
Localness on commercial radio

Amendments to guidelines and approved areas, and further consultation on approved areas in Scotland and Wales

STATEMENT AND CONSULTATION

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About this document

This document comprises a statement and a further consultation.

The statement sets out our decisions to:

- proceed with the proposed amendments to our localness guidelines, which relate to the minimum number of locally-made hours each station should provide, when these programmes should be scheduled, and the provision of local material; and
- approve the areas we proposed for stations in England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands in which their programmes are considered to be locally-made.

The further consultation element seeks stakeholders' views by **Friday 30 November 2018** on proposed 'approved areas' in Scotland and Wales, which we have revised in light of the responses to the consultation.

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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

1.1 Ofcom must secure that local analogue (i.e. FM and AM) commercial radio stations provide an appropriate amount of:

- programmes including local material; and
- locally-made programmes.

We are also required to provide guidelines as to how local commercial radio licensees should meet these statutory requirements.

1.2 In light of the ongoing pace of change in the media sector, we recently undertook a review of the localness guidelines and commissioned new audience research. The results of this review and research led to our June 2018 consultation¹ on proposals to revise our localness guidelines.

1.3 Following careful consideration of the 48 consultation responses, we are now amending our localness guidelines to include the following new minimum expectations:

- Local FM stations that provide local news at regular intervals throughout the day should air **at least three hours of programming each weekday between 6am and 7pm** which has been made in the local (or approved) area.
- Local FM stations that provide local news only at breakfast and drivetime should air **at least six hours of programming each weekday between 6am and 7pm** which has been made in the local (or approved) area.

1.4 The above amendments mean that there is no longer an expectation under our localness guidelines that weekday breakfast will be locally-made, or that locally-made programmes will be provided at the weekends or on public holidays.

1.5 In respect of the provision of local material, the guidelines will now say:

“any station whose character of service requires it to provide a local service should include, as well as the level of local news specified in its Format, sufficient other local material consistent with these guidelines to deliver the required character of service”.

1.6 “For local commercial radio services in England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands we approve the areas shown in the map at Annex 2 (the Channel Islands are not shown on the map), and specified in Annex 4 to this statement.

1.7 For local commercial radio services in Scotland and Wales, we have decided to consult further on new proposed approved areas following the consultation responses we

¹ https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/115113/consultation-localness-radio.pdf

received. The single approved areas for Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands will remain unchanged (as per the consultation).

- 1.8 Importantly, although these amendments give stations the flexibility to provide less locally-made programming than was the case under our current guidelines, and for that locally-made programming to be made further from the area the station broadcasts to, we have clarified our expectations regarding the types and amount of local material that a local station should deliver. This means that listeners should still expect a locally-relevant service, irrespective of where the programmes are broadcast from.
- 1.9 The amended localness guidelines are at Annex 1. Stations can now apply to have their Formats changed to reflect the new guidelines², should they so wish.

² The Format Change Request form is available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/manage-your-licence/radio-broadcast-licensing/amend> under the 'Changes to analogue Formats' section

2. Background

Statutory requirements

- 2.1 The Broadcasting Act 1990 places a general duty on Ofcom regarding local analogue (FM and AM) commercial radio, and a specific duty regarding each local service that we license. The general duty is that we must do all we can to secure the provision of a range and diversity of local services³. The specific duty is that when we run a competitive licence award process and select the winner, the licence we issue for the winner must contain appropriate conditions to secure that the character of the service, as proposed by the licence holder when making his application, is maintained during the licence period⁴. There are also statutory provisions under which changes to the character of service during the licence period can be made if certain conditions are met. Each station's character of service is captured in a part of the licence called the Format.
- 2.2 In addition to these duties, Ofcom is also required by law⁵ to carry out our functions relating to local services in the manner that we consider is best calculated to secure that local analogue commercial radio stations provide:
- programmes consisting of or including local material; and
 - locally-made programmes
- to the extent (if any) that Ofcom considers appropriate, and to provide guidance as to how these statutory requirements should be met.
- 2.3 'Local material' is defined in the legislation as material which is of particular interest to those living or working within (or within part of) the area or locality for which [a given local radio service] is provided, or to particular communities living or working within that area or locality (or part of it). 'Material' is further defined as including news, information and other spoken material and music.
- 2.4 'Locally-made programmes' are defined in the legislation as programmes which are "made wholly or partly at premises in the area or locality for which that service is provided or, if there is an approved area for the programmes, that area."
- 2.5 The guidelines which currently apply are as follows:
- On weekdays, FM local stations should provide either:
 - a minimum of 10 hours of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm (and this must include the breakfast show) if they are providing local news at least hourly at peak-times (breakfast and afternoon drivetime),
 - or;

³ Section 85(2)(b), Broadcasting Act 1990

⁴ Section 106(1), Broadcasting Act 1990

⁵ Section 314, Communications Act 2003

- a minimum of 7 hours of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm (and this must include the breakfast show) if they are providing local news at least hourly throughout the same period.
- On each weekend day, FM local stations should provide a minimum of 4 hours of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm, and local news at least hourly during peak-time (defined as late breakfast).
- AM local stations need not produce any locally-made programming nor broadcast any local material, but a minimum of 10 hours between 6am and 7pm on weekdays should be produced from within the UK nation in which the station's broadcast area is located.
- Certain defined 'regional' analogue stations need not produce any locally-made programmes nor broadcast any local material provided they are broadcast on a national DAB multiplex.
- Each local station may produce its locally-made programmes from the studios of any other station in a wider area approved by Ofcom, and share its locally-made programmes with one or more other local station in this approved area.

2.6 In carrying out our functions relating to local commercial radio services we must comply with our general duties set out in section 3 of the Communications Act 2003. These include our duty to secure the availability throughout the UK of a wide range of radio services which (taken as a whole) are both of high quality and calculated to appeal to a variety of tastes and interests⁶, and our duty to have regard when carrying out our functions to the principles under which regulatory activities should be transparent, accountable, proportionate, consistent and targeted only at cases in which action is needed.⁷

Context for the changes

2.7 Ofcom last carried out a review of its regulation of localness on radio nearly a decade ago.⁸ Since then, local analogue radio stations have faced increasing competition for both listeners and advertisers. Data from the independent radio audience research organisation RAJAR shows that there has been a noticeable shift in listening patterns over the past decade away from local commercial radio stations to national commercial radio. This is likely to reflect the fact that listeners now have a much greater choice of national radio stations available to them on the DAB platform.

2.8 There is also currently a difference, particularly with regards to 'localness' requirements, between the considerably 'lighter touch' regulation of services broadcast on the DAB

⁶ Section 3(2)(c) of the Communications Act 2003.

⁷ Section 3(3) of the Communications Act 2003.

⁸ Ofcom's consultation 'Radio: the implications of *Digital Britain* for localness regulation' was published in July 2009, with the statement following in April 2010. Both documents are available at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-1/radio>

platform compared to the regulation of those which are broadcast on analogue (AM and FM) radio.

- 2.9 The Government issued a consultation in February 2017⁹, which set out a number of proposals for amending commercial radio's regulatory framework. These included proposals to replace Ofcom's current duty to secure a range and choice of radio services with a new duty to secure the provision of news and other core information such as traffic and travel information and weather, and to give all local commercial radio stations the flexibility to produce and broadcast locally-relevant content without requirements on where that local content is made or broadcast from. In December 2017, the Government confirmed its intention to press ahead with these and other proposals¹⁰, by bringing forward legislation prior to 2022.

New audience research

- 2.10 Earlier this year Ofcom commissioned an online omnibus survey with a sample of 1,621 local commercial radio listeners across the UK. The aim of the research was to understand motivations for listening to those stations and what elements, if any, contribute to the 'localness' of a station. Full details of this research and its results can be found in the 'Localness on commercial radio' consultation¹¹.

Scope of the changes and next steps

- 2.11 The changes announced in this document are to our localness guidelines and approved areas in England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands.
- 2.12 We are consulting further on proposals for revised approved areas in Scotland and Wales.
- 2.13 The changes do not cover the non-localness aspects of Formats (primarily the requirements pertaining to music output) as we considered this area relatively recently, in 2015, deregulating significantly following a public consultation.¹²
- 2.14 Stations wishing to make changes to their Format which are consistent with the new localness guidelines will still need to apply for a Format change to effect these changes.
- 2.15 Under the statutory framework, Ofcom is not required to consult on a request from a station to provide its locally-made programming from any location(s) within its new approved area (as set out in this document).
- 2.16 We are also not required to consult if we consider that a proposed Format change would not result in a substantial change to the character of the service. We are likely to regard a request to reduce the amount of locally-made programming hours that is in line with the

⁹https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/591508/RadioDereg-Final13Feb.pdf

¹⁰https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/668926/Commercial_radio_deregulation_Government_response_final.pdf

¹¹ https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0012/115113/consultation-localness-radio.pdf

¹² https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0025/51667/statement.pdf

revised localness guidelines set out in this document as not constituting a substantial change to the character of a service.

Structure of the document

- 2.17 In Section 3, we set out our changes to the localness guidelines relating to the volume and scheduling of locally-made programming.
- 2.18 In Section 4, we announce our changes to the localness guidelines relating to the ‘approved areas’ (where locally-made programming can come from) in England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands. Section 4 also includes a consultation on our proposed approved areas in Scotland and Wales, and explains why we are proposing to revise these areas.
- 2.19 Finally, in Section 5, we outline the changes to the localness guidelines relating to local material.

Impact assessment and equality impact assessment

- 2.20 This document, as a whole, comprises an impact assessment as defined in Section 7 of the 2003 Act. We have not identified any detrimental impact on any equality groups (i.e. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation). Nor have we seen the need to carry out a separate equality impact assessment in relation to the additional equality groups in Northern Ireland: religious belief, political opinion and dependents. This is because we anticipate that the changes to our localness guidelines will not have a differential impact in Northern Ireland compared to listeners in the rest of the UK.
- 2.21 We have also paid due regard to Ofcom’s Welsh Language Standards on Policy Making as outlined in its compliance notice. The policy making standards are applicable at the point where they will have an impact regardless of where the policy decision is made. We anticipate that none of the changes to our localness guidelines will have any effect on opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, or in treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

3. Locally-made programming

What we proposed

- 3.1 We said in the consultation document that we considered that our proposals to amend the localness guidelines and to change the approved areas were an appropriate and proportionate approach to securing the local content and character of local radio services.
- 3.2 We reached this view on the basis that any stations required by their Formats to be local in character would continue to be expected to provide enough local material (i.e. programme material of local relevance, such as travel, what's ons etc.), as well as local news, to maintain this local character, regardless of where their programmes come from.
- 3.3 Specifically, we proposed to amend our localness guidelines as follows:
- On weekdays, FM local stations should provide either:
 - a minimum of 6 hours (currently 10 hours) of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm if they are providing local news at least hourly at peak-times (breakfast and afternoon drivetime),
 - or;
 - a minimum of 3 hours (currently 7 hours) of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm if they are providing local news at least hourly throughout the same period.
- 3.4 We also said that **we would no longer expect stations to provide a locally-made breakfast show** and there would be **no expectation of locally-made programming at the weekend or on public holidays**.

What respondents said

Reductions in locally-made programming expectations

- 3.5 Commercial radio trade body Radiocentre and the individual commercial radio groups who responded to the consultation all supported the central contention behind the proposals, namely that Ofcom's duty to secure 'localness' could still be satisfied even if stations were able to reduce the amount of locally-made programming they broadcast. Celador Radio, for example, said that: "As Ofcom has observed, and adduced research evidence to support, studio location correlates very weakly with both the provision of locally relevant content and listener perceptions of localness."
- 3.6 Global Radio said that "the notion of a mandatory seven hours [of locally-made programming per weekday] is outdated and doesn't take into account the impact of technology or the variety of operating models across the industry. Ofcom's proposal is a sensible intermediary step between the comprehensive proposals set out by DCMS which require new legislation and the current regime."

- 3.7 Radiocentre said that “these appear to be sensible amendments that will provide greater flexibility for local commercial radio stations to continue to support local material, but make changes to the method of delivery and production. An unfortunate consequence of the existing guidelines is that they appear to prioritise investment in local studios over high quality, locally-relevant output.”
- 3.8 However, many respondents disagreed with our view that Ofcom’s duty to secure ‘localness’ could still be satisfied if stations were able to reduce the amount of locally-made programming they broadcast. A significant number of these respondents conflated locally-made programming with local material, but those who did not nevertheless argued that changing the guidelines relating to locally-made programming in the way proposed would negatively affect stations’ ability to provide appropriate amounts of local material.
- 3.9 The view of these respondents was based on the observation that during networked (i.e. not locally-made) shows, local material is generally only broadcast at pre-scheduled programme ‘junctions’ of a fixed duration. This, they argued, provides less flexibility for presenters to talk informally about local matters and reference local place names outside of these ‘junctions’, or for stations as a whole to react to local events (e.g. a significant local story breaking, or extreme weather conditions) if they are ‘in network’. Some respondents also made the point that responding to local events is more difficult if there are simply fewer staff based in the local area.
- 3.10 The other main argument against enabling stations to reduce how much locally-made programming they provide that was made by almost all of the respondents who disagreed with the proposals, was that a local radio station cannot provide a locally-relevant service unless it is based in the area it broadcasts to.
- 3.11 For example, one respondent said that “Localness on a local commercial radio station is not merely an ‘add-on’ or ‘contracted hours’ of forced ‘local’ content; localness is the thread of place, identity, views, opinions, locations, accent, dialect and branding all intertwined to create something which is undeniably unique to the area. The establishment of a permanent office in the region, the ‘on-the-ground’ promotion of the service and local familiar faces is what makes local radio unique.”
- 3.12 Some respondents voiced concerns that having presenters and journalists based a long way from the station’s broadcast area means that they would lack the type of local knowledge of the area which can, for example, enhance the quality of traffic bulletins, or enable journalists to nurture local contacts and generate original local news stories. Stuart McDonald, MP for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East, wrote: “There is a great deal of value in having programming produced locally, where presenters and producers have an intimate knowledge of the particular traffic hotspots, the issues that resonate with local listeners and even the weather outside. During the most recent major snowfalls local radio played a crucial role in providing information on school closures and up to the minute traffic information based on their own experience and first-hand accounts.”
- 3.13 Others suggested that the recent decline in listening to local commercial radio was a product of local stations becoming ‘less local’.

Ofcom's research evidence

- 3.14 Some respondents also challenged aspects of the research evidence Ofcom presented. In particular, a number made the point that just because factors such as “the presenters are based in a studio in my area” or “the presenters talk about events in my local area” were ranked lower in the research than factors such as the provision of local news and information, it does not mean that these factors are not important to listeners.

Proposal to no longer expect breakfast shows to be locally-made

- 3.15 While very few respondents commented on the specific number of hours we proposed for the revised localness guidelines, there was a lot of concern expressed regarding the proposal that stations should no longer be expected to provide a locally-made breakfast show. This is because weekday breakfast is generally seen as a station's ‘flagship’ show that usually attracts the most listeners, and on most stations carries significantly more speech content than the more music-driven output that is typically aired for the rest of the day. Breakfast shows also have an important role in providing weather and travel information for listeners when they first wake up and need to get to work or school. Many respondents argued that a locally-made breakfast show, often presented by long-serving hosts who are well-known in the local area, is essential in delivering the local character required by individual station Formats.
- 3.16 For example, the Ofcom Advisory Committee for Wales (‘ACW’) said that, while it accepted the broad argument that requiring locally-produced programming does not of itself guarantee that local content would be provided, it said that “the particular role played by a station's flagship breakfast show sets it apart from the rest of the day's output”. The ACW said that “while we accept that it would still be possible to include hourly local news bulletins in a networked show, we believe that it could be much more difficult to include other local material such as weather and travel in a way that would be credible for local listeners. The loss of immediacy and local relevance, for example the inability of a presenter to comment informally on local events, would be very apparent in a networked generic programme.”

Other issues raised relating to locally-made programming

- 3.17 Although not directly relevant to the specific questions in the consultation, several respondents made broader points related to the proposed reduction in locally-made hours, and deregulation of the sector more generally, including:
- the commercial radio sector is financially very healthy¹³ and doesn't need any further deregulation;

¹³ During the consultation period, Radiocentre published Advertising Association/WARC figures from Q1 2018 which showed that radio is the fastest growing advertising medium (ahead of the internet), with a 12.5% annual increase in revenues. This came on top of record revenues for commercial radio of £679m for 2017 (a 5.2% increase on 2016 revenues).

- deregulating analogue radio reduces broadcasters' incentives to migrate to digital platforms; and
- Ofcom should wait for Parliament to decide upon the DCMS proposals¹⁴ for the deregulation of commercial radio before making any further changes to the localness guidelines.

3.18 Some respondents (the Community Media Association and the commercial radio station for Exeter, Radio Exe) made suggestions relating to matters outside the scope of Ofcom's regulatory remit. One suggestion was that if commercial radio stations undertake little or no local production, they should not be entitled to earn revenues from the local advertising market. The CMA also argued that any reduction in the amount of locally-made programming on commercial radio should be combined with a relaxation of the rules that limit the commercial income-generating activity of community radio, and that the £15,000 threshold that community radio stations are permitted to earn without being matched by non-commercial income should be increased¹⁵. Similarly, the CMA proposed to strengthen the community radio sector by increasing the size of the Community Radio Fund¹⁶.

3.19 Finally, Radiocentre, Bauer Radio and a number of other respondents observed that, under the proposals, local AM services would be expected to provide more locally-made programming than their FM counterparts. This is because, although AM stations can currently go down to zero hours in terms of production from their own licence area, they are still expected to produce 10 hours of programming per day from within their home Nation.

Analysis and conclusion

3.20 In considering the points made by respondents described above, we recognise that a reduced local presence could have an impact on the local character of a station. However, there is also no guarantee that a local presence will ensure that a service is locally-relevant.

3.21 With regard to the points made by respondents about the constraints of having to deliver local material within pre-determined programme 'junctions', some of the commercial radio groups pointed out that new technology enables them to deliver local material more flexibly outside of these fixed junctions through presenters pre-recording multiple bespoke local links for playout on different transmitters. While this may be a feasible option when only a small number of stations comprise the network, we think this is likely to be significantly more challenging on bigger networks covering a large number of different licence areas. As one respondent put it: "the practical challenges of sequencing local material are more difficult in larger areas." However, we consider that the extent to which stations' ability to provide local material is limited (or not) by networking technology is a

¹⁴ DCMS's statement on the deregulation of commercial radio is published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/commercial-radio-deregulation-consultation>

¹⁵ These limits are set by the Secretary of State in the Community Radio Order 2004 (SI 2004/1944) as amended.

¹⁶ The size of the Community Radio Fund is set by government. Ofcom distributes the fund by way of grants to community radio providers.

matter for the stations rather than Ofcom. It is for our licensees to ensure that they meet the requirements in their licences.

- 3.22 The position we put forward in the consultation was based on a range of evidence, including in particular new original research we carried out earlier this year¹⁷. Some respondents argued that just because factors such as “the presenters are based in a studio in my area” were ranked lower than factors such as the provision of local news and information does not mean that these factors are unimportant to listeners. We recognise that locally-based presenters are important to some listeners (17% in the survey), but the fact that respondents were able to select from a number of factors, and were not required to rank them, suggests to us that they are less important than factors such as the provision of local news and information.
- 3.23 In relation to the concerns expressed by many that our revised guidelines, if implemented, would allow a local station to no longer provide a locally-made breakfast show if it so wished, we of course recognise the particular importance of local radio stations providing a high level of locally-relevant material at weekday breakfast, but we do not think that this necessarily means that local stations should be expected to make the programme locally. Our research found that the generally low importance that listeners attach to programmes being locally-made applied to breakfast as much as to other times of the day, and we recognise that there are potential listener benefits (e.g. higher profile presenters) if commercial radio groups have the flexibility to offer a breakfast show presented by a single national presentation team broadcast across multiple local stations, but which still includes the locally-relevant material for each local area that listeners expect.
- 3.24 In relation to the broader points about deregulation made by some respondents, while we recognise the increasing competition that local analogue radio stations face from digital audio services, the evidence suggests that, as a whole, commercial radio is not a struggling industry but rather that it is currently performing very well in terms of attracting both listeners and advertisers. Our aim is to deliver an appropriate and proportionate approach to securing the local content and character of local radio services.
- 3.25 We also do not consider that giving analogue radio stations greater flexibility in this area will have a negative impact on broadcasters’ migration to digital platforms – as well as the fact that digital migration is not a specific policy objective for Ofcom, there will continue to be a greater level of regulation on analogue radio than on digital radio, and we agree with the commercial radio companies that savings made on the infrastructure of analogue licences can enable them to invest more in new digital services which can enhance consumer choice.
- 3.26 With regard to the relationship between the changes proposed in the consultation and the de-regulation of commercial radio proposed by the government, it should be noted that Ofcom is carrying out our functions in this area under the current statutory framework. If that framework changes following Parliamentary debate and subsequent changes to

¹⁷ https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0022/115168/local-radio-data.pdf

legislation, we recognise that we may need to change the localness guidelines to reflect the changed statute.

- 3.27 As noted in paragraph 3.19, a number of respondents observed that, under the consultation proposals, our guidelines would place greater expectations on local AM services than local FM services in terms of where they make their programmes. This is because we have in effect set an approved area for each local AM station which equates to the UK nation in which their broadcast area is located, and we expect them to provide 10 hours of locally-made (i.e. from within the nation) programming each weekday daytime. This compares with the three, or six, hours of locally-made programming per weekday daytime we proposed to expect FM stations to provide from within their approved areas. We are content with this position, as our guidelines also state that local AM stations generally need not produce any local material at all, and in most cases do not have a locally-oriented Character of Service to deliver, whereas local FM stations will still be expected to deliver local material. We also note that, apart from in Northern Ireland (and potentially Wales depending on the outcome of our further consultation), FM stations will still have smaller approved areas than AM stations within which they are able to produce their locally-made programming.
- 3.28 In summary, having considered the range of views put forward by respondents, we remain of the view that allowing stations flexibility to reduce the amount of locally-made programming they broadcast as we proposed while continuing to require them to deliver their 'character of service' through providing an appropriate amount of local material, is an appropriate and proportionate approach to securing the local content and character of local radio services.
- 3.29 We have therefore decided to make the changes to the localness guidelines that we proposed in the consultation, in respect of the volume and scheduling of locally-made programming.

4. Approved areas

What are approved areas?

- 4.1 In relation to any given local commercial radio station, a locally-made programme is defined (in statute) as one which is made at premises in the area the station broadcasts to, or at premises located somewhere else but still within a larger area which includes the station's broadcast area. The latter is called an 'approved area', because it must be approved by Ofcom (after consultation). The concept of approved areas was established in 2010 to give stations greater flexibility over where they make their programmes – in practice, it has enabled the larger commercial radio groups to rationalise the number of studios they operate, and stations in relatively close geographical proximity to share their locally-made programmes (providing the output can still be considered to be locally-relevant to listeners in each of the individual broadcast areas).
- 4.2 An approved area relates to an individual station, which means that every local station can, in theory, have a different approved area. Historically Ofcom has taken a mixed approach, whereby it first approved a set of areas such that every station in a defined geographical area of the UK had the same approved area¹⁸, but subsequently permitted different approved areas for some stations (for example, where two or more stations were located in more than one of the already approved areas) in response to requests from licensees.

What we proposed

- 4.3 Given that, apart from in the relatively small number of cases where Ofcom has approved different areas, the set of approved areas established in 2010 appear to have met the needs of local stations and their listeners, we considered that these should be the starting point for any proposals for change. Thus, we consulted on a new set of approved areas which are larger than those set in 2010, and which are designed to broadly match the ITV regions. This was on the basis that the ITV regions are an already well-established framework for the delivery of sub-UK-wide broadcast programming, which both audiences and advertisers have a degree of familiarity with.
- 4.4 Maps showing the current approved areas and the proposed new ones can be found in Section 4 of the consultation document – see Figures 8 and 10¹⁹.
- 4.5 We said that larger approved areas would give licensees greater freedom to determine where to locate their studios and make their content, and that this flexibility would enable radio groups which own multiple licences in the same region to put more resources into programme making and less into the “bricks and mortar” costs of maintaining separate local studios.

¹⁸ The only exceptions to this were Greater London and northern Scotland. Any stations located in these areas would need to ask Ofcom to approve an area on a case-by-case-basis.

¹⁹ Available at: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/115113/consultation-localness-radio.pdf

What respondents said

- 4.6 We received many comments from respondents about the proposed new approved areas, including various specific suggestions as to how (and why) some areas should be changed.
- 4.7 For example, some respondents argued that the county of Gloucestershire should be part of the proposed new 'West of England' approved area rather than part of the proposed new 'Central' approved area, while others argued that the existing 'Solent' approved area should be part of the proposed new 'South of England' approved area rather than part of the proposed new 'West of England' approved area.
- 4.8 Other respondents were opposed in principle to our proposals, largely on the grounds that they considered the proposed areas were too large to have any meaningful local relevance. For example, Radio Exe, the local commercial radio station for Exeter, commented that "the movement towards 13 larger areas is just a step along the way to a greater number of national commercial stations, patching together a collection of local licences....only the geographically challenged could perceive 50,000 square miles (a rough estimate of the new west of England region) as a local area in which people feel as one community."
- 4.9 In relation to our specific proposals for **England**, some respondents argued that the proposed new 'Central' approved area was too large, partly on the basis that the East and West Midlands are culturally distinct. They cited as evidence for this the fact that ITV produces separate local news programming for the east and west of its Central region. There were also concerns from respondents, including Tim Farron (MP for Westmorland and Lonsdale), that the proposed new 'North West of England' approved area would be dominated by Liverpool and Manchester at the expense of the more rural counties of Lancashire and Cumbria.
- 4.10 Other than a couple of comments from individuals who mistakenly thought we were proposing a single area covering both the North of Scotland and Northern Ireland, there were no comments from respondents regarding our proposals for **Northern Ireland**. The reason for this is likely to be that Northern Ireland has been a single approved area since 2010, and we did not propose to change this.
- 4.11 The main opposition to our proposals for **Scotland** centred around our proposal to combine the currently separate approved areas of 'Glasgow & South West Scotland' and 'Edinburgh & The Borders' into a single 'South of Scotland' area. One respondent argued that "the distinctiveness of the East and West of Scotland is one of the defining characteristics of Scottish life and culture and should continue to be reflected in the regulatory framework for local services in Scotland". The Scottish Government said it was "not confident that the creation of such a large approved area will not have a negative effect on the character and quality of local material." There were also concerns expressed about an increasing tendency towards 'centralisation' of Scottish media in Glasgow.
- 4.12 Ofcom's Advisory Committee for Scotland's response to the consultation stated that "Scottish identity is complex and any production centre and its staff, wherever it is based,

will be influenced by its immediate geography, social demography and cultural identity and this will be reflected in what content is produced”.

- 4.13 Stuart McDonald (MP for Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East) argued strongly against any changes being made to the current approved areas in Scotland, including in relation to our proposal to create a new North of Scotland area (where currently there are no approved areas). He said: “these proposals fail to address the distinct cultural, geographical and linguistic differences between regions in Scotland, and I believe it is imperative that the status quo with regards to approved areas in Scotland is maintained”.
- 4.14 Set against these responses were the views of two of the smaller commercial radio operators in Scotland, Nation Broadcasting (which has recently acquired licences in Glasgow, Helensburgh and Dumbaron) and New Wave Media (which owns Original 106 in Aberdeen and Central FM in Stirling & Falkirk), who both argued that Scotland should be one single approved area (as both Wales and Northern Ireland were proposed in the consultation to be).
- 4.15 The two biggest commercial radio operators in Scotland, Bauer and Global, supported Ofcom’s proposal for ‘South of Scotland’ and ‘North of Scotland’ approved areas.
- 4.16 Several respondents suggested that the approved area proposed in the consultation covering the whole of **Wales** should instead be divided into two – North Wales and South Wales. Among the arguments put forward for this were that this would prevent any local stations in North Wales from being able to broadcast their locally-made programming from Cardiff on the basis that there are significant cultural and linguistic differences between the northern and southern parts of Wales, and in a similar vein that North Wales has closer links to northwest England than to south Wales.
- 4.17 The Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the Welsh Assembly argued the change could potentially reduce the extent to which radio stations are embedded in – and reflect – the areas which they broadcast to, leading to a further homogenisation of content.
- 4.18 In its response to the consultation, Ofcom’s Advisory Committee for Wales, on the other hand, was supportive of the proposed “all-Wales” approved area on the basis that it “supports the idea of Wales being recognised as one unified territory as it is consistent with the concept of reporting news from the nation”, and that “creating a single area for Wales offers an opportunity to produce cohesive news that serves the Welsh national interests of listeners.” We have subsequently discussed the matter directly with the Committee, which has advised that it has reconsidered the matter and although it considers that many of the views expressed in its response remain relevant, it is nevertheless supportive of there being two approved areas in Wales (i.e. North and South).

Analysis and conclusion

- 4.19 Radiocentre was supportive of our proposal to use ITV regions as a basis for the larger approved areas, commenting that “the measures to move to a set of approved areas based broadly on the existing ITV regions seem to be a sensible step for the time being.”
- 4.20 Other respondents thought our proposals implied that there is a direct correlation between the geographical scope of an approved area and the localness of the local material provided on any single station within that approved area. However, under the regulatory regime all local stations with a requirement to deliver a service with a local character will still be required to broadcast local material relevant to their particular licensed coverage area, regardless of where their studio is based.
- 4.21 There was also no disagreement with the findings from our research – in which the location of presenters was not considered to be as important as the delivery of local material – or our analysis that developments in technology have made it easier to gather and produce local material without having to be physically located in the local area.
- 4.22 Therefore, other than in relation to the specific areas identified below, we have decided to approve the areas proposed in the consultation. We have accepted a suggestion from Lincs FM Group to label the new ‘Yorkshire’ approved area ‘Yorkshire and Lincolnshire’ to reflect the inclusion of that county in this approved area.
- 4.23 We also received various detailed comments made by licensees and other respondents around the composition of specific new approved areas, such as the proposal to place the existing ‘Solent’ approved area in the new ‘West of England’ approved area, rather than the new ‘South of England’ approved area. While we remain of the view that the approved areas for England on which we consulted are appropriate, we recognise that some licensees may wish to seek approval of a different approved area for their stations for reasons including the strategic and commercial interests of the radio groups concerned.
- 4.24 To be clear, a licensee who wishes to have a different approved area for its station may submit a request to us to approve the proposed area. In accordance with the statute, any such requests will need to be consulted on before Ofcom can approve them. These requests will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis using the existing criteria of station size, affinities between the station areas concerned, distance between stations and financial viability, as set out in our current guidance on the regulation of Format changes.²⁰
- 4.25 However, we recognise that it is unlikely that any licensee would ask to reduce the size of its approved area. Therefore, taking account of the strong cultural and linguistic arguments made in the responses to the consultation, and the advice from our Advisory Committees for each of Scotland and Wales, we are revising our proposals for approved areas in these two nations of the UK, as follows:
- reverting to separate approved areas for the western and eastern parts of southern Scotland;

²⁰ https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/87405/The-regulation-of-Format-changes.pdf

- not approving any approved area(s) for stations in northern Scotland (i.e. maintaining the current position), and;
- dividing Wales into two new approved areas – North Wales and South Wales. The proposed North Wales area would constitute the existing ‘North & Mid Wales’ approved area, while the South Wales approved area would merge the existing ‘South Wales’ and ‘West Wales’ approved areas.

4.26 A table listing the licences in Scotland and Wales that would fall into each approved area under the above proposals is at Annex 5.

4.27 We are consulting on the above proposal for a period of four weeks, starting from 26 October. The details of how to respond to this consultation are at Annex 6. The consultation question is as follows:

Do you agree with our revised proposals for approved areas in Scotland and Wales? If not, please specify any alternative proposals you think should be considered (if any), and explain the reasons and/or evidence which support your view.

5. Local material

What we proposed

- 5.1 In light of our proposals to lower our expectations as regards how much locally-made programming stations should provide (see Section 3 of this document), we proposed in the consultation to amend the guidelines to make clear that stations should nevertheless continue to provide sufficient local material to maintain their local character.
- 5.2 The existing guidelines state that local material need only be provided during the hours when programmes are locally-made.
- 5.3 In the consultation, we proposed to replace the following sentence in the current guidelines:
- “the locally-made programmes should include local material across the stated minimum hours as a whole, although local material need not be included in each of those individual hours if this is not appropriate”
- with the following new guidelines:
- “any station whose character of service requires it to provide a local service should include, as well as the level of local news specified in its Format, sufficient other local material consistent with these guidelines to deliver the required character of service”.
- 5.4 The proposed change was in recognition of the fact that while some stations may in future be providing only 3 or 6 hours of locally-made programming each weekday and none at weekends, they will still be expected to provide appropriate amounts of local material.
- 5.5 We did not propose any other changes to our guidelines as they relate to local material, and did not propose any changes to the guidelines in respect of local news provision.

What respondents said

- 5.6 There were relatively few points raised by respondents on this aspect of our proposals – those who opposed our proposals in relation to locally-made programming recognised that we were not proposing to reduce our expectations in relation to local material (although, as discussed in the previous two sections of this document, almost all considered that the former would negatively affect the latter). Others were broadly content with the proposed amendment in relation to the provision of local material.
- 5.7 Some respondents considered that, in light of the proposed reductions in locally-produced hours and increase in the size of approved areas, stations should be required to deliver more local material than currently, or that there should be quotas for the delivery of particular types of local material, notably local news bulletins. For example, Heart of the Nation Broadcasting Team suggested that there should be between five and six minutes per hour of local news broadcast by local stations during peak time, and that this should include stories from both the station’s licence area and the wider ‘approved area.’

- 5.8 Radiocentre suggested that there should be an “updating of what constitutes ‘local material’ by adding information, news and items about areas that may sit outside the immediate locality, but may be of particular interest to those in the local area. For example, in some cases there may be news or information about an employer based elsewhere that could be relevant to workers in a licensed area.” It added that “it would be helpful if Ofcom could clarify that output with such local implications can be considered as local material.”

Analysis and conclusion

- 5.9 We do not think it is appropriate to seek to set detailed quotas for local material – we consider it is for licensees to determine how best to provide a service which complies with its character of service, having regard to our localness guidelines.
- 5.10 With regard to Radiocentre’s suggestion for the definition of local material, we are happy to clarify that our localness guidelines already allow for material which is relevant to, but not necessarily drawn directly from, a station’s local area to be considered as local material. Under the sub-heading ‘What local material is’ (see Annex 1), we state that, among other things, local material “should include content drawn from, and/or relevant to, the station’s licensed area”, and that “licensees should be able to identify a range of output which is specifically relevant to their local area”. We consider that our guidelines in relation to local material, when taken as a whole, strike the right balance between giving licensees the flexibility to decide the nature of the local material they provide, while ensuring that listeners receive the locally-relevant services they expect.
- 5.11 Having considered the consultation responses carefully, we have decided to amend the guidelines as set out in the consultation.

A1. The revised localness guidelines

Ofcom Localness Guidelines

Introduction

Legislation requires Ofcom to secure that local commercial radio stations provide an appropriate amount of:

- programmes including local material; and
- locally made programmes

and to provide guidelines as to how the above requirements should be met.

These are the required guidelines. They set out Ofcom's general policy in relation to these localness requirements and how we are likely in most cases to apply them to local stations.

Ofcom considers each station on a case by case basis and how, if at all, these guidelines should apply to those stations. The extent to which local material and locally made programmes must be included in the service provided by a licensee is specified in the station's Format (and may vary by station).

Localness is not an issue for all stations, but where it is required by a station's licensed Format, it should be informed by these guidelines.

In particular, any station whose character of service requires it to provide a local service should include, as well as the level of local news specified in its Format, sufficient other local material consistent with these guidelines to deliver the required character of service.

These guidelines are not rules as such, but they outline the sort of considerations that may come into play if it becomes necessary to investigate a station's localness output. Many of these considerations are based on listener expectations.

Local material

Section 314 of the Communications Act 2003 defines 'local material' as *material which is of particular interest to those living or working within (or within part of) the area or locality for which the service is provided or to particular communities living or working within that area or locality (or a part of it)*. It can be delivered in a number of ways (local news, local information, comment, outside broadcasts, what's-on, travel news, interviews, charity involvement, weather, airplay for local musicians, local arts and culture, sport coverage, phone-ins, listener interactivity etc.). The balance of the different elements of local material outlined is for each station to determine for itself. But, where a station is required to broadcast local material it should include at least some of these elements.

What local material is

We take local material as defined to mean, amongst other things:

- A listener should get a feel for an area by tuning in to a particular station, and have confidence that matters of local importance, relevance or interest to the target audience in the area will be broadcast;
- This should include programming of specific local relevance which also offers a distinctive alternative to UK-wide or nations' service;
- It should include content drawn from, and / or relevant to the station's licensed area;

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- Licensees should be able to identify a range of output which is specifically relevant to their local area;
- Programming should be likely to give listeners a feeling of ownership and / or kinship, particularly at times of crisis (snow, floods etc).

What it isn't

- Pure promotional off-air activities such as station promotion in the area (vehicles carrying station logos, outside broadcasts, etc.), without on-air activity involving something other than self-promotion, are not in themselves substitutes for local programming;
- Competitions / promotions that invite and involve listener participation from outside a station area would not be regarded as a contribution to localness; and
- Advertisements are not regarded as local programming within the context of localness and Ofcom's localness guidelines.

Local news provision

Because of the particular importance to citizens and consumers of local news, all stations required to broadcast local material should broadcast local news at least hourly throughout peak-time both on weekdays (breakfast and afternoon drive) and weekends (late breakfast). Those stations which have committed to an enhanced news service (see below) should broadcast local news at least hourly during daytime on weekdays (6am-7pm) and throughout peak-time (late breakfast) at weekends.

Local news content:

- Local news should be high-quality, relevant, timely and accurate, as well as complying fully with the requirements of the Broadcasting Code.
- A station should be able to react on-air to major local events in a timely manner.
- Bulletins should seek to reflect the interests and concerns of listeners living in the area.
- Local news stories should be up to date and regularly refreshed.
- Local news bulletins should also feature nations' (if relevant), UK-wide and international news.
- The amount of local news, and the balance of local and national news in any particular bulletin, should be subject to professional journalistic judgements, but local news will always be an essential characteristic of a local station's overall output.
- Simply localising UK-wide news (e.g. conducting vox pop interviews in one area and playing them out as if from another or inserting local place names into UK-wide stories) without local news / information generation would not be regarded as a contribution towards localness or fulfilling local news requirements.
- While local sports stories can make a significant contribution to delivering localness, and can represent an important part of a local station's editorial mix, local sports news would not be regarded as being a substitute for local news stories.
- Similarly, entertainment news may be relevant locally but should not be the main ingredient of local news bulletins or a substitute for more serious local news stories.

'Enhanced' local news services

Some local stations have committed to providing an enhanced local news service in return for being able to broadcast a greater number of networked hours (i.e. programmes not made from within their licensed, or approved, area) during daytime programming.

The enhanced local news option gives stations the flexibility to reduce the number of local hours produced, should they wish to make associated cost savings. The provision of local news bulletins during daytime, as well as peak-time, helps to ensure that the station's local content and identity is maintained during these daytime networked hours.

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It therefore follows that local bulletins running during daytime hours as part of an 'enhanced' news service should not be merely tokenistic box-ticking exercises, and each bulletin should meet the requirements set out for local news in general (see guidelines above) just as comfortably as bulletins aired during peaktime (i.e. weekday breakfast and drivetime, and weekend late breakfast).

While we have never prescribed minimum durations for any type of news bulletin, as that is a matter for the licensee, we would always expect each enhanced daytime bulletin to feature more than simply headlines, and to include at the very least one fully-formed local news story, and normally more than this, alongside national stories. In cases where stations are sharing their local hours within an approved area (see notes on 'co-location and programme sharing, below), and are broadcasting the same news bulletin across more than one licensed area, at least one of the local stories in each bulletin needs to be directly relevant to listeners in each of the licensed areas. This is because stations sharing their local hours remain separate licences which still need to satisfy the localness and character of service requirements set out in their individual Formats.

Local news production

- Any group of stations may choose to pool their news resources and operate one or more 'news hubs' in a way which makes operational sense for them. However, in order to provide a comprehensive local news service in touch with the area it is covering, each station should have direct and accountable editorial responsibility for covering its licensed area.
- There should be an appropriate provision of professional journalistic cover, based within the licence area (or approved local area if appropriate), on days when local news provision is a Format obligation.
- The pre-recording of news bulletins should be an exception rather than a rule and peak-time bulletins should always be broadcast live (or pre-recorded only shortly before transmission).

Locally-made programmes

Where a station is required to broadcast programmes including local material a suitable proportion of them (as determined by Ofcom) must be locally-made programmes.

Defining 'locally made'

Locally-made programmes are those made within a station's licensed area or, where Ofcom has approved an area relating to that station, that approved area. A station's Format will formally indicate where it must make its locally-made programmes. While it is acceptable for news bulletins to be produced and/or delivered from outside the station's licensed or approved area as part of a 'news hub' arrangement (see guidelines on local news provision, above), and it is also permissible for other individual elements of local content (such as travel news) to be sourced from outside the local area, it is our expectation that the main presenter or host of any programme broadcast during a station's locally-made hours should be physically located within that station's licensed or approved area. This guidance also applies to situations where the programme's main presenter is pre-recorded or voice-tracked (i.e. not broadcasting 'live').

While stations are free to network programmes outside the requirements regarding locally-made programmes in their Formats, they should still be able to respond to local events in a timely manner, providing live local programming in the way and at times that audiences expect.

FM local stations

On weekdays, FM local stations should provide either:

a minimum of 6 hours of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm if they are providing local news at least hourly at peak-times (breakfast and afternoon drivetime),

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or;

a minimum of 3 hours of locally-made programming between 6am and 7pm if they are providing local news at least hourly throughout the same period.

In exceptional cases, if a station can put forward a convincing case as to why it should be treated differently, for example, as a specialist music station, and so have to provide less locally-made programmes than these guidelines suggest, Ofcom will consider such requests on a case-by-case basis.

AM local stations

AM stations generally need not produce locally-made programmes nor broadcast local material. But, each AM station should produce a minimum of 10 hours of programmes during weekday daytimes from within the nation where the station is based.

Origin of locally-made programmes and programme sharing

'Locally-made programmes', in relation to an individual local service, are programmes which are made wholly or partly at premises in either:

- a) the area or locality for which the service is provided, or;
- b) an area or locality for which another service is provided, but only where that area or locality falls within a wider area which also includes the area or locality for which the service in question is provided, and which Ofcom has approved for the purposes of permitting the service in question's locally-made programmes to be made there (an "approved area").

Ofcom has approved an area for each licensed local service. The approved areas for England and Northern Ireland are shown on the map at Annex 2, and the licences in each approved area (and that for the Channel Islands) are listed in the table at Annex 4. We are currently re-consulting on the approved areas for Scotland and Wales (in the meantime, the existing approved areas for Scotland and Wales remain in place).

Any station may provide its locally-made programmes from the area it is licensed to serve, or from the studios of any other station(s) whose licensed area(s) are also in the approved area (known as 'co-location'). The licensed area(s) from which a station may provide its locally-made programmes are specified in its Format.

A station may ask Ofcom to approve a different area for the purposes of where its locally-made programmes may be originated (i.e. one which includes one or more areas or localities which are not within the approved area specified in the map and table below). As well as needing to be considered in accordance with the statutory Format change process (which may or may not require a consultation), any such request must in any case be published for comment before it can be approved by Ofcom.

A station's Format specifies whether it is permitted to share its locally-made programmes with any other station. As a matter of general policy Ofcom will permit a station to share its locally-made programmes with any other station in its approved area, and our Format change guidance reflects this approach.

A station may also share its locally-made programmes with one or more other stations which are not in its approved area. Any Format change requests seeking such permissions will not be approved as a matter of general policy, but instead will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may be subject to consultation.

Where co-location and/or programme-sharing arrangements are in place, each station should still provide local material relevant to the listeners in their individual licensed areas.

Further guidance on approved areas, co-location and/or programme-sharing can be found in our Format change policy.

'Regional' stations and programme sharing

Where certain 'regional' analogue stations, listed below, provide a version of their programme service nationally on DAB, our policy is that they should not generally be required to broadcast local material and locally made programmes. This in effect, allows them to become national DAB stations with partial national coverage on FM. However, because of the importance of nation-specific content in the devolved nations, any regional stations in those nations will still be required to produce nation-specific programming as per the guidelines for local FM stations.

This is an exception to the general approach on local material and locally-made programmes outlined above. It reflects that these 'regional' stations are those which are generally focused on providing an extension of music choice, as well as the required locally made programming and local (regional) material. As a result, they are more apt to be given the flexibility to become like national stations, to create greater competition and choice at the national level, by freeing them from obligations to broadcast local material and locally made programming.

Regional and Greater London FM stations

Station	Region(s)
Absolute Radio	London, West Midlands.
Capital FM	London, North East England, Central Scotland, Yorkshire.
Gem	East Midlands.
Heart	London, West Midlands, Central Scotland, North East, North West, Yorkshire, South Wales, North & Mid Wales.
Kiss	London, East of England, Severn Estuary.
LBC	London.
Magic	London.
Nation Radio	South Wales.
Radio X	London.
Sam FM	Solent.
Smooth Radio	London, East Midlands, West Midlands, North East, North West .
Wave 105	Solent.

A2. Map of approved areas for England and Northern Ireland

The map below shows the new approved areas for England and Northern Ireland. (The Channel Islands, which remain their own approved area, are not shown on the map). A list of the individual licences that sit within these approved areas is at Annex 4. A map of the proposed approved areas we are consulting on for Wales and Scotland is at Annex 3.



A3. Map of proposed approved areas for Scotland and Wales

The map below shows the approved areas for Wales and Scotland that we are re-consulting on. The consultation proposes that the north of Scotland will not contain any approved areas (as is the case currently).



A4. Approved areas by licence

A4.1 The following table shows the individual analogue local commercial radio licences that are included in each approved area within England, Northern Ireland and the Channel Islands. We are re-consulting on the approved areas for Scotland and Wales (see Annex 6).

*Denotes AM station. Since 2010, AM services have been able apply to Ofcom to remove all local content and production requirements from their licences (though not all have done so).

**Denotes a regional or London FM station which has received permission from Ofcom to remove the local content and production requirements from their licence on the basis of providing a national DAB service.

Proposed new approved area	Licence area (and licensee's on-air name)
Central (Number of licences: 40)	Birmingham (Capital FM)
	Birmingham (Free Radio)
	Birmingham* (Free Radio 80s)
	Buxton (High Peak Radio)
	Cheltenham (The Breeze)
	Coventry (Touch FM)
	Coventry & Warwickshire (Free Radio)
	Coventry & Warwickshire* (Free Radio 80s)
	East Midlands (Gem)
	East Midlands (Smooth Radio)
	Gloucester & Cheltenham (Heart)
	Gloucester & Cheltenham* (Smooth Radio)
	Hereford & Worcester (Free Radio)
	Herefordshire & Monmouthshire (Sunshine Radio)
	Hinckley (Fosse 107)
	Kidderminster (Signal 107)
	Leicester (Capital FM)
	Leicester* (Sabras Radio)
	Loughborough (Fosse 107)
Ludlow (Sunshine Radio)	

	<p>Mansfield 103 (Mansfield)</p> <p>Macclesfield (Silk FM)</p> <p>Nottingham & Derby (Capital FM)</p> <p>Nottingham & Derby* (Gold)</p> <p>Rugby (Rugby FM)</p> <p>Rutland (Rutland Radio)</p> <p>Shrewsbury & Oswestry (Signal 107)</p> <p>South East Staffordshire (Touch FM)</p> <p>Stoke-on-Trent (Signal 1)</p> <p>Stoke-on-Trent* (Signal 2)</p> <p>Stratford-upon-Avon (Touch FM)</p> <p>Telford (Signal 107)</p> <p>Warwick (Touch FM)</p> <p>West Midlands** (Absolute Radio)</p> <p>West Midlands (Heart)</p> <p>West Midlands* (Radio XL)</p> <p>West Midlands (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Wolverhampton (Signal 107)</p> <p>Wolverhampton & Shropshire (Free Radio)</p> <p>Wolverhampton & Shropshire* (Free Radio 80s)</p>
<p>Channel Islands</p> <p>(Number of licences: 2)</p>	<p>Jersey (Channel 103)</p> <p>Guernsey (Island FM)</p>
<p>East of England</p> <p>(Number of licences: 22)</p>	<p>Cambridge & Ely (Star Radio)</p> <p>Cambridge & Newmarket (Heart)</p> <p>Chelmsford (Radio Essex)</p> <p>Colchester (Heart)</p> <p>East of England** (Kiss)</p> <p>Harlow (Heart)</p> <p>Ipswich (Ipswich 102)</p> <p>Ipswich & Bury St Edmunds (Heart)</p> <p>Ipswich & Bury St Edmunds* (Smooth Radio)</p>

	<p>Kings Lynn (KL.FM)</p> <p>Lowestoft (The Beach)</p> <p>North Norfolk (North Norfolk Radio)</p> <p>Norwich (Radio Norwich)</p> <p>Norwich & Great Yarmouth (Heart)</p> <p>Norwich & Great Yarmouth* (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Peterborough (Connect FM)</p> <p>Peterborough (Heart)</p> <p>Peterborough* (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Southend (Radio Essex)</p> <p>Southend & Chelmsford (Heart)</p> <p>Southend & Chelmsford* (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Tendring (Dream 100)</p>
<p>London</p> <p>(Number of licences: 21)</p>	<p>Brixton (Capital Xtra)</p> <p>Greater London** (Absolute Radio)</p> <p>Greater London (Capital FM)</p> <p>Greater London* (Gold)</p> <p>Greater London (Heart)</p> <p>Greater London (Kiss)</p> <p>Greater London (LBC)</p> <p>Greater London (LBC London News)</p> <p>Greater London* (Love Sport)</p> <p>Greater London* (Lyca Radio)</p> <p>Greater London* (Lyca Dil Se)</p> <p>Greater London (Magic)</p> <p>Greater London* (Premier Christian Radio)</p> <p>Greater London** (Radio X)</p> <p>Greater London (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Greater London* (Sunrise Radio)</p> <p>Havering (Time 107.5)</p> <p>Kingston-upon-Thames (Radio Jackie)</p>

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	<p>North London (Capital Xtra)</p> <p>North London (London Greek Radio)</p> <p>North London* (Panjab Radio)</p>
<p>Northern Ireland</p> <p>(Number of licences: 10)</p>	<p>Ballymena (Q Radio)</p> <p>Belfast* (Downtown Radio)</p> <p>Belfast (Q Radio)</p> <p>Belfast (U105)</p> <p>Coleraine (Q Radio)</p> <p>Londonderry (Q Radio)</p> <p>Mid Ulster (Q Radio)</p> <p>Newry (Q Radio)</p> <p>Northern Ireland (Downtown Radio, Cool FM)</p> <p>Omagh & Enniskillen (Q Radio)</p>
<p>North East of England</p> <p>(Number of licences: 11)</p>	<p>Darlington (Rathergood Radio)</p> <p>Durham (Rathergood Radio)</p> <p>Northallerton (Minster FM)</p> <p>North East England (Capital FM)</p> <p>North East England (Heart)</p> <p>North East England (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Sunderland (Sun FM)</p> <p>Teesside (TFM)</p> <p>Teesside* (TFM 2)</p> <p>Tyne & Wear (Metro Radio)</p> <p>Tyne & Wear* (Metro Radio 2)</p>
<p>North West of England</p> <p>(Number of licences: 29)</p>	<p>Bolton & Bury (Tower FM)</p> <p>Blackburn (2BR)</p> <p>Blackpool (Radio Wave)</p> <p>Burnley & Pendle (2BR)</p> <p>Carlisle (CFM)</p> <p>Chester (Dee 106.3)</p> <p>East Lancashire* (Asian Sound)</p>

	<p>Kendal & Windermere (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Liverpool (Capital FM)</p> <p>Liverpool (Radio City 2)</p> <p>Manchester (Capital FM)</p> <p>Manchester* (Gold)</p> <p>Manchester (Hits Radio)</p> <p>Manchester* (Key Radio)</p> <p>Manchester ** (Radio X)</p> <p>Manchester (XS Manchester)</p> <p>Merseyside (Radio City)</p> <p>Merseyside* (Radio City Talk)</p> <p>Morecambe Bay (Heart)</p> <p>North West England (Heart)</p> <p>North West England (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Oldham (Revolution 96.2)</p> <p>Preston & Blackpool (Rock FM)</p> <p>Preston & Blackpool (Rock FM 2)</p> <p>Preston, Leyland & Chorley (2BR)</p> <p>Stockport (Imagine FM)</p> <p>Warrington (Wire FM)</p> <p>Wigan & St. Helens (Wish FM)</p> <p>West Cumbria (CFM)</p>
<p>South of England</p> <p>(Number of licences: 40)</p>	<p>Alton & Haslemere (The Breeze)</p> <p>Andover (The Breeze)</p> <p>Ashford (KMFM)</p> <p>Aylesbury (Mix 96)</p> <p>Banbury (Touch FM)</p> <p>Basingstoke (The Breeze)</p> <p>Brighton (Capital FM)</p> <p>Brighton, Eastbourne & Hastings (Heart)</p> <p>Brighton, Eastbourne & Hastings* (Smooth Radio)</p>

Burgess Hill & Haywards Heath (More Radio)
Canterbury (KMFM)
Chichester, Littlehampton & Bognor Regis (Spirit FM)
Eastbourne (More Radio)
Folkestone & Dover (KMFM)
Hastings (More Radio)
Hertford (Bob FM)
Kettering & Corby (Connect FM)
Luton & Bedford (Heart)
Luton & Bedford* (Smooth Radio)
Maidstone (KMFM)
Maidstone, Medway & East Kent (Heart)
Maidstone, Medway & East Kent* (Smooth Radio)
Medway (KMFM)
Milton Keynes (Heart)
Newbury (The Breeze)
Northampton (Heart)
Northampton* (Smooth Radio)
Oxford (Jack FM)
Oxford (Jack FM 2)
Oxford & Banbury (Heart)
Reading (The Breeze)
Reading, Basingstoke & Andover (Heart)
Reigate & Crawley (Heart)
St Albans & Watford (Heart)
Surrey & North East Hampshire (Eagle Radio)
Surrey & North East Hampshire* (Premier Christian Radio)
Thanet (KMFM)
Tunbridge Wells & Sevenoaks (KMFM)
Winchester (The Breeze)

	Worthing (More Radio)
West of England (Number of licences: 37)	Barnstaple (Heart)
	Bath (The Breeze)
	Bournemouth (Heart)
	Bournemouth* (Smooth Radio)
	Bournemouth (Fire Radio)
	Bridgwater & West Somerset (The Breeze)
	Bristol (Sam FM)
	Bristol (The Breeze)
	Bristol & Bath (Heart)
	Cornwall (Heart)
	Cornwall (Pirate FM)
	Exeter (Radio Exe)
	Exeter & Torbay (Heart)
	Isle of Wight (Isle of Wight Radio)
	Portsmouth (The Breeze)
	Salisbury (Spire FM)
	Severn Estuary (Kiss)
	Shaftesbury (The Breeze)
	Solent (Sam FM)
	Solent (Wave 105)
	Southampton (The Breeze)
	South Hampshire (Heart, Capital FM)
	South Hampshire* (Smooth Radio)
	South Hams (Heart)
	Swindon (Sam FM)
	Swindon & West Wiltshire (Heart)
	Swindon & West Wiltshire* (Smooth Radio)
	Taunton & Yeovil (Heart)
	Torbay (The Breeze)
	Plymouth (Heart)

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	<p>Plymouth (Radio Plymouth)</p> <p>Plymouth* (Smooth Radio)</p> <p>Weymouth & Dorchester (Wessex FM)</p> <p>Winchester (The Breeze)</p> <p>Warminster (The Breeze)</p> <p>Weston-super-Mare (The Breeze)</p> <p>Yeovil (The Breeze)</p>
<p>Yorkshire and Lincolnshire</p> <p>(Number of licences: 24)</p>	<p>Barnsley (Dearne FM)</p> <p>Bassetlaw (Trax FM)</p> <p>Bradford (Sunrise FM)</p> <p>Bradford & Huddersfield (Pulse 1)</p> <p>Bradford & Huddersfield * (Pulse 2)</p> <p>Bridlington (Yorkshire Coast Radio)</p> <p>Chesterfield (Peak FM)</p> <p>Doncaster (Trax FM)</p> <p>Grimsby (Compass FM)</p> <p>Harrogate (Stray FM)</p> <p>Humberside (Viking FM)</p> <p>Humberside* (Viking 2)</p> <p>Kingston-upon-Hull (KCFM)</p> <p>Leeds (Radio Aire)</p> <p>Leeds* (Radio Aire 2)</p> <p>Lincoln (Lincs FM)</p> <p>Rotherham (Rother FM)</p> <p>Scarborough (Yorkshire Coast Radio)</p> <p>South Yorkshire (Hallam FM)</p> <p>South Yorkshire* (Hallam 2)</p> <p>South and West Yorkshire (Heart)</p> <p>Wakefield (Ridings FM)</p> <p>York (Minster FM)</p> <p>Yorkshire (Capital FM)</p>

A5. Proposed approved areas for Scotland and Wales by licence

<p>Edinburgh and The Borders (Number of licences: 7)</p>	<p>Borders (Radio Borders) Central Scotland (Heart) Central Scotland (Capital FM) Edinburgh (Forth 1) Edinburgh* (Forth 2) Fife (Kingdom FM) Stirling & Falkirk (Central FM)</p>
<p>Glasgow and South West Scotland (Number of licences: 11)</p>	<p>Ayr* (West Sound) Ayr (West FM) Central Scotland (Heart) Central Scotland (Capital FM) Dumfries & Galloway (South West Sound) Dumbarton (Your Radio) Glasgow (Clyde 1) Glasgow* (Clyde 2) Glasgow (Smooth Radio) Glasgow & West Central Scotland (Nation Radio) Helensburgh (Your Radio)</p>
<p>North Wales (Number of licences: 6)</p>	<p>Caernarfon (Capital FM) Ceredigion (Radio Ceredigion) North & Mid Wales (Heart) North Wales Coast (Capital FM) Wrexham & Deeside (Capital FM) Wrexham & Deeside* (Smooth Radio)</p>
<p>South Wales (Number of licences: 10)</p>	<p>Bridgend (Bridge FM) Cardiff & Newport (Capital FM) Cardiff & Newport* (Smooth Radio)</p>

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	Carmarthenshire (Radio Carmarthenshire)
	Pembrokeshire (Radio Pembrokeshire)
	South Wales (Heart)
	South Wales (Nation Radio)
	Swansea (Swansea Bay Radio)
	Swansea* (Swansea Sound)
	Swansea (The Wave)

A6. Responding to this consultation

How to respond

- A6.1 Ofcom would like to receive views and comments on the specific questions in this document relating to approved areas in Scotland and Wales only, by 5pm on Friday 30 November 2018.
- A6.2 You can download a response form from <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/category-2/guidelines-localness-commercial-radio>. You can return this by email or post to the address provided in the response form.
- A6.3 If your response is a large file, or has supporting charts, tables or other data, please email it to localness@ofcom.org.uk, as an attachment in Microsoft Word format, together with the cover sheet (<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/consultations-and-statements/consultation-response-coversheet>). This email address is for this consultation only, and will not be valid after 30 November 2018.
- A6.4 Responses may alternatively be posted to the address below, marked with the title of the consultation:
- Jon Heasman
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
- A6.5 We welcome responses in formats other than print, for example an audio recording or a British Sign Language video. To respond in BSL:
- Send us a recording of you signing your response. This should be no longer than 5 minutes. Suitable file formats are DVDs, wmv or QuickTime files. Or
 - Upload a video of you signing your response directly to YouTube (or another hosting site) and send us the link.
- A6.6 We will publish a transcript of any audio or video responses we receive (unless your response is confidential)
- A6.7 We do not need a paper copy of your response as well as an electronic version. We will acknowledge receipt if your response is submitted via the online web form, but not otherwise.
- A6.8 You do not have to answer all the questions in the consultation if you do not have a view; a short response on just one point is fine. We also welcome joint responses.
- A6.9 It would be helpful if your response could include direct answers to the questions asked in the consultation document. The questions are listed at Annex 6. It would also help if you

could explain why you hold your views, and what you think the effect of Ofcom's proposals would be.

- A6.10 If you want to discuss the issues and questions raised in this consultation, please contact Jon Heasman on 020 7783 4509, or by email to jon.heasman@ofcom.org.uk.

Confidentiality

- A6.11 Consultations are more effective if we publish the responses before the consultation period closes. In particular, this can help people and organisations with limited resources or familiarity with the issues to respond in a more informed way. So, in the interests of transparency and good regulatory practice, and because we believe it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other respondents' views, we usually publish all responses on our website, www.ofcom.org.uk, as soon as we receive them.
- A6.12 If you think your response should be kept confidential, please specify which part(s) this applies to, and explain why. Please send any confidential sections as a separate annex. If you want your name, address, other contact details or job title to remain confidential, please provide them only in the cover sheet, so that we don't have to edit your response.
- A6.13 If someone asks us to keep part or all of a response confidential, we will treat this request seriously and try to respect it. But sometimes we will need to publish all responses, including those that are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations.
- A6.14 Please also note that copyright and all other intellectual property in responses will be assumed to be licensed to Ofcom to use. Ofcom's intellectual property rights are explained further at <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/website/terms-of-use>.

Next steps

- A6.15 Following this consultation period, Ofcom plans to publish a statement in December 2018.
- A6.16 If you wish, you can register to receive mail updates alerting you to new Ofcom publications; for more details please see <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/about-ofcom/latest/email-updates>

Ofcom's consultation processes

- A6.17 Ofcom aims to make responding to a consultation as easy as possible. For more information, please see our consultation principles in Annex 7.
- A6.18 If you have any comments or suggestions on how we manage our consultations, please email us at consult@ofcom.org.uk. We particularly welcome ideas on how Ofcom could more effectively seek the views of groups or individuals, such as small businesses and residential consumers, who are less likely to give their opinions through a formal consultation.
- A6.19 If you would like to discuss these issues, or Ofcom's consultation processes more generally, please contact Jacqui Gregory, Ofcom's consultation champion:

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Jacqui Gregory
Ofcom
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA
Email: corporationsecretary@ofcom.org.uk

A7. Ofcom's consultation principles

Ofcom has seven principles that it follows for every public written consultation:

Before the consultation

- A7.1 Wherever possible, we will hold informal talks with people and organisations before announcing a big consultation, to find out whether we are thinking along the right lines. If we do not have enough time to do this, we will hold an open meeting to explain our proposals, shortly after announcing the consultation.

During the consultation

- A7.2 We will be clear about whom we are consulting, why, on what questions and for how long.
- A7.3 We will make the consultation document as short and simple as possible, with a summary of no more than two pages. We will try to make it as easy as possible for people to give us a written response. If the consultation is complicated, we may provide a short Plain English / Cymraeg Clir guide, to help smaller organisations or individuals who would not otherwise be able to spare the time to share their views.
- A7.4 We will consult for up to ten weeks, depending on the potential impact of our proposals.
- A7.5 A person within Ofcom will be in charge of making sure we follow our own guidelines and aim to reach the largest possible number of people and organisations who may be interested in the outcome of our decisions. Ofcom's Consultation Champion is the main person to contact if you have views on the way we run our consultations.
- A7.6 If we are not able to follow any of these seven principles, we will explain why.

After the consultation

- A7.7 We think it is important that everyone who is interested in an issue can see other people's views, so we usually publish all the responses on our website as soon as we receive them. After the consultation we will make our decisions and publish a statement explaining what we are going to do, and why, showing how respondents' views helped to shape these decisions.

A8. Consultation coversheet

BASIC DETAILS

Consultation title: Approved areas in Scotland and Wales

To (Ofcom contact): Jon Heasman (Senior Broadcast Licensing Executive)

Name of respondent:

Representing (self or organisation/s):

Address (if not received by email):

CONFIDENTIALITY

Please tick below what part of your response you consider is confidential, giving your reasons why

Nothing

Name/contact details/job title

Whole response

Organisation

Part of the response

If there is no separate annex, which parts? _____

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation not to be published, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

DECLARATION

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response that Ofcom can publish. However, in supplying this response, I understand that Ofcom may need to publish all responses, including those which are marked as confidential, in order to meet legal obligations. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Ofcom seeks to publish responses on receipt. If your response is non-confidential (in whole or in part), and you would prefer us to publish your response only once the consultation has ended, please tick here.

Name

Signed (if hard copy)

A9. Consultation question

Question. Do you agree with our revised proposals for approved areas in Scotland and Wales? If not, please specify any alternative proposals you think should be considered (if any), and explain the reasons and/or evidence which support your view.