MINUTES, DORNOCH BID BOARD MEETING.
7pm Monday 2nd March via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE: Gareth Dixon **(GD),** Claire Bruce **(CB**), Robert Smith **(RS),** Ginny Knox (**GK),** Jo Johnston **(JJ),** Matt Logie **(ML),** Sharon Mackay **(SM)**
Apologies: Colin Thompson **(CT),** Fraser Sharp **(FS)**

ITEM	DISCUSSION NOTE	ACTION
Matters/Actions arising from last minutes	**Dornoch Town Wi-Fi** – Still to be completed. RS reported he had heard the old kit is now obsolete. SM has new contact at HB and will investigate. **We Are Dornoch.** JJ to contact Catherine McCulloch and see whether she might be prepared to take this forward. Also to see if there was an outcome from DADCA meeting on 9th Feb. **BID Christmas Party**. SM has a quote from the Golf Club for 12th December. ML commented that The Station Hotel has reduced their drinks prices and would like to be considered as an option. SM will obtain quote from The Station. **Dornoch as a motorcycling tourism hub -** no progress on this as low priority. **Adoption of minutes** - Proposed JJ, and seconded GD	**SM** **JJ** **SM** **SM**
Finance - monthly report	**Year-end situation.** JJ is forecasting that the BID will make a small "loss" in FY 2025/6 of £3.5k, meaning we will pay no corporation tax. Even if the Highland Council's residual payment is higher than expected, she expects this to remain true. An excellent result. Many thanks to Jo. **Opt-in membership fees** are now just over £5k, though not all have come in. **Levy Billing 2026/7 is £74k.** This appears to be despite the fact that several properties have been removed from the levy and/or the NDR register. C/F: Sharon to compile a list by category, so we can understand this. **New Member billing protocol.** A new member has recently only been billed by the Highland Council (THC) once they were in their 2nd year of operation, and then they were issued with a double bill. Directors agreed to reduce their first year bill by 50%, on the grounds that since the BID did not know they were operating, the business did not benefit directly from a website listing or social media posts, though they will have benefited indirectly. This decision to be communicated to THC, and applied automatically in future if any similar cases arise. **AGM.** Jo to discuss with Mackay & Co. as to how best to arrange for an AGM. **2026 Grant funding routes.** The Board agreed we should apply for grant funding in 5 areas. These were (with approx. cost to be applied for): • Digital enhancements: Events Page upgrade & Visitor Analytics £12-15k • Town Signage: Retail parks directional signage. £10k • Autumn Festival (Programme & advertising) £15k • Spring Festival (Programme & Advertising) £15k • Shopfront Grants & accessibility improvements £10 – 20k	**SM** **SM** **JJ** **SM**
Marketing	**Website and Social Media Monthly KPI's sheet** has been pulled together by Elastic. Claire to finalise it and then send out to directors. She will also send out an analysis of paid social media campaign. New BID Marketing Exec Proposal to be ironed out in next 48 hours.	**CB** **CB** **CB/SM**

Signage	**New Maps** have been handed out today and placed around town. They have been well received. The Information boards will all be updated this week. **Retail Park signage.** We agreed that Sharon will ask the CC if the money granted for the Winter Lighting trail from the Common Good Fund could be re-allocated to the signage for the retail parks, which might allow both the CC and BID to argue for a voluntary reduction in "A frames" in the town centre. In any case, Sharon to meet with Retail park business owners to present proposed new signage and gain agreement for it.	**SM** **SM** **SM**
Events	**Spring Highland Festival.** There is now a big programme of events for this fortnight, now all on the website. A new leaflet will be printed ASAP. **Hogmanay** is being revamped under Colin's/DADCA's leadership. It sounds great!	**SM**
Member issues/ comms	**WhatsApp** Groups are becoming a stronger communication tool for the BID all the time, with more people joining and now with a general group. **Annual progress letter** was sent out to all members with their bill this week. **Business Breakfast** at Links House on 2nd March was very successful, with 24 members attending and good presentations regarding BID progress, Hogmanay, Dornoch Distillery, Amy Britten and Davy McBeth.	
"Political issues"	**Non-Domestic Rates Revaluation.** Meeting with the Highland Assessor (HA) and Chambers of Commerce/BIDs, attended by GK. Some hopeful news expected post April 1st, as HA broadly hinted that Northern Highland self-catering and "chalet-park" businesses, could expect to see their actual revaluations lower than their draft ones, as they acknowledge they "do not understand the North well". There is still scope for objecting to the new rates post April 1st, and we need to stay on top of this. **Draft Place Plan**. Luke Watson (DACIC) is presenting a proposal to the CC on behalf of DACIC and BID suggesting the CC might like to consider hiring a consultant to undertake this difficult and important task.	**GK**
AOB	**Car Rally, 16th May** – On behalf of ESRA and Rotary Clubs. The Rally will go from Lochinver to Dornoch Castle and already 42 cars are signed up. Claire will put this on the Website. **"Spring Clean" Town Tidy to be arranged on March 31st** – Also agreed to ask the golf students from UHI if a few would come and help.	**CB** **SM**

Date of next meeting – REARRANGED TO: 7 pm, **Monday 31st April**, Dornoch Hub