

**MINUTES of the MEETING of Kelso
Community Council held in the Town
Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 10 December
2013, at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Provost John Bassett (in the Chair), Councillors Betty Hodges, Fiona Scott, Harry Tomczyk, Dean Weatherston and Scottish Borders Councillors Simon Mountford and Alex Nicol

IN ATTENDANCE: Community Sergeant Keith Dougal, Shirley Redgrave (in coming Secretary) and Michael Ballantyne Chairman of Kelso Chamber of Trade

APOLOGIES: Councillors Tom Weatherston, Colin McGrath, Gavin Horsburgh and George Young (Secretary)

Welcome

Provost Bassett welcomed members of the Council and public to the meeting.

Police Matters

Community Sergeant Keith Dougal welcomed the opportunity to address the Kelso Community Council and apologised for the lack of Police presence during the previous three meetings which had been due to staffing issues.

Sergeant Dougal confirmed the Police report was in a new format which was work in progress and would welcome any feedback on it. He advised that the Police focus has been on reducing crime and disorder, increasing public reassurance and keeping people safe.

Sergeant Dougal advised the main priorities for Kelso and District were –

1. Reducing antisocial behaviour
2. Tackling substance misuse
3. Making roads safer
4. Protecting people

Sergeant Dougal advised currently there were two operations ongoing –

- Operation Tinsel (a Festive campaign) which centred around the night time economy. He advised between 4 and 8 additional officers were dedicated each day for the next month on this operation.
- Festive Drink Driving Campaign would be held between 6/12/13 and 3/1/14

Sergeant Dougal advised that the monthly performance statistics were published on the 15th of each month and they represented the previous month's figures. He advised that between

April and October on a year on year basis from 2008 to 2013 reported crimes in Kelso had fallen from 258 to 120 - there had been a steady drop over the five years. He confirmed that the same criteria for monitoring crime had been used over this period. Sergeant Dougal advised that for 2013 the number of vandalism crimes reported was 20.

The Provost raised the issue that the recorded 20 acts of vandalism in the town seemed low and commented that due to acts of vandalism the SBC councillors had no option but to close the public conveniences on the Knowes. He also mentioned that in his next article in Kelso Life he has urged the public to report any forms of vandalism direct to the Police.

Community Councillors intimated that the vandalism of the public conveniences had been caused by a group of known young teenagers and the question was asked whether Operation Tinsel should link into this. Sergeant Dougal advised that this issue should be dealt with by the local officers.

A discussion ensued on the various forms of communicating with the local Police, e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Crime Stoppers, (a way of passing on information anonymously) face to face in the street, by telephone, by email or by calling into the local station. Sergeant Dougal advised that his preferred method was for people to call into the station to raise any concerns but encouraged the public to report crime.

Sergeant Dougal commented that he felt crime had been reduced with the introduction of School Liaison Officers.

It was noted that road traffic offences were recorded separately.

The Provost thanked Sergeant Dougal for attending and for his report.

Chamber of Trade report

Mr Ballantyne thanked the Provost for judging the Christmas window display and it was noted that "Seasons" had won and the Cross Keys was runner up.

Mr Ballantyne advised that he had received mixed reports on the Sunday Christmas opening. The Provost suggested that it might be a good idea to have a late night opening session on the same day that the town Christmas lights were switched on, as this event brought a lot of local people into the town. Mr Ballantyne welcomed this suggestion and would put it to the traders.

Mr Ballantyne advised that the Chamber of Trade would be applying for a grant for flowers and watering to Charity Begins and Home. The Provost advised the Chamber of Trade could apply to the Community Council for a grant.

Mr Ballantyne advised that the web site was improving the Chamber of Trade was still looking for web administrators. He will speak to Councillor Horsburgh but as suggested at last months meeting. Councillor Dean Weatherston asked whether the monthly police reports could be included on the web pages.

Mr Ballantyne reconfirmed that the Chamber of Trade was still actively looking for candidates for Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Mr Ballantyne would welcome any suggestions for candidates.

Mr Ballantyne advised that he had spoken to the traders about a "Fair Trade" option, and it was noted that there was a mixed view. It was noted that such a scheme would need to be a voluntary one. The Provost commented that the Council would support a Fair Trade scheme. It was noted that Councillor McGrath was to feed back on what was the percentage of traders involved in the Fair Trade scheme to enable the town to be designated a "Fair Trade" town.

Councillor Tomczyk asked Mr Ballantyne whether he had any strong views on what the two blank panels of the Pantwell could be used for. Mr Ballantyne advised that he had no specific use in mind, apart from using one of the three for outlining the history of James Dickson. Mr Ballantyne commented that it could be used as a service point for outside events, with water and electricity. Councillor Tomczyk commented that the two remaining panels should be used to display Community Council minutes and material for information.

Provost Bassett thanked Mr Ballantyne for his attendance.

Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 November 2013 were approved subject to two minor alterations. They were proposed by Councillor Dean Weatherston and seconded by Councillor Harry Tomczyk.

Matters arising

a) **Resilient Communities**

It was noted that there had been no feedback and this should be added to the January agenda.

b) **Future Caravan Site**

The secretary reported that Councillor McGrath had contacted the Racecourse and they were enthusiastic about creating a facility outside of the racing calendar. Discussions were ongoing.

c) **Bus Consultation**

SBC Councillors confirmed this consultation was ongoing and urged the public to feed in their views. Councillor Nicol advised that he would circulate details of the "Demand Responsive Transport" scheme.

d) **Gallipoli Memorial**

The Provost advised he had given eight presentations on the proposed Gallipoli Memorial and they had been enthusiastically received. He advised he would be forming a sub committee with the Kelso Laddie Association to take the work forward.

The Provost advised that funding was the main issue, which hopefully could be sourced through public subscription. The Provost had spoken to George Young to see whether he could apply for a grant from the Sainsburys fund and George would check with SBC to see if this was possible.

The Provost confirmed that the 2015 Kirkin of the Kelso Laddie would coincide with the anniversary date of Sunday 12 July 2015.

e) Stakeholder Briefing

Councillor H Tomczyk updated members on the Stakeholder briefing held on 21 November 2013. This included –

- Public Art – an update on progress was given and members were directed to the comprehensive updates on the Visit Kelso web pages. It was noted that an article had been published in the Southern Reporter.
- Pantwell – a discussion took place around the use of the two panels
- Location of Taxi rank. It was noted the taxi rank had moved to outside the Banks. It was commented the taxi drivers were not happy with its previous location in front of the Town Hall. Councillor Scott commented there were no dropped curbs where the taxi rank was located and Councillor Nicol advised this would be addressed when the area was resurfaced. It had been agreed a trial would take place starting 10 December. Concerns were raised about the safety of passengers entering and leaving taxis and Councillor Nicol advised the size of the space would be increased to allow for this. Reservations had been raised by the Bridge Street traders who had been invited to the next Stakeholder meeting scheduled to take place on 30 January 2014, where they could raise their concerns.
- Excess cobbles – It was noted that some cobbles would be used to replace the broken planters at the top of Roxburgh Street. Councillor Scott asked whether the excess cobbles could be sold
- Gap site development – delays with local service diversions. Building work now pushing ahead and completion is expected in June 2014.
- Overnight parking of lorries – lack of space for them to park overnight and causing a disturbance to residents.

f) George Higgs would be attending the January meeting to give a presentation and to explain the rights of the ethnic community.

Kelso Facebook page

The Provost advised he had started a Facebook page on 8 December to let the people of Kelso know what the Kelso Community Council was doing. He stressed the site was for information only and in no way represented individuals views. The Provost advised that the page was based on the SBC's model.

The Provost apologised to Councillors for introducing a Kelso Facebook page without prior discussion with all Councillors.

It was noted that currently the Provost and Councillor D Weatherston and G Horsburgh were monitoring and responding to the Kelso Community Council Facebook.

Councillors raised concerns on how the page was monitored and how points raised would be addressed. It was noted that it was crucial that the page represented Kelso Community Council and views expressed in it were those of the Council.

It was agreed a code of conduct was required.

Councillor D Weatherston stressed the page would only be used to guide people to consultations, services, advice and current issues.

It was noted many other Community Councils use Facebook as a medium for communication and Councillor Weatherston undertook to check some of them out.

It was agreed this subject would be discussed at the January meeting.

Correspondence

- a) A letter had been received from Mr Kenneth Ross, Riverside Drive, Kelso regarding odour problems in the vicinity.

Councillor Nicol advised the issue had been raised at the last two meetings and it was his belief that this arose as a result of tankering. He suggested that he and a couple of Community Councillors should go down to the site when the material is being transferred to observe the process. Councillor Nicol advised the enforcement order had not been removed and the Council were within their rights to make an enforcement if necessary.

The Provost requested that the secretary send a copy of Mr Ross's letter to Rob Dickson at SBC requesting feedback and confirmation of Nicola Medley's replacement.

- b) An email had been received from SBC concerning a press release on Integrated Waste Management Strategy – this would be addressed later in the agenda.
- c) A letter had been received from a resident regarding the future garden waste collections – this would be discussed later in the agenda.
- d) An email had been received from Councillor Harry Tomczyk regarding the closure of the public conveniences in Knowes.
- e) Notification had been received from SBC Community Council Scheme Review Group regarding a meeting to take place on 10 December 2013.
- f) Notification had been received from SBC Petition Committee regarding a meeting to be held on 11 December 2013.

- g) Notification had been received from SBC regarding the full Council meeting to be held on 12 December 2013.
- h) An email had been received from Clare Malster regarding a press release on the Local Development Plan. The link to this had been circulated to members and the secretary had a hard copy of the plan for members to access.
- i) An email had been received from the Community Sergeant Keith Dougal apologising for Police absence at Kelso Community Council meetings and confirming he would attend the December meeting and give a report.
- j) An email had been received from Police Scotland which issued local priorities for Kelso and these are-
 - i) Reducing Anti social behaviour
 - ii) Tackling substance misuse
 - iii) Making roads safer
 - iv) Protecting people
- k) An email had been received from the Engineering Design and Construction team of SBC regarding the trailing of a taxi rank outside the Banks in Wood Market. This was discussed under the Stakeholders report.
- l) The Bridge November 2013 newsletter had been received.
- m) Scottish Natural Heritage – an open invitation had been received to attend an informal evening reception on 11 December at the Cross Keys.
- n) An email had been received from SBC regarding Neighbourhood Operations briefings.
- o) An email had been received from the Resilient Community giving an update on progress of the Resilient Communities Initiative to date and clarifying the role and responsibilities of co-ordinators should they be required to respond within the community this winter.

Area Forum Report

It was noted there had been no further meetings since November to report on.

Scottish Borders Council Report

a) New Kelso High School

It was noted there were no further developments. Councillor Scott asked what were the plans for the existing school site and Councillor Mountford advised nothing formal had been decided but options were being considered and the preferred option would be put out to public consultation in due course.

It was noted that Holly Young, the SBC youth worker now had an office based in the school which would make her job easier and she would be readily available to students.

Councillor Mountford advised there was a proposal to introduce an Asymmetric Week into Border schools. Although there would be the same amount of teaching time, it would result in the school week finishing at lunchtime on a Friday. Various options were being considered for Friday afternoons including after school clubs and sports options. Asymmetric weeks had been in place in Lothian for twenty years.

Councillor Nicol advised there would common timetabling in the region to allow for greater scope for more subjects to be available to students. He commented it was a way of making more efficient use of resources.

b) Scottish Water

It was noted that this had been discussed earlier under correspondence.

c) Closure of public conveniences

Councillor Nicol and Mountford commented they were concerned the public conveniences had to be shut due to regular occurrences of vandalism and these would remain closed and not replaced until the new ones were opened in six months time. Councillor Nicol apologised for not alerting Kelso Community Councillors the conveniences would be shut. This issue would be taken back to the Stakeholders briefing group.

d) Integrated Waste Management Strategy

Councillor Nicol advised an Integrated Waste Management Strategy would be discussed at the SBC full meeting on Thursday 12 December, with plans for the introduction of a new community recycling centre in Kelso and the removal of kerbside garden waste collections from 31 March 2014.

The recycling centre is scheduled to be opened in March 2015 and its likely location is Pinnaclehill.

Community Councillors very much welcomed the introduction of the recycling centre in Kelso but were concerned at the removal of the kerbside garden waste.

Councillor Mountford commented if the proposal went ahead there would be a 12 month gap from the closure of the collection and the opening of the new centre. Councillor Nicol commented residents would be encouraged to compost garden waste and the Council is expecting some green waste will end up in the grey-lidded bins.

The Provost commented it was very important the residents of Kelso feed back their comments on the proposal.

It was noted that SBC sell compost to the public.

Councillor Nicol circulated a FAQs document on the subject and the Provost requested an electronic copy so it could be added to the web pages.

Councillor D Weatherston asked what would happen to the Christmas tree collection and Councillor Mountford advised he was not aware of any change.

Future Kelso

Councillor Nicol advised there had been no further meetings.

Storage of Opera costumes

It was noted there was an issue with the storage of opera costumes and the SBC councillors were asked if they had anywhere suitable. Councillor Mountford advised there were no empty suitable storage areas available and suggested the Opera Society may need to pay rent for suitable storage in future.

Consideration of Plans

The Council considered the following plans:-

- a) From Mr Brian Campbell, Wagon Inn, 10 Coal Market, Kelso for the replacement of external windows. The Council had no objections.
- b) From Mr A Thompson for the change of use from office to form dwelling flat on first floor at 56 – 60 Woodmarket. The Council had no objections.
- c) From Laura Noon for the change of use from dwelling house to retail at 3 Elliots Close, Kelso. The Council had no objections.
- d) From M & J Ballantyne Ltd for the change of house type on Plant 14, Broomlands, Riverside Drive. The Council had no objections.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of Kelso Community Council will be held in the Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 14 January 2014 at 7.00pm