

**MINUTES of the MEETING of Kelso Community
Council held in the Town Hall, Kelso
on Tuesday 8 March 2016, at 7.00 pm**

PRESENT: Councillors John Bassett (Chair), Harry Tomczyk, Tamzin Thomas, Peter Cooper, Betty Hodges, John King, Colin McGrath and Scottish Borders Councillors Alec Nicol, Simon Mountford and Tom Weatherston.

IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Alan Livingstone (Chamber of Trade) and Sergeant Jacqi McGuigan (Police Scotland)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Alan Hall, Fiona Scott, Gavin Horsburgh and Dean Weatherston and Suzanne Howgego (Police Scotland)

- 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

The Provost welcomed members to the meeting and John Lamont MSP and Sergeant Jacqui McGuigan.

John Lamont MSP

John Lamont thanked the Council for the invitation to attend the meeting and advised he was fully aware of the importance of the work of Community Councils and local issues as he received monthly minutes.

Questions were put to John Lamont by Councillor Tomczyk on behalf of the meeting including -

- Devolving more powers to a local level, specifically Community Councils.
- Setting Business Rates at a Council rather than Central level.
- Local Councils being able to set their own rate of Council Tax.
- Transport links.

John gave his views on each of the above areas and advised he was supportive of greater devolution of powers to a local level and local Government having as much control of their revenue raising as possible rather than being dictated from the centre. It was noted SBC's budget had been cut by 7% and 130 post would not be replaced. It was noted better messages were needed on the Borders train to advise passengers to get off at Galashiels to access the interchange for local bus routes.

Councillor King advised asked for confirmation there were no changes to the Jedburgh to Edinburgh bus run. Councillor T Weatherston undertook to investigate and report back.

Police Matters

PS Suzanne Howgego had tendered her apologies and her February report had been circulated for comments and feedback. No comments were received.

Sergeant Jacqi McGuigan was in attendance to answer any questions. Councillor Colin McGrath raised the issue of parking, in particular illegal parking in the town. It was noted a Facebook page had been set up called Bad Parking in Kelso and asked Sergeant McGuigan for comments. Jacqi advised she was aware of it but if registration numbers were blocked no criminal offence was being committed. Details of the Facebook page had been circulated to Councillors and it was agreed they would not support it.

Alan Livingston asked whether better signage to the long term car parks at the Knowes and Bowmont Street would alleviate parking issues. It was noted some local traders were still abusing parking in and around the Square.

Sergeant McGuigan advised the police with limited resources were concentrating on keeping traffic moving around the town and targeting inappropriate and dangerous parking in particular on double yellow lines and at bus stops.

Councillor T Weatherston reiterated there was an issue with the yellow paint sticking on the cobbles and SBC would need to go back to the contractors for a resolution. Councillor A Nicol advised pressure for decriminalising parking was increasing.

Councillor H Tomczyk asked whether employing Special Constables would help with parking issues and Sergeant McGuigan advised Specials were recruited but the majority worked during the day so they were enhancing evening and weekend shifts.

Sergeant McGuigan reminded Councillors the restructure of Police Scotland meant some resources had been trained to concentrate on particular areas which had an impact on frontline officers.

The Provost in recognition of PC Howgego's spread of workload suggested she attended our meetings on a quarterly basis but to provide a monthly report and be available for comments and feedback. The secretary reminded Councillors Suzanne was always available for comments by email and these should be directed through her or the Provost.

Chamber of Trade report / Visit Kelso

Alan Livingstone advised there was a Tourism event taking place at Springwood the following day and Visit Kelso had taken a stand.

Alan advised the AGM would be held on the 14 March 2016 at 5.45 at the Cross Keys Hotel and all were welcome.

Alan advised the Visit Kelso sub group were actively promoting the town and were planning events around Easter including a Treasure Hunt and extended opening of shops over the Easter weekend.

Alan advised Visit Kelso had applied to SBC for funding for new hanging baskets.

Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9 February 2016 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor Harry Tomczyk and seconded by Councillor John King.

Matters arising

a) Twinning opportunities

The Provost asked the secretary to contact Kelso USA for contact details for the High School in particular the Geography department. It was noted Councillors Scott and McGrath were potentially interested in visiting Thiron Gardais, France.

b) Memorial Wall

Councillor Nicol advised repairs to the fence and hedge would be undertaken by SBC. Councillors Tomczyk and Nicol had met with colleagues from Hawick who were working on a memorial wall/garden.

Councillor Tomczyk asked who would own the site and Councillor Nicol advised going forward his personal preference would be to develop a low maintenance garden, not including grass and to encourage SBC to adopt it. Councillor T Weatherston suggested local people working on community schemes could be used to undertake the maintenance of the garden under supervision. Community Councillors endorsed this suggestion.

It was agreed funding needed to be established and Councillor T Weatherston suggested approaching the Fallago Trust. Councillor Tomczyk agreed to draw up a Business Plan. It was noted the issue of Public Liability insurance needed to be addressed.

c) Parking

This item had been covered under the Police report earlier.

d) Defibrillator Training

The secretary advised training on defibrillators had taken place on Wednesday 24 February at 6.30pm at the Fire Station which was well attended.

e) Kelso in Bloom – Floral Gateway Competition

Councillor Hodges had agreed to chair this sub group and Councillor D Weatherston had agreed to act as Treasurer. A meeting had been held on the 1 March and the minutes are attached as an Appendix. Councillor Hodges advised the group would be concentrating on projects at the entrances to the Town. The Provost advised he had included an appeal in his report in Kelso Life asking for volunteers and donations and a response box would be situated in Browns for the month of April. The Secretary advised she was in contact with SBC regarding potential grant schemes and she had written to the three local supermarkets and emailed 20 traders in town requesting support for Kelso in Bloom.

f) Questions from the public

In response to a question on Trinity Church, Councillor Mountford advised SBC enforcement officers were in contact with the owners.

Councillor McGrath asked SBC to notify the Community Council when they were disposing off land or property.

The Provost handed over the stained glass window from the old hospital to Councillor McGrath for Churches together.

Correspondence

The secretary advised correspondence had been circulated to Community Councillors and a summary schedule had been compiled. In addition the following documents had been received:

- An invitation from Friends of Kelso Museum to an event on 26 March to mark the 200th anniversary of the Town House.
- An invitation to the 2016 Declaration of Kelso Laddie on Friday 15 April at 7.00pm

Secretary's Report

The secretary advised the following –

- The Equal Opportunities Policy was due for its annual review to ensure compliance with the requirements of equal opportunities legislation . This had previously been circulated and Councillors endorsed it.
- Arrangements had been made to hang Provost Ferguson's framed photo in the Town Hall.

- Annual insurance renewal – this had been completed with Councillor’s Tomczyk assistance. A safeguarding children and/or vulnerable adults questionnaire had been completed and a Risk Assessment was outstanding.

Scottish Borders Council

Area Forum

Councillor T Weatherston advised the next Area Forum meeting would take place in Kelso on the Wednesday 30 March and urged Councillors and members of the public to attend.

Kelso High School and Broomlands Primary School update

Councillor T Weatherston advised work would start on both projects in March 2016 with a scheduled finish for the High School October 2017 and Broomlands August 2017. It was noted a ground breaking ceremony was taking place on 10 March for the High School.

Dog Wardens

It was noted SBC had allocated two dog wardens to the Borders area who were empowered to issue fines. SBC would subsidise this scheme for one year.

Questions to SBC Councillors

Councillor Hodges asked for an update on the Springwood Terrace fence and Councillor Nicol undertook to feedback.

Consideration of Plans

The Council considered the following plan

- a) Erection of twenty one dwelling houses, Land South East of 10 James Dickson Place (Phase 5, Land at East Broomlands), Kelso. The Council had no objections.
- b) Installation of solar panels to roof of Hermitage Lodge, 4 Bullet Loan, Kelso. The Council had no objections.

Consideration of Licenses

The Council considered the following application:

- a) Cobbles Inn, Kelso. The Council had no objections.

Councillor T Weatherston advised there were five licensing objectives that should be considered in each application. Councillor Weatherston undertook to send these to the secretary.

The next meeting of Kelso Community Council will be held in the Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 12 April 2016 at 7.00pm

Scotland's Floral Gateway – Kelso in Bloom

Steering Group Meeting held on Tuesday 1st March 2016 at 7pm in the Town House Kelso

Present: Betty Hodges (KCC) - BH
Robin Hogg (KHS/Advisory) - RH
Dean Weatherston (Visit Kelso/KCC) - DW
Richard Robertson (Kelso High School) - RR
Stuart Young (SBC/KHS) - SY
Walter Young (KHS) - WY
James McKay (Kelso Rotary) - JM
Jimmy Fleming (Kelso Allotment Assoc.) - JF
Tamsin Thomas (KCC) - TT

BH welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked everyone for agreeing to be part of a Kelso in Bloom Steering Group and that this meeting would take the form of a brainstorming session without an agenda.

RH gave a brief outline of the background and requirements for setting up a cohesive group to take the project forward – the emphasis being on clarity of communication with the public and getting together a willing band of volunteers. He emphasised the need to start small and build on this over the next few years. Also, that, although he would not be taking an active part, he would be willing to give help and advice if required.

Funding:

After discussion it was felt that minimal funding would be required in the short term, but would need increase as the project matured.

BH confirmed that Shirley Redgrave (Sec. KCC) was in the process of contacting relevant bodies regarding funding, grants and donations.

It was agreed that the group would require a treasurer and DW agreed to take this on and talk to Shirley with a view to setting up a bank account.

Publicity and Communication with Kelso Residents:

General discussion took place on how best to keep the project high profile in the town and encourage active volunteers, including:

Posters
Photographs
Leaflet Drop
Tear off slip in Kelso Life
Shop Display

Word of Mouth

JF agreed to look at the situation regarding posters and leaflets, also a photographic record, with text, of the projects already underway (further early discussion required).

BH to arrange to meet with Karen Hume regarding the hanging baskets.

Volunteers:

A list of volunteers to be compiled and hopefully split into groups spread around the town.

It was agreed that a minimum of two litter pick-ups per year would be required.

SY to confirm the date of the imminent National Spring Clean Campaign when we could arrange the first pick-up.

BH to speak to Shirley regarding the insurance and risk assessment required to allow young people ie. guides, scouts etc., to take part in the pick-ups.

General discussion took place with everyone floating various ideas and it was agreed to meet again in one month's time. BH to report back to the Community Council on 8th March