

## Consultation response form

Please complete this form in full and return via email to [community.radio@ofcom.org.uk](mailto:community.radio@ofcom.org.uk) or by post to:

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Ofcom  
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<b>Consultation title</b>	<b>Fever FM: Request to change Key Commitments</b>
<b>Full name</b>	Bill Best
<b>Contact phone number</b>	
<b>Representing (delete as appropriate)</b>	Organisation
<b>Organisation name</b>	Community Media Association
<b>Email address</b>	
<b>We will keep your contact number and email address confidential. Are there any additional details you want to keep confidential? (delete as appropriate)</b>	
<b>For confidential responses, can Ofcom publish a reference to the contents of your response?</b>	Yes

## Your response

<b>Question 1: Should Radio Asian Fever CIC be permitted to make its proposed changes to the Key Commitments of Fever FM, with particular regard to the statutory criteria set out in Section 1 of this consultation document? (Section 106 (1A) of the 1990 Broad</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Radio Asian Fever CIC (broadcasting as Fever FM) has held an FM community radio licence since October 2005 after broadcasting on Restricted Service Licences (RSLs) since 1999. The aim of the station was to serve the South Asian communities of Leeds. The station delivered nine 9 RSL broadcasts and came on air as a full-time community radio station on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2007.</p> <p>The station was ambitious from the outset and the objective was to give all listeners in the community a platform to air their views and</p>
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concerns, whilst at the same time educating, informing and entertaining them. Fever FM serves all South Asian communities in the city, combating under-representation and exclusion from mainstream media. The station works across cultures, faith groups, and their many denominations. Fever FM seeks to bring the whole community together and “to develop respect for one another by learning from each other”.

Fever FM broadcasts radio programmes in English, Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, and Mirpuri. The station’s talk shows, competitions, and phone-ins attract significant audiences. Via the station’s online presence, Fever FM has built up a strong listenership from other parts of UK and has a fan base that stretches to Pakistan, India, America, Austria, Middle East, New Zealand, Russia, Singapore, Canada, Norway, Austria, Germany and elsewhere.

As well as delivering high-quality content for a dedicated audience, Fever FM recruits and train volunteers in presenting skills, technical know-how, IT and life skills. The station supports and encourages their volunteers (through training, mentoring and supervision) to research, produce and present their own radio shows. Fever FM is also a springboard for local and new talent – and two previous young volunteers are now employed by BBC Local Radio, demonstrating Fever FM’s value. Programming ‘by the community - for the community’ is at the core of what Fever FM values as a genuine community radio station.

#### **Current Key Commitments**

From the key commitments for Fever FM [online](#).

Fever FM is for the South Asian communities of Leeds. It offers training, a platform for the target community to air its views and concerns, and acts as a springboard for local talent. It promotes health, education, training and employment opportunities to empower members of the community, including young people and women.

The service broadcasts:

- Music. The main types of music broadcast over the course of each week are: Bollywood, Lollywood, Indian and Pakistani folk (Punjabi), Bhangra, and Asian Fusion Music.
- Speech. The main types of speech output broadcast over the course of each week are: debates and discussions, interviews, news (local, national and some international), community news and information. There is some religious and cultural programming at times of religious significance and cultural celebration.
- Over the course of each week, programming is broadcast in a multilingual format, including Urdu, Punjabi, Mirpuri and English, as well as other secondary languages.

The service provides original output for a minimum of 15 hours per day. \*

The studio is located within the licensed coverage area.

The service provides a range of community benefits (social gain objectives mandated by statute) for the target community, both on-air and off-air, and in doing so, achieves the following objectives:

- the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion,
- the provision (whether by means of programmes included in the service or otherwise) of education or training to individuals not employed by the person providing the service, and
- the better understanding of the particular community and the strengthening of links within it.

Members of the target community contribute to the operation and management of the service.

The service has mechanisms in place to ensure it is accountable to its target community.

\* Original output is output that is first produced for and transmitted by the service, and excludes output that was transmitted elsewhere before. Original output can be live or voice tracked. Repeat broadcasts of original output do not count towards the minimum requirement.

*[March 2007. Revised December 2014; September 2016]*

**Proposed changes**

Fever FM wishes to amend its key commitments in three key areas: Music, Speech, and Original Output.

**Music** - The main types of music broadcast are: Bollywood, Lollywood, Indian and Pakistani folk (Punjabi), Bhangra, and Asian Fusion Music. During religious and cultural periods/dates, the musical output may change to spiritual and relevant tracks only.

**Speech** - The main types of speech output broadcast are: debates and discussions, interviews, news (local, national and some international), community news and information. During times of religious significance and cultural celebration, the speech output may be restricted to religious and cultural programming only.

**Original Output** - The service will provide original output for a minimum of 91 hours per week.

**Section 106 (1A) fulfilments**

Under section 106(1A) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as modified by the Community Radio Order 2004), Ofcom may consent to a change to Key Commitments only if it is satisfied that at least one of the following five statutory criteria is satisfied:

- 1) that the departure would not substantially alter the character of service (section 106(1A)(a));
- 2) that the departure would not narrow the range of programmes available by way of relevant independent radio services to persons comprising the

relevant community (section 106(1A)(b));

- 3) that there is evidence that, among persons comprising that community, there is a significant demand for, or significant support for, the change that would result from the departure (section 106(1A)(d));
- 4) that the departure would not be prejudicial to the access by members of that community to the facilities used for the provision of the service and for training in the use of those facilities (section 106(1A)(e)); or
- 5) that the departure would not be prejudicial to the delivery of social gain resulting from the provision of the service provided under that licence (section 106(1A)(f)).

Fever FM puts forward that criterion 1) above is satisfied as the proposed change would not substantially alter the character of service. The station currently plays religious and spiritual content during the different cultural festivals and the proposed change is to recognise the status quo.

Criterion 2) is met as the range of programmes available will not be narrowed as the station's existing commitment to playing Bollywood, Lollywood, Indian and Pakistani folk (Punjabi), Bhangra, and Asian Fusion Music will continue to be made. Fever FM merely wishes to formalise its acknowledgment of the festivals of Diwali, Vaisakhi, Ramadan, Christmas, and Easter.

It is proposed that criterion 3) is met as Fever FM is responding to a genuine local demand that on occasion the station would like to be able to re-broadcast some of its most popular programmes without breaching the conditions of the current key commitments.

Fever FM contends that criterion 4) is addressed as access to the station to all community members will remain open throughout all religious and cultural festivals. In fact, Fever FM views the proposed changes as

making the station more relevant to the community and more welcoming as a community asset.

Criterion 5) is met through Fever FM building bridges between different faith and cultural groups through delivering the station's key commitments. Fever FM will seek to improve inter-cultural understanding by highlighting the religious and cultural festivals of all community groups, promoting tolerance and understanding between different faiths and different community elements. Celebrating all major religious and cultural festivals at the appropriate times will assist Fever FM in its mission to better unite communities and promote mutual understanding.

### **Conclusion**

Fever FM is a long-standing and dependable member of the Community Media Association, the representative body for community radio in the UK, and takes part in activities and events organised for the benefit of the whole sector.

The proposed changes are relatively minor in nature and better reflect the aspirations of Fever FM to be a genuine community radio station that is relevant to all sections of the community broadcasting quality original content that is reflective of local tastes.

The proposed key commitment changes seek to streamline and simplify the station's licence conditions highlighting important religious and culturally sensitive programming but sensitive to the demands of the local audience.

The essential character of the station's service would not significantly change. Fever FM has worked hard to build up a loyal and trusted audience and the station management would not recklessly jettison a brand that has been hard-won and refined in the face of bland homogenisation of other media platforms.

For a decade, Fever FM has served as a genuine community radio station providing religiously appropriate programming at relevant dates in the calendar year for a variety of faiths in the local community. The station's focus has always

	<p>been to serve as many faith groups as possible and to use the relevant festivals to promote inter-cultural and inter-faith understanding, cohesion and education.</p> <p>Fever FM would continue to broadcast a wide variety of programming, covering a broad spectrum of entertainment, music, family shows, children's shows and talk shows. However only at the dates of the aforementioned festivals would there be changes to the station's output reflective of the relevant faith/cultural activity.</p> <p>In 2007, Fever FM surveyed their listeners to ask them asking them "What percentage of faith-based programming they would like to hear at appropriate times of the year?" The response of 99% of respondents was that they were keen for Fever FM to focus on the relevant festival at the time.</p> <p>Fever FM contends that the proposed changes represent only a minor variation to the station's current output and by changing them will enable the station to stay relevant to its local community and continue to deliver the social benefits of community cohesion, inter-faith understanding, education, entertainment, informing their audience from a wide range of backgrounds.</p>
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