

Minutes of AGM 10th March 2014

The meeting was opened by Chairman, John Lumley, who warmly welcomed members and Mr Martin Jones, the Programme Manager of Superfast Cymru.

Mr. Jones was invited to outline Superfast Cymru's programme for the deployment of superfast fibre broadband across Wales with specific reference to Cilcennin.

Whilst the wider project across Wales has been publicised widely in the media, Mr Jones announced that work on the Aeron exchange would begin in the autumn of 2014 and be completed in 2015. Whilst Wales generally is an engineering challenge because of the topography and related properties, the timetable will be delivered on time.

Once available, it will be an open network with consumer choice for contracts within the fibre broadband providers. Current copper based telephone lines will remain to individual properties whilst new fibre cabinets will be installed to supply fibre connections.

During a wide ranging discussion, questions were raised regarding duct space, signal strength and costs. Mr Jones predicted that duct space to the village box should not be limiting, speeds of 20-30mb/s will be realistic at a premium of £5-6 per month over current contracts. Residents were advised to sign up to the Superfast Cymru website for up to date information on deployment across Ceredigion.

After several challenging questions in regard to current suppliers contracts and fibre speeds versus copper links, Mr. Jones confirmed that residents would need to sign new contracts with a choice of suppliers. Upgrading to fibre broadband will not be automatic and everyone will have to change contracts, no telephony will be available over fibre and copper technology will remain to all properties.

Distance from exchange and fibre cabinets will still disadvantage many village properties although new "fibre boosters" were being tested and deployed to boost signal speeds. No guarantees were forthcoming and property technology (routers, extensions, wiring) may need checking if fibre speeds drop below expectations.

Before departing, John Lumley thanked Mr. Jones for keeping members informed on what has been, at times, a frustrating and demanding project for deployment of superfast broadband in Welsh communities.

The AGM agenda was then addressed. Apologies were received from Audrey Bamber, Steve Jamieson and Bob Fry.

2. Minutes of the AGM on 22nd May 2013

The minutes of the AGM on 22nd May 2013 were agreed as a correct record by Tony Bamber and seconded Martin Seal

3. Report of the Board of Directors

Chairman, John Lumley presented the company's Annual Report for 2013-2014 and highlighted notable achievements in assisting with solar panels for the village hall, a four

walks footpath leaflet and a successful grant application for a new footpath from Tir Bach to New Bethlehem.

The development of a new village website has been targeted for community support in a grant application, whilst Directors have also been engaged with the TyGlyn Davies Trust and the Ohio emigration project.

During questions, members agreed that everyone in the community needs to get involved in the new village website as it would be instrumental in maintaining cohesion and engagement of clubs and societies, both within the village and the wider internet community. A questionnaire was distributed and feedback requested on what individuals wanted in the new site including an address directory, historical listings and photographs. This consultation process will be expanded as a grant application is prepared.

4. Accounts for 2013-2014

Company Treasurer, Judy Morgan, presented the audited accounts for the previous year. It has been a quiet year financially, with a balance of £1,049.99 on 28th February 2014.

A warm "thank you" was extended to Brian Lomax for checking and auditing the accounts.

5. Election of Directors

As no new nominations for the Board of Directors had been received, the current list of Directors agreed to continue for another year.

6. Election of Company Chairman for 2014-2015

Chairman, John Lumley, announced that he was standing down. He was warmly thanked by Tony Bamber for all the effort and contribution he had made to the Company over many years.

Raymond Williams has agreed to stand as Chairman and was duly elected (proposed by Martin Seal, seconded by Tony Bamber).

The need for fresh ideas and directors was again highlighted, as the contributions of new Board members, Judy Morgan and Michelle Davies were acknowledged. Michelle will drive forward the development of a new website and the application for grant support.

8. Microhydro project

The feasibility report for a microhydro project on the River Camel has been received and circulated. A wide ranging discussion ensued regarding the proposed route, economic returns and outputs.

Whilst all parties were still interested, the scheme was not a hugely attractive proposition and whilst further discussions could take place, a significant investment was unlikely to yield attractive returns.

As there was no other business, the meeting closed at 9.25pm