

Your response

Question 1: Respondents are invited to comment on whether they agree with Ofcom's preliminary view and to frame their views and responses with reference to, or in the context of, the statutory criteria in section 106(1A) of the Broadcast Act 1990 (as amended).

I urge you to reconsider your decision!

XS Manchester has established itself as the best radio station in the Manchester and offers a completely different offering to any other station broadcasting in the city.

XS Manchester is the only radio station in Manchester that plays rock/indie music from local bands/artists and without the support of the station these bands would struggle to get the same airplay and recognition.

XS Manchester regularly promote upcoming gigs in the area, often making me aware of things taking place that I wouldn't have otherwise known. Their presenters often host pre and post gig events at various venues across Manchester bringing a real community feel to the city.

In regards to meeting the terms of section 106(1A) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 I do not see how this change satisfies any of the criteria listed:

(a) that the departure would not substantially alter the character of the service;

The character of the service would **clearly change** with a completely different emphasis on the music played and target audience (currently a rock and speech service for 35 – 64 year olds; proposed an urban contemporary music service playing music of an Afro-Caribbean origin)

(b) that the departure would not narrow the range of programmes available by way of relevant independent radio services to persons living the area or locality for which the service is licensed to be provided;

There is no other radio station in the Greater Manchester area that provides the same content to the same target audience. You have referenced Radio X as being the main competitor but acknowledge that this station is aimed at a different audience (15-34 year olds). If you were to cross reference the Radio X playlist with that of XS Manchester you will see clear differences. Opportunity given by XS Manchester to bands/artists (many of which are from the local area) that Radio X clearly doesn't provide. Radio X provides no content relating directly to Manchester whereas XS Manchester does.

(c) that the departure would be conducive to the

maintenance or promotion of fair and effective competition.

If XS Manchester were to cease broadcasting local bands and artists would struggle to obtain the same exposure no longer having the same opportunity to break through into the mainstream.

(d) that there is evidence that, amongst persons living in that area or locality, there is a significant demand for, or significant support for, the change that would result from the departure;

XS Manchester is well supported by residents of Manchester and contributes to the musical fabric of the city. Manchester is famous throughout the world for its indie/rock music scene and has a long held tradition of producing successful bands/artists such as The Smiths, Stone Roses, Oasis, Charlatans, Elbow, Courteeners, Blossoms and the Slow Readers Club all of whom receive regular airplay on the station reinforcing their importance to the city.

Afro-Caribbean music on the other hand doesn't have the same connection with Manchester. I'm not aware that there is a clamour within Manchester for this station to start broadcasting in XS Manchester's slot. A quick poll in my office suggests nobody is demanding the change. I'm 100% confident that if you were to give Mancunians the option of XS Manchester or Capital XTRA they would choose the former.

(e) that (i) the departure would result from programmes included in the licensed service ceasing to be made at premises in the area or locality for which the service is provided, but (ii) those programmes would continue to be made wholly or partly at premises within the approved area (as defined in section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 (local content and character of services))

XS Manchester is a local station with local content and presenters broadcasting from a location in the city centre. This gives the station a local Mancunian feel something that would be lost with the proposed offering. Whilst this consultation is specifically in relation to the change in service it has to be acknowledged that the proposal is also requesting a reduction in its locally made programming requirements.