

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 29th JANUARY 2021

MEETING ON ZOOM – 7.30PM

ATTENDANCE

Danny Lawrence	Ros Connors	Christine Tiernan
Johnny Jenkins	Aris Pap	Laura Anderson
Steve King	Paul Scarlett	Simon Turp
John Taylor	Aston Avery	Jacqui James
David James	Saida Sheenan	Liam Corrigan
Kurt Wilson	Steve Shrimpton	
Pam Bickle	Harry Doyle	Abbeygail
Shane	Cameron	Charlie Tolhurst

APOLOGIES

David Webster	Dave Montier	Jack Carter
Ashwyn Smythe	Car Norris	

A minute's silence was observed for Fred Tiernan and Peter Irvin who passed away.

There being no amendments, the motion to adopt the minutes of the last meeting was proposed by Aston and Liam Corrigan.

Accounts can be sent via email for anyone who wishes to see them.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT – BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT – DANNY LAWRENCE

Funding grants continue to come in. Extended time to spend the money because of corona. We have adapted our projects to continue service. Various bodies have given us grants, there are 16 active and 9 waiting. Education for obvious reasons is stopping and starting. Advertising has slightly increased. Volunteer hours has decreased, which what we expected. We are still getting covid grants. Presenters are still coming in (Aston).

S.S. DAB multiplex happening in the north of the country. Polygon won't be given an increase in power. We applied for a power increase in Canvey Island, it will need an upgrade of aerial, this is a long way off in the future.

Finally, about Eastgate, planning application in, so is a waiting game.

Dan mentioned the adaptation grant, check and trace, sanitisers, masks, screens, so we are covid safe.

Dan thanked Simon for putting in new phone system and sorting out internet problems.

ELECTION OF DIRECTOR

Danny due for re-election and has agreed to stand for a further 2 years, proposed by Simon Turp and seconded by Steve King. Danny re-elected.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/PROGRAMME CONTROLLER – ROS CONNORS

The work to keep the radio station on air 24/7 continues to be a full on 24/7 commitment.

Programming hours:

2020 average was 18 hours of original programming, and broadcasting 24 hours. In total much of it now automated. We've added some additional voice tracked programming. A new syndicated show was suggested to me to replace the Chill Factor. However, I have gone instead with voice tracked, or automated programming for the reason that there would be an issue when the show is delivered.

As always at an AGM I mention pre-recorded shows and when they are delivered. If you do supply a weekly show or shows, for transmission, please remember I need them in good time, and ahead of the day of transmission, preferably several days ahead.

Engineering:

The tune tracker upgrade is complete powered by the Haiku operating system. There have been some teething issues, but most of these are now sorted.

I wanted to mention a fault with the transmitter, that is currently being addressed. Song meta details are now appearing on the radio player app. I want to make sure that all presenters of regular daytime shows are using TT to achieve this. Show content continues to be impressive, especially during daytime, drivetime and on Saturdays with the radio club.

Emails:

Many spam emails are going to our studio account. There are also important emails containing press releases, diary events, music submissions, and even advertising queries regularly being sent to the wrong address. I am regularly deleting emails with email attachments with mp3 music files as I never want any unsolicited music played on Gateway. I would encourage all presenters and co-presenters not to even click on any of these emails as they may contain trojan viruses that could damage our computers.

All music submissions should be coming through me – the programme controller, and again I will remind all presenters that you should only ever play songs from TT, unless it has been specifically agreed with me that you use music from another source.

Please do not email me during shows if it is to do with programming, or admin. My sole focus during a live show is the show itself.

EDITORS REPORT – JOHNNY JENKINS

It's been a very different year, but we have managed to keep up content running on air every day, working with local groups and organisations to ensure our shows are busy. Our news presenters were granted key worker status and have been coming in ever since March – thank you to everybody who has come to Gateway throughout the past 10 months of the pandemic.

Grant Projects

Gateway Response

A new page on the website with wellbeing, community, audio and activity blogs.
Thank you to [REDACTED] Simon for getting this up and running quickly.
It is your one stop shop for local news – corona and beyond.
This project is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Gateway to Fitness

Regular Exercise classes on air and online.
We have done two so far and have more coming up.
Please sign up online at gateway978.com/fitness
This project is funded by Sport England.

Coronavirus

I have always done regular political updates on drivetime and other updates on daytime and good afternoon on big political days.

But – on 9th March – two weeks before the national lockdown, we began a daily coronavirus update, airing at 6pm on weekdays, now 5.30pm. Aside from over Christmas, I have done and continue to do this every day. This provides crucial updates for the community and the latest figures. We have been agile and reacted quickly to the pandemic. This was only possible because of the existing structures already in place.

We have also introduced a new website page (</coronavirus>) which is updated daily with the latest figures and the coronavirus update is uploaded here too. It also has national and local corona guidance.

Content

Prospects: sent out each weekday morning at 8am via email with details of the content for daytime and drivetime. It only works if you send me details of your content or upload them to the shared calendar the afternoon before. I write and schedule the email the night before, so if you send me the details late, it won't be in prospects.

Guests – I try to get most local guests on daytime or drivetime, but you need to be looking for content too. If your shows are regularly quiet, then you need to work with me to get interviews and other content.

Social media – keep posting on twitter, face book and Instagram through Hootsuite. Post pictures and videos too. Get creative with it but please do not bombard Instagram, we should be posting twice a day maximum on here. If you need help with social media, we can help. Let me know.

Website content – keep blogging interviews. Aston for example blogs every time they do an interview. If you do a specialist show, you can do a special blog post for each show. Or Charlie and Pat do a blog for their regular updates. If you need your password reset, let me know. If you need help with blogging, let me know. We also take press releases, local content and national news on our website.

Coming up – Elections? Due in May after being postponed from 2020. Unsure if they will go ahead. We will update you.

If you need any help, advice or content, let me know. I'm here to help and ensure we have the best on air and online content possible.

ENGINEERING REPORT – STEVEN KING

February – working and researching towards a new audio link up system purposely for outside broadcasting as the old FM link system was obsolete by Ofcom.

March – Servicing and maintaining studios is an on-going in-house cleaning, FM transmitter at the hospital has also been maintained and serviced. Late March transmitter had power failure due to a safety chip sensor for RF amplifier protection kicked in. Audio link to the galleries to the hospital failed to send packets due to infinite power injections to the dish both PoE were replaced and solved the problem. As a temporary fix, set up a pair of barix and matching on the network to send and receive ghost packets to keep the Sonifex working at the regular pace with audio packets.

April – During lock down the station was regularly maintained on the one day a week, to check the studio equipment and transmission rack.

May – The preamp distributor transformer came to the end of its life then replaced to keep the streaming audio transmission to the hospital.

June – 5.8G network dish arrived at the station, myself and John Taylor working on the project and sussed out the configuration between the two dishes very successfully and ready for more ground tests and will be in service for Kodosai, martial art weekend.

July – Paul replaced the central storage, which is the most important part of the station as a data storage successfully.

August – John Taylor serviced and replaced all of the PCs at the galleries, and security software at the station, now in full working order with windows 10 operating system, that also includes studio, new SSD hard drives, to make both studios perform better than the old mechanical drives.

October – Transmitting antenna came down on its side after the storm occurred, but luckily, we were still transmitting as normal. Transplan which are the company who installed the aerial repaired it, due to shattered brackets. We came across an issue with the reflected power which was 25W from the antenna, which is solved reflected of 4W.

November – Due to another lock down the checking of the studios and transmitter reduced down to one day a week.

December – Very quiet month.

January – New developments are taking place for refurbishing both studios, at the galleries to future proof the station. Danny Lawrence will explain all the details of the refurbishment.

JOHN TAYLOR – ENGINEERING

All Gateway PC's have now been upgraded to the current windows operating system and monitored by Bull guard antivirus. Currently training PCs are switched off due to no one being on site. When things are back to normal, I will get training area back up and running. This won't be a quick process due to weeks of missed updates.

Myself and Steve King are now working on a new link system for OBs at the current 3g system we use has now become unstable.

WEBSITE/COMMUNICATIONS – SIMON TURP

Ros mentioned earlier about spam messages going to the studio, my best suggestion is that all the emails are marked as spam, if they are all coming from a specific domain or location, we can look at ways of blacklisting them. So, it may be worth forwarding them to me before marking as spam, so that I can review the details.

Just after the last AGM, we launched Gateway's Instagram page, which has been a great success, with regular posts, thank you to everyone who has contributed to this.

As Ros also touched on earlier, we also rolled out the "Now playing" song meta data on the website and mobile apps, and external services, so listeners can see the song that is

currently playing. This was long overdue, and its still being worked on. This doesn't work on shows which are pre-packed, played via a CD, or outside broadcasts. We also ask for your help, if you every notice a song that is titled incorrectly, or you notice certain songs aren't showing up, let me and Ros know, so we can investigate. Once the situation with the pandemic is better, me and Steve are due to investigate ways to get this data on the RDS, so you'll be able to see this data on the move in the cars for example.

I am currently testing the listen again service on the mobile apps, with hope to release this in the next couple of months. I also plan to roll out integrated functionality to show the on-air presenter on the actual player page in the app, rather than on the separate tab.

Last year I rolled out the brand-new phone system with the new handsets. This has been a great success with much more reliability.

██████████ will cover this more in the analytics, but I want to congratulate Johnny Jenkins for his work in the past year since the Coronavirus pandemic started. Johnny has broken some major news before the big media outlets have, and each time it brought a huge amount of traffic the website. Thank you for your hard work on this. Some of you may have seen the push notifications that he has sent out.

And as with every year, my thanks goes to everyone that publishes content regularly on social media and the website. Fresh and up to date content is extremely important to driving traffic to the website and social media pages.

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Audience numbers – We have had a 10% increase in users this year, equating to just shy of 51,000 users and an 11% increased in new users.

Visitor Activity – The average time on the site is just over 2 minutes and the number of pages viewed per visit is 1.42; which is a 9% drop

Miscellaneous – Our busiest day ever was Thursday October 20th with 3,644 page views n one day.

Listen Again – Users are down 2% year on year.

Gateway Stream Stats –

42,123 unique listeners on line in the past year (up 38% year on year)

65,474 total listening hours in the past year (up by 138% year on year)

67 minutes average listening time (up 67% year on year)

We peaked at 159 listeners at 8am on March 13th – up from the previous peak of 69 listeners

These stats are somewhat skewed due to testing that Simon was conducting in relation to the 'now playing' roll-out on the website player.

RADIO CLUB REPORT – ARIS PAP/LAURA ANDERSON

At the start of 2020 we had big plans and enthusiasm for the year as it was the 10th birthday of Gateway. There were plans for a bus tour, trips and activities. Unfortunately, 2020 was what it was so many of the plans got cancelled and postponed.

But we like to keep it going and keep it positive on the radio club and after the last event before the lockdowns (Chinese new year) we set up a voice and text server (discord) so the members of the club could continue presenting the radio club takeover show from home. We have to split the club into two teams. In the beginning, it was hard for the members but eventually everyone started to get used to the new style of producing and presenting a radio show. We would like to think that this was a good opportunity to explore different technologies and learn different ways of making the radio club show work and I think we succeed.

There was a time that I like to call the intermission lockdown time in September and October where we were out of the lockdown, but still continued the two teams set up where Abbey and Oliver stepped up and took leadership of each team, enhancing their presenting skills by performing under the difficult conditions of working from home. This continues until today.

During the pandemic and the various lockdowns Danny was able to get some extra funding for various things and one of them was to upgrade the discord voice server with better quality sound. Also there was some extra equipment provided like headsets and microphones for the radio club members so the sound quality got elevated.

And finally, we are proud to say that two of our members won volunteer awards from the Basildon Council. Lachlan Bancroft won young volunteer of the year and Cameron Woodberry won a highly commended young volunteer award. This shows that even under the hardest conditions of lockdown we shined and produced award winning content.

Next year is still uncertain of what will happen but we will continue the content and the club through whatever happens.

Thanks to Danny for making the extra funds possible, and thanks to John Jenkins for his support.

ADMIN AND OFFICE REPORT – CHRISTINE TIERNAN

I would like to remind everyone to clean down after their shows (most of you do), but better safe than sorry. Would you also sign the form to say you have done so.

Please do not touch the heating, it is set on winter mode, so should not need altering.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

John Taylor volunteered to do some chart music staff and send to Ros.

█ mentioned change of play out system,

End of meeting