



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Lynda Waltho – Labour Member of Parliament for Stourbridge



Yiannis Thoedorou  
Ofcom  
Riverside House  
2A Southwark Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 9H

27 November 2008

Dear Yiannis Thoedorou,

**Re: Consultation on ITV's Proposed Cuts to Regional News**

I am writing in response to the current Ofcom consultation on the PSB Review, with particular interest in ITV's proposed cuts to its local news operations.

As a West Midlands MP, I am particularly concerned about ITV's proposals to cut a whole tier of its local news service and to do away with Central East and West's two distinctive programmes. ITV proposes to have programme with a six minute opt out to the East Midlands.

I am concerned about the number of job losses in the region if this move were to go ahead, which is currently believed to be 61, a cut of 47 per cent.

I also believe that this move would seriously undermine ITV's regional service to West Midlands viewers. Both regions are large (West Midlands has 5.3 million people and East Midlands has 4.5 million) and have distinct characteristics, and I do not believe that one news programme will be able to do justice to either region.

I am further concerned that the proposals will mean an overall reduction in news minutage in each region from five hours 20 minutes per week to three hours 45 minutes and the scrapping of all mid-morning bulletins on weekdays and the weekend lunchtime bulletin. Comprehensive news reporting is vital to my constituents, and indeed, many of them have contacted me to raise their concerns about this proposed reduction in news minutage.

I strongly oppose the proposed changes and I would urge you to adopt alternative ways of funding local and regional news.

Yours sincerely,

*Lynda Waltho*

Lynda Waltho MP  
Labour Member for Stourbridge **Speaking Up for Stourbridge**

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