

## Personal Details

Fields marked \* must be complete

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In the spirit of Freedom of Information, we would like to publish your response.

Are you happy for your contribution to be published? Please indicate Yes or No	yes
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If No, in brief please state your reasons why. (max 800 characters)

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The Department may receive a Freedom of Information request for any correspondence we receive at any time. If you have reasons for your correspondence to remain confidential please state them and they will be taken into account when the department considers how to respond to any such request.

Are you happy for your name and e-mail address to be released on request? Please indicate Yes or No	yes
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Your rights under the Data Protection Act 1998 are not affected.

We also reserve the right not to publish responses if we consider that their content is defamatory.

**1. Do you agree that securing plural sources of impartial news for the Nations, locally and in the regions should be a key priority?**

Yes	X
No	

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

Access to impartial information is a key ingredient of a thriving democracy and plurality of sources one of the best ways to maintain standards.

**2. Do you agree that sustainable, impartial news in the Nations, locally and in the regions is likely to require some top-up public funding?**

Yes	X
No	

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

It is the case that at present the commercial organisations which have provided independent television news in the regions claim that they can no longer do so. But there have been long periods when these organisations and their parent companies have been highly profitable and we are not convinced that given the right support the provision of impartial news could not be sustainable"

**3. Do you agree that the Television Licence Fee should be used to support impartial news in the Nations, locally and in the regions in addition to BBC services?**

Yes	
No	X

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

We believe the strength of licence fee system is the direct link between the fee paid and the service provided by the BBC. International experience shows that any break with this principle will lead to further dilution and the creation of an additional body to determine allocation of the fee. There are other ways in which public funding could be generated and a diversity of funding for a diversity of service is preferable to the model proposed here.

**4. Do you agree that any funding within a contained contestable element of the television licence fee not required for impartial news should potentially be available to fund other forms of essential public service content, or should such funding be limited to news?**

Yes	
No	x

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

The form of this question confirms our fears that once the link between the licence fee and BBC the alternative uses would expand further with the effect of weakening the BBC rather than strengthening public service broadcasting.

**5. Are there alternative funding mechanisms that you believe would deliver the above objectives more effectively?**

Yes	x
No	

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

By proposing a levy on telephone bills to fund universal high speed broadband digital access, Digital Britain recognises that there are parts of this sector which are highly profitable and can sustain a levy. IPPR research for the NUJ and BECTU confirm this and we believe that a simple principle that broadcasters either provide public services or pay for them would be widely understood, supported by the public and easily implemented.

**6. Do you agree with the proposal to set a maximum percentage of Television Licence Fee revenue which could be set aside as a contained contestable element?**

Yes	
No	

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

Since we don't accept the principle it is impossible to give a yes or no answer to this question.

**7. Do you agree that amending the BBC Agreement could provide the necessary protection to the BBC's future funding and independence?**

Yes	
No	x

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

As stated above we see this as a breach of principle and that no amendment could prevent future increases in the percentage of the licence fee used for other purposes.

**8. Do you agree that the use of any contained contestable element within the Television Licence Fee should be restricted to the public purposes set out in the BBC Charter?**

Yes	
No	

Comment (max. 4000 characters)

Again the question assumes the acceptance of a principle which we do not accept.