

Your response

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Question 1: Do you agree with the proposed broadcast licensing priorities for the short to medium term? Please give reasons for your answer.	Confidential? – N Broadly agree. Caithness FM (CFM) is a community radio station serving the county of Caithness. We broadcast on FM and online via our website, smart speaker and mobile phone App. Our FM coverage area is wider than most community radio due to sparsity of population: 25,000 in an area of 1600 km², approximately 15/km²). We see no prospect of a commercial DAB service in our area before 2030. Bauer commercial radio and the new STV radio have no plans for DAB in Caithness. If a DAB multiplex were available to us, we would switch if we could get similar or better coverage to our present one and if the cost were not prohibitive. If FM is switched off in the 2030s, we expect to become on-line only, which we do not think suits our listener demographic. We would welcome the idea of allowing wider FM coverage for Caithness. Our coverage is approximately 1/3 of this.
Question 2: Do you consider that the proposed broadcast licensing priorities for the short to medium term will provide sufficient provision for audiences? Please give reasons for your answer.	Confidential? – N We would welcome invitations for commercial DAB in our area. At present, only BBC broadcasts DAB in Caithness and is therefore unavailable to us. Incidentally, we believe that BBC Radio Scotland (FM only in our area) would only be available if there was a commercial DAB as its considered 'local radio,' like a county service.
Question 3: For post-launch SSDAB multiplex coverage improvement or extension requests only, do you agree with our proposed change in approach to our application of the rule which restricts overlap with local muxes to 40% of the population already covered by the local mux (the "40% ceiling")? Please give reasons for your answer.	Confidential? – N No opinion as its irrelevant to our area.

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Question 4: Do you agree with Ofcom's analysis in section 3 and at Annex A1 of the existing broadcast licence types? Please give reasons for your answer.	Confidential? – N Tend to agree. The comment that 'community FM is better than AM but declining long term' is also irrelevant in our area but leads us to propose that Community FM licences should therefore be cheaper to ensure viability, given the quote at 3.17 on the social value of community radio.
Question 5: Do you agree with our assessment on the impact of our proposed broadcast licensing priorities for the short to medium term at Annex A3? Please give reasons for your answer.	Confidential? – N We are certainly underserved by DAB (A3.12) and would welcome improvements in SSDAB if it meets the coverage needed by our demographic (A3.11).
Question 6: Do you have any other comments to make on the proposals?	Confidential? – N No

Please complete this form in full and return to broadcast.licensing@ofcom.org.uk.