

The Dornoch Area Community Interest Company  
Company Registered in Scotland: Registration No 327565

MINUTE OF DIRECTORS MEETING 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013 Adopted at the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> January

Present Jenifer Cameron (JC) (in the Chair), Cllr Jim McGillivray (JMcG), Rachel Jack (RJ), Joan Bishop (JB), Anne Coombs (AC)

Apologies: Pat Murray (PM), Tommy Mackay (TM)

Item	Point of Information/Discussion/Decision	Action
1. Minute	Of meeting 1 <sup>st</sup> November 2013. Proposed JMcG, seconded RJ.	
2. Matters Arising	<p><u>a. Visitor Survey &amp; Dornoch Report.</u> DACIC's analysis of the visitor survey and the "good bad and the ugly" Dornoch Report which summarises all three surveys (items b &amp; c) was approved by the board. Board members are asked to familiarise themselves thoroughly with all this information. All three reports will now be widely circulated. JMcG to send to Cllrs Deirdre Mackay &amp; Graham Phillips and Ward Manager Phil Tomalin, Stuart Black and CEO. JC to send to NHI and HIE (Roy Kirk &amp; Pete Guthrie). JB to update website, circulate to membership, stakeholders, Scott Armstrong (Visit Scotland), Alison Cameron (NT), HIE (Alex Paterson), Highland MSPs, &amp; John Thurso MP.</p> <p><u>b. Highland Retail Academy Report.</u> The survey was conducted in October by two mystery shoppers to understand "How our customers see us". This again highlighted poor signage – as even the Tourist Information Point was not found. However there were also many positive comments indicating a well cared for town with mostly good customer service.</p> <p><u>c. Accommodation Provider Survey</u> This was carried out by NHI and a 55% return achieved covering 43 properties. Occupancy summer peak rates are higher than the Scottish average, but winter month troughs are lower. Opportunity to develop shoulder months. More overseas visitors than Highland average.</p> <p><u>d. Dornoch South (ex abattoir site) Report</u> This was commissioned by HIE and carried out by Graham &amp; Sibbald. DACIC was included in the consultation process. The site covers 10 acres. There is significant contamination and associated clean up costs from previous use. The existing buildings would need to be demolished. Some of the site is on the flood plain and SEPA recommend no net increase in the existing building footprint. Viable options for use include coach park, (to address the cruise liner market), public toilets, student accommodation (which could be used as self-catering in the summer) and developer led affordable housing,</p> <p><u>e. Dornoch Calendar</u> Following the Masterplan meeting in November a proposal has been prepared by Plexus Media (who manage the Visit Dornoch site) that would allow a single calendar to be stored on the Visit Dornoch website (and populated by different organisations) with different views of the calendar able to be displayed on other sites (e.g. Golf Club, DADCA, Historylinks, Self-Catering properties). Visitors could subscribe to emails on areas of interest (e.g. music events). Tourist Office could print off the current week's events etc. Cost £1750. To be discussed with HIE on 6 December.</p> <p><u>f. World Host</u> A proposal has been received from Highland Retail Academy for training options. JB to contact RDGC, Royal Golf Hotel and Castle Hotel in first instance then other accommodation providers to determine interest and possible venue(s) &amp; dates.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>JMcG JC JB</p> <p>JB</p>

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	<p><u>g. Feedback from Tripartite meeting</u> JC had met with Jerry Bishop (DADCA) and Yvonne Ross (CC) on 6<sup>th</sup> November. Jerry outlined plans for new community centre awaiting result of stage 1 Lottery Bid. JC outlined branding project and Yvonne suggested presentation at next CC meeting to inform application for Common Good funds to assist.</p>	
3. Directors resignation	<p>John McMurray has tendered his resignation due to pressure of work and family commitments. We are grateful for the contribution John has made to DACIC and thank him for completing the visitor survey analysis before resigning. Possible candidates for board membership will be approached.</p>	JB, JMcG, AC
4. Membership & Stakeholder Applications	<p>There were membership applications from Stuart Gardiner and Isobel Bruce. They were duly admitted.</p> <p>There were stakeholder applications from Grant Sword, Director and Robert Ratcliffe, Manager both Royal Golf Hotel. They were duly accepted.</p>	
5. Court House	<p>a. The Public Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> November was well attended. Although there was initial surprise at our decision to withdraw from the Community Right to Buy (CRtB), once the full presentation had been made and questions answered, there was general understanding of the liabilities involved and the restrictive timetable of the legislation (completion by March 2014). Whilst the purchase price of £115k was achievable, the £770k for heritage maintenance and £400k for bedroom conversion would require multi-stage bids to different funding bodies and take at least 12 months to be processed with no certainty of success.</p> <p>b. We formally withdrew from the Community Right to Buy (CRtB) on 7<sup>th</sup> November. We advised Scottish Court Service that should we would continue to research the funding options so that if no private buyer is found, we may be in a position to make a bid in the future. We advised the Scottish Land Fund and the Heritage Enterprise Fund of the situation. The press, our membership and other interested parties were informed. Many notes of support for our decision were received.</p> <p>c. The Viability Study for Bedroom Conversion was completed with the estimated cost being £400k. A report was sent to the Architectural Heritage Trust (AHT) who had provided grant aid. As a result, AHT are open to a further approach for support.</p> <p>d. Annie Tunnicliffe has been sent the Viability Study for Bedroom Conversion to enable her to complete the overall Feasibility Study.</p> <p>e. A sub-committee of JB, AC &amp; JMcM had met on 21<sup>st</sup> November to start on the funding research referred to in (a). JB had spoken to the Heritage Enterprise Fund and a project enquiry form is to be submitted now the costs have been established.</p> <p>f. The CRtB legislation is included in Scottish Government consultation to be submitted by 14<sup>th</sup> January 2014. It was agreed that DACIC would respond.</p>	<p>JB</p> <p>JB/JC</p>

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6. Future Events	<p>a. <u>Pipe Band Championship</u> – nothing further to report at present</p> <p>b. <u>Charities Sponsored Walk</u>. JC has experience of running these based on marathon model where a few selected charities pay a sum (e.g. £200) to secure a number of places (e.g. 60). The charities then publicise the event to their supporters to ensure take up of places and sponsorship for the charity. Competitors and their families &amp; supporters come to Dornoch for the day (and hopefully more), experience Dornoch and raise our profile. Date chosen Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Family event – bring the children and the dog. 10 mile treasure hunt (e.g. around the town, through the woods and along the beach). In first instance charity interest to be established by the next meeting as follows: Children’s charity (e.g. Children First) (JB), DADCA (no charge if they could help with marshals etc), Macmillan (AC), Hospice (JMcG), Alzheimers (JC), SSPCA (RJ).</p> <p>Post meeting note: this is Aberdeen holiday weekend, (Glasgow is 27<sup>th</sup>)</p>	JB, AC, JMcG, JC, AC
7 Branding Project	<p>The surveys in 2a-c above are stage 1 in the branding process. Stage 2 is wider community consultation, with a public meeting, on-line surveys and specific focus groups to get a clearer understanding of what is special or unique about Dornoch. In particular we need to answer the question “Why Dornoch?” (and not Tain, Nairn, Brora or Ullapool). The information from stages 1 &amp; 2 would then enable a specialised marketing company to develop a brand. For example Oban has successfully branded itself “Seafood Capital of Scotland”. With a brand to sell and an understanding of who our customers are, we can then develop a marketing strategy to promote the one to the other. JC has experience of this process and estimates the professional input required will cost £18k. Potential funders are HIE, Ward Discretionary Fund, Common Good Fund, Beinn Tharsuinn and ENTRUST. DACIC’s in kind contribution is to run the community consultation. An early decision from HIE is required to allow the process to start in January - provisional date for the public meeting 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> January.</p>	JC/JB/JMcG
8. Website Update	<p>a. NHI making good progress on activities mapping and day trips. JB to update website on completion. Eilidh Todd is promoting the site to shops, cafes &amp; restaurants who do not currently advertise.</p> <p>b. The Charity Shop had asked if they had to pay for advertising. Whilst other charitable listings are free e.g. churches, it was agreed that as the Charity Shop is advertising in a section where all other shops pay £30 that this rate should apply to their business too.</p> <p>c. Advertisers can now add multiple photos which are automatically made into a gallery. They can also set up special offers and late availability. These enhancements, at no extra charge, will be promoted.</p> <p>d. RJ is contacting businesses &amp; trades to encourage uptake.</p>	JB  JB  RJ
9. DONM	Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 7-9pm Council Chambers.	