

Minute of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held on Tuesday 10 September 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, Owen Adams and Toni Oliver; Claire Fletcher (Visit Kelso); Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson and Tom Weatherston and Yvonne Oliver (Secretary)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Christine Hamilton and James McCombie; Scottish Borders 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 those present and trust everyone had a good summer.

Police Matters

The August MMWR had been received at approximately 4.30pm on the day of the Community Council meeting and had been circulated. There was no Police Scotland representative in attendance.

The Provost advised there had been arrests made in connection with the graffiti at Shedden Park but he expressed concern at the number of anti-social incidents occurring at Brisbane Place/Jamieson Court.

James Boulton said he had heard reports about a dog being stolen in Kelso but, although the Provost had also heard this, there was no confirmation.

Paul Roberts commented on the fact that, although there had been 49 traffic offence tickets issued in the Scottish Borders, there was no breakdown of how many tickets

had been issued in the Kelso area. He told the meeting that he had recently made the Police aware of a dangerous parking situation outside Kelso Public Library where a total of 9 work vans had been parked. The Officers concerned told Councillor Roberts that the men were simply doing their job and although Paul advised the Police that the vans were parked on double yellow lines, the Police said they had no parking tickets with them. Councillor Roberts expressed his extreme disappointment at the attitude of the Officers involved.

Visit Kelso

Claire Fletcher, representing Visit Kelso, advised members of the following:

- (1) Kelso had been nominated as one of the “Best Dog-Friendly Tourist Destinations”. She told members they could vote on-line and Visit Kelso encouraged everyone to do this;
- (2) Visit Kelso had received excellent feedback from locals and visitors on the recent Tour of Britain event;
- (3) The hanging baskets, which had been kept up longer this year due to the Tour of Britain stage in Kelso, would be coming down at the end of September. The Provost advised that one or two would perhaps have to remain owing to the fact that there were pigeon chicks in them;
- (4) Visit Kelso was delighted that some of the cruise ships were now incorporating a day trip to Floors Castle, and the cruise passengers were coming into the town centre, looking for somewhere to eat. However, local businesses were completely unaware of when these visitors would be arriving. The Provost advised that the Community Council has a good working relationship with Floors and, indeed, there was a member of staff at Floors who engage with Visit Kelso. Councillor Roberts suggested that Visit Kelso e-mail the cruise lines and ask for a copy of their itineraries;
- (5) The Annual General Meeting of Visit Kelso would be held on Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 5.30pm. The venue was the Registrar’s Office at Kelso Town Hall and new members were always welcome.

Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

Minute of the meeting held on Tuesday 11 June 2024

The Minute of meeting of Tuesday 11 June 2024 had been circulated and was approved. The Minute was proposed by Councillor Shirley Redgrave and seconded by Councillor Paul Roberts.

Matters arising from the Minute

- Yetholm/Morebattle Bus Service (new timetable from 1 September 2024)

The Provost advised that, whilst a provisional timetable had been introduced from 1 September 2024, it would be finalised in October. It was also noted that, although The Linn had been taken off the timetable for the buses to and from Sprouston, the buses were still stopping and picking up at The Linn. This had simply been an error on the timetable and would be corrected. This was also the case with the Town Bus which would still be dropping off and picking up at Angraflats Road.

Questions From The Public

- (1) The Provost advised the meeting that he had been asked by a member of the public why the new sign for “Kelso”, on the road into the town from the Teviot Bridge, was blue whilst all the other signs were black and white? The Provost replied that it was probably because Kelso’s festival colours were blue and white. Scottish Borders Councillors Robson and Weatherston agreed with this.
- (2) The Provost said there was still no street sign for Union Street in Kelso and Councillor Robson replied that this was being attended to with a replacement sign due to be put in place.
- (3) Councillor Toni Oliver said she had received various complaints about the state of the road from the entrance to the Primary School at Broomlands to where she lives at Thomson View. She said she herself had to be very careful whilst driving to avoid the numerous potholes. She felt it was ironic that the road from Thomson View to Ednam had been completely resurfaced when she felt that it had not been nearly as bad as the Broomlands Road. Councillor Robson said the road to Ednam had been the subject of numerous complaints and that was why it had been repaired. This road will be looked at and addressed in future financial years.
- (4) Councillor Colin McGrath raised the issue of cars speeding on the Nenthorn Road, outside the stables, advising that he felt it was very dangerous and he was concerned that someone would be killed (as there had been a horse killed there a few years previously, which managed to escape from Kelso Racecourse). Councillor Tom Weatherston agreed with him but said that there had been speed checks and surveys done in the past and the Council agreed that no action required to be taken. The Provost advised that this would lie in the jurisdiction of Floors, Makerstoun, Nenthorn & Smailholm Community Council.

Kelso in Bloom

- Greener Gateway

The Provost advised that there had been quite a lot of activity over the summer with plants being updated and some areas being replanted. Kelso In Bloom had taken over the centre bed of Bridgend Triangle and he thanked those for all their hard work. The judges for the Greener Gateway Competition (Town Award) had recently been in Kelso and it was noted that it was only Kelso and Jedburgh who had entered for this category. It had greatly helped that there

had been a litter-pick the evening prior to the judging and, again, he thanked all the volunteers who had helped with this.

Scottish Borders Community Council Network

The Provost advised that, although there had been a meeting of the Community-Led Planning Group in May/June, no further progress had been made. He had made contact with some Community Groups.

Colin McGrath said that funding for the Border Community Action Group had been stopped but the Provost said that he had read recently they have now received a quite considerable sum so hopefully funding to assist with be available.

Provost Report

- **Diary**

The Provost advised that it had been a very busy summer and Kelso Civic Week had gone extremely well. He thanked James Boulton for attending the Border Union Show on behalf of the Community Council.

The Community Council had been invited to an open evening at Ednam House Hotel to meet the new Manager. It was his intention to rebrand the hotel. The general feedback had been that the hotel required a lot of work and the general consensus was always felt more staff were required when there are functions on.

The Provost had also attended the Kelso High School Achievement Awards event. He said it was extremely encouraging to see how many straight-A and straight-B students there were this year. More often there is a focus on those who engage in disruption around the town – and the attention should be on those students who do well and are a credit to the School and the Town.

- **Provost's Community Award**

The Provost asked members if they were still happy to go ahead with this idea? There was general agreement but it was felt that it should perhaps be put on hold until 2025. The Provost suggested that the Award could be made during the Christmas Lights Switch-on and Toni Oliver (Chair of the Kelso Christmas Lights Committee) advised that he would need to attend a meeting of the Committee to put forward his suggestion.

James Boulton asked the Provost if he intended there to be one or two awards. The Provost replied that he would like 2 awards, one of which the recipient could keep. James suggested that a member of the community be asked to design the individual award, thereby making it unique and appropriate to the Town. The Provost wholeheartedly agreed with this proposal.

- **Dog Poo Dispensers**

Members were advised that the dog poo dispensers were being very well used and the Provost had been checking them most Fridays. The figures were as follows:

1 st week	-	339
2 nd week	-	432
3 rd week	-	437
4 th week	-	548

Gail Watson said she had noted on Facebook that the Football Club was still having to pick up dog poo at Woodside Park. The Provost also stated that he was aware of this, however dog walkers are predominantly walking around the marked pitches now.

- TV Display Town Hall

The Provost advised that the TV Display in the Town Hall window was up and working, although it was a work in progress, there is content on the screen and available to give information to visitors and members of the public. It is on from 8am until 8pm daily.

- Tour of Britain

Everyone agreed that starting and finishing the 1st stage of the Tour of Britain in Kelso had been excellent for both the town and the Borders as a whole and, indeed, they would be welcome back in future years if they so wished. Paul said there had been an issue with the disabled car park at the Waggon Inn. The Provost said there was a feedback survey out and any comments should be submitted on that.

- SBC Community Conversations (Kelso)

The Provost had attended an event at Kelso High School, chaired by the Chief Executive of Scottish Borders Council, who gave a speech on the area's continued priorities. It was an open session and feedback was given by those attending. The Chief Executive asked the public's view on an increase in Council Tax taking place this year. The Provost replied that, perhaps if people were told what the increase would be used for, they may be more amenable to accept it. There is around 18% of the budget that is always being squeezed, i.e. Pot Holes, Grass Cutting, Refuse Collections – the areas that members of the public are often more passionate about.

Secretary's Report

Events/Correspondence

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

Shirley Redgrave commented that she had been looking at the "Destination Tweed" website and said she had found it very interesting.

Kelso Brownies – November Meeting

It was noted that an email had been received from the Kelso Brownies, requesting that they be allowed to come along to the November meeting of the KCC (12th November 2024). The purpose of this visit was to ask the KCC members questions on the work they do for the Community Council. The Brownies had asked if they could come along at 6pm and all were in agreement with this proposal.

Consultations

Roxburgh Street Pharmacy proposal

The Provost advised that a letter from the Community Council had been submitted to the applicant, advising they had no objections to this proposal. Councillor T Weatherston said he was not happy with the proposed disabled access and could now see how it would be possible to provide this. There was a copy of a plan circulated on how the alteration of the shop premises would allow access via an internal ramp.

Scottish Borders Council Report

(a) Tait Hall, Kelso

Councillor Weatherston advised the meeting that SBC had agreed the sum of £75,000 be awarded to upgrade the entrance and some rows of seats at the Tait Hall, Kelso.

(b) Taxi Rank Location/Bus Tours

Councillor Toni Oliver advised the meeting that, over the last couple of months, she had witnessed a few tour buses off-loading passengers in The Square and, because of the situation of the Taxi Rank and the tour buses not being allowed to park there, they were putting their passengers in a dangerous situation. The buses were also causing huge congestion and she would like to see the Taxi Rank moved.

Councillor Weatherston said he had never wanted the Taxi Rank there in the first place and felt that it should be moved further down to outside the Black Swan. Toni asked why it couldn't be made multi-functional, i.e. simply used as a pick-up/drop-off point. The Provost felt that it would be positive to move it further down and he also felt that only 3 spaces were required, not 6 which they had at present. The usage of the rank had been considerably reduced since it was first introduced. It was noted that there had to be a very good reason for the Taxi Rank being moved and it was felt that the issue of the tour buses was a valid reason.

(b) Salmon Fishing Museum

The Provost advised the meeting that, unfortunately, the Salmon Fishing Museum was temporarily closed pending investigation. It was considered to be in breach of its tenancy due to it not being permanently manned. The Tweed

Commission were working alongside the trustees to be involved in the running of the Museum but it was noted that it always closed in October for the winter.

(c) A-Frame Advertising Boards

Members were concerned at the number of A-Frame Advertising Boards which were being used and also where they were being situated. It was noted that the Boards were meant to be 1200mm from the edge of the pavement but this was rarely being adhered to.

(d) Rutherford's Micro-Pub

Members raised the issue of the public not being able to get round the corner at Rutherford's Micro-Pub due to patrons taking over the pavement.

(e) SBC Robson advised of the following:

(1) He was still pursuing the issue of uplighters in The Square.

(2) Another lifebuoy had been stolen at Mayfield and they may need to look at moving their position. It may be that another couple of lifebuoy's required to be purchased.

(3) There is a planned meeting of the Heritage Society being held on 23 October 2024 at which Susan Turnbull would be speaking about the upcoming 900th Anniversary of Kelso Abbey. There were proposals to have an "Abbey Week" and all sorts of ideas were being suggested, e.g. seminars, town picnics, etc. Historic Scotland were very interested and lottery applications and community grants would be applied for to help with funding the event.

(4) The "No Swimming" signs at The Cobby and Mayfield were not missing but they were under the water. This would be attended to.

(f) Starbucks Application

SBC Weatherston advised that he hoped to have a decision on the Starbucks Application by the next meeting of the Community Council.

Consideration of Licensing applications

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

Consideration of Plans

There were no new Planning Applications to be considered at this time.

Any other business

- (1) A member asked for an update on what was happening with Kelso Hospital? Councillor Weatherston advised that the NHS had agreed to save it until at least the end of the current financial year.

Date of next meeting

The next Kelso Community Council meeting will be held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 8 October 2024 at the Town Hall, Kelso.