

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held by Zoom on Tuesday 8 June at 7:00pm



PRESENT: Councillors John Bassett, James Boulton, Peter Cooper, Gavin Horsburgh (part), James McCombie (part), Colin McGrath, Paul Robert, Dean Weatherston (Chair) and Scottish Borders Councillors Simon Mountford, Euan Robson and Tom Weatherston.

IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Gus Russell (Secretary KCC Railway Committee), Karen Hume (Visit Kelso), Hazel Woodsell (Kelso Heritage Society) and members of the public Owen Adams and Christine Hamilton.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Ian Brown and Harry Tomczyk and Tina Newton (Visit Kelso).

- *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.*
- *All 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 question through the Chairperson.*

Welcome

The Provost welcomed everyone to the June meeting being held by Zoom and advised attendees the meeting was being recorded.

Visit Kelso

Tina Newton had offered her apologies and Karen Hume attended to give the report.

Karen advised Visit Kelso had held its AGM on Wednesday 19 May via Zoom and was attended by 5 non committee members. It was a very positive meeting as they had achieved a lot over the last 12 months and have plans going forward to keep the name of Kelso in the spotlight.

Karen advised it has been a busy few weeks. The monies for the hanging baskets have been collected and the baskets are being planted up ready for hanging on Friday 11 June.

All in all there will be 76 hanging baskets which is slightly down on 2019 where they had 78 but the Queens Head have not taken their usual 11 so they have actually increased their presence with new locations around town.

Karen advised June is also their membership renewal month so they have been busy contacting their members and collecting the subscriptions 35 out of 120 in the first week.

The big news for this month is the “Bordering on Bootiful” campaign. The boots have been commissioned, the plants purchased and agreement has been given for us to install them in The Square from the 14 June. Flyers have been posted through the businesses in town and an advert has been placed in Kelso Life to encourage both residents and businesses to join the campaign and have fun decorating their old and unloved footwear for the love local, shop local, buy local campaign.

Visit Kelso are running 3 competitions, best photo of the “Static boots” in The Square, best “decorated footwear” on display and a Children’s window event where the type of footwear is noted from participating businesses. Vouchers will be awarded as prizes which can be spent in the local businesses and Visit Kelso will refund the monies to said businesses.

The Provost thanked Karen for attending the meeting and commented all the proposed plans were promising in promoting the town and was looking forward to the hanging baskets going up.

The Provost commented he had noticed there were a lot of the visitors to the town, including young families and he welcomed this and was optimistic Kelso would do well this summer with visitors.

Minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2021

The minutes held on Tuesday 11 May 2021 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor John Bassett and seconded by Councillor Colin McGrath.

Matters arising

Fencing around the old Foundry site – SBC Councillor Weatherston advised SBC officers were trying to contact the owners of the site, which was currently up for sale and it was deemed the fence was not dangerous to the public. He commented that he understood the property has been sold but is between owners and that at this stage neither party is engaging to address the fencing. He advised the local Parks and Environment Foreman is aware of the temporary fencing at the site and he is monitoring it and will undertake any necessary works to keep it in place.

Bike loops – SBC Councillor Robson advised he had spoken to SBC officers and undertaken a site visit and a copy of the preferred locations had been circulated. He advised a café owner had asked cyclists for their preferences and these had formed

the basis of the proposed locations e.g. to be located to the area where they could sit and have lunch. He advised two loops would be placed by the stone on a trial basis and there would still be plenty of room to view the stone. In response to a questions SBC Councillor Robson advised funding for this had been sourced from Sustrans money. Councillor Horsburgh advised there was a cycle hoop in Simon Square and wondered whether this should be moved.

SBC Councillor Robson advised that if the Community Council supported the proposal these would be installed. The Provost commented that it was his understanding that there would be two loops at Tweed Podiatry and two at Greggs.

The Provost and Councillors agreed with the proposal and gave support. The Provost thanked SBC Councillor Robson for his efforts with this project.

Questions from the Public

There were no questions from the public.

Police Matters

The Provost advised Police Scotland were not allowed to join meetings by Zoom and advised the Multi Member Ward Plan for Kelso and District for May 2021 had previously been circulated and if there were any comments or concerns to feedback to ourselves or Police Scotland.

The Provost advised the issues of anti-social behaviour was being addressed and SBC Councillor Mountford was speaking to the CAT team and would share the Community Council's concerns.

The Provost advised there were still issues with illegal parking and the chaos it was causing, particularly on Bridge Street which had recently been grid locked and asked that this be raised again with the Police. SBC Councillor Mountford commented Police patrol the town whenever possible and issue parking tickets. It was noted in the report that the number of tickets issued only reflected those that were not paid on the spot and 14 was not a true reflection of the number of tickets actually issued and from which area. The Provost asked that the issue of illegal parking continued to be raised with the Police.

Councillor Roberts commented the recent break ins at St Andrews Church had not been recorded in the monthly Police report and advised the Police response had been well received by Rev Bob King. Councillor McGrath commented that the Police report appeared generic and recommended they include issues that affect the town. The Provost agreed with this.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised that the CAT team had issued 844 parking tickets last year Borders wide and this was a significant increase on the previous year but didn't have the actual numbers for Kelso.

Kelso in Bloom

Councillor Horsburgh advised the beds had been emptied of old planting and filled with compost, generously donated by Cameron at Crop Services. He advised Kelso Horticultural Society and KIB volunteers would be carrying out the planting the following weekend. Councillor Horsburgh advised Mayfield Garden Centre had confirmed they would be donating and planting up The Square.

Councillor Horsburgh advised a community litter pick had been organised for the following Sunday at 1.00 pm and everyone was welcome.

The Provost commented some of the shop fronts were unkempt with weeds and Karen advised she would put a mention in the next Visit Kelso newsletter asking members to address their frontage, if needed.

Councillor Roberts asked whether we could have access to a pavement cleaner as The Square and some pavements were dirty and in need of a good clean. SBC Councillor Weatherston advised there was one and would ask that The Square be swept once a month. The Provost commented that there was a lot of grit / gravel and he was concerned the concrete around the setts would be eroded.

Councillor Horsburgh highlighted the shoddy state of the bus shelters and asked if they could be cleaned.

Railway Committee

SBC Councillor Robson advised the Railway Committee were concentrating their efforts on completing an application for UK Community Renewal funding. He advised that if they were successful the money would be used on a publicity campaign, a drone flight over the route of the old line to check on any obstacles and land searches in the English part of the old track bed as there are a number of private landowners. He also advised they were updating their contacts and would await the outcome of the grant application.

Secretary's Report

- Correspondence, consultations, planning, traffic regulations etc. had been circulated and captured and a summary would be attached to the minutes.
- Annual grant – the Secretary advised all Councillors have confirmed they would adhere to the Code of Conduct and on this basis she would submit an application for the annual grant.
- Falligo Environmental Fund – shared with Kelso Heritage Society. Hazel Woodsell advised the only area she could think of was Broomland Woods which was owned by the Council. She advised that any application would need a 10% contribution from the proposing organisation and they would need to give careful consideration to this due to their limited funds.
- Destination Tweed consultation – Hazel Woodsell on behalf of the Kelso Heritage Society advised Destination Tweed had contacted them for “cultural” input and what would people do when they stepped off the route and for Kelso – the town trail, Walter Scott trail and the Orchard. The Provost advised it

was important that the Community Council were involved in this project. The Secretary advised she had signed up for updates on this project.

- 20mph survey – the Provost asked Councillors to feed in any additional comments on this consultation

Provost's Report

The Provost advised he had not attended any events.

Scottish Borders Council Community Network (SBCCN)

Councillor McGrath advised there had been no meeting of the SBCCN but the core group would be holding an emergency meeting in the next week or so. He gave the following update –

As background Councillor McGrath advised that some months ago, before the Elections, Shona Haslam (Leader SBC) had asked the SBCCN to write to the Government to obtain a steer on what they mean by Community Empowerment. He had met the new Chief Executive Netta Meadows a few weeks ago and she had asked him to do the same. He advised he was still waiting for a response as the Government had not appointed anyone to be responsible for Communities. He advised he would writing to the Legal and Justice Ministers for their views.

Councillor McGrath advised he had received an email from Shona Smith advising SBC were about to appoint 5 Community Engagement Officers at an annual salary of £30,000 each. In his opinion he felt this was not appropriate until Community Empowerment had been clarified. He also advised SBCCN had analysed nationally how many Councils participated in Community Empowerment and commented only 6 out of 30 did this. Councillor McGrath advised he had asked SBC to delay the appointment of the 5 Community Engagement officers as he felt this was premature and to await the clarity from the Government. Councillor McGrath advised it was important that the public were consulted on issues that affected them and to have a say on such and he and his members of SBCCN were happy to work with the Council once Empowerment had been clarified.

The Provost asked what the remit of the Community Engagement Officers was and SBC Councillor Weatherston advised he had not been briefed on this matter.

Councillor McGrath there had been a recent change with the Area Partnership and Community Fund and the possibility of conflict of interest. In his opinion he advised a conflict of interest came from the Elected Members and not the public and sighted the example in Jedburgh last year which had been documented previously. He commented that there needed to be equal voting rights between the elected members and the public and that this was an ongoing debate to be resolved.

SBC Councillor Weatherston commented he wished to place on record that in the situation Councillor McGrath had mentioned it was the public that couldn't agree and the rules say in that event it was the elected members who had to make a decision.

Kelso Ambulance provision

The Provost had asked for this to be added to the agenda as he had heard rumours there would be no ambulance cover based at Kelso for the night shift and this could have serious consequences.

SBC Councillor Robson advised he had put an urgent question to the full Council last week and his question and response are listed below -

Urgent Question on the Scottish Ambulance Service: Council 27 May 2021

Given the alarming rumours now circulating regarding the Scottish Ambulance Service's 'Demand and Capacity' review being carried out by private sector consultants which is said to cover ambulance stations across the Scottish Borders and in the case of Kelso is alleged to include the loss of a night shift, will the Council request that the Scottish Ambulance Service clarifies its intentions by briefing elected members and consults the general public before making major changes in its provision in the Borders

Reply to Urgent Question from Cllr Robson: Council 27 May 2021

I have been able to obtain an update from the Scottish Ambulance Service. There has been a Scottish Government led demand analysis review of the Scottish Ambulance service throughout Scotland. Following the review a successful business case was submitted resulting in an uplift of staffing for the Ambulance service across Scotland.

The Scottish Borders is one of the area that are receiving additional staff who will be phased in over the next 12 months.

The deployment model in the Borders may be amended slightly in response to the demand analysis to better use the available resource at the highest times of demand, but the main message is this will result in an up lift of staffing for the ambulance service in the Borders and not a reduction. The work has not reached a consultation phase but the Scottish Ambulance Service is happy to discuss this in person with any Councillor who has concerns.

SBC Councillor Robson commented that although this was good news it did not address the shift pattern and that was a key issue. Although it was planned to have 3 shifts based at Kelso during the day but only 1 shift at night he was concerned about the demand in the evening. He commented that he was meeting with the Regional Director and Local Service Director to obtain clarity on how staff would be redeployed and report back.

Councillor Robson raised concerns and advised of an incident that had happened locally when someone needed to go to the BGH as they had been referred by the

local surgery and there were no ambulances available and had to be taken by a friend, which was an unnecessary risk. The Provost advised it was a difficult situation and welcomed SBC Councillor Robson's intervention.

Scottish Borders Council Report

Rosebank Cemetery Wall/Fence

SBC Councillor Robson advised he had spoken to officers who had inspected the gateway and fence and plans were being drawn up to replace the fence and fix the loose stones on the gateway. He advised he would need to investigate funding and planning permission for a wall to replace the fence and asked that this subject be kept on the agenda. He advised he was investigating the grass cutting in the area. The Provost advised he had spoken to two families who had dead children buried in the cemetery and they were very grateful this was being addressed.

Parking and traffic management

White lines - SBC Councillor Robson advised this work was ongoing and he would check what was outstanding. He advised he would be looking at junctions to see what work was needed and asked the Community Councillors to let him know of any areas that needed to be painted.

Councillor Robson advised patch work would be undertaken at Abbotseat, The Tofts, Inchmead Drive, Inch Road, Rosebank and Edenside Road.

Questions to Councillors

Councillor Horsburgh advised the majority of issues at Rutherford Square had now been resolved and thanked KCC and SBHA for their help. However, he advised there was still an issue with cars parking and blocking the access for ambulances and asked whether signs or line hatching could be installed. SBC Councillor Mountford advised SBHA owned some of the area in the front but he would ask SBC to paint line hatching in their area.

The Provost advised a concern had been raised with him regarding the lack of grass cutting at the playpark behind The Linn, which is a popular venue. SBC Councillor Mountford undertook to follow up.

Councillor Roberts raised the issue of travellers parking behind the swimming pool and asked what measures were being taken to prevent this happening in the future and measures to secure the area. SBC Councillor Robson advised he had been in discussion with Live Borders who were inspecting the lock on a daily basis which was secure and he was monitoring it. The Provost advised there was a family of travellers currently parked at Mayfield riverside, who came on an annual basis.

SBC Councillor Mountford advised SBC were currently reviewing their grass cutting regime and this would go out to consultation. One of the implications was that they were introducing low amenity and biodiversity grass areas which would only be cut once or twice a year. He advised areas had been identified and the SBC would

provide signage to publicise them and the purpose was to trail insect friendly areas with wildflowers and this would include Will H. Ogilvie Way by Sainsbury's and cutting and lifting grass at Bridge End Park three times a year. He asked whether there were any other areas in Kelso that could participate in this trial.

The Provost asked whether the two roundabouts at Rose Lane could be flattened as discussed previously. SBC Councillor Mountford undertook to investigate.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised the roundabout at the end of Grove Hill needed to be addressed as well.

Any Other Business

Hazel Woodsell on behalf of the Kelso Heritage Society thanked Councillor Horsburgh for watering the Community Orchard.

SBC Councillor Weatherston advised he and SBC Councillors Mountford and Robson would be cleaning the green algae off the road signs in the next period.

Consideration of Licenses

It was noted there were no licenses for consideration.

Consideration of Plans

The following plans were considered.

21/00803/FUL- Susan Watkins - external redecoration to front and side elevation of Gosham House, Edenside Road, Kelso TD5 8ES. The Community Council looked at this application and considered all of the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans. However, concerns were raised regarding the colour chosen for the render and stated the colour chosen was not in keeping with other properties in the area.

21/00826/FUL – Demolition of former taxi office and outbuilding and erection of dwelling house. 8 Simon Square, Kelso TD5. The Community Council looked at this application and considered all of the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans. However some Councillors raised concerns that any existing access that belongs to existing residents is maintained and that a proper drop kerb is installed so the cars parking don't bump up on the pavement. It was noted that Kelso Heritage Society had objected to these plans.

21/00717/FUL –Alteration and extension to dwelling house – 1 Victoria Place, Kelso TD5 7JJ. The Community Council looked at this application and considered all of the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans.

21/00673/FUL and 21/00683/LBC - Vault Square Properties Ltd - Change of use of public house and alterations and extension to form 14 flats - Public House 5 Vault Square Kelso Scottish Borders - TD5 7JU. The Provost declared an interest as he was employed by Hogarth's Mill who were in discussion with the owners. The Community Council were unable to support this application and the following reasons had been submitted –

- As the proposed apartments are within the conservation area of the town, the building and proposed roofline will not be in keeping with the same appearance of the other surrounding historic buildings.
- As the proposal is for 14 apartments, open plan living does not appeal and only 6 parking spaces are proposed for 14 apartments.
- The application states in the Design and Access statement as affordable housing, but it is difficult to see how this can be classed as affordable housing without a link to a national or local scheme.
- There is no provision for any disabled access to the proposed apartments, e.g. lifts.
- The current premises is seen as an asset for the town, bringing in visitors and it would be more beneficial if it was replaced with another asset to promote tourism e.g. hostel or bunk house.
- When it operated as a nightclub the footfall was always late in the evening with no vehicles operating in the very narrow lane leading off the Square. During the day this lane is very busy with articulated vehicles both to the Mill and the Co-Op and cars to the car park so the lack of a footpath for pedestrians is a big concern. Affordable housing will have families with prams and push chairs and there could be disabled residents and therefore a footpath is vital.

The Provost thanked everyone for attending the meeting and looked forward to meeting again in September hopefully in person at the Town Hall.

The next Community Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 14 September 2021

APPENDIX

KELSO COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE/EVENTS/CONSULTATIONS MAY 2021		
Date	Event/Correspondence	Venue and comments
12.05.21	Approved minutes posted	For information
	Planning applications submitted	For information
14.05.21	UK Community Renewal Fund	For information
	News release: Council agrees proposals for Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund - amended	For information
	Road Closure - D59-5 Harrietfield - North of Kelso	For information
	Fallago Environment Fund - C-19 Recovery Footpath Repair Grants	For information
	Covid-19 Testing Update	For comments
	20 MPH consultation PDF copy	For information
16.05.21	KCC response to 21/00673/FUL and 21/00683/LBC – Vault Square Properties Limited – change of use of public house and alterations and extension to form 14 Flats.	For information
18.05.21	Dementia Awareness Week - Meet the Alpacas	For information
	Road Closure - C46 Ednam	For information
	Full-funded courses from the Open University	For information
	Special Event - Road Closures	For information
19.05.21	Open University funded courses	For information
	Borderlands Partnership News Release: Business experts join the new Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal Economic Forum	For information
	Press Release - QME Care	For information
	Destination Tweed Consultation	For comment
25.05.21	Joint News Release: Scottish Borders joins the fight against empty homes	For information
	Planning application 21/00803/FUL	For comments
	Planning application 21/00826/FUL	For comments

	Scottish Borders Community Council Scheme Review Working Group - 27 May 2021	For information
	White lining Kelso	For information
	Press Release : Guidance on future Tweedbank expansion to be presented	For information
	Destination Tweed Consultation reminder	For information
28.05.21	News Release: Final appeal to EU nationals living in the Borders to apply to stay before the deadline	For information
	Planning application 21/00717/FUL	For comments
01.06.21	June meeting papers circulated	For information
	Area Partnerships - Have Your Say	For comment
	Engaging on the Local Place Plans Regulations consultation	For information