Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th September 2017 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

1 Present and Apologies

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

2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes for August, were approved proposed by Mary, seconded by Joe.

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

We are very pleased that Georgie Grimson has volunteered to take over the production of the accounts from Kate. It was unanimously agreed that Georgie would be formally invited to join the board as finance director. Kate will continue as a board member and bank signatory.

3.1 Bandwidth

No change, due to other priorities there has been no testing on the Lochcarron line.

3.2 CBS

Mary, Joe and Phil met with Alaistar Nicholson and Calum Stiven from CBS; the discussion covered the future of CBS, CMNet and the R100 initiative. Phil produced a separate document detailing the likely impact of the R100 initiative on the area. It was agreed we would circulate the document to everyone in the area regardless of whether they were likely ever to be CMNet customers; this will be done via our website, the circulation lists and the notice boards. The impact of the R100 programme on the area is uncertain and it is not be possible for us to answer any detailed questions about its effect on broadband in the area with any degree of certainty. However, if there is enough demand, we will organise a public meeting to discuss what we understand of the process to be followed by the R100 programme team.

We discussed the impact on the R100 programme on CMNet and the critical date will be spring 2019 when contracts will be made public and we will know whether there will be an alternative to CMNet. It was agreed we would continue to roll out CMNet to all those wanting a connection and support CMNet at least until the contracts have been announced in 2019. If CMNet is to continue after that date then it will be necessary to get more support from the local community and in the longer term find a team to replace the current directors to ensure CMNet can continue.

CBS will be much reduced in size and will just administer their current approved projects. There will be no additional funding for existing projects or new projects from CBS.

CBS informed us that the last date for CMNet to submit a claim for funding under our grant is 31st December 2017. We were told by CBS we will be asked to estimate the value of any outstanding claims for their budgeting in the near future.

To make sure that the last claim is as accurate as possible and covers everyone that wants a connection to CMNet we will:-

- Email all those that are on existing relays but have still not taken up membership to ask them to come off the connection list so the money allocated for their kit can be used for others.
- Email all those that are waiting for a connection to ask them reconfirm they still want a connection to CMNet and to commit to a connection.
- Contact others in the area that will be in sight of one of our relays to ask if they want to be included e.g. Leacanashie, between North Strome and Ardaneaskan.
- Use the notice boards to contact anyone else in the area covered by our relays.

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   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. No change this month **Action: Mary**

4.2   Long term support plan

Mary will think about the skills required and how to develop a wider support network. No change this month **Action: Mary**

We will look at the possibility of developing software to configure equipment. No change this month **Action: Phil**

4.3   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 August:-
    Brought forward   -   £8,324.55
    Income this month   -   £482.00
    Expenditure this month   -   £113.74
    Carried forward   -   £8,692.81
Liabilities
    Estimated Liabilities   -   £3,800.00 (includes ~ £3,360 to "repay" CBS)
    Estimated balance after liabilities -   £4,892.81
Provision for replacement of Electronic equipment
    Total value purchased to date   -   £9,000.00
    Balance after provision   -   £-4,107.19

5.2   Next year's tariff

No change in the total gigabytes sold at 1,660; break even tariff for 2 fibre lines - £0.62 per 10 GB, for 3 fibre lines - £0.93 per 10 GB.

There have been no comments from subscribers on the proposed change to 20 GB increments so this will come into effect in December 2017.

Phil presented details of the figures for GB used based on 20 GB increments, fixed costs and projections for the year 4 tariff. After some discussion it was decided to aim for a surplus around £700 for the year.

Due to the uncertainty created by the R100 programme and our need to get all potential subscribers numbers to CBS in the near future it was decided to publish the new rates immediately.

The "standing charge" will remain the same at £5 per connection and the quota based rate with the current sales of capacity equates to 75 pence per 10 GB. This change halves the quota based rate.

As in previous years no allowance has been made for growth; either in the number of subscribers or the increase in quotas of existing subscribers.

The existing rates are as follows:-
    £6.50 for 10 GB, £8 for 20 GB, £11 for 40 GB, £14 for 60 GB... £20 for 100 GB, £35 for 200 GB.
The new rates are as follows:-
    £6.50 for 20 GB, £8 for 40 GB, £9.50 for 60 GB... £12.50 for 100 GB, £20 for 200 GB.

Because the entry level charge will remain the same at £6.50 the new joiner's premium will be unchanged at £132 which equates to £11 a month for the first year of membership. However we will continue to maintain our entry point price

for new subscribers at £13.50 but for an increased quota of 20 GB. 40 GB will be charged at £19 for new subscribers, 200 GB at £31.

We will write to subscribers individually to tell them when they should change their monthly subscriptions.

Our policy is not to offer an unlimited package; all subscribers will pay in proportion to their monthly usage. However for comparison an unlimited package from Zen costs £32 on top of the line rental. A monthly payment to CMNet of £32 would buy 360 GB a month; this is twice the usage of the current highest subscribers.

5.3 Outstanding subscribers' debt

No accounts are in arrears.

5.4 Housekeeping

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

5.5 Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment

All payments are up to date.

5.6 Standing orders

One account has an error; we have emailed those concerned asking them to change their standing order. **Action: Joe, Phil**

5.7 Loan Contracts

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

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 - A number of customers are still experiencing random re-booting of AirRouters. This investigation is ongoing. **If anyone is experiencing problems with any kit please let us know.**

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 slow speeds but our monitoring software showed no problems with CMNet. The subscriber was therefore asked to perform additional tests on their Wi-Fi link which they have not done so this problem has been closed on the assumption the problem is with the subscriber's kit. **Completed**

Please note that all problems reported to CMNet are always investigated. This takes time on our part as we often have to check every device from the subscribers premise to the gateways in Plockton or Lochcarron. If the information gathered by our monitoring software is not conclusive we may need subscribers to run additional tests to get to the root of the problem. If this is not done then the cause of the problem remains unknown. If the same subscriber then reports a similar problem is pointless for us to do any more investigation without the results of the tests we requested. For this reason we will not look at any new reports of similar problems from the same subscriber until they have run the requested tests.

There is a problem with the daily usage reports not going out at the correct time. The fault is under investigation but may be down to Gmail. We will amend the programs to increase the number of times they try to access Gmail. **Action: Phil**

Outages on the 4th September - at 07:16 for 2 minutes and 4th September - at 19:54 for 3 minutes. Our monitoring suggests these were caused by spontaneous reboots of the Zen router in Plockton. No progress on the configuration of the replacement router. **Action: Phil**

Outage on the 4th September - at 17:45 for several minutes, this was caused by a mains power cut.

7.1.2 Usage quotas

The monthly total for August was 1,078 GB (1.078 TB) with a daily average of 34.8 GB, the same as July.

The peak usage in July was 58.4 GB for Sunday 27th, a 9% decrease on the peak in the previous month.

No customers exceeded their quota in August.

The peak load on the Plockton line shows it is now 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

One more customer has had his equipment installed but is yet to be connected. This will be done when the access point has been re-aligned.

7.1.5 Customer Contracts

All contract amendments have been issued; Joe has checked if all our records are up to date and will discuss any anomalies with Phil. **Action: Phil, Joe**

7.2 Changes for next month

7.2.1 Increases in quotas for existing subscribers

There have been no requests for a quota increase this month.

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

The remainder of the equipment required to install the scaffold and mains power supply has been obtained. **Action: Phil, Mary Joe**

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**

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 passed to Joe for safe keeping. **Completed**

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

8.3.3.2 New relays

Completed

8.3.4   The Glen

One access point will be upgraded to see if that will reduce the noise levels. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

8.3.5   Ardaneaskan

The contract for use of Ardaneaskan has been passed to Joe for safe keeping. **Completed**

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

Once the new relays are in place above Strome Ferry we will check the line of sight from Ardnarff. **Action: Phil**

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)

Nothing to report

8.6.2   ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School

We now have a spare router in stock and will replace the existing router. **Action Phil**

8.6.3   ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron

The new Zen router has been configured and installed. Initial testing suggests that Zen / Openreach have configured the line incorrectly. Further investigation is required. No progress this month. **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

Testing of the new domestic MikroTik routers continues. **Action: Phil, Joe.**

8.8   Company Logo

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

8.9   R100

See section 3.2.

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

Work continues to configure the software to improve network monitoring. An account will be set up to allow Joe access.
    Action: Phil

10 AOB

None

11 Items to add to the agenda of the next meeting

None

12 Next meeting

Date of next meeting Wednesday, 4th October 7:30pm at Fernaig House.
The meeting closed at 8:35 pm.