

**MINUTES of the MEETING of Kelso
Community Council held in the Town Hall, Kelso
on Tuesday 13 January 2015, at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Provost John Bassett (Chair), Councillors Harry Tomczyk, Fiona Scott, and John King and Scottish Borders Councillors Alec Nicol, Simon Mountford and Tom Weatherston.

IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Suzanne Howego (Police Scotland) and Alan Livingstone (Chamber of Trade)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Dean Weatherston, Colin McGrath, Peter Cooper, Betty Hodges and Gavin Horsburgh

- 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.

Welcome

Provost John Bassett welcomed members of the Council to the meeting.

Police Matters

PC Suzanne Howego advised the December 2014 Police Scotland report had been circulated and highlighted the following items:

Scottish Borders Alert - Individuals and organizations can now join the new Scottish Borders messaging system called SBAlert. SBAlert is supported by a local partnership of Scottish Borders Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and NHS Borders. SBAlert is a **free** network designed to share up to date emergency and crime prevention advice, weather warnings and utility failure updates, and alert local residents to crimes and safety issues affecting their community and area. This can be found on www.sbalert.co.uk. The Provost asked this item be added to the Kelso Facebook page.

PC Howego advised the Christmas and New Year period had been fairly quiet and reminded members if a crime was suspected mere suspicion was not enough but evidence was needed to arrest someone.

PC Howego commented that, resource permitting, she and her colleagues were patrolling and enforcing law in Kelso the best that they could and it was unfortunate they had been subjected to verbal abuse from the public on several occasions, particularly when addressing parking issues. The Community Council placed on record their thanks for the efforts of PC Howego and her colleagues and were disappointed they had been subjected to verbal abuse for just doing their job. The

Kelso Community Council fully supports PC Howgego efforts to prevent illegal parking in the town.

PC Howgego advised Police Scotland were currently undertaking a recruitment drive aimed at older recruits and from within minority groups. All information is available on the Police Scotland web site. The Provost asked for this information to be shared on the Kelso Facebook page.

PC Howgego asked whether Councillors would be interested in joining her for a walk around the town to do an Environmental Visual Audit to identify areas of concern. The Provost supported this initiative and also recommended the use of a Police mini bus in the Square which had proved successful in the past.

Councillor Mountford asked whether there had been any decrease in drink driving offenders with the introduction of new drink driving laws. PC Howgego advised there were no published figures available specifically for the Kelso area but Scotland wide there had been a 27% drop.

Councillor T Weatherston asked whether Police were aware of a private house in Oakfield Court which had had its windows bordered up, presumably through vandalism, for the third time in five years. PC Howgego advised no but undertook to investigate.

Councillor T Weatherston advised he had been contacted by a resident in the Forestfield area who was very concerned about drivers using Forestfield as a "rat run" and the potential danger to pedestrians. It was noted this road, which is an Access Only one had no pavements and therefore there was a high potential risk to pedestrians being harmed. He asked the Kelso Community Council to support the implementation of a traffic calming system to help alleviate this issue. The Kelso Community Council recognised this was an area of concern and potential risk to pedestrians and had previously discussed it at their meeting in September 2014. The Kelso Community Council fully supported the introduction of a traffic calming system albeit recognising the financial constraints on the Council, however, recommended SBC implement the introduction of speed humps which will hopefully alleviate the problem. The Secretary was asked to contact Scottish Borders Council Road Department.

Chamber of Trade report

Mr Alan Livingstone advised that there had been a meeting of the Chamber of Trade the previous evening and the subject of parking had been raised. The shopkeepers supported the Police clamp down on illegal parking.

Councillor T Weatherston reminded members that SBC were aware of the issue of parking and had set up a working group to look at the issue. He advised he was confident there would be a solution and would report back to the Community Council at a later date. Councillor Tomczyk asked when a report may be expected but was advised that this is not known.

The Provost commented there were a number of traffic wardens patrolling the car parks at the Borders General Hospital and it was noted these were in fact employed by the NHS and not SBC.

Mr Alan Livingstone advised the Christmas Opening on 14 December had proved unsuccessful and not supported.

It was noted with regret that there are more empty shops within Kelso.

The subject of the Kelso Christmas lights was raised and some shopkeepers felt more could be done. Councillor T Weatherston advised it cost between £5,500 and £6,000 per annum to put the Christmas lights on within Kelso. It was suggested lights could be strung across the road but this would cause a health and safety issue. Councillors advised they liked the Christmas trees on display along the main street at Coldstream but it was noted some individual households pay for these.

The Provost suggested the Community Council could fund the provision of lights/trees in the windows of the Town Hall. The Provost undertook to discuss this with the Rotary Club. Councillor Scott suggested members of the public sponsored a light bulb in memory of a loved one. Councillor T Weatherston advised he would welcome any suggestions to improve the Christmas lights and their funding.

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 December 2014 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor Harry Tomczyk and seconded by Councillor John King.

Matters arising

a) **Memorial Wall**

Councillor John King advised little progress had been made but he would continue to work on the project and contact Councillor Colin McGrath for an update from Churches Together.

b) **Gallipoli Memorial**

The Provost advised he had heard from SBC who confirmed Estates and the Conservation Officer were happy with the proposal and the project would be progressed to the Community Grant Scheme for a decision. The Provost advised he had written to 35 local organisations to see if they were prepared to help with fund raising. It was noted the Memorial would be unveiled on 12 July 2015 which would coincide with the Kirkin of the Laddie.

The Provost advised the Kelso Laddie would visit all War Memorials in the old Kelso Borough area and lay a blue and white wreath on each.

c) **Questions from public**

There were no members of the public to put forward questions for consideration.

Correspondence

The Secretary advised correspondence had been circulated to Community Councillors and a summary schedule had been compiled which would be attached to the minutes as an Appendix. Other correspondence received:

- It was noted the Scottish Borders Council, Police Scotland and the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) are running advanced driving courses to help cut the number of serious injuries and deaths involving young drivers on the region's roads. Sitting the IAM advanced driver course usually costs £149, but council backing means that this fee is refunded on passing. The scheme, for under 26-year-olds, is being sponsored by Scottish Borders Council.
- It was noted the Scottish Borders Lane Use Strategy consultation on the draft Framework were holding four public meetings in January.
- Bus Service 20 – Kelso/Jedburgh/Hawick The Crailing, Eckford and Nisbet Community Council advised they had heard from SBC who advised First are operating Service 20 without a change to timetable on behalf of SBC. Two companies had been contacted and asked whether they could operate all or some of the journeys on a commercial basis, without subsidy. Should neither company be in a position to run without subsidy timetable options would be drawn up for the operators to price.

Secretary's Report

Resilience Communities – The Secretary advised a Co-ordinator (Carol Turnbull) and deputy (Claire Payne) had been identified. Both people are Kelso residents who work at SBC. The Secretary was asked to invite them to the February meeting for an update.

Welfare Reforms – The Citizens Advice Bureau had contacted the Community Council to see if they wanted a presentation on how welfare reforms would impact on local people. It was noted the Universal Credit was due to start at the end of April 2015. Councillors agreed they needed to be aware of this important subject and its impact on the local community and the Secretary was asked to invite them to the March meeting for an update.

Secretary's Honorarium – the Secretary advised the Honorarium had been fixed at £600 for the past four years and asked Councillors for feedback. It was agreed this would continue at £600 per annum. This was proposed by Councillor Tomczyk and seconded by Councillor King.

Election of Councillors – The Secretary reminded Councillors they held their office for four years and the next election would be in May 2017.

Scottish Borders Council Report

Disability access evaluation

Councillor S Mountford advised big improvements to accessibility had been made during the recent town works. It was noted a representative for the disabled and elderly had been on the Stakeholder group and therefore their views had been taken into account. All improvements had been considered against the backdrop of the historic town centre and its status as a conservation area. Improved pedestrian crossing points, footway widths and footway surfaces had been introduced. A disabled person in a wheelchair had gone around the town with a colleague to establish whether there were any additional measures that could be taken to improve things. SBC Councillors advised there would be snagging exercise later in the year to pick up any outstanding issues.

The Provost thanked SBC Councillors for their work and welcomed the opportunity to have a snagging exercise to pick up outstanding issues. Councillors were urged to highlight any issues.

Traffic Wardens/Parking

It was noted this subject had been addressed earlier in the meeting.

Dog Fouling

It was noted there had been a lot of local comments regarding dog fouling in Kelso. The Provost advised this subject had been discussed at length a year ago at several Community Council meetings and SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston had undertaken to raise the issue with the Justice Secretary to change to the Act to stop dog fouling on playing fields.

It was noted Scottish Borders Radio were aware of the issue and had asked for a comment from the Community Council. The Provost undertook to contact Borders Radio after discussion at the meeting to give an interview to say SBC could not be blamed for the current spate of dog fouling in the town but this was as a result of people who had no community pride by letting their dogs defecate in the streets and play areas.

Roxburgh Street

It was noted part of Roxburgh Street would be closed to vehicular traffic from Tweed House to 91 Roxburgh Street to allow essential Scottish Water works to take place. The road would be closed for two weeks from 26 January. It was noted with regret funding was not available from SBC to resurface the road at the same time.

Questions to SBC Councillors

The Provost advised he had received several adverse comments on the subject of SBC spending significant money to house The Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank. It was noted SBC had not spent money on a significant tourist attraction for some time and it was anticipated the Tapestries would bring 47,000 visitors to the Borders per annum. None the less several Councillors expressed concern and Councillor Tomczyk was concerned about the project being financed by public rather than private money.

In his absence Councillor D Weatherston asked for the following issues to be raised:

Public toilets – gents' toilets had been flooded again.
Virtual Tourism – there had been an error message on the board and the board had been vandalised.

Bus shelters – cleanliness getting worse.

SBC Councillors undertook to investigate and feed back.

Councillor Tomczyk asked for an update on the public toilet signage. He was advised the signage was imminent.

Councillor Tomczyk asked for an update on the road markings. It was noted with regret this issue was outstanding but would be picked up at the snagging meeting and addressed.

Councillors asked for an update on the plaque for the Jubilee Tree – Councillor Scott undertook to provide the wording and send to the Secretary who would forward to Councillor T Weatherston.

Consideration of Plans

The Council considered the following plans:-

- a) Replacement windows (retrospective 24B Woodmarket). The Council had no objections.
- b) Erection of veterinary practice building at land south east of Paul Burton Warehouse (Plot 8), Pinnaclehill Estate Kelso. The Council had no objections.
- c) New Window signage, BMC Solutions, First Floor 1 & 2 Horsemarket Business Centre, 11 Horsemarket, Kelso. 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 10 February 2015 at 7.00pm