

Cairngorms Community Broadband

Meeting of the Working Group

17 June 2016

Cairngorms National Park Authority Office, Grantown-on-Spey, 11:00-13:30

Attendees

Community Broadband Scotland	Sarah Marshall, Archie Macdonald, Felix Spittal, Campbell Cameron, Amy Peters
Cairngorms National Park Authority	Murray Ferguson (Chair)
Cromdale and Advie Development Trust	Chris Bremner
Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust	Oliver Giles, Mary Edgar, Calum Dingwall
Glenbuchat & Corgarff Broadband Project	Peter Duffas, Jo Smith
Cairngorms Business Partnership	Mark Tate
Boat of Garten Community Council	Brian Tolson
Cairngorms Local Action Group	David Cameron & Alice Mayne
Association of Cairngorm Communities	Roger Clegg
Alvie Estate	Paul MacLennan

1. Welcome and Introductions

Murray Ferguson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Councillor Kate Howie were noted. Paul MacLennan (Alvie Estate) and Calum Dingwall (T&GDT) were welcomed and introductions made.

2. Review of previous minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting on 11 April were approved. Murray informed the group that in future the meeting minutes will be uploaded to the CNPA website as draft minutes, with formal approval at the next meeting. A request was made to recirculate the procurement document from GigaPlus Argyll.

3. Discussion of Project Area and State Aid Consultation

Sarah provided an update on the postcode coverage for the project. The postcode list that was circulated in confidence to the group may change slightly but it is unlikely that there will be significant alterations. **Sarah reiterated that this postcode list is not to be shared out-with the working group as this information is subject to change.** The postcode list is expected to be finalised

in July with the State Aid Consultation going out in August. If the technical solution and the geography suggest the possibility of going beyond the edge of the Park, there won't be an arbitrary limit for the project based on the Park boundaries.

The new Broadband Delivery United Kingdom (BDUK) State Aid scheme has now been approved with the first Community Broadband State Aid Public Consultation being issued under this new scheme for Isle of Skye Broadband. This means that the template for the State Aid Consultation has been approved and a simple adaptation for the Cairngorms is all that CBS requires to publish this document.

Action point 1: CBS to circulate link to Isle of Skye Broadband State Aid Consultation Document:

<http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/community-broadband-scotland/updates/state-aid.html>

Archie reminded the group about the next steps for the project following the completion of the State Aid Consultation and in particular the various stages of the procurement process as set out in the Project Plan. He also outlined how the community contribution of 11% of the capital costs could be raised citing the example of GigaPlus Argyll where connection fees made up a significant portion of this allocation.

Sarah informed the group about a change to the message CBS are using when discussing the various options communities have following the Scottish Government's commitment to 100% superfast by 2021. The message is that if a community is interested in owning assets and operating a network, then a CBS solution is the way to go. However, if the community is not interested in owning assets, setting up an enterprise and running a broadband network then there is likely to be something else coming down the track, but it is unclear what it will look like or when it will be implemented.

There was consensus that delivery of the community broadband project may commence by Spring 2018 and would still provide a viable solution with a business plan for delivery over a minimum of 5 years. The group confirmed that they still wished to pursue a community broadband solution. Community Broadband Scotland confirmed that they would keep the group informed of any policy changes arising from the Scottish Government's new commitment.

Action point 2: CBS to produce guidance to communities on the various options on improving broadband access available to them.

4. Discussion of establishment of a legal entity

Alice updated the group about the formation of the Cairngorms Trust and introduced the paper and informed the group of the meetings and discussions that took place. The main two options outlined in the paper were Community Interest Company (CIC) and Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable Status. The conclusion drawn by the sub-group was that the CIC would be a good structure for delivering just this project but that a Company limited by Guarantee with Charitable status would allow greater scope for future developments and additional activity – once the main project is concluded.

The group confirmed that that in they wished to go ahead and establish a community owned legal entity and to pursue a CBS solution. The group also decided that a Company Limited by Guarantee with Charitable status would be the legal vehicle to take forward the project.

The group thanked Brian, Jo and David for their contributions to the sub-group and in particular Alice for all the work she put in to producing the paper.

A discussion took place around the objectives of the new organisation that were laid out in the paper. Brian highlighted the benefits of having a longer term focus for the organisation and producing objectives which allow this. It was made clear that the objectives are still draft and there will be further opportunities for the group to influence prior to incorporation.

A discussion took place around the make-up of the board of directors and how to balance appointed with elected positions. The group supported the principle that community members should hold the majority of positions as this is first and foremost a community-led project. There was support for the larger board of around 11-13 members in the first instance but this could be revisited when the project was established. The alternative 'quota' system with different categories of membership that was outlined in the paper was ruled out by the group. Those present from the appointed groups were happy to have allocated positions on the board, Scottish Land & Estates were not present to consult.

It was agreed that the three founding members of the new company will be David on behalf of the Cairngorms Trust, and Brian and Jo from communities. An election to appoint a full board will take place as soon as practicable following incorporation. Once drafted, the constitution of the new organisation will be circulated to the group for feedback.

A discussion took place around the need for secretarial/project officer support for the new organisation and how this will be funded.

Action point 3: Alice to circulate link to new Cairngorms Trust website: <http://www.cairngorms-leader.org/>

Action point 4: Alice to ask Scottish Land & Estates if they would like to appoint someone to the board of the new entity.

Action point 5: Alice, David, Jo, Brian and CBS to meet to begin drafting of constitution

Action point 6: Alice, David and CBS to meet to discuss Project Officer Support for the new organisation and report back to group

5. Communications

A discussion took place on the importance of keeping the community up-to-date with progress and making them aware of their options. It was decided that until there is a clear project area it is best not to formally consult communities as it is not definite that they will be included in the project area. Engagement will commence when the State Aid Consultation is published – CBS can attend meetings and support these meetings with written materials. The project briefing document will be updated to take account of the decisions made at this meeting and added to CNPA website.

A discussion took place on the merits of producing a press release to make clear that progress is being made and that a legal entity is being established to progress the project.

Action point 7: Amy to produce a press release in conjunction with CNPA communications team

6. Next Steps – What needs to be in place and when?

Sarah clarified the upcoming processes that would be necessary to take forward the project. These had all been covered under previous agenda items.

Action point 8: Sarah to update the project plan and project briefing paper to reflect decisions made at this meeting

7. General Digital Update

The next Cairngorms Digital Steering Group meeting will take place at the end of July/beginning of August – David Watson is arranging dates. Mary queried progress with the telecoms issue that had been reported in the CNPA planning paper in Glenlivet and was advised to speak to Donnie Morrison in HIE for further information.

8. Next meeting

The next meeting will take place at the end of July/beginning of August or after the school holidays.