

Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th April 2023 @ 7:30 pm at Fernaig House

1 Present and Apologies

Present: Phil Game, Mary MacBeth, Kath Smith, Neil MacRae

2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous updates for March were proposed by Kath, seconded by Neil.

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

There have been no reports of bandwidth issues.

Our statistics of the link from Creag Mhaol to Ardaneaskan west are proving rather difficult to interpret. More investigation is required. **Action: Phil**

3.2 False RADAR

The connection from Creag Mhaol to the Achmore gateway will be upgraded to 60 GHz which is not subject to FR events. We have been granted a license by Ofcom and will install the 60 GHz link in due course. **Action: Phil**

In addition to the link to the Achmore gateway there have been a few of false RADAR events in the last month. We will extend our own software to capture and log FR events. **Action: Phil**

3.3 Subscribers

Live subscribers	- 62
Waiting for activation	- 0
Waiting for subscriber's confirmation of details / deposits	- 0
Pending installations	- 0
Waiting for installations	- 9
Leavers since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Total	- 71

One new installation this month,

The line of sight to our relay has been checked for another North Strome subscriber. **Action: Phil**

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**

3.4 New equipment

Phil will complete the set up of the new laptop for support with the agreed software and also add our monitoring software so it can be used as a backup for the server should that fail. **Action: Phil**

We have ordered the remainder of the equipment scheduled to be used for upgrades. There are stock shortages worldwide and our suppliers cannot give us delivery dates. However it was decided we should place our order now and so get in the queue for when stocks recover. **Completed**

4 Secretary's report

4.1 Risk register

No progress this month.

4.2 Long term support plan

We have adapted our software to work with the "AC Gen 2" units; we are looking at options to clone replacements devices remotely and in due course will look for volunteers at "remote" sites to hold spares. **Action: Phil**

4.3 Broadband in Achmore Hall

Neil will organise a meeting with the Hall committee to define requirements. **Action: Neil**

4.4 Zen price increase

We will review the value for money of all ISPs when we next look to increase capacity. **Action: Mary**

4.5 Electricity price increase

Mary has read and submitted meter reading ready for the new tariff on the 1st April. **Completed**

5 Finance Director's Report

5.1 Monthly Statistics

Revenue for March

Brought forward

Balance	£1,131.01		
Creditors		£16,088.98	
Debtors		£15,032.12	
Net			£1,056.86
Bank balance			£9,935.84

This month

Income	£544.74
Expenditure	£121.42

P&L

Creditors		£86.00	
Debtors		£311.92	
Net			-£225.92

Adjusted P&L

£197.40

Carried forward

Balance	£1,554.33		
Creditors		£16,174.98	
Debtors		£15,344.04	
Net			£830.94
Bank balance			£10,133.24

5.2 Outstanding Expenses Claims

There is an outstanding claim for £2,997.18 for equipment purchased in March. **Action: Phil**

5.3 This year's surplus

There are a few NJP rebate cheques that have not yet been cashed, one cheque was issued with the wrong initials and will be rewritten. **Action: Kath & Phil**

We spent just under £3,000 on hardware upgrades so far this year. **Completed**

5.4 Next year's tariff

The total number of gigabytes sold was 22,950, which makes the break even tariff for 3 fibre lines 206 GB per £1 and for 4 fibre lines 166 GB per £1.

5.5 Outstanding subscribers' debt

Three accounts are in arrears, the subscribers have been informed. **Action: Kath**

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.

5.8 Payment for missing equipment

An invoice will be dispatched for the missing equipment. **Action: Phil**

5.9 HMRC and Companies House submissions

The HMRC and Companies House submissions were circulated before the meeting and at the meeting Phil took everyone through the documents. A transposition error was noted when updating the Companies House return from the figures calculated by the HMRC return. This figure was amended and a revised document printed during the meeting. After this correction all the documents were agreed and approved unanimously.

After the HMRC super deduction allowance was applied to our tax return the tax due is ~ £96. The completed documents will be submitted to HMRC and companies House. Mary will pay the tax online and then reclaim the amount due.

Action: Phil & Mary

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*

There were a series of planned power outages in North Strome and Ardaneaskan for SSE maintenance. At times these upgrades affected Strome Ferry and Craig. All our equipment restarted without any issues when power was restored.

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. No progress this month.

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 - this is down to obstructions in the line of sight of the subscriber's antenna. **Action: Subscriber**

7.1.1.6 *Craig*

We have asked a subscriber to check the line of sight for obstructions. **Action: Subscriber**

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**

7.1.1.11 *Strome Ferry*

No issues

7.1.1.12 *Ardnarff*

Poor speeds between buildings have been traced to mains LAN extenders not connecting properly probably caused by "noise" on the mains power these will be replaced with radios to link the buildings. We delivered another bracket and fitting for the subscriber to install. **Action: Subscriber / Phil**

7.1.2 *Usage quotas*

The monthly total for March was 8.9 TB, the daily average was 286 GB, with a peak usage of 360 GB on Saturday 4th. CMNet peaks since operations started; highest average daily usage 345 GB, highest single days usage - 708 GB, highest monthly usage - 10.7 TB.

Three subscribers exceeded their quotas in March.

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 when stocks become available from suppliers.

7.1.4.2 *Achmore*

The access point will be upgraded when stocks become available from suppliers.

7.1.4.3 *The Glen*

A new unit has been configured to replace the dish on Creag Mhaol; it and a backup will be installed when weather permits. Although we planned to upgrade this link it was not possible as there is not enough space on the relay until the Achmore link has been moved and upgraded to 60 GHz. **Action: Phil.**

7.1.4.4 *Braeintra*

The upgraded access point is highlighting potential alignment errors on subscribers' antenna, further investigation is required. **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*

The access point will be upgraded when stocks become available from suppliers.

7.1.4.7 *Ardaneaskan West*

No issues

7.1.4.8 *Leacanashie*

The access point will be upgraded when stocks become available from suppliers.

7.1.4.9 *North Strome*

The access point will be upgraded when stocks become available from suppliers.

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**

We have received our 60 GHz license from Ofcom and the unit will be upgraded in due course. **Action: Phil**

7.1.5.3 *Lochcarron*

No issues.

7.1.5.4 *Other relays*

No issues.

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*

Nothing to report

7.3 *Volume trial*

7.3.1 *Review of the trial*

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

7.4 *Terms of Reference*

Deferred

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*

8.6.1.1 *Ardaneaskan East*

All installations have been completed.

8.6.1.2 *Ardnarff*

One installation needs to be upgraded. **Action: Phil**

8.6.1.3 *Strome Ferry*

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

8.6.1.4 *North Strome*

One installation has been completed but is experiencing problems with a software package. **Action: Phil**

One installation has had the line of sight checked and is now waiting to be scheduled. **Action: Subscriber, Phil & Mary**

8.6.1.5 *Achmore*

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

8.6.1.6 *Portchullin*

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

8.6.1.7 *Craig*

All installations have been completed.

8.6.2 *Phase 4 - Further investigations / backbone development required.*

8.6.2.1 *Ardaneaskan West*

8.6.2.2 *Reraig*

8.6.2.3 *Lohcarron*

8.6.2.4 *Strathcarron*

8.7 *Company Logo*

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

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

We will review our GDPR policy. **Action: Mary**

9 **Director's training session**

9.1 *Configuring Ubiquiti and MikroTik equipment*

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

10 **AoB**

The correspondence received just prior to the last meeting will be dealt with at subsequent meetings when time allows.

11 **Next meeting**

Monday 22nd May, all future meetings will be on the third Monday of the month to allow more time to process the accounts.

The meeting finished at 9:50 pm