

Mr Nicholas Wright for Canalside Community Radio/Canalsides The Thread 102.8fm

Additional comments:

Lots on bureaucracy, reporting, restrictions but it would take far too long and we have work to do. That work is to provide Community Radio as opposed to spending most of our time firefighting and pointing out faults in the Bill. These faults and flaws were pointed out from the outset and will have to go in the end, better do it sooner than later before more fall over.

Question 1: Do you agree with the proposal to revise Key Commitments as set out in this consultation? Please explain the reasons for your view.:

Yes we do. The main reason being that circumstances have changed, some for the better, some for the worse but the rules, regulations and commitments have remained the same. The "no, no, no, no, no" straight jacket that Ofcom has to work in has also remained the same. In our case owing to restrictions and geographical politics and dare I say 'complete nonsense' we have ended up serving a Community that does not include our Main Town. We were "advised" NOT to include this in our application as with one application already turned down we may have failed a second time. Key commitments were also exaggerated (for obvious reasons) with a desire to achieve. Levels and numbers were set to high and many have fallen short we also had to put proposals forward that showed we were doing things different to the Commercial outfits .. some of these things simply ticking boxes and completely unachievable and not viable, however, we have still achieved and delivered good Community Radio as have many other Stations (and against a lot of adversity) Key Commitments ought to be based around the ethos of the Radio Bill itself with a tweak here and there by the individual Station.

It is totally unacceptable for Stations to be tethered to these Commitments especially when with some Stations had to lay the commitments out so as not to upset the Local ILR Commercial Boys.

A complete shambolic system along with the restrictions which resulted in the tail wagging the Dog.

All the debates and arguments have become boring and exhausted and have gone round/through the Treadmill about 50 times.

Thank goodness for this question ... but alas, the Big question is "will it be acted upon" ?? or will we do the usual of tinkering around the edges so as to not upset the Commercial outfits. The 5km rule is also a debacle as 25 watts does NOT fit all. We still after 12 years do not know whether the 5km is a rule or a guideline ??? it seems to be a rule for some and a guideline for others. There would be flexibility also if Community Stations had an MCA and a TSA, this way at least we could have gotten around the problems quite easily. Villages and small Towns on the licence under the heading TSA.

There ought to only be ONE Key Commitment and that is the Commitment to provide good Community Radio / not-for-profit for your Community. Regulate the spend and not the earn and let Stations 'get on with it'

12 years down the line if the authorities don't know what Community Radio is by now, I would argue it is time to give up. Also, a Stations Community is the area that the Community Station wishes to serve ... it is NOT the area that the local ILR Station says we can serve, for reasons of Politics or ticking boxes.

I have over the years seen some proposals for changes to Commitments. Some of those

proposals have been valid, others have gone off-piste. It doesn't take a Professor to work out the genuine changes or the ones that wish to turn into small fry back-door Commercial outfits.

Via these channels I would be extremely grateful if someone from the DCMS could explain to me how having Macclesfield as a whole printed on our Key Commitments and Licence suddenly makes us not a Community Station ??? we are extremely baffled by this. The rules also need to create more grey areas so that Ofcom can have room for manoeuvre and instead of saying "no" on a regular basis, they can turn into the Man from Del Monte "he say yes"

Actions speak louder than words and louder than consultations.

Our live' programming goes up and down like a yo-yo .. some days we can be 15 hours, others we can be 6 hours ... the fact we drop below the original figure doesn't mean we have 'failed' or are in 'breach' it means we are struggling a bit at that moment in time we all run with Volunteers who do their best under the circumstances and Staff who run around like headless chickens spinning 25 plates ... to be told you are in 'breach' is unacceptable and then to have it highlighted on the website that an 'investigation' is taking place. This is no way to treat Charitable / Philanthropic / Benevolent organisations nor volunteers.

The rules, restrictions and commitments have created this and have only served to fill people full of frustration and dare I say angst ...change them please
Sooner as opposed to later and let Community Radio spread its wings

thank you