

Title:

Mrs

Forename:

Suzy

Surname:

Davies

Representing:

Organisation

Organisation (if applicable):

Welsh Conservative Group in the National Assembly for Wales

Email:

What additional details do you want to keep confidential?:

No

If you want part of your response kept confidential, which parts?:

Ofcom may publish a response summary:

Yes

I confirm that I have read the declaration:

Yes

Additional comments:

Question 1: Do you agree with Ofcom's proposal to make changes to the geographical areas of the Wales and West of England licence, to separate the constituent regions resulting in a single licence for Wales, and a larger West and South-West of England licence ?:

The Welsh Conservative Group agrees with Ofcom's proposal to issue a single Channel 3 Licence for Wales.

The geo-political landscape in Wales is vastly different from the one which existed at the time when the Wales & West licence was created.

The advent of devolution has led to public policy differences between Wales and England and the divergence has accelerated since the National Assembly for Wales became a primary law making body.

Although broadcasting remains the responsibility of the UK Government, we believe that the National Assembly for Wales has a role to play in scrutinising the public service broadcasting element of the Channel 3 Licence.

The Commission on Devolution in Wales is currently taking evidence on reviewing the powers of the National Assembly for Wales. All political parties represented in the Assembly have submitted different views regarding devolution of broadcasting. Our view is that the Assembly should have a joint role with Westminster in the development and scrutiny of broadcasting policy in Wales.

Despite the difference in submissions, all parties recognised the de facto different and separate identity of Welsh public service broadcasters. Whatever the Silk Commission ultimately decides, a separate Channel 3 licence would allow the licensee to respond in an agile manner without having to consider cross border issues, which may include elements of devolution.

There are other considerations, such as scope to provide focused news and non-news content, although that focus is already evident.

Therefore, we believe that maintaining a Wales & West licence would be impractical in future and having a separate licence for Wales would help facilitate joint scrutiny, should that be a recommendation of the Commission on Devolution in Wales.