

Minute of the meeting of **DACIC** board 17<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Present: Joan Bishop **JB** (Chair), Paddy Murray **PM**, Lynne Mahoney **LM**, Gordon Sutherland **GS**, Shona MacDougall **SM**, Jim McGillivray **JM**, Luke Watson **LW**

Apologies: Catherine Moodie **CM**, Lesley Strang **LM**, Neil Hampton **NH**

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| 1. | Minute of meeting of 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2021 | The minutes for all meetings were proposed by <b>PM</b> and seconded by <b>SM</b>  |
| 2. | Matters Arising not covered elsewhere          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. David Whiteford, Highland Coast Hotels – <b>GS</b> and <b>JB</b> attended a meeting with David Whiteford and Roddy Watt on 15<sup>th</sup> June. Genevieve Duhigg represented the CC. The idea is to form community liaison committee with representation of the main bodies. Roddy is happy to work together on promoting events.</li> <li>b. The old curling rink in Brora is coming down and we have been offered anything of use. Richard MacKenzie will have a look and advise.</li> <li>c. Communities for Coul results showed a positive outcome and <b>GS</b> reported almost 70% voted Yes. This means that public feeling is no longer open to doubt. The vote is a mandate to make a second planning application. The committee wished <b>GS</b> good luck in going forward with this.</li> </ul>   |
| 3. | Dornoch Hub                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Building Control have passed temporary occupation for all areas except first floor until 21st June and <b>JB</b> has negotiated an extension for a couple of weeks until the fire door is in situ. <b>LS</b> has been chasing this up and is assured the door will be delivered early next week.</li> <li>b. <b>LS</b> maintaining final snagging list (attached). Some things on the list have already been completed and she is chasing everything else up. Once signed off, the project will be finished. <b>LS</b> is very efficient, and a huge asset to DACIC.</li> <li>c. Wrong colour of chairs for conference room sent – replacement awaited. Promised delivery on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June.</li> <li>d. Chairs donated by Harry Gow are not suitable as they do not stack and there is not enough storage for them. <b>LS</b> is taking them to a charity in Invergordon and she has sourced folding chairs.</li> <li>e. F8 let to Murform (civil engineering supplier).</li> <li>f. THC moving Service Point to the Library so G17/G18 available for rent. There is interest from a ‘well-being’ practitioner.</li> <li>g. The outside signage is in place other than ‘2 min’ finger on Cathedral Green which should be up by next week. <b>JB</b> reported that a few more people are visiting the Hub but wondered about a banner with the universal information symbol for the side of the wall to catch people’s eye. No planning would be required for a banner. The committee was supportive of this idea.</li> <li>h. Activities Co-Ordinator (National Lottery funded) – interview 14th June. There was 1 Applicant for the post. Lorraine Goldsmith started on Tuesday and has already been in touch with various groups about arranging activities in the Hub. PVG will be arranged through VGS as she starts to recruit volunteers.</li> <li>i. First gallery booking has been confirmed. Pictures are ready to go up and Jerry Bishop will put up a rail system for the pictures to go on. We will get percentage of any paintings sold.</li> <li>j. Lesley Strang report – checklist circulated.</li> </ul> |

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|    |                 | <p>k. Tenant companies would like to know where their names will be displayed. LS and Iain Levens have worked out a space to the left of the front door and JB showed the committee on a shared screen. JB thought the Ian Westacott's town print could also go beneath the logos.</p>   |
| 4. | Project Curlew  | <p>a. Highland Coastal Communities –£80k offered may be upgraded to £100k via Strategic Fund. <b>JB</b> had an initial meeting with funding officer. There is £300k left at strategic level and advised to apply for the £120k that has been refused by THC as well as the £20k upgrade.</p> <p>b. Bid to Better Places Fund for £75k decision awaited- we are on the reserve list as we may not get the job done in time. <b>JB</b> to go back with an update and they will look at it. Mark Wills went back to contractor. They will maintain the prices but there is a national crisis in obtaining materials and so there is a 6 to 8 week lead in time. <b>JB</b> to get back to Better Places to explain and has asked contractor to redo the project plan to reflect the revised time frame, but likely to mean completion at the end of September if we were able to start now.</p> <p>c. The Highland Council are not willing to make £120k investment against future income – but there is the potential of a meeting with CEO this week – obstacles keep being put in the way. <b>JB</b> looked at using the private donation of £50k. Depending on the contract with THC in running the car park, it may be possible to retain £13k pa in revenue, meaning we could replenish that fund. <b>JB</b> showed the original quote from the contractor. If we lose 25 car parking spaces, we could save £110k. An option would be to take £44k from our own fund together with funds already in place and if other funding comes through, we might be able to extend the contract. A decision is awaited from RTIF as to whether is acceptable.</p> <p>d. RTIF and TCF been extended awaiting clarification.</p> |
| 5. | C Moodie report | <p><b>CM's</b> report was circulated. <b>JB</b> reported on grants outstanding.</p>  |
| 6. | Coronavirus     | <p>a. Visitor management plan – Custom at The Highland Larder is encouraging people to use the overflow carpark and drive more slowly, without the additional signage proposed. <b>JM</b> reported on an idea of a voluntary payment scheme for parking with proceeds to be split between THC and the Common Good Fund. Shane Manning is to meet with <b>PM</b>, Genevieve Duhigg and Phil Tomalin to discuss where the payment points will be.</p> <p>b. Visitor Centre – open 10-2 daily with a shared rota by all staff – getting a few more visitors. Few grumbles about not being open long enough. Generally people are very pleased that it is open.</p> <p>c. THC Ranger in place covering Helmsdale to Dornoch -and contact details available to report issues – Jerry Bishop has spoken to him about bins etc. and the Ranger aims to pass through Dornoch on a regular basis. The main place of concern will be the beach, but he will check the town too. <b>PM</b> had thoughts of organising a litter pick in town but will hold off until July/August.</p> <p>d. VisitScotland recovery Destination Marketing Fund (July 23rd deadline) – UK market now to March 2022 – we must present a unique marketing offer in collaboration with other neighbouring DMOs to</p>   |

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|    |           | <p>avoid overlap (Venture North and NC500) by doing different things but promoting each other. For example, heritage, health and wellbeing, gym and spas. VisitScotland have published data on the market and type of traveller we could hope to attract for an all-year round Dornoch experience. <b>JB</b> to put out to business group members.</p> <p>e. School holidays start 25<sup>th</sup> June – town &amp; beach already busy! Parking could be a problem, it is already difficult in places.</p> <p>f. Business feedback – HIE Focus Group meeting revealed that eating out is good but accommodation is not so good. It was felt that businesses that relied on UK custom would do ok but those relying on customers from the USA would struggle. It is not clear when those customers would be allowed to travel. Business group income was £11,001 of which £3177 was carried over from last year, leaving a total of £7,824 from this year – also The Castle have started paying 2019-20 outstanding. Overall, the town appears to be busy, the beach is busy and this has naturally caused people slow down on the approach road but volume of traffic will no doubt lead to parking problems. New toilet signs are still to be put up.</p> <p>g. Venture North (VN) as Regional DMO – Recovery Seminars are being run by consultant David Gass. 8th July date for Dornoch Hub with a maximum of 8 to 10 people per session. VN have 3 years' funding to manage recovery (mainly staff salaries) but the feeling is that VN has been Caithness centric. VN have taken on board these concerns and they will also address any community feeling about tourism being dangerous for the local community (<b>JB</b> mentioned that Grannie's Heilan' Hame had closed the staffed areas for a weekend due to staff isolating which had caused concern in Embo).</p> |
| 7. | 2021 Plan | <p>a. BID/SID -meeting held with THC to understand their considerable role in the process explained (paper circulated). Timeframe determined by their committee and council meeting schedule (probably 12 to 15 months). Colin Simpson has had experience with Nairn and Inverness and feels it would be better that Phil Tomalin as Ward Manger took the lead role for in our case. The Council has a pivotal role in this legal process, as there is a possibility we might be challenged, so the Council must produce paper evidencing that all correct procedures are being adhered to. The Seed Corn application can be submitted. No funding as yet for the ballot costs (<b>LS</b> getting quotes).</p> <p>b. Match funding application made to Beatrice Windfarm – hear end of June.</p> <p>c. Visit Dornoch Marketing &amp; Visitor Services – Adapt &amp; Thrive Bid outstanding (21 June)</p> <p>d. UKCRF submitted for Covid Recovery plan £57,132 – follow up discussion &amp; recommended for approval to next stage.</p> <p>e. Cruise liners at Invergordon – UK only and not until all Scotland is at level 1. Most cruise liners have cancelled but some coaches and motorhomes are in town.</p> <p>f. Anne Duchess of Westminster application for Community Transport is being evaluated.</p> <p>g. New Business Groups Members are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Highland Larder</li> <li>b. Sutherland Pipers for Hire</li> </ol>   |

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|     |                     | <p>c. Morven Urquhart – Ceol n Mara B &amp; B</p> <p>d. Silverback Gym</p> <p>e. Seashells SC</p> <p>Paul and Irene Hart are retiring at the end of September meaning we will lose The Bank House and The 2<sup>nd</sup> Green.</p>  |
| 8.  | Community Updates   | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dornoch Community Council: <b>PM</b> reported on the visitor management plan. Genevieve Duhigg is proposing funding for professional consultants to produce a traffic management master plan with a pre-agreement with THC as to what can be done. The CC have agreed that GD should go ahead with this. There have been 6 planning applications this month. After a close competition, Willie Fraser was won the Community Award. The wooden shed at the airfield is available for use with 1 interested party so far.</li> <li>2. DADCA: The Social Club is opening up for business slowly. <b>PM</b> reported that they are pleased with the cleaners. The Community Markets are going well despite the recent wet Wednesday weather!</li> <li>3. Embo Trust: <b>JM</b> confirmed that things were ticking over and the contract had offered for catering.</li> <li>4. UHI: <b>SM</b> and <b>JM</b> both outlined the problems with hospitality and cookery courses not being well subscribed and fears that they may disappear. The Principal will supply details of courses and costs. <b>PM</b>, <b>JM</b> and <b>LW</b> will liaise. There is an open day 6th July for the new facility at Burghfield. <b>JB</b> circulated the newsletter. <b>GS</b> commented that Roddy Watt (Highland Coast Hotels) thought the golf simulator was a great new facility if available to visitors.</li> <li>5. Historylinks: <b>LM</b> confirmed that the museum was gradually getting busier with visitors. There have been some interesting new acquisitions including silverware from the former SWI. Venture North are interviewing staff and volunteers for a promotional video. A Building Warrant for the new extension has been applied for and funding applications from Beatrice, HLF, MGS and smaller funds are in progress. MGS Recovery and Resilience Project coming to an end, this has paid for our Museum Assistant to stay on over the winter. Walks and workshops: bookings off to a good start.</li> <li>6. RDGC: <b>GS</b> reported that 50 people attended a talk by Todd Warnock. Over £1,000 was raised for Oversteps. The Club House varies in numbers. (An update from <b>NH</b> was circulated post meeting)</li> </ol> |
| 9.  | Financial Statement | <p>Statements circulated.</p> <p>Income from the Business Group is starting to come in. £11,000 in so far although some of that has been carried over from last year.</p> <p>Staff at Hub are sharing the rota which is working well.</p>  |
| 10. | AOCB                |  |
| 11. | DOMN                | Thursday July 15 <sup>th</sup> at 7pm in the Hub   |