

**MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
of Kelso Community Council  
held by Zoom  
on Tuesday 9 June 2020 at 7.00pm**

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Tina Newton (Visit Kelso), Kathryn Wyllie (press) and members of the public Hazel Woodsell, Verity Mutch and Teresa and Allan Dorward.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor Kerry Yule and Police Scotland.

**Minute**

The minute of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 14 May 2019 was approved on the proposal of Councillor Gavin Horsburgh and seconded by Councillor Harry Tomczyk.

**Provost's Report**

Year three as Chairman of Kelso Community Council and Provost of Kelso has been a privilege yet again. It started out the same as previous years but as we entered the last few month's things certainly changed. In 2020 we watched as COVID-19 started to spread across the world getting closer and closer every day. Eventually in March the first confirmed cases reached our shores and by the end of that month Scotland along with many other countries entered lockdown. The way we had lived all our lives changed overnight. Stay at home became the message being reinforced daily.

Although, I found myself in a position where I was now classed as a key worker. As Assistant Mill Manager at John Hogarth Ltd we kept working 24/7 to keep the nation fed. None of us ever considered ourselves to play such a vital role in society until then.

It was on 15<sup>th</sup> March that I contacted my fellow coordinators of Kelso Resilience Group and organised an impromptu meeting the following day. We never expected to be doing such a role when we set this group up two years ago. We planned for floods, power cuts and snow but not a viral pandemic. We evolved very quickly and were soon performing a vital role within the community delivering prescriptions and shopping to those shielding as well as helping in other ways by walking dogs, delivering PPE and providing support to some who found themselves lonely in a period of isolation. I would like to thank Dennis Fortune and Colin Seccombe my fellow coordinators who have worked tirelessly throughout as well as Gavin Horsburgh my Vice Chair who took over manning the resilience phone and managing the prescriptions deliveries. A very big thank you must also go out to all those who have volunteered not just with the resilience group but also with other groups including the Food Bank as well as those helping their neighbours, friends and families.

Another change as a consequence of these conditions was the mass cancellation of all meetings and events. I believe this is the first time since the creation of Community Councils that meetings have been cancelled here in Kelso. Community councillors continue to work behind the scenes via email and all going well I'll be reading this annual report at our AGM via Zoom, an online group video chat service. This will be the first online meeting in our history and if it goes well it's likely we will plan some other meetings in this way until social distancing and groups of people can meet again.

Back to events pre-covid and as always Civic Week went very well thanks to the hard work of the committee and volunteers. Mark Henderson followed in his families footsteps and did a fantastic job representing the town across the Borders throughout the summer. This year everything is cancelled and for those of us who follow all the Border festivals and common ridings there will be a huge gap in our summer and we won't be able to meet up with old friends. I feel for all those Principles who have to keep their secret for another year before they can represent their communities. On a personal note I find myself missing my last Civic Week as Provost and I really don't know how that is going to feel come July. Fiona and I had planned to host some parties and picnics throughout the week as a thank you to all those who have supported me over my time in office but sadly that is not to be.

The following week we had the Border Union Show and always it was a massive success. I was asked to judge the Children's Pet Show on the Friday which was great fun and the kids loved it.

Kelso in Bloom has a new committee and I thank all of them for stepping up. KCC Vice Chair Gavin Horsburgh has now taken over from Betty Hodges who stepped down during the year. Betty put everything she had into Kelso in Bloom and we are all greatly appreciate her efforts. Our summer planting has all gone in at the beginning of June and the beds and planters are all looking well.

In November I laid a wreath on behalf of the Community Council at the War Memorial. Prior to this I organised for some community groups to come together to plan a celebration to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day. Plans were well underway to hold a series of events over the bank holiday weekend in May and like everything else it all had to be cancelled. Instead I laid a wreath on behalf of the community with Kelso Pipe Major Alan Veitch. It was very different and quiet emotional to be there ourselves laying this wreath. Also that day Steven Patterson and his family laid a wreath over by Roxburgh Castle where three Polish soldiers were killed in training during WW2.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Community Councillors and other volunteers who have supported myself and the Community Council over the year. Special thanks must also go to our Secretary Shirley who does a tremendous job throughout the year handling all our communications and finances.

Councillor Horsburgh on behalf of the Kelso Community Councillors gave a vote of thanks to the Provost for all the excellent work he had undertaken in his third year of office. This was unanimously endorsed.

SBC Councillor T Weatherston on behalf of the other SBC Councillors thanked the Provost for all his hard work and commented SBC Councillors were lucky to have a good working relationship with the Kelso Community Council. SBC Councillor Weatherston

commented a positive community spirit had arisen as a result of the pandemic and he was very proud to be part of the community.

### **Annual Accounts**

The statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020 had been circulated. The Secretary highlighted the main features of these accounts. The general fund had shown a deficit of £445.28 leaving funds at 31 March 2020 of £19.77.

The Kelso in Bloom had funds at 31 March 2020 of £6,130.09. Income had been generated through two Sainsbury back packs, personal donations, Charity Begins at Home, award from Floral Gateway competition and generous donations from the Masons and Camera Club.

With regard to the CCTV account no expenditure had been incurred during the year and the funds in this account at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 amounted to £1,377.54. The Secretary advised that the Kelso Community Council at its March 2020 meeting agreed to close the account as it had been dormant for several years and split the proceeds 50/50 between the Kelso in Bloom and general KCC accounts.

With regard to the Kelso Memorial Fund there had been no activity and the balance in the account at 31 March 2020 remained at £4.00.

The Secretary advised the Kelso Heritage Society had been successful in securing a grant from the SBC path grant and the Kelso Laddies Association had secured a grant to provide bunting for the Tour of Britain visit.

The annual accounts were proposed by the Provost and seconded by Councillor McGrath.

The Secretary placed on record the thanks of the Council to Mr George Young who had audited the annual accounts.

### **Secretary's Honorarium**

The Provost advised the Honorarium had been agreed at £800 per annum last year and asked for approval for this amount this year. This was proposed by the Provost and seconded by Councillor Tomczyk.

### **Any Other Business**

Councillor McGrath advised it was disappointing that the visit by Kelso USA did not go ahead due to Covid-19 and commented they were enthusiastic to reschedule when appropriate. Councillor McGrath advised he had incurred some expenses relating to this visit and was advised to submit them to the Secretary for payment.

Councillor McGrath wished to place on record the Community Council's thanks to Scotmass for donating hand sanitisers to the Cheviot Area Hub and asked for a letter of thanks to be sent to them.

The Provost stated that in due course several letters of thanks would go out to businesses and community groups who have supported the town and community during the coronavirus pandemic.

Councillor Roberts wished to place on record thanks from the Kelso Food Bank to the whole of the Kelso community for their generosity, both financially and physically, given to their operation during the pandemic.

Tina Newton on behalf of Visit Kelso gave a huge vote of thanks to both the Kelso Community Council and Kelso in Bloom for all their hard work during the year.

Mr and Mrs Dorward on behalf of the over 70s age residents of Kelso wished to place on record thanks to the Kelso Resilience Group for helping them personally and others for all the assistance given to them with shopping, prescription collection, etc.

With no further business the meeting ended at 19.23 hours