

Your response

Confidential? N

I am concerned and disappointed that Ofcom has not included a work stream which includes a consultation with stakeholders on the potential impact on PSB and the creative economy of the potential removal of nearly twenty per cent of the BBC's Budget if the over 75s licence fee consultation is to be continued in full out of the BBC's licence fee income.

In my judgment -and I am sure that of the courts if Ofcom were to face judicial review, Ofcom's responsibility to maintain and strengthen the quality of PSB in the UK- together with meeting its primary function of promoting the citizen interest would require that Ofcom undertake- and speedily- such a consultation.

Without prejudging the outcome of this, it does seem to me that any decision to remove licence fee money from content creation etc ie media policy and place into a benefit for the elderly - social policy - would be a retrograde step which would damage the BBC, the independent production sector and quality and representation in broadcasting. It would make British television less competitive.

Ofcom needs to advise the government that funding for this concessionary licence fee should be met out of overall government expenditure and I invite Ofcom to establish whether or not this recommendation commands the support of the industry and stakeholders - as I believe it to do.

Professor Robert Beveridge