

# Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> August 2016 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

## 1 Present and Apologies

**Present:** Phil Game, Joe Grimson, Mary MacBeth, Neil MacRae, Hamish Howat Hurst (part)

## 2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes for July, were approved, proposed by Neil, seconded by Joe.

May's minutes were updated and a new version loaded to the website to document the decision to give Joe online access to the bank account. **Completed**

Copies of previous minutes are on our website at:-

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

Email [cmnetic@gmail.com](mailto:cmnetic@gmail.com) if you would like to be put on the circulation list or you have any questions.

## 3 Chairman's report

A lot of time has been spent this month updating firmware, reconfiguring, testing and tuning the system so the Lochcarron line can be brought into use.

See 8.6.1 for more details on the latest WHAN meeting. However it is interesting to note that all the other community groups involved in WHAN are not charging by usage volume and are managing their demand by limiting bandwidth to 2 or 2.5 Mbps, typical charges are £18 to £25 per month.

Several community Broadband Groups have experienced failures / problems with equipment due to bad weather. It appears there may be a design fault in the latest Ubiquiti dishes (not used by CMNet) which make them vulnerable to a combination of heavy rain and high wind.

### 3.1 Bandwidth

Bandwidth is mostly holding up well, but there are now signs we are approaching capacity limits at peak usage. The implementation of the new Lochcarron line will alleviate the situation for download capacity and to a lesser extent help with upload capacity. After Lochcarron our next upgrade will be to a fibre optic line in Plockton which we expect will deliver an order of magnitude increase in download speeds (estimated at 60 Mbps+) and upload speeds (estimated at 17Mbps+).

### 3.2 CBS

Joe's expenses have been paid and will be reclaimed from CBS. **Completed**

### 3.3 Subscribers

#### 3.3.1 Existing relays

Live subscribers	- 32
Subscriber installation pending	- 1

#### 3.3.2 Live relays but waiting for backhaul

Kit installed	- 0
CMNet installations pending	- 0
Subscriber installations pending	- 0
Total number waiting for backhaul	- 0

#### 3.3.3 Waiting for new backbone relays

Waiting for surveys	- 3
Waiting for installations	- 30

#### 3.3.4 Others

On live access points but requested a delay	- 2
No response when asked for an installation date	- 2
Withdrawn from CMNet since the last minutes	- 0
New joiners since the last minutes	- 0
Total	- 70

No change this month.

### 3.4 Terms of Reference

Deferred

## 4 Secretary's report

### 4.1 Companies House

Nothing to report

### 4.2 Long term support plan

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

### 4.3 Risk register

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

### 4.4 Terms of Reference

Deferred

## 5 Finance Director's Report

### 5.1 Monthly Statistics

There were no monthly reports from Hamish so these figures were produced by Phil; all figures are up to the end of July.

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

Brought forward	- £24,985.75
This period	- £ 0.00
Carried forward	- £24,985.75
No Change	

Revenue:-

Brought forward	- £4,844.27
Income this month	- £656.58
Expenditure this month	- £765.35
Carried forward	- £4,735.50

Liabilities

Estimated Liabilities	- £3,940.00
Estimated balance after liabilities	- £795.50

Provision for replacement of Electronic equipment

Total value purchased to date	- £9,000.00
Balance after provision	- £-8,204.50

£265 of loans and interest on loans was repaid this month.

### 5.2 Outstanding subscribers' debt

Total outstanding debt £0.00

Our thanks to everyone for the prompt payment of all outstanding monies, the subscriber debt side of our accounts is now up to date and balances.

Would everyone in receipt of a cheque from CMNet please cash it as soon as possible so we can remove the need to set aside money to pay for these cheques at some point in the future. This will simplify our accounts and greatly reduce the effort required to reconcile subscribers' accounts every month.

#### 5.2.1 Next three month's budget and cash flow

Direct debits for the Hydro bills are to be set up. **Action: Hamish**

The current Hydro bill will be paid by Mary. **Action: Mary**

The CC loan has been repaid but the cheque was not cleared by the end of July and is therefore shown as a liability in the end of July accounts. **Completed**

#### 5.2.2 Housekeeping

Migration of the accounts from Excel to Access is ongoing. **Action: Hamish**

### 5.3 Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment

This invoice has been paid but the cheque was not cleared by the end of July and is therefore shown as outstanding in the end of July accounts.

### 5.4 Standing orders

All standing orders have now been corrected and cheques to refund overpayments will be issued. Hamish and Joe to produce cheques for refunds, Phil to produce statements of account to accompany the cheques **Action: Hamish, Joe, Phil**

### 5.5 Customer contracts

Hamish passed all the customer contract details Joe. We are waiting for 2 customer contract to be signed and returned, Joe will chase. **Action: Joe**

## 5.6 *Loan Contracts*

One loan repayment cheque has dissolved in the rain a new cheque will be issued. **Action: Hamish, Joe** If you are in receipt of a cheque to repay your loan please cash it ASAP.

## 5.7 *Additional access to the bank account*

Joe has access to online banking and has tested the facility. **Completed**

Mary to provide details so forms can be completed to add Neil as another signatory on cheques, Joe will then submit the forms to the bank. **Action: Mary, Joe**

## 5.8 *Unpresented Cheques*

Phil sent out email reminders to ask people to cash cheques before they expire. Would anyone with a cheque from CMNet please cash it ASAP. Unpresented cheques create additional administration work reconciling the accounts and require that we set aside monies to cover them. **Action: Creditors**

## 5.9 *Business savings account*

Hamish has looked at setting up a savings account with RBS, but as this pays interest at 0.05% it was decided not to take this any further. We will review the situation if interest rates rise. **Completed**

## 5.10 *HMRC return*

Hamish circulated the forms to submit our accounts to HMRC but not all directors were able to read the format of the document. We went through the figures and reconciliation with our Companies House returns showed some discrepancies. It was decided we would follow the calculation methods used for companies house to ensure consistency. A small number of other changes are required to names and dates. Phil will amend the figures and Mary will submit an amended return. **Action: Phil, Mary**

The deadline for submission of our HMRC return is the end of August 2016.

## 5.11 *Change to invoice terms and conditions*

Invoices have been amended to show 14 days to pay so they can be reconciled in the current month's accounts.

**Completed**

# 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 *Problems and complaints*

The transmission frequency to Ardaneaskan has been altered to reduce interference from other radios.

A subscriber reported performance problems with the network last month around the time of the failure on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

However CMNet's statistics do not show any errors and subscriber testing has been inconclusive so we suspect that the problems are related to subscriber's equipment rather than CMNet. **Completed**

There were more problems with the daily stats program this month and although the disk was not full the cause was identified as insufficient free space on the disk. The disk has been cleared down and Windows software updated for good measure, this appears to have resolved the problems

Joe is still having problems updating firmware, this is not a high priority to fix and will be addressed in due course.

**Action: Phil, Joe**

### 7.1.2 *Usage quotas*

The usage for July was 411 GB with a daily average of 13.25 GB, stats so far for August predict usage just over 400 GB.

Three subscribers exceeded their quota for July.

### 7.1.3 *Possible virus infection*

No issues this month

### 7.1.4 *Installation of domestic equipment*

We are waiting for one subscriber to complete their pre installation work so we can complete their installation.

## 7.2 *Changes for next month*

### 7.2.1 *Increases in quotas for existing subscribers*

No increases have been requested.

### 7.2.2 *Additional Management tools / reports*

The automatic capping of excessive usage is under review.

### 7.2.3 *Potential personal safety issue*

Changes are ongoing. **Action: Phil, Joe**

## 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*

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

# 8 *General topics*

## 8.1 *Documentation*

### 8.1.1 *Mast lease*

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

### 8.1.2 *Network Plan*

No progress this month due to other commitments. **Action: Phil**

## 8.2 *Relays*

### 8.2.1 *Creag Mhaol*

We will complete the Ardaneaskan West and Craig installations before doing more work on Creag Mhaol.

**Action: Phil**

### 8.2.2 *Plockton*

#### 8.2.2.1 *Hosting agreement*

Hamish will add details of the solicitor's quote to the accounts. **Action: Hamish**

#### 8.2.2.2 *Equipment and tidy up*

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

## 8.3 *Backbone development*

### 8.3.1 *Lohcarron*

No progress this month.

### 8.3.2 *The Glen*

No change since the last minutes.

### 8.3.3 *Ardaneaskan*

All the equipment for Ardaneaskan has been now been received; no progress this month on the installation due to other commitments and poor weather. **Action: Phil / Joe**

### 8.3.4 *Portchullin*

No progress this month due to wet weather. **Action: Phil**

### 8.3.5 *Craig*

Once the Ardaneaskan West upgrade is completed we will start work on the Craig installations. **Action: Joe, Phil**

### 8.3.6 *North Strome*

No progress this month due to other priorities. **Action: All**

### 8.3.7 *Ardnarff*

No progress this month.

## 8.4 *Testing*

### 8.4.1 *Management & accounting software*

Some progress this month to change our programs work with gateways in Plockton and Lohcarron. **Action: Phil**

## 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)*

Phil attended the WHAN meeting on the 8th August, the first meeting this year. Simon Helliwell has resigned as chairman of WHAN but will remain a director. There was much debate about the demarcation of responsibilities and payments for WHAN maintenance and support and this is likely to be ongoing as the project unfolds. WHAN CIC has applied for a bank account and it is recognised that someone will have to be employed to handle administration. The 1 Gbps line in Mallaig has been delivered and tested. Work has now started on the configuration and testing of the backbone that will run from Mallaig to Applecross. The roll out to member community broadband groups will probably start next month. There is no implementation plan for the rollout at the moment. Peter Buneman has ordered a 100 Mbps line for Arisaig. WHAN was not party to this order and it is not clear who will take on responsibility for this once the UoE project comes to an end. WHAN has decided to look into the running costs in more detail at the next meeting. James Sweet who has done most of the technical and physical set up for WHAN on behalf of the University of Edinburgh will leave the project in October. The UoE is looking for a replacement for James.

We continue to maintain a watching brief on WHAN progress. CMNet has no direct line of sight to any existing WHAN relay so we will not participate in the initial roll out.

### 8.6.2 *ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School*

We will order a high speed fibre line as soon as the Lochcarron line has been tested and proven to be stable. **Action: Mary**

### 8.6.3 *ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron*

The router in Lochcarron has successfully been reconfigured as a modem to simplify the interface to Zen. CMNet has been configured to allow the server to use Lochcarron Gateway and bypass the bandwidth queues to allow stability and speed testing. All tests run so far, bar one, have shown download speeds between 17 and 18 Mbps and upload speeds just over 1 Mbps. Line for line Lochcarron will provide a big jump in download capacity and one 17 Mbps line will probably be more efficient than three 7 Mbps lines. However it should be noted that upload capacity is just 1 Mbps where the three Plockton lines combined have 1.8 Gbps upload capacity. In comparison with one Plockton line there is a much smaller increase in upload capacity. Upload capacity will be improved greatly when we move to a fibre line in Plockton with upload speeds of 17 Mbps.

We have successfully tested remote access to our network from the Internet which will allow support to be provided from anywhere that has an Internet connection.

Phil & Joe have been routed through the new line for a week to test its stability, so far there have been no problems.

## 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*

No additional purchases this month.

#### 8.7.1.2 *Finalise the properties to be surveyed*

We are still waiting on one subscriber to prepare their installations so we can install our equipment.

## 8.8 *Company Logo*

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

## 9 *Director's training session*

### 9.1 *Configuring Ubiquiti and MikroTik equipment*

We will organise another training session. **Action: Phil, Joe.**

Joe and Phil went through the management reporting system documentation. Phil will update and extend the document.

No Progress this month. **Action Phil**

Joe and Phil went through the configuration of the Lochcarron router, more training will be organised in due course.

**Action: Phil, Joe**

The Dude - No progress this month **Action: Phil**

## **10 AOB**

### *10.1 Proposed changes to the subscribers usage reporting system*

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

## **11 Items to add to the agenda of the next meeting**

None

## **12 Next meeting**

Date of next meeting Wednesday, 14<sup>th</sup> September 7:30pm at Fernaig House.

The meeting closed at 9:25 pm.