

Meeting of the Board of Midlothian Community Media Association held online at 7.00pm on Wednesday 12 January 2022

1. Apologies for absence - Kim Thomson

Present: S Horsburgh, Bob miller, Addie Thomson, Tony Conlin, Carrie Campbell, Alan Thomson and Gordon Clayton

2. Minutes of previous meetings - not available, In Kim's absence Gordon Clayton agreed to take minutes

3. Finance: £15,089 in bank due to income from advertising. Some refunds to Directors outstanding which will reduce the balance.

4. Midlothian Council Grant. The large grant application was unsuccessful with feedback indicating vast oversubscription with funds largely going to groups in social care, mental health and foodbanks along with community development in the less well-off areas of Midlothian. Individual feedback highlighted that our outcomes were not that quantifiable as we did not have audience figures.

A small 1 year grant of £ 3k has been submitted with decision early February. Judgement will be against same criteria as set out in the Single Plan.

5. Technical update: Halkerston 100.7 is live and written approval from OFCOM received today although the power level is blank. Chris Mackrell will enquire about levels. Thanks to Chris, Geoff Ruderham and co-operation of Midlothian Council. Reception to beyond Biggar in South- West but parts of Musselburgh and Tranent not covered but perhaps other factors in play.

Geoff had rebooted TBU and Chris would review the office and studio combined to 3 package and reboot other pc's. An offer of a pc from Addie warmly received. Bob sought and got advice on web vt system

6. Guests in the station. It was agreed to limit the number in studio and office combined to 3. Masks only to be removed in studio.

7. Review in '22 Gordon spoke briefly to his short paper attached as appendix1. There was a lengthy and widespread discussion which amounted to a Board review as we enter extension 3 to the original licence. It was agreed that there were many successes but shortcomings had to be addressed. Items 9. & 10 were taken at the same time. Gordon felt that we needed external help to see what impact we are having and whether the Birthday celebrations should include surveys, a 'gathering' of some kind and additional promotion of the brand. Some things agreed were:

A full page in Esk Valley View or even a double page

Appeal for volunteers with all interests but include marketing

Press releases including the Midlothian View

Seek advice on the use of the 2<sup>nd</sup> frequency in promotional materials but include at least in pre-news jingle

Seek help from Lynn at the Council Communications section

Try to get presenters to do more promotions and update or establish entries on website

Need to close gaps in key commitments around work with young people and discussion type programmes about community issues

This list was not exhaustive and it was agreed that as a group we do not have all the answers Tony said he had been asked if we were still broadcasting and that maybe highlights our problems

8. Programme sponsorship - specifically breakfast: Discussion on ethical advertising at that time of day but Alan could make approaches and bring back any possible interest to Graham and the Board.

9. 15th Birthday planning see 7

10. 100.7 branding decisions see 7

11. Centre Security. Steve was fully supported in taking a hard line with any volunteer who lets the station down by leaving the premises unsecure either at the door or the key cage. Access to the centre out of hours will be revoked.

12. AOCB

Tony mentioned need for refresher training

Alan not getting the invitation link to meetings

Carrie had sent an electronic message prior to the meeting indicating her intention to resign at the next AGM. As treasurer and Director. This news was received with dismay although it was appreciated that she had stepped into the role short-term but had become an extremely valued member of the Board over the last few years and her expertise will be difficult if not impossible to replace.

The Board agreed we were not in a position to offer payment to Unity productions for radio programmes about new musicals.

13. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022@ 7pm

## Appendix 1

# Review in 22

Moira and I had a call over the festive period from Larry where he made some observations about the station which put me in a reflective mood. It is now close on 18 years when the first steps were taken to establish a community radio station in Midlothian. The fact that we are still here is a tribute to all the volunteers involved particularly Board members past and present. Although the initiative came from the Community Learning Service, the establishment of a steering committee of locals and the emergence of the driving force that was John Ritchie and the involvement of 'radio' people including Geoff helped provide support for the initial licence application, identification and conversion of premises, funding and first but sadly not last transmission site.

Despite, not having a paid employee we have survived. We have had our successes and failures and some 'could do better's' There has been long periods of calm and some storms mainly self-inflicted.

Communications have changed since that day in 2007 that we first broadcast. The pandemic has led to a 'blended model of broadcasting but the audience is now likely to listen on a device other than a radio. One of our target audiences the elderly and housebound still find the radio relevant.

Young people and not so young now have so many platforms to be creative on that radio maybe has lost some of its attraction.

There is an old saying that you need to know where you are before plotting a path for the future. Shane Ibrahim of Bush Radio S.A. said 'it was more important to be necessary than popular'- Ideally you could be both!

We talked about a relaunch of the station but perhaps like Dr Who we have to regenerate. If we fail to get revenue funding and or /lose the free use of premises we need to plan ahead.

I propose an internal review by the end of March and an external event involving community groups, advertisers, voluntary bodies, sports contacts and the general public in May.

We may hear things we don't want to hear and get suggestions that are not feasible but we might attract new blood or just make the audience more aware

of the station. Midlothian is the fastest growing population in Scotland and we need to be open to sharing this facility to a wider number of residents of the area. Our technical side and sports side are where we need to get to with work with young people, advertising and promotion and although this expression pains me being at the heart of Midlothian in terms of issues in the community. Reviews, internal and external seem to be a necessary part of succession planning as raised by Steve at the virtual AGM.