

Business Plan  
Alive Community Radio (SCIO)

Prepared by: [REDACTED]

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## 2. Business details

Company Name:

Alive Community Radio (SCIO)

Address:

[REDACTED]

Telephone Number:

[REDACTED] (Company Secretary)

Legal Status:

SCIO

The Business:

Operates a Community radio Station with the aim of advancing education, citizenship and community development through the provision of training and work experience in all of the skills involved in running a small radio station. It also promotes advancement of the arts, heritage, culture and science and encourages the involvement and promotion of community organisations and events.

### 3. Key Personnel

#### ██████████, Trustee and Chair

██████████ is a business manager, has a BA Hons degree in Media Production and has previous industry experience as a Presenter at Bolton FM and Station Manager at Select 107 Radio. At Alive 107.3 he has held many positions including Station Manager, Head of Training, Producer and Presenter.

#### ██████████, Trustee and Finance Director

██████████ is a Financial Consultant who has been involved with Alive 107.3 for ten years as a Presenter, Station Manager and Director. He now manages the volunteers who keep the Charity's financial records and the preparation and presentation of the annual accounts.

#### ██████████, Trustee and Company Secretary

██████████ is a former accountant who has worked in media for 35 years. Starting as a Presenter at Westsound Radio he went on to become a Freelance Producer for BBC Radio, then an Award Winning Travel Writer and Author. He lectured in television, video and radio production at Dumfries College and is a tutor for the National Union of Journalists.

#### **4. What the business does**

Alive Community Radio (SCIO) runs Alive 107.3, a very successful Community Radio Station, which has been on air continually for twelve years. While the present charity took ownership of the Station in June 2019, most of the management team and volunteers have been with the station for considerably longer.

Alive 107.3 has a proven track record of working with young people and in areas of urban deprivation. We have a history of working in association with Summerhill Community Centre, running various skills based training courses and throughout lockdown producing specific radio shows designed to combat loneliness and isolation as well as providing information and entertainment.

Also in association with Summerhill Community Centre and Dumfries YMCA, Alive Community Radio founded the Alive Radio Academy, which was delivering an afternoon of radio production classes to S2 pupils from the North West Campus as well as a weekly after school class at Dumfries High and some ad hoc training to other groups.

## **5. What makes the business different**

We are the only OFCOM licenced FM Community Radio Station in South West Scotland.

We consistently provide more local on-air content and more direct community involvement than any other radio station broadcasting in the region.

We are firmly rooted in the local community, work with a variety of groups and organisations and provide training and volunteering opportunities to all age groups.

## **6. Legal requirements**

1. OFCOM Community Radio Broadcast Licence
2. OFCOM Wireless Telegraphy Licence
3. PPL and PRS for music Joint Community radio Licence
4. Equipment and buildings insurance

## **Compliance**

1. Our current OFCOM licences are valid until 31 August 2024
2. We have a current PPL and PRS for music Joint Community Radio Licence that is renewed annually.
3. Our insurance policy for our equipment is current and renewed annually.
4. We will obtain buildings insurance when we require it.

## 7. Market research

- There is a need and a demand for relevant local radio content in various segments of the community from teenagers to seniors.
- There is an emerging demand for more and varied specialist and minority interest shows
- We are aware of this from the response we have received from our youth, family and seniors shows that have been running since the outset of the Pandemic.
- We conduct a regular survey amongst listeners to ascertain the type of music they want to listen to and adjust our playlists accordingly.
- Both groups and individuals have recently made representations and in response to them we have introduced two new late night alternative rock and Indy music shows, an early evening show for local line dancers, one focusing on the work of singer songwriters and the return of our once popular World Music show.
- In association with DG Youth into Work we have re-launched our Saturday morning show aimed at teenagers and presented by a sixteen year old who has been a volunteer for three years and completed several of our training courses. Three other teenage volunteers are currently in training and will be launching a magazine show aimed at young people.
- Another young and disabled volunteer who has come to us via DG Youth into Work will shortly join the team of presenters for Drive Time.
- A young woman, who has recently completed an HND in Radio Broadcasting has gone through the Alive vetting process and induction training, joined the team of volunteers, and her mid morning show went live in March 2021.

## 8. Competitors

- BBC Radio Scotland. The National Broadcaster but has very little in the way of local content and does not participate in community events.
- Westsound Radio. Once an excellent local radio station but now as part of a multinational company ceased all local production in September 2019. All their shows are networked and broadcast from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and locations in England. It follows a national formulaic playlist with little or no community involvement.
- DCR. An Internet only station with very little live content, few volunteers and does not broadcast.



## 9. Managing market risks

The main risks to our business model are:

- Reduction in advertising revenue
- Losing our fundraising activities
- Reduction in donations from volunteers.

All of these events have regrettably taken place since the advent of Covid-19. Under the terms of our broadcasting licence we are only allowed to raise a maximum of £15,000 per annum through advertising. Most of our revenue from this source ended at lockdown. Fortunately a Government grant of £10,000 has provided us with a cushion and we have recently been notified that our application for £1800 to the OFCOM run Community Radio Fund has been successful.

When COVID circumstances permit we will launch a targeted marketing campaign to gain new advertisers and sponsors and to recommence other fund raising activities e.g. Supermarket bag packing.

## **10. Pricing**

Our advertising rate card is priced on the basis of being aware of what other local media are charging and what our research tells us that local businesses are prepared to advertise.

## **11. Promotion and advertising**

Our Station is promoted by:

- Social Media
- Press releases to local media
- Leaflets and flyers
- Having a high visibility presence at local festivals and community events.

## 12. Premises

Alive 107.3 currently broadcasts from premises above Dumfries Furniture Direct in Annan Road. We have two on-air studios, an office, server-room and loft storage space. There are many problems with our current location.

- We do not have a lease.
- We were given less space than we had originally been promised.
- Our broadcasting equipment is eleven years old, some of it even older. It is well past its useful life and only the skills of our Technical team has kept it operating for so long.
- The roof over the main on-air studio is leaking and there is little or no prospect of the landlord carrying out repairs.
- Installing new equipment in such a hazardous environment would be negligent.

We are currently preparing to move our entire operation to the former Enterprise Workshops at Shirley Road. There, in phase one of our plans for the building, we are creating two new on-air studios, a server room/workshop, training and off air production room which will also be used for administration and meetings, a reception area and a small kitchen.

We have grant funding and donations in place from, The Holywood Trust, Awards for All, Foundation Scotland, Summerhill Community Centre, OFCOM Community Radio Fund, The Cora Foundation, Neighbourly, Arnold Clark and Virgin Media. This has enabled us to replace most of our computers, our transmitter and antenna and to purchase the equipment to renew our main studio.

Donations from a sponsor let us replace our main output server and Clyde Broadcast Technologies sponsored the upgrade needed for our second studio.

We have sufficient funding in place to carry out the renovation and alterations to the property at Shirley Road. Most of the money will be spent on materials as our team of volunteers have the skills, qualifications and experience to tackle most jobs. A registered firm has installed the alarm systems and heating system and a registered plumber will install gas central heating. The existing heating system is unserviceable.

In subsequent phases we have plans to create a full spec recording studio as part of our main on-air studio and to use that to run training courses in sound and recording engineering for local people. We also plan to make the facility available free of charge to young people and the unwaged.

Two organisations will be joining us at Shirley Road and contributing towards the running costs. Solway Sound, a long established group producing a talking Newspaper and magazine for the sight impaired. Their members will all become volunteers at Alive, initially using their own equipment to produce their content but following training will use our broadcast facilities. We will assist them in recruiting new members and are discussing getting their content on air as a regular broadcast.

D&G Queerier is a small group producing a print magazine for the local LGBTQ+ Community. They will become volunteers at Alive and are in the process of putting together a small production team to broadcast a weekly one-hour radio show covering similar issues.

Restore Dumfries is a sister Charity, already occupying part of Shirley Road. In association with them we have plans to create a North West Men's Shed in three of the units. This will give local men the opportunity to learn new skills and practice others. It will help to combat isolation and loneliness, provide a welcoming space to spend time and develop marketable skills.

### **13. Managing Operational Risks**

Our main operational risks are:

- Equipment failure
- Shortage of volunteers
- Studio shut down by Local or National emergency.

Because of the extreme age of our equipment we have had several disruptions to our output in the last two years. With one exception our skilled volunteer technicians ensured that the off-air time was minimal. One more serious failure resulted in us having to transmit from our backup service for five days while our Technician, re-built the item that had failed.

Since then we have been seeking funding to enable us to buy new equipment. This has been successful and we will install greatly enhanced studios in the new building.

Two years ago we lost most of our volunteers. This put us under considerable pressure and in order to meet the commitments under our Broadcast Licence those volunteers that remained, took on the responsibility of doing extra shows. We also tackled the root cause of the departure of volunteers, set up a new charity to run the station and have now had all but two of our former volunteers returning to Alive. We have also recruited and trained new volunteers, added more shows and have an active, continuous, recruitment policy.

COVID-19 resulted in our Studios being shut but because we had planned for such an eventuality we were able to keep all shows on air and even added others. Experience gained through experimenting with remote broadcasting from as far away as Italy and then from two locations simultaneously at the 2018 Christmas

Lights switch on, enabled our Technical team to devise new and ingenious ways to set up our equipment to carry out operations we previously thought impossible.

A generous donation of surplus laptops allowed us to set up remote studios in presenters, homes, sheds and garages, while remote operating enabled our Technical team to set them up and provide the necessary training to make it happen.

#### **14. Costs**

Our main costs are our overheads as detailed in the accounts and cash flow forecast.

As we are a Charity totally run by volunteers we have no staff costs.

## **15. Accounts to 30th September 2020**

The accounts for our first period of trading are attached. They have been prepared, The Trustees Report attached and the accounts signed off by our external verifier and submitted to OSCR.

## **16. Managing Financial Risks**

As a small charitable organisation our sole sources of income are from advertising and sponsorship revenue, grants, fundraising activities and donations from members.

The main financial risk that we face is loss of income. Regrettably we have recently had to face up to the loss of most of our advertising and sponsorship revenue, we have been unable to take part in fundraising activities and part of the income from donations has stopped owing to volunteers having their own income cut.

We have survived these losses by successfully applying for grant assistance and The Radio Station is in a much better financial position than it was two years ago.

We have applied to the Robertson Trust for a grant towards our next two years running costs to provide a cushion while we re-build our income streams.

We have a plan of action to concentrate on an advertising sales drive as soon as we are permitted. While our broadcasting licence restricts us to advertising revenue of only £15,000, that will be more than enough to cover our core costs. We estimate that our target is achievable within six months to a year.

Once we have achieved that target we will continue fundraising to create a reserve sufficient to cover twelve months of revenue expenditure and to make regular payments to a capital reserve, which will fund planned equipment upgrading, and replacement program.

## **17. Cash Flow Forecast**

A FIVE YEAR CASH FLOW FORECAST IS ATTACHED.