

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council on Tuesday 11 April 2023 at 7:00 in Kelso Town Hall



**PRESENT:** Councillors Peter Cooper, Christine Hamilton, Gavin Horsburgh (Provost), Sharon Johnston (Secretary), James McCombie, Colin McGrath, Toni Oliver, Shirley Redgrave, Paul Roberts and Gus Russell and Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson and Tom Weatherston

**IN ATTENDANCE** June Swan (Visit Kelso), Ruth MacKay and Peter Small (Friends of Kelso Library)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Owen Adams, James Boulton, Gail Watson and SBC Councillor Simon Mountford

- *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.*

## **Welcome**

The Provost welcomed Councillors to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to the representatives from Friends of Kelso Library Ruth MacKay and Peter Small.

## **Police Matters**

The Police Report had been circulated.

SBC Councillor Weatherston raised the issue of the graffiti underneath Hunters Bridge to SBC and SBC Councillor Robson advised that the engineers would be inspecting the graffiti to find an appropriate plan of action to clean it.

## **Visit Kelso**

June Swan on behalf of Visit Kelso gave the following report.

Following on from the Wellbeing campaign a journalist and her family from Visit Britain magazine came to Kelso over the Easter weekend to check out the sights and delights of Kelso so let's keep our fingers crossed for a good write up.

We are in the process of organising the hanging baskets for this year and have 11 currently on order.

We placed an advert in the 2023/24 Landmark Press Bedroom folder which is being sent out to hotels and accommodation providers all across the Scottish Borders.

The Provost thanked June for attending.

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 March 2023 subject to amendments were approved by the Council, proposed by Councillor McGrath and seconded by Councillor Russell.

### **Presentation from Friends of Kelso Library**

The Provost welcomed Ruth MacKay and Peter Small to the meeting.

Peter Small thanked The Provost and Councillors for agreeing to let representatives from Friends of Kelso Library come along and give a presentation. Peter Small explained that events had been held in the library in the past, however, since the pandemic they have been struggling to bring the public back in to enjoy the community asset. He went on to say that the Library Contact Centre for SBC has been working very well and does bring in footfall but the Library sees little benefit from it. Peter Small asked if KCC would be willing to include Friends of Kelso Library and any events in any town correspondence. The Provost advised Peter Small that Kelso Life was an excellent source of advertising and Councillor Hamilton suggested that a Facebook Page would be beneficial.

A Tea and Poetry event is being held in the Library garden on 18th May 2023 from 2 - 3.00pm and Friends of Kelso Library would encourage members of the public and KCC councillors to come along. They would also like to encourage members of the public to become Friends of Kelso Library and to try and promote the Library, as member numbers are declining.

Ruth MacKay informed KCC that they are in the process of cleaning the Library garden and would like to promote this to celebrate 100 years of Kelso Library. Suggestions from KCC were put forward such as using the library for a social space, holding art exhibitions, including a small museum, the use of virtual/online records and having more regular and easy-to-remember opening hours, all of which Peter Small and Ruth MacKay were very grateful for, and agreed to take the suggestions back to the Friends of Kelso Library.

SBC Councillor Weatherston also recommended the use of the Press Reader app, which gives free access to worldwide publications through being a Live Borders member.

The Provost thanked Peter Small and Ruth MacKay for their presentation.

### **Matters arising from the minutes**

- Kelso Community Food Larder – Councillor Roberts advised KCC that since its opening Kelso Community Larder had prevented 552 kilos of food products from being taken to landfill. The Larder has been a great success and Councillor Roberts thanked all of the volunteers for their help and commitment and to the people of Kelso for embracing the Larder. Councillor Roberts advised KCC that what the Larder receives is principally down to the supermarkets Sainsburys, Coop and Aldi and to whom he expressed his thanks.

- American Visitors - Councillor McGrath informed KCC that a visit from Kelso, Washington, USA had proved to be very successful. Councillor McGrath thanked Councillor Roberts and Russell and Christine Henderson from Kelso Heritage Society who gave up their time to meet and take the visitors on a tour around Kelso. Councillor McGrath was hopeful that this would be the beginning of a long relationship with the community of Kelso, Washington. Councillor Russell raised the question of providing Better information to visitors to guide them around the town from the Knowes car park where most tour coaches park.

### **Questions from the public**

The Provost advised that a member of the public had complained that the underpass from The Linn to the industrial estate had no lighting and it needed to be cleaned. SBC Councillor Robson agreed to take this forward.

A member of the public contacted the Provost to advise any housing scheme who were holding a King's Coronation Celebration that Ark Housing Association had chairs and tables that could be borrowed.

### **Kelso Community Larder - Licence to occupy for approval and authorisation to sign**

Councillor Russell advised KCC that the Kelso Community Larder would enter into a licence to occupy the Stuart Room premises at Kelso North and Ednam Parish Church. The Licence to Occupy and all assets and cash balance relating to the Larder would be transferred from KCC to Kelso Community Larder SCIO for zero consideration, as had been planned from the outset. The signing of the Licence to Occupy and subsequent assignation of the Licence to Occupy to Kelso Community Larder SCIO needed to come to KCC for approval. The Provost proposed this and there were no objections from KCC Councillors. The Provost and Councillor Oliver agreed to be the two signatories required for this documentation.

The Provost thanked Councillor Russell for his hard work in arranging the legalities of the premises.

### **Kelso in Bloom**

The Provost advised that KIB were currently looking at plants for the flower beds in The Linn and other areas in the town. The next litterpick will be Thursday 20th April at 6.00pm, meeting in The Square.

### **Tweed Valley Railway Campaign and KCC Railway Committee**

The report (appended to the Minutes) had been circulated and there were no comments.

### **Scottish Borders Community Council Network**

Councillor McGrath agreed to submit a report for the next KCC meeting.

### **Provost Report**

- Coronation of HM King Charles III - The Provost advised that it has been extended to members of the public within their own housing estates to organise their own celebrations. Councillors discussed the possibility of watching the coronation on big screens. Councillor McGrath agreed to speak to the Race course. SBC Councillor Weatherston commented that it would be a shame not to use the £500 allocated grant to commemorate the Coronation. Councillor Roberts advised that The Wednesday Lunch Club at the Tait Hall could possibly do something to celebrate the Coronation.
- Time capsule - The Provost advised that SBC would lift the time capsule on Friday 28 April and it would be taken inside the town hall where members of the public would be able to examine its contents.
- Complaints Procedure - With regards to a complaint from a member of the public, the Provost advised that any Councillor carrying out work or meetings, on behalf of KCC should inform the Provost, Councillor Boulton and/or Sharon Johnston (Secretary) before work commences or meeting is held. He reminded all Councillors to refer to the Community Councillors Code of Conduct. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised that KCC Councillors should “declare an interest” if the need was to arise.

Councillor Hamilton asked if KCC should have a complaints procedure in place. The Provost agreed that there should be and advised that the third sector interface, Borders Community Action (into which The Bridge had been amalgamated) would be able to assist in producing one for KCC.

### **Secretary’s Report**

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

The Environmental Policy had been circulated and KCC Councillors were all in agreement to adopt this policy for another year, unamended. There being no objections, the Environmental Policy was adopted, unchanged.

### **Consultations**

There were no consultations.

### **Walking Festival 2023**

The Walking Festival Report had been circulated (appended to these minutes) and Councillor Redgrave advised that the Walking Festival website was now up and running.

Councillor Roberts advised that there had been some comments from the public regarding the lack of facilities for campers and caravans. Councillor Russell reported that the use of the Racecourse car park for up to 10 spots had been agreed, however, there are no toilet and shower facilities, so this would only be suitable for motorhomes. The Provost asked if anyone had approached any other businesses to provide a site/field for campers/caravans for the duration of the walking festival. Councillor Russell agreed to look into whether Springwood Holiday Park may have some spaces.

The Privacy Policy and Terms and Conditions for the festival were tabled and no objections were raised. Policy adopted.

Councillor Redgrave thanked SBC Councillors for agreeing to fund the advertising panels on the Heras fencing on Bridge Street for the festival.

Councillor Redgrave asked if there was any funding available for the civic ceremony to cover the cost of catering and SBC Councilor Weatherston agreed to ask the Convenor if this would be possible.

### **Scottish Borders Council Report**

SBC Councillor Euan Robson reported on several items of concern to the Community Council that had been raised at recent meetings.

Retaining Wall - SBC Councillor Robson advised that the retaining wall on Pipewell Brae did in fact belong to the SBC and that he had asked that an inspection be carried out on the wall. There would be a report in due course.

Graffiti - The police are now involved in looking for those responsible for the graffiti on the Woodmarket and Horsemarket bus shelters and have asked if anyone has any names or leads to please contact them.

Parking – SBC Councillor Robson advised that the Knowes car parking spaces would be widened from 2.4m to 2.6m and because of this nine car parking spaces would be lost. KCC Councillors agreed to lose these nine spaces as it would make the remaining spaces more usable. SBC Councillor Robson advised that the carpPark would need to be shut for one week to enable the changes to be put in place. He asked KCC to think about what week would be better. There was a general consensus that the October school holiday, when there is often a reduction in use of the car park, would be a good time.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised KCC that they, along with SBC, would need to look at potential parking in the town considering the new houses that have been built and the potential for new buildings in the next few years. Councillor Roberts suggested that public transport should also be looked at for the same reason. Councillor Russell asked who is responsible for making the decision as to how many houses are to be built. SBC Councillor Weatherston replied that the Scottish Government has targets that SBC have to hit for building new housing, but that developer take-up is concentrated in certain towns, mainly Kelso, Peebles and Melrose/Galashiels, which means that these settlements take a disproportionate number of new houses compared with other settlements in the Scottish Borders.

SBC Councillor Robson advised that cars were parking on the paths at the High School. The Provost advised that he had contacted Police Scotland about this matter and that they would look into this.

Shedden Park Toilets – SBC Councillor Weatherston advised KCC that the toilets in Shedden Park are to be re-opened. KCC welcomed this.

20 MPH sign Hunter's Bridge – the speed limit sign between Hunter Bridge and the Shedden Park / Rosebank Cemetery roundabout is located very close to the roundabout. The possibility of moving this further away from the roundabout is still under investigation.

Conservation Area Planning Permission - SBC Robson advised that there had been a number of complaints about noncompliance with planning regulations in Conservation Areas. He advised that he would circulate a report and Q&A documents to KCC with regards to planning permission regulation in a Conservation Area. Councillor Hamilton suggested that letting agents in the town could inform customers about the regulations. The Provost also suggested a letter be sent out to all businesses with their domestic rates informing them of the planning regulations.

### **Consideration of Licensing applications**

There were no considerations of licensing applications.

### **Consideration of planning applications**

There were no considerations of planning applications.

### **Any other business**

The Provost advised the Borders Art Fair at the Borders Event Centre between 17 - 19 March had been well attended.

The Provost thanked Councillor Roberts for attending the U3A meeting for the planting of the hedging at the Community orchard.

The next Kelso Community Council AGM and meeting will be held on Tuesday 09 May 2023.