

North Skye Broadband Steering Group Meeting No. 26

29 June 2017 – Tigh Na Sgire, 18:00

Minutes

Attendees:

Roy Bennett (RB) (Chair), Charles McCrimmon (CM), Geoff Semler (GMS), Elgar Finlay (EF), Moira Scobbie (MS), and Niall Till (NT) in attendance.

Via Skype: Robin Crorie (RC), Dominic Houlder (DH), Nigel Redfern (NR), Nick Duffill (ND).

1. Apologies: None.
2. Declarations of Interest: None
3. The Minutes of the previous meeting (18.05.17) were proposed by CM and seconded by NT.
4. Actions arising from the minutes: None
5. **Directors Report:**- GMS apologised for the delayed meeting, which was due to trying to progress issues with CBS, HIE and the Scottish Government.
To this end, he and RC attended a meeting in Inverness on 21 June 2017, with CBS (Z Laird and A MacDonald) and 2 representatives of the Scottish Government. However, said individuals did not manage to physically be in attendance due to problems on Scotrail, so were on a conference call. However an email received at 16:30 the previous day basically predetermined the outcome of the meeting and no further progress was achieved.
BDUK are not going to progress the possibility of a voucher scheme.
6. **Project Manager's Report:**- EF reported that **Community Engagement** activities have continued, and data collection is still on target to be completed at the end of June.
7. **Public Procurement Scheme:** It has become clear that the State Aid Procurement process is now only a means of handing government funding to a private company (supplier) without any active community involvement, investment or income, and that progressing with this (as it requires a mandatory engagement of external resources at a cost of around £48k) would reduce the amount of funding potentially available to fund a pilot scheme. EF confirmed that this had only become apparent within the last few weeks, when forms for the latest attempt at the State Aid Procurement process were completed. The latest State Aid Public Consultation, for which CBS are responsible, has not yet been officially launched.
8. **Pilot Scheme:** A further draft plan for the proposed pilot scheme is still awaited from the supplier before it can be taken to CBS. It is also not yet known what standard/specification of connection will be available from Openreach at Dunvegan to facilitate this.
9. **NSB Future Direction:** There was then an active discussion by all members of the Steering Group present of all the issues affecting both the progress to date and current situation of

the project. However, as a number of members expressed a wish to have longer to consider the situation before making a decision, the Steering Group voted to defer a final decision for two weeks (For:3, Against:2, Abstentions:2). A further meeting will therefore be scheduled in two weeks time.

10. **A.O.B.** – None.

11. **The next meeting** will be held on Thursday 13th July at 18:00 hrs, venue t.b.c.