

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council on Tuesday 10 January 2023 at 7:00 in Kelso Town Hall



PRESENT: Councillors Owen Adams, James Boulton (Vice Chair), Peter Cooper, Christine Hamilton, Gavin Horsburgh (Provost), James McCombie, Colin McGrath, Toni Oliver, Shirley Redgrave, Paul Roberts, Gus Russell, Gail Watson and Scottish Borders Councillors Simon Mountford and Euan Robson

IN ATTENDANCE Sharon Johnston (Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Scottish Borders Councillor Tom Weatherston, 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.
- 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 Councillors to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to the public.

Police Matters

The Police Report had been circulated and there were no comments or questions arising.

Visit Kelso

As there was no meeting in December there was no representation from Visit Kelso

River Tweed First Catch Event

The Provost welcomed Anne Woodcock from Tweed Foundation and Tweed Commission.

Anne Woodcock briefed the council on the opening event for the beginning of the fishing season on the River Tweed, which is to be held on Wednesday 1st February 2023. Anne advised that the Scottish Minister for Public Health and Sport, Mairi Gougeon will be attending this event and that there will be both local and national publicity around this event.

Anne reported to the council, she had spoken to Visit Kelso about them holding a shop window competition, and their feedback was positive. She also advised that she wanted to involve the younger generation by holding a competition to engage and educate them about the river and fishing.

Anne thanked the Secretary for her help and advice with regards to road closures and added that she hoped that it would become an annual event in Kelso.

Councillor Russell asked why the Tweed Foundation and Tweed Commission had chosen Kelso and Anne had replied that Kelso was one of very few towns that had a hotel sitting on the River Tweed suitable for holding such an event.

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 December 2022 were proposed by Councillor Watson and seconded by Councillor Russell and approved by the Council.

Kelso High School – Skate Park Presentation

Councillor Hamilton updated the council on the Skate Park Project but unfortunately, due to school holiday the presentation which was to be delivered by the students was not able to take place. Councillor Hamilton advised that the students are keen to present their ideas so it was agreed that it would be good for the students to come along to the March meeting given the February meeting would be in the half term break. Councillor Hamilton agreed to take this back to the students.

Matters arising from the minutes

- Kelso Community Food Larder - The Provost updated the council on the progress of the food larder. Funding had been received and was being spent and the legalities of the project were also being finalised. The project was on schedule for opening at the end of February. The Provost advised the council that the Food Larder Trustees were himself, Councillor Roberts and Councillor McCombie.
- Riverside Drive Woodlands – the Provost advised the council that there had been no more communication with the residents from Riverside Drive. However, he had received an email from Mr David Whittle suggesting that the community council set up a woodland committee and that he would be willing to sit on the committee. The Provost explained that there were no resources for this activity and it was beyond the KCC remit and the council advised that there was already provision at SBC that looked at trees.
- Battlefields Trip – The Provost advised the council that he had received interest from approximately 27 members of the public for the Battlefields Trip, but that he needed to fill a bus of 40 to make it viable.
- Vandalism – The Provost expressed the council's disappointment regarding the vandalism of the Christmas decorations and that nobody had come forward to date. Councillor Oliver expressed her concerns about the lack of lighting in the Square and commented that it should be improved. The Provost also expressed his concern about the poor quality of the lighting in the Square along with the poor quality of CCTV images due to the lighting issues. The Provost asked Scottish Borders Councillors if they would be able to provide better lighting, however, Councillor Mountford explained that this would be unlikely due to the budget, but they would ask the question.
- Scottish Water Top-Up Tap – The Provost informed the council that Scottish Water could not place the tap in the Square because of ownership of utilities under the pavements

issues but suggested Shedden Park. Councillor Cooper suggested Mayfield because there had previously been a water tap there and the Provost agreed to take this back to Scottish Water.

- Community Cinema – Councillor Cooper informed the council that there had not yet been any interest in the Trustee positions which would be coming available. The Provost asked if Councillor Cooper could email a list of duties and responsibilities involved which may help generate interest.

Questions from the public

The proprietor of Evi Jane Fabrics, Lynne Witherspoon asked the council if there had been any progress with the planning department with regards to the opening up of a retail business on Spylaw Road in contravention of the use class of the building. Councillor Robson advised Ms Witherspoon that the matter was under investigation. Ms Witherspoon also advised the council that she had been in contact with Trading Standards and that they would also be investigating this issue.

Kelso in Bloom

Councillor Redgrave informed the council that Kelso in Bloom had been successful in an application for a £2500 grant from the Cheviot Area Fund to be spent on the flower beds at The Linn. A meeting was being held after the 18 January to discuss what will be planted in the town beds come Spring. This would be reported back to the council.

Tweed Valley Railway Campaign and KCC Railway Committee

A report had been circulated by Councillor Boulton and there were no questions from the meeting. Councillor Boulton advised the council that they would be presenting their campaign to St Boswells Community Council on 26 January 2023.

Secretary's Report

Correspondence, consultations, planning, traffic regulations etc. had been circulated and a summary is attached to the minutes.

Provost Report

The Provost advised the council that there was nothing to report this month, but he did enquire of Scottish Borders Councillors who the relevant person was to contact in relation to digging up the time capsule. Scottish Borders Councillors advised this would be Brian Young.

Walking Festival 2023

Councillor Redgrave advised the council that there was no report this month. She updated the council on the £1000 grant they had received from the SBC Rangers. Councillor Redgrave also advised the council that she would be attending a meeting with Councillor Hamilton and Visit Kelso and that she would report back at the next meeting.

Councillor Redgrave advised the council that there was a shortfall in funds for the Walking Festival and the committee would still need to approach local businesses for sponsorship. The Provost advised the council that there was a Cheviot Area Partnership meeting on 1st February when the funding decision would be made regarding the Walking Festival.

Consultations

There were no consultations

Scottish Borders Community Council Network

Councillor McGrath advised the council that there had been no recent meetings, but he would be putting together a proposal of having a Citizens Panel in each community. Councillor Redgrave asked Councillor McGrath if he could share the minutes of the next Scottish Borders Community Council Network meeting. Councillor McGrath agreed that he would do this.

Scottish Borders Council Report

Parking/Traffic management – There was no update this month

Shedden Park Toilets – still awaiting the findings of the report on the issue of toilet provisions.

Scaffolding/ Abbey and Glebe Wall – The Provost reported that the netting for Glebe Wall had arrived and was waiting to be put up. At a meeting in December it was mentioned that the fencing at Abbey Row would be coming down in the first half of 2023. Scottish Borders Councillors agreed to follow this up and report back at the next meeting.

Edenside Road one-way traffic system - There was nothing to report regarding the one-way traffic system at Edenside Road.

Electric Charging Space –Councillor Robson advised that this would be brought forward at the next Scottish Borders Council meeting and reported back at the next meeting.

CCTV – Scottish Borders Councillors advised that the Police or SBC would not update the CCTV system in the town due to budget cuts. The Provost asked if the council would be able to apply for funding to buy and install new cameras and recording equipment in the Town Hall to cover the Square. Scottish Borders Councillor Mountford agreed to look into this. Councillor Adams asked if there were any legal restrictions on recording in public places and Councillor Russell explained that there was guidance that needed to be followed. The Provost agreed to look into this.

Scottish Borders Councillor Robson informed the council that a path was being installed along the Yetholm Road up to Lloyds tractors by the council, which was being paid for by Sustrans.

Councillor Robson advised that a safety audit was currently being carried out throughout all graveyards and any unsafe gravestones would have to be laid down and made safe. He advised that grave holders should be made aware of this before work was carried out.

Scottish Borders Councillor Robson appealed to the council to sign up to the library if they had not already done so as library membership was low, and this may have an effect on the future of this important asset.

Councillor Oliver informed the council that a wall next to the library was in a state of decay, the Provost agreed to take a look at this.

The Provost informed Scottish Borders Councillors that the wall along Pipewell Brae at the bottom was wearing away and was concerned that it may fall onto the path. The Provost asked if the wall belonged to SBC, Scottish Borders Councillor Robson agreed to find out who the wall belonged to.

The Provost informed SB Councillors that a gentleman had been in touch regarding a large pothole at Berrymoss Court which has already been filled on numerous occasions but is not alleviating the problem. Scottish Borders Councillor Robson agreed to take this forward.

Consideration of Licensing applications

There were no licensing applications.

Consideration of planning applications

Planning applications had been circulated to the council for consideration. Planning application - 22/01927/ FUL needs a response by 17 January 2023.

Any other business

Councillor Adams informed the council that there had been more complaints about customer cars from Gibbs Auto garage being parked on the roadside. The Police have already spoken to the garage owner about this and the Provost agreed to speak to the Police again.

The Provost thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The next Community Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 February 2023.

It has been a busy time so far this year from organising a Window competition on behalf of the River Tweed Commission to open the river to compiling our marketing plan for the next 12 months – Watch this space.....

But the big news is around a campaign that has been built to promote out of season tourism with thanks to funding from Destination Sector. To stand out Visit Kelso used the 6 doctors of wellbeing: fresh air, exercise, water, rest, diet, and sunshine and with local businesses signing up to become wellbeing warriors we are looking to be known as Scotland's Wellbeing Capital. The fantastic image of the lady in the Square in Yoga poses with an umbrella caught the imagination of the press and was featured in national newspapers and on TV. This has resulted in 5 new VK members and 8,300 Facebook Followers (up from 7,500 in October 2022, and 8,000 on 9th January 2023). Instagram now has 1,900 followers – I don't have previous data.