

**MINUTES of the MEETING of Kelso
Community Council held in the Town Hall, Kelso
on Tuesday 10 March 2015, at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Provost John Bassett (Chair), Councillors Dean Weatherston, Harry Tomczyk, Betty Hodges, Peter Cooper, Colin McGrath, Fiona Scott and John King and Scottish Borders Councillors Alec Nicol and Tom Weatherston

IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Suzanne Howgego (Police Scotland) and Maggie Watson (Citizens Advice Bureau)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Gavin Horsburgh, SBC Councillor Simon Mountford and Alan Livingstone (Chamber of Trade)

- 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.

Welcome

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

The Provost introduced Mrs Tamzin Thomas who had expressed an interest in becoming a Kelso Community Councillor.

Notice of Motion

Councillor John Bassett proposed and Councillor Colin McGrath seconded the nominations of Alan Hall from 6 East Bowmont Street, Kelso TD5 7DA and Mrs Tamzin Thomas from The Manse, Glebe Lane, Kelso TD5 7AU to be co-opted to the current vacancies on the Kelso Community Council.

It was confirmed Alan Hall and Tamzin Thomas appeared on the Electoral Register for Kelso and had signed the Acceptance of Nomination.

Kelso Community Councillors raised no objections and unanimously agreed Alan Hall and Tamzin Thomas should be co-opted from next month.

Police Matters

The Secretary advised the February 2015 Police Scotland report had previously been circulated. Suzanne Howgego highlighted the following –

- There had been acts of anti social behaviour at the local night club and this was being policed, resources permitting.
- There had been some incidents at Maxmill Park over the weekend and Suzanne was following this up with the Housing Authority.
- Thefts continue at the two Co-op supermarkets in the town and CCTV had provided some identifications to be followed up. Councillor H Tomczyk asked why the Co-op supermarkets were particularly targeted and Suzanne advised although she had previously given advice, thefts continued due to security issues and lack of staff resources at the stores.
- It was noted vehicles had been stolen from Tweedside Commercials and property from Keltek Electronics. The vehicles had been discovered in the Edinburgh area and the local CID and Edinburgh CID are following this up
- Two clothing shops had clothing stolen.
- Forestfield traffic calming bumps – it was noted the residents do not want the installation of a traffic calming bump at the entrance to the road. Suzanne will attempt to monitor the traffic throughput.
- A complaint had been received from Mr Crawford regarding trees being cut down in the Springwood Rise area. Members agreed this was not a police issue and was down to issues over the boundary area.
- Suzanne advised she had some “anti dog poo” posters that would be displayed in the town which would hopefully remind owners to pick up dog excrement.
- Complaints had been received from some taxi drivers, due to the lack of parking bays, had been forced to double park in the town and had been requested to move on and it was noted individual car owners had not been penalised. Suzanne advised she had a good working relationship with most taxi drivers in Kelso and welcomed their input and support. Councillors advised this was an issue with their Licensing Board and policing should be non discretionary and any person abusing parking facilities should be targeted.

The Provost asked whether it would be possible for Police Scotland to bring back their public awareness police van into the Square. Suzanne advised this would be difficult due to resource issues.

Suzanne advised that from April 2015 her priorities for targeting crime would be changed and this would be reflected in the monthly report.

Councillor H Tomczyk asked whether there was any data available on fixed penalty notices. Suzanne advised this was not readily available but would attempt to find out.

Councillor A Nicol asked how many complains had been received regarding noisy young drivers in the Knowes and Suzanne advised none had been received.

Welfare Reforms

The Provost welcomed Maggie Watson – Citizens Advice Bureau to the meeting who gave a brief presentation on her role within CAB

Maggie advised a Lottery grant had been awarded to the CAB to work across Roxburghshire and Berwickshire to help citizens who needed to apply for benefits. Maggie gave the following overview –

- Bedroom tax – noted not a particular issue in Scotland because additional funding had been secured but if a claimant had one empty bedroom there was a reduction of 14% housing benefit and two empty bedrooms the housing benefit dropped by 25%. It appeared the issue mainly affected fathers with children living elsewhere who wanted to house their children at say the weekends.
- Scottish Welfare Fund – this had been set up two years ago to provide crisis grants and community care grants. The money was given and not paid back but was restricted to three per year. The amount involved was relatively small but the definition of a crisis was undefined and subject to interpretation.
- Personal independent payments – noted this can take up to six months to process.
- Job Seekers Allowance – noted there was an issue with sanctions being imposed.
- Food Banks – noted 8 had been issued in Kelso during Jan/Feb this year and none during the same period last year.
- Universal Credits – Maggie advised this was going to be introduced on 27 April 2015 in the Scottish Borders area. CAB was concerned that there would be issues and anxiety over the implementation of this benefit particularly as a one off payment per month would be made to claimants who would then need to manage their money to meet all their monthly payments including rent. It was noted that all applicants would need to apply on line and the process usually took 1½ hours. Concern was expressed that computers at the local libraries could not be book for an 1½ period in order for applicants to make and submit their claim.
- Tax credits – it was noted that applicants who worked less than 35 hours per week and who were entitled to the current Working Tax Credits would need to have a relationship with the local Job Centre and be seen to be actively looking for additional work. Maggie advised that single parents with children under the age of 5 were exempt from this.

Maggie advised that due to an increase in demand in Kelso by 35% over the last year the Kelso CAB office would be opening for three sessions per week and volunteers were currently being trained.

Councillor C McGrath advised his family were involved with volunteering with the delivery of Food Banks around the Kelso area and asked who had a duty of care for volunteers in the event of delivery and dealing with difficult recipients.

The Provost thanked Maggie for her presentation and requested the Community Council be kept updated on developments.

Chamber of Trade report

Alan Livingstone had tendered his apologies and advised there had been no meetings of the Chamber of Trade.

Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2015

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 February 2015 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor Harry Tomczyk and seconded by Councillor Dean Weatherston.

Matters arising

a) Public Toilets

Councillor McGrath advised he had been contacted by supporters of the Public Toilets UK, which is a campaign to have more clean, well maintained toilets when out and about and to stop the closures of facilities wherever possible.

The Provost clarified that although several Councillors supported the reinstatement of the toilets in the Knowes car park, it had not received full Kelso Community Council backing. It was noted the facility could have other uses including housing a small museum or temporary exhibitions.

A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the benefits of reinstating the toilets at the Knowes car park. It was noted several members of the Community Council are concerned that the current public toilet arrangements within Kelso will not cope with visitors and tour buses in the summer months. In particular it is not known what impact buses off loading visitors in Wood Market would have and whether this would cause traffic issues.

It was noted the annual Dog Show brought many thousands of visitors into the town. Councillor Tomczyk asked whether the toilets at Abbey Row Centre could be used as public toilets.

It was agreed a letter should be written to SBC requesting they remove the "To Let" sign on the building until a review of the public toilet facilities in the town centre can be carried out over the summer months. It was suggested the SBC only granted a short term let while the review is ongoing.

It was agreed the review would include speaking to tour buses for their feedback, speaking to the local shops and undertaking a visitor experience feedback questionnaire.

It was agreed the way forward would be for a sub committee to be formed. This will comprise of Councillors Bassett, Scott, McGrath and Cooper. Councillor Nicol will arrange a meeting with appropriate SBC officers.

b) Memorial Wall

Councillor King advised he and Councillor Tomczyk had met with Jim Walker of Robertson Memorials to look at memorial walls. At a recent meeting with Councillor Tomczyk it was established that Robertson Memorials could design and build memorial wall and or columbarium. Their normal method of working is to build and then sell to the operating authority who would then charge as

appropriate to recover the costs. This has been done with various local authorities in Scotland and Mortonhall Crematorium for example.

Councillors asked whether SBC would reconsider funding and owning a memorial wall for Kelso residents as currently the only option is burial, whereas in Melrose there is a cemetery, crematorium and garden and the facility to purchase a memorial tree and benches.

It was agreed the way forward would be for a sub committee to be formed consisting of Councillors King, McGrath, Tomczyk and Scott to meet with SBC officer Jason Hedley. Councillor A Nicol undertook to facilitate this meeting.

c) Questions from the public

There were no questions from the public

Secretary's Report

Insurance Renewal - The Secretary advised the Insurance Officer at SBC had sent a form to all Community Councils because this year Zurich, the insurance provider, is undertaking a review of all block policies to give them a better understanding of the type of activities carried out during the year. The Secretary advised with the help of Councillor Tomczyk the form had been completed to include details in the Libel and Slander section to cover the Kelso Facebook page and the Visit Kelso and Bordernet web pages.

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. In addition the following correspondence was received

Health and Social Care Integration – SBC advised they were starting to plan the events and opportunities to take place during the summer that will help Scottish Borders Council and NHS Borders to engage with the community on the next stage of Health & Social Care Integration. As users of health and social care services it is essential that everyone has the opportunity to express their views. They asked for feedback on the consultation process and the Councillors asked for the following to be included :

- Use of website / social media - Kelso has a very active Facebook page.
- Distribution of easy read summary documents in prominent public locations eg Community Hospital, Health Centre, Library, CAB etc.
- Local press - newspapers and Kelso Life which is distributed to every household in Kelso.
- Public meetings - however there is always an issue with transport.

Kelso Laddie Declaration – Councillors have been invited to the 2015 Kelso Laddie Declaration on 17 April 2015.

Open letter to SBC Leader David Parker – it was noted Selkirk Community Council had invited Councillor Parker to attend their meeting to discuss SBC's decision to fund the Great Tapestry of Scotland at Tweedbank. Although the Councillor had initially accepted this invitation he later withdrew as he felt no useful purpose could be achieved. Councillors expressed their disappointment in this decision and asked whether it would be more appropriate for Councillor Parker to attend the Cheviot Area Forum to outline his vision for the Tapestry. Councillor T Weatherston undertook to pass on the invitation but advised there were five Area Forums in the Border region and if he accepted the invitation to the Cheviot Area Forum he would need to attend the others.

Scottish Borders Council Report

CCTV funding

Councillor A Nicol advised funding for CCTV across the Borders was being withdrawn but discussion and further engagement would be held with each individual Community Council.

Kelso High School

Councillor T Weatherston advised the Scottish Education Minister had put measures in place to secure funding for the new High School. It was noted the land is being cleared and a timescale of works was being finalised.

Bus service 120 Kelso Jedburgh Hawick

Councillor T Weatherston advised SBC had put funding in place to secure the bus route until August 2015, while SBC were looking at alternative options. The Community Council will be consulted on timetable options.

Traffic wardens/parking

Councillor T Weatherston advised a paper was going to the All Party Working Group and a decision was anticipated in the next few weeks.

THI – snagging exercise and markings for disabled parking

Councillor T Weatherston advised reassurances had been received the outstanding jobs would be completed. He advised the disabled parking spaces had been marked up.

Dardenelles

Councillor T Weatherston advised SBC removed garden waste and would power wash and paint the wall before the Plaque was installed.

Roxburgh Street

Councillor A Nicol advised he would try to secure funding for resurfacing Roxburgh Street after the new housing development.

Protection for Food Bank Volunteers

Councillor C McGrath advised he had raised this issue earlier in the meeting and asked SBC to investigate the duty of care for volunteers dealing with the delivery of

food bank provisions to difficult recipients. Councillor A Nicol undertook to make enquires.

Roger Fish Allotment area

Councillor A Nicol asked this item be placed on next months agenda for discussion.

Consideration of Plans

The Council considered the following plans:-

- a) Change of use from retail and alterations to form micopub 38 The Square, Kelso. The Council had no objections
- b) Internal and external alterations to Pointfield, Hermitage Lane, Kelso. The Council had no objections
- c) Demolition of two chimney stacks Abbey Royd, Bridge Street, Kelso. The Council had no objections.
- d) Replacement windows, Dispensary House, 106 Roxburgh Street, Kelso. The Council had no objections

Consideration of Licenses

The Council considered the following application:

- a) Grant of 'Provisional' Premises Licence in respect of Rutherfords Micropub, 38 The Square, 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 14 April 2015 at 7.00pm