Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 27th November 2023 @ 8:00 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 October were proposed by Neil, 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

Work continues to rationalise all the different Pro Formas. **Action: Phil**

A considerable amount of time has been spent preparing documents for the AGM which took place just before this meeting.

Time was also spent preparing and installing configuration changes; there were six maintenance sessions this month.

3.1 Bandwidth

Work continues to reduce the number of emails produced by the system, there is still more work to do to process the information. **Action: Phil**

3.2 False RADAR

There were about a dozen false RADAR events recorded in the last month, again 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	- 64
Waiting for activation	- 0
Waiting for subscriber's confirmation of details / deposits	- 0
Pending installations	- 0
Waiting for installations	- 10
Leavers since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 2
Total	**- 74**

No new installations were completed this month.

We have had new requests for two connections in Leacanashie.

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

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**

3.5 ISPs

We have been informed by Plusnet that they will no longer supply a business connection and we will have to move to another provider. **Action: Phil, Mary**

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 are waiting for the Hall committee to test and sign off the installation. **Action: Hall committee**

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 October

Brought forward				
Balance		**£446.63**		
Creditors			£1,062.80	
Debtors			£1,065.04	
Net				-£2.24
Bank balance				**£8,361.46**
This month				
Income	£594.50			
Expenditure	£362.18			
P&L		**£232.32**		
Creditors			£64.74	
Debtors			£97.36	
Net				-£32.62
Adjusted P&L				**£199.70**
Carried forward				
Balance		**£678.95**		
Creditors			£1,127.54	
Debtors			£1,162.40	
Net				-£34.86
Bank balance				**£8,561.16**

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**

5.4 Next year's tariff

The total number of gigabytes sold was 25,350, which makes the break even tariff for 3 fibre lines 215 GB per £1 and for 4 fibre lines 174 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. One change is still outstanding when this has been completed 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

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 Requests for information

Normally the directors are happy to provide subscribers with information regarding their use of CMNet above and beyond what is described in the Customer Services Contract. However subscribers should remember that every request always requires time from one or more (unpaid) directors. If these request become excessive they can take up a considerable amount of time and detract from the time available to work on other tasks. It has therefore been decided that, at directors' discretion, a minimum charge of £45 will be levied per request in extreme circumstances. Subscribers will be notified of the actual charge in advance and will have to credit their account before the request will be actioned. All monies raised will go to CMNet not to directors.

7.1.1.3 Fernaig

No issues

7.1.1.4 Achmore

No issues

7.1.1.5 The Glen

No issues

7.1.1.6 Braeintra

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

7.1.1.7 Craig

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

7.1.1.8 Ardaneaskan East

No issues

7.1.1.9 Ardaneaskan West

No issues

7.1.1.10 Leacanashie

No issues

7.1.1.11 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**

7.1.1.12 Strome Ferry

No issues

7.1.1.13 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 October was 9.3 TB, the daily average was 301 GB, with a peak usage of 408 GB on Wednesday 4th.

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

Two subscribers exceeded their quota in October.

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 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**

An operating system upgrade to the Raspberry Pi corrupted the micro SD card and the unit has been recovered so that a new card and operating system can be installed. **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. The schedule to backup the logs has been altered to keep several days worth of data. **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

One contract is outstanding; we will chase the relevant subscriber. **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*

In the New Year we will look for an alternative to Plusnet as they no longer supply business broadband.

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.

8.6.1.8   Leacanashie

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

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

8.6.2.5   Balnacra

8.7   Company Logo

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

8.8   General Data Protection Regulation (Data Protection Act)

Mary has reviewed our GDPR policy document; one small update is required. **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 15th January
The meeting finished at 8:50 pm