

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council on
Tuesday 14 September at 7:00pm in Kelso Town Hall



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

IN ATTENDANCE: Shirley Redgrave (Secretary), Gus Russell (Secretary KCC Railway Committee), Tina Newton (Visit Kelso) and members of the public Carol Mack, Colin and Lisa Seccombe, Julie Ure, Vanessa and Melville Clayton, Gayle Watson, Toni Oliver, John Murray and Tadeusz Michnewicz (Mitch)

APOLOGIES: Councillors James McCombie and John Bassett

- *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.*
- *All Councillors and attendees to act in a courteous manner and direct question through the Chairperson.*

Welcome

The Provost welcomed everyone to the September meeting and announced he was delighted we could finally meet in person which was the first time since February 2020.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors James McCombie, John Bassett and Police Scotland.

Visit Kelso

Tina Newton advised thanks to the Town Bids Resilience Fund Visit Kelso were able to create a marketing campaign centred on a giant pair of planted boots in The Square. She advised that this was linked to social media, TV, radio and press coverage. She thanked SBC for allowing the display to be in The Square and extending the duration of the fixture. Once the display was dismantled Visit Kelso donated the plants to the Cheviot Youth Centre and Kelso in Bloom.

Tina commented the hanging baskets have been glorious this year and while members have paid for the watering service, Visit Kelso had paid for an additional two weeks watering as the baskets still looked fabulous. She advised the baskets will be taken down at the beginning of next week as some are now past their best.

The Provost thanked Tina for the update and commented the floral displays had looked fabulous and there had been a lot of complimentary comments from visitors in person and on social media.

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2021

The minutes held on Tuesday 8 June 2021 were approved. They were proposed by Councillor James Boulton and seconded by Councillor Paul Roberts.

Matters arising

Fencing around the old Foundry site – SBC Councillor Weatherston commented SBC officers had contacted the selling agents who advised a preferred buyer had been identified but no legal agreements had been drawn up. He commented that we would need to wait until the new owners had been identified and then SBC would approach them to secure the site.

Bike loops – SBC Councillor Robson advised two of the new bike loops had been installed and the others would be put in place shortly. He commented that their use would be monitored. The Provost noted that they had begun being used within a few hours of being installed which was positive and shows the need for them.

Questions from the Public

Mr Michnewicz advised he lived next to the former Trinity Church in East Bowmont Street and asked whether anything could be done to address its unkempt state and overgrowth on the pavements. He commented that he was aware the current owner had tried to do renovation works, clear the yard and tidy the area but due to financial issues the project had come to a halt. He was aware the site is currently being rented by a broadband company to store their equipment.

Mr Michnewicz asked whether it would be feasible for SBC to purchase the site, level the building and transform the site into additional car parking spaces which would be of great benefit to the town. The Provost agreed with this and advised SBC were trying to identify land in Kelso to create additional car parking and this suggestion had been made before but the site of the former Trinity Church was not feasible because of the costs involved

SBC Councillor Weatherston commented that unless a private building was a health and safety risk to the public SBC had few powers to put pressure on the owners to maintain them. The Provost advised he would follow up.

The Provost commented that a many of the public attending wanted to raise issues around antisocial behaviour in the town and advised these would be addressed under the Police matters section.

Elections

The Provost advised the Kelso Community Council had scheduled to hold an election next month. There are 12 spaces available on the Council and he outlined the timetable –

- Nominations open today Tuesday, 14 September 2021 and nomination papers are available from the Secretary, downloadable from SBC Website and had been previously circulated by the Secretary.
- Nominations close on Tuesday 28 September 2021.
- A 7-day cooling off period allowable under the Community Council guide to elections which will be until Tuesday, 5th October 2021.
- If there are a greater number of nominations received than places on the Community Council then elections for the available posts will take place on Monday 18 October 2021 at 8pm in the Tait Hall, Kelso.
- If there is an election the ballot papers are to be counted by Democratic Services at SBC on Tuesday 19 October, there after the results announced.
- The new Community Council could have their first meeting shortly after.

The Provost advised details would be posted on social media and an advert would appear in Kelso Life and posters would be placed around the town. SBC Councillor Weatherston would be acting as the Returning Officer.

It was noted that the current Community Council would be in abeyance until the new Council was elected.

Police Matters

The Provost advised the Multi Member Ward Plan for Kelso and District for September 2021 had previously been circulated and it was noted unfortunately there was no representation from the Police tonight as he was aware many members of the public had comments and concerns to raise.

The Provost commented that parking issues around the town was still problematic.

Councillor Tomczyk asked for an update on the CCTV equipment. The Provost advised that he had been chasing up this issue and was aware that only 2 cameras were working but the quality was poor. He advised the CCTV by the public toilets had been able to identify people vandalising them and it was noted that the perpetrators were of mixed ages. Councillor Tomczyk commented that the issue of

CCTV had been discussed on numerous occasions over the years to be advised there was no money available from either the Police or SBC to rectify them and wondered whether an approach direct to MSPs to raise with the Scottish Government would be useful. A discussion ensued on who should be responsible for the provision of CCTV – Councillor Roberts commented that the Police used CCTV to capture criminal activity and monitor but it should be SBC's responsibility to protect businesses and the public. SBC Councillor Weatherston commented CCTV surveillance nationally was run and controlled by the Police and SBC had reduced funding to upgrade the equipment. However, he reminded the meeting that SBC had spent £0.5m on funding two Community Action Teams who carried out regular patrols. Councillor Roberts commented that with the increased antisocial behaviour happening in the town at the weekend, Kelso was in danger of getting a reputation as an unsafe town to visit. SBC Councillor Robson asked whether it would be possible to replace the faulty cameras and damaged cables on the current system. SBC Councillor Mountford agreed to arrange for a representative from the Community Council and himself to visit the Police Station to inspect the system to see whether any upgrades could be carried out. The Provost agreed that the Community Council should contact the local MSPs.

Members of the public Julie Ure and Carol Mack commented they had visited the local Police Station as Julie's puppy had tragically died from a drugs overdose outside her town centre home and to ask about the CCTV. They were advised by the Police that if there was working CCTV, they may have been able to capture the incident. Carol Mack asked whether it would be possible to start a public petition to raise funds. SBC Councillor Robson advised he was aware of other cases where dogs had been poisoned with a white substance although it was noted that the substance that killed Julie's dog was an illegal drug.

Many members of the public had attended tonight to raise concerns around the continued antisocial behaviour happening in the town at the weekend. The Provost commented that he was aware of issues, and these had repeatedly been reported to the Police. However, since restrictions were lifted there was a lot of antisocial behaviour in the town with large groups of both youths and adults gathering in The Square and Abbey Row and appearing to be under the influence of alcohol and or drugs. The Provost advised groups continue to congregate outside the Royal Bank of Scotland as they can access the free Wi Fi. This has been intimidating for people wishing to use the cash machines. Lisa and Colin Secombe who run a local B&B advised many of their guests had felt intimidated returning to their premises at night and advised she had written to the CEO of the bank to ask them to switch off the Wi Fi at the weekend to stop these gatherings. The Provost advised he was aware guests who had stayed at both the Cross Keys Hotel and the Queens Head Hotel had posted adverse comments on social media and contacted him regarding antisocial behaviour.

Members of the public advised it was frustrating trying to contact the Police to highlight these events but it was noted it was important to always contact the Police so incidents could be recorded. Lisa Secombe advised she had contacted John Lamont MP and he had responded by saying the police had not received many reports of incidents. SBC Councillor Mountford advised the CAT team were aware of

issues and they were trying to monitor. He did advise that if the Police were in attendance, they were reluctant to engage with a large gathering.

Councillor Roberts asked whether local police would be deployed to Glasgow to assist with the forthcoming COP26 climate change summit. SBC Councillor Mountford commented that the CAT team were funded by SBC and therefore they would not be redeployed. SBC Councillor Robson advised policing for the event was funded by the UK Government and that one or two officers would be deployed to Glasgow, but assurances had been given to look at shift patterns to avoid any unnecessary gaps.

In response to a question on how to deal with cars using the town as a racetrack SBC Councillor Mountford advised this was a specialist area that traffic police would need to deal with. The Provost raised the issue with increased speeding between Kelso and Heiton which coincided with the introduction of the 20mph scheme.

Councillor Roberts commented that it was urgent to “win hearts and minds” and that a police presence over the next few weekends and at the appropriate time was imperative to try to tackle anti-social behaviour. SBC Councillor Robson commented that assistance was needed from the parents. Vanessa Clayton commented that the antisocial behaviour usually occurred between 2200 – 0200 hours.

In response to a question on Police accountability to SBC, Councillor Mountford advised he had monthly meetings with the local Sergeant and Inspector, and he sat on the CAT committee and Councillor Robson sat on the Police Fire and Rescue Board. He advised that he would feedback the level of dissatisfaction to the Police.

Councillor McGrath commented that he had raised previously that careful consideration should be given into using “Specials” to assist with patrols over the weekend.

Kelso in Bloom

Councillor Horsburgh advised the beds had been well maintained over the summer and thanked all volunteers involved. He advised plans were in place to order the winter bedding, to be sourced locally and would be installed at the end of October.

Councillor Horsburgh advised several very generous donations had been received from the Lodge Kelso and Tweed Lodge 58, Kelso Branch – British Legion and members of the public.

SBC Councillor Weatherston commented that if there was any short fall in funds to contact him.

Open Water Safety

SBC Councillor Robson advised he was approached by one of the Junction Ghillies recently on behalf of Mrs Anne Moriarty about promoting water safety on the Tweed in Kelso. Mrs Moriarty tragically has lost two sons in the river.

SBC Councillor Robson advised he had asked the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to put on a water safety demonstration and the Area Commander Stephen Gourlay made arrangements to hold this on The Cobby very quickly.

They held a short ceremony to locate a lifebuoy on the wall at the car park – Roxburghe Estate has given permission for its placement. This was a symbolic launch to an on-going locally based water safety campaign and members of the public were invited to attend.

SBC Councillor Robson advised there is much to be done in the months ahead including fundraising for further lifebuoys and lifebelts, obtaining planning permission for their location, sorting out insurance and other activities. He advised one of the lifebuoys had been donated and he would take advice from the fishermen as to the best location for the others.

The Provost commented he was keen that we didn't just put up the life belts and that a full programme of engagement and education was undertaken. SBC Councillor Robson advised the intention was to produce leaflets and arrange awareness at the local schools. He commented that he would like to ask the Community Council to act as the focal point to collect funds and would like the Resilience Committee to be involved.

Railway Committee

Councillor Harry Tomczyk advised the Railway Committee had held a very successful meeting on the 6 September (minutes attached for information) and they would meet again on the 25 October. It was agreed minutes of future Railway Committee minutes would be appended to the KCC minutes, so everyone is kept informed of progress.

He advised the key points from the meeting were –

- Need to involve the communities along the proposed line
- Need to create a separate organisation to incorporate these groups – they were in discussion with Heather Batch from The Bridge
- A separate bank account had been set up with the KCC bank account which would be used for fundraising.
- A lot of enthusiasm across the Borders and from Berwick including their local County Councillor.
- This was a long-term project
- Will be in discussion with Campaign for Borders Railway
- In discussion with Destination Tweed who are planning a foot/cycle path from the Tweed's source to the sea and would very much like to present their project to the Kelso Community Council. The path would have an impact on Kelso as a whole and, although there is a cross-over with the Tweed Valley Railway because Destination Tweed are being directed to look at using the old rail track bed as part of the path
- Councillor H Tomczyk will be standing down as a Councillor and hence will no longer be Chairman but plans to be involved on the Railway Committee.

Councillor Boulton has volunteered to be chairman subject to formal appointment by the new council.

- Reston Friends are keen to promote the idea of a railway line from Reston to Galashiels.
- SBC Councillor Robson advised officers from Northumberland County Council area keen to be involved in this project.

The Provost thanked Councillor Tomczyk for his involvement in this project.

Secretary's Report

- Correspondence, consultations, planning, traffic regulations etc. had been circulated and captured and a summary would be attached to the minutes.

Scottish Borders Council Community Network (SBCCN)

Councillor McGrath advised SBCCN would be holding their AGM on 29 September 2021 in the Kelso Men's Shed and everyone was welcome.

Councillor McGrath advised he had written to representatives of the Scottish Cabinet Office today and raised the issue of Part 7 (football clubs) and Part 10 (participation in public decision making) not being enacted in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015. He advised as Chair of the SBCCN he had written to all Community Councils and a copy would be circulated by the Secretary. He commented that the Scottish Government maybe in contempt of their own legislation by any further delay, as this is causing significant problems for both the Community and Local Government.

He advised at the AGM the new Core Group will be proposed for election. The ten core group members (two from each Locality area as per the Constitution) will play a major proactive part liaising with the Community Councils in their Locality, who they represent in the Core Group.

The Act lists a range of public service authorities included in this legislation which applies to Part 10: Participation in public decision-making - Further/Higher Education establishment, Health Boards, Highlands & Islands Enterprise, Local Authority, National Park Authority, Police Service of Scotland, Scottish Enterprise, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Natural Heritage and Transport Partnership (regional)

Scottish Borders Council Report

Kelso Ambulance provision

SBC Councillor Robson advised he was in discussion with the service and was awaiting an update which he will share in due course.

Rosebank Cemetery Wall/Fence

SBC Councillor Robson advised the contract for the work had been issued and he anticipated the work taking place shortly.

Parking and traffic management

SBC Councillor Robson advised over 8,000 comments had been received as a result of the 20mph consultation. Based on feedback decisions would be made to consider which streets if any should remain at 20mph and which streets, if any, should revert to 30mph. He advised he anticipated SBC would be in a position early in the New Year to start a formal Traffic Regulation Order and after that changes to parking in the town would commence.

SBC Councillor Mountford advised Napier University are currently compiling their evaluation report and would report to SBC on 4 October 2021 with their recommendations.

SBC Councillor Weatherston commented with the increased Government targets to build more housing there would be greater pressure on the need for additional car parking in the town. Councillors Horsburgh and Tomczyk commented the Glebe field appeared to be the only option.

Update on Covid and Live Borders

The Provost commented it was good to see the Contact Centres reopening but was concerned Live Borders halls and community centres borders wide were still not opened which was forcing local groups/clubs to find alternative venues for their activities and this would have a detrimental financial effect on Live Borders.

Councillor Cooper commented the Kelso Cinema wished to restart its film nights but was having difficulty getting capacity numbers from Live Borders. SBC Councillor Robson undertook to investigate.

Questions to Councillors

Councillor McGrath asked SBC what their views were on the current the consultation on Social Care Reform. SBC Councillor T Weatherston advised SBC's comments would be available after the consultation.

Any Other Business

The Provost commented Paul Mitchell who owns the Micropub in The Square had formally thanked the Council for their support in allowing him to create seating space outside the pub.

Consideration of Licenses

It was noted there were no licenses for consideration.

Consideration of Plans

The Secretary had circulated a list of planning applications considered during the recess and these are appended to the minutes.

21/01441/FUL - Mr Douglas Elliot: Removal of condition A of planning permission 424/72 to allow for 12-month occupancy of static caravans: Springwood Caravan Park Springwood Village Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 8LS. This was approved.

Provost's Report

The Provost advised over his time on the Community Council, he had worked with three Provosts, two Secretary's and many Community Councillors. He wished to formally thank them all for everything they have done not just for the town but for their support given to him. He especially liked to thank all those who he worked with on Sub Groups with delivering projects that have enhanced the community.

He advised he was someone who prefers to work behind the scenes and was surprised when he put himself forward for the positions of Chairman and Provost but was delighted, he did. He said it has been an absolute honour to serve the town he loves and a privilege representing the town at events and occasions not just in the town but also at Springwood, Floors, around the Borders and in Edinburgh.

As part of the role as Chairman also comes the position of Honorary President of the Kelso Laddies Association. The Provost has supported Civic Week all his life and it was a great opportunity to give something back and be a part of this committee and he looked forward to continuing to work with them going forward.

Finally, the Provost advised although the Community Council is now in purdah, he will continue to represent the community council at other meetings until the new council has been elected at which point, he will officially hand over to the new chair.

SBC Councillor Mountford on behalf of SBC thanked the Provost for his leadership, dedication, hard work, passion and love of the town and wished him well.

Councillor Tomczyk on behalf of the other Community Councillors thanked the Provost for everything he had done.

The Provost thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

The next Community Council meeting will be held on Tuesday 19 October 2021 subject to the election and approval by the new community council.

APPENDIX - Planning applications considered during summer 2021 recess

21/00983/FUL - The Co-operative Group – Alterations to include replacement customer entrance door, installation of new refrigeration plan within fence enclosure-
The Co-operative Supermarket 26 - 38 Roxburgh Street Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7DH

21/00916/FUL - Mrs Nicola McIlwraith -Erection of Summer House – 1 Mayfield Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7BL

The Community Council looked at these applications and considered all the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans.

21/01084/FUL - Scottish Borders Council Erection of metal framed shelter - Shedden Park Shedden Park Road Kelso TD5

The Community Council looked at this application and considered all the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were reluctantly unable to support the plans. This is based on the following comments from most Councillors -

Although the Community Council wishes to encourage sports activities, we are unable to support due to the style and location of the shelter, on one of the main routes into Kelso which looks very attractive with the tree line, in addition the proximity to the memorial gates detracts from their appearance. Furthermore, the utilitarian nature of the structure would seem to be out of keeping with this specific part of Shedden Park.

We understand the runners would like a shelter and we would be happy to consider other locations within Shedden Park.

We don't support seating in the shelter. It will only encourage and increase existing anti-social behaviour problems. There is a changing facility at the back of the public toilets the runners have a key for so any valuables can be locked in here. We hate this argument as sports and community groups should be encouraged and the risk of vandalism shouldn't be a consideration of them improving this, but the fact of the matter is it will.

These shelters are in the Volunteer Park in Hawick. They're graffitied and have smashed panels. The Perspex panels that are remaining are covered in a green residue from the trees.

This is SBC land and SBC property so they will be responsible for cleaning and maintenance. Given they struggle to clean and maintain bus stops and public benches in the town centre what measures will be put in place for an additional shelter?

21/01163/LBC - Caroline Thomson - Formation of French doors from window- 2 Waverley Lodge Maxwell Lane Kelso Scottish

The Community Council looked at this application and considered all the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and objected to the plan on the following basis.

- This is a poor application with very little detail.
- This is a listed property with association to Sir Walter Scott
- There is no detail of the new French doors, whether they are plastic, wood or any other material.

21/01163/LBC - Caroline Thomson - Formation of French doors from window- 2 Waverley Lodge Maxwell Lane Kelso Scottish

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- This is a poor application with very little detail.
- This is a listed property with association to Sir Walter Scott
- There is no detail of the new French doors, whether they are plastic, wood or any other material.

21/00683/LBC RE-CONSULTATION – Incorporating revisions to previous consultation, Vault Square Properties Ltd - Internal and external alterations and extension to form one dwelling house and 7 flats - Public House 5 Vault Square Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7JU

The Community Council looked at this application and considered all the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans.

However, it is noted that although the new application for 7 flats and one dwelling house appears to be an improvement on the previous application for 14 flats without kitchens and they now look better, the plans don't say that extending the roof has been abandoned and not mentioned. We would support this, on the proviso that the roof line is kept at what it is now.

21/01225/FUL - Mr Mark Dean -: Alterations and extension to dwelling house and replacement windows - Bowmont House 22 Bowmont Street Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7JH

The Community Council looked at this application and considered all the planning policies relevant to the area of the proposal and were happy to support the plans.

APPENDIX

00683KELSO COMMUNITY COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE/EVENTS/CONSULTATIONS SUMMER 2021		
Date	Event/Correspondence	Venue and comments
08.06.21	Approved minutes posted	For information
	Planning applications submitted	For information
11.06.21	SBC Mainstreaming Report and Equality Outcomes 2021-2025	For information
	South of Scotland Destination Alliance Business Survey - Extending Season and Business Support - Deadline 18th June	For information
	Regional Prosperity Framework-consultation-advance letter to stakeholders	For information
	Planning application 21/00916/FUL	For comments - approved
19.06.21	Cancellation of Floral Gateway competition and questionnaire	For information
	BT public pay phone	For information
	News release: Activities for all as Get into Summer programme of events launched across the Borders	For information
	Planning application 21/00983/FUL	For comments- approved
	Vault Square development – update on planning application from Ian Hastings	For information
05.07.21	Online Consultation Event for the Draft Regional Prosperity Framework	For information
	News release: Residents invited to join Cheviot Community Fund Assessment Panel	For information
	News release: Cheviot Community Fund opens to support local projects	For information
	News Release from Borderlands Partnership: UK Government Minister hears of progress across the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal	For information

	Community Councils guidance on meetings and elections	For information
	News Release: Scottish Borders Council thanks staff, partners and communities	For information
	Fireworks Consultation Launch and The Fireworks (Scotland) Miscellaneous Amendments Regulations 2021	For information
	Fallago Environment Fund - Covid 19 Path Repair grants 2021	For information and shared with KHS
	SBC Planning – objections to the change of use for the public telephone box in The Square Kelso	For information
	Free Training for Community Councillors - from the Open University	For information
	LOCAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL PATHS MAINTENANCE GRANT 2021-22	For information and sent to KHS
	News release: Council to hold online session for people interested in becoming a foster carer	For information
	News release: Wildflower areas to help promote biodiversity across Scottish Borders	For information
06.07.21	Planning application - 21/01084/FUL -Scottish Borders Council: Erection of metal framed shelter: Shedden Park Shedden Park Road Kelso Scottish Borders	For comments – not supported
	Planning application - 21/01101/FUL – Lodge Kelso and Tweed 58 – Replacement door – Masonic Hall, Shedden Park, Kelso	For comments supported
	Road Closure - Abbey Row, Kelso	For information
	Email from Brian Patterson regarding public toilets and bus shelters in town.	For comment from SBC
	News release: Council holds consultation on proposed changes to Christmas holiday dates	For information
	Borders Kayak and Canoe Club proposal to locate a smaller container at Mayfield Riverside car park to store boats and equipment	Unanimously supported

08.07.21	Planning application - 21/00683/LBC and 21/00673/FUL - Vault Square Properties Ltd. Internal and external alterations and extension to form one dwelling house and 7 flats Public House 5 Vault Square Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7JU	For comments by 05.08.21 – support with proviso
18.07.21	Residents invited to join Eildon Community Fund Assessment Panel	For information
	Member Briefing Gypsy/Travellers - Kelso Riverside 14.7.21	For information
	News Release: Consultation opens on proposed Tour O' the Borders closed road cycling event	For information
	Planning application - 21/01164/FUL and 21/01163/LBC - Caroline Thomson: Formation of French doors from window 2 Waverley Lodge Maxwell Lane Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 7BH	For comment not supported
	Public telephone box - The Square Kelso – comments from Councillor McGrath on behalf of SBCCN	For information
23.07.21	Lifebelts on Tweed	For information
28.07.21	Application for annual grant submitted by Secretary and grant being processed	For information
29.07.21	UK Government Community Ownership Fund launched	For information
	Planning applications 21/01225/FUL and 21/1223/LBC – alterations and replacement windows Bowmont House	For comments - approved
03.08.21	We are still supporting EU citizens	For information
	A joint consultation has been launched today on how flood risk can be managed across the Scottish Borders in conjunction with SEPA.	For information
07.08.21	Police Scotland July 2021 report	For information
15.08.21	News release: Residents invited to attend next round of local Area Partnership meetings	For information
	Advance notice of a small grants programme for up to £10,000 per project to support community-led climate action	For information
	QME Care Press Release - Person Centred Software	For information
	News release: Community groups begin to benefit from Council's Build Back a Better Borders Recovery Fund	For information
	News release: Referrals open for domestic abuse support programmes	For information
	News release: Scottish Borders pupils receive exam results as figures show continued success	For information

	National Care Service – Consultation	For information
	Covid-19 Testing Update	For information
20.08.21	Member update - waste services	For information
	KCC September meeting – draft minutes and agenda	For information
26.08.21	Police Scotland confirmation of CCTV working	For information
	Update on Waste Services	For information
	News Release: Further local services to reopen in coming weeks	For information
	News Release: Final countdown for Tour of Britain's return to the Scottish Borders	For information
	Road closure - C46 Stichill to Ednam road	For information
02.09.21	Papers for KCC meeting on the 14.09.21	For information
	Papers for Community Council Election 2021	For action
09.09.21	Planning - 21/01441/FUL- Mr Douglas Elliot - Removal of condition A of planning permission 424/72 to allow for 12-month occupancy of static caravans - Springwood Caravan Park Springwood Village Kelso Scottish Borders TD5 8LS	For comments - approved
	Minutes of the Railway Committee meeting held on 06.09.21	For information
	Free webinar and drop-in session - Scottish Borders - 23.09	For information
12/09/21	Community Planning Strategic Board - presentation on The Money	For information
	Reducing Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals	For information
13.09.21	SBCCN AGM - Wednesday 29 September 2021 at 7pm	For information
	News release: Consultation to be held on Borderer's experience of Chiefswood Road one-way trial	For information
	News release: New partnership launched to help tackle rural crime in the Scottish Borders	For information
	Scottish Government launches consultation on Social Care Reform	For comment

APPENDIX MINUTES THE OF THE RAILWAY COMMITTEE 06/09/21

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council Railway Committee
held by Zoom on Monday 6 September 2021 at 7.30pm

1. **Attendance and apologies for absence**

Kelso Community Councillors Peter Cooper and Harry Tomczyk (Chair) and James Boulton (joined during discussion on action points); Scottish Borders Councillor Euan Robson (joined during discussion on action points); Ian Aitchison, Tina Newton and Gus Russell (Secretary)

2. **Minutes**

Approval of the minutes was proposed by Ian Aitchison and seconded by Councillor Cooper. The meeting approved the minutes from the 7 July meeting with no amendments.

Action points update

1. **Contact list:** SBC Councillor Robson has updated the list of contacts and it will be further updated after upcoming Community Council elections
2. **Stakeholder letter:** confirmed that this had been circulated to members for final comments (see item 6).
3. **Scott Wilson report:** there is no soft copy available, so a hard copy of relevant pages is to be located and scanned. SBC Councillor Robson confirmed that COVID restrictions had meant that his being in the Council offices at the same time as the officer who has the report had proved difficult.

Councillor Cooper asked for confirmation that the westerly point should be described as "St Boswell's". It was agreed that, as the junction would be at or near St Boswell's, this would be appropriate for immediate purposes.

As for the easterly point, Ian Aitchison suggested to name this as "Berwick-upon-Tweed (Tweedmouth)".

Councillor Cooper informed the meeting that his calculation of the population figures is now, largely, put together.

ACTION: SBC councillor to arrange in-person meeting with the SBC Officer who has Scott Wilson report and provide relevant sections to Councillor Cooper.

4. **Campaign for Borders Rail contact:** discussed in agenda item 3.

5. **Regional Prosperity Framework consultation:** the Secretary confirmed that the response was filed before the deadline.

SBC Councillor Robson confirmed that the framework document would now refer to possible extensions (plural) to Border Rail, thus keeping the door open for the Tweed Valley Railway extension.

6. **South of Scotland Draft Regional Economic Strategy consultation:** the Secretary reported that that the Committee's response was filed before the deadline.

- 7/8. **LNER timetable:** the Chair noted that the proposed timetable changes had been delayed for a year. It was agreed to remain alert to future proposals which might diminish the train services from Berwick upon Tweed station.

9. **Build Back Better Borders Fund:** SBC Councillor Robson reported that, to set up a campaign organisation outside Kelso Community Council, initial funding may be available via the Community Grant, for up to £2,500. The application would need to be submitted by the Kelso Community Council. This would give a decent start to a contact campaign: for example, to cover travel expenses for initial stakeholder meetings, production of a basic leaflet and/or basic website. If successful, the Kelso Community Council would make payments in line with commitments made by the Railway Committee. Once established, a separate campaign organisation would then operate autonomously.

Heather Batsch who, SBC Councillor Robson confirmed in response to questions from Councillor Boulton, works for The Bridge, a publicly funded organisation who provide development support for community and voluntary sector organisations in the Scottish Borders, could be approached to assist with the set-up of a separate campaign organisation.

The Chair reported that she had previously assisted with the conversion of the Heritage Society to a charity. He noted that it had always been envisaged that a stand-alone organisation, separate from the Kelso Community Council, would be necessary if there were to be any realistic prospect of garnering support from other bodies.

SBC Councillor Robson suggested that the Community Fund application be made through the Kelso Community Council and that the Committee should ask for Heather Batsch's help to set up a stand-alone organisation.

The Chair asked what ongoing links there would be to the Kelso Community Council when this happened.

SBC Councillor Robson stated that the Kelso Community Council, along with other Community Councils and Parish Councils, would become an important, interested party.

The Chair asked if the Kelso Community Council would give grant money to the new organisation.

SBC Councillor Robson said that the Community Council, as a recognised organisation, would need to apply for the grant funding and could then spend amounts to set up a stand-alone organisation.

The Chair noted that setting up a separate organisation was not straight forward and would require a constitution, with membership, bank accounts and the like.

SBC Councillor Robson confirmed that that was the case and why some funding would be required for the set-up; adding that, once a stand-alone body was set up, there would be scope to apply for funding from sources such as the Build Back Better Borders Fund.

Ian Aitchison supported the engagement of Heather Batsch, based on his positive previous experience of her through her advice to the Heritage Society, and noted that the stand-alone organisation would allow engagement with other stakeholders outside Kelso, with the expectation that Kelso, as the largest community on the proposed route, would have an important say in the campaign.

Councillor Boulton also expressed his support for engaging with Heather Batsch.

Councillor Cooper noted that her experience would provide considerable assistance with the procedures and administration involved in setting up of a separate organisation.

The Chair suggested to raise this approach at the Kelso Community Council meeting on 14 September but recommending that the decision to approach Ms Batsch be delayed until the new council members were in post, following the election in October.

Ian Aitchison queried if it was necessary to wait for the new Community Council members to be in place before making an initial approach to Ms Batsch.

Councillor Boulton suggested to raise the issue at the 14 September Community Council meeting, to get approval in principle to approach Ms Batsch, meet with Ms Batsch and then report back to the newly constituted

Community Council, after the election. If the new Community Council remains in support of the trans-border Tweed Valley Railway project, then, for it to have any realistic prospect of success, a new, standalone organisation - not being Kelso Community Council itself - will be essential to enlist a wider and more diverse membership.

Tina Newton suggested that, as the Chair had stated his intention not to stand for re-election to the Kelso Community Council, setting up a new body would leave the option open for him to remain involved, perhaps even as initial chair of that new body, noting that, otherwise, the Committee would need to elect another Community Councillor as chair of the Railway Committee.

The Chair informed the meeting that Councillor Boulton had kindly volunteered to take on the role of chair of the Railway Committee and that any appointment of a new chair of the Committee would, like the setting up a stand-alone campaign body, be subject to approval by the new Kelso Community Council, given the importance of the issue to Kelso.

Ian Aitchison suggested to put the proposed approach of speaking with Ms Batsch about how best to establish a stand-alone body to the 14 September Kelso Community Council meeting and, assuming there are no objections raised by the Community Council, to meet with her and, duly informed by her advice, to report with a formal proposal to the newly constituted Kelso Community Council, after the October election.

There was general agreement to this approach.

ACTION: SBC Councillor Robson to set up provisional time for meeting with Ms Batsch, to take place after 14 September, about how best to set up a stand-alone body.

SBC Councillor Robson reported that Northumberland County Councillor, Ms Isabel Hunter, had chaired the recent LNER timetable-change meeting and that she is very enthusiastic about the idea of redeveloping the Tweed Valley Railway route and could be very helpful in bringing other colleagues and fellow Northumberland County Councillors on board. Northumberland County Councillor Hunter also sits on two or three parish councils, whose support would be important.

The Chair noted that Parish Councils will often have District or County Councillors in attendance at meetings and the Parish Councils have a degree of autonomy, including the power to raise and spend money.

Ian Aitchison suggested that Northumberland County Councillor Glen Sanderson, Council Leader, is also likely to prove a vocal supporter of the proposed Tweed Valley Railway line.

- 10: The Secretary reported that the Kelso Community Council Secretary had set up a bank account, linked to the Community Council account but, due to banking requirements, it is in the name of the Community Council Secretary herself and she is, currently, the sole signatory.

The Chair concluded that this meant there was no fully separate bank account for the Tweed Valley Railway committee.

Tina Newton noted that any stand-alone body would need its own bank account, in due course, in any event. Money received for the railway campaign by Kelso Community Council could then be transferred to that account.

Ian Aitchison noted that if, as discussed earlier, a Community Fund application were to be made, it would need to be by the Kelso Community Council who could, if successful, receive the money and then transfer it to the separate Railway Committee bank account. This funding would then be evidenced and could be ring-fenced for the railway campaign. In due course, subject to compliance with the bank's know-your-client regulations, the account could hopefully be transferred to the new, properly constituted body.

- 11: Councillor Boulton to contact Sustrans about ownership of track bed.

ACTION: Action to be carried forward.

- 12: Destination Tweed: discussed under agenda item 4.

3. Campaign for Borders Rail

SBC Councillor Robson reported that he had not yet contacted Simon Walton and suggested that, perhaps, it would be better to await the outcome of the initial discussions with Ms Batsch about the preferred structure for a stand-alone campaign body before doing so.

The Chair raised a concern about the Campaign for Borders Rail learning about the planned set-up of a new Tweed Valley Railway campaign body without any initial discussion having taken place and that it would be good to avoid that situation.

Ian Aitchison offered to attend an investigative meeting with Simon Walton, to avoid reinventing the wheel. He suggested a meeting date by mid-October, so the report to the newly constituted Community Council in November could report on both the campaign body set-up proposal and the findings from the initial meeting with the Campaign for Borders Rail. He suggested that he, Councillor Boulton and the Secretary should attend.

Councillor Boulton noted that the Tweed Valley Railway Campaign had lots to learn from their campaign on issues such as funding, set-up, composition of committee, relevant skills needed including the cross-border elements.

Ian Aitchison added that, by having the meeting, those who would be presenting the Tweed Valley Railway campaign to the Kelso Community Council would be better prepared to answer the likely questions.

ACTION: SBC Councillor Robson to call Simon Walton of Campaign for Borders Rail to set up a meeting, at a date after the initial meeting with Heather Batsch.

4. Destination Tweed

The Secretary reported that Luke Fisher from Destination Tweed had responded to the Secretary's email and had requested the opportunity to present their project to the Community Council while raising the prospect of their path following the old railway track bed.

Ian Aitchison referred to the excellent cycle and footpath alongside the Airdrie to Bathgate railway as an example of co-existence and asked if having active travel paths alongside rail links was part of the Scottish Government's travel policy.

The Chair mentioned a similar path alongside the rail line in Norfolk, allowing people to combine rail and active travel.

SBC Councillor Robson mentioned that Destination Tweed had met with the Sprouston Community Council and residents because the old railway line passed through what are now private gardens or, in some cases, buildings. Accordingly, the path may not follow the old track bed and might even remain north of the Tweed. He added that he did not therefore think there was a necessary conflict of interest, noting that the cost-benefit analysis may result in the optimum route departing from the old route in order to serve different communities, a potential finding that would be come not come out until the detailed economic feasibility study stage.

The Chair noted that, from a Kelso Community Council perspective, any route would have to serve Kelso.

Councillor Boulton informed the meeting that the primary goal of Destination Tweed was to have a foot and cycle path as close to the River Tweed as possible. Although landowners may be pointing Destination Tweed towards the railway line that would be some way away from the River Tweed and noting that there are already long sections of path along the track bed, so it would not really meet the goal of having a new, riverside path. He suggested that we could certainly have a discussion with them.

Ian Aitchison suggested that the Destination Tweed initial contact should be with the Community Council, as that appeared to be their key request.

The Chair agreed that the Community Council often had interesting presentations made to it and that it would be more in Destination Tweed's interest to speak to the Community Council.

Councillor Boulton noted that, as there is overlapping representation on the Community Council and Railway Committee, it would be possible for general and railway-specific issues to be addressed during a Destination Tweed presentation to the Community Council.

ACTION: The Chair to report to the 14 September Community Council meeting that Destination Tweed would like to present to the Community Council

5. Build Back Better Borders Fund application

SBC Councillor Robson explained that this fund is for bigger projects than those funded by the Community Fund. It could, for example, fund the drone flight over the possible route. He suggested to apply to the Community Fund, first, to set up a stand-alone campaign body and then, possibly, to apply in the future to the BBBB Fund, to which funding is committed periodically by SBC own funds. SBC elections will be in April/May 2022 and the new Council will have their initial budget set by the previous Council, subject to any changes the new Scottish Borders Council may wish to make, given that the financial year ends on 31 March. This may mean that there is less risk for an existing, operating grant scheme to be amended in the course of the current financial year ending 31 March 2023, after it has been running for a month or so.

Ian Aitchison noted that, to have a realistic prospect of securing funding under the 2022/23 scheme, the campaign body would ideally be in place by Christmas 2021 and submit a funding application before March 2022.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

SBC Councillor Robson suggested that having contacted Northumberland County Councillor Isabel Hunter, it would be ideal if she could facilitate a meeting with some or all the four or five Councillors from Berwick upon Tweed to garner support for the Tweed Valley Railway project from them.

The Chair noted that the population of Tweedmouth and Berwick upon Tweed is significant so getting their support would be helpful, on the assumption that they would view a rail link from the West to be beneficial to their communities.

Ian Aitchison asked if meeting the Northumberland County Councillors, in October, after first meeting with Heather Batsch, would be helpful, as it would afford an

opportunity to get their input on both the suggested constitution of a campaign body and on the campaign itself.

SBC Councillor Robson said that that would be helpful, allowing the Committee to seek their views on a body serving a cross-border project and would also allow the Northumberland County Councillors to suggest enthusiastic supporters of the project who may be willing to sit on the new campaign body's committee. The Northumberland County Councillors could then bring in Parish Councils and local enthusiasts, with a desire to see better rail transport and improved stations, such as David McClymont (TBC) who was vocal about the stations in Northumberland: Berwick upon Tweed, Alnmouth and Morpeth and throughout the eastern part of the county and who was active in the Blyth Valley railway line extension.

Ian Aitchison reported that the reopening of the Blyth Valley extension is being looked at actively¹, as part of the UK Government's levelling-up agenda, but that cost constraints raised by Network Rail are impacting the desire to develop it in the way originally planned and may result in more basic infrastructure being built. While not 'digger ready' the planning is, he reported close to being, if not already, approved. He suggested that, after first meeting Heather Batsch, to meet with the Campaign for Borders Rail and to feed back their input to Heather. Then, similarly, to meet the Northumberland County Councillors and feedback their input to Heather Batsch. This would then provide a solid basis for presenting to the Kelso Community Council in November. He noted that a key question for Ms Batsch is about what skills are likely to be most helpful to make the new campaign body successful.

Ian Aitchison asked if the initial contact letter should now be sent out, given that the Committee now have an updated list of contacts or if it should await the set-up of a stand-alone body.

The Chair said it would make more sense to, first, get a stand-alone body in place, which the stakeholder groups could join, before making contact.

ACTION: SBC Councillor Robson to contact Northumberland County Councillor Isabel Hunter and ask for a date for a Zoom meeting with her and her colleagues, in the relatively near future, after the meeting with Heather Batsch.

ACTION: revisit stakeholder contact letter once new campaign organisation body has been established.

7. **AOB**

The Chair said that he would cease to be a Kelso Community Councillor after the election and would cease to be a Councillor and Chair of the Committee after the election. The Chair proposed that, until the stand-alone campaign body is set up,

¹ On 7 September, Ian Aitchison provided this link to the article to which he was referring: <https://www.chroniclive.co.uk/news/north-east-news/planned-new-northumberland-rail-line-20402593>

and subject to approval by the newly constituted Kelso Community Council, Councillor Boulton would be the new chair of the committee.

SBC Councillor Robson thanked the Chair for all his efforts to date and hoped to invite him back, in some capacity, in the future.

8. **Next meeting**

The next meeting will be on 25 October at 19:30h in the Town Hall.

Summary of actions

ACTION 1: SBC councillor to arrange in-person meeting with the SBC Officer who has Scott Wilson report and provide relevant sections to Councillor Cooper.

ACTION 2: Councillor Boulton to contact Sustrans about ownership of track bed.

ACTION 3: SBC Councillor Robson to set up provisional time for meeting with Ms Batsch about how best to set up a stand-alone body.

ACTION 4: SBC Councillor Robson to call Simon Walton of Campaign for Borders Rail to set up a meeting, at a date after the initial meeting with Heather Batsch.

ACTION 5: The Chair to report to the 14 September Community Council meeting that Destination Tweed would like to present to the Community Council

ACTION 6: SBC Councillor Robson to contact Northumberland County Councillor Isabel Hunter and ask for a date for a Zoom meeting with her and her colleagues, in the relatively near future, after the meeting with Heather Batsch.

ACTION 7: revisit stakeholder contact letter once new campaign organisation body has been established.