

Broadband Steering Group

Minutes of the Meeting held on the 11th May 2016 @ 7:30 p.m. Fernaig House

1 Present and Apologies

Present: Phil Game, Joe Grimson, Mary MacBeth

Apologies: Hamish Howat Hurst, Neil MacRae

2 Approve and adopt previous minutes

The previous minutes were approved, proposed by Mary, seconded by Joe.

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

In April we had two complaints about poor speeds and Joe's stats also show poor performance on several occasions, (see section 7 for more details). The poor performance was caused by an additional 55 GB of unauthorised additional usage, an increase of 20% over March. One day in April usage was 41 GB, over four times the daily average and again this was caused by unauthorised excessive usage. We also saw an instance of a subscriber using 51 times their agreed average daily quota. If we were to build a system to cater for these anomalies there would be addition backhaul costs and ultimately this will cause an unnecessary increase to everyone's monthly subscriptions.

Our policy is to make no system changes within seven days of members of the support team being unavailable and this was the case in early April. To allow new subscribers to be connected as soon as possible system changes were made in advance to prepare for the installation of the new line in Plockton. In the event the new line was not installed when scheduled and reversing out these changes fell into the seven day embargo; this meant access for new subscribers was not blocked.

Our priority is to maintain performance for existing subscribers and so we will not make changes in anticipation of additional capacity in future. We are also considering limiting all subscribers' usage excesses in future to prevent abuse of the system.

The new line in Plockton was finally installed by Openreach on the 12th of April but due to insufficient numbers of directors being available it could not be made available for use until the 2nd May. After some tuning each the three lines do now appear to be taking about a third of the load. More tuning may be required when we have more statistics available. Since the additional capacity was installed speeds have returned to an acceptable level.

The new line in Lochcarron is still scheduled for installation by the end of May.

Our intention is to use the additional capacity of the new line(s) to keep minimum speeds above 2 Mbps; however it must be stressed that this is only possible if everyone stays within their allotted monthly quota. We have a finite amount of bandwidth available and excessive usage will inevitably cause performance problems for everyone on the system.

We have to buy bandwidth to cope with peak demand and for this to work efficiently subscribers need to be on a tariff where their monthly usage is between 60% & 90% of their quota. If you find that you often reach 60% of your quota before the 16th day of the month or you regularly receive a 90% warning email and either of these cause you to modify your usage for the remainder of the month you should consider moving to the next band. If you change your usage part way through the month the damage will already have been done as we will have had to buy the additional capacity to cope with the higher usage for the first part of the month.

3.2 CBS

Phil is to send Joe a copy of the CMNet expenses form. **Action: Phil**

Joe to submit an expenses claim form for his attendance at the two day training course at SMO. **Action: Joe**

At the request of CBS we will attend a meeting with Strathcarron residents next Tuesday 17th at 7pm to discuss the possibility of them joining CMNet. **Action: Phil, Mary**

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

In addition to the six new subscribers ten existing subscribers have had their quotas increased. Potentially this totals approximately 180 GB of additional usage per month.

3.4 *Applecross*

We have asked Applecross if they would like to visit to see our set up, no response so far.

3.5 *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

Hamish was unable to attend the meeting and has not been able to submit his usual monthly spreadsheets so the following figures were estimated by Phil
Figures are up to the end of April.

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

Brought forward	- £24,985.75
This period	- £ 0.00
Carried forward	- £24,985.75

Revenue:-

Brought forward	- £3,742.12
Income this month	- £475.85
Expenditure this month	- £327.25
Carried forward	- £3,890.72

Estimated Liabilities	- £4,944.00
Estimated balance after liabilities	- £-1,053.28

Outstanding subscribers' debt

Current month	£2.70
Over one month	£21.60
Over two months	£5.40
Over three months	£0.00

Total outstanding debt £29.70

Phil raised a credit note to cover repayment for subscriber's loss of service, Hamish to confirm this is OK.

Action: Hamish

Hamish has renegotiated our contract with RBS and has got them to agree to waive bank charges. Hamish to confirm this has been implemented. **Action: Hamish**

5.1.1 Next three month's budget and cash flow

Mary passed Hamish the details so he can set up direct debits for the Hydro bills. **Action: Hamish**

5.1.2 Annual Accounts

Hamish was not able to attend the meeting and some figures in the annual accounts needed further explanation so they could be reconciled. It was decided that we would review the annual accounts outside the monthly meeting and organise a separate meeting if necessary to approve the accounts. Accounts are due at Companies House by the end of May. **Action: All**

5.1.3 Housekeeping

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

5.2 Payments for installations of subscriber's equipment

All payments are up to date.

5.3 Standing orders

Three subscribers have overpaid their subscriptions, one has underpaid; Hamish will issue reminders. **Action: Hamish**

5.4 Loan Contracts

No change this month.

5.5 Customer contracts

We are waiting for one customer contract to be signed and returned, Hamish will chase. **Action: Hamish**

5.6 Additional access to the bank account

It was decided we should register Joe to have online access to the bank account to give cover when Hamish is not available. **Action: Joe**

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

Finally Openreach resolved the problem with the new line in Plockton on the 12th April; unfortunately this additional capacity could not be added to the system until the 2nd May.

Two subscribers complained of poor performance and statistics showed that performance was below the minimum target of 2Mbps on nine separate days between 8pm and 11pm. This was probably due to customers massively exceeding their quotas and unauthorised use by other customers.

There were no reports of any defects during April.

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 April was 338 GB with a daily average of 11.3 GB, on one day the usage was over 41 GB which is **over four times** the average of previous months. Two subscribers exceeded their quota for the month.

7.1.3 Possible virus infection

No issues this month

7.1.4 Installation of domestic equipment

The new line in Plockton was finally installed and available on the 2nd May. Six new subscribers were added to the system. One subscriber is still to complete their pre installation work.

7.2 Changes for next month

7.2.1 Increases in quotas for existing subscribers

Nine existing subscribers have had their quotas increased.

7.2.2 Additional Management tools / reports

After April's performance problems we are considering capping subscribers so they cannot exceed their quotas by excessive amounts. We will review the situation. **Action: All**

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

Phil had produced a user manual to help subscribers document poor performance so the relevant information would be captured and forwarded for analysis. It was planned to distribute this document when the new line was installed and additional capacity became available so we could quickly identify potential performance problems. However due to the way the traffic is distributed over the three lines we will have to look for another method to test upload and download speeds as the proposed method would give confusing results. Further thought needed. **Action: Phil**

7.6 Complaint to WHFP about Openreach

There was some debate about whether we should write to the WHFP to complain about the performance of Openreach.

We felt that this would be unlikely to improve the performance of Openreach and inevitably involve additional effort on our part so we decided our efforts would be better directed elsewhere.

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

With the imminent arrival of additional capacity in Lochcarron it was decided we would survey the top of Creag Mhaol as soon as the next opportunity arose. **Action: Mary, Joe, 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

We will pursue Creag Mhaol as a possible location for the North Strome access points. **Action: All**

8.3.1 Lochcarron

No change since the last minutes.

8.3.2 The Glen

This relay is now fully live. **Completed**

8.3.3 Ardaneaskan

The new kit is working well for a domestic installation but may not be suitable for multiple users; we will run more tests before reaching any conclusions - no change.

We have started to look at alternative locations for the access point relay. **Action: All**

8.3.4 Portchullin

The relay has been checked and is now ready for Ian to make the mains power connection. **Action: Phil**

8.3.5 Craig

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

Program changes are underway to cater for the additional gateway in Lochcarron. **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)

The latest progress report shows that the WCB is again being delayed by Openreach.

8.6.2 ADSL Broadband installation at Plockton High School

The engineer failed to resolve the problem on the 7th April and another appointment was made for the 12th. Joe attended and this time the problem (reversed wires) was resolved. Initial testing showed poor speeds, but this is normal as it usually takes a day or two for the line to reach full capacity. The new Zen line is now operating at full speed but has a different profile to the two Managed Comms lines; the download speed is the same at 7.2 Mbps but the upload speed is slower at about 450 Kbps. The line was finally added to CMNet on the 2nd May. The initial load sharing algorithm proved ineffective and this was changed on the 4th May. The stats after this change show a much better balance across the three lines. We will continue to monitor and adjust the balance as required. **Action: Phil**

8.6.3 ADSL Broadband installation at Lochcarron

We called Andrew to arrange to attend for the Openreach installation on the 13th May only to discover that some progress has already been made and the new line to the barn has been connected to the old line serving Croft Road. Hopefully the remainder of the installation will go through more smoothly than the Plockton installation. Once the new line has been shown to be working the broadband connection can be activated. This is scheduled to take place before the end of May. **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

There were a few small purchases this month to a value of ~ £10.

8.7.1.2 Finalise the properties to be surveyed

We are 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 & Hamish**

9.2 The Dude

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

10 AOB

None

11 Items to add to the agenda of the next meeting

None

12 Next meeting

Date of next meeting Wednesday, 15th June 7:30pm at Fernaig House.

The meeting closed at 9:05 pm.