

BBC East Midlands Regional Audience Council
Venue: BBC Radio Derby

Wednesday 3 September 2008, 6.00pm

Present:

Phillippa Denton – RAC Chair	PMD
Tracey Davenport – Deputy Chair (Chair for the meeting)	TD
Nigel Hallam - Radio Derby Link Member	NH
Jonathan English – Radio Nottingham Link Member	JE
Del Shorley – Radio Leicester Link Member	DS
Glennis Taylor	GT
Lillian Nevins	LN
Paul Dickerson	PD
Katharine Stewart	KS
Pip Ostell	PO
Aziz Rashid – HRLP	AR
Carol Webster – Public Accountability Manager	CW
Rachel Gunn – Public Accountability Assistant	RG

Apologies:

Sarah McCann

1. Welcome and introductions

TD welcomed members to the meeting and introduced Simon and Gary to the meeting and thanked them for hosting the meeting.

He informed members that Andy Zadora had resigned from the council and Samson Ayi Ake had relocated to Manchester.

2. Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

Matters arising:

a. *The Poles are Coming*: At the last meeting CW was asked to find out if any of the people questioned outside the job centre would have taken the jobs offered – those shown had all declined. She was also asked to find out how large an audience there had been for the *White Season*. A response from the series producer and figures for the show was circulated to members.

b. PMD was still waiting for a formal response to the weather question. She agreed to take this to October ACE and asked CW to discuss with Louise Hall.

Action: PMD; CW

c. PMD had asked radio link members to feedback at the next meeting if listeners were conscious of the absence of competitions. The consensus was that neither members nor their networks had noticed the lack of competitions or missed them.

d. Outreach: A final paper was circulated to members on the Cbeebies / CBBC events.

3. Programme & Service Review

Service Review: Young People - BBC Three:

Gavin and Stacey: Everyone had watched the DVDs provided of *Gavin and Stacey* and the 60 Second news bulletins. Some members went on to watch other BBC Three output. Some were surprised that they enjoyed *Gavin and Stacey* and felt that it was a programme that worked across ages. Some said they would not have normally chosen to watch this programme, but had liked it and felt that although BBC Three is aimed at a younger age group, the programme worked across the age groups. There were some concerns at what one member felt was the flippant portrayal of the pregnant young woman. However members who had either watched more of the series or had been on the website thought that the subject was covered well and that a serious message got through by the end. The programme was well written and acted and would appeal to all generations. It was a good depiction of family life which could be shown on BBC One. Members felt the programme met the Creativity and Cultural Excellence, Education and Learning, Reflecting the UK and its' Communities Public Purposes.

The two 60 Second news bulletins had mixed reviews. Some found it dull although the news was alright, another felt it was too busy and found it hard to concentrate on as the message at the bottom of the screen didn't relate to the story being talked about. In general members agreed that the bulletin gave enough information to young people who are used to being on line, listening to music and watching TV simultaneously and would enable them to source additional information on news and current affairs if they wanted it. The presentation of the 9.00pm bulletin was more effective than the 8.00pm and the presenter was very good. The programme delivered to the audience it was aimed at. The bulletin was felt to meet all of the Public Purposes except Creativity and Cultural Excellence.

In general members felt that BBC Three was fostering new talent well and highlighted new programmes such as *Spooks Code 9*, *The Wrong Door* and *The Mighty Boosh* and that the Service Licence was being met.

BBC Switch:

Some members visited the website and one member watched *The Surgery*. The general feeling was that it was pitched just right for the age group and provides a number of ways of encouraging teens to talk about issues that affect them such as knife crime etc. Members found the website interesting as there were a lot of advice links and felt that this was a good portal/outlet for obtaining other information.

Members felt the service licence was being met.

Local Radio –

BBC Radio Derby: The Radio Derby link member gave highlights from his report, notably the *Blast* event that took place in Derby in June. He also mentioned use of the Big Screen by *Breakfast* presenter Shane O'Connor which had been effective and attracted attention.

Simon Cornes the managing editor of Radio Derby gave an update on recent events. The hand over of the Olympic torch had taken place in Derby Market Place and was covered by the station. The Derby Big Screen has attracted larger audiences than some of the screens in other cities. He reported on the good partnership with the local newspaper (Derby Evening Telegraph) and talked about the joint Community Championships. He described the radio station as being at the cutting

edge of local radio, being particularly lively, upbeat and celebratory. Radio Derby is **not** a local version of Radio 4. He talked about the morning show presenter (Shane O'Connor) who he said has brought to bear all the things that a local radio station should be doing well with a personality, humour and the enjoyment of being there. This is translated to the audience who also enjoy being part of this. He talked about an all day station sound and identity that listeners will recognise and know where they are.

The assistant managing editor Gary Andrews told the meeting that Aleena Naylor and Ed George had introduced Gabriella Cilmi at a local concert and that he hoped this would help to change listeners' perceptions of the radio station.

Not all members had been able to listen to Radio Derby prior to the meeting as it is not yet on DAB, but some had listened on the internet. The afternoon show was mentioned as being particularly enjoyable.

BBC Radio Nottingham: The link member said that he had struggled to listen over the summer, but would be making a concerted effort from now on. The only addition to his report was on the Big Night Out which had been a great success.

BBC Radio Leicester: The link member highlighted the following from his report: the Big Debate organised by Radio Leicester on the proposed eco town. The Managing Editor would like people to listen to the pre match football coverage and give some feedback.

Action: All

The opening of the High Cross shopping centre was to be covered live.

4. Chair's Report

The draft Audience Council England minutes for July video conference meeting had been sent to members.

PMD drew members' attention to the Impartiality Review (Page 6), and asked members to note any evidence of parachuting in network reporters with the date, time, programme and presenter and forward this to CW in order to build up a profile for the next ACE meeting.

Action: All

The link member for Radio Derby asked about progress on the DAB situation for the station. PMD said that there was nothing new to report. Members expressed concern that the station was adversely affected by the lack of DAB presence as Derby is the only city in England without this. Members wished to know if the BBC had a solution as DAB coverage is reliant on the commercial companies who own and operate the multiplexes. PMD agreed to raise this at the next ACE meeting.

Action: PMD

PD asked if there was any mileage in approaching OFCOM as they own the licences. It was pointed out that Smooth is aimed at the same audience and they are on DAB. Members asked if the PSB review included Radio especially as Channel Four were planning to launch radio services. PMD agreed to try and clarify these points.

Action: PMD

The BBC Trust's response to Review of Children's Services had been circulated and would be considered at the October ACE meeting.

Head of Region's Report: AR picked highlights from his report, which had been circulated, including the coverage of Rebecca Addlington's return with her two gold medals. PO hoped the same coverage would happen for the Paralympics.

GT asked if there was a limit on the music from the 50s, 60s and 70s played on local radio, as she would like more of it. AR explained that there is a core of 660 songs plus a weekly playlist of contemporary/ chart music. The music is tested on women between the ages of 45 – 55 years of age every 6 months or so.

5. HALF YEAR REPORT

The draft Chair's Introduction for the half year was circulated to members for comments and information; PMD gave members the opportunity to amend this and ask any questions.

TD asked if there would be any feedback from the Chairman's visit to Leicester.

Action: CW

AR reported that a new Asian magazine programme was due to launch in October on Radio Leicester aimed at the over 55 age group. This was welcomed by the Council as this is an underserved section of the audience whose needs had been highlighted during Sir Michael Lyons' visit to Leicester in May.

DS noted that Radio Leicester's service licence refers to music programming for the African Caribbean community and not to the Asian community and wondered if this could be addressed when the licence is next reviewed.

6. Trust Business

Audience Priorities

Members discussed the replacement of equipment at some of the local radio stations and felt that this was a priority. For example Radio Derby is long overdue for refurbishment with much of its equipment is more than 20 years old and obsolete. It cannot be serviced except by the station's engineers and replacement parts are hard or impossible to obtain. Members wished to know what risk assessment/avoidance plans existed to prevent stations falling off air? They felt that BBC finance should be directed towards refurbishing the local radio stations and producing better programmes rather than executive directors' bonuses. Some members also noted their feeling that selling off TV Centre is a mistake.

7. Outreach

Young People's Event (13 – 16 year olds)

Members discussed where and how this could take place and a number of suggestions were made. It was agreed that members send contacts to CW. AR also agreed to forward contacts from BBC Nottingham.

Action: All

8. Burning Issues/Any Other Business:

CW gave an update on the recruitment for new members.

Salford Seminar: members were reminded that the seminar was taking place and were invited to forward any questions or comments for CW to take to the event. PMD, LN and NH were attending.

Action: All

PD: commended the sports coverage for the Olympics and Wimbledon. He also commented that DR Who fans are not happy about what the new writer is planning to do with the Doctor's traditional arch enemies.

LN: members in her network had contacted her regarding the Eastenders storyline where a character was stabbed. They were shocked at this in the current climate. AR said that a number of complaints had been received about this, saying this was too explicit and graphic for the time of broadcast (plus the omnibus during the day). There followed a discussion on whether programmes like Eastenders should reflect what is happening in young people's lives and if these occurrences should not only be seen on news programmes.

PMD: had enjoyed the previous week's Proms with the Chinese musician and his father and wanted to know if this could be repeated or issued on DVD.

DS: again said that there are too many repeats especially repeated straight after transmission. He also said that he felt the previous Thursday's coverage of the American pre election conventions was excessive.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

9. Date of next meeting: Wednesday 12 November 2008.
At BBC Broadcasting House, Nottingham

10. Programmes for Review: To be confirmed

Signed:

Date:

Phillippa M Denton

Endnote

[We aim to make as much of the minutes available as possible. However, there will be times when sections of the minutes will be withheld from publication. These will be kept to a minimum and clearly marked.]

The reasons for withholding information are consistent with the Freedom of Information Act which applies to some of the BBC's information. See www.bbc.co.uk/foi for further explanation.]