

Community radio licence: key commitments

Licence outline: CR044

Station name	Raidió Fáilte 107.1fm
Community to be served	Raidió Fáilte will broadcast to the Irish language community and to other communities in the area of benefit.
Licence area	Belfast (within five kilometres of the transmitter)
Frequency	107.1 MHz

Character of service

Raidió Fáilte's objective is to provide a broad-based, community radio service, based on music and chat in the Irish language. It will typically encompass language learning, arts and literature, news and sports, lifestyles, hobbies and pastimes.

Programming

- Daytime output will typically comprise approximately 70% music and 30% speech output. Outside morning and evening peak listening hours, and during evenings, overnight and at weekends, a greater percentage of music-based output may be broadcast.
- The music content will consist of Irish traditional, folk and a broad range of music genres including classical, popular etc and will include output originating from local groups and musicians. In addition, station output may include a range of specialist music programming, reflecting the broader interests of members of its community.
- Speech output will include regular news bulletins (including local, community and Irish language stories), as well as current affairs, arts information, discussion and magazine programmes covering a range of community and Irish language topics. Some output will be directed at specific groups, for example young children, teenagers, learners of the language and sports followers. Output will also include occasional outside broadcasts or material recorded at community events. Evening programming may include specialist music and arts magazine programming. Overnight output may include re-broadcasts of pre-recorded programming and automated material.
- Output will be predominantly in the Irish language, with the occasional use of other languages.
- The service will consist of predominantly live, locally produced output during weekday daytimes. Between 08:00 and 18:00 at least 50% of output will normally be broadcast live. Overnight broadcasts will typically consist of automated and pre-recorded output.

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"

- Raidió Fáilte will provide Irish language output throughout the day.
- The station will also provide output to meet the needs of younger adults and children, many of whom have learned or are learning Irish through schools in the Belfast area. Aside from those who actually speak and understand the Irish language, Raidió Fáilte will also cater for those who are interested in Gaelic culture generally, especially music and song.

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

- Raidió Fáilte intends to be recognised as an important platform for facilitating discussion. The station will encourage a wide range of discussions on-air across the range of the station's speech and music based output.
- Some programmes will be specifically geared to debate and discussion. For example, each day there will typically be a programme of news, views and discussion, with as wide a range as possible of topics, including current affairs, community development issues, the Irish language, arts, literature and sport. This programme will comprise the main magazine element of the station's programming, ideally suited to phone-ins, soap-box slots, live studio discussions, pre-recorded pieces – anything that can inspire, encourage and facilitate debate in Irish.
- Raidió Fáilte will not take a partisan approach in any debate or discussion. Our standpoint will be to support the Irish language community and defend its right to be sustained, encouraged and developed with the help of government. Raidió Fáilte will be neutral and exercise the role of facilitator to debate and discussion within the community. The station will seek to stimulate and encourage debate within particular sectors of the community – on women's issues, for example, or men's health issues, on racism, on youth, education, sport... every subject, topic, theme and idea may be covered at some point, provided it does not promote sectarianism or racism in any way.

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

- Raidió Fáilte will provide regular programming aimed at those who wish to learn Irish. Independently, and in conjunction with others we will develop a language course suitable for community radio, geared towards learners who might not necessarily be able to attend classes.
- The station's arts and literature output will be geared towards teaching our audience about Irish language writers and their work, as well as dealing with topics that would be of general interest to those seeking to learn about the arts.
- The use of language is a key element towards learning language and the fact that Raidió Fáilte will provide a normalised context in which the language can be used will contribute hugely to the facilities available for learners.
- As well as education, Raidió Fáilte will provide training in radio broadcasting and administration for those not employed by the organisation. Training opportunities will be advertised regularly (on Raidió Fáilte and in the media) for people with an interest to come forward and learn the rudiments, in the hope that they will be inspired to take part in the project. We will also work in conjunction with other relevant institutions to provide top-quality broadcast training for teenage students.

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

- The principals of Raidió Fáilte have a longstanding background in developing the Irish language community in Belfast. Some of those employed by the station will also have a background in Irish language community development. Indeed, some may well still be involved in other aspects of developing the Irish language community whilst working for Raidió Fáilte. These people form the main link the station will have with our target community and will be the means through which those links will be strengthened.
- The associate membership plan is specifically designed to help the station build a better understanding of the target community. Associate members will elect officers and members to the Advisory Committee, take part in focus groups and sub-committees and bring to the station a better understanding of themselves as a community. It will be the business of the Committee's Chair to ensure that links with the community are being strengthened continuously and that a better understanding of the community is promoted.
- Raidió Fáilte is a registered member of the umbrella organisation Pobal, which provides a forum for over thirty Irish language organisations in Belfast and, being situated in the Irish language centre Cultúrlann McAdam Ó Fiaich, is well placed to consolidate its position at the very heart of the community.

Additional social gain objectives:

- Raidió Fáilte will play a pivotal role in promoting the Irish language on a cross-community basis. Many people from the Protestant tradition in Belfast are interested in the Irish language and culture, especially traditional music. Some are learning the language. Often, however, people from Protestant backgrounds are uncomfortable travelling to the Catholic areas where the language is mostly to be found. Irish classes, even traditional Irish music sessions, are mostly situated in what would be described as Catholic areas. Raidió Fáilte will bring the Irish language, including Irish classes and traditional music, into people's homes and vehicles and personal stereos all over the city, irrespective of their background or where they live or where they feel comfortable visiting. Raidió Fáilte will contribute to the 'normalisation' of the Irish language and to the 'inclusivity' of the Irish language community.

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."

- Raidió Fáilte will have membership open to the community, an elected Advisory Committee, with various sub-committees focused on a range of topics, issues and sectors thereby facilitating ground up discussion and debate around the radio itself and other issues.
- The Director of Raidió Fáilte will be tasked by the Advisory Committee to ensure that everyone in the community realises that the station is their station to be used by them and for them at all times. Practically, this will mean engaging with the various branches of the Irish language community through language and community organisations, through the Irish language media, including Raidió Fáilte itself, through schools and educational establishments, through the traditional music circuit and by any other means to ensure that people are aware of our open door policy.
- In addition, the Advisory Committee can decide to co-opt members in order to increase its effectiveness as a link with the community and as a platform for development. The Advisory Committee will liaise on a regular and frequent basis with the Raidió Fáilte Station Manager in order to contribute to and participate in the management of the service.
- If individuals express an interest in being involved in the operation of the station, management and staff will seek to provide relevant training opportunities. Raidió Fáilte intends to have space for at least ten volunteer broadcasters at any time.

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."

- Raidió Fáilte will launch an associate membership scheme (anyone in the community can join for a nominal annual fee). This will be advertised in the local and Irish language media. Members will be known as Cairde Raidió Fáilte (Friends of Raidió Fáilte). There will be an Annual General Meeting from which members and officers to an Advisory Committee will be elected, as well as sub-committees, or community focus groups, to advise on various aspects and subjects of the station's output. The committee and sub-committees will liaise regularly with the Station Manager to pass on views of the general membership as well as to advise on any and all topics.
- Members of the community (whether registered Friends or not) will be encouraged to take part in Raidió Fáilte as broadcasters or in other capacities on a voluntary basis. The voluntary aspect of the station's activities will play an important role and the radio phone-in will also act as a direct line of communication from members of the community. The station will regularly broadcast invitations to the community to encourage them to engage directly with the station, whether on air or in private, in order to ensure that the project is run from the outset as a community partnership initiative.
- The Raidió Fáilte Station Manager is responsible for ensuring adequate feedback from the target community in order to attain maximum accountability. The station will conduct formal and informal surveys amongst the target community in the area of benefit, to establish levels of awareness of and satisfaction with the service.
- Suggestions and any complaints from members of the community will be passed to the Station Manager who, in consultation with other relevant members of the station team, will investigate and take action in line with agreed policies and procedures.

**All material in italics is direct quotations from the Community Radio Order 2004*

September 2006