Minute of the Zoom meeting of **DACIC** board 16 April 2020

Present: Joan Bishop **JB** (Chair), Paddy Murray **PM**, Jim McGillivray **JM**, Lynne Mahoney **LM**, Jayne Pagan **JP**, Gordon Sutherland **GS**, Alison MacWilliam **AM**, Neil Hampton **NH,** Yvonne Ross **YR**.

Apologies: Kerri Stevens **KS**, Catherine Moodie **CM**.

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| 1. | Minute of meeting of 19 March 2020 | The minutes were proposed by **PM** and seconded by **JM.** |
| 2. | Matter Arising not covered elsewhere | 1. ESRA – planning permission has been awarded for the new building. **JM** indicated that there was an objection from the Community Council but HC went back to the applicant who responded appropriately to the concerns raised in the objection. HC then approved the application. **PM** indicated that the CC’s objection was deemed to be unclear and not fully against the project and thus it was not sufficient to stop the planning application. |
| 3. | Dornoch Police Station | 1. SSE Capital bid £174,456 has been awarded, subject to match funding. **JB** had asked the funding officer whether it would be possible to get access to the funding right away in order to be able to let the space, securing income which would then act as the match funding. If they do not agree, DACIC, we have to look into other funding streams. **PM** queried how this would work. **JB** explained that there are various ways of doing this, using various pots as below. 2. TCF £50k contract wording agreed with the Council but there was still flexibility to be awarded with the above. This has to be spent and is to be used for heating and partial rewiring. 3. Options for SSE spend: **JB** & **GS** to submit paper in due course. Costs of the main building, ground and first floor renovations have been reviewed with the architect and Kerri, who will go back to the preferred contractor to see if they can minimise costs in certain areas, eg windows. These may also be left to a later stage. 4. £66k of Public access space identified from tenders and used of EB, TNL and Pot 170 below (£26k) 5. EB Scotland bid (Landfill Fund) was rejected by SEPA as the building is over 10 miles from nearest Landfill. However, EB Scotland are supportive of DACIC and it may be possible to reapply for Curlew since there are no restrictions to projects on vacant land. 6. The National Lottery (TNL) bid for £50k capital (for community spaces) and £100k for community activities is nearly ready to submit, though a decision may be postponed due to CV. 7. Pot 170 Developer Contribution for Community Facilities – this has been halted due to Coronavirus (CV) 8. Gym update – **GS** reported that there had been some changes to the plans, but we are unable to finalise the quote as contractors are not all working just now. **GS** expects an answer within the next week or so. 9. Roof, gutter & ivy work has been commissioned but halted due to CV. 10. Western side garden (to be done by the Gunns) has been halted due to CV. 11. Site visit JB, JP, NH, GS and KS – this was postponed due to CV. 12. JB has ordered 3000l of oil as prices are currently very low. 13. 100% dispensation on rates; electricity and water bills awaited. |
| 4. | Project Curlew | 1. Solicitor is working on the Offer to Purchase – funds to purchase are in place (Scottish Land Fund), subject to the ground investigation. 2. ANM have given permission for the Ground Investigation (GI) to be carried out. 3. GI contractor has been commissioned and VDLF confirmed. 4. The title plan shows boundary issues on northern and eastern edges and these are being investigated. The site will be professionally pegged out (SLF funded, but halted by CV). Cityheart (UHI) had the same problem on eastern edge, but there is legal right of access. 5. THC Business Case for £90k on car park – halted due to CV. 6. RTIF for 26 June needs planning application in and £90k support identified:    1. £40k application to Dornoch Common Good (£45k supported last month by Community Council) – towards £300k required to develop the car and coach park. **PM** felt that the CC was keen to support a later phase, i.e. a community centre or toilets, rather than a car park. **JB** stressed that this was Phase 1 and we may not need to go to the CC for the funds if we get grants from others. **GS** stated that SLF requires certain outcomes: acquisition, discussion with HC re carpark and set-up lease with HC. SLF have been kept fully informed in writing that some of the outcomes may take longer. **PM** stated that he would prefer the CC not to be involved at all since they had committed £27k to Historylinks in the meantime. **JB** stressed that DACIC has to demonstrate that we have £90k earmarked in support. HC cannot commit to anything at the moment. **GS** reiterated that as long as we keep the SLF informed he feels this will be fine, they are very supportive.    2. £50k application to Beatrice, deadline 22 April, with outcome expected in June. If we are not successful in this, the project is a non-starter.    3. Blueprint Architects have been appointed (part of SLF bid) to submit the planning application and building warrant – these must be in progress for RTIF. 7. Work on site – this has been halted due to CV. 8. Potential to incorporate a recycling facility. **JM** felt that it was first important to find out what SEPA would require in order to be able to firm up what shape this might take. |
| 5. | C Moodie and K Stevens reports | **CM** and **KS** submitted written reports to the Board. These were noted. |
| 6. | THC consultation on parking | Cancelled due to Coronavirus. |
| 7. | Coronavirus | 1. ‘Don’t come’ message on Visit Dornoch FB page 22nd March (until 31 May currently) 2. Visitor Centre closed on 20th March. 3. Maggie Seatter has been furloughed from 23rd March and Lou Rollason from 1st April. 4. Lucy Williams retention – **JB** asked the Board to consider the power of positive digital messaging versus the cost of retaining Lucy. Following advice from VisitScotland, the Facebook posts had been encouraging people to look ahead to the future. **JB** suggested keeping Lucy on until September then consider furlough, depending on the situation at that time. There may be some grants available once we start to run out of funds. **JB** reminded the Board that there was £6.5k remaining in the Courthouse Fund which could be used for staff costs. **GS** suggested furloughing her right away but **JB** felt that we would lose the impact of what she has been doing. **NH** wondered if she could schedule posts for the next few weeks. **PM** preferred to retain her in order to ensure visitors considered Dornoch for next year. **JB** agreed and indicated that we were getting lots of positive comments to the Facebook posts, with people looking forward to visiting Dornoch once restrictions had been lifted. It was agreed to keep her on for the moment and to revisit this point at a later date. 5. Business Group – **JB** reported that 12 Mailchimp emails and multiple links on Dornoch.org.uk had been posted in the period 19 March – 9th April. There was also a supportive on-going dialogue on a What’s App group, created by **JB**. 6. Supporting the community response, new Food Support Facebook page, 6 Mailchimp emails to the members. Shona & Derek MacDougall have taken on the Food Support Group and **JB** reported that Shona is keen to become a director of DACIC once things settle down. 7. DACIC financial implications with no Business Group Income (2020 Covid 19v2.xlxs) would see us out of reserves and needing to call on the Courthouse fund in March. **JB** will look into grant support for next meeting. |
| 8. | Membership, Business Group and Stakeholder applications | No applications. |
| 9. | 2020 Plan | 1. Many events have been cancelled, including the Rotary Car Tour, the Sutherland Show and the early community markets. 2. Accounts are to be sent to Mackay & Co in May in order to be signed off in September. 3. The Competition has been halted due to CV. 4. Cruise liner visits have halted for April, and no news has yet been received about May visits; however, it is likely they will be cancelled too. 5. Dornoch 2020 leaflet distribution – halted due to CV. |
| 10. | Community Updates | 1. Dornoch Community Council – **PM** reported that the food bank is now up and running, largely due to Charles Minall, with help from **YR** and others. 2. DADCA – **PM** indicated that the Social Club, markets and car boot sales are all shut/not running. They received a grant from St Finbarrs, donated to the food bank. Currently the responsibility for income and funds for the food bank lies with the CC; **PM** intends to transfer it to DADCA as it has charitable status. **JB** pointed out that the Dornoch Firth Group – of which Charles Minall is the Outreach Worker also has charitable status. 3. Embo Trust – **JM** reported that this is ticking over well. Residents can phone in an order to the community shop and this is then delivered. 4. UHI – **AM** reported that the buildings had been closed and everyone was working from home; all students had left the residences. Work at the Burghfield had come to a halt. 5. Historylinks – **LM** reported that all staff were working from home, supporting the volunteers and keeping them engaged. Caroline is working with the young curators, documenting the whole experience in order to have something for the archive. They are also doing quite a bit on Facebook and the website to keep the interest going. They had applied for £27k from the Community Council to take the extension to planning & building warrant stage and will apply to Heritage Lottery Fund for build costs. The Heritage Lottery Fund supported the Longhouse Project, so they are hopeful of being successful again. 6. RDGC – **NH** indicated that all the facilities were closed. There were nine staff members still working, the rest were furloughed. **NH** hoped that some of the essential maintenance criteria would soon be loosened so they could take on a few more staff again, now that the growing season was starting. The key issue is that North American members are unable to travel just now, but NH remained hopeful that things would bounce back in 2021. **JB** mentioned that she had attended a meeting of IOT, at which the representative from Expedia thinks that CV will concentrate people’s minds on what they really want from a holiday and for many this will be an experience or activity. The general feeling was that initially visitors cancelled their holiday whilst in the last couple of weeks people were opting to defer their holiday instead. **GS** mentioned that some visitors had moved their weeks to next year and he had had few cancellations. **JP** reported that she had a couple cancellations from big golf groups who had booked all 14 rooms, but that some individual travellers had accepted alternative dates. |
| 11. | Financial Statement | **JB** reported that there were free reserves of £20,443.75 at near year-end. |
| 11. | AOCB | No other business |
| 12. | DOMN | 21 May 2020 at 7pm by Zoom. |