

North Skye Broadband Steering Group Meeting No. 20

8th December 2016 - SLCVO 18:00

Minutes

Attendees:

Charles McCrimmon(Chair) (CM), Geoff Semler (GMS), Elgar Finlay (EF), Moira Scobbie (MS), Niall Till (NT) and Nigel Redfern in attendance. Via Skype Robin Crorie (RC).

Apologies: Roy Bennett, Hugh Ross

The Minutes of the previous meeting (10.11.16) were accepted.

Directors Report:-

GMS reported that progress with CBS had been very slow. Initial request for a meeting resulted in an exchange of letters, but a conference call with them has now been arranged for 9.12.16. GMS has sent them objectives for the meeting.

GMS pointed out that the business plan proposed by Neil Watt was not a viable one that the company could accept. RC said that the general landscape was changing rapidly anyway, for various reasons.

GMS has met with HIE to review funding, as delays caused largely by CBS have resulted in prolongation costs and an extension of time. However, currently we have sufficient funds to continue for the time being.

A very positive meeting was held with Kate Forbes (MSP) who was very receptive to the importance of broadband services to the community she serves.

GMS reiterated that as far as the company was concerned, the directors could not entertain the prospect of going down the 30:15:15 with CBS as it was not a financially viable solution.

Project Manager's Report:-

EF is concentrating on putting together a business plan based upon estimates from suppliers, which is currently looking reasonably positive, but needs to be developed further.

ACTION:- EF to follow up offer of financial data on maintenance costs (offered at meeting on 10.11.16) from the Western Isles broadband project which Atkins/HIE are involved with.

RC, in conjunction with a specialist solicitor, has produced a short form wayleave document, which is now in final draft form. EF will test this on some of the larger landowners. NSB also intends to apply to OFCOM for Code Powers once the project is up and running.

EF has also met with Willie Rennie (Lib Democrat leader at Scottish Parliament).

After general discussion, it was agreed that the Steering Group could revisit the 30:15:15 solution as a last resort, but accepted that the directors of the company cannot endorse installation of such a network from a business point of view as it was not a financially viable solution.

RC reminded the group that there was a requirement to hold an AGM for the limited company before March 2017.

Meeting dates were agreed for the next five months, namely:-

19 January 2017, 16 February 2017 (plus AGM), 16 March 2017, 13 April 2017, and 18 May

These will be held at 18:00 hours at SLCVO unless advised otherwise.