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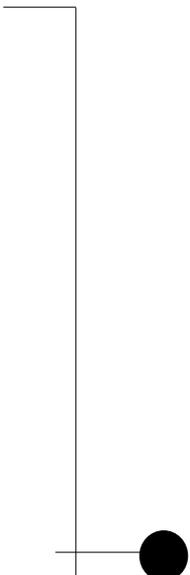
Building Community Through Television
- A Plan for Dublin Community Television.

Publication of:
Dublin City Development Board
November 2002

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Community Media – the key to the future

In preparing the economic, social and cultural strategy the Dublin City Development Board focused on the importance of developing a vibrant Community Media sector in the city. The strategy specifically states:

“Community media must be empowered and supported so that civic right might be realised in an independent and locally relevant context”

and

“The need to develop and enable local people to generate, manage and disseminate information that is locally relevant, locally shaped and locally understood is a real need in Dublin today”.

One form of Community Media that is vital to the future well-being of the city and must be developed is Community Television.

Community Television enables local people to provide and shape news and information in a way that meets their needs and creates a more participative society. For a democratic society to develop in the 21st century it is essential that citizens are able to use technology to promote issues that matter. Community Television offers a form of technology that can help sustain a conscientious and informed knowledge-base among citizens about key issues of policy and development. The development of community television can therefore compensate for the lack of attention given to Dublin issues in the commercial media. Dublin therefore requires a vibrant community media sector using television and Internet as well as radio, so that the issues that matter to citizens and society may be adequately debated and discussed.

An important start has been made to provide Internet infrastructure required to facilitate this sector through the development of www.dublin.ie. *dublin.ie* offers a web-based portal to the community and voluntary agencies to promote their services and raise issues that matter to them. Citizens can now create their own website, avail of free email facilities and also access a directory of community services available across the city. With the integration of communication technologies on the horizon this Internet initiative together with Community Television could provide citizens with access to a wide range of media.

The publication of this Report is timely and provides an invaluable resource in building the case for community television in the city. The Dublin City Development Board through its *dublin.ie* initiative has been able to support the Community Media Forum in the research and development of the Report. We look forward to using the opportunity provided under the Broadcasting Act 2001 to realise this vision of a vibrant Community Television station in Dublin City.



Peter Finnegan
Director

Preface

Dublin City Community Television will emerge, and be sustained, only if it serves the people of Dublin. Of course, we cannot predict this with certainty. But we can create circumstances to give it the best chance of succeeding. This report sketches out how this can be done. It argues that a license to broadcast a community channel, available under the Broadcasting Act 2001, is worthless unless there also exists a capacity in the community to produce programmes for itself. Thus, minimal facilities for training and to support production are an essential part of the proposed Dublin Community Television Channel.

The prospect of a community owned controlled Channel for Dublin, for the first time ever, broadcasting its own programmes is a great boost to all those who have been active over the years in community video and television. Already, a community media centre is under construction in North East Dublin, and there are several community video groups dotted around the city. A Dublin Community Channel will not only strengthen these. It will also very quickly herald the emergence of new groups excited at the prospects of using television to address their objectives. The majority of those interviewed for this report responded enthusiastically to the idea of a television channel, recognising immediately how it would help them achieve their goals and become a vital resource to the city. Down the road, the prospect of fully interactive digital transmission via dublin.ie will open up new horizons and possibilities.

The Community Forum funded an earlier volume of research on community television. This was completed in January 2002, and entitled *Lessons from International Experience*. In twenty pages, it describes various models for community television, popular and effective programme formats, and how they obtain their funding, and points to where some external programmes and content might be forthcoming. It may be read as a companion volume to this, and some of the work there has been integrated into this report. It can be obtained (as can this report) at www.activelink.ie/cmfm.

Our sincere gratitude is due to Peter Finnegan, the Dublin City Development Board and Dublin City Council, who took the decision to commission this work. We believe that community television in Dublin will be viewed in the future as among the most innovative outcomes of the work of the Board.

Finally, we would like to thank the consultants, Seán Ó Siochrú and Eoin Collins of NEXUS Research, for having undertaken this fine piece of research and laid the basis for the next steps.

The Interim Steering Committee comprises the following:

Community Media Network, NEAR FM, Northside Community Media Coop, AXIS Centre, Dublin City Development Board, Inner City Renewal Group, Rathdown District Ass., Dublin City Council, Irish Deaf Society, Lourdes Youth and Community Services, Dublin Adult Literacy Centre, Amnesty Ireland, Pavee Point, Sustainable Ireland, Gingerbread, Merchants Quay Ireland - Homeless Drugs Services, Community Response, Dublin City University, REHAB/NTDI

Dublin has become a metropolitan city characterised by increasingly diverse, energetic yet dispersed communities. A vibrant civil society has emerged, populated by a great number of community and voluntary groups active in development, arts and culture, special needs, and many other areas. Two factors now offer an opportunity to create a Dublin Community Television Channel. First, with the Broadcasting Act the legal basis exists for a 'community channel' along with an obligation on the cable carrier, NTL, to carry the signal. Second, the political environment is more positive with the inclusion of community television among the strategic objectives of Dublin City Development Board's strategy: Dublin, City of Possibilities 2002-2012.

1. The rationale for the Channel comes from several directions:

1. It is a logical next step to community led development. The value-added of the Channel will be to connect up the multifarious activities at local level, many already using video and arts for advocacy, awareness raising, training and indeed for creative pleasure. The current under-utilisation of media facilities in the community, identified in the research, and the huge need to disseminate information and reach within and between communities, provide a basic rationale for the Channel.
2. The *White Paper on Supporting Voluntary Activity*, the work of the *Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems*, and the *Equality Legislation* all underline the government's commitment to:
 - Achieving equality of opportunity and access;
 - Ensuring the involvement of consumers and service users in the planning, delivery, management and evaluation of policy and programmes;
 - Focusing on the needs of the most disadvantaged.

The Channel follows precisely these principles, and can contribute significantly to these outcomes.

3. The above mentioned strategy accords special prominence to the contribution of community television in "building a democratic and participative city" and in "developing a connected and informed city". Set in larger picture of eventual digital convergence over a broadband network, the strategy recognises that community television can play a special role in ensuring that the broadband network enhances people's creativity, interactivity and means of expression, and not merely their consumption. dublin.ie is potentially a nascent integrating platform for such services.
4. Developments in the media also add to the rationale for a community television Channel. Global trends in the commercialisation and concentration of ownership of media render them remote from people and communities, and produce a proliferation of channels but diminished diversity of content. The experiences of community radio in Ireland and of community television where it exists in strength in numerous countries around the world demonstrate their capacity to enhance diversity and to bring media closer to people, especially by engaging communities in the process of programme production and management of the stations themselves.

Thus the principles of the Channels can be summarised in three concepts:

1. **Empowerment** of communities in achieving social, economic and cultural objectives;
2. **Participation**, in every aspect of the channel, as well as in the governance and development of the city;
3. **Diversity**, both by celebrating the diversity of communities and by extending the range of programmes.

The implementation of these principles radically differentiate community television from their commercial or public service counterparts, and it crucial that the communities of Dublin, in taking ownership of the Channel, fully appreciate and take advantage of these principles.

2. What Community Television will Do

The Channel will operationalise the principles through the following activities:

- **Providing access to transmission to communities**, to help achieve objectives and reach their targets;
- **Catalysing community productions**, by providing equipment and facilities and facilitating partnerships to produce their own programmes;
- **Televising local government and enabling interactions** with politicians and officials;
- **Opening education options** not otherwise available;
- **Enhancing diversity** in media content and in representing Dublin communities;
- **Deepening media understanding** and critical viewing skills.

Programme content can loosely be categorised into three segments:

1. **A Community Programme** segment, the largest, will comprise programmes made or selected by individuals and communities, acting singly or in partnerships, sometimes utilising Channel resources. There already exist archives of relevant programmes in the community and elsewhere.
2. **An Educational segment**, which will target those at home seeking further education for instance in literacy, family health, or eventually in a range of formal and informal areas.
3. **A Local Governance segment**, which is likely to be organised in partnerships between communities and local authorities in Dublin.

Based on experience elsewhere, the Channel should begin broadcasting with a minimum of six hours continuously per day, supplemented by text based services. Ultimate editorial control will lie with participating and contributing communities, not with Channel staff, management or external partners.

A **range of training courses** will be also be a central offering of the Channel. Supplementing existing training facilities in Dublin, it will offer training in the Channel's own equipment, in programme production and post-production, and in the future in media literacy and criticism.

And the **provision of media equipment** to individuals and groups will be vital to enable production in the community. Minimum requirements will include in-house studios (including a small self-operated phone-in studio), editing suites for post-production, as well as cameras, lighting and sound equipment.

3. How the Channel will Work

In the long term, a vision of community television in Dublin would see a number of local community media production centres, some possibly specialising in different services and communities of interest, and a central transmission centre. Already a centre is under construction to serve the North East city and community video facilities are available in Ballymun and elsewhere. Dublin Community Television, at the hub, will from the beginning comprise a **transmission centre**, which will collate, schedule and transmit content over the cable or other system; and a **community production centre** which will service citywide communities of interest as well as (until they can create their own centre) local communities.

The institutional framework developed will reflect the principles, and will enable ownership by the community, as well as full participation in management (through an elected board) and in operations (through autonomous production and in voluntary activity in the Channel). The institutional structure will be not-for-profit and membership-based for Dublin groups and individuals in Dublin, and offer opportunities to others (statutory, educational, firms) to interact with and support the Channel.

Linking into resources in the community and organising the production of content is likely to be mainly by means of various types of partnerships. For instance, the extensive media resources in communities and in educational establishments will be accessed by local communities, at low cost and times of low usage, through more or less formal agreements. Some third level colleges may also create partnerships for news or current affairs (or other) production, bringing together community groups and media students. Or several community groups, possibly supported by statutory bodies or government departments, might come together to produce regular programmes on topics of interest, such as global development and aid, immigration, drugs in the community, or whatever.

In all, the Channel would see itself as a facilitating entity to these partnerships, brokering and entering into agreements that will build up skills and result in programme production and selection.

Such a role demands a professional approach to staffing. Leveraging other resources, and facilitating others, requires a small, highly-skilled staff with particular strengths in partnership development and outreach. Training, technical and general management skills are also essential.

Further issues are critical to successfully running a Channel.

Attracting viewers and active participation from the diverse and dispersed citywide communities will demand innovation, including through electronic networking and the various formal and informal networks that exist around the city. Developing means to measure success will also be important. Viewer numbers, and their socio-economic status, are the criteria for commercial channels. Even public service television maximises audiences, in Ireland receiving most of its income from advertising. With community television, while the audience size is important, other indicators of success will also need to be identified and applied. Especially important are indicators to assess achievement of the core objectives, such as empowerment, coverage of diversity, and enhancing active citizenship. Reaching minority audiences, enabling people to understand and act on issues of concern to them, and empowering through participation in the Channel itself are factors that differentiate community television from the mainstream.

This underlines the need to design innovative methodologies to evaluate the extent to which the Channel is achieving its objectives in relation to the communities of Dublin.

4. Requirements and Costs

The initial equipment, facilities and staff complement must be sufficient to test the value and viability of the concept. Anything below these is likely to lead to failure, due to under-resourcing. But a medium terms plan would see the Channel begin to build towards the vision.

The initial minimal **technical and facilities requirements** for Channel and community use are as follows:

- One small self-operated phone-in studio with a live link to transmission;
- A multi-purpose media-sized studio (10m by 15m) with cameras, lighting, sound and control room;
- Three editing suites for post-production;
- Five portable 3 CCD cameras, with portable lighting and sound equipment, and two DVCam (or other) more advanced cameras;
- A connection to the cable transmission head-end (NTL), and associated event controller;
- An internet Server, and staff computer network.

Staff requirements, initially eight full-time people, are estimated as follows:

A Channel manager; a Partnership, Outreach and Fundraising Coordinator; three Training and Production Support staff; a Technical Support person; an Administrator; and a support person.

All the above will be housed in a **premises of about 500 sq.metres**, though additional space is likely to be required in the medium term .

Finally, **estimated capital costs** for the above equipment comes to €350,000; and **annual recurring costs**, including rent, to about €750,000. Provision is made in this to gradually build towards a medium-term scenario that will include professional quality equipment, to be used alongside mini DV equipment, for training and production.

Transmission around the city, for the foreseeable future, is expected to be through NTL's cable network. It has about 315,000 subscribers from Maynooth in the West, to Bray in the South, to Swords in the North. A **licence application** can be submitted to the Broadcasting Commission

of Ireland, under Section 39 of the Broadcasting Act, though further clarification and work will be required regarding full community consultation and demonstrating viability of the broadcasting activities. In the long-term, the Channel may be integrated within a common interface, such as *dublin.ie*, to a fully interactive all-digital broadband platform.

5. Funding

Experience here and elsewhere strongly suggests that a variety of funding sources is optimal, but that reliable core funding of a considerable proportion is a prerequisite to success. Following practice elsewhere, core funding might come from license fees, a proportion of the cable operators turnover, or local or central government. In current terms, the figures add up as follows (these must be considered as indicative):

Covering all recurring Channel costs of €790,000 annually would:

- Cause a **1.7% increase in the basic NTL subscription** (€2.58 annually per household); covering two-thirds would need a 1.1% increase (€1.65 annually);
- Cause a **2.39% increase in the TV Licence Fee in Dublin** (€2.56 annually per household); covering two-thirds would need a 1.58% increase (€1.69 annually);
- Cost local or central authorities **€2.29 per Dublin household**; covering two-thirds would cost €1.45.

The additional current income required, beyond the two-thirds above, could be obtained from a combination of membership fees, rental and training fees, general sponsorship or advertising, fundraising and sales.

6. An Action Plan

Creating a Channel will be completed in stages, the immediate one leading to an application to the BCI for a community broadcasting licence.

An **Interim Steering Committee** was formed in June 2002, and a Secretariat agreed, to take the initiative forward with the following priorities:

1. To open out the **Committee and its activities** to all community and others stakeholders in Dublin.
2. To further **develop and refine the concept and plan for Community Television**.
3. To **identify sources of funding** for the Channel itself, and how they might be secured.
4. To explore with the BCI the consultation and other **requirements of a license application**.
5. To establish an **appropriate legal institutional form** for future activities and membership.

A reasonable deadline for initiating the formal application procedure to the BCI is late 2002 or early 2003. After a license is granted, which may take several months, there will be many more months of intense activity leading to the launch of the channel. The physical and technical requirements, training and staff capacities, transmission agreements, and participate membership structures will all need to be put in place. Most of all, community organisations and other stakeholders will embark on their huge task of gearing up to produce a regular series of programmes of interest and relevance to their constituencies and to Dubliners as a whole.

1. RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 - The Opportunity

Dublin has become a metropolitan city characterised by increasingly diverse, energetic yet dispersed communities. We see the emergence and growth of a vibrant civil society, populated by enormous numbers of community and voluntary groups active in local development, arts and culture, special needs, and a range of other activities. An exciting opportunity has emerged for the creation of a Community Television Channel for Dublin.

- The Broadcasting Act of 2001 for the first time offers a license for a Community Channel, for which the cable operator will carry the signal;
- Dublin City Development Board, in its strategy published in July 2002 (*Dublin: A City of Possibilities 2002-2012*), recognises the contribution such a community channel can make to several strategic objectives (Objectives 3.3, 5.2). For the future, the strategy also foresees the creation of dublin.ie, a single digital platform for communities in Dublin that will enable interactive dissemination of community television signals in years to come.

In line with these strategic objectives, a key distinguishing feature of community television is that it will be not-for-profit, participative, empowering, equality based and open to all, particularly communities or groups whose needs or concerns are not reflected in mainstream media. These core principles will inform programme content, which will seek to keep people abreast of local and city issues and initiatives relevant to all communities, reflect the city's real diversity and enhance overall media diversity. They will also inform programme production, the aim being to build on the capacity of communities to create and broadcast programmes that put forward their own perspective on the issues that concern them, and to publicise issues and activities that have to date received little or no air time in mainstream media.

The capacity to deliver on these objectives will be greatly facilitated by a number of important developments. Key in this respect are:

- Growth of the community voluntary sector and the development of policy and programmes in support;
- Changes in arrangements for local governance, and the participation of people;
- At a broader level, new developments in policy around broadcasting and the information society.

Relevant developments, and their implications for the form of community television Channel proposed in this document, are summarised as follows.

1.2 - Community Development

Dublin increasingly diverse communities can be defined both geographically around particular localities, and on shared interests (around issues or identities such as ethnic origin, sexual orientation, job creation, age, sport etc.). The welfare and development of these communities has been greatly facilitated by the growth of a vibrant community and voluntary sector. Approximately 2,000 community and voluntary groups are known to the Dublin City Council in the city area alone, including emerging organisations that reflect a more ethnically and culturally diverse population.

Many of these groups have developed innovative methods of communicating within their own communities and in communicating issues of concern to policy makers and the wider population. New and creative modes of addressing disadvantage and marginalisation, of expressing individual creativity and collective celebration, have appeared. These have included plays, art exhibitions, video productions, film festivals, research publications, focus groups, magazines and programming broadcast on community radio stations. Issues covered have included health promotion (for example around addressing drug use), unemployment, city planning and regeneration, housing, education and equality (for example, on issues of racism or gender).

However, this range of creative and innovative development activities remain somewhat isolated from each other, having no common form of expression, a forum in which their existence can be made known to each other, and in which they can appear side by side. *Community television can be seen as an important next step in developing this capacity of communities to connect with one another and to voice alternative perspectives on issues that concern them.*

There already exists much to work on. A number of pioneering community media organisations are active for over a decade, whose experience can immediately be drawn upon. But in conducting research for this report, a surprising level of experience in video and television was also evident amongst community and voluntary groups generally. Numerous groups have produced videos, some very sophisticated and often working with community arts and activist groups. They have been used for training purposes, for advocacy, for raising public awareness on specific issues, and indeed for the creative pleasure and liberating feeling achieved. Several community organisations have cameras and some even editing facilities, purchased usually for a particular project. The under-utilisation of these resources is a concern for them, and all recognise the limitations of the current dissemination possibilities. This is where community television can come in.

1.3 - Community Development and Local Governance: Policy and Practice

The role of the community and voluntary sector organisations has increasingly been recognised in government policy and support programmes. The White Paper *Supporting Voluntary Activity* outlines the principle that “the State recognises and validates the Sector as a core component of a vibrant civil society and the effort to build a broader, more participative and more accountable democracy in Ireland” (*Government of Ireland 2001*). A broad strategy is then

outlined to build the capacity of the sector to organise and to participate in evolving local development and local governance structures (such as the Local Area Partnerships and the City/County Development Boards) as well as in national social partnerships structures.

Some of the key principles informing the development of the community sector and state services include a commitment to:

- Achieving equality of opportunity and access;
- Ensuring the involvement of consumers and service users in the planning, delivery, management and evaluation of policy and programmes;
- Focusing on the needs of the most disadvantaged.

The White Paper also commits the State and the community sector to pay particular attention to the needs of groups experiencing discrimination. Important in this respect are those groups named under new Equality Legislation (*Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Equal Status Act 2000*) which provides protection against discrimination in employment and services in relation to nine grounds. These include age, gender, race and ethnicity, disability, membership of the Traveller community, religion, sexual orientation, family status and marital status.

Many of the principles outlined in the White Paper have also been highlighted by the *Task Force on the Integration of Local Government and Local Development Systems*. According to the Task Force, principles underlying any new model of local governance will include a focus on social inclusion, partnership/participation (involving communities, State and social partners), building the legitimacy of local government, and developing the capacity of local communities to be fully involved in and to influence and shape local decisions (TFILGLDS, 1998). The Task Force also notes the principle of *value for money* - in other words, it proposes that new models for local governance and development should aim for improved use of existing resources and should have mechanisms to ensure accountability and provision for review.

The structure proposed for community television in this document and mechanisms proposed for programme production and broadcasting will seek to build on many of these principles. For example in relation to programme production:

- Although Community Television will have its own core production facilities, its principal role will be to work with communities to harness existing resources for the production of programmes on their particular issues. A key focus in this respect will be on the development of working partnerships between a range of organisations (statutory and community) necessary for programme production.
- The extent of working partnership developed (and resources necessary) will depend on the development stage of the community group or organisation in relation to knowledge and familiarisation with broadcasting media. In some cases, it will be important to ensure that a wide set of funding partners (or those with relevant resources) are involved to build the capacity of communities to develop programming- for example, through training in the use of equipment, editing and so on.

The above principles will also inform the programming content. In particular:

- There will be a clear focus on reflecting the diverse communities of Dublin, especially those that are or have been most excluded.
- There will be a focus on local news and commentaries, particularly the processes and outcomes of local decision making structures such as the local authorities and other local governance structures.
- The community channel will actively accord with current legislation and policy on equality – in other words, there will be a clear commitment to ensuring that programming does not discriminate or incite hatred against vulnerable groups in society.

1.4 - A “City of Possibilities” for Interactivity and Creativity.

As mentioned, Dublin City Development Board in its strategy, *Dublin: A City of Possibilities*, explicitly points to community television as contributing to several key strategic objectives.

First, in Chapter 5: *Building a democratic and participative city*, a community television channel for Dublin is singled out as a strategic objective in promoting openness and awareness, across the community and in a participatory manner, about the city, its political structures and the services. Community media in general are also recognised in Chapter 2: *A Diverse and inclusive city* as important to personal development and participation of diverse communities.

More fundamental, however, is its role in Chapter 3: *“Developing a connected and informed city”*. This takes a broader view of the evolution of networking and knowledge in Dublin’s future in the information age. An integrated interactive digital environment, in which the people of Dublin can “generate, manage and disseminate information that is locally relevant, locally shaped and locally understood”, is foreseen by the plan. Ultimately, this will be based on “broadband, hi-speed connectivity at a reasonable cost to all homes, organisations and businesses”, that will deliver a huge range of services and possibilities. But ensuring that this will be genuinely interactive, and will enable all communities and people to be producers as well as mere consumers of knowledge, is the real challenge for a people driven network.

Community television, specifically proposed under Objective 3.3, can be seen, even in its conventional analogue form, as the forerunner of a larger all-digital environment, as one element among several converging information avenues. The plan points to the need for a coherent framework for the emergence and integration of these, as the infrastructure and investment permits.

The launch of *dublin.ie* is a step in this, intended as a central precursor to the overall integrative framework. The design of community television will take this possibility into account from the very beginning. Community television in the future is likely to be one service amongst others available on demand from a single digital interface to Dublin’s knowledge resources – of which the communities of Dublin will be a principle wellspring.

1.5 - Developments in Media

In proposing the structure for Community television outlined in this document, consideration has also been given to experience of other innovations in community media in Ireland, as well as to developments in media at an international level.

Especially relevant in Ireland has been the establishment of community radio stations in the 1990s. A report of the *Independent Radio and Television Commission* (IRTC) in 1997¹, found these stations to have had a number of benefits, particularly the following:

- Establishing and deepening intra-community linkages and dialogues of all kinds;
- Acting as a community 'watchdog' and campaign supporter; and
- Sustaining and renewing a sense of community identity.

A key conclusion from this report was that the process of programme development, and in particular the involvement and participation of people in the production of programmes about their own communities, was as important in achieving the above benefits as the programme content itself. Some evidence also suggests that community media, although very sparing in terms of resources utilised, nevertheless need core ongoing and secure source of funding. Core professional skills are required to mobilise community energies and creativity, and proceeding in the absence of secure resourcing can lead to failure and a long-term setback.

There are also lessons to be learned from community television in other countries of North America, Europe, Australia and elsewhere, where literally thousands of community channels have been in existence, for decades in some cases². For instance, the centrality of open community ownership and control is highlighted by a contrast between the experience of the USA as against that of Canada. But developments in mainstream media have also given a new impetus to community television worldwide. The growing concentration of ownership of media into a small number of corporations, and the general commercialisation of media has led, paradoxically, to a proliferation of channels but diminished diversity and difference between them. Not alone is content converging on a few models and formats, but the channels are getting more distant from people and communities.

1 NEXUS Research, An Evaluation of the Pilot Community Radio Stations, IRTC, 1997.

2 See www.openchannel.se/cat/links/htm for community media around the world.
Also Part I of this study: Lessons from International Experience, December 2001, at www.activelink.ie/cmfi/

1.6 - Principles and Objectives: Empowerment, Participation, Diversity.

Bearing in mind these factors, the Dublin Community Television channel will pursue three-fold principles: *empowerment*, *participation* and *diversity*.

1. **Empowerment** of communities currently facing disadvantage or blockages in achieving social, economic and cultural objectives;
2. **Participation**, in every aspect of the channel, as well as in the governance and development of the city, for all the communities and people and Dublin;
3. **Diversity**, both by celebrating and linking the great diversity of communities of all kinds in Dublin and by widening the range of programmes available for people, including minority audiences, to watch.

It is difficult to underemphasize the importance of this philosophy, not only in its own terms and in how it will inform Channel activities, but also in terms of how others perceive community television. In our own research, as well as in experience elsewhere, confusion between local (commercial) television and community television can persist even after considerable contact with a community station. Community radio in Ireland reports a similar experience.

In the final instance, local commercial television is not about providing a service to the local area. Rather, it is about delivering a profit to its shareholders – often a short term profit through sale to a larger media conglomerate. (In this sense, local commercial media cannot be called ‘independent’, since they depend entirely on maximising the returns to shareholders.) This approach permeates through not just the content, but also ownership and management structures, in terms of the interactions between community and station.

The sole objective of community television, on the other hand, is to serve the community. Commercial gains are specifically excluded. This is, in fact, specified in the Broadcasting Act 2001, which states:

“Article 39 (2) (b) the supply of programmes material [by the community channel] will be effected with the sole objective of –

(i) specifically addressing the interests of the community concerned, and

(ii) achieving a monetary award of no greater amount than is reasonably necessary to defray the expenses that will be incurred in effecting that supply.”

It is vital that the community understand this difference, since this is a prerequisite to taking ‘ownership’ of the Channel and fully participating in and directing its activities. Yet this will take a huge effort in education, as it runs counter to what people are familiar with not only in commercial television, but in traditional top-down public service television.

The above three principles translate into concrete objectives, quite distinct from those of the mainstream. Dublin Community Television aims to:

- Enhance and enable practical sharing and networking, especially amongst marginalised groups, to support them in achieving their aims ;
- Encourage and facilitate participation by the people of Dublin in its development and governance;
- Create new means for people to gain an education in chosen areas;
- Connect and help to integrate dispersed communities;
- Deepen cultural identity and integrity, in a context of change and diversity;
- Encourage a wide range of non-mainstream, non-conventional views and ideas, stimulating new avenues of thought and cooperation.

2. WHAT COMMUNITY TELEVISION WILL DO

2.1 - Television's Contribution to these Objectives

Community television will address the objectives outlined above through a number of activities:

1. By providing access to transmission, it will empower community groups in Dublin, enabling them to promote their objectives on television, building bridges between them, and enhancing the sense of community in Dublin;
2. Through making available equipment, facilities, expertise and training, it will support communities in the production and dissemination of programmes;
3. Through televising deliberations of local government and creating opportunities for open interactions between the public, their representatives, officials and others in power, it will enhance the political participation and transparency and deepen the public sphere;
4. It will open education options not otherwise available;
5. Diversity in media will be improved by offering a range of viewing alternatives, and reflecting the diversity of Dublin communities in media;
6. It will deepen media understanding and critical viewing skills through training, enabling participation, equipment provision and other means.

In short, it aims to become an empowering thread in the fabric of Dublin communities, exploring and building partnerships and interactions with and between groups.

Thus the range of activities supported is necessarily broader than that of mainstream media, despite the great challenge it faces in securing resources. Commercial and public service media engage almost exclusively in programme production, selection and broadcasting (indeed, each of these tends increasingly to be divided between separate companies). A community channel, as part of its mission to integrate itself fully with the community, has an additional strong remit in the area of imparting media skills and enabling production. It is both a practical need, since the community itself is the core supplier of content for the channel, and a developmental goal bringing its own benefits to the community.

In the next page, programme content is considered first, followed by training and then equipment and facilities.

2.2 - Content Selection and Duration

- COMMUNITY 'EDITORIAL' CONTROL -

In general, the choice of broadcast programmes will be made ultimately by community and voluntary groups, singly or in combination, and even by individuals. In many cases, these groups will collaborate with enabling partners outside the community sector, such as local government or statutory agencies. It is not expected that the channel will itself have an editorial role, though it will in many cases work to facilitate the selection and production of programmes by others. This is, in part, to ensure that content comes from the community itself and is always linked to the needs as perceived by the community, and in part to prevent the emergence of an editorial clique that may lose touch with the community. An organisational structure able to carry through this approach is described further on.

As a community-run gatekeeper to transmission access, the Channel will first and foremost facilitate the development of schedules and transmission of programmes consistent with its principles of empowerment, participation and diversity and in line with its objectives. Legal restraints will, of course, remain and content may be excluded for instance where a serious risk of legal liability arises, such as libel, slander, invasion of privacy or obscenity; or where there is a serious risk of discrimination under the Equality Legislation. Furthermore, standards in broadcasting regarding taste, decency and advertising (which under Section 19 of the Broadcasting Act may be produced by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland) will apply, in ways yet to be specified.

On the other hand, 'political balance' is not a prerequisite, and representation and access for political institutions or politicians would be exercised in the context of the principles and objectives. Obviously, commercial programming (i.e. programmes made in pursuit of commercial gain or by commercial organisations) would be excluded, as would programmes falling below a minimum technical standard to be broadcast on cable.

- DURATION AND TRANSMISSION -

The duration of transmission – the times and length for which the Channel will be on air – is a function both of the supply and of the demand side. It will to a large extent depend on the volume of programmes that can be produced and sourced. But it will also depend on the airtime available, and on the equipment and other resources at hand to produce these programmes. Furthermore, the situation is more complex than it is for mainstream television, since the idea is not necessarily to reach the largest audiences and capture them for the longest period possible. Quite different objectives come into play.

Having said this, experience elsewhere strongly points to the need to be transmitting for a significant proportion of the day. Occasional or intermittent transmission will fail to build an audience and link solidly into the community.

Community channels in the USA manage to sustain a huge range and volume of programmes. CAN TV in Chicago, for instance, has five full dedicated channels on cable, each specialising in a different area. It broadcast over 6,000 hours of original programmes during the year 2000. Manhattan Neighbourhood Network broadcasts over four cable channels, closing only between the hours of 2:30am and 7:00 am.

But even small cities sustain significant broadcast schedules. Cambridge and Malden, both suburbs of Boston in Massachusetts, maintain three distinct channels apiece each of them running for over 15 hours daily. Smaller still, Somerville is a town of 26,000 households, 20,000 of which can receive SCAT: Somerville Community Access Television. They broadcast 90 hours of television per week, one half made by the community and the other coming mainly from community channels in neighbouring cities and towns.

The resources (financial and community) and audiences required for this level of programming have been painstakingly built up over a number of decades. But from the outset in Dublin it will be necessary to provide a minimum length of transmission. Discussions with smaller stations suggest the following:

1. A community channel needs a dedicated channel (i.e. not sharing with another broadcaster), perhaps using down-time to broadcast community or other messages in text form;
2. A continuous period of daily broadcasting, covering both the most popular general watching hours in the evening, as well as less popular slots where minority groups are more likely to tune in in the afternoon and/or morning, is needed.

Further on, a sample schedule is shown based on an assumption that a community channel would have to begin with at least six hours continuous broadcasting per day.

A key to producing this volume of content is to provide several avenues by which programmes can be produced and sourced, and to mobilise as many groups as possible within the community. We turn next to three segments of programmes, each of which could mobilise different modes of content production.

2.3 - Programme Content: Three Segments

The content broadcast may usefully be divided into three segments: *community*, *educational*, and *local government*, differentiated by their intent and mode of organisation.³

³ This bears some resemblance to the PEG model (public, educational, Government) in the US. However, there are also some important differences especially in relation to the community segment which, in Ireland, will be focused more on empowerment and diversity and less on public access and free speech.

A: THE COMMUNITY PROGRAMME SEGMENT

Community programmes will comprise the core element of the channel. While they will cater especially to minority, marginalised and special interests, some will also address the widest possible population in Dublin. This block of programmes will fill the bulk of the transmission time, and the main part of channel resources will be directed towards its realisation.

Community programmes will either be produced by or with community organisations active in Dublin, or selected by them for broadcast from non-commercial programme sources locally, nationally or internationally. Examples of these programmes might include, for instance:

- Video productions created independently by a community group or individual and brought to the channel for transmission;
- A series of programmes produced by a partnership of community organisations around a single theme, utilising in part resources supplied by the channel;
- Phone-in programmes directed by a community organisation, using facilities owned by the channel;
- Cookery programmes with ethnic recipes, and how-to programmes for hobbies, produced in studio;
- Bulletin Board listings of events, services and other community issues of interest;
- Appreciations or documentaries on local arts events, produced by a Channel team or local arts groups;
- A regular local news programme produced in collaboration between the local third level institutes and a group of community organisations;
- Non-commercial programmes imported from other countries, selected on a thematic basis by a group of community organisations active in similar areas, such as development, disability or gender.

A good example of a group marginalised by the media is the deaf community in Dublin. Only a tiny proportion of media programmes display Irish sign language, though a larger proportion have subtitles. Programmes of direct interest to the deaf community – as with so many other disadvantaged groups – are few and far between. A community station could both focus on increasing the use of signing and sub-titles, and facilitate the production of programmes of direct relevance to the deaf community. The Irish Deaf Society already has camera and editing equipment, and has produced a number of videos. It is estimated that there are about 1,500 deaf people in Dublin, and a further six to seven thousand with impaired hearing. Including also hearing families members, the potential size of this marginalised minority audience would be about 30,000 to 40,000 and a large proportion would be likely to tune in.

Thus content could be varied, some targeting larger audiences and other deliberately catering to very specialised or marginalised interests. All, however, would be proposed for transmission by one or more community groups, probably organised into ‘partnerships’ (see further on).

Over the years, many community organisations have produced videos of excellent quality. A considerable archive is distributed around the city, many still relevant today or that could be

updated with minimal effort. These might offer this segment a 'head-start' while production facilities are being put in place. A number of groups interviewed are in receipt of ongoing funding from government departments for their community development activities, and some have even produced videos as part of their work. The possibility of broadcasting such videos to targeted audiences can only enhance the potential of receiving future funding from these sources.

B: THE EDUCATIONAL SEGMENT

A block of educational programmes will target specific groups, for whom television access is particularly useful. In general, this might include situations where people work full-time in, or are confined to, the home or where confidentiality would be desirable. Literacy education and family or children's health come immediately to mind. But it could broaden out into distance education courses, and other forms of conventional training.

What distinguishes this segment of programmes is that it is promoted by educational interests, in general funded by the public sector. It targets very specific groups interested in following through on a course. Though a community channel welcomes innovation and experimentation, like most pre-planned educational material its form is relatively top-down and pedagogical.

Although this segment will ultimately be publicly funded, it will most likely (in line with current practice in this type of education) be delivered by professional educational and training experts in the community and voluntary sector. And the television dimension will in many cases be just one of a number of components comprising the course, combining with opportunities for phone or web-based interaction, class-based learning, one-to-one support and/or paper based material.

C: THE LOCAL GOVERNANCE SEGMENT

The third area of programme content aims specifically to enhance participation in, and transparency of, local governance activities.

Local government in Dublin has evolved in recent years. Dublin as a whole has a number of democratic assemblies, the local authority areas comprising Dublin City, Fingal, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, and South Dublin. Dublin City Council is devolved into five Areas, and indeed about 20 distinct neighbourhoods are generally recognised in the city alone. Important local decisions are more and more being taken at a devolved level, enabling elected representatives to focus on outcomes more directly in the constituencies to which they were elected.

Enhancing transparency and accessibility is important at all levels, and community television can contribute. Televised council deliberations, as seen in the Dáil, enable anyone interested to view how they are represented, a most immediate aspect of democracy. Other public tribunals, meetings and events can also be televised on an ad hoc basis. From the public's perspective, decisions directly affecting them are of most interest. Televising the most devolved level of local government will thus be a priority for the Channel.

What characterises programming in this segment is that it focuses exclusively on processes of government, aiming to enhance transparency, accountability and public participation. Collaboration with local government will be important, in funding and organisational terms. But programmes need not be confined to official meetings. The Channel could produce discussions and phone-in programmes with elected representatives; investigate and report on activities of the Council, and develop other formats in which representatives, local authority officials and others engage with the public on matters of concern.

Thus a suite of programmes, clearly identified as pertaining to local government issues, will be developed in various forms of cooperation and collaboration with the local authorities. Of course, this would not prevent additional programmes from being produced by community organisations themselves (for the community programme segment) relating to local government. The greater the diversity, the better.

2.4 - Training

The provision of media training is not an incidental part of a community channel. It is a central plank of survival, as well as the means to realise an important channel output, the imparting of media skills.

Most Channel content will be produced by community organisations themselves. It is envisaged that the Channel will have a small number of staff. It will facilitate production, through not only training but also basic equipment and facilities (see further on), but production is likely for the most part to be by individuals and community groups themselves, acting alone and collectively, in a voluntary capacity or as part of paid employment on behalf of a community or voluntary organisation. There may be some professional participation, from Channel staff or others, in Local Government and Educational Programme Segments, but the larger Community Segment will rely heavily on the capacity and willingness of the community to produce content.

As already outlined, programme formats will vary greatly, from full documentary productions to humble in-studio phone-in and discussions. To match these needs, training will be equally varied.

As a priority, the Channel will provide the training needed by communities directly to produce output. There are two broad kinds:

- a) Short instructional sessions on the use of individual items of equipment available to the public, such as cameras and lighting, and editing studios;
- b) Short, regular, standardised courses in using in-house self-operated studio(s) (see further on). These would be a requirement on groups intending to utilise the equipment for broadcast purposes;

- c) More extended training in the various components of producing a programme, from pre-production, to production and post-production. Conventionally these include, for instance:
- Planning and organising programme production;
 - Using camera, lights and other equipment;
 - Editing and Sound-Dubbing;
 - Graphics and credits.

It is not envisaged that the Channel will replace or compete with existing community-based media training and educational resources. Rather, it will directly undertake training where it is geared towards use of the Channel's own (limited) facilities, and where appropriate training is not available and accessible elsewhere. The Channel will cooperate closely with existing training resources in ensuring that individuals and communities receive the type of training needed, at affordable rates, to support Channel production and achieve its objectives.

A further form of education covers media literacy, interpretation and use. This is a valuable complement to technology use and production skills, and raises the level of sophistication of a community in its interactions with mainstream media, from being passive viewers to engaging directly with media and their coverage of community issues. This category is likely only to emerge as resources permit. It is worth noting, however, that participation in a local community Channel, not only in production but also as volunteers in the administration and board management, is in itself an educational experience, and provides a grounding from which mainstream media can be better assessed.

2.5 - Media Equipment, Facilities Provision and Production Support

In addition to training, access to media facilities is essential for community production. Again, as in training, the aim is not to compete with existing sources, of which there exist quite a number. It is rather to cooperate in making existing resources available to those seeking to produce content for the Channel, to make up the shortfall where needed, and to provide the minimum of facilities that a Channel needs to sustain a coherent and reasonably comprehensive set of activities.

Dublin has a range of media facilities, spread through different parts of the city. A few are devoted specifically to community media, and others are utilised by educational institutions or others. The Channel would facilitate, where possible, an extended availability of these resources to community groups and organisations (see further on).

The minimum required in terms of the Channel's in-house studios, editing facilities, and so forth is described further on. At this point, attention is drawn to the need to facilitate access

to this equipment as an integral part of Channel activities, in the first place to enable the production of content. Usual facilities include:

- Studios, for different types of formats;
- Portable cameras, audio and lighting equipment, for use externally;
- Video editing, audio dubbing and post-production suites
- Website and networking facilities, to support programmes and interact with members and audiences.

However, even with training provided and equipment to hand, the experience of community radio suggests that further efforts will be essential if the gap between the those active in the Channel and the community in general is to be really bridged. A number of factors combine such that a gap will almost inevitably open at the early stages of a media initiative, even with the best efforts of the pioneers in television to emerge naturally as part of the community. Reasons include:

- Community organisations of all kinds are usually already severely stretched, and to spare time or money for new unproven initiatives, no matter how promising, can be extremely difficult if not impossible. It takes time to rank alongside, establish precedence over, other pressing needs.
- Many, if not most, community groups regard media simply as a means to get their story out, alongside other stories. Dissatisfaction is often centred on the image of the community that mainstream media present, rather than on limitations of the format and capabilities of the mainstream media themselves. Getting the idea across that community media belong to the community itself, and thus of the potential to explore new ideas through the media, takes time and effort.
- Many community and other organisations harbour a fear of the media, derived ultimately from how mainstream media set themselves apart and above people. They may thus prefer to allow others control the production process.

The Channel will therefore offer direct support for production and for recording community events and activities, gradually breaking down barriers and fears and building up capacities.

As with training, the priority will be to put minimal requirements in place, as a prerequisite to the production of content. But a medium-term aim, comparable to community stations elsewhere, will be to provide the community with affordable use of equipment, facilities needed to produce videos for whatever purpose, and direct support of the nature and extent needed to build solid bridges between community and channel.

3. HOW THE CHANNEL WILL WORK

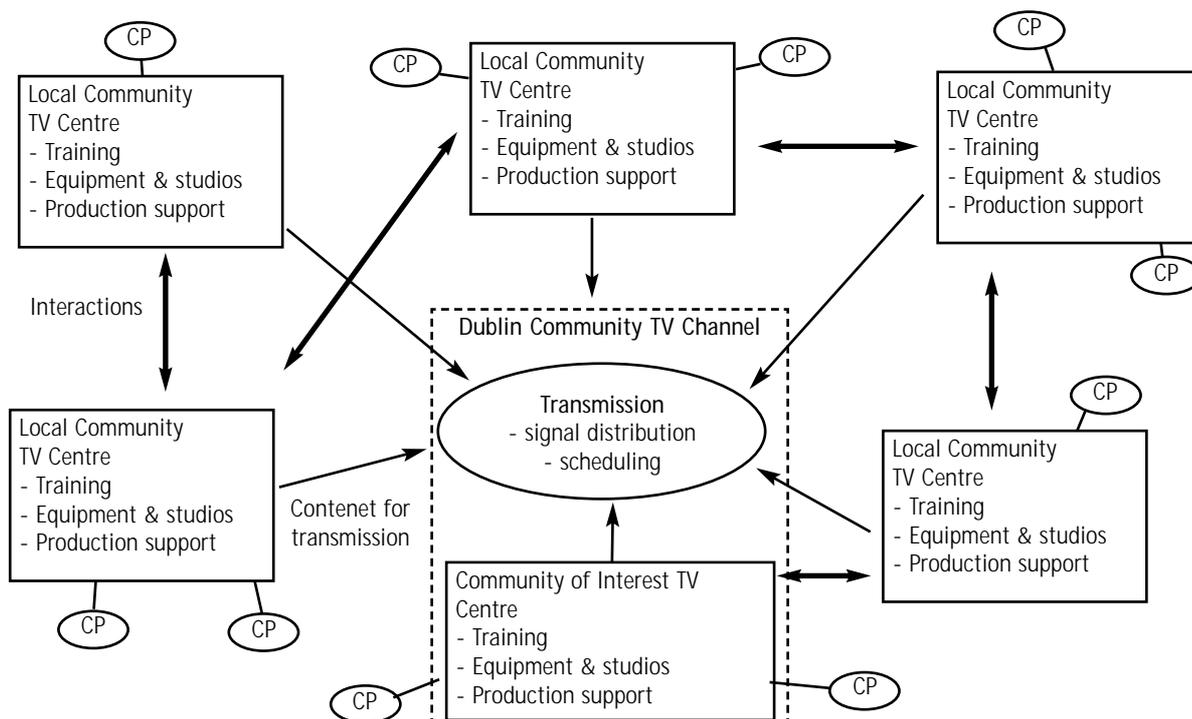
3.1 - A Vision of Community Television in Dublin

The point of departure is an ambitious, but realisable, long-term vision for community television in Dublin. For the people of Dublin and groups striving to enhance the cultural, social and economic well-being of the city, it would see the provision of:

- Affordable training in television and associated skills, at times and places that suit communities;
- Affordable access to production and post-production facilities, in locations distributed around the city within easy reach of their own communities;
- Free access to transmission for programmes produced by the community, and selected by it to augment diversity of television content and the cultural wealth and multiplicity of Dublin’s communities;
- Ultimate control over these facilities, and every opportunity to participate in all areas of activity.

The full flowering of this vision will take time, but it provides focus to what otherwise might be fragmented development. Each step must justify in its own terms investment devoted to it, while at the same time it sets another brick in place in the construction of a coherent and effective new television resource for the people of Dublin. A model may be drawn as follows, illustrating the long-term vision but also demonstrating how proposals here represent a step in this direction. It presents a distributed set of independent centres, which in addition to their local activities, feed content into a central transmission facility.

Figure 1: A Vision of Dublin Community Television



how the channel will work

Illustrated are a number of local independent community television centres dispersed around the greater Dublin area, within easy reach of Dubliners anywhere. In practice, their might be any number of these, each engaging in a range of community media activities (such as video, radio, publishing, photography, internet) and in other community development and support actions. The 'bubbles' attached to these (at the risk of cluttering up the illustration) represent the Community Partnerships (CP), a large number of which will come into being to produce and select programmes, and indeed who will be the ultimate arbiters of content.

Dublin Community Channel itself, at the centre, is a two fold-entity: a *transmission facility* linked to the cable provider or other means of transmission, as well as a *community television centre* that serves primarily communities of interest in the city as a whole (i.e. communities based not on geographic proximity but on commonality of interest, such as gays and lesbians, minority ethnic groups, and innumerable general issue based groups.), as well possibly the local area in which it is situated.

Thus transmission and service provision are quite distinct, only the former requiring a licence from the BCI.

- The transmission facility looks after connecting to the means of dissemination, for instance the cable operator. It is also concerned with scheduling and presenting content - though, as we have seen, following guidelines set by the community rather than in pursuit of an editorial policy of its own.
- Service provision, on the other hand, is concerned with direct interactions with the community, including training, provision of equipment and studios, and expertise. In this model, all but the central 'community of interest TV centre' are independent, created in and by their own communities and engaging in a range of other activities.

Although this is a long-term vision, some elements are already falling into place. In North East Dublin, a Community Media Centre is currently under construction. Part of the Civic Centre in Coolock, it will include a television studio and a radio station, NEAR FM, amongst its services. Civic Offices elsewhere in the city are at different stages of development, but such community television centres may be located in a variety of contexts. In Ballymun, a community video cooperative is doing both training and local production, and has been provided space in the local arts and community resource centre, AXIS.

While working towards the realisation of this full vision, Dublin Community Television would focus its activities on both the local community in which it is based and the wider Dublin community. It could also enter into agreements with non-community training and production facilities, such as those in third level educational institutions, to make facilities available locally and to enhance the capacities and interest of communities in the Channel and in production. Among potential partners in this regard are Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Aungier Street, National College of Art and Design (NCAD) in Thomas Street, and Dublin City University.

Finally, the fine lines between the boxes above indicate flows of transmission content towards the central facility. But broader lines suggest that many other interactions might emerge

between independent local centres, in terms of sharing facilities, specialising in certain services, and in building bridges and collaboration between the communities themselves.

Yet even this vision may not yet do justice to a fully interactive and participate environment of a future Dublin, based on converging digital technologies, as envisaged by the “*Connected and Informed City*” and anticipated by *dublin.ie*. Thus in the future, television and other community media may find themselves on a same digital platform as a huge array of community, statutory services available in the city, carried by a new broadband network.

3.2 - Building the Institutional Framework

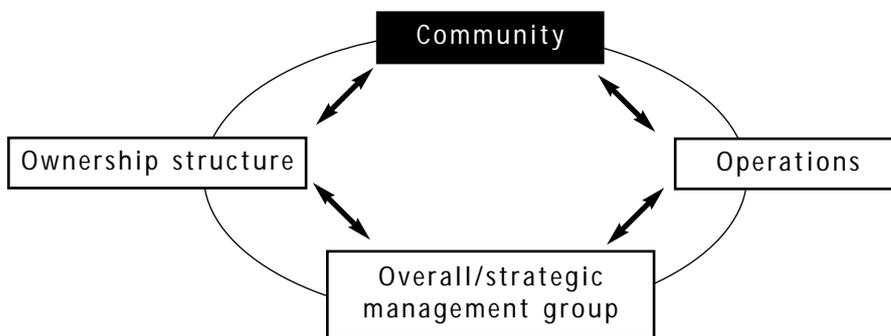
Dublin City Community Channel will be wholly owned by the people and communities of Dublin. It will be a not-for-profit entity, dedicated entirely to serving the people of Dublin in pursuit of the objectives above. This much is reasonably certain based on the stated preferences of those consulted.

The design of the institutional framework, and the practicalities of its realisation, will be central to maintaining the ethos and objectives. Both will require careful consideration. The latter especially is likely to evolve over a period. At this stage, a couple of options are presented concerning the specifics of the institutional structure.

GENERAL INSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

Fortunately, institutional principles of community media have already been the subject of debate and decision in Ireland. Collaborating closely with community radio stations, the Independent Radio and Television Commission (the precursor to the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland) devised a model. This was strongly endorsed subsequently at the Community Media Workshop held in Dublin in June 2001.⁴ Broadly speaking, Dublin Community Television will follow this model, and the principles guiding its institutional aspects will be democratic participation, transparency and accountability.

This generic model, intended to apply to community media initiatives of all types, is illustrated below:



⁴ Community Media Workshop, Mercer Hotel, June 20th 2001. Organised by Community Media Forum June 2001 see www.activelink.ie/cmfw/

how the channel will work

The main thrust is to ensure that the community has multiple avenues for participation in the initiative, and that the relationship between the community and the channel is bi-directional and ongoing.

Thus the community will participate in ownership in one of several ways, for instance through the issue of a single share, with voting rights, to every individual or every group interested.

The community may also elect or select the overall management group. And there will many opportunities to engage in the operation of the Channel, for example through producing programmes, getting training in media skills, or volunteering in administration, fundraising or other activities.

The critical governance issue here is to ensure that ownership, strategic management, and operational aspects of the Channel are open to broad participation, to individuals and community groups active in Dublin.

At the same time, the empowerment and diversity objectives of the Channel would suggest that a *collective* membership structure is especially to be encouraged. Community and voluntary groups, as distinct from individuals, will most likely play the key role, although the Channel will be open to all.

Needless to say, the institutional structure adopted by the Channel is not only about these principles. It must also be designed to provide a robust and flexible instrument for managing and administering the activities, for raising and utilising funding, and for effective marshalling of resources to achieve objectives.

INDICATIVE INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

At this stage, an indicative description of the Channel's institutional structure is sufficient. A key step in the Action Plan will be to define this more closely and to initiate the appropriate legal and institutional arrangements. The following are intended to act as a basis for further deliberation.

1. Several legal options are available in Ireland for community initiatives, none of them ideal. These include a **company limited by guarantee**, a **cooperative** and **charitable status**. The first is the most commonly used.
2. It is possible, in part because of the different nature of activities but also because of the conditions associated with gaining a community channel licence, that **two distinct legal entities** will be formed for the transmission activities of the Channel, and for the production/training and service provision side respectively. However, a separate institutional and governance structures would not thereby be required.
3. The creation of a further separate **Foundation or a Charitable Trust** may prove to be effective in terms of attracting and administering financial and other resources.

4. The Channel will be a **membership-based** organisation. Experience elsewhere (and in other organisations in Ireland) suggests a number of options for membership:
 - **Ordinary membership** could be divided between **institutional** (for groups) and **individual** membership. Basic criteria would be that they be active or resident in the community, and (for groups) promote non-for-profit aims relating to community and individual development in the broadest sense.
 - Each would pay a different **membership fee** (always set to ensure affordability and with different rates according to need), and have **a right to vote** at general meetings. The voting rights may be different, groups possibly given more than individuals. Members would be the main actors in the production partnerships (see below) and would ultimately be behind all Channel broadcasting and other activities.
 - **Associate or Affiliate Membership** could be introduced to enable those who cannot, or do not wish to, become members to support its activities. These could include individuals, statutory organisations, private sector firms or associations. Certain privileges might come with this form of membership, such as renting resources at reasonable rates. Some stations have also introduced an explicit **Sponsor** status, for those providing significant funding and support, and receiving an acknowledgement for it.
5. Members elect a **Board of Directors**, who act in a voluntary capacity. The election process and the composition of the board may reflect different categories of membership, for instance having a certain number of positions set aside for election by groups and by individual members. There could also be directors elected on a geographical or other basis. The Board would oversee the appointment of staff and strategic aspects of the running of the Channel.
6. One or more **Advisory Committees** may also be established, both to involve other actors and to help areas such as programme production, partnership development and fund-raising. The three Programme Segments outlined earlier might also each have an Advisory Committee.

The above is quite a conventional approach, and other ideas may be developed to enhance ongoing participation in the management structure.

3.3 - Managing Resources and Organising Content

The Channel is conceived as primarily a facilitating organisation. It will have a set of core activities and resources to be undertaken by its own staff. But most Channel day-to-day activities will be carried out by people and groups in the community, supported by the Channel in various ways. This means that the Channel must lay a heavy emphasis on mobilising communities, to help them recognise the benefits of, and invest the time, effort and resources in, programme production.

Some programmes will be produced by individuals – talented and committed enthusiasts – and by larger individual organisations. But the main bulk is expected to come from ‘partnerships’ initiated and supported by the Channel.

INDIVIDUAL PROGRAMME PRODUCTION

It may be within the resources and the remit of some larger community and/or voluntary organisations to produce regular programmes of interest. This may be especially true in the educational sector, for production in the educational segment. In this case, an agreement would be drawn up between the Channel and the organisation, regarding the nature of the programme, the number of hours to be broadcast during what period, the broadcast times, the contribution of the Channel and so forth.

Other community organisations, with strong outreach, advocacy or training remits, might gain significant benefit from producing a regular programme utilising the minimum of equipment and facilities available at the Channel, such as a basic phone-in studio or editing suite. Experience elsewhere has also shown that aforementioned enthusiasts may also find time and energy to put together programmes of interest on a specific topic on a regular basis, using Channel facilities.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PARTICIPATION

Yet partnerships of various kinds are expected to comprise *the key organisational form* used to enable resources and content, and encourage participation. Partnerships have several advantages.

- They share the burden and responsibility of production, possibly on a rotating basis, yet, if a suitable format and content is found, all can benefit equally from the common work.
- Several organisations acting together may be able to attract more funding than one acting alone, a joint effort offering more credibility to the funder in terms of relevance and impact;
- From the Channel’s perspective, attracting participation in the form of members and volunteers, is likely to be greatly improved by the participation of more organisations;
- Partnerships, more than individual groups, could contact a wider audience, to alert them to the presence of the Programme;
- A partnership is more likely to be able to overcome unexpected crises and demands on resources, and still produce the content, than an individual organisation.

Partnerships will have distinct aims, the following four examined here:

- a) To facilitate community access to (non-channel) media production resources;
- b) To facilitate community access to (non-channel) training programmes;
- c) To enable the cooperative production of programmes and content;
- d) To produce specialised programme segments, in particular with local government.

A number are presented below, each configured differently but all with the final aim of ensuring that quality production is available to be broadcast by the Channel. All partnership

arrangements are premised on mutual benefit. That is, any organisation (or individual) entered into partnership with the Channel and with others will do so based on a recognised benefit to itself. Each arrangement will be explicit and contractually agreed upon by the organisations involved.

a) Partnership with Media Production Resources

Much production will take place utilising equipment and facilities already existing in various locations in Dublin, including in community media organisations, civic centres, and second and third level institutions.

For the Channel to gain access to these, partnership agreements will be entered into. For instance, third level institutions with courses on journalism, media studies or visual arts may arrange for students to undertake projects on community programmes as part of their course, including access to equipment and studios. Such programmes would be planned and produced in conjunction with local community or voluntary organisations, working together as an editorial team on the subject matter to be covered (for example a regular local news item, or documentaries on current concerns). The aim would be to agree a package of programmes for each annual cycle, to be broadcast at a regular and agreed time.

Students benefit from having proposals put to them regarding their projects that have real relevance to the community, and through having public transmission to their credit. The Channel and the community benefit by having the programmes produced and broadcast on themes of current relevance.

b) Training and Education Partnerships

These could go in several directions.

At its simplest, the Channel might simply facilitate access to existing training and educational courses in media and communications with a community focus, by directing community organisation towards them and developing arrangements to facilitate enrolment and funding.

Taken a step further, the Channel could assist in developing a module or programme in community television, working with a community media group or second or third level college. The aim would be to focus on skills required by the Channel, in the broadest sense, including both conventional and experimental programme making, media criticism, and working with communities. Such courses could be provided to individuals or to groups from organisations intending to work in a community context later.

A component of such training could also be to work directly in the Channel, for a period, to gain experience and learn and experiment in production.

Quite a different idea is to seek the voluntary time of media professionals, working in RTE and elsewhere, to provide hands-on workshops and short training sessions, organised by the Channel itself. These could be arranged individually, or a trade union or television station itself might, for instance, be willing to facilitate them.

c) Theme Cluster Partnerships

A third type of partnership could be termed a 'theme cluster partnership'. Many groups interviewed during this research indicated strong interest in using television to assist them in achieving their objectives, whether advocacy, community development, information dissemination or otherwise. Yet individually they lack the resources (time and/or money) to produce a regular series. The aim of this partnership is to bring together groups with similar interests, to form a critical mass able to produce a regular series.

Thus the Channel would facilitate the coming together of a cluster of community organisations or individuals who share a common interest, for instance in development, in gender, in culture, or in a particular sport or hobby. They would draft an agreement between themselves and the Channel to produce a given number of programmes, at regular intervals. Partners would take responsibility for the production of programmes, from beginning to end. Resources could be found in a number of ways, made easier by sharing the effort.

- They could seek funding from a public or other source, and have the programme produced professionally, possibly by community media video makers. (This might be the case, for instance, for the educational segment of programmes.)
- They could produce the programmes themselves, utilising the Channel's own equipment for shooting and editing, at low cost. The skilled input required could be obtained externally or from among their number - a surprising level of skills, from directing, to camera to scriptwriting, was found, during the course of this work, to be available to some community level organisations.
- They could opt to produce a programme in the Channel's own studio, either live or taped.
- Archives of videos or of footage produced previously by partners or associates could be edited and supplemented, as appropriate;
- As a group, they could source programme externally, non-commercial but high quality. Such programmes could be shown in their entirety, or (copyright permitting) could be editing together and supplemented with commentaries.

It would be essential that such partnerships are willing and capable of producing the content on a reliable basis, following whatever agreement is reached.

e) Local Government Partnerships

Here, the aim is to produce programmes for the local government segment, working with local authorities.

A partnership agreement might be reached whereby a local authority provides access to meetings and funds programme production of relevance to the areas involved. As mentioned, a suite of programmes could be produced based on an explicit agreement. Actual production could be undertaken by Channel staff or by other community media groups. Such a suite of programmes on local government issues might include:

- Regular or occasional broadcast of devolved Council deliberations;
- Studio discussion with politicians, local people and other experts;
- Live phone-in discussions;
- Magazine-type segments on things happening in the area.

Each programme could cover just one area of the city, for instance a group of neighbourhoods or possibly the proposed Areas of the City Council, and might have a regular programme once a month or week.

3.4 - Staff: A Professional Approach

A professional staff is essential to the success of a venture such as this. Volunteers, student placements and others similar arrangements can contribute in some circumstances, but only where core activities are planned and implemented in a professional, well-organised manner. This is as true for television as it is for any significant community initiative with ambitious goals and complex means to achieve them.

An initiative that aims to leverage and supplement existing resources in the community in particular demands that staff have multi-faceted well-developed skills. Much of the work involves working with and motivating others, outside a strict hierarchy, and innovating in setting up and maintaining partnerships.

Further on, where the resources required are outlined, we consider the number and nature of staff. At this stage, staff responsibilities are broadly divided into the main areas as follows:

Scheduling and Transmission:

- Seeking and accepting tapes and programmes;
- Scheduling the programmes;
- Liasing with NTL and others for transmission;
- Publicity and dissemination, including attracting/informing viewers.

Partnership Development and Programme Production:

- Organising partnership arrangements and theme clusters;
- Facilitating programme production by members and communities;
- Producing and maintaining Web support and materials for the programmes;
- Producing programmes, with community groups.

Training and Equipment Provision:

- Purchasing and maintaining equipment and facilities;
- Making equipment and facilities available to members;
- Providing Training.

General Management and Administration:

- Fund-raising and resource mobilisation;
- Staff and volunteer recruitment and training;
- Administration and bookkeeping;
- Designing and initiating new activities;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Reporting to the Board.

3.5 - Attracting and Involving Viewers

The above partnerships are a primary means to encourage participation in the Channel. Though they are focused on programme production, they can also be used to boost membership activity and to attract volunteers for non-production areas.

But another key challenge faces a community channel: How to attract and retain viewers. A community Channel is not in the same game of maximising viewers as are mainstream channels – the goals and the rules are quite different. Nevertheless, there is a need both to ensure that potential viewers are aware of what is being broadcast and to make programmes as attractive and stimulating as possible.

Viewers of community television may be a very disparate group, with widely differing interests.

A few programmes, such as local news, will aim at attracting a large audience. But much, if not most, will deliberately serve small minorities of viewers. What this means is that community television is likely to be treated differently by the viewer. Apart from the general interest programmes, most viewers will be seeking a specific programme designed to address his or her interests, and will have little interest in much else that is shown. Rather than including the community channel among those they regularly ‘flick’ through, the aim is to be ensure that minority interests are aware of the time that one or a few particular programmes of interest are broadcast.

General programmes, such as local news, are likely to have little difficulty building a wide audience, and may be reported on, for instance, in the local press. For specialist programmes, a number of means could be utilised:

- E-mail lists and Websites have proven an effective means to activate and network in civil society as a whole, and specific groups could be targeted. In part, such targeted lists could be compiled (with permission from those listed) from community and voluntary organisations active in the subject-area.
- Especially if working together to produce the programmes, Theme Partnerships could use their own conventional means (newsletters, meetings etc.) to alert members and associates.
- Regular listing in newspapers may also be possible, though experience elsewhere suggests that newspapers will carry community listings only where there are a relatively small number of stations available overall and where a significant duration of programmes is broadcast.

- Leaflets, advertising in places where specific audiences are expected to be, posters and other more conventional means can also be effective.

Word-of-mouth is considered one of the best ways of attracting audiences. This is likely to work especially on the context of programmes with a strong local dimension.

Community television is interested not only, however, in attracting audiences to watch programmes. People and groups will also be facilitated to act on foot of what they have watched, and indeed to understand that they, too can, become active in the Channel. Here, a Website could also be used (as in mainstream television) to provide supplementary information on the issues raised in the programme, and on how to become involved with the organisations or others featured, and to introduce people to the Channel itself. Although ready access to the internet is still not available in many homes, access in libraries is now widespread, and could be encouraged perhaps through links with the libraries themselves.

3.6 - Measuring Success

Being able to monitor and evaluate success in achieving the objectives outlined earlier is essential to attracting and maintaining support, from the community as well as from funders. In some models of community television, this need is not so great. For instance, where enhancing free speech is a primary objective, simply the provision and use of a facility for people to make their own programmes is a main indicator of success – whether people choose to watch output, or indeed whether programme makers are thereby empowered, is less important.

Dublin Community Television aims at a set of objectives that include such matters as empowering groups and addressing diversity. Criteria and indicators will be required to monitor success in each of them. The Broadcasting Act 2001 already suggests certain criteria necessary to gain and retain a license (criteria relating to applying for a license are presented later on). To retain a license the following are relevant:

“Article 39 (5) The Commission shall conduct, or arrange with members of the local community concerned for there to be conducted, a survey, which shall be as comprehensive as is practicable, amongst members of that community for the purpose of ascertaining –

- (a) the extent to which that community is facilitated in the active participation by it in the compilation and transmission of the programme material pursuant to a community content contract,*
- (b) the extent to which those members view any broadcasting service on which there is transmitted that programme material, and*
- (c) the opinion of those members with regard to –*
 - (i) the quality of the programme material, and –*
 - (ii) whether that material specifically addresses the interests of the community.”*

Below we contrast principles governing the measurement of success for a community channel with those of mainstream channels. Using the mainstream yardstick for both, a tendency of those unfamiliar with community media, would fail to allow for some critical differences.

SUCCEEDING WITH VIEWERS

Commercial television, in terms of content and scheduling, measures its success primarily by the amount of advertising revenue it can generate, maximising returns to shareholders. Its survival thus depends heavily on two factors: The sheer volume of viewers, 'eyeballs', they can deliver to advertisers; and the spending power of those viewers. The emphasis is on selecting programmes not specifically for their content per se, but for how successfully they deliver on these goals – it is the spaces between programmes, the ads, that matter most, and not programme content itself. (Subscription fees, to cable or satellite, comprise a further revenue stream, and are less linked to individual programmes and more to the overall selection available.)

Even public service television, which does have specific content guidelines, is increasingly required to play by the same rules, due in no small part to cut-backs in public funding. Currently just over a third of RTE income (in 2001, 95m of a total of 258m) comes from the licence fee, meaning the rest must be raised by advertising and commercial activities. The pressure to do so is global, driven by huge media conglomerates, mainly US controlled, that dominate the production and broadcasting industries, and few governments have the will to oppose the trend (in part, because of the very power of the media themselves). To the extent that this is the case, commercial and public service media are becoming indistinguishable.

This provides the opening for community television, since it is driven by a different logic.

Community television is concerned with the overall beneficial impact of the programmes transmitted, in line with its social and cultural objectives. This means that the *impact of the content itself* is a critical measure of success. This is radically different as a criterion for success, since the nature of the impact of a programme can vary greatly i.e. the meaning of the programme to the viewer and the consequences that might follow. Put simply, the value to the viewer of watching an imported soap-opera is very different to the value of a programme that explores an issue of crucial concern to her or his community. In community television terms, fifty thousand people watching a soap opera is less valuable than five hundred people eagerly learning about, and motivated to act upon, issues that affect their daily lives.

Furthermore, community television derives no additional benefit from attracting viewers with high disposable income. Community television need not gravitate towards commercially attractive groups, such as young high-earners with few children and well-off professionals. In line with its community ethos and objectives, other interests, currently neglected as not numerous enough or wealthy enough to constitute a viable 'market', are often the target groups. These might include older people, low-income families, immigrants, refugees and minority ethnic groups, environmentalists, development activists, people with hobby - as well as the general population interested in their local city, and indeed those simply fed up with being treated as fodder for advertisers and lifestyle sales pitches.

Thus neither the absolute volume of viewers nor their purchasing power are, in themselves, driving factors in community television. Numbers do matter, and the audience size must be maximised. But ultimately numbers matter only in so far as contribute to achieving the goals of the Channel, for instance in terms of empowering the maximum number, and gaining access to audiences sidelined by the mainstream.

It is thus the quality and depth of impact on people's lives and on the community, resulting from viewing and corollary actions, that matters. This is a lot harder to measure – indeed only communities themselves are ultimately in a position to judge – but it is also an objective worth striving for.

SUCCEEDING WITH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Community television differs from mainstream counterparts in another fundamental way.

Unlike for either commercial or public service television, the level of participation of a community in its television channel is both an objective and a critical factor in its success. Becoming directly involved in television has a number of valuable benefits for individuals and groups:

- Television can be an extremely valuable tool by which community organisations achieve their goals, through advocacy, helping them get their message out, through advocacy;
- Becoming practically involved in media is possibly the best media literacy training there is, enhancing the ability to critically assess whether mainstream media really are acting in the public interest;
- Participating, working with others, in a community activity helps build linkages within communities.

Participation can, as outlined above, run from production of programmes, to volunteering, to participating in general meetings or the management committee. All have their own benefits for participants. And all are essential to the Channel's survival. It is the mutual benefit from participation, if it can be maximised, that anchors the Channel in the community, and the community in the Channel.

Levels of participation can be measured without too much difficulty. It is a bigger challenge, however, to assess the extent of benefits to be derived from such participation. Again, community groups and individuals are in the best position to judge these, and the methodologies adopted will reflect this.

DESIGNING A METHODOLOGY

In short, assessing the extent to which the Channel achieves its objectives will include consideration of:

- a) The overall immediate and longer-term impact on viewers, on different viewing groups and on community development, depending partly on the number of viewers, on the impact of viewing, and on a consideration of characteristics of content directly;

- b) The level and quality of participation by individuals and groups in all aspects of the Channel, the extent to which this has enabled them to achieve their goals and has been a force for empowerment.

Detailed indicators to comply with the Broadcasting Act can be developed in due course, and the BCI will have some say in this.⁵ The Channel will also devise additional criteria and indicators to determine whether it is achieving its goals.

At this point it is stressed that these should be designed and implemented in an innovative and participative manner, working closely with organisations and individuals involved with the Channel, as well as in relation to the needs of Dublin as a whole. The aim should be to develop a monitoring and evaluation process that can be utilised not only to assess the degree to which objectives are being attained, but also as a management tool for the Channel's ongoing activities..Such generic methodologies have already been developed in the community and voluntary sector, and are being applied for instance to the *Community Development Programme* of the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs.

5) In community radio, the IRTC supported the creation in 1997 of a methodology for evaluating community stations based around Workshops with the community itself. It was geared not only to assess success but to provide feedback on how to improve the functioning of the station for the community, and the initial work was undertaken by NEXUS.

4. REQUIREMENTS AND COSTS

The physical requirements of a community Channel for Dublin are presented here, designed according to the description above. The focus is two fold.

First we describing the *minimum* level of resources needed at the outset, below which the Channel will probably fail to achieve a basic survival threshold in terms of content, audience impact, local support and benefits to the community. This is what is required to test whether the viability and value of the concept.

Second, we consider briefly the path towards making progress, within the foreseeable future, towards the model envisaged above.

4.1 - Basic Assumptions on Transmission, Programmes and Technology

A number of assumptions must be made prior to outlining requirements. The following are indicative, based on experience elsewhere and on discussions with relevant groups during the course of this work. They relate to the basic minimum requirements.

a. Duration of Transmission:

The Channel, in principle, could broadcast up to 24 hours a day. Our assumption is that the minimum required to build up a critical mass of programmes is six hours per day, or approximately 180 hours a month. This comes to about 2,160 hours a year. More would be preferable. Many programmes will be repeated, some several times, and some will be imported from outside. But there remains an enormous number of hours to be filled, with inevitably limited budgets.

b. Audience Mix:

We assume that one part of this will be targeted at a mass Dublin audience, such as a daily news programme. The rest will focus on specific minority audiences, following the Channel's principles.

c. Live Broadcasting:

We assume that live broadcasting will be possible from a Channel studio. Live broadcast is not only, for many formats, more effective in getting a message across. In the case of phone-in programmes (which we expect to occupy a significant proportion), it is essential.

d. Formats:

Experience elsewhere suggests a number of staple formats that are both low-cost and popular at community level. These include phone-in programmes on topical issues, studio interviews, group discussions, 'how-to' programmes produced in studio, and event broadcasting.⁶

6) Such formats are described in some depth in the first report of this project: *Lessons from International Experience*, at www.activelink.ie/cm/

e. Bulletin Board:

In addition, a community bulletin board, or other text service, would be broadcast at other hours. These could reasonably occupy an additional four hours, or so, a day.

f. Schedule:

A sample monthly schedule might thus break down as follows:

Content	Hours
News programme: 2.5 hours weekly	10 h
Local Government Programme: 4 hours weekly	16 h
Educational programming: 4 hours weekly	16 h
Community Phone-in: 10 hours weekly	42 h
Community imported programmes: 5 hours weekly	20 h
Community productions (including archives): 5 hours weekly	20 h
Total unique hours :	124 h
Repeated	52 h
Grand Total programme broadcast	180 h
Scrolling text messages: 4 hours daily	120 h

g. Quality of equipment and facilities:

Equipment is both falling in price and becoming easier to use. Increasingly, equipment is self-operated, requiring only limited training. Broadcast-quality production, that a few years ago required expensive, bulky and difficult to use equipment, can now be achieved with low-cost digital mini-DV cameras with digital computer editing. Nor is top-range professional equipment even always the most useful for a community station. Portability, reliability, robustness and cost, as well as functionality, are included among criteria for selection.

The approach of the Channel is anticipate future changes in technologies, and especially the imminent migration to wide screen television, to move to digital, the convergence of distribution platforms, constantly enhanced interactivity, and the general integration of services to customers. The technological base of the Channel should enable a smooth transition of archives and current production to a fully digital, broadband environment, and the emergence of a single general digital interface for users in Dublin, such as is anticipated in *dublin.ie*.

Thus the channel will equip on the basis of the low-cost mini-DV option, but at the same time to begin a process with more advanced broadcast quality that will gradually lead to a parallel, though less comprehensive, capacity using this technology. This will provide broader training capacity (suitable also for later mainstream media employment), ensure that output can be

broadcast on mainstream television, and enable the Channel to stay abreast with technology developments. A minimal DVCam technology platform is included below, which will be built up in the medium term.⁷

4.2 - Production, Training and Equipment Provision Needs

INITIAL MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

The following are the initial minimum requirements for the Channel, in terms of equipment, premises and staff, bearing in mind the above assumptions. (see Annex 2 for a detailed list).

Studio Needs

- 1) One small three-person, self-operated studio, with fixed cameras, roll-in VCR deck, credits and titles, and live phone-in facilities. This would require a live connection to the cable broadcaster.
- 2) One multi-purpose medium-sized studio, seating six to eight participants in reasonable space, and accommodating a small audience. Size would be approximately 10 metres by 15 metres, with adequate height, and a linked control and sound room. This would be suitably equipped with cameras, lights, sets, control room mixers, and sound mixing room, and fitted out with studio facilities.

In addition (as mentioned above) it is expected that the Channel will arrange for community groups to gain access to studios existing in statutory, educational or community facilities.

Editing, Cameras and other Equipment

These are required for Channel production, training and community use.

- 3) Three full editing suites, in sound-proofed room. These will enable community groups and individuals to edit tapes, as well as the editing of Channel output. Sound dubbing would also be possible.
- 4) Five mini-DV 3 CCD Cameras, with tripods and microphones available for rent to members. Smaller mini-DV cameras may also be available. In addition, two broadcast-quality DVCam cameras will be required (see footnote 7 above).
- 5) Portable sound and lighting equipment to accompany the above.

Again, it is assumed that similar equipment and facilities would also gradually become available around the community, through arrangements with existing organisations and groups.

7. Technology is currently changing fast, with the introduction of several all digital, high definition standards, and the transition towards wide screen television. The current professional standard, Beta, will soon be replaced by advanced technologies, such as DVCam, DVC Pro or DigiBeta, compatible with the mini-DV format. The Channel will have to consider these in selecting its high-grade broadcast equipment in the future.

Connectivity Needs

Equipment is also needed to connect to the cable operator, and effect the transfer of content.

- 6) A number of options can carry the Channel signal to the cable operator: Radio link to NTL cable head-end via a repeater; 2 Mbit leased line from EirCom; or Direct cable network connection to the head-end.
- 7) Event controller (for lining up and playing content to transmission)

Other equipment needs

- 8) Internet server;
- 9) Computer network, PCs and software for general staff use.

MEDIUM TERM DEVELOPMENT

Beyond these minimum initial requirements, the medium term strategy will include the following:

- 10) An additional medium-sized studio, which will enable flexible sequential live broadcasts, with each studio laid out for the requirements of specific regular programmes.⁸
- 11) Further additions to a full DV Cam capability, including editing suite and software, and studio cameras. The aim is the build a basic capacity in DV Cam (or other appropriate professional) technology.
- 12) A mobile Broadcasting Unit, to enable coverage of major events around the city and indeed further afield.

In the medium term, also, additional community media centres could gradually be resourced and equipped to enable the community to receive training locally and producing programmes.

4.3 - Staff

Staff activities were outlined earlier under four headings, which would be divided between the following eight members of permanent staff.

Channel Manager (1)

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Channel is run efficiently and effectively, and for ongoing Channel development and growth. Building and developing relations with the community through the formal structures adopted and through partnerships will be vital components of this.

8. This is the approach of Channel 9 in Derry, a local broadcaster that produces about seven hours a day of local programmes, mostly live.

Partnership, Outreach and Fundraising (1)

Leveraging existing resources, developing membership, building partnerships and general outreach in the community, and fund-raising for the Channel, are vital but time-consuming activities, and so in addition to some of the Manager’s time, a full-time staff member will be devoted to these.

Training and Production Support Staff (3)

Training is critical to enabling community programme production, and ongoing courses will be delivered. Three staff members will also provide support in the production of programmes by community groups, and in recording local events etc., using facilities within or provided by the Channel. Such outreach has been identified as essential, especially in the early stages to bridge the gap between Channel and community.

Technical Support (1)

This staff member is required to maintain equipment and facilities and make them available to community groups for their use. Ensuring reliable transmission will also be the responsibility of this member.

Administration, Accounts (1)

Considerable administration will be involved in membership and partnerships, as well as in the financial activities of the Channel.

Support Staff (1)

A support staff position will provide administrative and office assistance to the key functions above. Some front-office and support activities may also be staffed by volunteers.

This is the minimum level of staffing. As the Channel builds and its resources expand, it is likely to employ more.

4.4 - Premises

Total minimum space required in the Channel premises will be as follows:

- Main studio and Phone-in Studio, incl. control room: 180 sq.m *(studio must be 7m height)*
- Three editing suites 50 sq.m
- Training room 50 sq.m
- Equipment storage 25 sq.m
- Office, meeting and reception space 200 sq.m

Minimum space needed 505 sq.m

To allow for medium-term development, additional scope should be available for studio and service expansion of approximately 150 sq.m to 200 sq.m.

4.5 - Transmission

Initially, it is expected that broadcasting will be via the NTL cable network. Later on, the option of utilising an interactive digital platform developed by *dublin.ie* may come available.

The NTL system covers the wider Dublin area, stretching roughly to encompass Maynooth in the west, Bray in the south, and Swords in the north. It has 315,000 subscribers among the 370,000 households passed by the network. This circumscribes the maximum extent of Dublin Community Television broadcasting.

The Broadcasting Act 2001 is a decisive factor in enabling transmission of a Community Channel. Section 37 (10) states:

... the Commission may require the holder of a license referred to in subsection (1) [i.e. a cable or MMD system] to transmit as a broadcasting service, by means of the cable system or, as the case may be, the MMD system concerned, the whole or part of the programme material supplied under one or more specified community content contracts the holders of which are members of the local community that is served by the said system and who request the first mentioned holder to so transmit the whole or, as the case may be, a part of the programme material.

Shorn of its legal jargon, this means that the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland can require the cable or MMD systems (NTL in the case of Dublin) to carry the programmes of a community channel (referred to here as a community content contract holder). This is also known as a 'must-carry' obligation, and it already exists for instance for RTE channels. The one exception noted, in subsection 11 of the same Article, is for analogue MMD system. It continues, in subsection 13, to note that the cable or MMD system may not impose a charge on the viewer who receives such programmes.

A further Section is also worthy of mention here, concerning legal liability for content. Subsection 7 of Section 39 (Community Channels) states that if a must-carry obligation is imposed, then the cable operator shall not be:

(b) regarded for the purposes of the law of defamation, malicious falsehood or any other form of civil liability as having, by virtue of such transmission, published the material, or

(c) liable in damages, by virtue of such transmission, for any infringement of copyright, other intellectual property rights or other legal rights of any person.

This means that the community channel itself assumes these legal responsibilities, and not the cable operator. This is important since were the cable operator legally responsible for the content broadcast, it could reasonably demand a right to approve all content broadcast over its network. Experience in Canada suggests that this can be used to unnecessarily constrain community television.

Whilst the legislation secures a must-carry obligation in principle, a number of key questions are likely to be determined in a process of negotiation between Dublin Community Television Channel, the BCI and the cable operator, NTL. The license granted by the BCI is

likely to contain specific provision on this. NTL rightly regards each slot on its cable transmission system as a valuable asset, and will carefully consider implications in terms of the duration of broadcasting (several of its slots are shared by two Channels), and the number a community channel might occupy in the line-up. On the other hand, a successful Community Television Channel could significantly enhance NTL's offerings over those of its main rival (with the likely still-birth of the terrestrial digital network), the UK registered SKY television. The dynamics of competition is changing rapidly here, and Dublin Community Television will be seen in that context by NTL.

NTL is unlikely to fully digitalise its networks, to give a full range of services including internet connectivity, telephony and true interactivity, at least until 2005 – possibly much longer – its plans for an earlier roll-out abandoned in the face of the downturn in telecommunication generally. For the moment, Dublin Community Television will aim to be an analogue service, available at the standard cable subscription rate. The premium NTL digital channels (which are, for the most part, broadcast through the analogue network thus lacking true digital interactivity) are subscribed to by about 25,000 households (though it is rising quite rapidly), since an additional charge is levied to receive them.

Yet, the future, sooner or later, will be digital. The government's recent initiative in broadband, proposing public/private investment, may speed the process. Apart from NTL, satellite networks, such as Sky's, are constantly looking at ways to upgrade their service and expand interactivity; EIRCOM's DSL service is available in most of Dublin, though at a relatively high price (the basic service is €160 a month); and in theory recent relaxations of regulation have removed obstacles to new entrants in the market in Dublin (though this is currently unlikely).

The emergence of *dublin.ie* as a popular and important interactive digital interface is being pursued by Dublin City Development Board as part of the future media strategy for Dublin. This would offer a natural future home for an all-digital Dublin Community Television service, and could offer a huge range of interactive possibilities such as programmes on demand (as distinct from scheduled), and a greater variety of means to interact with programmes and other viewers/users.

4.6 - Obtaining a License

The Broadcasting Act 2001, in Section 39, for the first time gives legal recognition to the concept of a community channel. (It also recognises a Local Interest Channel in Section 38, conceived as a commercial entity and with distinctly different characteristics and obligations.) Section 39 has a number of important elements.

Under subsection 2, members of a local community (defined as “the community of a town or other urban or rural area”) may apply for a licence to supply a “compilation of programme material” to the cable operator for broadcast if:

- (a) those members are representative of the community concerned,
- (b) the supply of programme material ... will be effected with the sole objective of –

- (i) specifically addressing the interests of the community concerned, and*
 - (ii) achieving a monetary reward of no greater amount than is necessary to defray the expenses that will be incurred in effecting that supply,*
- and*
- (c) there is a reasonable prospect that all such expenses as are likely to be incurred during the period of the contract will be defrayed...*

Thus the Channel must be representative of the community, have the sole objective of serving the community, in effect be non-profit-making, and have a reasonable prospect of covering its costs.

The section then states (in subsections 4 and 5) that local communities must be able to make submissions to the BCI regarding the type of channel they would like to see, and that the BCI must also keep communities informed of its proposals. Any such submissions would have to be considered before granting a licence.

After granting a licence, there are also conditions associated with retaining it. The Commission will conduct, "or arrange with members of the local community concerned for there to be conducted", a survey to assess:

- (a) the extent to which that community is facilitated in the active participation by it in the compilation and transmission of the programme material...*
- (b) the extent to which those members view any broadcasting service on which there is transmitted that programme material,*
- (c) The opinion of those members with regard to –*
 - (i) the quality of that programme material, and*
 - (ii) whether that material specifically addresses the interests of their community.*

The results of this survey will be taken into consideration in deciding whether a licence should be renewed and under what terms.

Note that the licence is granted solely for transmission purposes. There is, naturally enough, no licence required to actually produce material and few limitations (apart from the interests of the community) laid on what form that content should take. But there is a reference to production facilities, in a short section that follows, Section 40, reproduced below:

40.- The Commission may, on its own initiative or at the request of a community group or organisation, carry out an assessment of the needs of a community in respect of broadcasting and such an assessment shall include an ascertainment of the extent to which production facilities, training and resources are available to the community to enable the community to best serve its interests in respect of these.

No indication is given of any action flowing from the results of this assessment. Nevertheless, recognition of the issue is useful, as would be the results of such a survey itself. It could also be argued that this is an implicit admission that if the resources are lacking for the community to produce its own programmes, then issuing a license to transmit will have less than optimal results.

Although the legislation is quite precise in what it says, there is still much to be worked out in terms of its practical implications. Dublin Community Television has already gone through a process of consultation, first with regard to the desirability of such a facility, and currently with regard to what shape it might take. Much consultation remains to be done. However, the nature and extent of consultation that will be required for a successful license application, how one can establish if one 'is representative of the community', whether there must be an open call for applications, the extent to which the process of application can receive support from the BCI – these and other issues remain to be worked out in detail. The licence review procedures are equally uncertain, though not of such immediate concern. Finally, it is not clear how the offer made in Section 40 regarding assessing community production needs can be availed of by a community.

Nevertheless, the essentials are in place and there remains no legal impediment to a license application. It is no longer a matter of *whether* a community can get a broadcast licence, but one of *when* and precisely *how*.

4.7 - Summary of Capital and Current Costs

We summarise Channel costs here. Details of all capital equipment costs contained in Annex 2.

The capital cost of a premises is not included in Table 2 below. There are indications that an appropriate building may be available at low or no-cost from a public source, possibly Dublin City Council. A rental figure for premises of 505 sq.meters is listed separately further on in current costs. But in any case, the **cost of refurbishment and of fitting out is not factored in here** as it impossible to determine at this time.

The figures presented are based on the assumptions of minimum requirements set out above. These could be configured in various ways, depending on the initial emphasis chosen, in terms of activities and services, by the Channel. Prices given here are commercial, but there may be ways of reducing these somewhat through donations, concessions or other means.

Table 2: Equipment Capital Cost Summary

EQUIPMENT CAPITAL COSTS	in Euro
Main Studio	128,949
Self-operated Phone-in studio	18,769
Editing Suites (X3)	47,190
Mini DV Field Cameras (x5), Lighting, Sound	41,183
DVCam Cameras	28,200
Connectivity to cable network	57,667
PC network and other equipment	28,800
Total Equipment Capital Costs	350,758

Note: VAT is excluded. The VAT situation for the Channel is unclear. It may be possible to have a zero VAT rating, as the equipment is to be used for educational purposes. The type of incorporation chosen by the Channel may also affect the VAT situation.

requirements & costs

Nevertheless, these can be taken as an acceptable minimum.

With regard to current, or recurring, costs, the figures below should be taken as indicative.

RECURRING COSTS	in €
Equipment maintenance & depreciation ¹	52,500
Annual transmission cost ²	20,000
Salaries and labour costs (approx)	
Manager (1)	65,000
Partnership, Outreach, Fundraising (1)	50,000
Training and production (3)	117,000
Technical support (1)	38,000
Admin, accounting (1)	35,000
Support (1)	25,000
Video/broadcast materials	30,000
Training equipment and materials	15,000
Outreach, promotion, publishing budget	30,000
Travel and subsistence	10,000
Printing, postage etc.	6,000
Photocopy lease & maintenance	4,000
Office materials	5,000
Utilities	8,000
Phone	8,000
Premises services and maintenance	9,000
Audit, Accountancy etc.	15,000
Professional services ³	30,000
Evaluation and monitoring	25,000
Staff development and training	30,000
Insurance	10,000
Total Recurring Costs	637,500
Rent 505 sq.m. @ €180 each ⁴	90,900
Investment in Medium Term Development ⁵	60,000
Total Including Rent	788,400

Notes:

- 1 15% of capital equipment, excluding transmission)
- 2 The several options available here will be reviewed with NTL.
- 3 This includes legal costs, consultancy, research etc.
- 4 It is hoped that premises may be obtained at low or no cost, from a public source.
- 5 This is annual expenditure needed to gradually develop a capacity in DVCam (or other) equipment for training and production. The aim is to maintain full mini DV technology and a minimum of professional level equipment.

5. FUNDING

5.1 - Funding of Community Television Worldwide

Public access and community television have achieved secure, ongoing, core funding in a number of countries, among them the United States and Canada, each with hundreds of stations; Sweden with thirty; Germany with almost ninety; and the Netherlands; Denmark, New Zealand and Australia. Sources of such funding vary, and most exist by combining several. Core funding options include the following:

- In Germany since 1986, funding is provided through one percent of the overall television licence fee;
- In Denmark non-commercial community television, which is broadcast terrestrially, is funded through a combination of fees from commercial television and the license fee;
- In the Netherlands and New Zealand access channels are permitted to carry advertising if the income is used solely for running the TV station. In Sweden, only sponsorship is allowed. But all three also receive local government funding.
- A cable company in the US is not automatically obliged to support a public access station. But if a community chooses to set up a channel, then under the Cable Act, it must provide 5 percent of gross local revenues to fund that channel.
- In Canada, each cable operator directly has the obligation to provide a community channel.

Many access stations raise funds by means other than these. Affiliate membership from local businesses and institutions are common, and conventional fundraising often amounts to a significant proportion of income. Some also promote 'fund-raising days' where the entire programming is devoted to raising funds from the local community. Foundations and other grant-giving organisations may fund specific series of programmes or capital items. However, as in all non-profit organisations, the amount of energy and management time consumed by these activities must be carefully weighed against the potential yield.

One thing is beyond doubt. No community station can exist for long in the absence of a secure stream of income, to cover a reasonable proportion of overall expenses. It follows that the provision of a 'must-carry' obligation on the cable carrier, and of a 'community channel' license, in the legislation is of limited value in itself. A meaningful policy on community television must be complemented by enabling sources of funding that can translate this into benefits for the community.

We might look to Europe to develop a common position on community access to media. There is some evidence of concern in the Parliament, but as yet little action. (This applies even more to the European Commission, whose position on the media has been more concerned with opening markets than with providing its citizens with access or diversity.) In June 1995, the

European Parliament stated that it:

"advocates measures to support citizens' broadcasting and open channels in order to afford citizens direct access to and participation in the audiovisual media, thereby strengthening the democratic process at local and regional level given the growing importance of the electronic media in public information."

There is a lobby among existing access stations to translate this into action, but it has not yet yielded results.⁹

5.2 - Funding Options

There is thus general recognition that if community television is to achieve its objectives and serve the community, it requires core funding from a public source or from one secured by an instrument of legislative. There is also at least implicit, sometimes explicit, recognition that a diversity of funding sources is optimal, rendering the station less depending on any individual source. Core cable franchise funding in community stations in the USA, for instance, typically range from about 40% to 75% of total income.

Having said this, the need for public funding or regulatory support also obliges the Channel to deliver, and to be seen to deliver, on the community development objectives it is constituted by, objectives that in turn must be derived from the needs and desires of the community itself. This affirms the need for effective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Funding for the Channel can be differentiated by type:

- Long-term core funding.
- Ongoing earned or generated income
- Other sources of mainly once-off funding.

LONG-TERM CORE FUNDING

Long-term options for core funding are roughly as sketched above internationally. It may take some time before a firm case can be made to justify such support. Nevertheless, the options should be explored early.

In North America, based on the use of public rights of ways for laying, the cable company pays out 5% of revenue. Although the limit is fixed, the precise terms and beneficiaries are renegotiated periodically. A similar system could be applied in Dublin.

NTL is the Dublin cable provider. It currently charges €150 annually for its package of basic services. It passes approximately 370,000 households in the Dublin area, and has at least a basic

⁹ See <http://www.openchannel.se/cat/> for a description of and links to community television around the world.
For the European lobby see: <http://www.openchannel.se/euro/index.htm>.

subscription from about 85% of these (314,500). This should yield approximately €47m in income for NTL in basic service fees (i.e. excluding their digital service). Since passing a proportion of this income to a community channel was not a condition at the time of licence issue, it may be unreasonable to argue that some of the existing basic charge should be set aside for that purpose i.e. at best, funding for a community channel would have to come from **an increase in the basic rate**. This may or may not require legislation, and perhaps understandably, might encounter resistance from NTL itself. The NTL licence was granted in 1999 and runs for 15 years.

An addition to the basic subscription of €2.50 on basic service customers would yield approximately the current costs required for the Channel, as outlined above, of just under €790,000 (including rent). This is less than 1.7% of their basic service income – only a fraction of what other NTL subsidiaries pay in the USA to community television services. To cover 66% of Channel costs (i.e. assuming that one third of funds could be raised from other sources), the additional payment would amount to €1.65 per subscribing household.

A second option is to add a small amount to the **Television licence fee** for those resident in Dublin. Currently the license fee is set at €107, yielding for RTE a sum of €95m in 2001. Assuming that 35% of 880,000 licence holders are in the Dublin area (308,000), then about €33m is raised in license fees there. An increase of €2.56 on Dublin’s license holders, the equivalent of 2.39%, would be sufficient to provide the €790,000 income required by the Channel. To collect 66% of the Channel’s income, an increase of €1.69 per household would be sufficient.

A third possibility is to receive direct support from the four **local authorities** covering the Dublin area. (Alternatively, a government department concerned with culture, the arts or local government and development may also be willing to pay.) Dividing the sum required by the number of households in the different authorities, yields the following (it should be noted that the number of households has grown considerably since 1996):

Local Authority Households (1996)	100% of Channel costs		66% of Channel costs	
	€ amount	per household	€	Per household
City Borough: 173,000	397,000	€2.29	264,000	€1.53
Dun Laoghaire Rathdown: 61,500	141,000	€2.29	94,000	€1.53
Dublin Fingal: 48,000	110,000	€2.29	73,000	€1.53
South Dublin: 62,000	142,000	€2.29	95,000	€1.53
Total: approx 344,500	€790,000	€2.29	€526,000	€1.53

The table below summarises all the figures:

Table 5: Proportionate Contributions to Channel Costs						
Community Channel	Extra on	Extra on Cost per household				
		NTL Basic subscription		TV License Fee		via local or central government
Full current costs: €790,000	1.7%	€2.50	2.39%	€2.56		€2.29
66% current costs: €520,000	1.1%	€1.65	1.58%	€1.69		€1.53

Relatively small sums per household, from any of these, would thus be required to support the ongoing costs of a Community Channel.

The vision of community television in Dublin outlined earlier of media centres within reach of communities anywhere in the greater Dublin area, would require further support. A further 2% (€3) rise in the basic NTL fee - still well below the level in the USA - would yield a further €940,000 annually for building, equipping and running community media centres around the city. A similar amount would be generated by about a €3 rise in the television licence fee in Dublin.

These figures demonstrate that the vision of community television, available to everyone everywhere in Dublin, and providing a wide range of services and diverse programmes, is realisable through relatively modest increases in current levels of television charges.

EARNED OR GENERATED INCOME

This category of income is very varied, and may generate a small fraction or a significant proportion of overall needs, depending on the circumstances and approach adopted.

A relatively small, but nevertheless useful, income contribution can be obtained from, for instance:

- Annual membership and affiliate fees;
- Rental fees for equipment hire, studio use and other community services;
- Training fees;
- A small transmission fee;
- A general sponsorship membership, or corporate affiliation, of the Channel.

However, since the aim of the station is to provide services at affordable rates to groups and individuals with limited income, this is not likely to bridge the gap of non-core funded requirements.

Fundraising in the community, in a few cases, has yielded more on a regular basis, for instance through:

- Special fundraising drives, for a fixed period, using the channel as the main medium to collect;
- Sales of station products and paraphernalia.

Income relating to production is also likely to contribute to the Channel.

As already noted, programmes (whether produced locally or brought in) will largely be the responsibility of community groups and dedicated partnerships. These will have their own sources of income to enable them to provide the Channel with programmes they wish to have broadcast. Although the Channel may assist in getting this money, much of it is expected to come from statutory bodies and government departments who will provide it directly to community groups to enable them to carry out their given remit more effectively. Such direct funding of productions entirely in the community, since it does not cover any of the costs outlined above, is excluded here. But, it does, in effect provide support for programme production.

Having said this, the station may engage in:

- Externally funded community co-productions, providing extensive technical support, including studios, equipment and technical staff. Collaborators, alongside community organisations, might include local authorities or statutory bodies.

But the most significant area of funding may relate to broadcasting. Although conventional corporate advertising is unlikely to accord with station principles, it may be possible to gain income from various forms of non-corporate advertising and sponsorship activities. Working out the details of policies and practicalities will require significant effort, and must be a priority for a Channel. But significant income could come from:

- Advertising revenue from social and cultural services, for local businesses, and other sources unlikely to bring undue pressure to bear on content.
- Programme sponsorship, per series or on the basis of a regular slot on a given theme.

OTHER SOURCES OF ONCE-OFF SUPPORT

An immediate and ongoing need is to gain once-off grants or other forms of support, that can assist in launching a station and supporting it for a period while the concept can be tested and proven. A wide variety of sources can be tapped, and there is little point to

compiling a complete list. However, a few possibilities spring to mind, to provide a focus for fund-raising activities:

- Obtaining a premises will be a major cost. Here the local authorities may be able to assist.
- The CAIT Programme (Community Access to Information and Technology) may be able to provide support, though it runs only to the end of November 2002. Its focus is specifically on providing access and experience in information technologies, which include digital video production, to those with little experience or access.
- The EQUAL programme, an EU funded follow-on to the INTEGRA Programme, will have another call for proposals in the middle of 2003. It aims to support innovation in addressing exclusion and might be a candidate to support this initiative.
- The BCI itself may be willing to provide limited resources under Section 39 and 40 to support certain research aspects of the licensing process and in an exploration of production and training requirements.
- A small number of international foundations are active in Ireland in the area of community development and empowerment, and they may be willing to consider a community television channel.

6. COMMUNITY TELEVISION A PLAN OF ACTION

6.1 - Process Leading up to the Report ¹⁰

The process leading to this report goes back to early 2001. A number of milestones are important.

1. In June 2001 a Consultation Workshop on community media in Dublin was attended by about 60 community and voluntary organisations from all over the city. It was sponsored by the *Community Forum*, itself constituted under the *Dublin City Development Board (DCDB)*. This strongly endorsed the active promotion of community media in Dublin.¹¹
2. As a direct result, a *Community Media Forum* was set up in September 2001 under the DCDB. This forum is open to all community groups in Dublin. Several Working Groups were constituted on different media, including one on Community Television.
3. The Community Television Working Group applied for and received funding from the *Community Forum* and the *Dublin City Development Board* to undertake the current research.
4. A first report was produced by NEXUS in January 2002, which looked at lessons from international experience, as a prerequisite to assessing the situation and potential in Ireland.¹²
5. The preparation of the Final Consultant's report involved deeper consultation with selected community and voluntary groups in Dublin, and with a range of other relevant organisations. Interviews were completed from January to May, and approximately thirty-five groups were consulted in depth (see Annex 1). The final report was delivered in June 2002, and is amended here solely to update its contents.
6. In July 2002, Dublin City Development Board published its plan: *Dublin: A City of Possibilities 2002-2012*, which strongly endorsed the idea of a community television station in strategic objectives 3.3 and 5.2, explicitly recognising its potential contribution to the culture, social and political life of Dublin.

6.2 - Where we Stand Now: The Interim Steering Committee

Since delivery and launch of the Consultant's report in June 2002, the process of implementing its recommendations has already got underway.

10. This section updates the original consultants report, delivered in June 2002, to take into account developments since then.

11. The report of this Workshop can be found at www.activelink.ie/cmfi/

12. This report can be found at www.activelink.ie/cmfi/.

In June 2002, an Interim Steering Committee for Dublin Community Television was constituted. As a mechanism, it is open to all those supporting the principles and ideas contained here, and willing to devote some effort to making them a reality. A first decision of the Committee was to accept the offer of a provisional secretariat from Community Media Network (CMN), which acts as a contact and dissemination point.

The Committee will take this initiative to the point where it ready to apply for a license to broadcast from the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland. Its key priorities are:

6. To **open out the Committee and activities** to the broad constituency of community and voluntary organisations in Dublin, committed individuals, local authorities, statutory agencies active in empowerment and education, educational institutions and other stakeholders.
7. To continue to **develop and refine the Community Television** initiative, beginning with the ideas here. The aim is to articulate the basis of a broad consensus on the key concepts and approach.
8. To **identify sources of funding** for the Channel itself, and undertake initial explorations of circumstances in which such funding would be forthcoming.
9. Explore with the BCI further **requirements for community consultation**, and **initiate them**, as well as the terms under which a license may be applied for.
10. To establish Dublin Community Television **in a legal institutional form** appropriate to its future activities, membership and relationships.

To achieve these, the Committee has formed itself into two groups, each with various tasks.

The **Institutional Group** is concerned with refining the concept, sourcing funds, identifying appropriate premises, and for outreach and development. It is comprised mainly of community media organisations and others with a general interest, derived from their core activities, in taking the idea forward. This group is recruiting a Coordinator, and identifying the immediate resources, to bring the concept forward.

The **Content Group** is concerned with laying the foundations that will in the future ensure that programmes and content of interest and benefit to Dublin will be produced. It is comprised of a number of thematic sub-group, each comprised of community groups and others concerned with that area and recognising the benefits they could derive from the community television. Each sub-group is devising a plan for how content can be sourced or produced, on a regular basis, for broadcast on the community channel. (The template for this sub-group activity is contained in Annex 3) Among themes covered by content sub-groups are: adult education needs, local governance, local and community development issues, the deaf community, travellers, sustainable Dublin, communities and drugs, Dublin new diversity, gay / lesbian issues, women's group, older people, development issues.

6.3 - The Future

The Interim Steering Group, and all those involved in this endeavour, are well aware of the scale of the challenge in launching an creative, empowering and participative community television channel. It must demonstrate that such a concept will bring real benefits to Dublin, that core and ongoing funding can be found, that it is feasible to produce the volume and quality of programmes anticipated, and, most of all, that the people and communities of Dublin are willing to support it for the rewards it brings and to embrace it as their own.

Convincing the BCI to grant a license, only the first step, will require the Channel to show that it can defray its costs of organisation and transmission; that sufficient content can be generated to fill the time requested, and that a credible, democratic and accountable institutional framework is established.

A reasonable deadline for formally initiating the license application procedure to the BCI is late in 2002 or early in 2003, and the process will take some months as the BCI goes through the procedures involved in granting a license.

After that, the real work begins.

The period between the granting of a license and the launch of a Channel will see many months of intense activity, as the plans on paper are turned into reality on the ground. Appropriate premises and technical requirements will have to be put in place; training capacities developed; the relationship with NTL confirmed by formal agreement; the institutional structure and membership opened out widely; and key staff recruited. Most important, community organisations and others committed to sourcing and producing content will embark on their huge task, gearing up to produce a regular series of programmes of interest and relevance to their constituencies and to Dubliners as a whole.

ANNEX 1: INTERVIEWS COMPLETED

The methodology for this report was straightforward. It relied primarily on a large number of face to face interviews and analysis of documents.

Those interviewed individually were:

Amnesty Ireland: Brian Dooley
Arts Squad, Finglas: Mary McDermot
Association of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Sebit Iwa
Ballymun Media Coop: Ollie McGlinchey
Broadcasting Commission of Ireland: Michael O'Keefe, Margaret Tumulty
Cómhlámh: Colm of Cuanacháin
Community Action Network CAN: Monica Manning
Community Media Network: Margaret Gillan, Bill McConnell
Community Response: Robbie Byrnes
CONCERN: Paddy McGuinness
Creative Activity for Everyone, CAFE: Wes Wilkie
Dublin Adult Literacy Centre DALC: Mary Maher
Dublin City Council, North East Community Area: Paul Moloney, Ronan Rogers
Dublin City Council: Deirdre Ní Raghallaigh
Dublin City Development Board: Peter Finnegan
Dublin City University, School of Communication: Farrell Corcoran
Dublin Institute of Technology, Media Production Centre: Gráinne Rourke
Dublin Institute of Technology: Aungier Street. School of Media, Brian O'Neill, Edward Brennan
Feasta: Emer Ó Siochrú,
Firestation: Tony Sheehan.
Forum of People with Disabilities: Donal Toolin
ICON Inner City Seanie Lamb
Inner City Renewal Group: Tom Redmond
Irish Deaf Society: Kevin Stanley, Cormac Leonard
Irish Refugee Council: John Daly
Lourdes Youth and Community Services: Valerie Bow, Helena McNeill, Damien Keoghan
Meitheal: Aideen Ni Cléirigh
National Women's Council of Ireland: Anne O'Donnell, Orla O Connor
National College of Art and Design, Thomas Street, School of Media Studies: Kevin Atherton
NEAR FM and North East Dublin Community Media Centre: Ciaran Murray
Office of the Director of Telecommunication Regulation: High Tuckey, Rory Hinchy, Carmel McLaughlin
Pavee Point: Caoimhe McCabe, Patrick Neville, Catherine Mannion
Sustainable Ireland: Davie Philip

A group meeting was held in Ballymun, facilitated by Ollie McGlinchey and Margaret Gillan, attended by:

Ballymun CAP: Suzanne Keily
Welfare Rights Centre: Áine Rooney and Rosie Doherty
AXIS Centre: Linda Hegarty
Tógáil: Winnie Ryan
Computeach: Anne Crowley

ANNEX 2: DETAILED CAPITAL EQUIPMENT COSTS

Main Studio Costs (excluding premises):

NO	ITEM	MODEL	COST €	COST
CAMERA				
3	Cameras with cables			
3	Tripods and wheeled bases / pedestals			
3	viewfinders, pan/tilt handles			
3	remote focus + zoom controls		€10,000.00	€30,000.00
STUDIO				
1	Cyclorama			€10,000.00
1	Black Curtain & Track			€5,000.00
1	ChromaKey Wall + jib			€6,500.00
	Furniture			€2,000.00
CONTROL ROOM				
1	VHS player/recorder	Sony SLVE1000	€606.86	€606.86
1	Mini DV player/recorder	Panasonic NV DV2000B	€1,600.48	€1,600.48
1	BETA player/recorder	Sony BVW-60	€10,961.00	€10,961.00
1	Switcher / Vision mixer	Sony DFS-300	€10,000.00	€10,000.00
7	small 9" monitors	Vicom 9"	€400.00	€2,800.00
1	CapGen	Aston Motto2	€7,000.00	€7,000.00
1	TelePrompter	TelePrompter TP120	€2,188.94	€2,188.94
1	Large Clock with Second Hand		€50.00	€50.00
MICROPHONES				
4	Clip Mics	Sennheiser MKE2	€270.74	€1,082.96
2	Set of Radio Mics	Sennheiser EW112P	€500.00	€1,000.00
4	Handheld Mics	Sennheiser MK65	€536.69	€2,146.76
4	Mic Stands		€200.00	€800.00
TALKBACK				
1	2 way head set system for talkback to cam crew -			
5	headsets & handsets			€2,000.00
AUDIO				
1	Audio Board	Spirit FX16	€1,132.38	€1,132.38
1	Double Tape Deck	Sony TCWE 475	€214.99	€214.99
1	Vinyl Turntable	Sony PSLX 76	€54.95	€54.95
1	CD Player	Sony CDPXE 270 B	€129.99	€129.99
1	Mini-Disc	Sony MDSJE 440	€239.99	€239.99
2	Interconnects	Cambridge Pacific	€40.00	€80.00

Continued overleaf

ANNEX 2: DETAILED CAPITAL EQUIPMENT COSTS
Main Studio Costs (excluding premises):

NO	ITEM	MODEL	COST €	COST
LIGHTING				
1	Lighting Desk	NSI MC7532	€2,742.24	€2,742.24
10	Par Lights	Lighting Specialists	€60.00	€600.00
6	Fresnels	Lighting Specialists	€120.00	€720.00
6	Ellipsodial	Lighting Specialists	€250.00	€1,500.00
1	Spot	ProspotLX	€3,000.00	€3,000.00
1	Wash	ProwashLX	€3,000.00	€3,000.00
	Clips etc for above		€2,000.00	€2,000.00
1	Ladder	Rapid FMS 14	€977.77	€977.77
				€112,129.31
Add 10% Installation				€11,212.93
Add 5% Transport / Currency Diff.				€5,606.47
Total				€128,948.71

Phone-in Self-operated Studio Costs (estimate)

Items			
1	Camera: adjustable with tripod	Sony DCR-VX2000	€4,719
1	Camera: fixed for displays	To be selected	€2,200
1	Phone digitizer (for phone-in)	To be selected	€2300
1	VCR dual mode player/recorder	To be selected	€450
1	Cables, connections	Various	€1,200
1	Mixer desk, with remote user operation	To be selected	€4,000
1	Seating, Furnishing, backdrop	Tailored	€1,800
1	9" PAL Monitor	Vicom 9"	€400
1	PC and monitor for presentations	Any	€1,700
Total			€18,769

Note: VAT is not included in any of the above prices

Editing, Cameras and Other Equipment

Editing Suite Hardware:	Cost
160 GB Firewire HD:	€480
3 x 20 GB Portable Firewire HD :	€840
PowerMac G4 Dual Processor 1Ghz :	€3500
Apple Cinema Display :	€2800
VGA Monitor :	€400
PAL Monitor :	€200
VCR :	€180
Matrox RTMac Breakout Box and PCI Card :	€750
USB Audio Capture Device :	€175
USB Speakers :	€80
Stereo Speakers :	€80
USB Digital Camera (Olympus C-3020) :	€609
FireWire, USB, Audio Cables :	€200
6 Port FireWire Hub :	€87
7 Port USB Hub :	€75
Sub Total:	€10,456
<hr/>	
Editing Suite Software:	
<hr/>	
Final Cut Pro & DVD Studio Pro :	€2,049
iMovie and iDVD : Comes with the MAC	€1,574
Adobe Digital Video Collection :	
● Adobe Premiere	
● Adobe After Effects	
● Adobe Photoshop	
● Adobe Illustrator	
Bias Peak (Audio Editing Software) :	€640
Boris FX (3D Visual Effects Software) :	€1,011
Sub Total:	€5,274
<hr/>	
Total Hardware/Software:	€15,730
<hr/>	
Grand Total: Three Editing Suites	€47,190
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Cameras, Lighting and Sound

NO	ITEM	MODEL	COST €	COST €
CAMERA				
5	Cameras	Sony DCR-VX2000	4,191.00	20,955.00
5	Camera Case	Sony	139.37	696.85
5	Tripods	Manfrotto 116MK3	528.63	2,643.15
5	Tripod Case	Manfrotto	75.00	375.00
5	Raincovers	Sony LCR-VX2000	150.00	750.00
10	Cables	Sony	200.00	2,000.00
10	Spare Batteries	Sony	70.00	700.00
5	Chargers	Sony	100.00	500.00
2	Small Monitors	VICOM	639.21	1,278.42
1	Handy Jib	Hague	117.24	117.24
2	DVCam Cameras	To be selected	13,500.00	27,000.00
2	Tripods	To be selected	600.00	1,200.00
LIGHTING				
4	Reflectors	Ianiri	50.00	200.00
	Light Kits	Ianiri		
2	3 Red heads, 3 Stands	Ianiri	1,199.93	2,399.86
2	3 Lilliputs, 3 Stands	Ianiri	1,039.64	2,079.28
2	1 Blonde, 1 Stand	Ianiri	719.26	1,438.52
MICROPHONES				
2	Long Microphones	Sennheiser ME 67 Shotgun	368.44	736.88
2	Microphone Covers	Rycote	250.00	500.00
2	Boom Poles	Rycote	250.00	500.00
5	Hand Held Mikes	Sennheiser ME 65	444.73	2,223.65
	Clip Mikes	Sennheiser MKE 2 Tie Clip	272.32	1,089.28
Grand Total				€69,383.13

Connectivity Needs

The technical requirements for connecting to the NTL cable system are uncertain at this stage. There are three potential options, each need further clarification :

1. 1 Radio Link Near Fm to NTL Cable Head End via a repeater at Howth or Three Rock. Budgetary Radio link cost (estimate €44,000). Video encoder / decoder (€18,000) and mid point site rental €4,000 per annum
2. A 2 Mbit leased line from Eircom. Audio encoders decoders (€18,000). Eircom Cost dependent on route distance. and distance from exchanges. (estimated Connection Fee €12,000 Annual rental €20,000)
3. NTL could carry it from the studio to its head-end via its own cable network. Audio encoders decoders (€18,000).

Because of the uncertainty, a figure of €20,000 is included in the figures below.

No.	ITEM	MODEL	COST €	COST €
1	Radio link, 2 Mbit Leased line or link to NTL head end (approx).	(indicative figure)		20,000.00
1	Event Controller	Leightronix	5486.06	5,486.06
2	VHS player/recorder	Sony SLVE1000	606.86	1,213.72
2	Mini DV player/recorder	Panasonic NV DV2000B	1,600.48	3,200.96
2	BETA player	Sony PVW 2600	3,510.00	7,020.00
100	Blank Tapes		5.99	599.00
	Sub total			17,519.74
	Add 10% Installation			1,751.97
	Add 5% Transport / Currency Diff.			875.99
Total				57,667.44

Other Equipment

6	Personal computers	Dell	1,400	8,400
1	Network, internet server, cables	Dell	3,400	3,400
6	Desks etc	Various	3,000	1,800
	Printers, scanners etc.		3,000	3,000
	Office furniture	Various	2,000	2,000
1	Phone systems	To be selected	5,400	5,400
1	LCD Projector	Sony	2,800	2,800
	Miscellaneous		2,000	2,000
Total				28,800

ANNEX 3: CONTENT SUB-GROUPS

Initial Assessment form for Content Sub-Groups (Generic)

The following comprise generic terms of reference for each of the content sub-groups referred to in section 6.2 above. These are amended and refined by each sub-group as they see fit. Their purpose is to begin a process that will lead eventually to the sourcing and production of content for the Channel, of specific interest and relevance to their chosen theme.

The goal of each group initially is to provide a succinct and credible statement of value of the content (programmes) produced on this theme, and how it can realistically be produced or sourced externally. These will be compiled, and then further developed into comprehensive plans for production.

The completed

- A: *The Theme of Programmes and Target Groups***
- The theme and nature of the programmes to be produced
 - Who the organisation's target groups are?
- B: *Benefits to the Organisation and Communities of Dublin City***
- What are the benefits to the organisation in producing / being involved in / utilising Community TV?
 - What are the potential benefits to the communities of Dublin City?
- C: *The Partnership that will produce it***
- What types of organisations might be interested in getting involved?
 - What types of organisations could be potential partners and/or potentially good partners?
- D: *Production and Sourcing***
- How will the programmes be produced and/or sourced?
(Here, the various options from using professionals through production by the group themselves; to sourcing material from around Dublin or outside Ireland, will be outlined.)
- E: *The Volume and Scheduling of Programmes***
- How many hours or programmes can realistically be produced and/or sourced, perhaps in different scenarios? When would they ideally be scheduled for transmission?
- F: *Funding and Requirements***
- How would the programmes be funded?
 - What requirements would need to be supplied by the Channel (equipment, studios etc.)
- G: *A Realistic Timeline***
- Given the various factors involved, when might be realistic to get programmes incrementally on stream and ready to broadcast?
- H: *Any Other Information That Your Organisation Feels Is Important To Note At This Time?***

Dublin



City Development Board



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