

MINUTES, DORNOCH BID BOARD MEETING.
10am Thursday 4 June 2026

IN ATTENDANCE: Gareth Dixon (GD), Claire Bruce (CB), Colin Thompson (CT), Matt Logie (ML), Claire Riddell (CR), Sharon Mackay (SM).

Apologies: Robert Smith (RS), (CT), Ginny Knox (GK), Jo Johnston (JJ).

ITEM	DISCUSSION NOTE	ACTION
Matters/Actions arising from last minutes -	Dornoch Town Wi-Fi. SM advised that the Wi-Fi will be going live next week. SM to email Cameron and cc in CB to confirm landing page is linked to 'This Is Dornoch'. BID Christmas Party. Comparable quotes received. GD, CT and CB voted for Dornoch Station. SM to ask RS, JJ and GK to vote and book Hotel if majority agree. Town Tidy (TT). Event was postponed due to weather - new date to be set. A TT banner has been made to go on Dornoch Castle railing. A WhatsApp group is in place to let people know if TT is going ahead or not, as not everyone is on FB. New Directors. c/fwd We Are Dornoch (WAD). CB, GK and JJ met with Paddy (DADCA) to discuss WAD. He supports the concept. If DADCA includes WAD, the monies are to be ringfenced in a separate bank account. Paddy to discuss with DACIC's Treasurer. BIDs WAD webpage to be updated by JJ, so that there's transparency on where WAD monies are spent. CR shared an insight into two foundations set up by the Golf Club, using a third-party to facilitate Gift Aid. Adoption of minutes. Proposed by CB, and seconded by CT	SM SM CB/JJ JJ
Finance -	Monthly report and Forecasting. SM read JJ's note - BoS funds total £68,302 - most held in deposit account. Dornoch Gatherings funds of £5,190.52 transferred to new charity bank account. Grant funding is a priority to support planned projects. NDR Levy/Opt In Member Updates: -Opt-in Members - SM speaking to two possible new Opt In members. -NDR Members - No new entries. A BID member asked SM for help regarding an invoice raised incorrectly. SM advised to contact Assessor and NDR office for clarity. SM sent a letter, approved previously by the Board, to a member explaining that 'Opting Out' wasn't an option. A positive discussion took place subsequently and BID will continue to work closely with the member. Possible Funding 2026/2027 SM shared an updated possible funding streams paper and highlighted: -Creative Scotland - Decision expected mid-July on the Autumn Highland Festival. -Ward Discretionary Fund and CGF – Applications for new directional/Park signs on hold as installation of poles on pavements must be done by HC. Quote pending. CLLD An application for the AHF 2026 to be submitted as fund has just opened. HIE – SM had a positive call leading to agreement that BID is to submit a proposal for digital support to help non accommodation businesses with online bookability. An application also to be made for the SHF 2027. NHI – SM asked if a map reprint, new bin wraps or something else should be sought from this fund rather than photography as CB/JJ agreed a retainer with local photographer. CB said the map reprint is a priority and that HC should replace the bins. GD mentioned beach bins overflowing. SM to speak with HC and suggested a meeting with Ward Mgr. when new Councillor appointed to address these matters. Shopfront Grants & Accessibility. - National Lottery is an option to progress. SSE and others are in the pipeline and not open as yet, as shown on table. GD said it was a useful table and to keep it updated for each meeting.	SM SM SM SM

Marketing	Website and Social Media activity/report. CB to ask EC to update the report with suggested changes given at the last Board meeting for next meeting. CB highlighted some key findings from the current report: -Strong traffic growth driven by Meta Ads and organic search. Website visitors increased to 10,835 in April 2026 from 5,826 in April 2025 (+86% YoY). Growth driven by Meta Ads and improved organic search, expanding to new audiences. -Engagement metrics have declined but this is expected and explained by audience mix. Engagement rate (46% vs 64.6% last year), session duration, and pages per visit all decreased as Meta Ads brought in new “discovery-phase” users who are not yet familiar with Dornoch. This is expected as Meta creates new audiences, whereas search captures existing, so lower engagement does not indicate reduced effect. -Clear opportunity to improve ROI through retargeting and content strategy. To maximise performance, the recommendation is to introduce Meta retargeting campaigns (£300/month minimum spend). Alongside this, fresh blogs/refreshed creative assets are suggested to maintain relevance, improve familiarity, and gradually increase engagement from the new audience base. CT mentioned that his B.com bill has decreased by 50% in May – a trend developing since last November. ML said similar picture at Dornoch Station adding people are more aware about booking direct for better deals. CB said BID needs to turn these anecdotal stats into facts. SM said it would be useful to have analytics to show what referrals are coming via the BID’s website too. Property for sale webpage. A new page within the ‘Dornoch Life’ section of the website for residential properties and businesses for sale, is ready to be populated. CB spoke with Lindsay at Arthur Carmichael to get their properties added. SM to ask others with businesses for sale and share with CB. SM will share link once live with HIE as they have overdemand for new units opening soon in Golspie. Non-members such as Springfield Homes can be on the page for a fee, which is yet to be decided. BID Marketing Support. CB advised the Marketing Contractor advert running for the next 2 weeks is advertised on Hi-Jobs, LinkedIn, Live North and Facebook.	CB SM/CB CB/SM CB
Signage	Visitor Map Boards. The updated map boards are now in situ in the 5 locations. The map dispensers were removed as they covered up QR codes. CB offered to fix. Retail/Business Park Signage. SM met Architect to agree locations of signs and a quote has been given. Quote now pending for installation on pavements as sign company have advised they can’t put poles into pavements as need a ‘breaker’. NEW Events Calendar. ‘What’s On’ posters with QR codes will be shared via newsletter. Some framed versions for reception desks to be made. GD asked if window stickers can be made too. The Coach House asked BID to help share posters. CT would like to see weekly newsletters listing what’s on in next few days, upcoming events, weather forecast etc. emailed to members to download/print. CB said the new contractor can progress this. The American Highlander SM sent e-introductions to members who have shown interest, further to the Newsletter information. Dornoch Castle Hotel, Historylinks, Gold Moss, Kilncroft and The Jail all asked for intros. SM to keep intros going.	CB SM SM SM
Events	Autumn Highland Festival. Stargazing workshops to be hosted by Dornoch Station - date tbc. Fashion Show venue tbc for 30/31 October. Cookery demo date tbc. SM hopes to have programme finalised end June. Hogmanay 2026. CT advised Lesley working on the website and all is set for the event which will be launched in August. Christmas Lights and Fair/Winter Lighting Trail – c/fwd.	SM JJ

	Whisky Festival. – CT advised that the Whisky Festival 2026 is all ready to go. Website tested yesterday and going live today. CB met with Lesley Strang and CB advised that TID will make sure it is pushed via the BID channels too.	
“Regulatory issues”	Non-Domestic Rates Revaluation meeting. SM advised that the template created by GK has been shared with members to help them challenge the ‘High Demand’ classification and appeal revaluations, further to seasonal stats being shared by some members and FOI details shared by GK. CT secured transition relief. GD has been getting good feedback from customers about the BIDs efforts in this area.	
Membership Matters/Communications/Meetings	Member/Stakeholder Updates: Cruise Liner Opportunities. SM met the Royal Dornoch Tours (RDT) group (Historylinks, Dornoch Cathedral, Tartan Creations, and Gary Cruden) to discuss how to increase independent tours and develop the half-day RDTs in 2027. CB suggested creating promotional materials to showcase Dornoch when engaging with cruise operators. CB suggested asking NHI to consider a standalone larger grant to support promotion of Dornoch and the wider north. SM advised that the RDT group had also discussed producing a video to showcase the tours and Dornoch. SM was asked by the group to explore whether venues such as the Golf Club, hotels, and other members could help screen the video in-house. SM said the video could also be utilised at events such as “Connect Scotland”. This work would align with wider BID activity, supporting tour/experience providers as they move towards greater online bookability, while broadening access for RDT to be booked by non-cruise visitors too. CR mentioned the £2 Stagecoach fee taking people to Inverness. SM advised that the RDT already asked BID to look into this. HistoryLinks Update. A new entrance has been designed for the Museum, along with a community garden which will transform the look of the area. The wall is to be removed allowing better access to the Meadows area.	SM SM SM SM
AOB	Community Centre - CB met Paddy and Lesley re the new Community Centre (CC). CB has suggested that rather than create a new website, they have a page within ‘This Is Dornoch’ and the CC events link through to our calendar. DADCA would cover the cost which would be less than creating their own site. CB to get a quote from EC to create. Paddy spoke about staffing of the CC. CB suggested the BID marketing person could possibly do CC social posts/update their webpage, as long as a contribution was made to cover that cost. Hustings – One of the election candidates asked if BID could host a Hustings. The Board agreed that they should not organise this event. SM to advise candidate. Royal Dornoch Golf Club – CR advised they are changing their refuse collection to Northern Recycling (NR). They will go to a once-a-week collection. NR would be keen to target the area which could help secure a Friday uplift too. SM to survey members to establish if there is a general demand for a new service in the town. CB said this was part of a buying group scheme BID tried to introduce at the start. CB suggested that we re-look at the offer and ask members if they might be interested in a voluntary group purchasing arrangement for waste and recycling services that could potentially reduce costs and improve service. Defence Employer Recognition Scheme – CR advised that the Golf Club is working towards a Silver Covenant Award within this scheme, which recognises and rewards employers who actively support members of the Armed Forces community. CR asked if BID members might like a presentation to learn more. SM to progress. Meeting venue – There was a discussion around moving the meeting venue from time to time. CR said the Golf Club would take their turn at hosting.	CB SM SM

Date of next meeting – 10am, Thursday 2nd July, Dornoch Hub