

Dear Sir

In response to your consultation request:

1. Do you agree with the proposed criteria for Ofcom to apply when considering a 5 year extension?

In principle yes, but OfCom should take special note of the conditions placed upon the specific licence being considered. At present there is little distinction made between a geographical community, with coverage over a specific area, serving every member of that community, and those for social or ethnic communities, which serve one specific cultural group.

In the first case OfCom should consider whether the whole community has been adequately served, and reconsider the terms of the licence, although these should not be changed if, in the opinion of the local population, the station is providing a satisfactory service.

In the second the changing demography of the area must be considered. First generation immigrants, who may be considered the most vulnerable and therefore initially in need of specific services may well move during short time periods, so the specific community is likely to disperse, moving to other geographic areas or it may change in perspective.

2. Do you think the 50% funding restriction from any one source should be lifted?

Now that volunteer input is allowable that could cause some difficulties. It's useful to record such numbers, and encouraging to see how much is contributed by voluntary input but not if it is to frustrate other income streams.

3. i) Do you think that the rule prohibiting a community radio station from being licensed if it would overlap with an existing local radio service whose MCA is no more than 50,000 adults, should be lifted?

Yes, without doubt.

ii) If so, should the advertising and sponsorship restriction be applied to community radio stations that overlap with local radio services of up to 150,000 adults?

No. It is beyond comprehension that a commercial radio station should take precedence over a community station. In any case whatever happened to the free market? Competition is supposed to be good for business. If commercial stations cannot survive then they should be allowed to decay. In our area the two commercial stations closest to us are both owned by the same company, who are based in Jersey, and pay no mainland taxes. Yet their wishes were taken into account recently resulting in the refusal of a community radio licence to one of the very best community stations. A nonsense.

The wishes of the community must be taken into consideration before those of commercial companies whose only motivation is private profit and gain.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our views.

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Chairman

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