

Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 3rd July 2013 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

Present: Phil Game, Joe Grimson, Hamish Howat Hurst, Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae,

1) Apologies: Geoff Harrington

2) Previous minutes.

Proposed by Neil, seconded by Hamish

Copies of minutes are on our website at:-

<http://www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=433827>

Email Broadband@fernaig.fsnet.co.uk if you would like to be put on the circulation list or you have any questions.

3) Update from Phil

Sandra Byrne and Alaistar Nicholson of Community Broadband Scotland are happy to meet with the BSG. We will suggest a date & time and wait for their confirmation.

Action: Phil

Subscribers, we have 24 requesting a connection ASAP, 8 more with connection dates from November to April 2014 and 14 yet to respond. It was decided we would chase the subscribers that have not yet provided dates, explain the problems this causes and detail the consequences of them not providing dates.

Action: Phil

Volume trial, eight households have agreed to take part, two households are yet to respond, we will chase.

Action: Phil

Highland Council discretionary fund, this topic was raised at the last CC meeting and we can apply within the next three months. CBS funding (or lack of) will not exclude HC funding.

Action: Geoff

Lochcarron relay, we have asked various residents in Lochcarron for information about their broadband speeds. Results are consistent in any given household, but vary considerably between one property and the next. Speeds range from 0.6 Mbps to 7 Mbps, the higher speeds are from the more recent installations. A viewshed from this location shows it is likely to be able to provide a signal for all those who requested a connection in Strome Ferry and Ardnarff. It also has a line of sight to the second proposed relay in the Hill between Achmore and Strome Ferry and is close to the Lochcarron BT exchange. We will pursue this option further.

Action: Phil

Our equipment has been removed from Liz and Islay MacRae's garden in Plockton and we have given them a garden centre voucher as a small token of our thanks for their help.

Closed

4) Setting up the CIC

Mary circulated a draft set of registration documents and the bulk of the meeting was spent going through them in detail. By the end of the meeting one or two items were left to complete, we will Bob Anderson for advice on the outstanding issues and ask him to check the completed forms before they are submitted.

Our broadband company name will be CMNet CIC Limited.

5) Role of auditors, finances and liabilities

Auditors

Hamish & Geoff will have a separate meeting to set up the auditor's records.

Action: Hamish, Geoff

Finance

We will check what funding is available and when a top up may be available.

Action Joe

Insurance cover

An estimate of insurance cover and company audit fees have been put in the budget.

Completed

6) Testing Update

a) Outstanding issues to be resolved for this configuration

No progress this month.

Action: Phil

b) Investigate management & accounting capabilities

No progress this month.

Action: Phil

7) Restoring the power to the TV repeater station

a) Investigate what is needed to obtain a power supply from the Hydro

Neil has confirmed with the Hydro that it is possible to make a connection from any of their existing supply cables; it does not have to come from a new connection at a pole. The Hydro will connect to a box in the middle of a field, as long as it is to the right standard. We will have to dig all trenches for the Hydro and lay all our own cables. It is possible for us to obtain a Hydro connection and then connect our own cable in our own time frame. As soon as we have established the company and agreed wayleaves we will formally apply for a power supply from the Hydro.

Action: Neil

b) Set up trial to remove a section of old cable to see what sort of effort is involved.

No progress this month.

Action: All

c) Protection of the cable on the hill top

We will talk to the landowners as to their preferred solution as part of the wayleave contract.

Action: Phil

8) Demonstration in the Hall

This was completed on the 13th June, speeds were just under 6 Mbps. See separate document.

Completed

9) Volume trial.

Hamish has produced a draft outline plan and this was discussed with Mary & Phil. It will now be developed further.

Action: Hamish

10) Domestic contracts

Joe has produced a draft contract and is waiting for Phil to provide more details

Action: Phil, Joe

11) Wayleaves

Phil has circulated a draft document. This will be vetted by a solicitor before use.

Action: Phil

12) Bonds / loans for domestic equipment and using the CC loan for backbone equipment.

Hamish circulated a draft document to cover a bond / loan for comment.

Action All

13) Relays

The CC has agreed to provide a loan to cover the first two relays.

The first relay will be in Plockton to provide the internet connection.

We will test a link to Portchullin from the Plockton relay.

The second will be the old TV repeater site; this will allow connections at Fernaig, Achmore and Braeintra.

We will test a link from the TV site to a relay in The Glen to distribute the signal around local properties.

A second relay will be built on the hill with line of sight to Plockton, Lochcarron and Ardaneaskan

This can provide a link from Plockton to Lochcarron and to a relay in Ardnarff to distribute the signal to the local properties.

It is likely a relay in Lochcarron will provide a signal to Strome Ferry, more surveying is required.

Work building the relays will commence when wayleaves are in place.

Action: Phil

14) Outstanding

Testing over longer distances might suggest sector antenna would be better than the Nanostation.

What equipment should we use to link to the Glen, more testing will be required.

What do we do about obstructed line of sight, trees etc.

15) Implementation Plan

As we receive connection dates households are being put on the implementation plan.

Action: Phil

16) Next meeting.

We will organise a special document signing meeting to complete the company registration..

The next full meeting will be on Wednesday 7th August at 7:30pm Fernaig House.

The meeting closed at 10:15pm