

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 19 July 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Renewal of Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting Community Interest Company Deed of Grant
Purpose of Report:	To update Members on the activities of Bro Radio and to seek approval for an extension of funding for a further three years.
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Head of Policy & Business Transformation
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer Communications Manager
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive decision.
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Vale of Glamorgan Council has supported the local community radio station Bro Radio since its foundation in 2009. This report seeks approval to extend the existing funding arrangement for a further three years to August 2024. • In addition to the Council's established communications channels and in an unstable media landscape, the award-winning local station has established itself as a vital source of reliable news and information for Vale residents. • The wider work of the station, such as providing employment and volunteering opportunities to young people and support and promotion of local businesses, very effectively complements the work of the Council. 	

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the contents of this report.
2. It is recommended that Cabinet approves the renewal of the Deed of Grant between the Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting Community Interest Company for a further three year period (1st August 2021 – 31st July 2024).
3. It is recommended that Cabinet delegates authority to the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services, in consultation with the Executive Leader and Head of Finance / Section 151 Officer, to prepare and execute the Deed of Grant and related payment processes.
4. It is recommended that Cabinet receives an annual update on the work of Bro Radio over the term of the funding.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To provide Cabinet with an update on the work of Bro Radio.
2. To approve the further funding of Bro Radio for a period of three years.
3. To enable the funding arrangement to be regularised by way of a Deed of Grant and associated payments to be made.
4. To provide Cabinet with an overview of the work of Bro Radio on an annual basis.

1. Background

- 1.1 Bro Radio (trading as Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting CIC) is an award winning, local community radio station for the Barry, Llantwit Major, Penarth and surrounding areas, as defined by industry regulator OFCOM. The station is available on 98.1fm in the central Vale, 100.2fm in Llantwit Major and surrounding areas. The station is also available online, via its mobile app, Radio Player and on Smart speakers – where it has seen a 60% increase in listener numbers in 2020.
- 1.2 Bro Radio is a service focused on the Vale of Glamorgan. The station seeks to promote a feeling of social identity and community pride amongst the urban, rural and coastal communities which exist within the county.
- 1.3 The Vale of Glamorgan Council has supported Bro Radio since 2009. The original Deed of Grant agreed in 2009 enabled the establishment of the community radio station. This was subsequently renewed in 2012, 2015 and 2018. Throughout this time the grant has been set at £24,000 per year, paid in equal monthly instalments.
- 1.4 This report provides an overview of the work of Bro Radio and seeks approval to renew the Deed of Grant for a further three-year period to 31st July 2024.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** Appendix A provides Cabinet with a report produced by Bro Radio setting out the work undertaken by the station over the last year.
- 2.2** On air, Bro Radio provides a minimum of 84 hours of locally produced content per week from studios in the Vale of Glamorgan, whilst providing regular local news bulletins and online content relevant to its audience.
- 2.3** Online, the station's team of journalists share an average of 130 local news stories every month, read by over 332,000 readers in 2020.
- 2.4** The Council has developed a strong collaborative relationship with Bro Radio. For example, the Council directly benefits from the sharing of Council news releases to a local audience as well as through the on-air promotion of Council services events. The station hosts monthly shows with the Youth Cabinet and Vale Youth Service. The station also often broadcasts live from Council run events in the Vale.
- 2.5** During the Covid-19 pandemic the station has regularly featured key public health messages to help keep the population of the Vale safe.
- 2.6** The work of Bro Radio also contributes to the Council's wider objectives, as set out in the Corporate Plan, in a number of ways.
- 2.7** As well as providing an on-air service, Bro Radio exists to provide training, volunteering and work experience opportunities for local residents and students. In 2020, the station built on its partnership with the University of South Wales to offer work experience and placements to 10 students from the University of South Wales directly, whilst broadcasting work by over 20 students studying journalism at the Cardiff campus. This work experience has helped previous students build up real long-term experiences and opportunities, which in 2020 helped students achieve long-term employment with BBC Radio Wales and Global Radio, off the back of their experience and portfolios.
- 2.8** Working with Vale Communities For Work, each week Bro Radio broadcast a series of local jobs and opportunities via its "Job Search" feature. This is backed up by online content and a monthly interview discussing upcoming training and opportunities offered by the department and its partners.
- 2.9** Working with Learn Welsh: The Vale, the station is airing regular Welsh Phrases, to support the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Welsh Language Promotion Strategy which aims to increase the number of Welsh speakers and use of the language in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- 2.10** "The Lowdown" continues to promote events, activities and campaigns in the local area - including supporting the Vale Food Bank, Fare Share and Foodshare, making residents aware of the support available to them, should they require it.

- 2.11** Bro Radio also supports local businesses, offering affordable and free opportunities to promote their services.
- 2.12** In addition to the funding received from the Council, the station generates commercial income through advertising.
- 2.13** It is recommended that Cabinet approve funding for a further three-year period to 31st July 2024. In order to provide Cabinet with a regular update on the work of Bro Radio, it is also recommended that an annual report be presented to Cabinet coterminous with the anniversary of the funding being approved.
- 2.14** The Council's Communications Manager has regular meetings with the Station Manager from Bro Radio to discuss and monitor the relationship between the organisations as part of the Council's editorial process.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** As outlined above, Bro Radio contributes to the achievement of several aspects of the Council's Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plan.
- 3.2** In addition, the work of Bro Radio enables the Council to reach the station's listenership of over 22,000 residents, some of whom may not receive communication directly from the Council through traditional methods including newspapers and social media.
- 3.3** Bro Radio exists to provide opportunities to those residents who are socially isolated, not in employment or education to access volunteering and training opportunities. Through projects such as its 'Broadcast Buzz', it gives those isolated individuals an opportunity to get together with those with similar experience, learn radio skills and tell their stories via radio and podcasting. Bro Radio is continuing to build its relationships with local schools and colleges including UWC Atlantic College.
- 3.4** Bro Radio provides opportunities for Council departments and partners to promote their services and support, including activities organised by its Sports and Play Development and Health Living Teams.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** The current Deed of Grant provides Bro Radio with £2,000 paid monthly, and funding will continue for the next three years at this level. Funding will come from existing budgets.

Employment

4.2 There are no employment implications arising directly from this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

4.3 It is recommended that Cabinet delegate authority to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services, in consultation with the Leader and Head of Finance, to prepare and execute the Deed of Grant and related payment processes.

4.4 The Deed of Grant which governs the award received by the Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting Community Interest Company requires compliance with set grant conditions throughout the grant period to enable continued funding to be received, including the requirement to produce an annual report for consideration by Cabinet.

5. Background Papers

None.

2020 Annual Report



broradio
98.1&100.2fm
www.broradio.fm

About Bro Radio

Bro Radio is the award winning, local community radio station for the Barry, Llantwit Major, Penarth and surrounding areas, as defined by industry regulator OFCOM.

The station is available on 98.1fm in the central Vale, 100.2fm in Llantwit Major and surrounding areas and, soon, clearer on 106.1fm in Penarth, Sully, Dinas Powys and surrounding areas.

The station is also available online, via its mobile app, Radio Player and on Smart speakers – where it has seen a 60% increase in listening in 2020 alone.

Bro Radio is a service focused on the Vale of Glamorgan. It promotes a feeling of social identity and community pride amongst the urban, rural and coastal communities which exist within the County.

Its programming reflects the life of the residents it serves, with a mixture of locally relevant news, information and music during the day, with specialist music and information programming, covering sport, key communities, Welsh Language and specialist music genres during the evenings and weekends.

During the daytime, Bro Radio broadcasts a mix of today's new releases, alongside music from 1975 to today, entwined with local news and information.

During the evenings and weekends, Bro Radio broadcasts specialist music programmes, covering everything from Rock, Reggae, Classic and Welsh Language music genres.

On air, Bro Radio provides a minimum of 84 hours of locally produced content per week from studios in the Vale of Glamorgan, whilst providing regular local news bulletins and online content relevant to its audience.

Online, the stations team of journalists share an average of 130 local news stories every month, read by over 332,000 readers in 2020 alone.

Key Stats in 2020:

- Launched on 100.2fm in Llantwit Major
- Opened new studios in Llantwit Major at CF61
- Received approval to launch on FM in Penarth
- Won station of the year at the 2020 Community Radio Awards
- Won a silver award for its General Election Hustings in 2020
- Continued to provide over 100 hours of local radio, from home studios
- Increased local news output with a team of 15 dedicated volunteer student journalists and local people
- A 60% increase in online listening compared to 2019
- The largest social media following of any media organisation based in the Vale of Glamorgan.
- Monthly estimated FM audience of 22,000 listeners
- Local news stories read by an average of 16,000 people every week

* Vale of Glamorgan bi-annual survey

broradio
98.1 & 100.2
www.broradio.fm

The station
that loves
the Vale

Love
The Vale



broradio
98.1 & 100.2 fm
www.broradio.fm

There for the Community

2020 has been one of the most challenging for Bro Radio and the communities which it serves. Despite the challenges, the year proved to be one of the most successful for Bro Radio – as it increased output, local content and its coverage across the County.

Just prior to the announcement of a national lockdown, Bro Radio was able to utilise new technology to continue to provide a service for its community.



This led to a change in schedule, with reduced presenters and programmes – whilst equipment was sourced and distributed to allow the station to provide 112 hours of locally produced content from homes, kitchens, bedrooms and garden sheds across the County.

Its news team continued to deliver key facts, news and information – whilst its presenters kept the music playing, not only acting as a friendly voice for people staying at home, but also interacting with the community and sharing relevant information about local organisations, groups and individuals working day to day to support their communities.

Remote technologies allowed the station to increase its local news team. Working with journalism students at the University of South Wales we continued to provide 65+ local news bulletins every week, alongside original and accurate news stories and interviews with local people, politicians, businesses and groups.

Through 2020, Bro Radio prided itself on giving its listeners the chance to question key ministers. It's award winning Vale This Week programme interviewed the First Minister, Health Minister, Education Minister and Leader of the Vale of Glamorgan Council, giving listeners the chance to raise issues, share concerns and questions about the decisions being made during the pandemic.

With an increase of 60% in online listenership, as people work from home – it proves that Bro Radio comes into its own during emergency situations. It's proven this previously during “Storm Emma” and the “Beasts from the East” and since then, with more and more local radio stations moving their content outside of South Wales – local people tuned to Bro Radio to know what was going on in the community.

We believe that during periods like this, Bro Radio goes above and beyond in keeping local citizens up to date on local information that matters most to them.

Providing Opportunities

As well as providing an on air service, Bro Radio exists to provide training, volunteering and work experience opportunities for local residents and students.

In 2020, the station built on its partnership with the University of South Wales to offer work experience and placements to 10 students from the University of South Wales directly, whilst broadcasting work by over 20 students studying journalism at the Cardiff campus. This work experience has helped previous students build up real long term experiences and opportunities, which in 2020 helped students achieve long-term employment with BBC Radio Wales and Global Radio, off the back of their experience and portfolios.



In a normal year, the station works closely with local schools to provide work experience placements, however the coronavirus pandemic put this on hold.

Despite the pandemic, Bro Radio continued to welcome new volunteers - providing training remotely, with numbers slightly down on the year prior and 50 regular volunteers involved in the station. Despite this, the pandemic gave volunteers more time to dedicate at the station which saw volunteer hours for the period increase from an average of 6 hours a week, to an average of 8 hours per week.

Promoting Opportunitites

As well as directly providing opportunities, the station continues to promote opportunities to help the community get back into work, education or training.

Working with Vale Communities For Work, each week Bro Radio broadcast a series of local jobs and opportunities via its "Job Search" feature. This is backed up by online content and a monthly interview discussing upcoming training and opportunities offered by the department and its partners.

Working with Learn Welsh: The Vale, the station is airing regular Welsh Phrases, to support the Welsh Government and Vale Council targets of increasing the number of Welsh speakers. The broadcast phrases, voiced by Suzanne from Learn Welsh The Vale - focus on key talking points that can be used on a weekly basis in day-to-day life. The feature is supported, by presenter-led talk-ups aired regularly.

The lowdown continues to promote events, activities and campaigns in the local area - including supporting the Vale Food Bank, Fare Share and Foodshare, making residents aware of the support available to them, should they require it.

How does Bro Radio support the Vale Council?

Local news coverage:

Bro Radio's team of 15 journalists, made up of local people and students from the University of South Wales and Cardiff University produce Bro Radio's local news output.

The station broadcasts 70, 2-minute news bulletins every week, alongside its award winning weekly news programme the Vale This Week.

On its website, the station releases 100's of local news stories, many of which include coverage of the work of the Council, its departments and councillors.

Advertising:

On behalf of the Council, Bro Radio broadcasts regular adverts for foster care, adult placement service, telecare and family information service.

In addition, the station has broadcast adverts for Council events, changes to recycling, coronavirus testing centres, election registration, census and Christmas waste changes.

Event attendance

In a normal year, Bro Radio attends and hosts events on behalf of the Vale of Glamorgan Council – including Town Centre Christmas lights switch-ons and Barry Island weekenders.

Supporting local businesses:

Bro Radio continues to support local businesses, offering affordable and free opportunities to promote their services.

In 2020, the station launched its free business directory – as a platform to support businesses as they got back on their feet after the pandemic. The directory will remain free for life, with businesses given the incentive of £2,000 in free on air advertising by registering.

In December, prior to the lockdown Bro Radio working with Barry Town Council launched a Christmas station promoting shopping local in Town Centres. The station ran online and on tannoy across High Street and Holton Road, with free 20-second adverts for businesses. We are looking into how this could be made available to other Town centres in 2021.

Provision of volunteering opportunities:

Bro Radio continues to provide opportunities to local people to be part of their community, learn new skills, increase social interaction and employability.

The pandemic has reduced the station's ability to deliver training, however new studios in Llantwit Major have opened up new opportunities for people in the area to learn new skills once lockdown restrictions are eased.

The station continues to provide remote training for new volunteers and has a series of projects, focusing on decreasing social isolation and community participation set to launch later in 2021.



Umpalumpa
Sweet Shop

UMPA LUMPA
www.umpalumpa.co.uk



Umpalumpa
Sweet Shop
Ice cream
in store!

Monthly Programmes

- Vale Youth Cabinet,
- Youth Service,
- Glamorgan Voluntary Services

Bro Radio's monthly programmes are partnerships between the station and various partners including the Vale Youth Service and Glamorgan Voluntary Services.

The monthly programmes promote the work of third sector organisations, voluntary groups and youth led organisations.

Community Awards

Bro Radio's Community Awards is the only event in the Vale of Glamorgan to celebrate the work of individuals, businesses, groups and organisations in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Now in its third year, the event brings the community together to recognise their hard work in the twelve months previous – with 30 finalists and 10 winners, across 10 categories.



Supporting the Vale of Glamorgan Council's wellbeing goals

Bro Radio's partnership with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, helps supports all three of the Council's Well-being objectives, as set out in its Corporate Plan 2020 – 2025

Objective One: To work with and for our communities

Improve how we involve, engage and communicate with others about our work and decisions.

Bro Radio talks directly to residents, who may not traditionally receive communication from the Council directly, through newspapers and social media. These tend to be the most vulnerable and at risk individuals.

Promote equality of opportunity and work with the community to ensure we are responsive to the diverse needs of our customers.

Provides opportunities to those who are social isolated, not in employment and education.

Promotes opportunities directly to those individuals.

Promote the use of the Welsh Language and contribute to the Welsh Government target of 1 million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Monthly bilingual Welsh language programming. Regular welsh language spots etc

Objective Two: To support learning, employment and sustainable economic growth

Work with education, training providers, businesses and other agencies to provide a range of advice, support & training opportunities which improve people's skills and readiness.

Promote Vale Council support & training opportunities

Support and promote volunteering and community learning, recognising the range of benefits to individuals and the community.

Provides training opportunities to local people

Group training for those with lived mental health experience

Opportunities for local Primary school children – school takeover

Opportunity for local secondary school children – Youth Show

Support economic growth through regeneration, improved infrastructure and support for town centres, tourism and industry.

Free advertising for local businesses

Supporting town centre events, promoting and attending

Supporting Visit the Vale and tourism teams in promoting events, attending etc.

Objective Three: To support people at home and in their community

Encourage and support people of all ages to have active and healthy lifestyles to improve and maintain their physical and mental well-being.

Promoting services offered by the Council, as well as the work of local sports teams through sports programmes.

Promote leisure, art and cultural activities which meet a diverse range of needs.

Through its lowdown, Bro Radip provides free promotion for local sports clubs, groups and venues across the Vale of Glamorgan. The free service has recently promoted Arts Central, Memo Arts Centre, Turner House Gallery and St Donats Art Centre, to name just a few.

Work in partnership to develop cohesive communities and promote community safety.

Bro Radio works in partnership with YMCA Barry, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Barry Town Council, Major Music, CF61, Glamorgan Voluntary Services, to work collaboratively to improve the service we offer and the wider Vale of Glamorgan.

Expansion and plans for the future

The coronavirus pandemic presented opportunities which allowed Bro Radio to undertake its FM expansion.

Funding from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Vale Heroes Grant scheme allowed the station to launch its new frequency on 100.2fm in Llantwit Major – bringing its service to the Town and surrounding areas for the first time.

With an aim of being there for communities, the suspension of the Glamorgan GEM meant that it was vital that the station could be on air, in the community and providing relevant local information and news.

It has since received approval to bring a stronger and clearer signal to Penarth and the Eastern Vale of Glamorgan on 106.1fm – which it hopes to undertake shortly, with plans to launch on DAB in 2021/22 on the Cardiff Multiplex, which serves the Capital and the Eastern Vale of Glamorgan.

Further funding from the National Lottery, Glamorgan Voluntary Services and the Vale of Glamorgan Council, presented the opportunity for the station to take over the studios, formerly managed by Major Music at CF61 in Llantwit Major.

A £30,000 investment has been undertaken to create two industry standard studios, suitable for training and project work, with the purpose of being utilised to support those vulnerable and isolated individuals within the community, who have been affected by the pandemic in getting back on their feet, once restrictions are eased

Key Contact Info

Bro Radio is a trading name of Vale of Glamorgan Broadcasting CIC.

Company Number: 6071362

Trading Address: YMCA Barry, Court Road, Barry, CF63 4EE

Phone Number: 01446 420 681

Key Contact: Nathan Spackman - Operations Director

Email: nathan.spackman@broradio.fm