

Dear Sir/Madam,

I Would like to submit some general comments regarding the Oftcom Review regarding a new BBC Scotland Television channel. The views expressed in this email are the views of me as an individual living in Scotland.

My main concerns over this process is over the lack of independence of BBC Scotland from the editorial viewpoints expressed in the rest of the UK and over competition specifically with respect to news and current affairs programmes.

Glaring examples of the lack of competition in the Scottish media were seen during the Scottish independence campaign and during the Brexit campaign. It became increasingly obvious that the BBC was not an impartial observer and the editorial control and slant given to its reporting have been widely commented on.

If the BBC in Scotland is not seen as independent or impartial then the issue of competition becomes of paramount importance. The obvious question is to ask why we are talking of giving the BBC a Scottish television channel and why this can't be a consultation of who should run the new channel? How are the public in Scotland expected to obtain a balanced view of current affairs specific to Scotland if the choice of news is restricted to programmes presented only by the BBC or from STV. This extra BBC channel seems to compound this problem as it increases the prominence of the BBC in Scotland.

I don't know if this is possible but rather than another channel for the BBC I would prefer a third option. The new channel could be run by a company distinct from the BBC or from STV. As an example, let me call this new provider Channel 4 for Scotland (C44S ?). This option has the benefit of being free from the perceived link between the Westminster government and the directors of the BBC. It would be free from any historical bias and perceived editorial control from London. It would be a real different choice for the viewing public; the BBC in Scotland, STV and the new channel (C44S). This could be a chance to have a new channel which would be a fresh start for Scotland. Truly an independent voice and extra choice for Scotland.

To continue my point off a third provider in Scotland, I will quote some of Channel Four's Statement of Promise here which I think is very relevant: -

Channel 4's objectives are founded in our remit as laid out in the statement of programme policy, attached to the Channel 4 licence.

This states that Channel 4 should "foster the new and experimental in television. It will encourage pluralism, provide a favoured place for the untried and encourage innovation in style content perspective and talent on and off screen"

Our ambition is to remain true to our unique role in UK broadcasting. We are a commercial broadcaster, with a funding structure and public service remit to provide diverse and innovative programming and services. We are there to offer a benchmark of quality and innovation, providing competition to commercial and public-sector broadcasters alike. Channel 4 aims to set ambitions for innovation in British media that others aspire to meet.

Channel Four's Statement of Promise goes on to talk about diversity of the British creative economy and of reflecting the diversity of Britain, culturally and geographically.

In my opinion, a third choice in Scotland would help to deliver this diversity which in my opinion is what the BBC have shown themselves as being unable, or perhaps unwilling, to deliver.

Kind Regards,

Richard Dalglish