

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Kelso Community Council held in The Town Hall, Kelso on Tuesday 14 May 2024 at 7.00pm

PRESENT: Provost Gavin Horsburgh, Councillors James Boulton, Peter Cooper, James McCombie, Paul Roberts and Shirley Redgrave; Scottish Borders Councillors Euan Robson and Tom Weatherston.

IN ATTENDANCE: Yvonne Oliver (Secretary), Norman Burr (ASSET) and Lesley Muter (ASSET)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Colin McGrath, Toni Oliver, Christine Hamilton, Owen Adams and Gail Watson; Adrian Clarkson (Visit Kelso/Auditor of Accounts); SBC Councillor S Mountford

Minute

The minute of the Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 9 May 2023 was approved on the proposal of Councillor James Boulton and seconded by Councillor Shirley Redgrave.

Provost's Report

Into year three as Chairman of Kelso Community Council and Provost of Kelso, this has been a privilege yet again. Since the last AGM, Kelso Community Council has been extremely busy with so much going on – The first main duty was the unearthing of the Kelso Time Capsule, buried underneath the Bullring, in the Square, as this coincided with the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. As this had not been opened since 1961, this brought a lot of interest and crowds to the opening and the items have been on display in the Town Hall for a year.

We welcomed the 2023 Kelso Laddie, Andrew Thomson and along with Kelso Civic Week in July, proved to be an extremely popular laddie. The following week we had the Border Union Show and as always it was a massive success. I was asked to judge the Children's Pet Show on the Friday which unfortunately, I couldn't attend and asked Vice-Chairman James Boulton to do the honours and along with his family, enjoyed the experience.

In May I attended the Poland Constitution Day event and concert at St Giles Cathedral followed by a civic reception in the Burgh Chambers in Edinburgh – and Lorna and I was back in Edinburgh in July having been invited to the King's Garden Party at Holyrood House, which was a rare honour and such a wonderful experience, even though the rain fell hard all afternoon, it certainly didn't dampen our spirits.

Kelso In Bloom started to move away from the usual style of planting, instead of bedding plants a change to more permanent planning with shrubs, perennials, annuals and trees. This has proved to be popular with the public where the committee and volunteers have completely overhauled The Linn flower beds and extending out further in to The War Memorial raised beds, and soon to be Bridge End Island. Kelso In Bloom continue to hold monthly litter picks around the main town area. On that note I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the committee of Kelso in Bloom, Councillor Shirley Redgrave, Councillor Gail Watson, Lewis Hamon, Heather & Alan Robertson, Sarah Plummer &

Wattie Young, and all the volunteers that continue to assist and give their time for the benefit of the town.

Kelso Community Larder, which started out as part of Kelso Community Council, has now moved away from the Community Council and is established as its own group. This has grown and until now is close to achieving 10 tons of food that has been collected and given away, to stop this going to landfill. I would like to thank fellow trustees Councillors Paul Roberts and James McCombie and all members of the committee and volunteers for all the hard work that has gone into the Larder the last year.

In September, Kelso hosted the Scottish Borders Walking Festival, which was organised by Councillors Shirley Redgrave, Christine Hamilton, Angus Russell and Paul Roberts. This was an extremely well organised event, which took almost a year in the planning, was extremely well received and enjoyed by all participants. This was able to showcase the many walking areas around Kelso and the surrounding countryside, the weather was wonderful and at some points you were able to see for miles around – Well done to you all.

At this point, I would like to note my sincere thank you to Councillor Russell, who unfortunately had to step down from Kelso Community Council, after leaving the area, Angus brought so many qualities to Kelso Community Council and has been a great miss to the council.

In November I laid a wreath on behalf of the Community Council at the War Memorial, in memory of those personnel who have fallen and gave their lives for our freedom.

I would like to thank Councillor Toni Oliver on her involvement with the Kelso Christmas Lights committee for all their hard work in upgrading the Christmas light displays around the square. Her passion for the town that Toni brings to Kelso Community Council is very much appreciated by all.

Over the last year, the administration and the time involved of this role with just shy of 3000 emails, 87 meetings and 74 events, the role is like having 3 full time jobs, including my own, I can assure you I am putting in as much effort as I can and my passion for Kelso and making a difference is still as enthusiastic as it was the day I was declared. Although I have learned not to get too involved with some things and delegate more, so as not to be spread too thin. This does present a challenge though when all you want to do is the best for your town. Taking on this role does bring you involved with many other wonderful committees and groups, to name a few, Chairman Kelso Community Council, Kelso Town Provost, Hon President Kelso Laddies Association, Chairman Kelso In Bloom, Chairman Visit Kelso, Member of Kelso Common Good, Member of Cheviot Area Fund Panel, Member of Abbey Row House Committee, Member of Cheviot Area Partnership, Trustee Kelso Community Larder, Trustee Charity Begins At Home and others.

It is very encouraging to see more people coming along to our monthly meetings. At the same time though, for those who don't like to come to meetings, the Facebook page still proves to be very popular and numerous people have been in touch with me by phone after reading my monthly report in Kelso Life. I would like to thank Richard at Kelso Life for providing this page to us and supporting the community council throughout the year. I recently setup a new website, dedicated to Kelso Community Council which hopefully extends more information to the Kelso public and also folders within the Town Hall and

Library filled with printed meeting minutes, agendas and approved accounts over the last 10 years.

I would like to thank Councillor James Boulton for being our Vice-Chairman and the advice and guidance that we share.

I would like to thank all the Community Councillors and other volunteers who have supported me and the Community Council over the year. Special thanks must also go to our Secretary Yvonne who does a tremendous job throughout the year handling all our communications. Our treasurer, Shirley, for the treasurer work she does for Kelso Community Council and for Kelso in Bloom as well as being involved with other community groups.

Finally, my thanks go to our three SBC, Councillors Euan Robson, Tom Weatherston & Simon Mountford for all they do for the town and the guidance, advice and support that they give myself and Kelso Community Council.

Annual Accounts

The statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2024 had previously been circulated. Councillor Shirley Redgrave (Treasurer) highlighted the main features of these accounts and said this last year had been particularly challenging. She asked for suggestions as to how to spend the surplus monies currently held in the Royal Bank Memorial Account.

Councillor Redgrave also intimated that she would like to resign as Treasurer of Kelso Community Council to take effect no later than the Annual General Meeting of 2025 and asked if any member would like to take on the role, or whether they knew of anyone who would be interested.

The annual accounts were proposed by Councillor Gavin Horsburgh and seconded by Councillor Paul Roberts.

The Provost placed on record the thanks of the Community Council to Mr Adrian Clarkson, who had audited the annual accounts.

Any Other Business

The Provost advised the meeting that the Community Council elections would be held in October 2025. He thanked Councillor Redgrave for fulfilling the role of Secretary and Treasurer and also thanked Yvonne Oliver, who had taken over as Secretary.

With no further business the meeting ended at 19.20 hours