

Community radio licence: key commitments

Licence outline

Station name	Phoenix FM
Community to be served	Those living and working in Brentwood and surrounding areas
Licence area	Brentwood, Essex (up to a 5km radius from the transmission site)
Frequency	

Character of service

PHOENIX FM is seeking to provide a new community radio service to the town of Brentwood and surrounding areas.

The area, situated just outside Greater London in the south west corner of Essex, has been underserved in the past by existing ILR stations and is outside the remit of the London stations which stop at the M25. Brentwood has been seeking its own identity – and Phoenix FM aims to stamp this on the local airwaves. The area is rich in culture and history, having its own cathedral, medieval monuments and ancient parkland, and also boasts an extensive and thriving arts and entertainment scene, with hundreds of orchestral, drama, music and arts societies which Phoenix FM has been promoting in its broadcasts over several years.

Groups have been seeking to establish a radio station in the area since the early 1990s. Phoenix FM first broadcast under a restricted service licence in December 1996, and since 1998 has been the only radio group in the area seeking to establish a full-time radio station to serve the community.

Programming

- Daytime output will typically comprise 65% music and 35% speech ('speech' excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails and sponsor credits). Between 19:00 and 07:00 (evenings and overnights) the proportion of speech may be lower.
- Music output will comprise mainly of adult contemporary music, recent hits as well as those from the 70's, 80's and 90's, tracks from local unsigned artists, and a number of specialist genres including classical, folk and soul.
- Speech output will include local news programmes, features, interviews and sports coverage. It may also include other types of spoken word output including drama productions.
- Output will be broadcast primarily in English, although the occasional use of other languages is permitted.

- The service will operate 24 hours a day, typically broadcasting live from 07.00 to 24.00. Automated output will usually be broadcast from 12.00 midnight and to 07.00 daily.

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"

- Phoenix FM notes that *"there is little programming aimed at members of charities, community groups, local bands and artists, sports teams (of all varieties) and schools in the Brentwood area"*. Phoenix FM aims to include these groups, giving them the opportunity to talk about their future and current activities on a regular basis.
- Phoenix FM have analysed local demographics and point out that a number of target groups are currently overlooked by local commercial radio. The Christian and Hindu communities are particularly under-represented. The station aims to address this issue by including both religious and secular news from the area's ethnic minorities".

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

Phoenix FM will:

- Operate an open-door policy so that all members of the community may participate in broadcasts;
- Invite local organisations to participate in programmes;
- Encourage debate and discussion on a range of subjects through its speech based programming. Topics of discussion will include local politics environmental issues, charity work and local sport.

"(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"

- During its first 12 months of operation Phoenix FM aims:
 - To provide work experience, on-air placements and other forms of training for up to 30 people. These individuals will be selected in liaison with local schools, colleges and other organisations.

- The group hopes to establish links with approximately 50 community organisations and form working relationships to promote and publicise training opportunities.
- The station's training programme will focus on a number of core areas, including:
 - broadcast and interviewing skills;
 - technical operation of studio and ICT equipment;
 - broadcasting and libel laws;
 - wave editing and equalising on computer;
 - operation of portable recording equipment.
- The station will also run a weekly 'drop-in' session enabling volunteers to receive training and advice on a variety of subjects.

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

To satisfy this requirement, Phoenix FM will:

- Work closely with Brentwood Borough Council and local community groups as these bodies represent a large proportion of the target community.
- Conduct a number of interviews with community groups, involving them in the station's projects.

Additional social gain objectives:

- The station will provide indoor and outdoor PA services to local schools and charity events.
- The group's training programme will encourage confidence and team building.

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.”

- Members of the community will have the opportunity to participate in the operation of the station through the speech based programming that is offered.
- The station's training programme will enable people to participate in the production of radio programming.
- The station will operate a membership scheme. Members will be able to make comments and to pass suggestions to the station's management.
- Public meetings will be held so that the community can discuss the station's progress and direction with the station's managers. A listener panel will be established, intended to compliment this process.

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."

To satisfy this requirement, Phoenix FM will set up a transparent and accountable procedure for dealing with suggestions, enquiries and complaints. This procedure will include the following:

- All complaints will be formally logged.
- Complainants will receive personal responses.
- The station's complaints log will highlight persistent problems and the management will resolve them.
- The complaints log will be published on the station's website.

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