

## THE DIGITAL BRITAIN WHITE PAPER UPDATE 30 JUNE 2009

### Actions and Implementation

1. Chapter 9 of the Digital Britain White Paper, published on 16 June outlined the timetable for further action and implementation plan on the specific actions and recommendations in the Report. This update note sets out how this will be carried out.
2. Yesterday the Government published the Draft Legislative Programme for 2009-2010. This includes a **Digital Economy Bill** which will, among other things, give the sector regulator, **Ofcom**, **new duties to promote investment** in infrastructure and content alongside the promotion of competition; give the Secretary of State reserve powers to direct Ofcom to regulate the UK Internet Domain Name System to prevent abuse; reinforce **intellectual property protection** by tackling illegal file-sharing and a new licensing regime to enable the wider commercial availability of orphan works; change the licensing framework for **radio** to encourage increased investment and coverage as part of Digital Radio Upgrade; provide an **updated remit for C4 Corporation**, and adopt a new single rating system for **Video Games Classification** based on the pan European system.
3. The following sections set out what is being done to implement other actions, which do not require Primary Legislation to be given effect. The number in brackets denotes the page numbers of the White Paper where the relevant action appears.
4. **(37 and 42) Digital Inclusion and Participation.** The Digital Inclusion Champion and Expert Task Force have today been given the line of accountability to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (from The Department for Communities and Local Government) together with the necessary supporting funding for the task. We have today published the letter from the Government commissioning Ofcom to convene and lead the Consortium of Stakeholders to drive Digital Participation<sup>1</sup>, working closely with the Digital Inclusion Champion.
5. **(39 and 94)** Also published is the invitation issued today to the Consumer Expert Group to report by the Autumn on specific issues faced by people with disabilities' use of the internet. In the light of the Government's commitment to complete the national Digital Radio Upgrade by the end of 2015, the Government is formally asking the CEG to tender advice to Government, on behalf of

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<sup>1</sup> All letters are available at [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/publications/6243.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6243.aspx)

consumers on Digital Radio Upgrade, as it has done on the Digital Television Switchover programme.

6. **(45, 146)** The Board of **C 4 Corporation** have today been invited by the Secretary of State to provide the Government with its response by the end of July on the elements of the updated statutory remit for C4 contained in the White Paper, and, as part, of that C4's role in helping to drive Digital Participation.
7. **(58)** Following the White Paper's confirmation of the **Broadband Universal Service Commitment** by 2012 and its funding, the Government has today written to the BBC, on the specifics of the governance of the Network Design and Procurement Group and the practicalities of the release of the first tranche of funding to progress the appointment of the Project Director and Network Design experts to develop the tender specification by the Autumn.
8. **(76, 82)** In relation to **Next Generation Mobile and Spectrum Liberalisation**, the process of Guiding Technical Arbitration is now underway. The process will be open, transparent and inclusive and on 22 June the Independent Spectrum Broker issued a call for evidence from interested parties. This work will address the core issues around 900MHz and 800MHz spectrum and additional points identified in the final report. The Government has today also written to the Mayor for London offering to work with the Mayor, TfL and the operators to identify and remove any regulatory or other barriers to the deployment of mobile communications on the Underground ahead of Olympics 2012.
9. **(99)** The implementation plan for **Digital Radio Upgrade** continues. The Government has already approached Ministers from other Member States as well as the European Commission to consider how best to achieve consensus on a Community-wide strategy for the roll-out and deployment of digital radio.
10. **(111)** The contact point for responses to the detailed **legislative proposals to address illicit peer to peer file sharing** is [mike.klym@bis.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:mike.klym@bis.gsi.gov.uk). The last date for responses is 15 September 2009, to enable these legislative proposals to be incorporated into the Digital Economy Bill.
11. **(125)** The Technology Strategy Board has today formally assumed task responsibility for the **initial £10 million for pre-competitive research for Next Generation Digital Test Beds** and will issue guidance for interested participants.
12. **(129)** The Minister for the Creative Industries, Sion Simon MP, has written to the chairmen of TIGA and ELSPA formally inviting the British video games industry, working with Government, to build the

evidence-based case by September for a **culturally-based tax relief**<sup>2</sup>.

13. **(154)** following the recommendation in the Office of Fair Trading Review of the Local Media Mergers Regime, the Minister for Communications, Broadcasting and Technology has today formally invited the **Audit Commission to undertake a specific inquiry into the prevalence of local authorities taking paid advertising to support local authority information sheets**, its implications for commercial local media, and to make recommendations.
14. **(162)** By 31 July 2009 the Government will make the **Commencement Order for Sections 272 and 273 of the Communications Act 2003**, which will ensure that Channel 3 and Channel five remain available on all specified distribution platforms for the remainder of their public service licence period and enable Ofcom to advance the revaluation of their remaining analogue licences.

#### **Consultation Update**

15. **(143)** The Government has today published the **Consultation Document on the option of a Contained Contestable Element of the Television Licence Fee**<sup>3</sup> from 2013, to fund in particular news in the Nations, regions and locally alongside news provided by the BBC.
16. **(160)** In early July the Government will also consult on the proposal to give the independent Channel 3 broadcasters in Scotland and Northern Ireland, **STV Group plc and UTV Ltd, equivalent status to qualifying independent production companies** to access the independent production quotas of the BBC, C4, ITV and five in the UK-wide market..

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/consultations/6245.aspx](http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/consultations/6245.aspx)