Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 18th September 2023 @ 8:30 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 minutes for August were proposed by Kath, seconded by Mary.
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

Since the last report a considerable amount of time has been spent reducing the amount of information coming from the system. Now most of the "dross" has been removed things are starting to become clearer; but there is still a lot more to do. **Action: Phil**

3.2   False RADAR

Work is yet to start on the intermediate mounts that will allow us to make micro adjustments to the dish alignment. **Action: Phil**

It is proving to be very complex to rationalise all the different pro formas. However we have already identified some inconsistencies and are correcting the current pro formas as the work progresses. Work continues. **Action: Phil**

There has been very few false RADAR events in the last month, the majority have been on the link between Strome High and Strome Low relays. This link is scheduled to be replaced by the new 60 GHz radios which will eliminate the FR events. **Action: Phil**

3.3   Subscribers

Live subscribers	- 63
Waiting for activation	- 0
Waiting for subscriber's confirmation of details / deposits	- 0
Pending installations	- 0
Waiting for installations	- 8
Leavers since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Leavers since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Total	**- 71**

No new installations were completed this month.

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 request to provide a 4G service to boost mobile coverage; once our existing commitments have been met we will see if this is feasible and schedule the work. Mary to check if this is still needed. **Action: Mary**

3.4   New equipment

More work is required to the email client to filter incoming messages on the support laptop. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

We will also add our monitoring software so it can be used as a backup for the server should that fail. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

We are **still** waiting for one item outstanding item to be delivered, one year and counting. **Action: Phil**

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

We met with a subset of the Hall committee at their September meeting to define their requirements. It was agreed we would run a scan to find the best location for access points(s) to provide connectivity in the main hall, kitchen and

gallery. Once the location of the access points has been agreed the hall committee will organise running Ethernet cable(s), CMNet will then complete the installation. Access to the network will be by a voucher system which will be set up by CMNet and distributed by the hall committee. **Action: Neil**

4.4   Electricity price increases

In the light of the recent increases in electricity charges it was decided to review the amounts paid for hosting relays and to increase payments. **Action: Phil**

5   Finance Director's Report

5.1   Monthly Statistics

Revenue for August

Brought forward				
Balance	**£248.84**			
Creditors		£19,610.27		
Debtors		£19,063.79		
Net			£546.48	
Bank balance				**£8,543.29**
This month				
Income	£586.50			
Expenditure	£1,088.94			
P&L	**-£502.44**			
Creditors		£999.16		
Debtors		£181.38		
Net			£817.78	
Adjusted P&L				**£315.34**
Carried forward				
Balance	**-£253.60**			
Creditors		£20,609.43		
Debtors		£19,245.17		
Net			£1,364.26	
Bank balance				**£8,858.63**

August is the end of our financial year and, as in previous years, there will be some adjustments made to the final results as we process the EOY accounts. When we complete our HMRC submission the figures will change again as the tax rebated and tax due are calculated and applied. For the moment the August figure shows we made a loss of ~ £250 for the year.

5.2   Outstanding Expenses Claims

All claims are up to date.

5.3   Last year's surplus

There is one NJP rebate cheque that has not yet been cashed. **Action: Subscriber**

As explained above we made a loss of ~ £250 this year, this was a conscious decision to overspend on the projected surplus for the year and to buy an additional 60 GHz radio; i.e. to buy four rather than three to create two links and to save on the delivery charges. **Completed**

5.4   Next year's tariff

The total number of gigabytes sold was 24,900, which makes the break even tariff for 3 fibre lines 211 GB per £1 and for 4 fibre lines 171 GB per £1.

5.5   Outstanding subscribers' debt

All accounts are up to date.

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 Subscriber Payment Errors

One subscriber has had problems correcting their subscription payments which are now in surplus. After some debate it was decided that the best course of action is to ask them to change their payments to cover the next change which is due in the near future and then we can issue a cheque to rebate the overpayment. **Action: Kath**

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 have been a series of power cuts since the last report; all units came back online each time 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. We paid a visit and ran scans of Wi-Fi signal strength at various locations and looked at various options. Phil will set up and test a Wi-Fi repeater as one of the options. **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**

7.1.2 Usage quotas

The monthly total for August was 11.4 TB (a new record), the daily average was 367 GB (a new record), with a peak usage of 533 GB on Saturday 12th.

CMNet peaks since operations started; highest average daily usage 367 GB, highest single days usage - 708 GB, highest monthly usage - 11.4 TB.

Three subscribers exceeded their quota in August.

7.1.3   Possible virus infection

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

For several days our system software detected that a subscriber was accessing an excessive number of websites. This was likely to be the result of a virus infection. It is important that prompt action is taken by subscribers when they have been notified of a possible infection. In the past our ISP has detected rogue traffic being sent over the internet from a virus infection within CMNet and notified us that they will suspend CMNet's connection if the problem is not addressed urgently.

To make sure that CMNet's internet service is not suspended by our ISP; all subscribers should be aware that they may have their connection to CMNet suspended if they do not respond and take action when notified of a possible virus infection. **Action: Subscribers**

7.1.4   Planned upgrades of equipment

7.1.4.1   Fernaig

The access point will be configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4.2   Achmore

The access point will be configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **Action: Phil**

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. **Action: Phil.**

7.1.4.4   Braeintra

The access point will be configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **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 configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4.7   Ardaneaskan West

No issues

7.1.4.8   Leacanashie

The access point will be configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **Action: Phil**

7.1.4.9   North Strome

The access point will be configured and installed now we have received stocks from our suppliers. **Action: Phil**

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**

The 60 GHz dish mount will be upgraded. **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 (again!) - The newly installed equipment has been set up but there is still more work to do. It appears that when the system is backed up the logs are cleared down thus making it difficult to trace yesterday's problems. We will investigate backing up the logs!! **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

Some contracts are outstanding; we will chase the relevant subscribers. **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 are waiting for a subscriber to provide details of the land they own so we can determine where to install their relay. **Action: Subscriber**

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: Subscriber**

8.6.1.3   Strome Ferry

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

8.6.1.4   North Strome

All installations have been completed.

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   Lochcarron

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

11 Next meeting

Monday 23rd October
The meeting finished at 9:00 pm