



Community Radio

Key commitments annual report form

Publication date: March 2011
Issue 5

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Community Radio Annual Report Form

.1 Community Radio Annual Report Form: Year Ending 31 March 2011

Station details

Licence Number

CR206

Station Name

107 Meridian FM

Launch Date

1 March 2010

Web address where you will publish this report

This report will be published on the 107 Meridian FM web site by the end of July 2011. The web address address is www.meridianfm.com

PLEASE NOTE: Each section can be expanded to take as much information as you need to provide.

.2 The year in numbers

| Please specify the station's achievements in the 10/11 year in numbers as follows: | |
|--|----------------|
| Average number of live hours per week | 121 |
| Average number of original programming hours per week (this may include pre-recorded as well as live material but should not include repeats). | 121 |
| The percentage of your live daytime output that is speech | 30% |
| Number of people trained over the course of the year | 30 |
| Number of volunteers involved over the course of the year | 83 |
| If appropriate, a list of languages you have broadcast in | English |

(Please also include this information in the following sections where relevant)

.3 Key commitments: Programming

Meridian FM programmes will appeal musically to a wide cross-section of the population and we will provide local news and events information.

- Output will typically comprise 70% music and 30% speech ('speech' excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails and sponsor credits). Evening and overnight output will have a higher proportion of music.
- Music output will comprise a mix of tracks from 1960 to the current chart, with specialist music shows focussing on specific musical tastes.
- Speech output will include local news, weather and travel information, local information including an events guide, and guest interviews with local people. Information on local sports will also feature from time to time.
- Meridian FM will broadcast in English.
- The service will typically be live for 12 hours per day. (Live programming may include pre-recorded inserts, if applicable). The majority of the output will be locally produced.

Daytime show programming follows a standised format which includes speech items as noted below, the overall average broadcast hour contains ~36 mins music, ~6 mins advertisements/trails and ~ 18 mins (i.e. 30%) speech.

Music output generally conformed to our programming commitments during day-time shows, and we also provided an extremely varied range of specialist shows in the evenings and at weekends, covering everything from jazz, classical and 1930-60s band music, right through to folk & acoustic, live local amateur bands, funk, blues, dance, ska/two-tone, and progressive rock.

Our speech output conformed closely to our commitments during this period, particularly as all our day-time shows are required to follow an outline which includes

news, weather, travel twice an hour, events guide, and guest interviews with local people wherever possible.

107 Meridian FM broadcasts exclusively in English, as ethnic minorities remain relatively small in our area and they traditionally speak excellent English.

With a core of dedicated and enthusiastic broadcasting volunteers 107 Meridian FM put out an average of 17.2 live hours of broadcasting each day during the year, 100% of which was locally produced. There was virtually no pre-recorded material used, as we have a station policy of live broadcasting as far as possible.

.4 Key commitments: Social gain objectives

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of community radio services that they are local services provided primarily (a) for the good of members of the public, or of particular communities, and (b) in order to deliver social gain, rather than primarily for commercial reasons or for the financial or other material gain of the individuals involved in providing the service."

"(a) the provision of sound broadcasting services to individuals who are otherwise underserved"

- The station will schedule a programme aimed at, and presented by, under-16s from the target community.
- Meridian FM may assist local authorities in distributing local services information in order to enable a wide cross-section of the audience to learn of specific services and initiatives.

"(b) the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion"

- The station will broadcast interviews on day-time programmes covering a wide range of topics of interest to the target community. Listeners will be encouraged to phone in and offer their opinions.
- The station will utilise online initiatives as well as text messages and emails from listeners to gather feedback and inform its service.

"(c) the provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service"

- During its first year on air Meridian FM will offer at least four work placement places annually to local school students, with plans to increase this programme from the station's second year on air.
- The station will offer local schools the opportunity to visit its studio in order to further students' interest in radio as a medium. Meridian FM may invite up to two schools per month, on average.
- Meridian FM will offer training opportunities in radio broadcasting to long term unemployed people in the target community.
- The station will provide ongoing training for at least 50 existing volunteers each year and will aim to train at least ten new volunteers on an annual basis. Training for new volunteers will include an induction training course and on-air training, depending on individual needs.

"(d) the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of the links within it"

- Meridian FM will broadcast from external events and link back to the studio from a variety of local events in an effort to bring the target community's thoughts and opinions live to air.
- The station will hold one public meeting per year to meet its target community face-to-face and better understand the community's needs. Community members will be able to meet with the management team and make appointments to meet the station manager.

Additional social gain objectives:

- The station will run programmes in conjunction with local agencies regarding local employment opportunities and returning to work, and other relevant topics.
- The station may broadcast appeals for volunteers on behalf of other voluntary organisations and provide an opportunity for these organisations to talk about their work.

(a) Under the supervision of a senior broadcasting team member a number of "youth show" opportunities have been created and young people given the experience of running their own radio shows. Meridian FM also specifically supported the East

Grintead Town Council's promotion for public hire of their East Court and Meridian Hall public facilities via free on-air advertisements.

(b) In both the daily mid-morning and afternoon shows especially, interviews with local interest guests are very frequently conducted on an extremely wide range of subjects, covering issues such as local charities, interest groups, community events, local celebrities and business people. The studio phone number is routinely promoted for listener contact. Meridian FM also provides direct public access into the studio to the live presenter by an e-mail address and a dedicated text line number, both of which are very widely publicised both on-air and on our web site.

(c) Meridian FM worked in collaboration with the two local secondary schools to provide student work placements in the summer period, providing basic office administration experience as well as news-gathering and some broadcasting training. The station also provided a series of off-site group training sessions for members during the year covering broadcast presenting skills, interviewing skills, and digital editing. In addition, individual training and coaching was provided for existing members and new joiners, including some who are long-term unemployed.

(d) Using our dedicated and fully equipped outside broadcast vehicle we attended 7 major local fairs, community events and commercial shows during the year, to meet the public and run live outside broadcasts which included interviews with local people attending. We also attended 3 other community events to broadcast live or record for later broadcasting, one of these in particular being the local council election hustings held in the community centre where we are located, which we broadcast live for the benefit of our community. Although no formal public meeting was actually held during the reporting year we routinely received visits from members of the public to access our management team by virtue of the fact that we are based in a well-known community centre, accessed by large numbers of people, and we continuously promote our location and accessibility.

.5 Key commitments: Access and participation

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that members of the community it is intended to serve are given opportunities to participate in the operation and management of the service."

- Meridian FM will operate a 'Friends of Meridian FM' scheme. An annual open public meeting will be held and 'Friends' will be invited to meet with the station management and share their thoughts and ideas.
- All station volunteers will be able to meet with the station manager, as required, to discuss specific station matters. Volunteers will be given the opportunity to become more involved in the operation of the station by taking on a management role.

107 Meridian FM operates a "Friends of Meridian FM" scheme which is promoted on our web site and also by active on-air promotion. As noted above, the station operates an 'open house' policy and welcomes members of the public to visit and meet with members of the management team. All Meridian FM member volunteers also have direct access to management team members either in person in the office and studio, or by widely publicised e-mail addresses and phone numbers. Volunteer members are actively encouraged to become involved in the various aspects of the organisation and management of the station, and in particular they are encouraged to

stand for the annual elections to the management team.

.6 Key commitments: Accountability to the target community

Community Radio Order 2004: "It is a characteristic of every community radio service that, in respect of the provision of that service, the person providing the service makes himself accountable to the community that the service is intended to serve."

- Listeners will be invited to use the station's feedback from on its website to leave comments and feed back to the station. This information will be used by the station to help fulfil the needs of the community and inform the service.
- The station will run regular polls on its website covering a variety of topics, including questions about the station.
- The station will hold an Annual General Meeting which will be open to members. In addition, the station will hold at least one public meeting annually.
- The station will put in a place a complaints procedure for its listeners and volunteers and a grievance policy for volunteers and/or employees.

Listeners were encouraged to use several means to contact the station and to give their feedback and opinions, including publicised phone numbers for both the live studio and the office, e-mail addresses for both, and a text-in line. In addition a major listener survey was planned, prepared and run just towards the close of the reporting period in which volunteer members visited leading supermarkets in the town and other venues to actively canvas the listening habits, views and opinions of the local public. This is reported more fully in 1.10 below.

The station's Annual General Meeting during the reporting period was held in June 2010 at a local café chosen in order to encourage as many Meridian FM members as possible to attend.

The station's policies on complaints and grievances were slow to develop past the informal stage during the reporting period, however they are currently undergoing full review. During the reporting period no formal complaints or grievances were lodged with the management team.

.7 Volunteer inputs (see the separate guidance notes)

Number of volunteers: 83 (total, not all active at any one time)

What roles are performed by volunteers:

During the reporting period all roles required by the station were all done by the volunteers, with the sole exceptions of Station Manager role, which was a paid role until 31/12/10, and Business Development Manager role, which was a position grant funded by Ofcom from August 2010 to past the end of the reporting period.

Approximate number of hours worked on average per volunteer **per week:**

Senior volunteers: 6 persons averaging 2.5 hours / week

Other active volunteers: 48 persons averaging 1.75 hours / week

Additional information:

These are very averaged figures, the work done varied significantly from week to week, and from person to person, and was constantly affected by changing volunteer availabilities, e.g. during very busy periods some senior volunteers probably worked up to 25 hours/week

.8 Significant achievements

a). 107 Meridian FM secured a significant grant to fund the equipping of a second broadcasting studio next to our existing studio which will be available for member training, paid-for external training, producing programme trailers, advertisements and jingles, and to act as an exchange live studio with the existing one. The grant was successfully spent on acquiring suitable professional equipment from a closing radio station in Portsmouth. This second studio is due to come on stream soon.

b) The very harsh winter 2010-2011 in our locality gave us a prime opportunity to serve our community directly in providing frequent local traffic and weather reports on air, and also live-on-location “snow patrol” reports from member volunteers on the current conditions of passable and impassable major and minor roads, and also reports direct from the local shops and supermarkets detailing which were open or closed, and which had food stock issues or not. As roads to our studios were also badly affected, several members were unable to do their regular shows but other members walked significant distances through the snow to maintain a live service from the studio during this period, a tremendous team effort.

c) A major listener survey was conducted with very encouraging results – see 1.10.

.9 Significant difficulties

Do you wish this section to be kept confidential? **Yes**

.10 Audience research

Please provide a summary of any audience research/ data you have collected during the year.

A major listener survey was conducted during March 2011 by interviewing members of the local public at shops and especially at the two main supermarkets in East Grinstead. A total of 317 surveys were completed.

63% of respondents said they had listened to 107 Meridian FM in the last week. In a coverage area of ~ 35,000 or more people, this puts our potential listenership at around 22,000.

The demographic character of those who said they listened was 68% female, and 83% above the age of 35.

Peak listening times were weekdays, 7am-12 noon and 3-6pm.

Expressed music preference was predominantly “Varied”

Meridian FM listeners also listened predominantly to Heart, Radio 2 and Radio 4 (in that order)

Major reasons given for not listening to Meridian FM were not remembering to, loyalty to other stations, and not heard about Meridian (in that order)

Of those claiming to like Meridian FM, 51% said it was because it is truly local.

Section 2

Declaration

I hereby declare that the information given in this annual report is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and correct.

Signature

[signed]

Name

Simon Bruce

Position

Steering Group Chairman

Station

107 Meridian FM (CR206)

Email address

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Telephone number

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Date

10/7/11

Section 3

Checklist

Please ensure that you have done the following:

- Read the Guidance Notes.
- Checked that all sections of both forms (i.e. this document and the accompanying spreadsheet) are completed.
- Ensured that the declaration is signed and dated by a member of the board of the corporate body which has been awarded the community radio licence, and that the person has the authority to act on behalf of the board.

Then

Submit your form by email to community.radio@ofcom.org.uk and send one signed hard copy to

Community Radio (5th Floor),
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road,
London
SE1 9HA.

Annual report forms must be returned to Ofcom by Wednesday 29 June 2011.

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