Minute of the meeting of **DACIC** board 18th February 2021

Present: Joan Bishop **JB** (Chair), Paddy Murray **PM,** Neil Hampton **NH,** Lynne Mahoney **LM,** Gordon Sutherland **GS,** Shona MacDougall **SM,** Jim McGillivray **JM**, Jayne Pagan **JP**

Apologies: Catherine Moodie **CM**

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| 1. | Minute of meeting of 21st January 2021 | The minutes for the meeting were proposed by **SM** and seconded by **NH**. |
| 2. | Matters Arising not covered elsewhere | RDGC – Common Good Consultation JB has sent documentation supporting this and has had confirmation of receipt. |
| 3. | Dornoch Hub | 1. OBC/Architect: fourth and fifth invoices received and grant claims made (to date £253k out of £462k). Kitchens are in place. Not quite the right colour and a dual fuel cooker has got to go back for Community Room, but good progress. David O’Brien has taken over from Mark O’Brien as Site Manager but will be finishing at Burghfield first. **JB** has items to discuss with him.
2. Projected final account – £8.6k contingency remaining. There will be a few more extras to come. Very hopeful that the contingency will not be needed for the water pressure booster. Quote for blinds £2500 but no money committed yet. Work has begun on the hostel.
3. RM Mackenzie – almost complete £27.8k has been billed out of £32k with £2.2k extras to come. Gym finished.
4. Last Monthly meeting Iain Levens & OBC 25 January by Zoom – site meeting Monday 22nd February.
5. Preparation of leases for tenants (via Solicitor) **GS.** Must spend SLF money by end of March.
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| 4.  | Project Curlew | 1. Offer to Purchase being progressed and must be completed by 31 March for SLF.
2. [Planning application](https://wam.highland.gov.uk/wam/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=QHGRX4IHIFE00&activeTab=summary) – queries addressed & additional information submitted
3. Highland Coastal Communities –application submitted.
4. TCF – £28k awarded against £58k requested – need to be committed by 31 March and now identified as for the SUDs basin.
5. DCG - £39,760 may be released to match fund TCF if plan B (suggested by Shane Manning) can be confirmed.
6. RTIF – on wait list at £246k rather than £375k – but RTIF to double for 2021.
7. Clear funding gap for ‘Plan A’ – so possible phased approach identified by GS but there will still be a gap. JB shared the drawing to illustrate. The coach lane may be removed from the first phase to reduce costs as the tarred area is the most expensive.
8. Ground Investigation complete. May be budget in VDLF for removal of the limited asbestos found.
9. The works contract will on published on Public Contracts Scotland on 22nd February to be in a position to award by 31st March. This will depend on bids received and matching to funding available. Coastal Communities Fund will be looking at bids end of March. If professional services are less than £10k it can go to one tender. Most of the design work has been completed in the planning phase.
10. **SM** commented that in her experience it is all looking good.
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| 5.  | C Moodie report | **CM’s** report was circulated.  |
| 6.  | Coronavirus | Visitor management plan – draft for discussion. At the request of The Focus Group, HIE appointed SKS Consultants to develop a visitor management plan to address difficulties experienced last year.1. People coming do not know where they should park. Therefore, better signposting and facilities required.
2. Motorhome rental companies are of the opinion people do spend money locally on places to eat. Caravan site reported that the majority of bookings last year were one-night stays.
3. **PM** reported that the CC has to provide new information required by Blue Flag. It was suggested that the existing ‘You Are Here’ sign at the beach be reskinned to include the additional information. The DACIC Board agreed with this strategy.
4. **JB** commented that Shane Manning (THC) will provide signs once there was agreement on locations. **PM** explained that the idea is to manage the Motorhomes rather than discourage them.
5. There will be an extra 2 passing places on single track section of Beach Road and double yellow lines have been suggested.
6. The Food Shack will go in the overflow carpark.
7. Motorhomes will be directed to the overflow car park
8. Electronic ‘smiley face - watch your speed’ signs would be owned by the CC and initially put at West Church Hall, but could be moved as necessary. All agreed.
9. It was suggested that the airfield carpark might be useful place for motorhome overflow parking. The CC made it clear this would not go ahead unless supported by the caravan site (decision awaited). It was made clear that the motorhomes would be away by 9am. The proposal is yet to be approved by THC (if they have power to approve). **JM** reported that he is to liaise with Aviation Authority and Fire Officer about potential risks. **PM** confirmed the carparking would be 100 metres away from the airfield so there was no risk involved.
10. There will be a repositioning of entrance posts to the beach carpark. The posts to stop people parking have increased problems rather than helping.
11. There will be resurfacing to the beach play park to prevent flooding and improvement to the entrance of the overflow carpark to allow for motor homes.
12. Dornoch South unlikely to have a facility this season.
13. Retail carpark is the most useful solution for motorhomes. Left hand lot has hardstanding already there for the bottle bank. Parking will be limited to daytime only. This is a HC carpark so it could happen for 2021.
14. Parking in Castle Street. Shane Manning said marked spaces encouraged people to go to the right places and some deeper parking for motorhomes is possible at the Shore Street end of Castle Street.
15. Parking restrictions (e.g. one hour only, no return within 3) could encourage turnover of vehicles outside shops (e.g. St Gilbert Street to Deans Lane) and dissuade employees from parking outside their place of work all day. CC have concerns about this, feeling that this must go out for community consultation. **JB** suggested Survey Monkey but **PM** thought it needed to be more specific for people and businesses immediately affected.
16. It was suggested that Beach Road and Golf Road should have a 20mph limit. **NH** commented that the 20mph signs at the Golf course are suggestions and therefore do not need a traffic order.
17. Keep Dornoch tidy: suggested by the Business Group to employ a town officer/ranger to remove litter (and address problems of more outside eating due to COVID restrictions). DACIC including this in a bid to Adapt and Thrive Grant. **PM** pointed out that there is a community litter pick at beginning and end of season. Colin Thompson has suggested that volunteers might be encouraged by turning it into a socially distanced event with some food provided (by Castle Hotel).

Business Group1. Most businesses have accessed closure grants, which are good for smaller establishments but not adequate for larger businesses.
2. Other grants have been announced for those who have missed out e.g. B & B and self-catering paying Council Tax, large self-catering properties (THC should contact these businesses directly).
3. There have been lots of cancellations since the Government announcements regarding Easter and with no firm date for tourism to reopen in Scotland.
4. Grant for updated Visit Dornoch website from HIE – work started (initial layout for comment). The website update is being done by Val McLennan of Digital Roots in Elgin. **NH** confirmed that he is familiar with the company. The first ideas have been submitted. The overall idea is for it to look fresh and modern. The video is on first as Val thinks the website needs to tell a story. She has decluttered it giving a feeling of space. There are 3 calls to action on het home page; Enjoy, Stay a While and Eat. She has taken a different approach encouraging people to think about what they can do rather than where they will sleep. Pictures can be changed quarterly to represent the correct season. **JB** to send a link with an invitation for the Board to come back with ideas. Lucy Williams will be doing more videos and interviews with businesses – and using the new Go Pro camera.
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| 7. | 2021 Plan | 1. JB went through the plan.
2. Management: Check insurance update with Zurich
3. Marketing plan: App update.
4. Business group: Annual review meeting was held on 1st February but no data collected for 2020
5. BID/SID **JM** and **JP** have been working on the seed corn grant application. We need to demonstrate support from a range of businesses but face to face contact not possible now. **SM & JP** have identified key benefits for all business types tourism, shops, professions and trades. **JB** to contact Treecraft and Pat Munro.
6. Assets Manager – we are delighted that Lesley Strang has accepted the position initially for 3-months to get policies and procedures in place for the Hub.
7. Plans for opening of Hub. There are funds available to appoint an Activities Coordinator and Youth Leaders once restrictions allow.
8. Visit Dornoch Marketing & Visitor Services, business group meeting suggestions (1st February meeting) – Adapt and Thrive application
9. Scottish Government ‘Easter holiday accommodation unlikely to be allowed)
10. Scottish Government – Non-Domestic rate relief extended for 2021 – 2022.
11. Scottish Government – Licencing of self-catering and B&B postponed.
12. Events – DADCA announced Nine Markets. It was confirmed that one would be held during Carnegie week.
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| 8. | Community Updates | 1. Dornoch Community Council: **PM** had nothing more to report than had previously been discussed.
2. DADCA: **PM** reported that there will be a meeting of all groups with community buildings, to discuss different directions and lack of coordination with the hope of rectifying this.
3. Embo Trust: **JM** confirmed that the Directors have stood down and a new committee was in place.
4. UHI: **SM** reported that things were coming towards completion. Interviews for the Principle awaiting face to face opportunity. There were not many student on campus.
5. Historylinks: **LM** said that the museum is at the planning stage for the extension. Virtual walks will be filmed in March to allow people 4 choices of walk around Dornoch and area. They are still working towards opening for the season and they are working on a funding bid to Museums Galleries Scotland for running costs to June.
6. RDGC: **NH** reported that the club was waiting to see when they will be restarting. They are disappointed that the Home Internationals have been postponed. They need long-term clarity from Government in order to free up tee times taken by International visitors who want to come but are unable. Golf industry is tackling Government at the highest level about this.
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| 9.  | Financial Statement | Circulated and approved. |
| 10. | AOCB | There was no other business. |
| 11. | DOMN |  Thursday March 18th 4.30pm via Zoom |