested if a users group would take over the park. This would exclude the play park which SBC would continue to maintain. The toilets could be included or excluded in this takeover. It was stated that an SBC survey should that the toilets are used on average 153 times a week which is below what SBC think merits them staying open. The timing of the survey as questioned and it was noted these public toilets are well used by bus/HGV drivers, park users such as the school and rugby club and walkers/runners going by and Slaters Funfair.

Craig Blackie emphasised that all Border towns were going through the same exercise.

It was noted Shedden Park was not included in the proposed cuts as this was maintained by the Cricket Club.

Councillors asked for thanks to be placed on record to Kelso Horticultural Society who maintain the flower beds between Bridgend and Springwood and Border Union Agricultural Society and Kelso Farmer's Market who finance it.

It was noted responses were required by 26 October to enable a report to be submitted to the December Cheviot Area Forum meeting. The Provost asked for the plans to be placed on the KCC Facebook page. Councillor A Hall undertook to co-ordinate responses.

The Provost thanked Craig Blackie and Stuart Young for attending the meeting.

## **Police Matters**

PS Suzanne Howgego had tendered her apologies and her September report had been circulated for comments and feedback. The Councillors had no comments on

the report but asked for an update on the incident at the Factory Shop and police response times.

It was noted Inspector John Scot hoped to attend the November meeting.

### **Chamber of Trade report / Visit Kelso**

Alan Livingstone advised the traders had agreed to Sunday opening during December between 11.00am and 3.00pm and late nights opening until 6.30pm on Thursdays. An event was being organised on Sunday 20 December, to include entertainment.

Alan advised a Chamber of Trade meeting had been organised for 26 October to which all were welcome. He advised they were currently investigating funding to expand their web site.

Councillors discussed the options of attracting visitors using the Borders Railway and they reemphasised the importance of a regular bus service. Councillor D Weatherston advised Future Hawick had been awarded some funding which they were using to provide buses to bring people into the town until the end of November. It was agreed they should be approached to receive feedback.

SBC Councillors agreed they would work with Visit Kelso to see what bus options could be explored.

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2015**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15 September 2015 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor Colin McGrath and seconded by Councillor Harry Tomczyk.

### **Matters arising**

#### a) Car Parking

It was noted the Secretary had written to the Chief Executive of SBC regarding decriminalising parking and a response had been circulated. Councillors expressed concerns about the timescales proposed and SBC Councillors agreed to have further discussions.

#### b) Memorial Wall

The Provost advised progress was being made and it was noted Robertson would be interested in financing a wall or columbarium if they could establish whether there was a market for it. A market research / survey would need to be undertaken. Councillor Nicol advised he had spoken to Jean Robertson to outline possible funding options and had a meeting with Heather Batch regarding a survey / determination of needs which will be needed to guide the way forward. It was agreed once finalised this should be put on the KCC web pages and placed in Kelso Life to gauge support. It was agreed this should be placed on next months agenda.

#### c) Cinema

Councillor Cooper advised he was in discussion with colleagues at Duns who were also interested in piloting the Film Scotland venture. It was agreed the preferred options for staging a cinema would be either Tait Hall or the Cross Keys Hotel. Councillor Cooper advised he was raising awareness and would report back at the next meeting.

d) Floral Gateway Competition

The Provost asked what assistance SBC could offer the Council with this competition and Stuart Young advised some funding would be available but it was important to establish a sub committee of all interested parties as soon as possible. It was suggested this group should consist of The Chamber of Trade, Kelso Horticultural Society, Kelso Rotary Club, Kelso High School and the Local Housing Authorities. The Provost asked the Secretary to approach these organisations inviting them to a meeting. Councillor B Hodges advised she would like to be included in the group.

e) Twinning opportunities

Councillor McGrath raised the subject of twinning with Kelso in Washington State, USA. Councillor McGrath agreed to progress and report back.

f) Questions from the public

There were no questions from the public.

### **Secretary's Report**

The Secretary advised she had been contacted by Tim Allen of the Buccleuch Hunt who had asked permission to come into the Square on Friday 1 January at 10.45. Councillors agreed to this and the Secretary was asked to approach Mr Brooks to see if his family wished to continue the family tradition of providing the stirrup cup.

The Secretary advised she had been approached by an Edinburgh Film Production Company who is interested in filming the erection and decoration of a Christmas Tree in a typical Border town. Councillor Mountford undertook to make contact.

### **Correspondence**

The Secretary advised correspondence had been circulated to Community Councillors and a summary schedule had been compiled.

### **Scottish Borders Council**

#### Area Forum

Councillor T Weatherston advised the next Area Forum meeting would take place in Kelso on 9 December and asked Councillors if they had any subjects they wished to put on the agenda. Councillor T Weatherston advised there would be an update on the Kelso High School and Broomlands Primary School. Councillors welcomed the update on the local Schools and advised this should be widely advertised to encourage the public to attend. Councillor Tomczyk asked whether the subject of parking could be placed on the agenda and Councillor T Weatherston advised this

was a standing item. Councillor Nicol asked for an update on decriminalising parking to be placed on the agenda.

The Provost advised the meeting details would be placed on the KCC web pages to encourage the public to attend.

Councillors discussed the option of reintroducing parking charges within the town as any revenue generated would be spend in the town.

#### Springwood Terrace / Jedburgh Road

Councillor Hodges had asked for this subject to be placed on the agenda as the fence was now proving to be a health and safety issue. It was noted the land was originally owned by the Cottage Hospital and was used as a car park. It is not known who currently own the fence and therefore responsible for its repair. Councillor Nicol advised the best way forward would be to establish who the owners were and to organise an inspection of the fence. This meeting would involve the three SBC Councillors, Neil Hastie and Brian Young from SBC and Councillors Hodges and Tomczyk. Councillor Nicol undertook to organise this.

#### Street Lighting

Councillor Hodges advised she had received a complaint from a resident in James Stewart Court regarding lights not working, despite reporting this to SBC. Councillor T Weatherston advised he had reported this and would follow up.

#### Questions to SBC Councillors

Councillor D Weatherston asked whether additional parking could be provided in the Inchmyre area to take traffic off the corner. Councillor T Weatherston advised this subject had been discussed previously and it had been agreed to fell some trees and shift the pavement to create additional parking. Councillor T Weatherston undertook to follow up.

Councillor McGrath advised he would be attending the Scottish Borders Community Council Network AGM.

Councillor Hall asked for an update on the upgrading of the pavement in East Bowmount Street. Councillor T Weatherston undertook to follow up.

Councillor Cooper asked for information on the formal Audit by KPMG and was advised to contact Jill Stacey, Chief Officer Audit and Risk at SBC for information.

It was noted Kelso has been shortlisted for most improved small/medium sized town in Scotland following the THI regeneration project.

#### **Consideration of Plans**

The Council considered the following plans:-

- a) Formation of patio doors from window, 4 Mayfield, Kelso. The Council had no objections.

The Secretary advised she had received confirmation the planning application for land west of Bowmont Street and car park Roxburgh Street had been considered by the planning committee and following consideration of observations, including the Community Council, the Planning Committee approved the application in principle. Councillor T Weatherston expressed concern barriers had been erected in front of the two car parks despite work not due to start until March 2016. He undertook to establish who currently owned the land and if possible arrange for the barriers to be taken down.

### **Consideration of Licenses**

There were no applications to be considered.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Kelso Community Council will be held in the Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 10 November 2015 at 7.00pm