

Minute of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 at 7:00 in Kelso Town Hall



PRESENT: Gavin Horsburgh (Provost), Councillors Christine Hamilton, Shirley Redgrave, Peter Cooper, Paul Roberts, Colin McGrath, Gail Watson, James McCombie and Owen Adams; Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson, Tom Weatherston and Simon Mountford; Mags Clark (Visit Kelso) and Yvonne Oliver (Secretary)

IN ATTENDANCE: PC Gary Chisholm, Police Scotland

APOLOGIES: Councillors Toni Oliver and James Boulton

- *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 Police Report for November 2023 had been circulated. PC Gary Chisholm was in attendance at the meeting.

Roxburgh Street – Speed

Councillor Paul Roberts welcomed the fact that ‘Pop-Up Bob’ had been utilised and thanked Police Scotland on behalf of the local residents. PC Chisholm advised that this was thanks to PC Owenson. PC Owenson has also been trained using speed equipment and will be able to carry out patrols when available. He also advised that a few drivers had recently been stopped in the Borders due to speeding (although very few in Kelso) and issued with a warning. It was noted that the offence of “drugs driving” was increasing and was a major concern to Police Scotland.

Pavement Parking

It was noted that the offence of Pavement Parking was being introduced but this would be enforced by local authorities, not Police Scotland. It was not known when the Scottish Borders Council would bring this into effect or what the level of fine would be. Provost Horsburgh advised that SBC had recently sent out a survey in this regard to which Kelso Community Council had responded – KCC had commented on the issue of parking outside the local schools. The Provost had also discussed this with Sergeant Granger.

Councillor Colin McGrath asked PC Chisholm if there was always a police presence at Kelso Races but PC Chisholm advised this only occurred if it was a particularly large meeting, e.g. Ladies Day. The Provost advised that this would be between Kelso Racecourse and Police Scotland.

PC CHISHOLM LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

Visit Kelso

Mags Clark, Visit Kelso, advised the meeting Visit Kelso was again running their Xmas campaign, which included the “Advent Calendar” competition, and this was proving very popular. There would also be an afternoon of fun in Kelso Square on Sunday 17 December, when Santa Claus would be putting in an appearance.

She also advised that several shopkeepers had expressed concern at the low footfall at the moment. The shops are still quiet, even with the run-up to Christmas. She requested that, should anyone have any ideas on how to promote business, they get in touch with Visit Kelso.

The Provost expressed dismay that Dessert Diva had intimated that they may have to close their shop due to low sales, although they would still carry on with their on-line business. He encouraged the use of Gift Vouchers which many of the local shops now issued and these could be used at any time, not just at Christmas. He also said how disappointed he was that the local Fish Shop was closing down as was J H Hume, Painters. The good news was that Humes Ladies Outfitters was taking over the Painters and Decorators’ premises and a tenant had also been secured for the Ladies Outfitters’ premises at Horsemarket.

Following the closure of D Welsh’s shops, tenants had also been found for both premises. Mags Clark said it was encouraging to see new business ventures but was disappointed that turnover was poor. The Provost suggested a social media campaign along the lines of “Use Us or Lose Us”. Mags said Visit Scotland was intending to promote “Staycations” in January.

Councillor Roberts commented that it was disappointing to see that some people were not bothering to cancel appointments (hairdressing, etc) and using the lack of car parking as an excuse. It was well-known that parking spaces were at a premium, particularly at this time of year.

Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 14 November 2023

The Minute of meeting of Tuesday 14 November 2023 had been circulated and approved. The Minute was proposed by Councillor Gail Watson and seconded by Councillor Owen Adams.

Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Questions From The Public

There were no questions from the public.

Kelso in Bloom

The Provost advised that a very well-attended 'Meet and Greet' had been held in the Town Hall on 17 November to thank members and volunteers from Kelso in Bloom for all their hard work. He also said that volunteers were always required and, in particular, someone was needed to water the plants. Mags Clark suggested asking Lloyds, Kelso or another local firm if they would be prepared to provide this service.

It was noted that the new trees in The Square had received positive feedback and thankfully had not been subject to vandalism.

Placeplan – Cheviot Place Making Working Group

Scottish Borders Councillor Simon Mountford advised the meeting that Scottish Borders Councillors had recently been given a presentation on the PlacePlan prepared by Stranraer. SBC had asked for guidance to be prepared to show Councillors how to go about preparing a local Placeplan. Councillor Christine Hamilton was engaged in a lot of work behind the scenes.

Scottish Borders Councillor Tom Weatherston advised that those who have a ready-made PlacePlan are receiving money towards implementation.

Scottish Borders Community Council Network

Councillor Colin McGrath advised the meeting he had been away for three weeks but would provide an update on the SBCCN prior to the next Community Council meeting.

Provost Report

Christmas Tree – Kelso Square

The Provost asked the Scottish Borders Councillors to convey his thanks to SBC for replacing the original small Christmas Tree. He said that, whilst it had been a beautiful tree, it was just too small for Kelso Square. It had however, been put to good use, having been donated to the Morebattle community.

CCTV Town Hall

The Provost advised the meeting that the newly installed CCTV camera was proving to be of very good quality and he was looking at installing another two. Police Scotland were fully aware of the camera and had no objections, provided they adhered to the guidance.

It was noted that there had been an incident whereby two men had been seen climbing the Christmas tree. It was thought that they had not been local but had probably been attending Kelso Races that were cancelled. No long-term damage had been done.

The Provost had attended the “Over-60’s” Christmas Lunch in Ednam House which he had thoroughly enjoyed. He encouraged anyone over the age of 60 to get involved with this Group. He had also attended a Pensioners Christmas Lunch in Kelso Rugby Club which, again, had been very good.

The Community Council all agreed that the wall at the end of Bridge Street was looking great. The Provost thanked all those involved with its restoration.

The Kelso Christmas Lights Switch-on had been a great success and the Provost thanked Councillor Toni Oliver and the Christmas Lights Committee for all their hard work.

With regards to the installation of the loop system in the Town Hall, the Provost had spoken to Lauren Miller, of Property, SBC who said she would look into this. There were also another couple of issues (gutters,etc) which needed to be looked at. SBC Councillor Euan Robson said he would speak to the Estates Department regarding these matters.

The Provost reminded the Committee that he and Councillor Paul Roberts were part of the Resilience Group which, although still in existence, had not been called upon since COVID. He felt it was time to check up on their equipment. Springwood Village had recently started their own Resilience Group and had requested a venue to go to, should the need arise. The Provost said he would speak to the President (Neil Hastie) at Kelso Rugby Club in this regard.

Secretary’s Report

Events/Correspondence

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

Application for Paths Grant

Councillor Shirley Redgrave advised that an application for a Paths Grant of £450 had been applied for and should be successful. It was noted that this was being increased to £600 in 2024.

Councillor Redgrave also advised that the Community Council was being charged £61.60 for Public Liability Insurance. She was going to check if this was in order as the Community Council had been advised they would no longer be required to pay for insurance.

Application for Annual Grant

The application for Annual Grant had been submitted.

Consultations

The Provost advised members that the Scottish Borders Community Council Scheme had been circulated and he suggested that a Sub-Group be set up to go through the various items and provide feedback. He would like a meeting perhaps in the second week of January to discuss the way forward.

Walking Festival 2023

Councillor Shirley Redgrave advised the meeting that she had repaid £500 to Kelso Community Council and she would also return the grant of £1,000 which had been kindly donated by Charity Begins at Home. She was looking for suggestions from CC members as to the amount they thought should be donated to the Borders Search and Rescue Team, who had provided a first-class service during the Walking Festival. The Provost would make enquiries in this regard.

Scottish Borders Council Report

(a) Bus Shelters – Horsemarket/Woodmarket Painting

SBC Councillor Robson advised that SBC was unsure as to what paint to use – he was waiting on a reply.

Street Lighting – it was noted there were a great many problems with regard to street lights either not working, or being left on all day. This was not always SBC's concern but, in most instances, it was the remit of Scottish Power. Councillor Robson said this was not just a problem in Kelso but all over the Borders and it seemed to be a problem to engage contractors.

Knowes Car Park – it was good to see that work was ongoing with the surface in the Knowes Car Park which was very helpful and a painted box section would be installed to prevent parking outwith bays.

(b) Signage Traffic from Poynder Apartments/Orchard Park

SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston advised he would circulate an e-mail he had received from Scottish Borders Council in this regard. There was to be no signage put in place at this time as discussions were continuing.

(c) Vandalism in Public Toilets

It was generally agreed that it was a good idea to have ceased charging for the use of the public toilets – the machines were repeatedly being vandalised.

(d) Ednam Road – Yellow ZigZag Lines

SBC Councillor Euan Robson advised that SBC Officers have investigated the parking along from Broomlands Primary School and will report on their findings and recommendations in due course.

(e) Grovehill Parking

The Council was advised that there was a resistance from local residents to install yellow lines – if these were in place, where would they park?

(f) Pavement Outside Crabtree and Crabtree

The Provost asked SBC Councillor E Robson if he had raised this issue with Scottish Borders Council. Councillor Robson said he had been advised that it was Scottish Water's responsibility.

Mags Clark said there had been a lot of rain recently and the drainage was just not "fit for purpose". However, the Provost replied that, during a very interesting visit to the Water Treatment Plant, visitors were advised there was no concern about the size of the existing plant and that it could cope with more infrastructure.

Consideration of Licensing applications

There were no licensing applications for consideration.

Consideration of planning applications

23/01732/LBC – Replace glazing to existing windows – 9 Abbey Row, Kelso, Scottish Borders, TD5 7JF – The Provost to ask for more information regarding a previous application.

Any other business

(a) 900 Year Anniversary – Kelso Abbey – SBC Councillor E Robson

SB Councillor E Robson would bring a report on this matter to the next meeting of the Community Council.

(b) Proposed New National Park

SBC Councillor Simon Mountford advising the meeting that there was a paper coming to the full Council that week regarding the proposed bid for a National Park. There were nine bids from across Scotland. It had been suggested that Scottish Borders Council should merge with Dumfries and Galloway Council for their bid but this had not met with agreement. A decision would be made on Thursday.

(c) KADAS – Dean Weatherston

The Provost advised the meeting that the KADAS was disbanding and he had been asked by Dean Weatherson whether Kelso Community Council would consider sending interested members of the Heritage Society any emails received from Scottish Borders Council regarding existing and future planning applications. The Community Council unanimously refused this request and The Provost suggested that as any member of the public can comment on Planning Applications, or that The Heritage Society contact SBC Planning and request their group to comment / move from KADAS to THS.

(d) Councillor Christine Hamilton

Councillor Hamilton announced to Kelso Community Council that due to personal issues, she will be taking a step back from the council, however she will still be available outside of meetings and give her feedback when she can.

Date of next meeting

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

DRAFT

KELSO COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE/EVENTS/CONSULTATIONS – NOV/DEC 23		
Date	Event/Correspondence	Venue and comments
23.11.23	[OFFICIAL] Joint News Release: Sport, leisure and culture recommendations agreed by Council	For information
24.11.23	[OFFICIAL] News Release: Chancellor's announcement of £20m for Borders welcomed	For information
24.11.23	[OFFICIAL] FW: Postponement of Enhancement Group/In Bloom Group Networking Session	For information
N29.11.23	[OFFICIAL] Road Closure - C58 Lempitlaw, Kelso - 11th December 2023	For information
30.11.23	[OFFICIAL] News Release: Annual Council budget survey launched as cross-party group seeks input of Borderers	For information
04.12.23	Housing Support Service acknowledged as 'very good' by Care Inspectorate	For information
04.12.23	[OFFICIAL] Subject: Budget and Council Plan survey launched	For information
05.12.23	[OFFICIAL] Road Closure - Berry Moss Court, Kelso - 8th January 2024	For information
05.12.23	[OFFICIAL] News Release: Study finds multi-million pound local economic impact from Cycling World Championships	For information
06.12.23	23/01732/LBC Replace glazing to existing windows 9 Abbey Row Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7JF	Comments by 12th Jan
07.12.23	Consultation: South of Scotland Regional Land Use Framework	For information
07.12.23	[OFFICIAL] News Release: National park proposal to be discussed	For information
11.12.23	OFFICIAL] FW: SCOTTISH BORDERS PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN: INTENTION TO ADOPT	For Information