

Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 5th August 2015 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

1 Present and Apologies

Present: Phil Game, Joe Grimson, Hamish Howat Hurst, Mary MacBeth

Apologies: Michael Fraser, Neil MacRae

2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes were approved; proposed by Mary, seconded by Hamish.

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

3.1 Bandwidth

No specific performance problems were reported this month, however we are aware that there are drops in performance at peak times. We have reported the problem to Managed Comms, they say they have checked their network and there are no problems. The suggestion is therefore that the Plockton exchange is the bottleneck and they have asked that we confirm this by running speed tests at peak times of the day from Plockton with the rest of CMNet disabled. We will organise a convenient time with the school and then ask subscribers for a testing slot. **Action: Phil**

We will see how Lochcarron performs and decide whether to reduce the number of subscribers per line - see 8.3.1. The long term solution is the West Coast Backbone leased line - see 8.6.1. It was agreed we would not connect any more subscribers until the new Lochcarron line is live and we have more capacity available.

3.2 CBS

No progress this month.

3.3 Subscribers

| | |
|--|------|
| Live | - 25 |
| Kit installed waiting for backhaul | - 0 |
| Waiting for installations | - 1 |
| Waiting for subscriber installations | - 5 |
| Waiting for surveys | - 0 |
| On live access points but requested a delay | - 4 |
| Waiting for backbone relays | - 29 |
| No response when asked for installation date | - 2 |
| Withdrawn from CMNet | - 1 |
| New joiners | - 2 |
| Total | - 62 |

The installation completed in May has now been activated. One person has asked to be connected to the Achmore AP but unfortunately this will have to be deferred until we have extra capacity from the new line in Lochcarron.

3.4 Loan Contracts

Phil gave Hamish more copies of the missing loan contracts. **Action: Hamish**

3.5 Subscribers contract

Phil gave Hamish another copy of the missing contract. **Action: Hamish**

3.6 Terms of Reference

Deferred

4 Secretary's report

4.1 Companies House

Mary will inform Companies House that Geoff has resigned when we submit the annual return in September.

Action: Mary

4.2 Risk register

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

4.3 Terms of Reference

Deferred

5 Finance Director's Report

Monthly Update

All figures are as at the end of July

Capital expenditure against our grant of £37,538:-

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Brought forward | - £10,790.48 |
| This month | - £ 0.00 |
| Carried forward | - £10,790.48 |

Revenue:-

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Brought forward | - £4,230.36 |
| Income this month | - £492.14 |
| Expenditure this month | - £4,248.87 |
| Carried forward | - £473.63 |
| Accruals for interest | - £47.18 |
| Loans (includes CBS deferred contribution) | - £5,166.05 |
| Balance after liabilities | - £-4,739.60 |

Please note that the balance after liabilities does not include a further £3,000 of additional equipment not yet shown in the books. In total there will be a repayment resulting from a claim from CBS of approximately £6,000. The claim will be submitted when we have completed the bulk of the capital expenditure for the next phase. When the claim is paid by CBS the balance after liabilities will be approximately **£-1,500**

Outstanding subscribers' debt

| | |
|------------------|--------|
| Current month | £49.94 |
| Over one month | £85.50 |
| Over two months | £0.00 |
| Over three month | £0.00 |

Total outstanding debt £135.44

There was a long discussion about late payers and what to do to ensure payments are made on time. Directors are spending too much time and effort raising supplementary invoices and chasing for payments. For CMNet to work efficiently our administration overheads **must** be kept to the minimum.

It was decided we will adopt the following policy to chase for payment:-

Invoices are issued on a 30 day term; payment should be received within that period.

If monies are outstanding after 30 days then **one** reminder will be sent by email.

If monies are outstanding after 60 days **one** more reminder will be sent by email and we will telephone **once**.

If monies are outstanding after 90 days the subscriber's service will be suspended.

The service will only be reinstated when all outstanding monies have been paid and any standing order changes completed.

If subscribers continual pay late we reserve the right to permanently terminate their service. Please remember if you don't pay your bill on time all your neighbours have to make up the difference on your behalf.

Phil emailed Hamish with a copy of the Managed Comms contract and a copy of the notice of increased charges.

Managed Comms charges continue to be rather confusing with different payment plans for each of the two lines.

However Hamish has analysed the payments since our contract started and we have not been overcharged.

Completed

In the past month Phil & Mary have spent approximately £7,000 on new kit on behalf of CMNet, Phil & Mary have been reimbursed by £3,000. There are two major expenses due in the near future; payment for Hydro connection above Portchullin and payment for the installation of the ADSL lines in Lochcarron, when these have been completed we will submit a claim to CBS to reimburse Phil & Mary in full. - See the note above on liabilities above.

Action: Phil

Phil issued all the invoices, contracts and standing orders for June's changes, Hamish will chase as required.

Action: Hamish

5.1.1 Next three month's budget and cash flow

No issues

5.2 *Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment*

All payments are up to date.

5.3 *Payments for exceeding monthly quotas*

Some payments are outstanding from June; Hamish and Joe will chase the late payers. **Action: Hamish, Joe**

5.4 *Standing orders*

Two subscribers have been issued with new contracts for an increased monthly quota. Some standing orders for previous months have still not yet been updated; Hamish and Joe will chase the late payers. **Action: Hamish, Joe**

5.5 *Loan Contracts*

Two loan contracts are missing. Hamish will chase. **Action: Hamish**

5.6 *Customer contracts*

One customer contract is missing. Hamish will chase. **Action: Hamish**

5.7 *Next year's tariff*

It was agreed that subscribers' tariff changes will become effective from the anniversary of the first full monthly payment to CMNet, i.e. from when the standing order came into effect. For example, if a subscriber joined CMNet in January 2015 and then increased their quota in May and received a new contract the date of change in the tariff will be January not May.

5.7.1 *Current monthly revenue expenses*

Hamish presented an analysis of current running costs which will be used to set next year's tariffs.

5.7.2 *Expected increase in Subscribers*

Our experience so far has shown that we cannot rely on potential subscribers actually joining CMNet and becoming actual subscribers. We will therefore look at a range of possibilities and take a cautious approach to next year's rates.

5.7.3 *Expected monthly revenue expenses change next year (if any)*

With the prospect of the West Coast Backbone becoming a reality in the next year we will review our policy towards ADSL providers and look for contracts that do not commit us to more than one year.

5.7.4 *Expected capital expenses & therefore monthly accruals*

Again we can take two approaches, one which assumes high expenses and accruals and another which assumes much lower expenditure.

After a lengthy debate it was decided we should convene a separate meeting to discuss next year's tariff.

5.8 *CIC 34 annual return*

Hamish will tidy up the layout of the HMRC documents and then circulate them to the directors. **Action: Hamish**

6 *Internal auditor's report*

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

No problems were reported this month. There were three power cuts and one planned power outage. CMNet was briefly unusable for a few minutes caused by problems at our ISP, the system returned to normal before the fault could be reported. No progress on software to automatically report on performance. **Action: Phil**
Set up and trial a second Wi-Fi router, the subscriber has confirmed they no longer need this additional facility.

Dropped

7.1.2 Usage quotas

July's usage was 254 GB an increase on June's 214 GB. In July two subscribers increased their quota by 10 GB each. Two subscribers exceeded their quotas in July, Phil will issue invoices. **Action: Phil**

Joe presented an analysis of usage since last December, which will be circulated in full with the AGM minutes. It is worth noting that although we have only increased the number of subscribers by one in this period the average daily usage has increased by 90%. I.e. usage has almost doubled in the past eight months from a daily average of 4.4 GB in January to 8.2 GB per day in July. The highest recorded daily usage occurred in August and was 18 GB, more than twice the average daily usage in July. 18 GB a day equates to 560 GB a month.

7.1.3 Possible virus infection

One subscriber has been identified as having a possible virus infection.

7.1.4 Installation of domestic equipment

No new installations have been completed this month; we will not install any further subscribers until we have installed more ADSL lines.

7.2 Changes for next month

7.2.1 Increases in quotas for existing subscribers

No further increases in quotas are possible until we install another ADSL line.

7.2.2 Additional Management tools / reports

No progress this month.

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 Mast lease

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

8.2 Relays

8.2.1 Creag Mhaol

No changes this month.

8.2.2 Plockton

8.2.2.1 Hosting agreement

Our solicitors have sent the hosting agreement to the HC, no progress.

8.2.2.2 Equipment and tidy up

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

8.3 Backbone development

The new network plan for phase 2 using bridges is complete, Phil will produce an alternative using routed links and then set up a separate meeting to finalise the plan. No progress this month. **Action: Phil, Joe, Hamish & Mary**

8.3.1 Lochcarron

Joe & Phil installed all the enclosures at Lochcarron, the dish has been installed and a brief test was run to align the antenna showing acceptable signal strength. We are waiting on advice from the electrician for the best method to install mains power. Our thanks to Andrew MacKenzie for his help. **Action: Phil**

8.3.2 The Glen

Mary, Hamish & Phil completed all the relays and the enclosures have been installed, we have applied for the mains power and expect this to be delivered in September. We are ready to install the access points and the dish to link The Glen to Creag Mhaol using a temporary supply to test the signal strength of the links.

Action: Hamish, Joe, Mary, Phil

We have three subscribers ready for a connection.

8.3.3 Ardaneaskan

Roger and Beccy have given us a definitive list of subscribers in Ardaneaskan West ready for a connection through Craig.

We have tested the link to Ardaneaskan and the signal strength using the standard Nanostations is a little weak so we have bought and tested more powerful radios which show good signal strength. We also have a list of subscribers ready for a connection in Ardaneaskan East (Portchullin access point) and these will follow when the Portchullin relay has power - see 8.3.4. Currently there are ten subscribers ready for a connection in Ardaneaskan / Leaconashie.

Action: Phil

8.3.4 Portchullin

We have installed the relay and enclosures and can install and test the electronics using a temporary power supply. We have applied to the Hydro for power. Our thanks to Colin Arthur who has written to the Forestry to formally confirm that he has no objection to the relay being sited on his Croft ground. We have relayed this information to the Forestry who have now informed us not to proceed with the Hydro until they have issued draft terms which they will do "as soon as they are able". We first requested permission from the Forestry on the 16th June - seven weeks ago. We will chase the Forestry for a response. **Action: Phil**

If we experience further delays with this application we look at alternate temporary routes for the connections to North Strome, Strome Ferry and Ardnarff. **Action: Hamish, Phil**

8.3.5 Craig

Mary, Hamish & Phil installed the relay and enclosures and have a temporary power supply which has been used to test a link to Ardaneaskan West. We have two subscribers ready for a connection at Craig. Our thanks to Ian & Ruth for their help. **Action: Phil**

8.3.6 North Strome

No progress this month.

8.3.7 Ardnarff

No progress this month.

8.4 Testing

8.4.1 Management & accounting software

No progress this month.

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)

Peter Buneman has ordered the 1,000 Mbps leased line for Mallaig and this is expected to be delivered in October. Peter has been testing high speed radio links. Peter has spoken to Scottish Sea Farms about the possibility of a link at their Kishorn site. If the Kishorn site proves suitable it will provide a relay within sight of Creag Mhaol and provide a connection between CMNet and the WCB.

8.6.2 ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School

No progress this month.

8.6.3 ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron

We will look for the best deal available for a one year contract. **Action: Mary**

We believe our current two ADSL lines are restricted in bandwidth due to capacity issues in the Plockton BT exchange. As a result the two lines are being overloaded and 25 users with a total usage of 254 GB a month, peaking at 18 GB a day, is causing speeds to drop to an unacceptable level.

In the past we have installed a line for every 12 subscribers and this is now probably too low. However we do not want to order and pay for capacity that we do not use and so we will order another line in Lochcarron as soon as we have working relays in Ardaneaskan West and Craig plus five new subscribers ready to connect within the order period.

We will then proceed with another ten subscriber installations and order line four, etc. **Action: Phil**

8.7 Implementation

8.7.1 Phase 2 - Relays and creation of access points for the remainder of residents and connect trial subscribers.

8.7.1.1 Equipment

All the scaffold and external enclosures have been purchased; we have received all the electronics needed for the next batch of installations. **Completed**

8.7.1.2 Finalise the properties to be surveyed

We will revert to installations at the rate of ten subscribers per ADSL line - see 8.6.3. All the outstanding installations will be prioritised. **Action: Phil**

8.8 Company Logo

No progress this month.

Action: All

9 Director's training session

9.1 Configuring Ubiquiti and MikroTik equipment

Another session will be arranged in due course. **Action: Phil, Neil & Hamish**

9.2 The Dude

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

10 AOB

10.1 Windows 10

The Windows 10 download is now available. **Please note the file is 2.7 GB in size.**

10.2 AGM

CMNet's AGM will be on September 2nd followed by the normal monthly meeting; this is for board members only.

There will be an open meeting in the middle of September for all subscribers and potential subscribers. The final date is yet to be confirmed but will probably be Wednesday the 16th if the hall is available.

At this meeting the board will give a short presentation covering the previous year's work and future plans and then the session will be opened up to all.

More details about the agenda will be forwarded in due course. If you have any issues you would like to see raised please contact one of the directors.

11 Items to add to the agenda of the next meeting

None

12 Next meeting

Date of next meeting Wednesday, 2nd September 8:00pm at Fernaig House.

The meeting closed at 10:35 pm.