

WEST KENT COMMUNITY RADIO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

Meeting Minutes

Meeting held at Saint John's Yard, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells on Wednesday 21st May 2025 at 19.30

Chair: Will Dunn Minutes: Martin Webber

1. Welcome

Will Dunn chaired the meeting and welcomed the other members in attendance. Will stated that "only a team effort will ensure the survival of the station in the next year."

The 23 members who attended were:

Trevor Adams, Claire Backhurst, Elizabeth Barnes, Stuart Boyle, Mona Channet, Vince Cox, Elizabeth Cruttenden, Zac Daunt-Jones, Will Dunn, Corin Goldsmith, Adam Howe, Brian Johnson, Simon Jupp, Chris Makey, Chris Manser, Julia Neal, Nigel Peacock, Christopher Reed, Alan Rustad, Giselle Streeter, Martin Webber, Marion Weisskirchen, Mary Whitlock.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been sent by 12 members:

David Boyle, Lynn Briggs, David Brown, Rob Carter, Rayan Choudhury, Callum Ewing, Tim Godsolve, Phil Mills, Madeleine Sanderson, Victoria Scott, Jason Sonance, Christopher Woodward.

These 8 members did not acknowledge the invitation to the AGM:

Jerome Beadle, John Butt, Josh Dixon, David Harley, Arthur Hosmer, Peter Moore, Alex Smith, Alex Tuckwell

Attendees were asked to sign into the meeting on a written form when they arrived.

We currently have 45 members in total (including life members), so just over half the membership attended.

3. Minutes of last AGM on 15th May 2024

The minutes of last year were approved by the meeting with no questions. The proposer was Chris Manser and the seconder was Chris Makey.

4. Trustee Report

Will Dunn asked members for questions on the Trustee Report on the past year that had been submitted to members ahead of the meeting. There were no questions.

5. Break for EGM on Proposed Revision to Charitable Objects (minutes separately written)

6. Trustees Election

Three Trustees remain in post as they were elected last year: **Chris Manser, Alan Rustad and Martin Webber.**

Jason Sonance needed to step down after the end of his 3 year term in accordance with the constitution. Jason decided to stand for reelection.

Will Dunn agreed to step down in accordance with the constitution which states that a third of the standing Trustees need to apply for reelection or step down before the AGM. Will Dunn also decided to stand for reelection.

There were 5 vacant posts, and these had received 5 valid nominations. As well as Jason and Will, nominations had been received for **Liz Barnes, Mona Channet and Adam Howe.**

Will asked the Trustee nominees to make their case for reelection.

Mona Channet stated that she had worked in marketing and publishing for 35 years. Mona said she wanted “to bring everyone together” and hoped to generate more membership engagement and increased community awareness and interaction.

Adam Howe stated that he had been an appointed Trustee about a year ago before stepping down. He had also presented programmes on the station until six months ago. Adam said he wanted to help promote the station at fetes and concerts and hoped he could contribute again.

Liz Barnes stated that she had recently ended a role as a committee member for the Wealden Cycling Club and had worked there to update systems and make it a more attractive club for members. At West Kent Radio she had already produced key health content on air to meet our OFCOM key requirements and Charity objectives. Liz wanted the station to be informative and entertaining for listeners.

Will Dunn stated that he had been a Trustee of West Kent Radio in the past year and had been a Trustee of Hospital radio Tunbridge Wells for many years before that. Will wanted to see clearer lines of accountability for making things happen effectively at the station. He wanted to focus on more efficient running of the station to ensure its survival.

Jason Sonance could not be at the meeting due to last minute unforeseen circumstances. Jason did not have a message for the meeting.

In addition **Rayan Choudhury** had withdrawn his nomination as a Trustee that day and Will read out an email statement from Rayan wishing the new Trustees well for their new role. Rayan argued that there were many skills in the West Kent Radio “family” and he wanted to work on how members could come together more and collectively grow and champion community efforts to advance our station.

Will Dunn asked if the meeting agreed that all 5 nominated trustees were suitable for the role. The members agreed to approve all as a block and so add Liz Barnes, Mona Channet, Will Dunn, Adam Howe and Jason Sonance to the continuing 3 Trustees of Chris Manser, Alan Rustad and Martin Webber.

There was no vote and membership approval was given by an informal show of hands.

After the election of the new Trustees, Adam Howe stated that he thought the Trustees had not been properly elected at the AGM of 2024. Will Dunn emphasised that the constitution is clear that no formal recorded vote is required to be taken to appoint Trustees “if the meeting agrees” to the appointment of the Trustees when vacancies equal nominations. Will stated that in 2024 there were no objections to the appointments, so the Trustees were duly appointed.

But Adam remained unconvinced. And given that Adam had suggested a lack of support among membership for the Trustees operation of the charity in the past year, Will agreed to Adam’s request for an informal show of hands (not a recorded vote) as to whether the membership supported the

Trustees work in the past year. There was no opposition evident from that informal show of hands to the existing Trustees continuing in their roles.

7. Any Other Business - All

Liz Cruttenden asked about lack of communication to members after the closure of the WhatsApp. **Will** explained that the WhatsApp group had been closed down because it was having a detrimental effect on the station. **Martin** mentioned some members had withdrawn from the chat or the station completely because of the unpleasant, negative and lengthy exchanges on the WhatsApp chat.

Simon Jupp said that although he wasn't a member of the WhatsApp group, he was made aware of messages that were unpleasant in nature and tone, and accusatory in some cases. It also became clear that programme cover was being arranged through the group, without informing the programming team, causing confusion with schedules and responsibilities.

Trustees agreed to look at the best way forward for members to communicate. **Stuart Boyle** suggested that people should be directed to be nice to each other in chats. Some members thought the WhatsApp could be revived if it was policed and there were consequences for not keeping to guidelines.

Corin Goldsmith highlighted that he had almost given up on the station due to the lack of response to his messages asking for live training in the studio. He is now on air thanks to the support of Simon Jupp and Martin Webber. **Martin** said he was overloaded already and could not take on systematic live training in the studio for members as well, so we need more members who know the studio to volunteer to do this live studio training.

Mona Channet suggested expanding our social media presence and mentioned TikTok. Simon stated that since our OFCOM remit is to target 45+ age group, then TikTok would not be a priority and we should focus on Facebook and Instagram. Again, no members had volunteered to deal with social media so the current social media posts are ad-hoc with no follow up.

Liz Cruttenden raised the issue of how to promote your WKR programme on your personal social media accounts. She has been adding the @westkentradio link to her Instagram posts successfully and getting around 250 reactions every week.

Martin Webber said he thought it would be helpful to explain more fully the financial crunch behind Will's warning about the station's survival being in doubt. Martin wanted members to realise that the annual fixed costs that we can't avoid run at £20,000 a year (for rent, lines & licencing). Unfortunately our current income from membership fees, sponsorship and advertising is only £ 10,000 pa. Therefore it is vital that we make the station sound better and more attractive to advertisers to pull in more income. Grant funding can fill some of the gap but is a sporadic and requires a lot of work.

Martin pointed to the problems in the past year with the loss of 4 live presented programmes in the crucial listening time of **weekday daytime**. Chris Murphy, Miltos Lazarides and Lynn Briggs (who did two shows per week) have all given up doing live weekday daytime programmes. Martin is now the only person usually doing a live programme on weekdays from 7am to 7pm. This means the station is not connecting as well as it should with the audience at key listening times.

Martin said there had however been many positive steps forward achieved by the Trustees in the past year, which give cause for optimism that audiences will improve. He listed:

- Improvement of 106.7 FM reception in Tunbridge Wells by moving the transmitter to a better site.
- Better reliability of the FM signal in Tonbridge due to us renting a dedicated BT line to feed it.
- Stronger news team with Mary, Maddie, Callum and Liz all joining and Brian, Marion and Julia also still contributing great relevant local content - two different news features are now scheduled daily
- Getting 9 Health Features on air to be repeated in rotation to meet OFCOM/Charity obligations
- Starting local rugby and soccer reporting in the Saturday afternoon Sports show with Chris and Tim
- Getting IRN news back on air thanks to Will Dunn's return to studio project
- Local News stories on our website are a very useful community asset, which attract attention to the station and a recent Nextdoor post about our website attracted 7,000 local page views.

- Plans are advanced for an FM extension to Sevenoaks if OFCOM agree, which could improve the station's attractiveness to advertisers

Nigel Peacock gave an update on SSDAB for West Kent and Maidstone. Trustees have agreed to go forward with this as it would make us easier for listeners to find and so help build audience. We would have to incur SSDAB carriage costs and apply for a new licence to OFCOM. Nigel said the two people originally setting up the local SSDAB had left, but new investment had been secured and the new multiplex was now more likely to happen. The deadline for it to get on air is January 2026.

Martin then began a discussion about a proposal to move forward with our co-operation with BBC Radio Kent. Martin explained that the Community Radio Association (which we are part of) has signed a "memorandum of understanding" with BBC Local to share resources and material. Martin said he and **Simon Jupp** had visited the offices of BBC Radio Kent and found they were keen to collaborate. The BBC wants to show there are benefits beyond its own stations for the payments we make into the licence fee, so is willing to share its content with Community Radio stations such as ourselves.

BBC Radio Kent had offered their 2 minute daily news bulletins for us to use (but they didn't seem to meet our audience need) and BBC Radio Kent also offered access to their relevant package material.

A further possible area for cooperation was for BBC Radio Kent to offer their established and emerging presenter talent to present programmes on West Kent Radio. This would be of mutual benefit - BBC Radio Kent allow their staff to hone their live presenting skills where they don't have a regular BBC slot, while we benefit from BBC trained staff on air and working with (and training) our new members.

The station manager at Radio Kent persuaded two members of BBC staff to come to West Kent Radio studios and they expressed an interest in filling some daytime presenting gaps on our schedule.

However, the collaboration stalled with Trustees concerned that some existing members may be unhappy at non-members being on air. Therefore Martin said he wanted to sound out opinions at the AGM ahead of a further discussion by the Trustees.

In the following discussion, some members did express concern about the precedent and wanted to ensure that no members lost their shows to BBC presenters.

Chris Manser said he wanted BBC staff to be required to join our membership. Martin said he thought this was inappropriate as we should see this as two different organisations collaborating for mutual benefit, not as a way of boosting our membership fees, although some BBC staff may want to volunteer to join the charity too. The BBC staff would clearly have to sign up to our presenter guidelines and our playlist and format.

Martin emphasised that BBC staff would only take on slots on the station where West Kent Radio had found nobody appropriate from the membership to fill them. **Simon** suggested there should be a time limit on the BBC staff filling any slot of maybe 3 months, before it being reconsidered.

Martin also emphasised that it would significantly boost efforts to get new young members to sign up to West Kent Radio if we could demonstrate a good continuing relationship with the local BBC station, as many young members would see that link as a good potential way into forming BBC links and therefore obtaining paid work in the media industry.

Martin proposed that the use of BBC staff may be allowed to fill gaps (aiming mainly at the big holes in the daytime live presenter rota) on a 3 month by 3 month basis. This idea was supported by 17 votes to 1 with 4 abstentions.

Nigel then spoke about the latest version of the OFCOM "character of service" which means we are fixed to broadcasting principally to the 45+ age group and need to promote "the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle and the importance of maintaining good personal, mental and physical health, by encouraging lifestyle improvements".

Will ended the meeting by repeating that members had to contribute more beyond their weekly shows to ensure the survival of the station.

Will Dunn closed the meeting at 21:30.

Confidentiality notice: These minutes contain business confidential information related to the management of West Kent Community Radio. Trustees, Members and Friends of West Kent Community Radio must not disclose the information contained in these minutes to any other organisation or individual.

WEST KENT COMMUNITY RADIO EXCEPTIONAL GENERAL MEETING (EGM)

Saint John's Yard, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells

Wednesday 21st May 2024, 19.45

Martin Webber explained that a proposal to change our charitable objects had been agreed by the Charity Commission and now needed the approval of the membership to have effect.

It had been decided to change paragraph one to remove references to in-house broadcasting for hospitals or similar institutions. This removes a commitment for West Kent Community Radio to specifically provide a service for hospital patients and those receiving community care which allows us to widen our remit.

Paragraph two has been altered to include Southborough in the list of towns.

Adam Howe asked why a more extensive list of objectives which had previously been considered by Trustees had been dropped.

Martin explained that the Charity Commission feedback had been that the the Charitable Objects needed to be in a strict legal format to work and therefore the original list under discussion a year ago had been trimmed to our core purpose. This revised version had proved acceptable to the Trustees and the Charity Commission.

Adam suggested that a broader set of objectives would help to obtain a higher level of grant funding, but two former Trustees who had worked on grant applications (Nigel Peacock and Simon Jupp) said this was not the case.

The changes proposed to the charity objects were supported by the meeting by 21 votes to 0.

Existing Charitable Objects:

THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE:

(1) THE RELIEF OF SICKNESS, POOR HEALTH AND OLD AGE AMONGST PEOPLE LIVING IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TONBRIDGE, PEMBURY, SEVENOAKS AND SURROUNDING AREAS OF WEST KENT BY PROVIDING A LOCAL BROADCASTING SERVICE FOR HOSPITALS, RESIDENTIAL HOMES AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS, AND FOR PATIENTS RECEIVING COMMUNITY CARE; AND

(2) THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH AND PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF SICKNESS FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF THE BENEFITS OF LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING GOOD PERSONAL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH BY (MAINLY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY) THE MEANS OF BROADCASTING HEALTH EDUCATION MESSAGES TO PEOPLE LIVING IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TONBRIDGE, PEMBURY, SEVENOAKS, AND SURROUNDING AREAS OF WEST KENT, USING FM RADIO, DIGITAL RADIO, ONLINE AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA.

New Charitable Objects:

THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE:

(1) TO RELIEVE SICKNESS, POOR HEALTH AND OLD AGE WHO ARE LIVING IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TONBRIDGE, SOUTHBOROUGH, PEMBURY, SEVENOAKS AND SURROUNDING AREAS OF WEST KENT BY PROVIDING A LOCAL COMMUNITY BROADCASTING SERVICE; AND

(2) THE ADVANCEMENT OF HEALTH AND PREVENTION OR RELIEF OF SICKNESS FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF THE BENEFITS OF LIVING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING GOOD PERSONAL MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH BY (MAINLY, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY) THE MEANS OF BROADCASTING HEALTH EDUCATION MESSAGES TO PEOPLE LIVING IN TUNBRIDGE WELLS, TONBRIDGE, SOUTHBOROUGH, PEMBURY, SEVENOAKS, AND SURROUNDING AREAS OF WEST KENT, USING

FM RADIO, DIGITAL RADIO, ONLINE AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA.