

Minutes of the Meeting of Kelso Community Council held on  
Tuesday 21 October 2025 at 7.00 pm in Kelso Town Hall



- PRESENT:** Gavin Horsburgh, Councillors Paul Roberts, James McCombie, Toni Oliver, Gail Watson; Jenna Borthwick, June Regulski, Susan McKay, Shirley Redgrave, Harry Tomczyk and Dean Weatherston.
- APOLOGIES:** Councillor James Boulton; Scottish Borders Councillor Simon Mountford.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Scottish Borders Councillors Tom Weatherston and Euan Robson.
- MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** Paul Copson, Karen Roberts, Liz Hull and Ryan Whellans

- *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.*
- *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 questions through the Chairperson.*

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Councillor Gavin Horsburgh welcomed all to the meeting including members of the public. As this was the first meeting of the new Kelso Community Council, he welcomed back Councillors Shirley Redgrave, Paul Roberts, Gail Watson, Toni Oliver, James McCombie and James Boulton. He extended his congratulations and thanks to those new members of the Community Council who had taken the initiative to become involved with the Community Council for the benefit of the Kelso community. Welcome to Jenna Borthwick, Susan McKay and June Regulski and, after a term of absence, welcome back to Harry Tomczyk and former Chairman Dean Weatherston.

Gavin also introduced Yvonne Oliver, Secretary/Treasurer and Scottish Borders Councillors Tom Weatherston and Euan Robson. (Unfortunately, SBC Councillor Simon Mountford was unable to attend the meeting).

Members were advised that, over the past term of office of Kelso Community Council, many events had taken place. These included the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II; the Proclamation of King Charles III; the King's Coronation; the unearthing of the Time Capsule in Kelso Square; Kelso Civic Week celebrations; Remembrance Day Parades and many more. There are also ongoing projects which include the 900<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Kelso Abbey and the future of the Abbey Row Community Centre.

The Community Council has followed up on many planning applications, complaints from the public and matters of concern which have been brought to its attention. These have brought many offers of thanks and praise from those concerned.

The following members of Kelso Community Council introduced themselves:

Gavin Horsburgh  
Shirley Redgrave  
Paul Roberts  
June Regulski  
Gail Watson  
Toni Oliver  
James McCombie  
Susan McKay  
Harry Tomczyk  
Dean Weatherton

Scottish Borders Councillors:

Tom Weatherson  
Euan Robertson

Yvonne Oliver (Secretary/Treasurer)

### **Returning Officer, Scottish Borders Councillor Tom Weatherston**

Scottish Borders Councillor Tom Weatherston, acting as Returning Officer, took the Chair.

### **Apologies for Absence**

Community Councillor James Boulton; Scottish Borders Councillor Simon Mountford.

### **Declaration of Interests**

There were no Declaration of Interest at this time.

### **Membership of Kelso Community Council**

SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston read out the names of those nominated to Kelso Community Council (names as previously minuted above). He congratulated everyone and, on behalf of the Scottish Borders Councillors, advised he was looking forward to working with them.

### **Appointment of Chairperson**

Councillor Weatherston asked for nominations from members for a Chairperson. Councillor J McCombie proposed Gavin Horsburgh and this was seconded by Councillor Paul Roberts. Gavin was therefore duly elected Chairperson and Town Provost for his second term of office and was sworn in by Returning Officer, SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston.

Gavin then took the following Oath:

“I, Gavin Horsburgh, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of Provost of Kelso and will, to the best of my ability preserve, protect and uphold the Code of Conduct set out by Kelso Community Council. And, to the best of my ability, serve the people of Kelso in an honest, diligent and respectful manner for the duration of this term.”

**Chairperson and Provost Gavin Horsburgh then took the Chair**

### **Appointment of Vice-Chairperson**

Gavin thanked everyone for their support and requested nominations for Vice-Chairperson. He nominated Councillor James Boulton and this was seconded by Councillor Gail Watson. James was duly elected Vice-Chairperson for the new term.

### **Appointment of Secretary and Treasurer** (already appointed at AGM)

Gavin nominated Yvonne Oliver as Secretary and Treasurer – this was seconded by Toni Oliver. Yvonne was duly elected Secretary and Treasurer for the new term.

### **Appointment of Sub-Group Representatives**

#### **a) Kelso In Bloom**

Community Councillors Shirley Redgrave and Gail Watson were currently representatives of Kelso In Bloom and were duly appointed for a further term.

#### **b) Kelso Resilience Group**

Community Councillors Gavin Horsburgh and Paul Roberts were currently representatives of Kelso Resilience Group and were duly appointed for a further term.

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 September 2025**

The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday 9 September 2025 had been circulated and were approved:

Proposer: Councillor Gail Watson  
Seconder: Councillor Toni Oliver

## **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Councillor Redgrave asked the Provost if there had been any development regarding the proposed signs and QR Codes being placed where the Poo-Bags Dispensers were? The Provost replied that he was still awaiting prices from DH Design & Print.

## **Visit Kelso**

The Christmas Market this year would be held on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> December and is titled "Tinsel and Tweed". There will be market stalls in the Tait Hall and the Dickson Room in the Cross Keys as well as variety acts in Kelso Square. There would also be a window competition for children whereby they had to spot 26 elves in 26 shop windows.

## **Kelso In Bloom**

As there had not been a meeting since the last meeting of Kelso Community Council there was nothing further to report at this time.

## **Questions from the Public**

### **1) Ms L Hull**

Ms Liz Hull, Smithy House, 8 Simon Square, Kelso addressed the meeting. She advised that she currently had a Planning Application lodged with Scottish Borders Council (25/01349/FUL) whereby she was proposing to install stone relief structures to the gable of her property. She exhibited some drawings of what the structures would look like explaining that they were equestrian-based. She felt very strongly that Kelso was severely lacking in equestrian features, particularly when it had a strong equestrian ethos (Kelso Racecourse, Kelso Civic Week, etc). The Provost reminded members that the Planning Application had been circulated on 1 October 2025 but, as the Council was in abeyance at that time, it would be circulated again and comments requested.

### **2) Mr P Copson**

(a) Mr Copson had attended the previous meeting of Kelso Community Council regarding an issue he had with Gypsy Travellers illegally camping at Mayfield. He wondered if there had been any developments regarding this matter? The Provost apologised that there had been no further action but advised that the Community Council had been in abeyance and he was therefore unable to pursue the matter. He had now, however, reported the matter to SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston.

Councillor Weatherston advised that the problem was that no-one knew when the Gypsy Travellers would be arriving – there was no designated site in the Borders for them and they knew their rights. He said that putting signs up would be no use whatsoever as, by the time the Gypsy Travellers had been reported to the Sheriff Officer and a Warrant obtained, they would be long gone. Mr Copson said he was frustrated at the fact he was getting nowhere with Scottish Borders Council – they said it was a Police matter and

the Police said it was a Council matter. Councillor Weatherston agreed to take the matter up with the Liaison Officer.

Councillor Euan Robson advised that, following a telephone conversation with Mr Copson, they had managed to get the site cleared on two separate occasions. The Provost said that, as he had mentioned previously, he felt that some form of barrier or boulders/stumps along the edge of the grass verge, may be a deterrent. Councillor Robson agreed that it was a very difficult issue which needed some thought as to how to overcome the problem.

- (b) Mr Copson asked if the parking problem at the corner of Abbotsford Grove had been resolved? The Provost advised he had spoken to PC Paul Owenson who was going to investigate this matter.
- (c) Mr Copson advised the meeting that he currently prunes the trees in The Orchard Garden at Mayfield. He wondered who had planted the trees because the bands round them were no longer required now that the trees were established. Councillor Harry Tomczyk told Mr Copson that it had been Kelso Heritage Society who had planted the trees, and he would liaise directly with Mr Copson regarding this matter.
- (d) Mr Copson expressed concern at the field next to the Garden Centre which was now full of thistles. He said that two years ago it had been absolutely beautiful being full of wild flowers. The Provost said he believed that Scottish Borders Council is likely to re-sow this area with wildflowers next year. R Whellans suggested that perhaps it would be an area which Abundant Borders would be interested in?

### **3) Mr R Whellans**

Ryan informed the Community Council that the Men's Shed now had a full committee and thanked the Community Council for their sharing of requests appealing for volunteers and in particular a Secretary and Treasurer, both of which have now been filled.

### **Police Report**

The Provost advised the meeting that PC Paul Owenson had submitted his apologies but had provided an update for members as follows:

Following an enquiry from Councillor Harry Tomczyk regarding the problems people were having crossing the road at Broomlands School, (the painted drop kerbs), the Provost advised that PC Owenson was going to visit Schools on Wednesday 23 October 2025, together with the Schools Officer, to monitor various issues. He was also aware of the continuous flouting of the parking rules in Horsemarket and was monitoring this issue carefully. It was noted that these were ongoing problems which had been raised on numerous occasions at previous Community Council meetings. P C Owenson had also advised the Provost that the opened electricity box at the Skatepark had now been closed.

## **Secretary's Report**

### **(i) Events/Correspondence**

Correspondence, consultations, planning, traffic regulations etc. had been circulated and a summary was attached to the Minute.

The Provost advised new members that they would receive, by email, notices that had been received in the Kelso Community Council email box, for their information. These would include notices of Planning Applications which had been submitted to Scottish Borders Council for comment and for which there would be a closing date for submissions. They were asked to read these applications and reply to the KCC email accordingly. The Secretary would then submit a response on the Community Council's behalf.

### **(ii) Agenda Items**

The Secretary drew members' attention to the paragraph at the beginning of each Agenda, whereby it states "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 the meeting." She asked that members adhere to this request for future meetings.

## **Consultations**

The Provost advised that a new consultation had just been issued from Scottish Borders Council, asking for the public's views on the 2026/27 Budget. This was open to all members of the public and he asked that all members have a look at the proposals and submit any concerns or comments directly to Scottish Borders Council. There was a link on SBC's website whereby this could be done.

## **Scottish Borders Councillor's Report**

- (i)** SBC Councillor Tom Weatherston advised the meeting that he had just found out that the 'Glebe Field' was Under Offer – he had no further information as to who had submitted the offer or the proposed purpose of the land.
- (ii)** Councillor Weatherston also informed members that, although Starbucks had recently won their appeal against refusal of Planning Permission, the planners had now put conditions on their opening hours restricting them to 7.30 pm closing Monday-Friday and 7.00 pm closing on Saturdays and Sundays. As this was completely impractical, Starbucks were both very disappointed and very angry at this decision and Councillor Weatherston was very concerned as to what action Starbucks would now take.

- (iii) Members were also advised by Councillor Weatherston that proposals for 50 houses (30 Affordable and 20 Private) on land next to Kelso High School and 11 houses on land in Bowmont Street, Kelso had been accepted. It was hoped that these houses would be ready for occupation in 2028/29.
- (iv) Community Councillor Shirley Redgrave asked what the present situation was regarding the land and buildings at Maxmill Park, Kelso? Councillor Weatherston replied that he thought that Eildon Housing was looking at the site with a view to providing Affordable Housing.
- (v) SBC Councillor Euan Robson advised members that the problems with trees in the Berrymoss/Sydenham Court area would hopefully soon be resolved. Scottish Borders Council was engaging with consultants to carry out a survey of all the trees across their “holdings” which were causing problems.
- (vi) Councillor Robson also reported that the lights in Shedden Park had now been sorted out.
- (vii) He also informed members that, due to the complexities of the issues surrounding the future of Abbey Row and Live Borders, a Special Meeting was due to be held in November. This meeting was originally scheduled to take place in October.

### **Consideration of Licensing applications**

There were no Licensing applications for consideration at this time.

### **Consideration of Plans**

#### **25/01349/FUL -Installation of stone relief sculptures to gable at Smithy House, 8 Simon Square, Kelso, Scottish Borders, TD 5 7AZ – Ms W Hull**

As mentioned previously at the meeting, this application will be re-circulated for comments by members.

### **Any other business**

- (i) As previously reported the Provost had applied, on behalf of Kelso in Bloom/Kelso Community Council to the Neighbourhood Support Fund, for the sum of £5,000 – £1,000 for Dog-Poo Bags; £1,000 for Litter Pick Sticks and £3,000 for Kelso In Bloom Planting. Councillor Dean Weatherston advised members that there had been 90 applications submitted but that funding had been drastically reduced this year. Unfortunately, the Provost’s application had been unsuccessful.
- (ii) The Provost said he was delighted to announce that Kelso had received a Silver Commendation, and the Best Town of 2025 at the Greener Gateway Awards. He wished to express his very grateful thanks to all those involved in helping

Kelso to achieve this award, i.e. Kelso Community Council, Kelso In Bloom, Visit Kelso and all volunteers in general.

- (iii) As mentioned at a previous meeting, the Provost expressed his wish to provide benches in both Shedden Park and Bridgend Park. He felt that perhaps 5 in Shedden Park and 7 in Bridgend Park would be ideal and he had received an estimate of £330 per bench. Scottish Borders Council had confirmed that they would be willing to renew the bases for these benches which work has already commenced. The funding for these benches would come from the monies left over from the Walking Festival with Visit Kelso offering to help and also the Common Good Fund. It was suggested that Kelso Community Council and Visit Kelso could perhaps contribute £1,500 each with £960 being provided from the Common Good Fund. There was unanimous agreement to this proposal. The Provost will apply to the Common Good Fund.
- (iv) The Provost advised members that they were all very welcome to attend the 2025 Remembrance Parade on Sunday 9 November 2025. Any member wishing to attend should be at the War Memorial by 10.40am. There would be refreshments provided at the Royal British Legion after the ceremony.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of Kelso Community Council will take place on Tuesday 11 November 2025 at 7pm.