

MINUTES
NORTH SKYE BROADBAND
STEERING GROUP MEETING

HIE Portree office

Thursday, Sep 10 2015

6pm

Present

Geoff Semler (chairman), Calum Stiven (HIE), Roy Bennet, Nick Duffill, James Caldwell, Niall Till, Charles McCrimmon, Moira Scobbie, Calum MacLeod, Hugh Ross, Elgar Finlay, Alastair Nicolson (CBS) and via conference call were Martin Farquhar, Robin Crorie (secretary) and Nigel Redfern (from 6.30pm onwards). Callum MacLeod, vice-chairman of Broadford and Strath Community Council was also present at a NSB meeting for first time to find out of project could be of interest to his district.

1. Declarations of Interest

EF and ND both declared their interest in the Project Manager's job.

2. Previous Minutes

The minutes from 27.8.15 were approved by NT and seconded by RB.

3. Actions from Minutes

- GS said that Eilidh Ross MacLellan (legal) had accepted invitation to join NSB board and Faye Macleod (finance) declined, although offered to provide advice when required. The chairman said the board could operate without a finance director at moment but it would certainly become an issue "down the line".
- RC said that he could not organise paperwork for proposed Steering Group members as NSB had not formally been registered as a company yet.
- GS said Companies House was had returned the company paperwork as they could not accept the address being entered as an address as well as referencing the Servicfive Address (despite the two being the same).
- GS said that he and EF had met with Stewart MacPherson (HIE) and AN (CBS) immediately prior to this meeting discuss the scoping document and understand if there were any further items to include. As a result there will be some minor changes to the scoping document.
- The Steering Group Terms of Reference had been circulated to the Steering Group members.
- The Project Manager Job Spec had been sent out to Steering Group.
- PR Strategy was not due until the next meeting, Martin confirmed he was working on it.
- AN said he was still awaiting BT to confirm the postcodes which would *not* be served with the roll out of superfast broadband in Skye by the company.
- RC and EF had set up the NSB e-mail addresses. However, three individuals on the steering group had not yet responded and GS said he hoped that could be done as soon as possible.

4. **Scoping Document** GS said he and EF had discussed the document with HIE and as a result there will be an update to the document prior to submission. One area of clarity that needed to be included is that the Business Plan would be expected to demonstrate the sustainability of the business for at least 7 years and this should be reflected in the Scoping Document

GS asked if there were any other comments. RC said the document should be seen as being primarily for bidding for finance from HIE and CBS but was no more than “a means to an end”. GS said he would like it to be representative of what NSB is going to do and SMCp required that it will demonstrate to HIE the NSB vision and seven-year obligation. GS added that timescale needed to be changed from 12 to nine months and he and EF were going to have to look at the numbers.

Action – GS and EF to implement proposed changes to Scoping Document by 24/9.

**NR joined the meeting*

5. **Steering Group TOR** GS asked RC if it encapsulated NSB objectives and RC said it did,
Action – RC to circulate final draft of Scoping Document to Steering Group by Thursday September 17, a week before next meeting.
6. **Project Manager Job Spec** The document was handed out. ND asked if he and EF should leave the room but was told that they did not need to. There was a discussion about the NSB target area and GS suggested “All parts north of Sligachan.” However, RC thought NSB should keep its powder dry and simply state the “non-serviced BT areas of Skye”. NR said it was important that the job spec was not too highly specific so that it encouraged as many people as possible to apply. GS asked if there were any other suggested changes to let NR know in next three days, he said there were a couple of things SMCp suggested, specifically “adding in the key deliveries”. **Action – NR to complete draft of Job Spec by Tuesday, Sep 15.**

Review of Progress: EF had provided referred to the progress to date which mainly covered agenda items. Details not covered in agenda items related to the WHAN Edinburgh University project. EF said he had been contacted by “WHAN” - West Highland Access Network which expressed an interest in NSB and involved in community broadband projects at Applecross and Sleat. The WHAN project is being lead as a research and development project lead by Edinburgh University and appeared to be investigating backhaul options for community broadband schemes.

Action - RC offered to discuss their interest with EF.

7. AOCB

- CMcR said he wanted the reference to a company director having a veto on prospective new members removed from the NSB Memorandum document. He said in a community project no director should have that power. GS said that the Articles of Association and Memorandum should be circulated to the steering group seeking feedback, with everybody to reply to RC. GS proposed that the arts and mems be circulated but stated that they were a standard format. As they were being processed by companies house then any changes could be made at a later date if required. **Action GS/EF to circulate Mems and Arts.**
- NT said that Visit Waternish had asked him to do a presentation on NSB at its meeting on October 20 and asked if that would be OK. There was a discussion about the information which should be made public and RB keen that was managed otherwise the community could start driving the strategy. GS said a short one-page summary could be drafted to outline what NSB is trying to do, next steps, etc with input from MF. RC added that the update could be published on the holding page of www.northskyebroanband.com **Action NT to provide NSB update and run it past MF. NT to present update to Waternish Business Group.**
- CMcL said there was concerns in his district about the current broadband service and asked if NSB was likely to operate in south Skye. AN said there were projects in pipeline for Elgol, Torrinn and Strathaird and said in theory the main NSB project could be expanded into other Skye postcodes, like parts of Raasay. He said that he would be very disappointed if he did not have the list of postcodes from BT by the middle of September. RB said the message from NSB should be that if peoples' addresses were not included in the superfast roll out then they could be included in NSB project with an indicative delivery timescale provided. There was further discussion about the PR strategy and AN agreed to contribute to the proposed NSB project summary summarise the project coverage, while NT will contribute text as well, both to be sent to MF, who will circulate it to Steering Group. **Action – AN and NT to both input into summary and send to MF before Sep 17**
- Terms of Reference – GS said he would like to be on the Steering Group but thought it was inappropriate if he was one of the office bearers and asked if there would be any objection to being a member, but there were none. There was a discussion about a chairman/woman of the Steering Group. GS will invite people to stand for chair, depute chair, and secretary of the Steering Group. CMcL said he would like to represent Broadford and Strath on the group. **Action – All on Steering Group to be invited to Sep 17 meeting and suggest office bearers.**

9. Next meeting Thursday, Sep 24 at 6pm in HIE Portree office.