

Minute of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held on Tuesday 12 November 2024 at 7:00 in Kelso Town Hall



PRESENT: Gavin Horsburgh (Provost), Councillors James Boulton, Shirley Redgrave, Peter Cooper, Paul Roberts, James McCombie, Gail Watson, Owen Adams and Toni Oliver; Adrian Clarkson (Visit Kelso); Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson, Tom Weatherston and Simon Mountford; and Yvonne Oliver (Secretary)
Ryan Whellans (Member of the Public)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Christine Stewart and Colin McGrath.

- *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 questions through the Chairperson.*

Kelso Brownies

Prior to the commencement of the public meeting, the Community Council welcomed Kelso Brownies and their Leaders. The Brownies asked various questions about the work of the Community Council, how they were elected etc and when the Community Council came into being. Members were happy to answer all the questions and the Provost explained what the various flags and artifacts in the Chamber were used for.

The Brownies had recently held a Sponsored Scoot in Shedden Park and had noticed a few things that they felt could be improved in the Park. Their observations are attached as an Addendum to this Minute.

Welcome

The Provost welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Police Matters

The October MMWR had not been received but the Provost advised that Sergeant Grainger was either on holiday or had recently been on holiday. There was no Police Scotland representative in attendance but PC Paul Owenson had tendered his apologies. He was investigating the recent Hendersyde burglaries and also the complaint regarding illegal parking outside Kelso Library and would report back to the Provost.

Councillor Gail Watson informed the meeting that Police Scotland had recently been in attendance outside Broomlands Primary School and had booked several people who had parked illegally on the zig-zag lines.

SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston informed the meeting that 4 more mobile CCTV cameras had become available and it was up to the public to keep reporting issues – the areas which received the most complaints were the ones where the mobile CCTV cameras would be utilised.

Visit Kelso

Adrian Clarkson, representing Visit Kelso, advised members of the following:

- (1) Kelso had been nominated as one of the “Best Dog-Friendly Tourist Destinations”.
- (2) He reminded members of the Christmas event taking place in the Tait Hall on 15/16th December - there would be a total of 30 stalls which was an excellent result and he hoped it would be well-attended. It had been advertised both in Kelso Life and also on local radio.
- (3) Visit Kelso were hoping to start work on producing a single map of Kelso, (rather than the current 4 separate maps), following comments received from visitors that they would prefer this.

Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 8 October 2024

The Minute of meeting of Tuesday 8 October 2024 had been circulated and was approved (subject to a slight spelling amendment). The Minute was proposed by Councillor Paul Roberts and seconded by Councillor James Boulton.

Matters arising from the Minute

There were no matters arising from the Minute other than those which would be discussed later in the meeting.

Questions From The Public

Mr Ryan Whellans was present at the meeting and asked what the current situation was with regard to the introduction of bee boxes and bug hotels, as discussed at the last Community Council meeting. The Provost advised that he thought this was a great idea and intended bringing the subject up at the next meeting of Kelso In Bloom. Enquiries had been made to the Men's Shed in Kelso to see if this was something they would be interested in getting involved with and was waiting to hear back from them.

SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston suggested that this could be a job for the Community Payback Team as they were always looking for projects, particularly in the winter season.

Kelso in Bloom

There had been no further meetings of Kelso In Bloom but the Provost reminded members there was an informal "thank-you" gathering being held in the Town Hall on Friday 15 November 2024 at 7pm for the volunteers. He extended a welcome to all.

Scottish Borders Community Council Network

There was no further update on the Scottish Borders Community Council Network, as Councillor McGrath was absent. However, SBC Councillor Simon Mountford advised there was a meeting of the Cheviot Area Partnership coming up there may be an update at this.

Provost Report

- Diary

The Provost thanked members for attending the War Memorial service on Sunday 10 November 2024. There had been an excellent turnout by the public.

He had attended a Remembrance Service at Kelso High School on 11 November 2024 which had gone very well.

The Provost, together with the 3 Scottish Borders Councillors, had attended a recent meeting at Kelso High School, organised by the young people involved with the Skate Park Lights Project. Discussions had taken place regarding (1) extending the skate park and (2) a new Rules Board being erected. The issue of anti-social behaviour had also been discussed and the Police had agreed to take a greater interest in the Skate Park. It was noted that, if the public continue to complain, perhaps this would be an ideal location for one of the mobile CCTV cameras.

The Provost had been invited to give a speech at an Awards Night at Kelso High School on 14 November 2024. These were awards given to pupils who do voluntary work for the town as well as Duke of Edinburgh participants.

Ali Hay, a former pupil of Kelso High School and the instigator of organising the Skate Park (amongst other projects in Kelso), would also be in attendance.

The Provost would be attending the Cheviot Area Partnership meeting, being held on Wednesday 20 November 2024.

- Dog Poo Dispensers

The Provost advised that the Dog Poo Dispensers were working very well. He told members that he fills them up every fortnight but was now down to only 4 cases left (out of 15 originally purchased). It was agreed that more cases be ordered. There was general agreement that the Dispensers had made a big difference to the amount of dog mess being left around the town

Secretary's Report

Events/Correspondence

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

Shirley Redgrave advised that she had recently attended John Lamont's "Pensioner Afternoon" in the Tait Hall. Whilst she found it very informative it was disappointing that there had been a poor turnout. It was suggested that it had not been very well advertised, particularly for the age group it was trying to attract.

Consultations

There were no consultations at this time.

Scottish Borders Council Report

(a) High Croft Co-op/Playpark

Councillor Gail Watson wished it to be noted that the Playpark beside the Highcroft Co-op was very neglected looking.

(b) "Little Food Shop" Building, Bowmont Street, Kelso

The meeting was advised that the premises which had previously been a little food shop in Bowmont Street, Kelso (opposite the old Kelso High School), was looking very dirty and rundown. Councillor Watson asked if the SBC Councillors knew who owned the property? Councillor T Weatherston agreed to look into this matter and report back.

Consideration of Licensing applications

There were no new Licensing applications for consideration at this time.

Consideration of Plans

- Community Council Consultation – 24/01222/FUL – Installation of air source heat pump, 1 Broomlands House, Ednam Road, Kelso – No objections
- Community Council Consultation – 24/01246/LBC and 24/01314/FUL – External redecoration to shop front (retrospective), 52 Woodmarket, Kelso – The Provost expressed his disappointment that, despite putting in objections to the change of colour of properties in the Town Centre, Scottish Borders Council approve the applications regardless. It was particularly frustrating when the premises in question actually belong to the Council.

SBC Councillor T Weatherston said that, in his opinion the rules should be reviewed. At the moment, the information given is that any changes made should be “in keeping with the surrounding area”. He felt that this left the way open for various interpretations. SBC Simon Mountford agreed to raise this issue with the Head of Planning.

Any other business

- (1) Councillor Paul Roberts informed the meeting that he was extremely disappointed to hear of one local’s story regarding transport to Edinburgh for medical treatment. They had been told if they were unable to make their own way to the hospital then they would be unable to receive treatment. SBC Councillor Euan Robson replied that, whilst he knew the Red Cross provision had been withdrawn, he was appalled that this was the case. SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston advised that Scottish Borders Council had just launched a survey for completion regarding cancer patients’ experiences in the Scottish Borders.
- (2) Councillor Toni Oliver asked for an update on the red telephone box which had been damaged by a vehicle and removed from Kelso Square. SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston advised that BT had been in touch with SBC so it looked like the phone box would be replaced. Councillor Oliver said she hoped it would be replaced “like for like”, i.e. another red phone box.
- (3) SBC Councillor Euan Robson distributed copies of the updated bus services for Routes 80 – Kelso Town Service and 81 – Kelso-Kirk Yetholm-Town Yetholm-Morebattle-Linton-Kelso. He said these would be officially confirmed on 25 November 2024. The Provost commented that the buses were not disabled friendly and Councillor Robson advised that an application had been submitted to the Levelling-up Fund for a contribution towards the acquisition of a “low-entry” bus.
- (4) SBC Councillor Euan Robson advised members he was aware of various problems being experienced by the residents of Rutherford Square, Kelso but the one needing urgent attention at the moment was the issue with the main front doors not closing. Naturally, the residents are alarmed at this state of affairs but Scottish Borders Council are aware of the situation.

Date of next meeting

The next Kelso Community Council meeting will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 10 December 2024 at the Town Hall, Kelso.

Addendum:

List of observations made by Kelso Brownies regarding Shedden Park, Kelso

(1) Seats

It would be much better and easier for everyone to enjoy the park if there were more seats. There aren't very many. When we went down for our Sponsored Scoot, there was nowhere for families to sit.

(2) Smoother Paths

We noticed there are quite a few parts of the path around the park which have been torn up by tree roots. This makes the path difficult to walk on, or even use bikes, scooters or roller blades. Could they be made smoother?

(3) Lights

If there were more lights in the park, we would be able to play and use the park more when it's darker in the autumn and winter. Lots of people would feel safer there if it wasn't so dark.

(4) Poo Bins

When we did our Sponsored Scoot, we saw a lot of dog mess around the park and some of our bikes got very dirty. Why can't there be more poo bins, with bags too?

(5) Play Park Things for Older Children

We think most of the stuff in the playpark area is for little children. It would be good to have things for us, we can have fun in there too. We love playing outside all year round.