

Key Commitments change request form

Community radio station name:	Hope FM
Licence number:	CR000086BA/5
Licensee (company name):	Voice of Hope Radio
Contact name:	Blair Crawford
Date of request:	15-12-23

Details of requested change(s) to Key Commitments

A community radio operator may apply to Ofcom to have the station's Key Commitments amended.

Please complete the table overleaf by including your current Commitment in the left hand column and your proposed revised Commitment in the centre column. In the right hand column please give a brief explanation as to why you wish to make each change.

We also require you to complete a second table which asks you to explain your proposed changes with reference to the statutory framework.

If you do not provide an explanation for your proposed changes and a completed comparison table, Ofcom cannot consider a Key Commitments change.

Please complete this form and return it to: broadcast.licensing@ofcom.org.uk

Existing Commitment (as in your published Key Commitments) Please only include one commitment change per row, and add more rows as necessary into the table.	Proposed revised/new Key Commitment	Reason for proposed change
<p>Hope FM is for the population of Bournemouth. People and organisations from every sector of the local community contribute to the programming, promoting a sense of inclusion and belonging. The service is based on a Christian ethos, gives a voice to children and young people, and helps disadvantaged groups.</p>		
<p>Music. The main types of music broadcast over the course of each week are: Christian music of various styles, and contemporary popular music.</p>		
<p>Speech. The main types of speech output broadcast over the course of each week are: human interest stories, discussion and debate, interviews, public service information, news, traffic, weather and community information.</p>		
<p>The service provides original output¹ for a minimum of 98 hours per week.</p>	<p>The service provides original output¹ for a minimum of 65 hours per week.</p>	<p>While meet our requirements for providing locally-produced output per day, we continue to struggle to meet our</p>

		<p>original output per week target without compromising on quality.</p> <p>Due to the nature of having a volunteer led presenter team, we have found it increasingly difficult to cover absences with personnel who can deliver a quality which properly serves our community, as per our other key commitments.</p> <p>There has been a noticeable change in the availability of volunteer hours for original output in recent times, and we feel 98 hours per week is currently unrealistic.</p> <p>With this proposed change we will still be averaging over 9 hours of original output a day per week.</p>
<p>The service provides locally-produced output² for a minimum of 13 hours per day.</p>		
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> the facilitation of discussion and the expression of opinion, <input type="checkbox"/> 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.

Statutory requirements

Under section 106(1A)(a)-(f) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as amended and modified¹) Ofcom must be satisfied that your proposed changes **meet at least one of the criteria referred to below**.

Please indicate which of these criteria you believe your proposed changes satisfy by deleting YES or NO as applicable and provide an explanation for why you consider a particular criterion is met in the relevant box. You should note that even if Ofcom is of the opinion that your explanation of your proposed changes meets one or more of these criteria, there may still be reasons why Ofcom is unable to consent to the change. When explaining your proposed changes, it is not enough to state that you believe one of the criteria is met. You must also demonstrate *why* you consider that at least one of these criteria is met.

In particular, if Ofcom is not satisfied that the changes would not substantially alter the character of the service (criterion (a) below), Ofcom cannot consent to the change without consulting on your proposals.² If this is the case, we will contact you to confirm that you are happy for us to consult on your proposed changes, and whether you wish to make any changes to your request in light of the need to make it public.

As part of our consideration of your request to make changes to your Key Commitments, we require applicants to provide an explanation for **at least one** of the criteria below.

(a) In your judgement would the proposed changes substantially alter the character of the service?	NO (Please explain why below)
The proposed changes aim to maintain the quality of original output while adjusting the quantity to a more realistic target given the current volunteer availability. This ensures the service remains true to its original character and commitments.	
(b) Do you consider that the proposed changes would narrow the range of programmes available by way of relevant independent radio services to persons comprising the relevant community?	NO (Please explain why below)
The changes will not narrow the range of programmes but will help maintain the quality of content delivered, ensuring a diverse and engaging range of programmes remains available to the community.	
(c) Do you believe that there is evidence that, amongst persons comprising that community, there is a significant demand for, or significant support for, the changes that you have proposed?	YES(Please explain why below)
Feedback from volunteers and community members indicates a strong preference for maintaining high-quality programming even if it means reducing the total hours of original output. There is significant support for this approach within the community.	
(d) Do you consider that your proposed changes would 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?	NO (Please explain why below)
The proposed changes will not affect community access to facilities or training. The focus remains on ensuring the community continues to benefit from high-quality programming and opportunities.	

¹ As amended by sections 312 and 313 of the Communications Act 2003 and modified by the Community Radio Order 2004.

² Ofcom may approve a change under any of criteria (b), (c), (d) and (e) without consultation, or after a consultation of less than 28 days, if Ofcom considers that to hold a consultation at all, or for 28 days or more, would result in a delay that would be likely to prejudice the interests of the licensee. Ofcom may also remove for the purposes of consultation any confidential information submitted by the licensee.

(e) Do you consider that the proposed changes would be prejudicial to the delivery of social gain resulting from the provision of the service provided under your licence?	NO (Please explain why below)
The delivery of social gain will remain unaffected. The proposed changes are intended to ensure that the social gain objectives continue to be met effectively without compromising the quality of the service provided.	

Please set out below any additional information and/or evidence you wish to provide in support of your proposed changes.

In particular, you may wish to outline how you think your proposed change(s) fit(s) within Ofcom’s [published guidance on changes to Key Commitments](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/31913/kc-changes-guidance.pdf) ([https://www.ofcom.org.uk/ data/assets/pdf file/0017/31913/kc-changes-guidance.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/31913/kc-changes-guidance.pdf)).

We propose the reduction of the required hours for original output from 98 hours per week to 65 hours per week due to significant changes in the availability of our volunteer team. Over the past year, we have observed a decline in the number of volunteers able to commit to producing original content, which has directly impacted our ability to meet the existing commitment without compromising the quality of our broadcasts.

This change will allow us to focus on delivering high-quality content that aligns with our community’s expectations and needs. By averaging over 9 hours of original output daily, we continue to provide substantial local content while ensuring that our volunteer team is not overburdened, thereby maintaining a sustainable and enjoyable experience for both presenters and listeners.

Feedback from our community indicates strong support for this adjustment. Many listeners have expressed a preference for maintaining the quality of our programmes over the sheer quantity of original content. We believe this change will not alter the character of our service but will instead enhance it by allowing us to maintain our standards of quality and relevance.

Additionally, we are committed to ensuring that this change does not negatively impact our community’s access to our facilities or the training provided. We will continue to offer ample opportunities for community engagement and involvement in all aspects of our station’s operations.

This proposed change aligns with Ofcom’s guidance on Key Commitments, which recognises the need for flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances while ensuring that community radio stations remain true to their core objectives. We are confident that this adjustment will enable us to better serve our community and fulfil our social gain objectives effectively.

Data Protection

We require the information requested in this form in order to carry out our licensing duties under the Broadcasting Act 1990, Broadcasting Act 1996 and Communications Act 2003. Please see Ofcom’s [General Privacy Statement](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/foi-dp/general-privacy-statement) (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/foi-dp/general-privacy-statement>) for further information about how Ofcom handles your personal information and your corresponding rights.

Ofcom notes on the request

The request was AGREED, because Ofcom was satisfied in relation to Section 106(1A)(a) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as modified by the Community Radio Order 2004, and further modified by the Community Radio (Amendment) Orders 2010 and 2015) i.e. that the change would not substantially alter the character of the service, and for the policy reasons given below.

The Licensee is requesting to reduce its Key Commitment for original output from 98 to 65 hours per week. This represents a reduction of approximately 34%. In requesting this change the Licensee has highlighted changes in its volunteer availability while allowing it to maintain access to its facilities and provision of training for members of the target community.

While this is a relatively large reduction, we consider that 65 hours per week of original output should still be enough to ensure the station remains able to deliver on its Key Commitments to promote a “sense of inclusion and belonging” in Bournemouth, while ensuring that “The service is based on a Christian ethos, gives a voice to children and young people, and helps disadvantaged groups”.

As such, we are satisfied this change does not substantially alter the character of the service. In terms of our policy criteria, Ofcom is satisfied the change will not affect the station’s ability to meet the community radio ‘characteristics of service’ set out in the legislation, and there are no other policy reasons to refuse the change. We have therefore decided to exercise our discretion to approve this change.

July 2024