

Title:

Mr

Forename:

Wilfred

Surname:

Webber

Representing:

Self

Organisation (if applicable):

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:

Strongly urge the refusal of this application.

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.:

Whether or not the application affects the range in Exeter and Torbay would not interest me.

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.:

It might be calculated to maintain or promote digital in the UK, but the effect of bringing local digital to North Devon has 'knock on' effects with FM local not being put out to other interested parties to bid for the North Devon Licence.

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.:

Not at all. The percentages of coverage are way below acceptable. A spokesmans comments in the North Devon Journal pointed out that, although a maximum coverage of 70 percent was mentioned in the application, this may rise before FM gets switched off. As I see it, we are judging the application in hand, and it is quoted 70% after the three transmitters are switched on. What happens beyond, or in the future should not be taken into account when deciding this proposal.

The acceptance of this digital proposal would result in the FM local commercial licence being renewed in the favour of the current licensee - Heart Radio. Being that Hearts output contains almost no useful local information for our area since the closure of Barnstaple Studio last year, we could not risk another term being served by them, - Nor could we risk local digital coming to North Devon with a poor coverage. For these reasons, and for the good and wellbeing of North Devon, this proposal must most definately be rejected.

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.:

I would not know.

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?:

This does not apply to me.

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.:

Digital is not going to save the world, and to some people other matters are more important. If Digital local is allowed here, all it means is we will get mainly a load of digital stations controlled by Global radio/Heart. Yes BBC Radio Devon is on there, but initially this would

be on quite a poor coverage. None of the stations that would be coming here from the Exeter and Torbay extension would be classed as 'locally produced', so no localness will be felt by us as listeners.

On the subject of localness, the present FM so-called 'local' station is Heart Radio. It's content is produced in either Exeter or London, and so I don't deem that to be local either. The station is some fifty or sixty miles from Barnstaple. We get no local enjoyment of listening, nor is it at all useful with providing information relevant to North Devon or Torridge. It is so sad to us as North Devonians how it has ended up, from the brilliant Lantern FM that we had for so many years. Those people really knew what we wanted, and they delivered an endless list..... events, news, involvement with local schools, superb travel news in bad weather, - and here we get lots of that!, competitions, and most of all presenters who 'knew this area'. Surely we need to walk before we can run, - running being digital. We don't want it, or not under these sort of terms anyway. We need the local feel of a decent locally based station again on good old FM. Its signal gets to a huge part of North Devon, and can cope with getting out over the hills and into the valleys. I don't want Heart to get a renewal because nothing about them is local. Even the music is the same countrywide give or take a few minutes, with just local adverts dubbed in. The Digital proposal should not be accepted on its grounds of poor coverage and non local content. Heart's automatic renewal should not be allowed because of their total lack of local content and general non-involvement where North Devon is concerned. The FM licence should be re-advertised as was originally planned before this crazy digital scheme came to light, - and hopefully we might then get a radio station here again that gives us what we used to have - i.e. localness!!!