

Rhona Parry,
PSB Review,
Ofcom,
Riverside House,
2A Southwark Bridge Road,
London,
SE1 9HA.
PSBReview@ofcom.org.uk

June 16th 2008

Dear Rhona Parry,

Re: Simon Community, Northern Ireland response to the consultation: Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review – Phase One: The Digital Opportunity consultation

Simon Community is a cross community voluntary organisation providing a wide range of integrated services to single homeless people throughout Northern Ireland. We provide accommodation and support services including opportunities for education and training, resettlement support and specialist accommodation for young homeless people. As a homeless organisation we seek to change the perceptions of homelessness and promote the awareness of homelessness in Northern Ireland. The vision of Simon Community Northern Ireland is that everyone has a fundamental right to a home.

As you are aware, the main political parties in Northern Ireland have supported Local Public Service Television and signed the Early Day Motion 1013 which looks to *'the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to introduce a licence for the provision of local public service television during the rollout of digital switchover'*.
<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35211&SESSION=891>

During the passage of the Communications Act, nine Northern Irish MPs supported *"the important contribution community media can make to social inclusion, neighbourhood renewal, citizens' participation, local democracy and lifelong learning and called on the Government to include specific measures for the further growth and development of community media which would include distinct licensing arrangements based on clear public service obligations, reservation of broadcast spectrum, guaranteed access to cable channels and the establishment of a community media fund to help finance start up, development and operating costs"*. (EDM1316)

In response to your consultation we would recommend that Ofcom consider acceptance of local community television as public service broadcasters.

In relation to the development of local television in Belfast, we should be grateful if Ofcom would support NvTv being carried on Freeview as a local public service broadcaster. Such a development would ensure that everyone in the city has access to a valuable local service and would support the efforts of those of us who seek to foster mutually beneficial relationships to meet need. It would also support the arts and community media sector to nurture the city's cultural and creative assets and talent.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Rea
Education Manager