

MINUTES, DORNOCH BID BOARD MEETING.
10am Thursday 2 July 2026

IN ATTENDANCE: Gareth Dixon (GD), Claire Bruce (CB), Ginny Knox (GK), Matt Logie (ML), Neil Hampton (NH), Jo Johnston (JJ), Sharon Mackay (SM).

Apologies: Robert Smith (RS), Colin Thompson (CT).

ITEM	DISCUSSION NOTE	ACTION
Matters/Actions arising from last minutes -	Dornoch Town Wi-Fi. No update from Highland Broadband. SM to chase. BID Christmas Party. SM has confirmed booking with Dornoch Station. Town Tidy (TT). A banner with QR code to WAD's crowdfund page is now outside Dornoch Castle. The Angry Seagull has asked if planters could go in at the Retail Park to make the town look more joined-up. CB to ask Flowers and Fairs Committee. Public Bins. SM advised that HC has asked where the trouble spots are with the bins are. CB and GD advised that the Cathedral Green, MUGA, the Square, beach and the top of the steps to the UHI. SM to let HC know. New Directors. GD to invite Cllr. Murray to attend the Board meetings. SM to invite the Ward Manager to attend. Visitor Map Dispensing Units. CB hopes to reinstate the dispensers soon. 'What's On' posters. 15 posters in frames have been given out to members. Stickers are to be made. The American Highlander. The first in a series of You Tube videos featuring BID members is going out on Friday. In addition to being shared on social media, BID can also upload edited reels to the You Tube section on TID. Jason also offered to share the edited reels with each member for their own marketing use. Community Centre – CB advised that there is no further update. Waste & Recycling Group Purchasing Survey. The initial response rates to a survey to gauge interest in a voluntary group purchasing arrangement for waste/recycling services is low. SM is to re-issue with greater emphasis on potential benefits, including cost savings, improved service and the opportunity to attract an additional local collection through Northern Recycling if sufficient demand is identified We Are Dornoch (WAD). GK advised that DADCA could set up a bank account on the condition that funds spent was decided by DADCA rather than the trustees of WAD. GK has advised that the WAD trustees would like to decide the spend. If this is not going to be an option, a WAD Charity can be established. Adoption of minutes. Proposed by GK and seconded by JJ.	SM CB SM GD/SM CB SM SM GK
Finance -	Monthly report and Forecasting. Bank balance: £60,162, with an £11.5k VAT payment due in early July. A proposal for a £150/month retainer with John Wright, subject to Board approval, to capture seasonal images and events was approved. Funding: Grant funding remains essential to deliver planned projects. GK asked if the Dornoch Gatherings entry can be removed from the accounts. JJ advised it can't be done as the year has started so the DG's entry needs to stay in the P&L account. NDR Levy/Opt In Member Updates: -Opt-in Members – A self-catering business is interested in joining. SM is still waiting to hear back from two other possible Opt In members. -NDR Members - No new entries. SM helped a member to sort out an issue with being incorrectly liable for a property on the SAA. The matter is now resolved. Possible Funding 2026/2027 SM shared an updated possible funding streams paper and highlighted: <u>Creative Scotland</u>. Decision expected mid-July on the Autumn Highland Festival.	SM

	<u>Ward Discretionary Fund and CGF</u>. SM has not submitted a funding request due to not having a quote yet for the on-street signage installation but is hopeful quotes will arrive soon. JJ suggested a quote for vinyl covers should funding not be granted. <u>CLLD</u>. An application for the AHF 2026 could be submitted as fund has just opened. <u>HIE</u>. Online bookability initiative progressing and SHF 2027 with HIE. <u>NHI</u>. A request for a grant to reprint visitor maps has not progressed as 50% of the re-print cost has been secured from members' sponsoring adverts and another member showing interest. SM suggested an application is made to NHI once we hear if the Creative Scotland application for the Autumn Festival is successful. <u>Shopfront Grants & Accessibility</u>. National Lottery is an option to progress.	SM SM SM
Marketing	Website and Social Media activity/report. CB highlighted some key findings from the current report and said that the Events page is most popular: - Strong performance: Website traffic remains up year-on-year, despite a drop from May following the end of the Spring Meta campaign. - Content opportunity: Visitor engagement dipped slightly, highlighting the need for fresh content and ongoing SEO improvements. - Effective marketing: The Autumn Highland Festival 2026 campaign achieved 1.07 million impressions and 4,579 clicks at a low £0.25 CPC, although it was less successful than the Spring campaign, perhaps as better to share in August/Sept. Property for sale webpage. CB advised that Arthur and Carmichael is delighted about the new page of the website for residential/business properties for sale and their properties are now being added. SM contacted all members with properties for sale to advise about the new page. Pitgrudy responded to say it was a great idea. SM has shared the Agents site details for each with CB, adding it will be good to get the page live as HIE is ready to share the link with those unable to get a unit at the new Golspie Business Park. GK asked NH if there could also be a link to the RDGC website or newsletter. NH advised this could be arranged. BID Marketing Support. CB advised the Marketing Contractor post has been offered to Kathryn Collinson and that she starts on 1 August. SM contract to be updated in light of this. The focus for Kathryn is to secure Grant Funding, Manage the website and social media. GD thanks CB for all her help with this. Proposal for a Dornoch Gift Voucher Scheme. SM asked the Board to consider piloting a 'Shop Local Dornoch Gift Voucher' to encourage local spending and support BID businesses. The scheme would launch with an initial £10,000 voucher issue, with estimated setup costs of £550. SM yet to get a quote for a webpage to be set up. GK asked what the benefits would be and if there was any evidence of what has happened elsewhere. SM to ask Oban for stats. Driving Footfall Through Digital Heritage Trails. GD had been contacted by 'Trail Tale' and the Board agreed it was worth progressing. GD offered to do so.	CB NH CB SM GD
Events	Autumn Highland Festival. SM advised that the programme is mostly complete. Stargazing workshops to be hosted again by Dornoch Station and that event is live on the website and a Fashion Show is planned for 30 October (venue/event tbc). SM hopes to have programme finalised end July. JJ offered to speak with Cathedral to include a Ceilidh. Lesley Strang (LS) has asked to include some DWF events to help ticket sales. LS is also looking into a discount card to encourage DWF attendees to visit local businesses. CB has asked DWF for details on the website traffic to understand where the attendees are coming from. 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. CB emailed Cath MacAngus but is yet to hear back. CB to chase up.	SM JJ CB CB

“Regulatory issues”	Non-Domestic Rates Revaluation. SM to send a reminder to members about deadline to submit an appeal before 31st July. CB asked if it applied to all and GK advised that those below £12K benefit from SBRS but that they are better to apply as next time they could be above the threshold. Equally, GK added that those at the high end of the valuation, such as RDGC should also challenge the High Demand classification. Tourism Visitor Levy Update. SM advised a proposed scheme is being worked up with industry reps. BIDs were left out of the discussions initially, but HHA managed to get Visit Inverness Loch Ness an invite. It is expected that in September a proposal will be made to Councillors followed by a 12-week consultation.	SM
Membership Matters/Communications/Meetings	Member/Stakeholder Updates: Cruise Liner Opportunities. SM continues to share dates with certain sectors regarding Cruise Ships visiting the town. SM contacted Stagecoach about the £2 fee coaches taking people to Inverness from the Cruise Ships, but they have said there is no capacity this year to include Dornoch. Dornoch Town and Country Lettings - Visitor Map Request. The Board considered a request from Dornoch Town & Country Lettings to be included as a named location on future printed Visitor Maps. The Board agreed that the map is a wayfinding tool rather than a business directory. The Board agreed not to include the business as doing so would add unnecessary complexity and create a precedent, as other letting agents/small agency’s in the town would need to be treated consistently. The Board agreed that the current approach remains the fairest and most consistent policy for all BID members. SM to suggest an advert to help raise awareness of the business.	SM
AOB	150th anniversary celebrations of Royal Dornoch Golf Club (28 June to 4 July 2027) GK asked NH how plans were coming together for the 150th celebrations next year. NH said that everything is going well, and replies are now being gathered from the non-member invites. The members’ invitations will be sent at the end of July. Member Concern – Supporting Local BID Businesses. ML advised that he had been contacted by a BID member regarding a seasonal mobile sports massage therapist at the hotel who is not based locally or a BID levy payer. This arrangement was pre ML’s arrival at the Hotel. GK noted that the therapist also works for Embo House on occasions when the local provider is unavailable. SM advised that the BID member's concern related to the principle of supporting local BID member businesses wherever possible, rather than competition. Both businesses confirmed they will continue to use the local BID member, whenever possible. Trees on St Gilbert Street. SM had a site meeting with new Council Officer Jim MacCauley, to address the longstanding issue with the trees. The Council officer also heard firsthand from neighbouring businesses about the issues the trees cause. It was a good meeting. SM is hopeful the trees will be cut back in October. Meeting Venue. NH kindly offered to host the next meeting at Royal Dornoch Golf Club.	

Date of next meeting – 10am, Thursday 5th August 2026.