

Title:

Mrs

Forename:

Cathy

Surname:

Edwards

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

Self and charity

Email:

What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?:

Keep nothing confidential

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Ofcom should only publish this response after the consultation has ended:

You may publish my response on receipt

Additional comments:

I live in North Devon and I am concerned about the proposals relating to the loss of FM radio services in North Devon should Now Digital get approval for their application.

Personally I liked North Devon having its own local radio station. Our area is not as vastly populated as Exeter, Plymouth and South Devon but it does cover a fairly large geographical area. When Lantern first transmitted from their small studios in Bideford the community got

behind it and it grew, so much so that it moved to Barnstaple and with local presenters and sales staff it built up a respected and popular service and business.

If we needed to know what was going on in the national news we could tune in to larger network radio stations, the TV or the internet. But if we wanted to know what was going on daily in North Devon we would tune in to our local radio station.

If local road works were going on it would be aired on the local radio station - if local schools were closed for one reason or another it would be aired on the local radio station. In the last few months I have had to take long detours due to small roads being closed that I was not aware of - and with Devon's long and winding narrow lanes I was not happy!!! I was also held up in Bideford a few months ago due to a small accident - there was no report of it on Heart or Radio Devon as it was probably considered too small to bother with - as a result I was late for a medical appointment. If I had known about it I could have taken a different route and avoided the delay.

Wearing my charity hat, local radio was a huge asset to me and many other charities. The 'What's on Event Guide' would plug events for me free of charge - people don't always read a newspaper to find out what's going on but they do listen to the radio! Since Heart has taken over they don't appear to promote many local events - if at all. As there is no longer a local FM radio station for North Devon I noticed a drop in some the events we organised - I know I can put this down in part to the knock on effect of them not being publicised on local radio.

I expect digital radio will have to come to North Devon at some point but I don't see why it should be at the expense of loosing our FM service and even if it does I don't see why Now Digital should have the monopoly of running most or all of the stations, with the exception of Radio Devon.

Just one thought - are there going to be grants available for people to purchase new digital radios when thousands of perfectly working receivers will have to be ditched?

I wish all the team at The Voice the best in trying to keep a local FM service in North Devon and I will do all I can to support them. At least they care about OUR community!!!

Question 1: Do you think that allowing Now Digital to extend the coverage area of its Exeter & Torbay local radio multiplex licence to include North Devon would unacceptably narrow the range of DAB programme services available in the Exeter and Torbay area? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

Question 2: Do you think that allowing Now Digital to extend the coverage area of its Exeter & Torbay local radio multiplex licence to include North Devon would be calculated to maintain or promote the development of digital sound broadcasting in the UK otherwise than by satellite? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

Question 3: Do you think that Now Digital's proposals for providing coverage of North Devon are satisfactory? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

From the information provided I understand that not all areas of North Devon will be able to receive digital broadcasting. If FM is continued in North Devon an extremely high proportion of the population will continue to receive a variety of radio services.

Question 4: Do you consider that Now Digital has the ability to maintain its local radio multiplex service if its request is granted? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

Question 5: (For programme service providers on the Exeter & Torbay local radio multiplex only) Do you consider that there are sufficient safeguards in place to protect your rights and interests in the event that Now Digital is permitted to extend coverage to include North Devon?:

Question 6: Do you consider that there any other grounds on which Ofcom should approve, or not approve, the request from Now Digital? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

Not approve - see comments box