

Cairngorms Community Broadband

Meeting of the Working Group

7 March 2016

Cairngorms National Park Authority Office, Grantown-on-Spey, 13:00-15:00

Attendees

Community Broadband Scotland (CBS)	Sarah Jones, Campbell Cameron, Archie Macdonald, Felix Spittal
Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA)	Murray Ferguson (Chair), David Watson, Jackie Farquhar
Badenoch Broadband & Communications (CIC) (BCCIC)	Robert Cumming
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT)	Oli Giles, Mary Williams Edgar
Cromdale and Advie Community Development Trust	Helen Webster
Corgarff and Glenbuchat	Jo Smith (Corgarff and Glenbuchat)
Association of Cairngorms Communities (AoCC)	Roger Clegg
Cairngorms LEADER Local Action Group	Alice Mayne
Scottish Land & Estates	Jamie Williamson
Boat of Garten Community Council	Brian Tolson
Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP)	Philippa Grant

Apologies: Mark Tate (CBP) , David Cameron (CNPA), Peter Duffas (Corgarff and Glenbuchat),

Welcome and Introductions

1. Murray Ferguson welcomed everyone to the meeting and summarised the background to the project for those in attendance for the first time. The project would play an important part in delivering the Economic Strategy for the National Park.
2. SJ explained how the Working Group had been formed following the inception meeting which was held on 21 January. It was noted that the geographic spread of the Working Group was good but it was agreed that it would be useful to encourage someone from Highland Perthshire/ Blair Atholl area along to a meeting as the project will cover the whole of the National Park and a group in that area have been progressing their broadband initiative and may well have advice to pass on.

Action point 1 – SJ to reengage with community groups in the Highland Perthshire/Blair Atholl area to check if anybody wants to join the Working Group or share lessons learned.

Review of previous meeting minutes

3. The Working Group was content with the note of the inception meeting from 21 January 2016.

Discussion on Project Plan

4. SJ introduced the project plan for the Cairngorms Community Broadband Project which defines the terms of reference and scope of the project and also forms the basis for the management of the project.
5. The Working Group were content with the background and the aim of the project.

Project area discussion

6. SJ informed the Working Group that CBS projects can only be taken forward in “white postcodes” which are postcodes where no fibre roll out is planned. The “white” postcodes for the Cairngorms area have not yet been defined but there were active ongoing discussions at senior level between HIE, CBS, Scottish Government and BT. More funding was becoming available to extend the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) project and further planning work was being undertaken. It now looks likely that this important issue will be resolved by early May.
7. Members of the Working Group found this extremely frustrating as they had experienced this problem before. At the inception meeting they had been advised that it was hoped that this was likely to be resolved at a meeting on 27 January between CBS, BT and the Scottish Government DSSB team. The project plan will need to be amended to take account of this delay. The members were finding it very hard to keep their wider communities well-informed and motivated.
8. It was agreed that MF, as chair of the Working Group, should write to Alex Paterson at HIE noting the Group’s frustration and ask for a reply in a form that could be communicated to others. Members of the Group can then share this letter and the subsequent response with the communities they represent to try and explain the delays.

Action point 2 – MF to send a letter to Alex Paterson expressing the frustration of the Working Group at the delays in identifying the scope of the project.

Action point 3 – SJ to update project plan with a revised timeline and recirculate to members and for the website.

State Aid consultation discussion

9. SJ discussed how a State Aid Consultation document needs to be produced and published to provide the market with the opportunity to state if they are planning any broadband infrastructure build in a given area. SJ provided an example of a State Aid Consultation document from the community broadband project on [Skye](#) to give the group an idea of what was involved. It was agreed that the State Aid Consultation (SAC) document for the Cairngorms Community Broadband project could not take place until the list of white postcodes for the Cairngorms has been confirmed. It is expected that the SAC document for the Cairngorms will now be published in May 2016.
10. The text for the SAC document for the Cairngorms project can be prepared in advance to speed up the process. In this way, once the white postcodes for the area has been confirmed this postcode list can be inserted into the SAC document and be published. The SAC document for the Cairngorms will be circulated to the Working Group before it is published.

Discussion of establishment of a legal entity

11. FS introduced the CBS paper (Legal structures for Community Broadband Scotland projects) for the Working Group to provide information on some of the different options available for establishing organisations to undertake such projects.
12. The Working Group had a full discussion around the various options and noted that this was a critically important issue – the form the body takes and the governance arrangements would impact on what it could do in years to come. CBS highlighted that the importance of good communications and inclusion at this stage and the need for appropriate legal advice to be taken. The Working Group agreed that in order to take an informed decision they would like a paper prepared, that evaluates:
 - a. The two options emerging for the discussion for the legal entity – a separate trading arm of the proposed Cairngorms Trust or a completely new, standalone entity.
 - b. What form the legal entity could take (i.e. Company limited by guarantee, Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Community Interest Company or Community Benefit Company)
13. The Group agreed that whatever form the legal entity ended up being, it should be able to raise capital
14. It was noted that the individual members would need to time to consult with their respective members on this important issue and the papers should be circulated at least 10 days prior to the next meeting of the Working Group.

Action point 4 – AM, BT and SJ to prepare a paper for next meeting to evaluate the different options for the legal entity to take the project forward.

AOCB

15. DW talked the group through the work of the Digital Communications Steering Group which comprises representatives from CNPA, Scottish Government , HIE, CBS, Scottish Futures Trust, Cairngorms Business Partnership, local authorities and the Association of Cairngorms Communities. Next meeting is at end of March when the focus was likely to be on telecoms provision in the National Park.

Date of next meeting

16. Next meeting would be in approximately 5 weeks time; SJ to organise date, venue and confirm arrangements.

16th March, 2016