

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Nick

Surname:

Harvey

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

Member of Parliament

Email:

mail@nickharveymp.com

What do you want Ofcom to keep 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 believe the people of North Devon have been badly served by this consultation. Ofcom's own Consultation papers state that "where possible, we will hold informal talks before announcing a big consultation to find out whether we are thinking in the right direction...If we do not have enough time to do this, we will hold an open meeting...after announcing the consultation." There has been no public meeting or any apparent engagement with local

residents about this issue, despite the fact that an overwhelming majority of people in the area do not think that Ofcom are "thinking in the right" direction.

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.:

The principal objection in my constituency to these proposals is that it means that once again, "local" radio for North Devon will be based many miles away with no real reference to local news, traffic or events.

It is felt that this application is merely a fig-leaf in order that those wishing to apply for a license for a truly local radio cannot as the current holder of the analogue license can automatically apply for a renewal of the existing license.

This application goes no way to promote the development of digital sound broadcasting in the UK. The proposals offer no new content or approach, purely the expansion of Exeter/Torbay programming to an area which does not identify itself with Exeter and is miles away.

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.:

The coverage proposals that Now Digital make are extremely disappointing and only reinforce the view that the needs of listeners in North Devon are not going to be properly catered for. The percentage coverage will mean that many people won't even be able to listen to the service, and even if the Government decide to go ahead with digital switchover, there will still be people with no radio coverage.

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.:

Ofcom should not approve this request and instead should be consulting on a proper local radio service for North Devon.

This area needs a dedicated FM service and rather than seeking to extend an existing multiplex from the South of the county, the opportunity should be given to bid for an FM license.