

Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 27th June 2022 @ 7:30 pm at Fernaig House

1 Present and Apologies

Present: Phil Game, Mary MacBeth, Kath Smith

Apologies: Neil MacRae

2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes for May, were proposed by Mary, seconded by Kath

Copies of previous minutes are on our website at:-

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

3 Chairman's report

3.1 Bandwidth

After spending several hours configuring a replacement router Mary & Phil went over to the Lochcarron Shinty Club to test the line speeds - surprise, surprise the results were exactly the same as the "old" Plusnet router. Mary called Plusnet to give them the results but even before the results were passed on the Plusnet operative realised that there was a configuration error their side. After a few; "can you hold the line for a moment", "it shouldn't be much longer now", "I'm just waiting to get the results", "sorry to keep you waiting"... Mary was told that the configuration would be corrected in the next 24 hours - which it was. We now have download speeds ~70 Mbps and upload speeds ~18 Mbps. Plusnet have agreed to refund a portion of their charges for the period prior to this fix. We now need a clear day so we can make sure we have a clear line of sight to finalise the position of the dish at the Shinty Club. **Action: Phil & Mary**

3.2 False RADAR

We have seen an increasing number of false RADAR events affecting North Strome access point; eventually these were occurring several times a day. Changing the frequency did not improve the situation and a frequency scan did not pinpoint any external interference either. It was therefore decided to disable the unit and bring the backup unit into service. The backup unit was using a different frequency band (old configuration) and it was decided to stay with the alternate band. No false RADAR events have been logged since the backup unit was brought online, further testing will be required. **Action: Phil**

It looks like the issue with the link to the server may be something other than false RADAR, further investigation is required. **Action: Phil**

3.3 HMRC & Companies House annual accounts submissions

HMRC & Companies House have accepted our accounts, special thanks are due to Mary who called Companies House to make sure that this year they would not reject the wording of clauses produced by the HMRC software as they tried to do last year. **Completed**

3.4 Spurious Addresses

The overnight housekeeping jobs have reported external addresses trying to connect to invalid CMNet addresses. Most of these have come through Achmore and can be explained by the Plusnet router in Achmore Hall which has a different configuration to the units in Plockton and Lochcarron but there have been a couple that appear to have come through our router in Plockton. Further investigation is required. **Action: Phil**

3.5 Use of CMNet in public places

There was some debate as to whether we could make CMNet available on an ad-hoc basis in public spaces. As there has been no specific request for this facility the discussion was brief and kept to the principles involved. However it was agreed that CMNet could probably provide such a facility if requested. It would require some additional equipment and would be subject to third parties taking full responsibility for the administration of the facility.

3.6 Subscribers

Live subscribers	- 58
Waiting for activation	- 0
Waiting for subscriber's confirmation of details / deposits	- 0
Pending installations	- 0
Waiting for installations	- 14
Leavers since the last minutes	- 1
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Total	- 73

No new installations this month.

One subscriber has reneged on their commitment to join CMNet thus wasting time and public money. We have had requests for connections in Lochcarron, Strathcarron and Balnacra; once our existing commitments have been met we will see if these are feasible and schedule the work. **Action: Phil**
 We have had an enquiry for a new connection and have been told by the subscriber that they do not have line of sight. We may review this when all other subscribers have been connected. **Action: Phil**
 See section 8.7 for more details on implementations

4 Secretary's report

4.1 Risk register

No progress this month.

4.2 Long term support plan

Work continues to adapt our software which will clone devices to work with the "AC Gen 2" units. Now annoying renamed in the latest firmware upgrade. **Action: Phil**

4.3 Access to the bank account

Kath believes that RBS have given Mary access to the bank account; however Mary is still unable to access the account through the online banking app. Kath suggested Mary use the "chat" function in the app as this will probably remove the last barrier. **Action: Mary**

5 Finance Director's Report

5.1 Monthly Statistics

Revenue for April

Brought forward			
Balance		£2,326.76	
Creditors			£10,474.77
Debtors			£9,274.80
Net			£1,199.97
Bank balance			£10,719.48
This month			
Income	£607.90		
Expenditure	£324.53		
P&L		£283.37	
Creditors			£212.12
Debtors			£158.00
Net			£54.12
Adjusted P&L			£337.49
Carried forward			
Balance		£2,610.13	
Creditors			£10,686.89
Debtors			£9,432.80
Net			£1,254.09
Bank balance			£11,056.97

Revenue for May

Brought forward

Balance	£2,610.13		
Creditors		£10,686.89	
Debtors		£9,432.80	
Net			£1,254.09
Bank balance			£11,056.97

This month

Income	£611.62		
Expenditure	£356.07		
P&L	£255.55		
Creditors		£210.07	
Debtors		£162.38	
Net			£47.69
Adjusted P&L			£303.24

Carried forward

Balance	£2,865.68		
Creditors		£10,896.96	
Debtors		£9,595.18	
Net			£1,301.78
Bank balance			£11,360.21

5.2 Outstanding Expenses Claims

Nothing outstanding

5.3 This year's surplus

We are on target to make a surplus of ~£4,000 this year, there was some discussion as to the best use for the money:-

We will invest in the latest equipment to upgrade most of the Creag Mhaol access points to the latest technology and add backup units where these are currently not in place.

We will allocate some funds to use to repay subscribers a portion of the new joiner's premium.

We will go through the figures again and make a final decision at July's meeting. **Action All**

5.4 Next year's tariff

The total number of gigabytes sold was 15,675, which makes the break even tariff for 3 fibre lines 140 GB per £1 and for 4 fibre lines 113 GB per £1.

There was some debate about the options for amending the tariff next year and we looked at various changes to the variable GB increment. The £5 standing charge will remain as is.

We will go through the figures again and make a final decision at July's meeting. **Action All**

5.5 Outstanding subscribers' debt

The outstanding debt is £66.40. **Action All**

5.6 Housekeeping

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

5.7 Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment

All payments are up to date.

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 Issues raised by Subscribers

7.1.1.1 How can subscribers contact CMNet when the internet is down?

We will investigate the options; ideally the CMNet support team needs to receive problem reports via email so our initial investigations will be whether voice mails can be forwarded via email.

7.1.1.2 Fernaig

No issues

7.1.1.3 Achmore

No issues

7.1.1.4 The Glen

No issues

7.1.1.5 Braeintra

One subscriber has reported poor performance in Braeintra - this is down to obstructions in the line of sight of the subscriber's antenna. **Action: Subscriber**

7.1.1.6 Craig

No issues

7.1.1.7 Ardaneaskan East

No issues

7.1.1.8 Ardaneaskan West

No issues

7.1.1.9 Leacanashie

No issues

7.1.1.10 North Strome

One subscriber is having issues preventing the installation of a whole house Wi-Fi system. **Action: Phil**

There were problems with false RADAR events see section 3.2 for more details.

7.1.1.11 Strome Ferry

No issues

7.1.1.12 Ardnarff

No issues

7.1.2 Usage quotas

The monthly total for May was 8.1 TB, the daily average was 261 GB, with a peak usage of 362 GB on Tuesday 31st. CMNet peaks since operations started; highest average daily usage 282 GB, highest single days usage - 433 GB, highest monthly usage - 8.7 TB.

Two subscribers exceeded their quota in May.

7.1.3 Possible virus infection

No new instances of the Ubiquiti virus were detected; we will continue to run scans. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4 Planned upgrades of equipment

7.1.4.1 Fernaig

The access point will be upgraded and a backup installed. **Action: Phil.**

7.1.4.2 Achmore

Once or twice every few months we are still seeing sporadic problems with the Achmore access point. The access point has already been replaced with another similar unit which did not resolve the problem. The current unit will be upgraded and a backup installed. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4.3 The Glen

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

7.1.4.4 Braeintra

The access point will be upgraded and a backup installed. **Action: Phil.**

7.1.4.5 *Craig*

We are investigating a report of drop outs. We will review the situation when we have more experience of low level links over water or other options become available. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4.6 *Ardaneaskan East*

No issues

7.1.4.7 *Ardaneaskan West*

No issues

7.1.4.8 *Leacanashie*

No issues

7.1.4.9 *North Strome*

No issues

7.1.4.10 *Strome Ferry*

No issues

7.1.4.11 *Ardnarff*

No issues

7.1.5 *Backbone relays*

7.1.5.1 *Plockton*

We will check the installation and apply a second coat of paint to the school wall. **Action: Phil & Mary**

7.1.5.2 *Achmore*

The Plusnet router will be replaced with something more suitable. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

To test the maximum speed that the radio link from Achmore Hall to Creag Mhaol will support the router in Achmore Hall will need to be upgraded. At the moment it has “only” 100 Mbps Ethernet ports and it is expected that the radio link will be able to run well over this speed. However we test the speed from router to router so the 100 Mbps port on the Achmore Hall router would be the limiting factor. We will therefore replace the router with one that can support 1 Gbps Ethernet ports; we have a suitable router “in stock”. The corresponding router on Creag Mhaol has already been upgraded. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

7.1.5.3 *Lochcarron A*

Link capacity testing is required. **Action: Phil**

We will install a Raspberry Pi micro computer to facilitate gateway line speed tests. **Action: Phil**

7.1.5.4 *Lochcarron B*

See section 3.1 for the current status.

7.1.5.5 *Other relays*

The damaged Strome Low relay dish that connects to Achmore High will be recovered when we next schedule work on Creag Mhaol. **Action: Phil**

The Creag Mhaol dish that connects to Ardaneaskan West that was replaced after storm damage is showing some slight dips in signal strength. This is probably due to a damaged housing, the housing will be replaced when we next schedule work on Creag Mhaol. **Action: Phil**

7.1.6 *System monitoring servers*

The MikroTik server (“The Dude”) is having its database rebuilt - the newly installed equipment has been set up but there is still more work to do. **Action: Phil**

7.1.7 *Documentation*

Phil is part way through a document to list the options for automatic recovery of failures and loss of capacity. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

7.1.8 *Customer Contracts*

We will check that all changes to customer contracts and charges are now correct. **Action: Phil**

7.2 *Changes for next month*

7.2.1 *Additional Management tools / reports*

Management Reporting Software upgrades. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

Software to check the configuration of equipment - this is being upgraded to increase the automation when configuring new devices and simplify the configuration of backup units. **Action: Phil**

7.2.2 *Potential personal safety issue*

The new naming standard has been used for all the new installations. **Action: Phil**

7.2.3 *Additional equipment for subscribers*

Additional access points have been requested and will be installed for a subscriber in Leacanashie. **Action: Phil**

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*

A trial WhatsApp group has been set up by Mary - testing is continuing amongst directors. **Action: All**

8 *General topics*

8.1 *Documentation*

8.1.1 *Creag Mhaol*

We have received a draft lease agreement from our solicitors; we have yet to go through this in detail. We will need to reconfirm all the GPS coordinates of the relays before we can proceed; priority will be given to completing the set up of the relays on Creag Mhaol. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

8.2 *Backbone development*

8.2.1 *New relays*

8.2.1.1 *Completed*

No progress this month.

8.2.1.2 *Next steps*

The new relay automated recovery algorithms are being tested (some rather unexpectedly)
The buried mains power cables need to be permanently marked and documented.

Action: All

8.2.1.2.1 *Portchullin (raised beach)*

The Portchullin enclosures will be upgraded. **Action: Phil**

Re-align the existing Portchullin Access Point

Install test equipment in Portchullin

8.2.1.2.2 *Reraig*

We have surveyed various locations for a relay to provide an access point for Reraig. Access will almost certainly require a much higher relay than we have built so far. We will return to the relay investigation and build once the current relays are active. **Action: Phil**

8.3 *Testing*

8.3.1 *Management & accounting software*

Nothing to report

8.4 *Restoring power to the old TV repeater*

8.4.1 *Removal of old cable*

No progress this month.

8.4.2 *Protection of cable on the hill*

All the cable on the hill has been buried but the routes still need to be marked.

8.4.3 *Backup Generator*

No progress this month.

8.5 *ISPs*

No issues

8.6 *Implementations*

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

8.6.1.1 *Ardaneaskan East*

Two installations are waiting to be scheduled. **Action: Phil, Mary & Ken**

8.6.1.2 *Strome Ferry*

Four installations are waiting to be scheduled. **Action: Phil**

8.6.1.3 *Leacanashie*

One installation has been completed.

8.6.1.4 *North Strome*

One installation is waiting to be scheduled. **Action: Phil, Mary & Ken**

8.6.1.5 *Achmore*

One installation is waiting to be scheduled. **Action: Phil**

8.6.1.6 *Portchullin*

New enclosures have been purchased to act as replacements for the corroded units. **Action: Phil**

8.6.2 Phase 4 - Further investigations / backbone development required.

8.6.2.1 *Ardaneaskan West*

8.6.2.2 *Ardnarff*

8.6.2.3 *Reraig*

8.6.2.4 *Lohcarron*

8.6.2.5 *Strathcarron*

8.7 **Company Logo**

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

8.8 **General Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection Act)**

We accidentally used an old CMNet email circulation list when responding to an email thus breaching GDPR policy. A GDPR self assessment was completed and as the impact was unlikely to cause a risk to the individual concerned the matter was not referred to the ICO.

We will review our current GDPR policy.

9 **Director's training session**

9.1 **Configuring Ubiquiti and MikroTik equipment**

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

10 **Next meeting**

Date of next meeting Monday 18th July 19:30.

The meeting finished at 10:10 pm