Present: Joan Bishop **JB** (Chair)**,** Neil Hampton **NH**, Jim McGillivary **JM**, Lynne Mahoney **LM**, Paddy Murray **PM**, Yvonne Ross **YR**, Alison MacWilliam **AM**, Catherine Moodie **CM**.

Apologies: Gordon Sutherland

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| 1. | Minute of meeting of 15 January 2019 | It was noted that the SLF decision is 23 May, not end April (Point 4.g). The minutes were proposed by **PM** seconded by **YR.** |
|  2. | Matters arising not covered elsewhere | 1. **JM** reported that Lorraine Goldsmith had been appointed as the new Dornoch Ambassador. She has completed a 2-hour training session and been round all the businesses.
2. Coul Links enquiry: **JM** reported that all the community groups had done well with their presentations and he felt positive about the outcome. It was hoped that the Reporters would submit their decision before the summer recess.
3. HLH summer use of Curlew – **GS** to speak to Fiona Hampton.
4. YR/PM/PW visit to Police Station – **YR** did not think that the room initially proposed for the Youth Group would be big enough. Equally, Peter and Sally Wild did not think that the proposed ‘art room’ would be suitable for their purposes, so **YR** indicated that the art room would be ideal for the Youth Group. **CM** requested a tour of the Police Station – she and **JB** would liaise regarding possible dates.
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| 3. | Membership and Stakeholder applications | 1. Coast Candle Co. closed on 16 March; the building is reverting to residential use.
2. The Shop around the Corner closed on 23 March.
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| 4. | 2018-9 plan |  |
|  | a. Visitor Centre | 1. There were 547 visitors in February, down 4% on 2018.
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|  | b. Business Group | 1. 2018 data: one further response received from a B&B.
2. VisitScotland Meeting: no progress, **JB** has sent a reminder email.
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|  | c. Developing the Cruise Liner market. | 1. **JB** indicated that CFPA had requested feedback on passenger spending in Dornoch. All businesses reported that cruise ship passengers spend little money due to the short amount of time spent in town.
2. The Tour Guides are doing a FAM visit on 5 April.
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|   | d. Month by month plan. | 1. Information had been requested on the St Gilbert Festival – one event would go in the April ‘What’s on’ guide, Joseph Cathedral Youth Theatre on 6 April at 14.30 and 19.30.
2. Blue Badge Guides FAM visit (Plews Tours chased).
3. Cruise liner calendar and known coach times sent out to business members.
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|  | f. Project Curlew | 1. Fund Raising sub-committee update: nothing to report.
2. Ironside Farrar: a public consultation event was held on Friday 22 March to present the design drawings to the public. This was very well attended and several curlers took the opportunity to have a meeting with Julian Farrar. His report is due end April. **JB** talked through the Project Cost Plans; there were four options put forward and two different funding plans. There is a sizeable shortfall so the situation is looking rather bleak and a more basic design of the curling rink now being investigated.
3. Flood risk and contamination assessments: nothing done as yet.
4. ANM Option Agreement: no further information.
5. Natural & Cultural Heritage Fund: **CM** is progressing this for submission by 22 April, although the feeling is that generally speaking this fund is aimed at projects which are much further down the line than Curlew is. The applicant must submit a letter from HMRC confirming the VAT status, so it is likely that DACIC would need to seek VAT advice, paid for from reserves.
6. **JB** reported that one weakness in the application was the lack of staffing structure. She has spoken to KoSDT about gaining their support. In addition, a risk register has to be drawn up. **CM** indicated that progressing the application has been helpful in formulating the detail, which would also be useful for other applications.
7. There was discussion around the remaining funding received for CM’s post and that it should be used to take on a project manager. **CM** indicated that, although she did not have experience in project management, she was willing to learn and could work a further one day a week. However, it was agreed that the aim was to relieve JB and GS of as much of the work as possible, so it would be better to take on someone with experience. **YR** suggested working with KoSDT staff on a consultancy basis, if this were possible under the funding conditions.
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|  | g. Dornoch Police Station | 1. SLF Stage 2 application has now been submitted.
2. Police Scotland: to provide a decision by end May. They are ‘consulting’ with the people of Dornoch initially.
3. Renovation Funding: there was a further meeting with Alan Webster, Highland Council, on 4 April for RCGF, which opens on 20 May. **CM** is working on the Beatrice application for 25 April.
4. Silverback Gym has submitted an estimate of c. £30k + VAT in order to refit the space. **GS** had suggested 5-year lease initially. The gym would be providing the equipment (probably leasing it).
5. **YR** mentioned that it was important for the Youth Group to feel that the space was their own and that it was kitted out to suit their needs. Sharing the space would only work with groups who used it during the day (eg knitting group) and left no trace, but not with young kids/messy space where lots of equipment was left lying around.
6. **PM** to provide **CM** with numbers/groups who currently use the Social Club for the Beatrice application.
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|  | h. Community Development Manager report | **CM** summarised the work that she had been doing on the Police Station and handed round cost and funding plans. She has a list of potential funders, including the Robertson Trust Small Grants (up to £20k), which have a quick turnaround. The feeling was that applying for small amounts for the Police Station may then stand us in good stead to apply for greater funding for Curlew.  |
|  | i. Community Consultation KoSDT/Locality Plan | 1. Dornoch is now included in the survey for the Locality Plan. Experience in other towns shows that reports have been useful as support/evidence when applying for funding. Posters will be going out and the next member email will include the link to the SurveyMonkey survey.
2. The survey will be made available in the Service Point.
3. The school visit has taken place.
4. A Drop-in Surgery will take place on 11 June and a Community Workshop on 12th.
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|  | j. Community updates | Dornoch Community Council: 1. **YR** reported that Kilbraur Wind Farm developers had attended a recent meeting of the Community Council. The new windfarm may be visible from the Badninish area, in which case Dornoch would be entitled to apply for funding. There would be an opportunity for community groups to buy shares in the windfarm with an expected 10% return.
2. It was noted that Duncan Allen had suggested that North Highland College be encouraged to establish a business school. However, **AM** responded that business degrees of various types are already offered through UHI and whilst students could choose to attend in Dornoch, they often preferred to travel to Inverness to be part of a larger student body.
3. Housing plots: Highland Council had originally agreed that the Community would be given the serviced plots, however, this was brought before the relevant HC committee and the Community Council has now been informed that they would have to pay market value for the plots. This has been contested and a community asset request may be submitted.
4. Cemetery – space in the current cemetery is likely to run out around November; a new plot has been identified.
5. Community food store larder: **YR** reported that this facility works in a similar way to a food bank and they were hoping to set one up in Dornoch. Discussions had been taking place with Fiona Wylie at NHC who was keen to locate this at the Burghfield since they could get the students involved with things such as menu cards. Tesco and the Co-op in Brora had been very supportive in this initiative elsewhere. **YR** would put in a funding bid to the Community Council for a shed, larder, fridge and freezer.

DADCA: 1. **PM** reported that Fibrefest had been very successful.
2. DADCA will pay for a Treasurer to replace PM who will step down from this role.

Embo Trust: **JM** reported that they have appointed someone to take on the café franchise. They continue to have issues with the heating, but JM is working hard to bring costs down.Dornoch Focus Group: 1. This group met on 19 March 2019 and was chaired by HIE.
2. There is a new business development unit at NHC Burghfield run by Fiona Wylie.
3. There was some suggestion that VisitScotland Expo may be held in Inverness next year at which we could have a VisitDornoch stand (promoting Dornoch to the trade).
4. NC500 was now advertised on Expedia so bookings could be made through that website.
5. Bus parking was raised as a major issue at the Focus Group; this would not be resolved until progress was made on Curlew and the option agreement taken out.
6. UHI student accommodation: **NH** reported that he had had further discussions with Debbie Murray of NHC and although progress is slow, there is some movement on working with partners such as RDGC and Dornoch Castle Hotel. For the time being, though, it remains far too expensive, both for students and for potential partners.
7. Building work on NHC Burghfield extension is due to start this summer. The new golf facility would include golf simulators, which may be available for use by visitors.
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| 7. | Financial statement | **JB** reported free reserves of £26881 at near-financial year-end. |
| 8. | AOCB | 1. DONM: Tuesday 23 April at 7pm at RDGC.
2. **LM** reported that Historylinks had received funding for an exciting new project on a longhouse settlement along the Loch Buidhe road. Phase 1 would include workshops of all kinds and they would apply for funding for Phase 2, which would be an archaeological dig. Both the Academy and primary school will be involved, along with the learning centre in Brora. Workshops would be open to members of the public.
3. **LM** mentioned that Historylinks would open for the season this coming weekend. They had appointed a new part-time assistant who would also run the Young Curators’ Club on Wednesdays after school for the P7/S1 age group.
4. Post meeting note: RDGC has now installed a free-to-use ATM in the front hall. This will be open to the public.
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