

Minute of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held on Tuesday 13 February 2024 at 7:00 in Kelso Town Hall



**PRESENT:** Gavin Horsburgh (Provost), Councillors James Boulton, Shirley Redgrave, Peter Cooper, Paul Roberts, Colin McGrath, Gail Watson, James McCombie and Toni Oliver; Claire Fletcher (Visit Kelso); Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson, Tom Weatherston and Simon Mountford and Yvonne Oliver (Secretary)

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Christine Hamilton and Owen Adams

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Beth Landon, Borders Community Action; Members of the Public.

- *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 everyone to the meeting.

### **Police Matters**

The February MMWR had previously been circulated. There was no Police Scotland representative in attendance.

Councillor S Redgrave expressed her concern at the amount of anti-social behaviour occurring recently in Roxburgh Street, Kelso. A terrified resident had tried to contact Police Scotland by phoning 101 but no-one picked up the call. The Provost suggested that, should this happen again, the number to be used should be 999.

The Provost advised the meeting that three under-16s had been arrested and charged in connection with the recent damage to the lights on the Rennie Bridge, Kelso.

### **Visit Kelso**

Claire Fletcher, representing Visit Kelso, advised the meeting that Visit Kelso had held a brainstorming meeting on 20 March 2024 at which it had been decided to work on a 2-year plan. This would involve looking at what is taking place in Kelso over the next 2 years and, hopefully, capitalising on events. Rachel Thomson (Hume's Outfitters) had taken over the development of the Visit Kelso website.

Claire also advised that planning for Christmas 2024 was well underway. An application for financial funding had been submitted to Charity Begins At Home and, if successful, any award received would go towards provision of hanging baskets and also for assistance with Christmas events.

The Provost informed the meeting that he had recently been in Jedburgh and noticed 2 large tour buses stopped in the town from a company called Alpha Tours. He asked what their itinerary was and was advised that they were going on to Melrose, staying overnight at Selkirk and then coming to Kelso. He said it was quite promising that tour companies are now looking at Kelso as a tourist destination. It was noted that buses can now easily park in The Knowes.

Councillor Paul Roberts said he had attended the very interesting presentation given by Yvonne Gilroy, on the subject of shoplifting and security.

### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no Declarations of Interest.

### **Attendance by Beth Landon – Borders Community Action** (formerly “The Bridge)

Beth advised members that she was responsible for the Berwickshire and Cheviot area for community-led planning (formerly known as PlaceMaking). In 2019, the Planning Act introduced Local Place Plans which would influence the Local Development Plan in the Borders.

Beth suggested that a Steering Group be set up with a view to drawing up aspirations for the area and that there was funding available. Councillor James Boulton asked Beth how long she expected the process to take and she thought perhaps in the region of 12-18 months. The Provost replied that he had already set up a small Sub-Group but the present Community Council only had about 18 months left in office. He asked whether it was worth starting anything just now or wait until the next Community Council was in place? Councillor Boulton felt that the present Community Council should be the catalyst and how large did Beth think the Steering Group should be? Beth felt that 12 would be quite a good number. She said the way forward was to invite interested parties initially and then agree who would be doing what. Councillor Redgrave asked if there was such a thing available as an “Idiot's Guide” to the process. Beth said she had indeed produced such a document that very week and would forward it to the Community Council for distribution. Beth also said she was available to help from the outset.

## **Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 January 2024**

The Minute of meeting of Tuesday 13 February 2024 had been circulated and was approved. The Minute was proposed by Councillor Gail Watson and seconded by Councillor Toni Oliver.

### **Matters arising from the Minute**

Councillor Redgrave advised the meeting that she had submitted an application for an award from Charity Begins At Home for the purpose of replacing window boxes around the town.

### **Questions From The Public**

- (1) Ms E Hull, the lady who had very kindly taken it upon herself to plant flowers in the area outside Kelso Police Station, was in attendance and addressed the meeting. She advised that she had moved to Kelso about six months ago and she absolutely loves gardening. She said that the area outside the Police Station had been needing attention for a very long time.

Ms Hull also said that she felt that Kelso, with all its connections to horses, should have a horse as a piece of civic architecture. She felt that the area outside the Police Station was ideal and that an Information Board could also be put in place. The Provost agreed that this was a great idea. He would make enquiries and report back to the next Community Council meeting.

- (2) Ms Rose Hogg, (Bluemill Studios) the proprietor of what used to be the Trinity Church, advised that there had been a huge upsurge in anti-social behaviour in Bowmont Street, Kelso. The Provost said that a huge problem was that there was very little in the town for youngsters to become involved in, unless they were interested in sport. There was nothing much for 13-16 year olds. He would love to see the introduction of a "dry bar" for them but this obviously needed suitable accommodation and money to operate such a venture. He said that the High School worked very well with the Police but the problem was that Police resources were always stressed.

A comment was made about the White Swan hoping to re-open with the brewers wanting it to be a "wet-led" pub, i.e. more alcohol being sold than food. This being similar to how the White Swan operated previously.

### **Kelso in Bloom**

The Provost advised that a meeting of Kelso in Bloom had been held and everything was very positive. Work would begin on the Bridgend Island and it was noted that the beds at The Linn required weeding so volunteers were required for that. The watering of the flower beds had been organised. Ms Hull had already indicated her

wish to join Kelso in Bloom and the Provost was delighted to welcome her and would mention this to the rest of the Kelso In Bloom committee.

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

Councillor Colin McGrath advised that the Working Party Report on Community Planning and Empowerment, due to be published on 11 March 2024 had now been put back to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and this would likely be online via Microsoft Teams.

Colin expressed his disappointment that the Scottish Borders Planning Officers had not turned up at the last Community Council meeting, when the Starbucks application was being discussed, despite being invited by the Provost. The Provost also advised that, on any occasion when he had written to the Planners, he had not received a reply. SBC Simon Mountford asked the Provost if, in future, he would copy him into any e-mails being sent to the Planning Department. The Provost agreed to do this.

### **Provost Report**

The Provost advised he had been very busy trying to get the work of the Community Council publicised. He had made up folders with past Minutes and Agendas of CC meetings and placed a set at the bottom of the stairs in Kelso Town Hall, as well as a set being placed in Kelso Library. He had also received permission from Sainsbury's to put an Agenda and papers for forthcoming CC meetings on their Noticeboard.

The Provost has also worked on creating a website for the CC. [www.kelsocommunitycouncil.co.uk](http://www.kelsocommunitycouncil.co.uk) has been purchased with the permission of the Community Council and is now live.

### **Secretary's Report**

#### **Events/Correspondence**

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

Mr J Thom, Chairman of the Kelso Laddies Association, had extended an invitation to all members of the Community Council who wished to attend the Installation of the 2024 Kelso Laddie on 19 April 2024. Yvonne would reply to this invitation with the names of those Councillors who had expressed a wish to attend.

### **Consultations**

There were no new consultations at this time.

### **Scottish Borders Council Report**

(a) Rennie Bridge Lamps

SBC Euan Robson advised the meeting that there would be significant cost to replace the lamps which had recently been damaged by vandalism. Councillor Gail Watson asked if it were possible for the people who had caused the damage to be made to pay for the replacements but the Provost advised this would be up to the Judge who heard the case.

(b) Parking in Kelso Square

The Provost asked when the next full Council meeting was being held and was advised that this would take place on the last Thursday in March. He said he had written to the full Council asking an open question regarding the parking situation in Kelso Square. SBC Tom Weatherston said that Kelso was losing a number of visitors due to there not being enough suitable accommodation and definitely not enough parking.

(c) Property in Bowmont Street

SBC T Weatherston advised that pressure was being put on the owner of the property in Bowmont Street (which had been under renovation for a considerable time) to attend a meeting of the Community Council. As the outside works would appear to have been completed and the compound area in Union Street was still being used to house equipment, instead of being able to be reopened.

SBC S Mountford advised there was a report going to the next full Council meeting detailing all existing vacant Council properties and whether these can be sold.

(d) Lights in Kelso Square

SBC E Robson advised he had no further update regarding the lighting situation in Kelso Square.

(e) Rosebank Cemetery

Councillor Toni Oliver asked if it was possible to put hardcore on the path at Rosebank Cemetery. SBC E Robson replied in the affirmative saying that the path between the old and new sections of the cemetery also needed attention due to flooding issues.

(f) Local Bus Service

Councillor Toni Oliver advised she had been approached by a member of the public, complaining about the Galashiels to Kelso bus service. The lady had to change buses at Milestone, St Boswells and had been left standing in the dark, waiting on the connecting bus. Councillor Robson said he knew of this and it was very unfortunate but it was due to there not being enough demand for the bus. Since Covid, paying passengers were down 60%. He asked if the Community Council could collect examples of people who would use a direct

service to Edinburgh. The Provost agreed to write to Rachael Hamilton, MSP for Ettrick, Roxburgh and Berwickshire.

Councillor P Roberts advised that the Pingu Service, trialled in Berwickshire, had been very useful but very expensive. SBC Robson advised that the Pingu Service costs £320,000 per annum.

(g) Street Lighting

Councillor Gail Watson advised that some of the street lights in Kelso were still being left on all day. SBC Robson advised that he knew this and Scottish Power had been made aware of the situation.

(h) Bus Shelters

The Provost asked if there was any update regarding painting the bus shelters. SBC Robson said he thought this had been resolved and would follow it up and report back to the next CC meeting.

(i) Steps at Dentist's in Horsemarket

Councillor Toni Oliver reported that the steps at the Dentist's premises in Horsemarket were crumbling away and were dangerous. SBC T Weatherston advised he would follow this up.

**Consideration of Licensing applications**

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

**Consideration of Plans**

24/00196/LBC – Internal refurbishment to public house – 7 Woodmarket, Kelso, Scottish Borders, TD5 7AT – **No objections**

24/00234/FUL – James Stewart & Son – Solar Panel – **No objections**

**Any other business**

There was no other business at this time.

**Date of next meeting**

The next Kelso Community Council meeting will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 9 April 2024 at the Town Hall, Kelso.

KELSO COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE/EVENTS/CONSULTATIONS – FEB / MAR 24		
Date	Event/Correspondence	Venue and comments
13.02.24	News Release: Council Tax freeze set to be agreed	For information
14.02.24	Our Transmission Net Zero Fund is open for applications!	For information
	<b>Draft Council Plan 2024</b>	<b>Comments by 19 February 2024</b>
	News Release: Council confirms Tour O The Borders can take place on closed roads in 2025	For information
19.02.24	FW: Improving the Cancer Journey - consultation	Comments by 31 March 2024
	Ice hockey at Border Ice Rink	For information
	FW: News release: Public Protection Committee supports Adult Support and Protection Day	For information
	Alzheimer Scotland, What's On Guide - March 2024	For information
21.02.24	FW: News release: Feedback published on shared access routes consultation	For information
	Road closure - B6364 Hume to Greenlaw - 4th March 2024	For information
22.02.24	FW: News release: Feedback published on shared access routes consultation	For information
	Amended Alzheimer Scotland What's On Guide - March	For information
	Community-led planning update	For information
	News Release: Drop-in event to be held as coastal change consultation set to open	For information
23.02.24	News Release: New Councillor elected to represent Jedburgh and District Ward	For information
	<b>Community Council Consultation for Planning Application 24/00196/LBC – Internal refurbishment to public house – 7 Woodmarket, Kelso, Scottish Borders, TD5 7AT</b>	<b>Comments by 22 March 2024</b>
29.02.24	Cross-party financial plan agreed by Councillors	For Information
	Scottish Borders Community Council Insurance Renewal 2024	For Information
01.03.24	<b>Community Council Consultation for application 24/00234/FUL - James Stewart &amp; Son - Solar Panel</b>	<b>Comments By 29th March 2024</b>
05.03.24	Road closure - Halliden Road, Kelso - 25th March 2024	For information
	Road Closure - D76-5 Hassington West Mains, Stichill - 24th April 2024	For information

06.03.24	Independent Research: Scottish Borders Council/Events	For information
	Upcoming event - Kelso Library Contact Centre	For information
07.03.24	Border Union Schools Countryside Day 21st May 2024	For information
	Kelso & District MMWR - February [OFFICIAL]	For information
08.03.24	[OFFICIAL] Kelso RFC - No Waiting - 30th March 2024	For information
	[OFFICIAL] Kelso RFC - No Waiting - 30th March 2024 (amended)	For information
10.03.24	INVITE TO COMMUNITY COUNCIL TO DECLARATION NIGHT	For information
11.03.24	Re: Community Council Stakeholder Event	For information
	[OFFICIAL] News Release: Artist appointed to deliver Hawick CARS legacy project	For information
	Fundraising event 28th March for Alzheimer's Scotland	For information