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10 June 2008

Rhona Parry,
PSB Review,
Ofcom,
Riverside House,
2A Southwark Bridge Road,
London,
SE19HA.
PSBReview@ofcom.org.uk

Dear Rhona Parry,

**Re: Women into Politics', Northern Ireland response to the consultation:
Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review - Phase One: The
Digital Opportunity consultation**

Women Into Politics' is a cross community organization with the aim to promote women into decision-making roles in civic, public and political life. We campaign and lobby on relevant matters for women and strive to promote equality of opportunity for all women in our society. We practice and encourage the principles of democracy, feminism and community development. We are independent of all political parties, promote good relations and actively encourage the participation of women in all their diversity.

We work in partnership with grassroots organisations in a cross-community context and in co-operation with elected representatives and policy makers for the advancement of women and to the benefit of the women's sector. **We seek to contribute to the development of new methods of decision-making that ensure equal opportunities for participation.**

In response to your consultation and in relation to your main objective of furthering the interests of citizen-consumers; in particular, developing "*a new broadcasting licensing regime to foster self-regulation and broaden citizen/consumer choice*" we would recommend that Ofcom considers acceptance of local community television as public service broadcasters.

We know from our own experience that communities cannot be developed from without and must build their internal capacity for change and growth. Empowering citizens to become content providers and creating media which reflects and raises awareness of local issues and interests constitutes a valuable public service. It enhances skills, encourages a sense of place and ownership of the city and has the potential to foster greater citizenship.

Central funding provisions have been made in the Communications Act for community radio and local digital television. Ofcom should consider a fund, which could potentially be drawn from the licence fee and from top-slicing commercial broadcasting licences or other central government sources.

Regarding aspects of work required to bring about a UK map of local and community television following analogue TV switch-off post 2010, we would request your assurance that no planning, at this stage, precludes a network of local digital multiplexes.

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 are bringing women together and encouraging their involvement in negotiation and conflict resolution to build a more positive future for everyone.

Yours sincerely



May De Silva
Director

