

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
OF GATEWAY COMMUNITY MEDIA CIC

Date 28th January 2015
Gateway 97.8 Studio Suite, Eastgate Centre

ATTENDANCE

Danny Lawrence	Yvonne Williams	Ros Connors
Chris Tiernan	Liam Corrigan	Kelly-Ann Pacey
Steve Shrimpton	Mark Hardie	Paul Higgins
Richard Yates	Tyler Pittaway	Vishal Bhatnagar
David Webster		

APOLOGIES

Tahra Malik	Charles Peck	Richard Becker
Gary Howe	Ashwyn Smythe	Arfer Johnson
Dave Montier	Steven King	

There being no amendments, the motion to adopt the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by David Webster and seconded by Richard Yates.

Yvonne Williams (Managing Director's Statement)

We are still in credit with no loans.

I must advise you that we have had an eventful year – fire, flood and complete make-over.

Thanks to all our wonderful members, to Eastgate Management and to the public for their support in what could have been a very difficult time.

We've seen a year of change which simply presages further change. We may have to move partially or fully as the result of the planned building of a multiplex cinema into the Eastgate complex. We have been given assurances by the landlord, so are not concerned about being booted out – far from it, but we are living in a dynamic world – a world of change – and need to be fleet-footed and adaptable enough to prosper in such an environment.

We are aware that Kelting House may be subject to alteration or truncation, this would impact upon our transmission. We are therefore considering suitable options and undertaking research on that basis.

We have looked afresh at who and what we are, what makes Community Radio work effectively, and effectively is the operative word. We can be effective if we are widely heard, widely respected and are taking full advantage of our unique proposition – localness. To ensure people listen to us, we must be professional in our approach for we are competing

to be heard against the major professional operations.

Professionalism means delivering programmes in a consistent manner. For daytime programming the music selection has been made by our system in accordance with detailed instructions prepared by the Programme Controller. It means appropriate music is scheduled for different times of the day. The presenter's job is to provide the other – significantly localised – content in a manner that will engage individuals listening.

Other than for specialist programmes, presenters do not make the music selection – try doing that on Heart or the Beeb and see how long you last. They are not DJs – they are responsible for the non-music content that does so much to give a programme character appeal.

It is worth noting that advertisers want to be with a station that is effective in reaching their local target markets. We need to secure and increase advertising revenue as a valuable part of our funding mix – we need to be professional.

We also want to meet the 'community' commitments of providing broadcasting access for local people, giving them an effective voice, local information and education, providing skills development opportunities locally, understanding and welcoming diversity within and amongst our local communities. We want to promote local enterprise, local businesses, local arts, local talent.

It is not too difficult to play lots of music – but we could then sound like 'anywhere fm', but that would be a cop-out. Specialist music shows must be localised with details of local venues, upcoming gigs etc.

As broadcasters and of the community, we have a duty to keep our listeners updated on matters of relevance and interest to them. To this end, during daytime programming we must feed in local news, local 'whats on' and be aware of local implications of national stories. The result is a livelier locally relevant mix providing opportunities for further topical interviews and giving plenty more reasons for people to tune in and engage with us as listeners or contributors.

With another five years ahead of us, we need to think of succession. We need to be preparing the next generation of Directors, need to look at the re-apportionment of responsibilities and to use our experience to date to establish a clear route-plan to set the business for further development over the long term.

Danny will outline plans for an exciting development offering further opportunities to those interested in developing their radio skills – a development built upon our experience – a development Gateway Community Media CIC welcomes – a development that makes it ever more important that we establish a stable infrastructure for further growth.

In pressing for more professionalism, we realise that we are expecting staff to act as in temporary stewardship of Gateway time, space and resources. To this end we have produced a Presenter Agreement, the terms of which presenters commit to keeping.

Incidentally, part of being professional involves leaving a studio with all its settings in the standard position, with the presenter phones plugged in, the studio neat and tidy. No presenter should have to come on shift and need to reset the studio equipment.

Professionalism involves being punctual, how long would presenters survive with the Beeb if they take a cavalier attitude towards meeting commitments?

We started with all the enthusiasm you could want – spreading far and wide. Our task is to channel that enthusiasm in order to make our work more effective, extend our reach and become an essential much loved element for everyone in the area – our radio.

Membership is not just something nice and fluffy but a real commitment to a highly significant ongoing project. To this end I believe we need to look afresh at our membership fee - £1 is almost derisory – and structure. It seems to me we should adopt a two tier membership – the one for staff who regularly commit over three hours a week, staff who accept the £1 limited liability, and the other for young people under 18 who are not expected to have that liability. How much should we ask? I don't think £10 is excessive.

But enough of the pep talk – over to Danny first for something you might rather like, and then Ros will follow on.

Danny Lawrence (Business Development Director)

The station has had another exciting year, with our education arm bringing major changes. For example we are still a provider for alternative education and our courses are all NCFE, but are subject to change this year with courses being more robust and more lengthy.

Cut backs have affected us regarding education and grants but I am pleased to say we have adapted to the changing ways and we continue to be a diverse mixture of funding. We continue to work with JCP, Seetec and schools via CSS. We continue to receive grants from lottery and Jack Petchey Scheme which is on-going.

The Stats

During the year 4 courses were run
300 visits by local school children
4,000 people signed the book.

2014

BEM for Gateway Director Danny

ECC placements continue, battle of bands 2014, yellow ads running, newspaper coverage in all papers. 2 youngsters coming to do their skills for DofE. 4 doing NCFE course, Jack Petchey winner Zach, Mike Barnard/rotary sponsor summer school. Major refit after fire, High Sheriff funding/award, 120 people help in the fire clear up at Gateway 350 man hours to clear, 30 people help in the office/studio to put equipment back = 80 man hours so far. Newspaper coverage on the fire, all papers and Anglia news, max publicity and front page headlines – Good Marketing! We have had the opportunity to re-design the lay out.

Samaritans PSA completed, Essex Youth Strategy Fund received £2000, Rotary £1,000. New Gateway qualifications for unemployed people. 20 Essex Arts Awards achieved. JSA work placements/SEETEC continue, live OB's, Jack Petchey Award – Kelly-Ann Pacey, applied for lottery funding, ofcom funding again. Applied for Ofcom extension to licence. Gateway involved with DAB trial for 2015 possibility. Trip to BBC summer school, trip to Kent workshop with Paul Chandler on legal and defamation rules.

2,000 people through the door half was through the year, anticipate 4,000 in the year, compared to year 2010 – 2,000, 2011 – 3,000, 2012 – 3,000, 2013 – 4,000, 2014 – 4,000. Total in licence period 16,000 people.

Ofcom approved licence extension.

Rotary approved £360 radio money for trip. Jack Petchey £200 award is to Kurt Wilson, in addition computers from ECC given to us.

We have had another good year.

2015

Ofcom opened up licence application for S.E. Area. Identified frequency safe, never used. After much deliberation Gateway Thurrock set up. We have a room to set up from which we will run a course in March and Yvonne to link back to Gateway. This would be a new service with different sounds, we would like to network the two occasionally. 6 hours per day. Share programming off peak. Danny Lawrence and Steve King will be the Directors for Gateway Thurrock. Danny will stand down as a director from 97.8 and will need to be replaced, but will still be based at the galleries. Gateway Thurrock will buy in courses. Presenters will be popping up on both stations but our identities will be separate.

Thurrock studio to be built, initially for courses in Thurrock in March and shows on Gateway 97.8 linking back.

Thurrock licence application – submitting for its own licence with shared programming.

Possible transmitter move. Sites identified and under negotiation are Basildon Hospital and Brooke House. Possible closure of Kelting House. Possible relocation of Galleries studios 2015/2016. We have had talks with the relevant people, and we may lose reception, but not worrying as all people and businesses affected will have new homes. After the fire we can do anything! Kelting House – after much discussion aerial transmitter will hopefully be at Basildon Hospital after discussions with them. Site survey in the near future. The other site approved is Brooke House.

Ros Connors – Programme Controller

Programming hours. These are the same as last year and for those who were not here then, these are as follows:-

Monday-Thursday – 18 hours

Friday - 19 hours
Saturday - 19 hours
Sunday - 18 hours

Total hours = 74

Notable programmes:

I want to thank all presenters for contributing, particularly with early shifts. I also want to thank those who make programmes for the holidays. There are a tireless few who contribute material for Christmas and New Year, Easter and Bank Holidays. Particular thanks goes to those who are thinking about the station output, the consistency of the broadcasting. Notable programmes include, Scratchy Show, A World of Difference, A Year to Remember and the new Weekend show for Saturdays. Special thanks to David Fenn, who came in to do 13 programmes, in spite of his wife's ill health. New weekend show for Saturday with David Webster is excellent. Presenters, please do make more pre-records. Richard Becker will co-ordinate info on sport and feeding onto shows.

Disappointments

Unsigned. An unmitigated failure in all aspects. A local show designed to help promote local talent, local singers and bands. Failed due to lack of commitment on the part of those involved. Local sport could also be given a lift. We play out IRN material, but we have nobody co-ordinating or collating information about local weekly football or other sporting events.

I am occasionally asked about night time programming and through the night. I will remind all here that our remit is 6am to 10pm weekdays, and from 7am to 10pm at weekends. These are the hours that I have to fill first because it is in our licence commitment to Ofcom. It is prime importance that daytime and evening slots are filled first. We have certain nights where we have a shortfall of an hour, and this is where a syndicated show might fill the slot, and take it on for a second hour, outside the commitment time.

Several requests to all members.

Obligation:

If you have agreed to cover a slot for a live show, please honour it and don't back out at the last minute. Obviously we understand if you are sick and cannot do it, but there are times when presenters have other activities, be it family arrangements etc. Please try to help us plan ahead as it can throw those who are running the station into a mess, and we have to alter plans we might have to accommodate yours.

Timekeeping:

We also have issues with some people turning up for their show five minutes before they are due on. Think of the person who might be on before you. They might be getting worried you are not going to show and they are going to have to carry on. Also, turning up late

means you can lose valuable prep time, and it can adversely affect your programme. I would always recommend being in the station at least thirty minutes ahead of a live show..

Show Content:

If you are presenting a show like Breakfast, Daytime, Good afternoon or drive time, thinking ahead about what you are going to do during that show is all important. You might think it is OK to forward promote that on your show you have got travel, a local artist and community action. These are fixtures and fittings. They are prompts in the hour clock to get you to do something. We are a community station. That name sets us apart from other stations. We should be looking at upping our social gain by getting as many people from the community involved in our daytime output. If you see something that someone is organising, it's in Kelly's Diary page with a phone number, then ring them up. Ask them if they'd like to come on radio and talk about it. Engage with them. Possibly do a phono there and then. Invite them in to your show or do a pre-record. Engagement and involvement with the community = listeners.

Format:

Show formats for all shows and times are programmed in by me, and if anyone wishes to make suggestions for change, then if I am approached. I will work with you to do best to achieve your wishes. What I don't want to hear, and what I have heard recently, is the odd presenter changing the format of a show to suit themselves, or only playing the music they want to play. If you are presenting daytime, then the show will have a particular feel to it, and any presenter who comes in and does that show, if they haven't done it before, I would expect them to get the feel of it by listening to another day, and then coming in and following the format. We are now looking at station agreements which presenters will have to sign and agree before they go on air.

Socialising:

While it is great we have a cohesive, involving, friendly, family feel about the station, I feel there are a few people here who are treating it as a social club. They come in, sit at tables, chat to people, but contribute nothing. Sometimes they even come in and distract those who are working, or hang about the studio area while shows are on the air. I don't wish to see this happen. Those who are coming in, are coming in to complete a task. If you have the odd hour here or there to offer Gateway, be it manning the reception for a couple of hours, or using an offline studio to make jingles or produce programmes, then we will always be glad of the help. If you are coming in to hang around, then we do not want you. Gateway is a place of work. It is based in a busy shopping centre surrounded by other businesses.

Richard Yates (Station Engineer)

I would like to thank Andy Coleman-Wood and Steve King who worked 7 days a week on the studio build, which was much appreciated. The visibility is better, no loose wires, so all in all, a successful rebuild. Regarding Kelting House, we might lose it, everything comes from there, so there will be a lot of work to come, so any help would be great, but as previously mentioned, nothing has been decided yet re Kelting.

The station has invested in a new router and I am in the process of configuring it. It is 5g and will be do everything we ask of it.

Steve King built a case in which we can broadcast on 3G. It has been trialed and works very well, works as a portable studio. It will be used for the election this year in a joint venture with BHR covering the election with Steve and Richard feeding it back. Danny said regarding Kelting House we have had a successful lottery bid for a new transmitter and antenna for Gateway 97.8, so we don;t go off air. If we are successful in our bid for Gateway Thurrock we can use our old equipment for that Station.

I would ask that no-one installs anything on the computers, please ask Richard or Steve. Ros asked if we could create a log-in where people cannot update?

Election of Directors

The Chairman explained that according to our constitution, at least one third of our Directors is to stand down or for re-election each year at the AGM. Danny Lawrence is thus standing for re-election. There being no other candidates the motion to elect Danny was moved by Kelly-Ann Pacey and seconded by Steve Shrimpton.

Any Other Business

Richard Yates: I would also like to tell you about the raspberry pi. It has been designed to easily learn how to write computer code which has been sadly lacking in the school IT curriculum for over 20 years. I would like to propose setting up a raspberry pi club at the station for members who are interested. It would be run by myself and we could meet once a month to learn coding, build projects, exchange ideas and most importantly, have a bit of fun and it could also be integrated with the radio club. The club can also be run online to those who are unable to attend. Some project ideas!! Grandpa scarer – plays spooky noises and release a scary spider from a box, infra-red camera bird box – sends a tweet when a bird enters the box, networked real time studio clock, scrolling message window display. Ros said this was a great idea, but entirely down to Richard, as long as he is happy to do some training. Danny said he might get funding for.

Richard Yates also mentioned that it would be good idea to arrange some quiz nights, as the impromptu quiz at the Christmas office party was enjoyed by all, everyone at the meeting agreed this would be a good idea. Richard Yates also mentioned about visits to various places, eg Bletchley Park, and perhaps we can set up some events in the Summer months.

Ros Connors: some little birds are using the station twitter account to follow people. We are following more people than people following us! Please exercise care with the company account, it is not a personal account for individuals.

Danny Lawrence: mentioned Andy Roberts, who passed away in the summer, and would be greatly missed by everyone who knew him at Gateway.

Yvonne Williams: spoke about the membership fee. The current figure was so small, so needs to be made worth something. If it was a higher rate, it might stop people who never

come in suddenly appearing and actually offer nothing to the station. People need to give not take. Higher rate would make members more involved. Membership should be applied for. £10 was mentioned. It was decided that we appoint someone as membership secretary to keep up to date records and take money and keep accounts. Chris Tiernan will take on job. Danny said that those not at the meeting need to be consulted about membership changes proposed and agreed at the meeting. It was decided that all members would be emailed and given 28 days to re-apply. If no response after that time then they will be taken off the database.

New members will pay the new rate automatically and given new protocol for what we expect from them and what we offer in return.

David Webster: asked if anyone was bidding for Thurrock licence. Danny said we don't think they are, but as yet it is unclear. We have absorbed BCR, they are an internet station and haven't put in a licence bid. Dan said we have no idea what frequency and area might get licence although it is clear that there is a frequency suitable for Thurrock or Southend. We know another party is bidding for Southend..

Yvonne: said if we move our antenna from Kelting House, we would have better coverage, hospital site is preferred, but up to Ofcom approval.

Ros: mentioned relocating the antenna to the hospital site will help with dead spots.

Yvonne: said because of potential advantages of aerial move, we are resolved move it irrespective of what happens at Kelting, subject to all relevant approvals.

Danny: said the good news is that we have the green light for both sites. Ian Hickling is coming to do a survey at the end of February. It is important to do now.

Ros: mentioned that this will assist with the DAB experiment. Hospital move would be of great benefit.

Yvonne: said that if we are selected for DAB, which is not a done-deal yet, Ofcom will supply the equipment.

Dan: said we have put our intention in for it, so it is just a matter of waiting.

Ros: said I think we have a good case!

Dan: said that the station selected will run DAB for 1 year.

Yvonne: requests anyone who can do anything with web site please come see her.

Yvonne: thanked everyone for attending the meeting and that the date of the next meeting will be equivalent date next year.