

Kidderminster independent local radio licence applications

Questions and responses: Kidderminster FM

These are the responses received from Kidderminster FM to the non-confidential questions asked by Ofcom regarding the group's application for the Kidderminster licence.

1. You note that the TSA of 130,685 has been identified for marketing and editorial purposes. It also appears to underpin the forecasts in your financial appendix. Please clarify the methodology that was used to allocate population to the postcodes you have identified on page 15.

To clarify, the methodology used to derive the TSA of 130,685 involved overlaying a postcode sector map over a coverage prediction map supplied by NTL. The purpose of this was to establish a list of whole postcode sectors that met the following criteria:

- some or all households in the postal sector could receive a signal strength at the 54 dB level;
- the sector was contiguous to the core Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport conurbations; and
- the postal sector was editorially compatible with the core Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport area.

As a result of this analysis the following postcode sectors were selected to define the Kidderminster FM TSA for marketing and editorial purposes: B61 0, B61 9, DY10 1 to DY10 4, DY11 5 to DY11 7, DY12 1 to DY12 3, DY13 0, DY13 8, DY13 9, DY14 0, DY14 8, DY14 9, DY7 6, DY8 2, DY9 0, DY9 9, WR9 0.

Taking our selected postcode sectors, we then commissioned CACI to run Census Population and Population Prediction reports to set out the population profile in 2001, and estimate the predicted population profile of the area in 2005, 2011 and 2017. These CACI reports (based on 2001 Census data) indicate a population prediction in 2005 of 130,685 adults aged 15 and over.

2. Please also explain the methodology that was used to derive the separate figure of 135,078 adults in households receiving the signal in excess of 54dB(μ V/m) from the proposed transmitter.

This separate figure was derived from coverage prediction data supplied to us by NTL. This information estimated the number of dwelling points that would be able to receive a signal in excess of 54dB would be approximately 70,000 households. Using a factor of 2.39 to calculate population per household, and a factor of 0.81 to estimate adults 15+, the NTL data showed approximately 135,000 adults would be able to receive a signal in excess of 54dB from the proposed transmitter.

NTL utilise 1993/94 Royal Mail Post Code Address data to derive the number of delivery points. The total population per dwelling point factor of 2.39 is an accepted figure used by NTL, as is the 15+ adult factor of 0.81.

3. You note that this second figure, of 135,078 adults, includes "some isolated areas that are not contiguous with the core Kidderminster, Stourport-on-

Severn and Bewdley area, plus some inevitable but limited overspill into parts of Stourbridge, Bromsgrove, and Droitwich”. The decision to settle on 130,685 adults for the TSA figure implies that you have chosen to exclude some, but not all, of the population in these areas, unless the total population in these areas is slightly less than 4,500. Please explain this decision.

We are required for marketing and RAJAR purposes to define our TSA by whole postal sectors and inevitably this leads to a degree of compromise where signal strength drops within a postcode sector.

In order to define our TSA, as highlighted in our response to Q1, we selected only those postal sectors that were contiguous with, and had editorially relevance to, our core area, and where a signal strength of 54dB or above could be received by some or all of the households.

We also eliminated postcodes that clearly fell into the "inevitable limited overspill" of the signal into parts of Bromsgrove, Stourbridge and Droitwich as being irrelevant to this licence in marketing and editorial terms. The resultant postal sectors, as defined in our response to Q1 gave us a predicted 15+ adult population (in 2005) of 130,685.

Generally in local radio, extending a TSA reduces weekly reach as we move further from the core area and this is reflected in our realistic audiences projections. We are confident that the TSA defined represents a realistic and marketable station for Kidderminster and the surrounding areas.

4. In your transmission proposals, it appears that the figures given on page 19 for height of site above Ordnance datum (44.1m) and height of transmitting aerial above ground level (84m) may have been transposed. Please confirm the correct figures.

As Ofcom correctly point out these figures have been transposed in the text. To confirm, the height of site above Ordnance datum is 84m, and the height of transmitting aerial above ground level is 44.1m. In addition, and for clarity, we also confirm that this transposition has no effect on the transmission coverage predictions set out in the application.

5. In relation to locally-made programming, the application is quite specific (page 32) that “all the programmes of Kidderminster FM will be produced in our new studios in Kidderminster by people who know the area well. The only planned exception to this principle will be a suitable nationally networked chart show...”, and further undertakes to use programme networking “only in exceptional circumstances”. However, the Format does not make any commitment as to the proportion of locally-made programming. Please explain why the application commitment was not reflected to any degree in the Format.

The application commitment to locally made programming was not reflected in the Format due to oversight on our part. However, we are happy to make such commitment and attach a revised Format as a result.

6. Given that the target audience is all adults in the service area, please explain how you plan to accommodate up to 45% of current and recent hits in the schedule, when the research indicates these two eras had the lowest enjoyment levels overall but particularly for all demographics from age 35 and up, and highest “switch-off” scores overall.

In our format commitment, we state that recent and current tracks will never make up more than 45%. This figure is an absolute maximum and not necessarily the figure that we will choose to run with. It is worth pointing out that in our experience, research into “new music” is liable to swing wildly according to the perceived strength of the music scene at the time of the study. Furthermore, we would schedule according to the nature of current and recent chart hits and the editorial decisions made by our Programme Director on an on-going basis.

Our proposal for a music-led station focusing on local news and information for the Wyre Forest is designed to offer something for everyone in the broad 15 to 64 age range, and attract a core audience of 25 to 44 year olds.

In the music testing undertaken as part of our consumer research, we did not set out to define simply ‘music preference’, but also to identify music tolerance and specifically 'switch off'. The scoring regime (set out below) applied to obtain mean scores reflects this:

Definitely Want To Hear	+100
Like To Hear But Not Essential	+50
Don't Care If Hear It Or Not	+25
Don't Want To Hear (Wouldn't Switch)	0
Definitely Don't Want (Would Switch)	-100

As Ofcom correctly point out, the enjoyment levels for more recent music declines with the age of respondent. However, as the table below illustrates, this is due to the high intolerance of these music genres by those aged 65+. Taking out the 65+ demographic, the mean scores for ‘recent’ and ‘current’ music suggest listeners would tolerate this genre of music and not “switch off”.

ERA	Age of Respondent					
	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
60's	18	38	51	60	63	54
70's	25	41	59	61	58	41
80's	47	59	59	46	37	14
90's	63	68	51	31	23	-4
Recent	82	78	45	18	3	-30
Current	89	75	42	9	-1	-38

While the Kidderminster FM music policy is informed by the research, it is also informed by The Wireless Group's experience of successfully programming other local radio stations, and specifically by the advice of our Group Programme Director, John Evington, who has considerable experience of successfully programming local stations.

Attachment 1 (see Question 5)

KIDDERMINSTER FM STATION FORMAT

Licence Outline

Station Name	Kidderminster FM
Licence Area	Kidderminster and the surrounding area
<i>Frequency</i>	
<i>Service Duration</i>	24 hours a day (a maximum of 11 hours automated in non daytime on weekdays and a maximum of fourteen hours in non daytime at weekends)

Definitions

Speech	"Speech" excludes advertising, programme/promotional trails & sponsor credits, and may be calculated across daytime or non-daytime
Peaktime(s)	"Peaktime(s)" refers to Weekday Breakfast and Afternoon Drivetime output, and Weekend Late Breakfast.
<i>Daytime</i>	"Daytime" refers to 0600 to 1900 weekdays, and weekend output from 0800 to 1400.
<i>Locally produced/presented</i>	Production and presentation from within the licence area. All requirements for locally produced/presented output must include peaktime.

Character of Service

A locally focused music and information station for the Kidderminster area.

Detail

Speech and information are important ingredients for the station and will include such content as local news, weather, traffic and travel, what's on details and regular listener participation. Speech will not normally fall below 20% of daytime output and around 10% of non-daytime output. Bulletins with local news will run hourly at least during weekday peaktime, with extended local bulletins at least twice each weekday. National news will feature at other times. Music will be mainly a spread of Top 40 hits from the 60's to the present day. Current and recent tracks will never make up more than 45% of the music output. All programming will be locally produced/presented, with the exception of the occasional syndicated programme such as a weekly hit single chart show.