Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10th July 2017 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

1   Present and Apologies

Present: Kate Biss, Phil Game, Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae
Apologies: Joe Grimson

2   Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes for June, were approved proposed by Mary, seconded by Joe (by email).
Copies of previous minutes are on our website at:-
> http://www.stromeferry-and-achmore.co.uk/index.asp?pageid=433827

Email cmnetcic@gmail.com if you would like to be put on the circulation list or you have any questions.

3   Chairman's report

3.1   Bandwidth

We are now starting to see brief peaks very close to the upload and download limit of the Plockton line which suggests that we may have reached the saturation point at 1 TB per month.

3.2   CBS

We will attend a CBS seminar on the 17th & 18th July regarding the government's proposal to reach 100% superfast Broadband coverage and how this will affect Community Broadband Groups.

3.3   Subscribers

3.3.1   Existing relays

Live subscribers	- 35
Subscriber installation pending	- 1

3.3.2   Waiting for new backbone relays

Waiting for surveys	- 4
Waiting for installations	- 38

3.3.3   Others

On live access points but requested a delay	- 2
No response when asked for an installation date	- 2
Withdrawn from CMNet since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Total	- 81

No change this month.

3.4   Companies House Fine

We were fined £150 for lodging our accounts late with Companies House. This year we used new HMRC software to complete our tax return and understood the software would automatically lodge our return with Companies House. Apparently this is true for just about every type of organisation except a CIC. So although our accounts were with HMRC on time they were not forwarded to Companies House. We appealed to Companies House detailing the wording on the HMRC website but they refused to accept this as a valid excuse and so we have been fined.

3.5   Terms of Reference

Deferred

4   Secretary's report

4.1   Risk register

We will evaluate the costs and benefits of a third connection through the Strome Ferry exchange. In the light of the recent network problems with Zen it was agreed that we would look for a third line through an alternative ISP if that makes economic sense. **Action: Mary**

4.2   Long term support plan

Mary will think about the skills required and how to develop a wider support network. **Action: Mary**
We will look at the possibility of developing software to configure equipment. **Action: Phil**

4.3   Zen Refund

The refund from Zen of £626.97 has been credited to our bank account; we will audit the Zen account to confirm that the correct sums have been received. **Action: Mary, Phil, Kate**

4.4 Terms of Reference

Deferred

5 Finance Director's Report

5.1 Monthly Statistics

Capital expenditure claimed against our grant of £37,538:-

Brought forward	-	£24,985.75
This period	-	£ 0.00
Carried forward	-	£24,985.75
No Change		

Revenue for June:-

Brought forward	-	£8,149.99
Income this month	-	£1,050.29
Expenditure this month	-	£890.50
Carried forward	-	£8,309.78

Liabilities

Estimated Liabilities	-	£3,800.00 (includes ~ £3,360 to "repay" CBS)
Estimated balance after liabilities	-	£4,509.78

Provision for replacement of Electronic equipment

Total value purchased to date	-	£9,000.00
Balance after provision	-	£-4,490.22

This month's income and liabilities includes the £626.79 refund of VAT paid from Zen

This month's expenditure includes tax, refunds to subscribers for overpayments and backdated payments for hosting relays.

Now Kate has online access to the bank account it was agreed that Kate would start to take over the production of the financial figures. **Action: Kate, Phil**

5.2 Next year's tariff

Total gigabytes sold 1,550; break even tariff for 2 fibre lines - £0.66 per 10 GB, for 3 fibre lines - £0.99 per 10 GB.

5.3 Outstanding subscribers' debt

Apart from backdated changes to quota increases we are owed £22.50, email reminders have been sent out.

5.4 Next three month's budget and cash flow

Given that we have £8,000 in the bank it was agreed that we would drop this item from future minutes.

5.5 Housekeeping

Work continues to automate the reconciliation of payments; priority will be given to Zen. **Action: Phil, Kate**

5.6 Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment

All payments are up to date.

5.7 Standing orders

Three accounts have an error; we have emailed all those concerned asking them to change their standing orders. **Action: Joe, Phil**

5.8 Loan Contracts

Now Kate has access to the bank account it was agreed we would start the audit of all loans and repayments to ensure that all the documentation is complete so the details can be archived. **Action: Phil, Kate**

5.9 Additional access to the bank account

Kate now has online access to the bank account; however RBS appear to have given Kate update access through the use of a card and reader. This violates the terms our insurance and our own accounting policy to make sure all expenditure is authorised by two directors. So, in the presence of all those at the meeting, we opened all the correspondence from RBS and destroyed the card and it's PIN. Kate now has read only online access. **Completed**

6 Internal auditor's report

It was agreed we would prepare a synopsis of our current practises, needs and areas of weakness to assist ourselves and the auditor. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

6.1   Assets, bf, acquired, relinquished / written off, cf

No progress this month.

6.2   Liabilities

No progress this month.

6.3   Description of the Audit Trail

No progress this month.

7   Customer Relations

7.1   Production Environment

7.1.1   Problems and complaints

Joe is still having problems updating firmware, this is not a high priority to fix and will be addressed in due course.
Action: Phil, Joe

AirRouter reboot problem - Since we have rolled back all AirRouters to the earlier firmware the number of reboots has dropped dramatically but has not ceased completely. We are trialling a scheduled automated reboot of some problematic AirRouters to see if that helps.

If anyone is experiencing problems with any kit please let us know ASAP.

Wi-Fi dead spot problem - we have given the subscriber various options and are awaiting their response. **Action: Subscriber**

Two customers in Braeintra are experiencing poor signal levels we will try a hardware upgrade to the Braeintra access point. No progress this month. **Action: Phil, Joe**

One customer reported a failure of his AirRouter following an internal power failure. Investigation revealed that the router was defective and a new router was cloned and fitted. The probable cause of the failure may have been due to a power surge during the power failure. **Completed**

Outages on the 5th July - 20:45 to 21:35, 6th July - 12:30 to 16:30, 7th July - 12:03 - 12:05, 9th July -14:01 - 14:03 all of these were caused by problems with the Zen network. We have instigated additional monitoring to help identify the cause of failures. As we have not had any problems since the 9th this problem report has been closed. **Completed**

7.1.2   Usage quotas

The monthly total for June was 1,036 GB (1 TB) with a daily average of 34.5 GB, 10% higher than the previous month. The peak usage in June was 47.6 GB for Saturday 17th June, a slight increase on the peak in May.

Two customers exceeded their quota in June; both have elected to increase their quota.

The peak load on the Plockton line shows it is now almost at full capacity.

7.1.3   Possible virus infection

The monitoring system will be amended to increase the reporting threshold. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4   Installation of equipment

No installations since the last minutes.

7.1.5   Customer Contracts

All contract amendments have been issued; we will run an audit check to make sure all our records are up to date. **Action: Phil, Joe**

7.2   Changes for next month

7.2.1   Increases in quotas for existing subscribers

There have been three requests for quota increases this month in addition to two retrospective increases for customers exceeding their quotas. **Action: Phil, Joe**

7.2.2   Additional Management tools / reports

Software to check the configuration of different types of equipment - no progress this month due to other priorities **Action: Phil**

7.2.3   Potential personal safety issue

Changes are ongoing. **Action: Phil, Joe**

7.3   Volume trial

7.3.1   Review of the trial

No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

7.4   Terms of Reference

Deferred

7.5   Problem reporting procedure

No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

8 General topics

8.1 Documentation

8.1.1 Mast lease

Nothing from the Highland Council

8.1.2 Network Plan

Work continues on the new network plan to incorporate new relays on Creag Mhaol above Strome Ferry. **Action: Phil**

8.2 Relays

8.2.1 Creag Mhaol

We have checked our stock of scaffold ready to purchase additional the missing items to build the Creag Mhaol relays. **Action: Phil**

8.2.2 Plockton

8.2.2.1 Hosting agreement

We will add details of the solicitor's quote to the accounts. No progress this month. **Action: Phil, Kate**

8.2.2.2 Equipment and tidy up

The new dishes have arrived and will be configured and installed when traffic can be switched through Lochcarron. **Action: Phil**

8.3 Backbone development

8.3.1 Plockton

No issues.

8.3.2 Lochcarron

The contract for use of Lochcarron has been completed and will be passed to Joe for safe keeping along with all the other contracts. **Action: Phil, Joe**

8.3.3 Creag Mhaol

8.3.3.1 Existing relays

We will investigate hardware upgrades as the next step to reduce noise on the links. **Action: Phil**

8.3.3.2 New relays

Planning the electronic kit for the new relays is complete. **Action: Phil**

8.3.4 The Glen

One access point will be upgraded to see if that will reduce the noise levels. **Action: Phil**

8.3.5 Ardaneaskan

The contract for use of Ardaneaskan has been completed and will be passed to Joe for safe keeping along with all the other contracts. **Action: Phil, Joe**

8.3.6 Portchullin (raised beach)

Activation of the Portchullin relay is waiting on the activation of the new Creag Mhaol relays. **Action: Phil**

8.3.7 Craig

We will look for a test site to allow real world tests to be performed. No progress this month. **Action: Joe, Phil**

8.3.8 North Strome

Activation of the North Strome relay is waiting on the activation of the new Creag Mhaol relays. **Action: Phil**

8.3.9 Ardnarff

No progress this month.

8.4 Testing

8.4.1 Management & accounting software

The subscriber usage email will be enhanced to give the specific amount of data used to allow subscribers to better manage their quotas. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

8.5 Restoring power to the old TV repeater

8.5.1 Removal of equipment from Holly Croft

Phil is to check Eric & Elizabeth are happy with our proposal to compensate them for the use of their electricity. Phil is to tidy up all the equipment left on their premises. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

8.5.2 Removal of old cable

No progress this month.

8.5.3 Protection of cable on the hill

No progress this month.

8.5.4   Backup Generator

No progress this month.

8.6   ISPs

8.6.1   Community backhaul, West Coast Backbone (WCB)

There has been some activity on the WHAN / HUBS forums recently regarding broadband access for the new Kishorn Port facility. CMNet has been proposed as one on the Community Broadband Groups that might provide a service. There was a general discussion about whether we would want to extend our network to cover Kishorn and it was decided that we would only give this consideration if there was no other option available.

8.6.2   ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School

All subscribers continue to be routed through Plockton - there are signs that for brief periods we are reaching saturation on the fibre line.

8.6.3   ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron

The new router has been received from Zen and it is a different model to the one in Plockton. It has taken a little while to configure it in the same way as its predecessor but we now have a working configuration which will be tested and then installed. **Action Phil**

8.7   Implementations

8.7.1   Phase 3 - Relays and creation of access points for the remainder of residents and connect trial subscribers.

8.7.1.1   Equipment

The second batch of equipment for the backbone relays has now been received.

As we have now had several AirRouters fail and to make sure we cover all options we have purchased four different MikroTik routers to trial to see which is best suited for different installations. Phil showed the rest of the directors the new units which are a similar size to the old AirRouters. Initial results show that small changes in the location of the routers can have a significant effect on the signal strength and so direct comparisons will need careful testing. **Action: Phil, Joe.**

8.8   Company Logo

No progress this month. **Action: All**

9   Director's training session

9.1   Configuring Ubiquiti and MikroTik equipment

We will organise another training session. **Action: Phil, Joe.**

Joe and Phil went through the management reporting system documentation. Phil will update and extend the document. No Progress this month. **Action Phil**

Joe and Phil went through the configuration of the Lochcarron router, more training will be organised in due course. **Action: Phil, Joe**

9.2   AirControl

No changes this month.

9.3   The Dude

At lot of time has been spent looking at the facilities and the best way to use them. One advantage over AirControl is the ability to graph data from several devices on the same chart. In this way it is possible to draw direct comparisons and cross reference performance to identify problems. This facility was used on the 5th - 9th July to quickly identify the source of the outages as the Zen network. **Action: Phil**

10   AOB

None

11   Items to add to the agenda of the next meeting

None

12   Next meeting

Date of next meeting Monday, 14th August 7:30pm at Fernaig House.
The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.