

Visit Kelso – AGM

28th March 2019 @6:30pm

Tweedie Stand – Kelso Racecourse

Present: Tina Newton (Chair), Adrian Clarkson, Karen Hume (Treasurer), Jeff Kelly (Edenwater House Hotel), Lauren Burns (Racecourse), Peter Cooper (Kelso Community Cinema) Archie Hume, Jill Lothian (Kelso High School), Ian Hird, Claire Mole, Louise, Stewart, Clare Fletcher, Steve Fletcher, Dean Weatherston, Sue Beck, Derek Robeson, Sue Brewis, Emily McGowan.

Apologies:

Cttee Members – James Walker, June Swan, Marian Armitage, Gail Clarkson, Wendy Richardson

Non Cttee Members – Mark Haye, Alister Innes, Alan Livingstone

The Chair opened the meeting and thanked Lauren and the Racecourse for hosting the AGM

1. Minutes of Previous AGM 9th May 2018

Minutes of the AGM 9th May 2018 were confirmed as a true and accurate record and were duly signed by the chair subject to the following amendment

Apologies Brian & Caroline Fletcher should be Brian & Caroline Townsend.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

3. Chairs Report (Tina Newton)

We were successful transfer of name, constitution and bank account from KCoT to Visit Kelso in May 2018.

Raffle of 6 hampers at the Farmers market in May 2018 raised a grand total of £1007 which was used to pay for marketing expertise and social media.

Meet & Greet was held on 31st May 2018. A great number of people attended this event and was used to blow the cobwebs from the organization as well as attract new VK members as well as committee members.

£1000 was received from CBAH to help towards the costs of the Marketing Toolkit which took on the form of Welcome packs showcasing the advantages of being a member of Visit Kelso. The monies also funded social media campaigns throughout the year and helped towards the cost of promoting the town at Christmas in the production of flyers and advertisement in Kelso Life.

£5000 was received from the Community Grant scheme to fund a map of Kelso. This has been developed by a subcommittee who have taken the map idea and progressed it to a leaflet and map highlighting various aspect of the town appealing to locals and visitors alike.

A sub committee was formed to specifically promote Christmas. This sub group concentrated on promoting the Sunday Trading during the month of December. Two main initiatives were developed, one was a small Market for local traders who are members of Visit Kelso who either do not have a presence in town or are not near to the Square. The group also encouraged Young Enterprise Scotland to take up stalls with one young lady producing mugs who sold out of all her stock.

The feedback from this was very positive, with one stall holder saying it was the best she had been to this year. It also showed some of the outlets who do not have a position close to the Square thus encouraging visitors and customers to stroll further round town. The last Sunday before Christmas saw a hive of activity around town with locals showing off their talents by busking in key locations to help the festivities.

VK invited to host a talk to the Kelso Probus Group December 2018 and the Rotory Club in February 2019.

All in all it has been a successful first year under our own constitution.

4. Treasurers Report (Karen Hume)

Welcome to our 2019 AGM.

You will have a copy of the draft annual accounts to 31st January 2019 in front of you.

Community Grant - £5,000

Visit Kelso have had an active year securing £5,000 funding from Scottish Borders Council Grant scheme with the funds being used to fund our marketing toolkit project. This project is now in its final stages and has allowed Visit Kelso to produce a town map and pop up banners. With the demise of the Tourist information Centre, it was felt a town map was imperative for visitors to have when visiting the town and surrounding area. This map will be distributed widely and held by all businesses to be given to visitors.

Donations - £2574.94

Visit Kelso along with Kelso Chamber of Trade were fortunate to receive £2500 funding from Charity Begins at Home which went towards the purchase of new hanging baskets, assistance with the hanging basket watering and the printing of marketing materials to promote the town of Kelso and the surrounding area.

A small crowd funding amount was also raised totalling £74.94 which was put towards marketing the town.

Subscriptions - £5673

Subscription levels increased in 2019 and we have 117 paid members benefiting from the work carried out by the Visit Kelso team. We would like to thank those that support our initiatives. We can only succeed by working as a group with a strong message ensuring all are aware of what

Kelso and the surrounding area has to offer via our marketing materials, flyers, tourism events attended, website marketing, google campaigns and a very active social media campaign.

LEADER - £2400 Debtor and Fundraising £1270.91

Our 12 month LEADER funding ended in April 2018. Following a good level of membership subscription take up in 2018/19 and fund raising carried out by Visit Kelso by way of a cake sale at the BGH and a raffle where we raised £1270.91 between them we have been able to continue to have Emily McGowan from McGowan Marketing and Wendy Richardson work for our group in a marketing capacity following the end of the LEADER funding.

Emily brings a wealth of experience and has been responsible for the Marketing Tool Kit project, the project to produce our membership pack and accompanying inserts as well as our social media campaign, updating the events pages on the Visit Kelso website and generally assisting with strategy and structure within the group. Wendy has carried out all social media postings, campaigns, lots of photography and created video content all for use on all our social media channels. Our group could not have performed without the work carried out by Emily and Wendy. As a voluntary group we can do so much but could not perform to the level we do for members without employing marketing help.

Advertising - £170 income and £935.92 expenditure

The Kelso Common Good Fund assisted the businesses in Roxburgh Street following the unfortunate close of the street due to an unsafe building last year. There were surplus funds following the funding allocation given to Roxburgh Street of £170 made available to Visit Kelso and a social media campaign was run and boosted on facebook to ensure all locals and those visiting the town were aware the street was open for business again once the building was made safe.

£414.00 was spent on the Christmas market campaign. A group from within Visit Kelso ran the Christmas campaign for the town. A marketing flyer was used which was distributed via Kelso Life as well as a supply held and distributed by all the businesses in the town and surrounding area with the aim of ensuring all locals and visitors to the area were aware Kelso was open 7 days a week during December.

£389 was spent on the membership marketing folders and pack inserts to help encourage new members. These packs were launched at our Meet n' Greet held in the Town Hall in May 2018.

Hanging Baskets - £1840 watering revenue, £2186.20 watering expenditure

Visit Kelso are responsible for the hanging baskets within the town, In 2018 we had 76 baskets planted for businesses by Newton Don as well as all the floral displays that businesses put up themselves. The watering service was well used with 92 hanging baskets and floral displays watered by the service run by Visit Kelso.

Those members using the watering service pay £20 per basket for a 12 week period. Visit Kelso funded an extra weeks watering from their funds as well as covering the cost of the plant food.

The watering bowser pump had to be replaced in 2018. Without the help from donations and Charity Begins at Home, we would not be able to offer such a fantastic service.

Website Expenses - £216

Visit Kelso pay an £18 per month hosting fee to Strive Digital who built and developed the current website and who manage the hosting.

The bank balance at the year end stood at £10,233.77 as per the balance sheet. Taking into account the provisions made to 31st January 2019 including the £5000 Community Grant, £2400 LEADER funding still due to Visit Kelso and the £4000 Grant double payment, the net cash position stood at £3633.77.

To summarise, we have had a reasonably strong year and have been able to invest in the promotion of the town benefitting all members and hope to have a good membership renewal period in 2019 to enable us to continue with our marketing and promotional initiatives.

The membership year runs from 1st June and we will be holding the annual membership cost at £50 for 2019/20

5. Election of Office Bearers

Chair: Tina Newton

Treasurers: Karen Hume and Claire Mole (replacement for June Swan who had resigned)

Secretary: Gail Clarkson

6. Any Other Business

- National Park – There is currently a proposal to create a national park covering the Borders Area. Leaflet circulated detailing current position and request for members to feedback as appropriate
- SB Tourism Partnership – Organisation is researching into how best to promote / sell the Borders. Have produced an app ‘Scotlandstartshere’ which members were encouraged to have a look at.
- Austin Travel – It was noted that the company are keen to bring coach parties to Kelso and this is something that VK would support and will be involved with going forward.
- Kelso Community Cinema (Charity) – Looking to become a full member of VK. Currently looking at the possibility of local advertising on cinema nights, members present thought this was a good idea and representatives of the Cinema will be invited to a future VK meeting.
- The Chair closed the meeting at 7:10pm