

Neil Currie, Mr.

Question 1: Should Blackburn Broadcasting Co. Ltd be permitted to make its proposed change to the Format of The Bee, with particular regard to the statutory criteria set out in Section 2 of this consultation document? (Section 106 (1A) of the 1990 Broadcasting Act, as amended, relating to Format changes):

I write formally requesting and appeal with my views and opinions on the change of format for The Bee.

Firstly, this announcement has come to a surprise, as there were no indications prior to decision. My initial concern is a reason why this is up for consultation to change the format because there are no stats that could suggest there is no need for Bombay Lounge to be broadcasted. It has been running for many years now and has a great spot on the show on a Saturday night. Lancashire has a high number of Asians within the areas of Blackburn with Darwen through to Preston and Chorley.

I refer to Section 2.5 of the Ofcom Stakeholders report for Request to Change Format – The Bee:

Under section 106(1A) of the Broadcasting Act 1990 (as amended), Ofcom may consent to a change of a Format only if it is satisfied that at least one of the following five statutory criteria is satisfied:

1. that the departure would not substantially alter the character of service

Bombay Lounge is a unique show on Bombay Lounge playing the latest Bollywood music, bhangra music and Bollywood Gossip. It is played only a Saturday evening appealing initially to the Asian Community as per above, the broadcasted areas has a high percentage of Asian Communities. It is however still listened to by 'non asian' listeners. In particular the character of service will be altered because it is not providing anything for the Asian community.

2. that the departure would not narrow the range of programmes available by way of relevant independent radio services to persons living the area or locality for which the service is licensed to be provided;

As above #1, removal of Bombay Lounge will adversely affect persons living the area which the licence provided as it is a broad Asian Community tuning into an FM radio station. Without this there is no other FM radio station broadcasting any Asian Music.

3. that the departure would be conducive to the maintenance or promotion of fair and effective competition

With Regards to competition, for the area as to which the Bee is licensed to broadcast, there is not other FM radio station which provides music and gossip aimed at the local community. There is a Medium Wave Station which is based in Manchester but not a very good reception picked up in the east of Lancashire. There is also use of DAB but how many people actually have a DAB?

4. that there is evidence that, amongst persons living in that area or locality, there is a significant demand for, or significant support for, the change that would result from the departure
Statistics are available to present the Asian population in East Lancashire. As I am probably sure there will be records of the amount of calls and texts received each Saturday to the studio with requests, shout outs and competition entries. There is no doubt a device which can be used to gather accurate evidence of how many people in the broadcasted areas are tuned into the radio station on a Saturday evening.

My Personal Opinion on this matter is as a listener and have been for many many years now, I feel very strong and passionate about the appealing of the decision of format change.

As I have explained above, there is no specific reason as to why the format is changing apart from changing the character of service. During the week the Bee will broadcast a whole variety of music however it is very repetitive. There is a selection of tracks picked for the playlist and is repeated through out the day with commercial gaps in between. One of the Core Values of The Bee is "Unconventional" which to my knowledge define not doing what is already been done. How can this decision go forward without contradicting its own core values by changing it to A MUSIC AND

INFORMATION STATION FOR 25 TO 54 YEAR-OLDS IN THE BLACKBURN, DARWEN, ACCRINGTON AND SURROUNDING AREA, FOCUSING ON LOCAL ISSUES. Guess what, during the week it the same thing!!

Please consider all of my views on this consultation and would appreciate any feed back.

Should you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,
Neil Currie