

The Licence Fee and Public Service Provision

We also support the retention of the licence fee. But we underline again our concern, shared with the broadcasters, that we must maintain a plurality of public service provision.

Radio

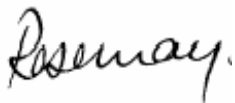
On **DAB**, and the availability of Radio Cymru and Radio Wales, Ofcom has just finished a consultation on the future licensing of DAB and the BBC expressed its great unease about the current lack of coverage of services in the devolved nations, and has also expressed concern that the anticipated slow roll-out of further local multiplexes in Wales will not provide the coverage required to satisfy audience demand. Ofcom is licensing a second UK multiplex, and the BBC has said that it is prepared to enter into negotiations with whoever is awarded that multiplex in order to investigate whether Radio Wales and Radio Cymru could be made available throughout the whole of Wales. A key issue for the BBC is that commercial multiplexes are obliged to carry Radio Wales and Radio Cymru when they are licensed, but, currently, they only exist in the urban south-east. In order to ensure that Radio Wales and Radio Cymru can be made available across the whole of Wales, the BBC would wish to see a second UK-wide multiplex make that kind of provision available for Wales.

The Committee supports these views and believe they should be addressed as a matter of some urgency..

The Welsh language and S4C

The Committee welcomed the new arrangements being put in place between the BBC and S4C, which we hope will serve to strengthen and secure the output of Welsh language programming.

Yours sincerely,



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Chair
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