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Thank you to everyone who came to the studio to provide, music, news, information, and advice and interacted with the community live on air.

Gloucester FM Report 2005

On Thursday 18th November 2004 Gloucester FM's (GFM) full time Access license application was submitted to OFCOM. It was a sense of relief to finally be able to submit an application that if successful, would enable GFM to broadcast 365/ 24/7. It was becoming increasingly difficult to explain to members of the community that GFM could only broadcast for a maximum of 28 days on a restricted service licence. The type of full time license GFM was applying for is very different to the license BBC Radio Gloucestershire and Severn Sound have. The BBC is subsidised by license fees most people pay to the government each year, Severn Sound is a privately owned company that generates revenue via advertising, and both stations we believe have different aims and objectives to GFM.

“Community radio stations are a new tier of ‘not for profit broadcasters’, owned and run by local people, mostly volunteers which enable communities throughout the UK to use the medium of radio to create new opportunities for regeneration, employment, learning, social cohesion and inclusion as well as cultural and creative expression”.

Access licences, as they are officially known, are awarded to community radio stations that are voluntary run and not for profit organisations or charities. Gloucester FM is a registered voluntary non- profit organisation limited by guarantee. Access licence's are generally awarded to organisations or groups that will provide access to the radio airwaves to communities that might be excluded from main stream radio programmes broadcast on their local radio station, or it can be proved that there is a need to provide minority communities with access to the radio airwaves to make and broadcast programmes by members of the local community that meet the needs of the community.

Furthermore, everyone who is actively involved as a presenter or volunteer is giving his / her time free, presenters and volunteers are not paid, thus ensuring community radio stations remain true to the ethos of local people running their own radio stations, *with the people for the people*, that has been GFM's aim. GFM has had the privilege of being able to offer local people from the community the opportunity to get involved and make and broadcast programmes that are aimed primarily at the BME communities, but not exclusively.

We are proud of the fact that whilst GFM might appear exclusive, it is very much inclusive, the people involved with GFM we believe are a good example of Gloucester's multi cultural community working together. There were 57 volunteers / presenters from our multi cultural communities from the age of 16 upwards involved in delivering *music, news, information and advice* to our community. However, one of the stipulations that anyone volunteering to join GFM must adhere to is to only play music of black origin. Not being able to listen to the many genres of music of black origin as and when one would like to on the radio airwaves in Gloucester was one of the primary reason GFM was started.

Whilst it might appear that this might put people off, it has in fact helped to endear more members of the community to GFM. Black music is now very popular and is accepted by more people than it has been in the past. Nonetheless, we are delighted at the way GFM

is accepted by most people, as being Gloucester's community radio station, because this was our aim.

We believe the *music, news, information and advice* GFM has been broadcasting since October 2000, has empowered the community regardless of race, colour or creed. In fact GFM has probably broadcast news, information and advice that we are proud to say other radio stations in Gloucester have not, which has helped to confirm that there is need for a community radio station like GFM.

Gloucester FM Report 2005

This year's summer broadcast was deemed, by most of the people who gave constructive feedback, to be GFM's best broadcast so far. In many areas volunteers and presenters excelled themselves to provide *music, news information and advice* to the community that we believe to be second to none. The pre broadcast publicity given to GFM by Ian Mean and staff of The Citizen Newspaper helped to raise awareness that GFM would be back on air in August instead of the usual July / August. The Citizen also supported GFM by providing us with its local headlines news everyday throughout the broadcast, thank you for the support.

The broadcast date was changed to coincide with the Gloucester City festival dates in August 2005. I must also thank Liz Artner and Katie Wooldridge at The Chelsea Building Society for producing the printed publicity material and ensuring it was ready on time for us to distribute in and around Gloucester.



Gloucester FM's Publicity: Poster, Programme Schedule, and Website Homepage

Gloucester FM's new website was launched on Monday 11 April 2005 and also helped to inform the community when GFM would be back on air and has proven to be extremely popular. In August 2005 there were 2.2 million hits on the website. 1.2 million people took the opportunity to use the web cam to see GFM's presenter's live in action.

The board worked with Net9design to create a website that reflected the changes within GFM. Net9design also delivered training to GFM's website co-ordinator Dan Robertson. Part of the new site is GFM's message board, this was something that the board wanted to put in place for some time to enable those who genuinely have an interest in GFM to interact with other members of the community about matters relating directly to GFM when we are on and off air.

Sadly, the board was naïve in thinking the message board would be used solely for this purpose and has learnt how easy it is for someone to hide behind emails and make comments and threats not only to the board, but also about volunteers and presenter which caused stress and anxiety to the people they were directed at. The comments did not encourage debate; they merely enraged members of the community who felt it would be contentious to respond to the comments posted on GFM's and other message boards in the county. In fact we received so many complaints from those who had read them, the board took the advice offered and decided to shut down the message board for the time being. Nonetheless, I must express our gratitude to Chris Maltby who took it upon himself to respond to the comments posted on the message board.

Shutting down the message board seemed to enrage the person more, who seems to have the impression that the message board was solely for this person to pour scorn on the board and use other message board's in the county to try and discredit the hard work of GFM's volunteers, one cannot not help but form one's own opinion on why GFM has been targeted. However, I must make it clear to everyone that the board will not succumb to blackmail and threats, the message board will be back when it is appropriate to do so.

Furthermore, a complaint was lodged at OFCOM; against the community link team for the way the crew reported and debated the proposed changes to the bail hostel at Rycroft Street. We were delighted when the complaint was not upheld. Another new addition to the website is the listen again facility, OFCOM was directed to this page, doing this enabled us to put the record straight quickly. Please log onto www.gloucesterfm.com and go to the listen again page and you can listen to the entire community link programmes in August 2005. A full listing of the topics covered by the community link crew can also be found on the community link page on the website.

As always the community link show is made of volunteers, this year was a new beginning for many of them. The community link crew reported on numerous issues and raised community awareness about issues relating to him /her that he /she might not have known about. We are proud to say the community link is viewed by many as the anchor show on GFM that most of the people who might not listen to other programmes find time to listen to. GFM prides itself on the fact that local people gather and provide information and advice that is welcomed by nearly all of GFM listeners.

I must say a special thank you to Carol, Emma, Sali, D'ana-Kay, Jazmine, Lauren, Marvin, Natteesha, Jay and Maria for their dedication and handwork in serving our multi cultural community.



There were 57 volunteers and presenters involved in delivering the service to our community in 2005 and since GFM's first broadcast in October 2000, there has been 52 Volunteers and presenters that have received accredited radio production training, There were also 2918 text messages, 307 emails and 651 phone calls received in the 2005 broadcast. We are extremely proud of the number of volunteers, presenters and people from the community that have taken up the training. We were also delighted when Young Lion found time to visit the studio and talk about being a presenter on BBC 1Xtra. Young Lion is an example of what can be achieved, we are proud to inform people that he was presenting with GFM before he joined BBC 1Xtra.

With each broadcast since 2000 it has become clear that GFM is not viewed as just a radio station, it helps bring community cohesion. It is wonderful to witness the number of people who come up to GFM presenters at the launch of the Gloucester City festival in Gloucester Park, we long for the day the sun finally shines on everyone, there is a real feel good factor in our city when GFM is on air.

To many, GFM is also viewed as the local voice for those living primarily in the Barton, Tredworth, White City, Matson, and Podsmead areas and from some people living in areas that has surprised us. It has been jokingly said that GFM is the poor peoples radio, one can assume this was said because of the large amount of our listeners who live in social housing and tune in for *music, news, information and advice*, delivered in GFM's unique style.

Trying to provide our listeners with the information is not always possible but we endeavour to do it. Social housing was something that is of importance to some of our listeners who live in social housing, unfortunately due to circumstances beyond our control the planned debate that could have answered lots of questions, did not take place.

It was particularly disappointing for the community link crew who had gone out into the community to carry out interviews, seek their comments and to find out what he /she knew about their new proposed landlord.

Nevertheless, we were delighted when Gloucestershire Housing Association sponsored the popular African Beats programme and took the opportunity to inform the community about shared ownership, this is not the first time that GFM have been supported by GHA and we are hopeful it won't be the last, thank you Jonathan and everyone at GHA for the support.

This year GFM worked in partnership with Jobcentre Plus for the first time and an advert was made in Ghuiatri that was aimed at members of our Asian community. For a national statutory organisation to contemplate making an advert like this, should in my opinion be commended, they have shown that it is endeavouring to reach as many people as possible and recognises the various communities living Gloucester. It was hoped that training could be offered to anyone visiting their offices who expressed a desire to take up training, we are hoping to develop this and our partnership with Jobcentre Plus, our thanks to Mike Nichols and the team for the support.

Our training partners CEED delivered the five-day open college network accredited radio production training. There were 15 places available for anyone who wished to complete a radio production-training course; GFM volunteers and presenters took 8 places. Unfortunately, some of those who came forward to do the training had work commitments and were not able to take it up as originally planned. There were also places specially requested and reserved but due to unforeseen circumstance were not taken up.

There are only 15 places available to volunteers, presenter and members of the community to ensure GFM can provide the support required with a good trainee / tutor ratio. It was very pleasing when one of those training wanted to complete a radio production-training course and GFM provided the opportunity to do so. This year ACET and Community Counts sponsored training. Thank you for all your support.



Some photos from Gloucester FM accredited radio production training course 2005

Prior to, during and after the 2004 broadcast members of the board received vociferous complaints for some of the young people in the community that GFM was not catering for them and had lost its edge. This was not the case, some of our previous young presenters had informed us that they were moving on to allow others the same opportunity that they had. The music scene was also changing and finding young people who were in keeping with the change was not possible.

We are pleased to say that not only did GFM reconnect with its young listeners in 2005, but encouraged young people to write and record their own music that was played and previewed on GFM. This year saw the emergence of Grime, GFM presenter's and guests who brought the new music to the airwaves of Gloucester and what a response we had.



DJ Ninja – Grime Time



DJ Fred Locks @ Gloucester Festival 05

The Gloucester music day in the park featured young presenters from the past and present playing the best in Grime and other genres of black music with local MC's showing what they can do. Gloucester has a wealth of young people making music and it is our intention to continue to raise the profile of homegrown talent in future broadcast. It is inevitable that members of the board are asked when will the Caribbean day return to the festival, we are also asked why GFM support's the festival when it is not providing enough to meet the need of the Jamaican community in Gloucester.

GFM supports the festival because it is for the people of Gloucester, so it does not matter where you are originally from, if you now live in Gloucester, in my opinion you should endeavour to support it, nevertheless I can emphasise with people's observation. Sadly, whilst it has been recognised that Gloucester is twinned with St Anne, Jamaica, the significance of the whole community celebrating Jamaican independence appears to be only known by a few within the local authority.

Nonetheless, the board will continue to express the community's opinion that the Caribbean day that coincided with Jamaican independence that used to be an integral part of the Gloucester festival should be reinstated.

Whenever there are volunteers involved it is inevitable that sometimes the service one would like to deliver is not always possible. From the boards point of view it was interesting to see who came forward at short notice to cover for those who through work or other commitments could not present his / her programme. This also created openings for some presenters, who did really well, thank you guys.

We are very proud of the volunteers and presenters, particularly those who covered day time shows at very short notice, the board and presenters have always known that this area is GFM's Achilles Heel. However, everyone approached stepped up to the plate, well done to all the daytime presenters. Securing the full time license will bring some things to the forefront that the board has been aware of for some time. The availability of daytime presenters for a 28-day Restricted Service License broadcast has been testing at times, operating 24-7 / 365 would require further commitment the current presenters may not be able to offer.

In 2005 Musical Memories was introduced to listeners of GFM. This programme proved to be a success with listeners. Each week a presenter played tracks that helped to influence his / her musical preference and marked an important time in his / her life. Listeners were asked to phone, text and email what memories hearing a particular track brought back for him / her. It is hoped that this programme will develop and members of the community will be offered the opportunity to share his / her musical memories. Well done to Action Jaxson, Carlos Docksey, Beefie and Carol Francis for doing an excellent job.

Towards the end of the 2005 broadcast, the opportunity the board had been hoping for finally came our way. Carlos Docksey approached the board about working in partnership with 'The Flow' for an end of broadcast party at Liquid. It was encouraging to know that GFM presenters would be able to entertain our listeners in one of Gloucester major nightclubs and serve up a hot plate of Soul, RNB, Reggae Dancehall and Old Skool music.



Gloucester FM's End of Summer Broadcast Party 2005 @ Liquid Night Club

Our off air countdown coincided with those already in Liquid counting with us in the studio, GFM's logo and sponsors names were also projected in the club, Carlos worked hard to ensure everything went smoothly, overall we believe the night went extremely well.

However, for me what was most memorable was the advert that promoted the event. On behalf of everyone involved with GFM I must convey our thanks to Carlos Docksey for making things happen, thank you also for the financial donation to GFM. I hope GFM and 'The Flow' can continue to work in partnership at Liquid. I also hope GFM can build on the partnership with Café Rene, who provided GFM with the opportunity to provide a pre club party on our last night of broadcast that was enjoyed by many who attended the event. Thank you for supporting the music and giving presenters the opportunity to play the music live and for the financial donations that was gratefully received.

Gloucester FM Report 2005

At the time of writing this report we have not heard whether or not Gloucester FM has been granted a full time community radio license. Without a shadow of doubt securing the full time license is the way forward, however, running the station full time will be a significant step up from 28-day broadcasts and will mean that some things will be different. We will need a bigger pool of voluntary presenters, in particular for day time programmes, so if you are unemployed and specialise in playing music of black origin and you think you have what it takes, get in touch.

However, working with Community Media Solution has helped GFM to plan and prepare for the possibility of full time broadcasting. A full time manager, marketing manager, administrator, technical assistant and community development worker will be required to run the station full time.

The board has assessed its equipment needs for broadcasting full time, and the most immediate requirement is another studio, thus freeing up the existing studio to make it the permanent training studio, the IT equipment will also need to be substantially updated for full time broadcast.

The stakeholder meeting held in October 2004 attracted various organisations, it is hoped the organisation and businesses that attended will support GFM financially as well as in kind when a full time license is awarded to GFM. The board has already embarked on fund raising and is extremely happy that two year lottery funding has been secured, subject to GFM being granted a full time license.

Securing the funding to deliver the full time broadcast is now the challenge, we're confident that we will secure a full time license to broadcast *Music, News, Information, and Advice* to our multi cultural community. It is our belief that business and organisations have not yet recognised the importance of community radio and it's ability to reach the Black Minority Ethnic and disadvantaged communities, someone said to me that Gloucester is a town but thinks it's a city, hence there is a reluctance for businesses and organisations to support new ideas and aspiration for making our city better, that they are not aware off.

GFM has come along way since 1999 when Simme and I enlisted the help of Carol, Tony, Glen and then John to start up a steering group to deliver a community radio station in Gloucester. It has not been easy at times to continue, particularly after our

equipment was stolen, but the community has supported us, this has made my time with GFM very special.

We are on the threshold of Gloucester FM's annual general meeting and to have reached this far has been in my opinion an achievement, when we secure the full time license will be an even bigger achievement, so always remember.

Gloucester FM, serving the community, with the people, for the people, music, news, information, and advice.

On behalf of the board I sincerely thank all of GFM's presenters and volunteers from the past to the present for giving up their time and making the commitment to serve our community, and all the listeners for the continued support and suggestion.



D. C. Francis
Chairperson