

Report of the East North East Area Manager

East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 22nd October 2009

Subject: Radio Fever Proposal

<p>Electoral Wards Affected:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>	<p>Specific Implications For:</p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Community Cohesion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Council Function <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function available for call in <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/></p>

Executive Summary

This report provides Members with information on the development of Radio Fever (formerly Radio Asian Fever) to date and presents a new initiative – Community Voices.

Purpose of This Report

1. This report introduces a new Community Voices project currently being developed by Radio Fever.
2. It further requests Area Committee's financial support for this initiative.

Background Information

3. Radio Fever has been broadcasting under a full-time Community Radio Licence awarded by OfCom since March 2007. They deliver 14 hours of live broadcasting and 10 hours of recorded programming every day.

4. Fever FM is very successful in attracting large audiences from all ethnic groups in Leeds. The programmes are delivered in English, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali, Kashmiri and Mirpuri. Talk shows, (discussion /debates on topical issues) and phone-ins attract a massive response, with over 8,000 individual telephone calls currently being logged each week. This clearly demonstrates the ability to understand and meet communities' needs and therefore engage with them.
5. Most recently (30.9.09), Fever FM was involved in the organisation and promotion of the successful Plan It Harehills Event organised by the Harehills Tasking Team to consult and engage the local community as part of the planned engagement strategy on behalf of the Inner East Area Committee.
3. For the last two and half years Fever FM has been broadcasting full time 24 / 7, involving as many organisations and groups as possible. However this has been hampered by shortage of resources. As the radio station becomes established the demands from the organisations and members of the community wishing to use the radio are also increasing. In general, Radio Asian Fever team has a vast and varied experience of community work stretching over nearly 20 years.

Main Issues

4. The organisation has received funding of £105,000 for 3 years from the Tudor Trust. This guarantees core staff salaries for that period of time.
5. However, the organisation aim to develop their activity further still and to complement the existing staff team, a new post of Community Outreach Worker has been planned. A shortfall in Tudor Trust funding means that an alternative source of funding has to be found.
6. Community Outreach Worker's funding for £21k is required for one year only to allow sufficient time to identify, apply and secure match funding from alternative sources for the second and third years. This work has already started and a number of funding bodies are being applied to. The Outreach Worker will research / network and develop radio programming in partnership with a wide range of community organisations and initiatives, especially third sector. The aim is to improve access for the community to information, decision-making, networks and service providers. This post will support the station in engaging in joint working processes with various local strategic partnerships. The Community Outreach Worker will help promote the station and its work by liaising with relevant local organisations to organise access to radio programmes / interviews to ensure uptake, participation and interaction. They will also work with organizations to highlight their own events and drives. The worker will liaise closely with groups and organizations working in the Harehills and Chapeltown areas. The aim is to bring local people together with the third sector service providers to make changes, as well as helping people to take up services and develop skills and interaction to build strong and cohesive communities. The Community Outreach Worker will research the community's needs, problems and barriers to accessing services; liaise with the service providers to develop programmes. Thus, helping to raise public awareness of community issues through Fever FM. They will also, where appropriate / necessary, train volunteer programme presenters from the participating organizations. The programmes will all be done in the main community languages Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri, Hindi and English.

7. Radio Fever through the Community Outreach Worker will improve its liaison and partnership work with a wide range of local organisations and groups to further its and their community aims. It will become possible fully to get involved in supporting partners in delivering the aims of the Leeds Strategic Plan. Such as:
 - Intensify work with the Area Committees and Area Management Teams through tasking and community engagement work.
 - Promote Healthy Living by working with Healthy Living Centres and organisations to design develop, produce and deliver programmes on health issues prevalent in the South Asian Communities including diabetes, heart diseases, mental health issues and many more.
 - Increase employability of community members (with Jobcentre Plus) to increase access to and enable uptake of jobs and training opportunities.
 - Family and social relations / interaction will be highlighted by working with educational institutes, black mental health, drugs and substance misuse organisations, domestic violence and community safety teams of WYPA.
 - Local Citizens Advice Bureau's provide on air and in-house surgeries on welfare and benefits, housing, debt, asylum / refugee and immigration advice etc.
 - Develop community relations by working with the wider communities on cross-cutting themes to remove barriers and build harmonious communities. This will be through celebrating (in an informative manner) the various community identities and cultures.
8. Radio Fever has approached the Inner North East Area Committee and the Inner East Area Committee for a share of the shortfall in funding; £10,500 each. A recommendation has been made to the Inner North East Area Committee to agree to support the proposal to the value of £8k.
9. In reaching it's decision, the Committee needs to take into account a recent OfCom ruling in respect of Radio Fever. A complaint was made to OfCom in May 2009 regarding the broadcasting of a programme in the run-up to the European Elections on 4th June 2009, during which the station urged voters to vote Labour. A copy of the OfCom ruling is attached in Appendix A. The station was found guilty of breaching rules relating to impartiality and giving due weight to the coverage of major parties during an election period. Whilst no fine or other sanction was imposed, the breaches will remain on the station's licence, and would be taken into account in the event of any further breaches of the rules. The station apologised, admitted making a grave error of judgement and gave assurances that similar instances would not occur again. This situation does not prevent the Committee giving the station further financial assistance if it accepts the assurances given, but it is something which the Committee needs to be aware of and take into account in reaching its decision.
10. The proposal is in line with the strategic themes of the Area Delivery Plan. It impacts on:
 - Culture Theme through provision of additional cultural opportunities in the area;
 - Enterprise and Economy Theme through support for projects which will help to improve the economic prosperity in the area;
 - Learning Theme through creation of additional training opportunities in media and creative industries;
 - Stronger Communities Theme through involvement in engagement and cohesion activities.

11. Appendix B shows the current position on the Wellbeing revenue budget. Taking into account the nature, aims and objectives of the proposal and its fit with the ADP, as indicated in paragraph 10 above, funding available to support this proposal could be identified within the Enterprise and Economy (£3k) and Stronger Communities themes (£6k).

Implications for Council Policy and Governance

12. There are no additional implications for Council policy or governance.

Legal and Resource Implications

13. There are no additional legal or resource implications other than the use of Wellbeing allocations.

Recommendations:

14. Members are requested to consider the application.

Document used in preparation of this report is the OfCom ruling in appendix A.