

Gloucestershire local radio Multiplex application

Questions and responses:

These are the responses received from MuxCo to the non-confidential questions asked by Ofcom regarding its application for the Gloucestershire licence.

1. Could you please clarify how, in practice, the management of podcast service would work, given that you have indicated the potential for several suppliers?

The podcast service is a key part of our application for the Gloucestershire multiplex. We believe that using small amounts of capacity to broadcast podcasts will be an excellent use of the spectrum, will enable smaller and local operators who cannot afford 24/7 linear radio to provide speech and specialist music content and will also establish an additional source of revenue.

Folder Media will manage the podcast service and be the DSPS licence holder. They will be responsible for all aspects of the channel and will ensure that all content conforms with Ofcom's Broadcasting Codes. We believe that this is a similar approach as at Spectrum Radio, where the licence is held by Spectrum Radio and various service providers provide content to it for broadcast. We believe that this approach will reduce the administrative burden for Ofcom and podcast providers. We recognise that this is a new development, and will liaise with Ofcom during the development stage and initial operational period to review the best regulatory approach.

In relation to how the podcast service will operate, Folder Media will use a management system that will provide podcast providers with maximum flexibility to upload content to its ingest centre. Each podcast provider will have a login to a specialised content management system ('CMS') which will allow the provider to create and name a podcast 'channel' which they can assign to be broadcast on a particular or a number of multiplexes, allowing the multiplex to easily broadcast a variety of relevant content. Through this 'channel', they will be able to create a new 'episode' with title and description fields, and have a place to upload audio. They will then be able to assign a publish date a minimum of one week in advance. Alternatively, service providers will be able to specify an existing RSS feed through which Folder Media can collect audio from. Combining this with previously set rules will allow the system to be integrated within a provider's existing web-based podcast distribution.

Folder Media's backend system will then take this data and signal to DAB receivers in the relevant areas to show that new content will become available during the course of the next 7 days allowing listeners to subscribe to the new content. At the prescribed time, the system will then broadcast the full data and signalling information on the relevant multiplexes to enable the audio to find its way to listener's receivers.

The delay between the audio being uploaded and broadcast will enable the material to be reviewed by Folder Media's ingest team to ensure it meets Ofcom's Broadcasting Code, as well as enabling the correct signalling information to be broadcast.

If required by the service provider, the podcast will be made available through MuxCo's consumer facing website for the relevant multiplexes, increasing accessibility for the content.

2. You have indicated on page 23 that “all services will broadcast from the start of the multiplex licence period, with the exception of ‘Local Live’ which will launch nine months from the start’. Can you confirm that this will include the podcast service?

It is our proposal to provide the Podcast Service from launch.

3. On page 12 of the application, you have committed to a launch to be at the same time as Hereford & Worcester, and no later than October 2008. Given that you have committed to launch Hereford & Worcester by September 2008, and Local Live 9 months after that; could you confirm that ‘Local Live’ would in fact launch by May 2009?

In relation to Hereford & Worcester, it is the intention to launch ‘Local Live’ by May 2009 (no later than 9 months after launch of that multiplex).

It is our proposal to launch Gloucestershire at the same time as Hereford & Worcester, i.e. in September 2008, but added one extra month to provide a degree of flexibility in case of any unexpected issues. It is our intention that ‘Local Live’ will launch on both multiplexes at the same time, i.e. by May 2009.

4. For the services ‘Smithy Rock’ and ‘Shuffle’, the service description includes reference to the Hereford & Worcester multiplex. Would it be possible to submit wording such that if at some point in the future there was a change to the Hereford and Worcester Multiplex, a variation to the Gloucester multiplex would not be necessary.

Smithy Rock

Format	Classic Rock
Licence Description	A service playing classic and some new rock, targeting listeners aged 35 plus.
Local Content	A new service reflecting the regional rock music scene, and featuring artistes who have recorded at the Old Smithy studios. Speech will include music related information relevant to the audience, including regional news and information.
Music to Speech	Minimum 90% music and 5% speech
Hours of Broadcast	24



Shuffle

Format	Youth
Licence Description	A music station comprising listener-generated content and chart, dance and rock tracks, and focusing on the tastes and interests of under 35 year olds.
Local Content	Shuffle will reflect the trends of young people. It is a music intensive service, playing chart, dance and rock music alongside programmes and features created by local listeners. Speech will include information of relevance to the target audience.
Music to Speech	Minimum 90% music and 5% speech
Hours of Broadcast	24

