



Invitation of applications for community radio licences: Greater London and other areas within the M25

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1. Ofcom, in accordance with section 104(1) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as amended by the Communications Act 2003 and as modified by the Community Radio Order 2004), invites applications for licences to provide community radio services in Greater London and other areas located within the boundary of the M25 motorway. This part of the United Kingdom is shown as region 8 on the map in Annex 1 to this notice. (Any applicant unsure as to which region its proposed coverage area is in should contact Ofcom for confirmation.) These licences are being offered for the provision of services on either the FM (VHF) waveband (but see important note below) or the AM (medium wave) band, for a maximum period of five years from the commencement of broadcasting.
- 1.2. There is a severe lack of suitable FM frequencies in and around Greater London and other areas within the M25. Ofcom has conducted an analysis of spectrum availability and concluded that there are only two suitable FM frequencies available within the region. See section 3 below for a detailed discussion on the potential areas that may be served by these frequencies, and the restrictions on their use. Ofcom will not accept FM applications for services proposing to serve any location other than those falling within the parameters set out in section 3 below.
- 1.3. It should be noted that Ofcom already has a number of applications under consideration from applicants in locations outside the M25 (from region 7 on our timetable: 'east and southeast England, excluding Greater London and areas within the M25'). Frequencies identified in section 3 may be suitable for use in some locations outside the M25, and these applications may therefore be competing for an FM frequency with applicants from locations within the M25 motorway. However it is possible that in such an instance the frequency could be used twice; once within the M25 and once some distance outside of it. In addition, in some cases applicants from regions 7 & 8 may propose overlapping coverage areas and therefore need to be considered alongside one another. It is important that our application procedure does not disadvantage groups from either region (i.e. groups based either within or outside the M25). Therefore we expect that we will need to consider some applications from outside the M25 alongside some from within the M25 at the same time.
- 1.4. In addition to the two FM frequencies referred to above, Ofcom believes that there are a small number of suitable AM frequencies available for community radio services within this region.
- 1.5. The closing-date for the receipt of completed applications will be **5.00 pm on Tuesday 15 September 2009**. A non refundable fee of £600 will be payable for each application submitted and considered.

Section 2

Restricted areas

- 2.1 The Community Radio Order 2004 (SI 2004/1944) says that Ofcom may not license a community radio station if it would overlap by 50% or more in population terms with the measured coverage area of a commercial radio station serving an adult (aged 15+) population of 50,000 or fewer. The legislation also says that, where a community radio station would overlap by 50% or more in population terms with the measured coverage area of a commercial radio station with a measured coverage area containing an adult (aged 15+) population of between 50,001 and 150,000, then Ofcom must include conditions in the community radio licence to prohibit on-air paid-for advertising or the sponsorship of programmes.
- 2.2 There are no commercial services serving an adult (aged 15+) population of 150,000 or fewer within the M25 region and therefore these specific restrictions do not apply in this region at the current time. However, applicants should note that the obligation to include conditions in community radio licences to prohibit on-air paid-for advertising and sponsorship of programmes is a continuing obligation. This means that even if there is no existing overlapping commercial radio station with an adult population in its measured coverage area of between 50,001 and 150,000 at the time a community radio service licence is awarded, the prohibition of on-air paid-for advertising and programme sponsorship would be triggered at a future date were such a commercial service to be licensed. Under the terms of the Community Radio Order, Ofcom has no discretion to disapply this rule. It should be noted, however, that Ofcom currently has no plans to advertise further analogue commercial radio licences in this area.

General impact upon local commercial and community radio services

- 2.3 In addition to the specific restrictions detailed above, Ofcom must assess whether, more generally, a community radio service would prejudice unduly the economic viability of any other existing local commercial or community radio service. The application form includes questions on revenue, including whether a group plans to seek revenue from the sale of advertising or sponsorship on the station. Any decisions to (for example) vary the limit on advertising and sponsorship income to a level lower than that specified in the legislation, or not to award a community radio licence, will be made by the Radio Licensing Committee. (The Radio Licensing Committee is a standing committee of Ofcom's main board. It is the decision-making body for community radio licence awards.) Please see the notes of guidance for further information.

Section 3

Frequency availability

- 3.1 Ofcom has undertaken further assessment of FM frequency availability in Greater London and other areas within the M25. We have concluded that there are only two FM frequencies available for use by new community radio services and that both of these frequencies are limited to use in certain areas. These frequencies were previously used for commercial services at Lewisham and Thamesmead: the particular parameters applying to each frequency are detailed below.
- 3.2 Both of these frequencies are restricted by the use of adjacent ones in and around London. As a result the successful applicants are expected to need to install directional transmitting aerials with restrictions to the north and possibly in other directions too. The two frequencies are available only for services targeted at communities to the south of a line defined by the River Thames or the M4 motorway, whichever is the most northerly. Within the M25, each frequency is expected to be usable at only one location.
- 3.3 Applicants are advised that these two frequencies could also be utilised for community radio in locations outside of the southern M25. However it is possible that in such an instance the frequency could be used twice; once within the M25 and once some distance outside of it. Ofcom may therefore consider the applications it has already received from such locations alongside applications from within the M25.
- 3.4 Applicants should note that the power levels referred to below are the maximum available. The actual power level allocated to the successful applicants will depend on the coverage area and target community identified by the applicants, as well as taking into account the technical constraints.
- 3.5 **Ofcom will not accept applications for services on FM for which transmitters are sited in areas to the north of a line defined by the River Thames or the M4 motorway (whichever is the most northerly).**

107.3 MHz

- 3.6 The following constraints affecting transmission parameters will apply:
- a total maximum effective radiated power (erp) of 200 watts will be allowed, with a maximum erp of 100 watts in the horizontal and vertical planes;
 - in order to protect the existing north west London commercial radio service on 107.1 MHz (www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/mcamaps/al255.pdf), a field strength of more than 54 dB(V/m), measured at 10m, should not extend into any appreciable area north of a line running from Harrow-on-the-Hill to Battersea to Bermondsey to Ilford;
 - in order to protect the existing commercial radio service in Havering on 107.5 MHz (www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/mcamaps/al216.pdf) a field

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strength of more than 60 dB(V/m), measured at 10m, should not extend into any appreciable area north of the River Thames east of the A406;

- in order to protect the existing High Wycombe commercial radio service (www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/mcamaps/al276.pdf) a field strength of more than 35 dB(V/m), measured at 10m, should not extend into any appreciable area north west of a line running from Burnham to Rickmansworth.

3.7 (For information only; if the Bredegar House site, previously used by South London Radio in Lewisham, were to be used for a community radio service the following transmission parameters would be acceptable):

Location:	Bredegar House
National Grid reference:	TQ 379 745
Site height:	14 m above Ordnance datum
Frequency:	107.3 MHz
Total maximum erp:	200 watts (100 watts HP + 100 watts VP)
Aerial height:	65 m above ground level
Aerial pattern:	Directional
Aerial restrictions:	6 dBs over the arc 280 to 310 degrees ETN

106.8 MHz

3.8 The following constraints affecting transmission parameters will apply:

- a total maximum effective radiated power (erp) of 200 watts will be allowed, with a maximum erp of 100 Watts in the horizontal and vertical planes (all-vertical or all-horizontal is acceptable);
- in order to protect the existing Hertford commercial radio service (www.ofcom.org.uk/static/radiolicensing/mcamaps/al259.pdf) a field strength of more than 30 dB(V/m), measured at 10m, should not extend into any appreciable area north of a line running from St Albans to Harlow;

3.9 In order to satisfy the above requirements, the use of a directional transmitting aerial array is expected to be necessary.

3.10 (For information only; if the Shooters Hill site, previously used by Time FM in Thamesmead, were to be used for a community radio service the following transmission parameters would be acceptable):

Location:	Shooters Hill									
National Grid reference:	TQ 438 767									
Site height:	124 m above Ordnance datum									
Frequency:	106.8 MHz									
Total maximum erp:	200 Watts (100 watts HP + 100 watts VP)									
Aerial height:	24 m above ground level									
Aerial pattern:	Directional (see details below)									
Bearing: (degrees ETN)	0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	
Restrictions: (dBs)	10	8	6	5	4	2	1	1	0	
Bearing	90	100	110	120	130	140	150	160	170	

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Restrictions:	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
Bearing	180	190	200	210	220	230	240	250	260
Restrictions:	4	5	6	8	10	10	10	10	10
Bearing	270	280	290	300	310	320	330	340	350
Restrictions:	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

General information: FM

- 3.11 Whilst the details of the previous implementations are given above, it is for applicants to propose a transmission site and parameters capable of achieving their desired coverage. This must include the frequency (106.8 MHz or 107.3 MHz) and any aerial restrictions required in order to adhere to the constraints identified above. Ofcom, once it has satisfied itself that the successful applicant's transmission proposals are acceptable, will seek clearance for the use of the planned frequency at the site and characteristics agreed.
- 3.12 Applicants should note carefully the points outlined in Part 5 (Engineering, coverage policy and technical matters) of the 'Notes of Guidance for Community Radio Licence Applicants and Licensees' available at www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/commun_radio/tlproc/nogs_r23.pdf and in addition should recognise that the submission of a proposal for approval and clearance is a process that may take several months to complete, and that an outcome that is wholly satisfactory to the successful applicant cannot be guaranteed.
- 3.13 Ofcom will not accept applications for services on FM for which transmitters are sited in areas to the north of a line defined by the River Thames or the M4 motorway (whichever is the most northerly).

Frequency availability: AM

- 3.14 In addition to the two FM frequencies above, Ofcom believes that there are a small number of suitable AM frequencies available within this region (Greater London and other areas within the M25). Applicants may wish to consider applying for a licence to broadcast on AM; please see the notes of guidance referred to in paragraph 3.12 above for further information.

Section 4

Guidelines and procedures for submission of applications

- 4.1 The application form, notes of guidance for applicants, and other supporting documentation, may be obtained from the Ofcom website at: http://www.ofcom.org.uk/radio/ifi/rbl/commun_radio/tlproc/ or on written request from community.radio@ofcom.org.uk or Community Radio Licensing, 5th Floor, Ofcom, Riverside House, 2a Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 9HA.
- 4.2 At least one typed copy of an application in English should be submitted.
- 4.3 One electronic or paper copy of an application must be received by Ofcom no later than the closing-date specified in Section 1 of this Notice. Applications received after this time will not normally be accepted. All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt (by email or written receipt). Paper copies of applications, together with any supporting documentation, must be sent to the address given in 4.1 above. If email is the chosen method of submission, the application must be sent to community.radio@ofcom.org.uk. Applicants should be aware, however, that emails are not an instantaneous means of communication, especially when they have large attachments. Applicants are therefore strongly advised to submit email applications at least 48 hours in advance of the closing-date, so that urgent steps can be taken by the applicant if no acknowledgement from Ofcom is received.
- 4.4 Payment of the application fee must also be received (i.e. the funds must be present in the Ofcom bank account) by the closing-date specified in Section 1 of this Notice. Applicants may submit their payment by any of the following methods:
- Payment by BACS into the Ofcom bank account (sort code: 30-97-90, account number: 00782415, account name: Ofcom). Please note that any payments made using this method will take at least three working days to reach the Ofcom account. In the mandate reference field of your payment, please write 'CR' followed by the applicant's company name or proposed station name.
 - Payment by CHAPS into the Ofcom bank account (details as above). Please note that although this is a 'same day' payment method, applicants intending to submit their payment on the closing-date itself should confirm with their bank the deadline for ensuring that it is received by Ofcom on that date. In the mandate reference field of your payment, please write 'CR' followed by the applicant's company name or proposed station name.
 - Payment by cheque. Cheques must be made payable to 'Ofcom', and posted to the address given in 4.1 above. If an applicant wishes to submit a cheque without an accompanying paper copy of the application, the cheque must be accompanied by a note detailing the applicant's company name or proposed station name.
- 4.5 Failure to comply with any of the above guidelines is likely to result in the disqualification of the application.

Annex 1

Regional map

A1.1 Applications are invited for licences to provide community radio services in localities within Greater London and other areas within the boundary of the M25 motorway. This is marked as region 8 on the map below.

