

# Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 2017 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

## 1 Present and Apologies

Present: Kate Biss, Phil Game, Joe Grimson Mary MacBeth

Apologies: Neil MacRae

## 2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes for July, were approved subject to correcting some examples where May was quoted in error instead of June - proposed by Mary, seconded by Kate.

Copies of previous minutes are on our website at:-

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

Email [cmnetcic@gmail.com](mailto: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 change, the Plockton line is very close to the upload and download limit but is performing satisfactorily. The Lochcarron line will be brought on stream to provide additional capacity in the near future once testing is complete.

### 3.2 CBS

Phil attended the R100 (Reaching 100%) workshop on the 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> July regarding the government's proposal to reach 100% superfast Broadband coverage and how this will affect Community Broadband Groups.

At this meeting it was announced that Community Broadband Groups would have to choose either to drop out of the program or to make a submission to R100 by the 5<sup>th</sup> August. Due to the short timescale (less than three weeks) there was an emergency meeting of CMNet directors on 22<sup>nd</sup> July, Kate Biss was unable to attend as she was away but the rest of the directors attended. At this meeting Phil took the other directors through the slides from the presentations and his notes.

Although it was not possible to fully digest the consequences of the R100 scheme and to reach a conclusion about the best approach for all involved (i.e. CMNet, current subscribers, future subscribers and broadband users that do not wish to join CMNet) it was decided we would make the minimal submission to R100 to keep our options open. The submission was made on the 31<sup>st</sup> July and stated that CMNet had all premises in the postcodes covered by our relays "under review".

See section 8.9 for further details about R100 and its impact.

### 3.3 Subscribers

#### 3.3.1 Existing relays

Live subscribers	- 35
Subscriber installation pending	- 1

#### 3.3.2 Waiting for new backbone relays

Waiting for surveys	- 4
Waiting for installations	- 38

#### 3.3.3 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	- 81

No change this month.

### 3.4 Terms of Reference

Deferred

## 4 Secretary's report

### 4.1 Risk register

We will evaluate the costs and benefits of a third connection through the Strome Ferry exchange. In the light of the recent network problems with Zen it was agreed that we would look for a third line through an alternative ISP if that makes economic sense. **Action: Mary**

### 4.2 Long term support plan

Mary will think about the skills required and how to develop a wider support network. **Action: Mary**

We will look at the possibility of developing software to configure equipment. **Action: Phil**

### 4.3 *Terms of Reference*

Deferred

## 5 **Finance Director's Report**

### 5.1 *Monthly Statistics*

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 for July:-

Brought forward	- £8,309.78
Income this month	- £447.00
Expenditure this month	- £432.23
Carried forward	- £8,324.55

Liabilities

Estimated Liabilities	- £3,800.00 (includes ~ £3,360 to "repay" CBS)
Estimated balance after liabilities	- £4,556.78

Provision for replacement of Electronic equipment

Total value purchased to date	- £9,000.00
Balance after provision	- £-4,443.22

This month's expenditure includes payments to the accountant, Companies House fees and the fine for late submission.

### 5.2 *Next year's tariff*

Total gigabytes sold 1,660; break even tariff for 2 fibre lines - £0.62 per 10 GB, for 3 fibre lines - £0.93 per 10 GB.

There was some discussion about whether it makes sense to continue with 10 GB increments for year 4 given the rapid and continuing increase in subscribers' quotas.

Although no figure has been set for next year's tariff it is almost certainly going to be lower than this year's, and if previous years are an indication, subscribers' quotas are likely to increase again when the new rate is announced.

At the moment every month 3 - 4 people increase their quota and quite often the same subscriber increase their quota again within a short period. Each change causes work for three directors and it was agreed we should aim to reduce this administration overhead.

It was agreed we would propose a change to subscribers' contracts to change the increment from 10 GB to 20 GB. I.e. we will set a tariff for year 4 for 20, 40, 60 GB etc. Anyone on an odd multiple of 10 GB will be moved to the next even multiple. I.e. 10 GB -> 20 GB, 50 GB ->60 GB etc. As things stand today this automatic increase will affect a very small number of subscribers.

It was also agreed we would propose a second amendment to contracts so that anyone exceeding their quota will, by default, be moved retrospectively into the appropriate quota band. I.e. if a subscriber exceeded their 20 GB quota by 30 GB in May (i.e. they used a total of 50 GB) we would by default backdate an increase to their quota to 60 GB in May. Only under exceptional circumstances would we agree to a reduced backdated increase to 40 GB or a one off charge based on £2.70 per GB or part GB.

We will email all subscribers and potential subscribers to notify them of this intended change to the CMNet contract. It is proposed this change will come into effect with the year 4 tariff in December 2017.

See section 10 for more about the administration workload.

### 5.3 *Outstanding subscribers' debt*

No accounts are in arrears.

### 5.4 *Housekeeping*

Work continues to automate the reconciliation of payments; priority will be given to Zen. **Action: Phil, Kate**

### 5.5 *Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment*

All payments are up to date.

### 5.6 *Standing orders*

One account has an error; we have emailed those concerned asking them to change their standing order. **Action: Joe, Phil**

### 5.7 *Loan Contracts*

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

## 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

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**

AirRouter reboot problem - A number of customers are still experiencing random re-booting of AirRouters. A trial to automatically schedule reboots has made a marked improvement but has not eliminated the problem completely. This investigation is ongoing.

**If anyone is experiencing problems with any kit please let us know ASAP.**

Wi-Fi dead spot problem - no response from the subscriber, this problem has been closed. **Closed**

Two customers in Braeintra are experiencing poor signal levels we will try a hardware upgrade to the Braeintra access point. No progress this month. **Action: Phil, Joe**

Two customers reported faults stating that they could not log on to the internet. Rebooting their respective access points solved the problem. Both their systems had been switched off for a number of days before they tried to reconnect

**Closed**

One customer reported slow speeds but speed tests showed no problems with CMNet so this problem has been closed pending further information from the subscriber. **Closed**

Outages on the 11<sup>th</sup> July - at 21:48 for 3 minutes, 15<sup>th</sup> July - 22:54 for 3 minutes, 18<sup>th</sup> July - 15:05 for 3 minutes, 26<sup>th</sup> July - 18:04 for 3 minutes, 13<sup>th</sup> August - 9:00 for 3 minutes. Our monitoring suggests all of these have been caused by spontaneous reboots of the Zen router in Plockton. We have purchased a spare router so the Zen router in Plockton can be replaced and will install it in Plockton in due course to see if that resolves the problem. **Action: Phil**

#### 7.1.2 Usage quotas

The monthly total for July was 1,078 GB (1.078 TB) with a daily average of 34.8 GB, just under 1% higher than the previous month.

The peak usage in July was 64 GB for Friday 13<sup>th</sup>, a **34% increase** on the peak in the previous month.

Four customers exceeded their quota in July and all have opted to increase their quotas.

The peak load on the Plockton line shows it is now at full capacity.

#### 7.1.3 Possible virus infection

The monitoring system will be amended to increase the reporting threshold. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

#### 7.1.4 Installation of equipment

No installations since the last minutes.

#### 7.1.5 Customer Contracts

All contract amendments have been issued; we will run an audit check to make sure all our records are up to date. **Action: Phil, Joe**

### 7.2 Changes for next month

#### 7.2.1 Increases in quotas for existing subscribers

There has been one request for a quota increase this month. **Action: Phil, Joe**

#### 7.2.2 Additional Management tools / reports

Software to check the configuration of different types of equipment - no progress this month due to other priorities

**Action: Phil**

#### 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*

Nothing from the Highland Council

### 8.1.2 *Network Plan*

Work continues on the new network plan to incorporate new relays on Creag Mhaol above Strome Ferry. **Action: Phil**

## 8.2 *Relays*

### 8.2.1 *Creag Mhaol*

Phil and Mary have surveyed the new relay sites and found likely suitable rocky bases to fix scaffold feet. The additional scaffold feet and poles have been purchased and the poles cut to length. It will be necessary to clear some soil to reach solid rock so the feet can be bolted down securely. **Action: Phil, Mary Joe**

### 8.2.2 *Plockton*

#### 8.2.2.1 *Hosting agreement*

We will add details of the solicitor's quote to the accounts. No progress this month. **Action: Phil, Kate**

#### 8.2.2.2 *Equipment and tidy up*

The new dishes have arrived and will be configured and installed when traffic can be switched through Lochcarron.

**Action: Phil**

## 8.3 *Backbone development*

### 8.3.1 *Plockton*

No issues.

### 8.3.2 *Lochcarron*

The contract for use of Lochcarron will be passed to Joe for safe keeping. **Action: Phil, Joe**

### 8.3.3 *Creag Mhaol*

#### 8.3.3.1 *Existing relays*

We will investigate hardware upgrades as the next step to reduce noise on the links. No progress this month. **Action: Phil**

#### 8.3.3.2 *New relays*

Planning the electronic kit for the new relays is complete. **Completed**

### 8.3.4 *The Glen*

One access point will be upgraded to see if that will reduce the noise levels. No progress this month. **Action:**

**Phil**

### 8.3.5 *Ardaneaskan*

The contract for use of Ardaneaskan will be passed to Joe for safe keeping. **Action: Phil, Joe**

### 8.3.6 *Portchullin (raised beach)*

Activation of the Portchullin relay is waiting on the activation of the new Creag Mhaol relays. **Action: Phil**

### 8.3.7 *Craig*

We will look for a test site to allow real world tests to be performed. No progress this month. **Action: Joe, Phil**

### 8.3.8 *North Strome*

Activation of the North Strome relay is waiting on the activation of the new Creag Mhaol relays. **Action: Phil**

### 8.3.9 *Ardnarff*

Once the new relays are in place above Strome Ferry we will check the line of sight from Ardnarff. **Action: Phil**

## 8.4 *Testing*

### 8.4.1 *Management & accounting software*

The subscriber usage email will be enhanced to give the specific amount of data used to allow subscribers to better manage their quotas. No progress this month. **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)

We were called by the company bidding to install the broadband connection to the new Kishorn Port facility. Initially they are going to pursue a connection through Plockton schools high speed link.

### 8.6.2 ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School

We now have a spare router in stock and will replace the existing router. **Action Phil**

### 8.6.3 ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron

The new Zen router has been configured and installed. Initial testing suggests that Zen / Openreach have configured the line incorrectly. Further investigation is required. **Action Phil**

## 8.7 Implementations

### 8.7.1 Phase 3 - Relays and creation of access points for the remainder of residents and connect trial subscribers.

#### 8.7.1.1 Equipment

Testing of the new domestic MikroTik routers continues. **Action: Phil, Joe.**

## 8.8 Company Logo

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

## 8.9 R100

It was agreed that we would create a briefing paper to circulate to all concerned. This will document our understanding of the R100 programme. We will also highlight the choices open to CMNet and the pros and cons of each option. It is likely this will take some time before it is completed.

If there is sufficient demand we will then organise a public meeting to explain the impact of R100 to all interested parties.

## 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**

### 9.2 AirControl

No changes this month.

### 9.3 The Dude

Work continues to configure the software to improve network monitoring. **Action: Phil**

## 10 AOB

There was a general discussion about the amount of administration effort required to run CMNet. It was felt that this overhead is affecting our ability to make progress with the new installations and indeed is impacting workloads outside CMNet. To help reduce the workload it was agreed we would look at changes to the subscribers' contracts - see section 5.2 and look at other ways to reduce the load on individual directors.

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

None

## 12 Next meeting

Date of next meeting Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> September 7:30pm at Fernaig House.

The meeting closed at 9:00 pm.