Eden FM

Your details

- Full name:

  Nigel Peacock

- Representing:

  Organisation

- Organisation (Optional):

  Eden FM Radio

Your response

- *Q1. Ofcom would like to run a short, focused community radio licensing round. Our preferred option is to invite applications in areas where we have evidence of demand, after checking that there is a suitable frequency. Do you agree with this approach? If not, tell us why and what your preferred option would be.:*

  Yes, we agree with this approach. It should, in our opinion, be restricted to areas where there is already evidence of demand, rather than gathering new expressions of interest. The latter would mean a significant number, which will prevent or delay moving to other aspects of community radio needs.

- *Q2. a) New community radio stations: Do you agree with our proposed revised coverage policy in relation to new community radio services? If not, please give us your reasons.:*

  New stations in very rural areas should have the opportunity to cover a significantly larger area than the traditional 5km. This gives them a better audience and can be the make or break between sustainability or failure.

- *b) Improvements to coverage for existing services: Do you agree with our proposal to consider requests to improve coverage within the licensed area for existing licensed services? If not, please give us your reasons.:*

  Yes. This is of particular importance to existing stations in very rural areas. should have priority over city stations, who already have significant audience numbers. Rural stations suffer from small areas and therefore small populations, making them unsustainable. Evidence this in our area by the failure of Indigo FM and recently, Radio Teesdale.

- *c) Extensions to coverage for existing services: Do you agree with our proposal to consider requests to extend the existing licensed area of a community radio service into an adjoining area or locality? We will consider such requests against statutory criteria, and propose to use six core considerations to help us decide whether or not to agree to a request. Do you agree with the core considerations we propose to use? If not, please give us your comments.:*

  Not entirely. Many community stations fund it difficult to work together. Additional competition from an adjoining area could affect sustainability of one station, if the sales team at the other is particularly aggressive with their sales and they don't co-operate. The result couldactually damage and take some stations off-air.

- *Q3. Do you agree with Ofcom's proposals regarding its community radio work priorities? If not, please tell us why.:*

Each community station will have a different view, depending on their own circumstances. As a rural station with half of the local population outside the reach of our current FM transmitter, leads us to want the technical issues of existing stations examined first. Relocation of transmitters, higher power, additional relays. We can see that in a very crowded FM market, that there would be a demand for small scale DAB. There is government pressure to move from FM to DAB. This begs the question, as to whether ANY new community stations should be licenced on FM at all. Why not offer small scale DAB services now, instead of any new FM services? Existing community stations could launch second services on small scale DAB (witness Angel radio, Portsmouth). From our stations point of view, we would want the following order: (a) Technical review for existing stations (b) Small scale DAB role out (c) New community stations in areas where there is existing demand, but use small scale DAB