

Ed Richards
Chief Executive
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA

30 January 2008

Dear Mr Richards

Response to the OFCOM consultation entitled 'The future of digital terrestrial television – enabling new services for viewers'

I am writing regarding the above consultation, which you are currently inviting responses to.

As a signatory to it, I commend to Ofcom the points raised in Early Day Motion 922* tabled during the previous parliamentary session (06-07) by my colleague Ian Stewart MP, Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Community Media and signed by over 150 MPs.

You may also be aware of an earlier EDM, 1316** from the 2001-02 parliamentary session, that my colleague Tony Lloyd MP tabled during the passage of the Communications Act 2003. Although I did not find time to add my name to the 113 MPs that supported 1316 whilst this EDM was 'live', I fully support the pro-community media stance it outlines.

I would be grateful if you could take these points into consideration during the collation of response to this consultation.

Yours sincerely

* That this House congratulates the Department for Culture, Media and Sport for its excellent report The Community Radio Sector: Looking to the Future, recognising the social and economic impact of community radio in engaging the most disadvantaged members of our communities and delivering public value across a wide range of public service targets and departmental priorities; and calls on the Government to introduce secondary legislation to ensure that community and local television has access to the digital spectrum and also that sufficient space on digital spectrum is reserved for community media when considering Ofcom's Digital Dividend Review and further to ensure that the whole of the community media sector has sufficient financial resources,

through a fully funded Community Media Fund significantly larger than the current annual £500,000 Community Radio Fund, thus ensuring that the sector is economically sustainable and able to realise its potential to help those most in need. **EDM 922, 21.02.07**

** That this House welcomes the launch of the first 'access radio' services licensed by the Radio Authority and serving Manchester, Bradford, Havant, Stoke-on-Trent, Belfast, Leicester, Nottingham, Pontypridd and Central Glasgow; notes that local and community television services are being pioneered under licences from the Independent Television Commission; recognises the important contribution community media can make to social inclusion, neighbourhood renewal, citizens' participation, local democracy and lifelong learning; calls on the Government to include specific measures for the further growth and development of community media which would include distinct licensing arrangements based on clear public service obligations, reservation of broadcast spectrum and guaranteed access to cable channels; and further calls on the Government to establish a new Community Media Fund to help finance start-up, development and operating costs. **EDM 1316, 15.05.02**