Minute of the teleconference meeting of **DACIC** board 19th March 2020

Present: Joan Bishop **JB** (Chair), Paddy Murray **PM**, Jim McGillivray **JM**, Lynne Mahoney **LM**, Jayne Pagan **JP**, Gordon Sutherland **GS**.

Apologies: Alison MacWilliam **AM**, Kerri Stevens **KS**, Catherine Moodie **CM**, Neil Hampton **NH,** Yvonne Ross **YR**.

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| 1. | Minute of meeting of 20th February 2020 | The minutes were proposed by **PM** and seconded by **JP** |
| 2. | Matter Arising not covered elsewhere | 1. Beach award - application submitted. New map is required.
2. Sutherland Contractors & THC Approved List - **JM** reported that all contractors were still on the list which is being renegotiated.
3. ESRA – planning permission has been awarded. **JM** has a summary of the decision which he will circulate. **GS** asked if there was an appeals process. **JM** to follow up. **PM** will contact Phil Tomalin to follow up.
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| 3. | Dornoch Police Station | 1. Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) – very disappointed not to get this (£304k), but there is an opportunity to apply again next year.
2. Update on lets – tenant for G9 has cancelled
3. Tender Returns – **JB** referred to email with tender analysis. Without other grant funding only £50k available from TCF.
4. SSE Capital bid submitted to replace RCGF – outcome April
5. TCF contracts to be awarded by 31st March. TCF fund gives us £50000. This had been earmarked for heating upgrade and electrical rewiring. However tender returns are well in excess of that figure. Iain Levens had met with Building Control and the stringent conditions especially on fire safety are necessary if the public at large can access the building and that is what has pushed up the price. If use was restricted to businesses, only minor changes would be needed. It was agreed that it would best to prioritise the first floor so that tenants could move in. **JB, JP, GS, NH** and **KS** will visit the site to identify key needs. **GS** has heard from THC that in the COVID19 crisis (CV), there is now a degree of flexibility in the timing of the award of the TCF contract, hopefully until the SSE outcome is known (due in mid-April).
6. Pot 170 – Developer Contribution for Community Facilities. Still waiting on policy being established and likely to be further delayed by CV.
7. Gym update – **PM** asked how much was required in order to get started. **JB** said that £32k of the £50k received form Beatrice is available. However with the floor and oil tank issues, this may not now be enough – alternative quote awaited from Don Maclean (**GS**). When the Gym is up and running it will bring in £600 per month.
8. Garden and grounds have been tidied by Lawn Ranger. MacLeod’s Roofing will clear gutters and Ivy when they do the roof – starting 24th March
9. Western side garden - Gunn’s to clear
10. Rates- JB reported a 100% rebate on rates
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| 4.  | Project Curlew | 1. SLF – Offer of full funding received of £216,411! The VDLF grant of £65k for ground investigation also confirmed. **GS** has spoken to ANM and received a positive response to requests for permission for ground investigation to start. Now ready to appoint a contractor.
2. THC Business Case –**JB** explained the Skye partnership model between THC and community group. HC lease car park land from the community and THC contribute cost of car park match funded by Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF). The Skye model was 50:50. THC recover their costs through running the charged car park over a number of years. THC considered the £150k investment in Dornoch South but rejected it. However the DACIC RTIF was based on 30:70 split, reducing THC investment to £90k. Phil Tomalin has requested new business case based on £90k. **JM** to follow up.
3. VDLF update –see 1 above. Contract to be awarded by 31 March.
4. RTIF is through to stage 2 due by 26th June, but may be delayed because of Covid-19. **GS** advised that the situation needed more clarity by the next meeting.
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| 5.  | C Moodie and K Stevens reports | **CM** and **KS** submitted written reports to the Board. |
| 6. | THC consultation on parking | Public consultation has been cancelled although we as a Stakeholder must respond by 2nd April. The board’s view is that the proposal to introduce charges for the Square is unacceptable. THC paper considered on 24th October says recommendations relate to ‘off-street’ parking. The Square is clearly ‘on-street parking’. **JB** also pointed out that the proposal say no coaches can park in the Square. THC figures from the 24th October paper predict the Sutherland share of income from its 27 car parks would bring in a total of £30,000 per year for the local area – just over £1,000 per car park. The board recommends that the new town centre car and coach park planned for Dornoch South be chargeable, but the edge of town Meadows car park remains free. Responses from businesses and personal members to our request for feedback were overwhelmingly against the proposed charges at The Meadows and The Square. **GS** is preparing the response.  |
| 7.  | Coronavirus | 1. Visitor Centre – possible closure.
2. Staff - Maggie Seatter is to planning to go into self-isolation and Lou Rollason will take over her hours for now. The centre will be open winter hours only until closure. Maggie and Lou are on zero hours contracts and not enough hours to qualify for sick pay. The cost of winter hours in VC and Digital Marketing until the end of June would be £2800. **PM** felt that guidance will change rapidly, and this situation should be looked at again in a couple of weeks with more time devoted to it. **JB** to look up notice period to be given in worst case scenario. Colin Thompson had advised that Visit Scotland will not be charging for Quality Assurance this year and clearly all our business members are facing significant loss in income.
3. Business Group – There was a WhatsApp Business Group meeting yesterday which was very successful. **JB** to put the information up on <https://www.dornoch.org.uk/dacic-business-group.asp> as the situation develops.
4. Dornoch Resilience Group - Community Response. A meeting took place last night to develop community support, chaired by **YR** with DACC, DADCA, DACIC, Embo reps. and church groups.Leaflet drops will be made to every house to find out need and volunteers recruited via Survey Monkey to meet specific needs. Charles Minall Dornoch Firth Group is leading the administration. **JB** had offered Lou’s VC time in support.
5. DACIC financial implications - **PM** considers we will need to plan for a year to eighteen months with no income.
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| 8. | Membership, Business Group and Stakeholder applications | Business Group Membership application from Milk and Honey. |
| 9. | 2020 Plan | 1. Visitor Centre – as above
2. Insurance – renewal much better than expected at £918 (initial estimate was £2000). The change from last years cost of £145 reflects the ownership of the Police Station.
3. Business Group
4. Invoices usually issued in April – Invoices on hold for now.
5. SID – delayed for 6 months or until post CV
6. Social media meeting on 10th March – meeting postponed.
7. 2020 month by month calendar.
8. Arrange new photos for website – Vicki Mackenzie – on hold unless it’s pictures of the beach.
9. Digital Screen at i-Centre Inverness – done
10. Dornoch 2020 leaflet –40,000 leaflets delivered – 35,000 to Landmark and 5,000 Dornoch. **JB** to try and cancel/postpone Landmark distribution.
11. Community Updates
12. Dornoch Community Council has stopped meetings. **PM** thought it would be a good idea to reinstate and have them by phone conference. **PM** reiterated plans to help local community at this time.
13. DADCA meetings have stopped but **PM** again feels they could be reinstated with use of phone conference. All activities at the Social Club are cancelled or postponed but if the building is neededin an emergency it can be made available. Income from the hall is £10,000, they will need to cut costs but DADCA can carry on for another year without any financial problems.
14. Embo Trust – **JM** has submitted the accounts for audit. **JB** mentioned that there were some complaints about Grannies Heilan Hame remaining open during the COVID-19 pandemic. **JM** felt that there may be further Government edicts forcing them to close.
15. Historylinks – The last workshop of the Longhouse project has been postponed as has the end of project conference. Very successful project and hope to finish next year depending on advice from Heritage Lottery Fund. Fibre Fest was a success with the museum open with free admission to see the newest acquisition of an 18th Century dress from Overskibo. The museum will not be opening on 4th April as planned due to the COVID-19 outbreak.
16. RDGC are offering bookings later in the year or next year for those needing to cancel. They are waiting for confirmation from Community Council on the new lease. RDGC are not moving from their position but are ready to sign. **YR** has approached Chris Holmes to ask for this to be done. **JM** to email Chris Holmes this evening as well. It was agreed that this is a good deal for the community.
17. VS Expo scheduled for 1st & 2nd April has been cancelled.
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| 10.  | Financial Statement | Better off this month due to selling generator. |
| 11. | AOCB | No other business |
| 12. | DOMN | 16th April 2020 6.50pm by conference call |