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Mandarin Speakers Association

Ms Rhona Parry,
PSB Review,
Ofcom,
Riverside House,
2A Southwark Bridge Road,
London,
SE1 9HA.

June 12th 2008

Dear Ms. Parry,

Re: Mandarin Speakers Association response to the consultation: Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review - Phase One: The Digital Opportunity consultation

The Mandarin Speakers Association is an independent non-profit-making organisation. Our members are Mandarin speakers, including those who originate from Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, and Malaysia. We encourage our members to promote cultural and social exchange between local communities in Northern Ireland and Mandarin speaking groups.

In response to your consultation and in relation to your main objective of furthering the interests of citizen-consumers; in particular, developing "*a new broadcasting licensing regime to foster self-regulation and broaden citizen/consumer choice*" we would recommend that Ofcom considers acceptance of local community television as public service broadcasters.

We know from our own experience of the importance of being involved in cultural exchange and our vision is to help Mandarin speakers to maintain their cultural heritage as well as promoting harmony between Mandarin speaking groups and other community groups. We could not have done this work quite so well without working with Northern Visions/NvTv on arts and multicultural-based programming in connection with the local television service. Empowering citizens to become content providers and creating media which reflects and raises awareness of local issues and interests constitutes a valuable public service. It enhances skills, encourages a sense of place and ownership of the city and has the potential to foster greater citizenship.

Regarding aspects of work required to bring about a UK map of local and community television following analogue TV switch-off post 2010, we would request your assurance that no planning, at this stage, precludes a network of local digital multiplexes.

In relation to the development of local television in Belfast, we should be grateful if Ofcom would support NvTv being carried on Freeview as a local public service broadcaster. Such a development would ensure that everyone in the city has access to a valuable local service and support those of us who aim to share information, help each other, promote cultural and social exchange and improve the quality of our lives.



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Yours sincerely,

Lyndsay Donly

Arts Project Coordinator
Mandarin Speakers Association

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