

**Name Withheld 1(b)**

**Question 1: Should local radio station Capital FM (Birmingham) be permitted to make the changes to its Character of Service as proposed with particular regard to the statutory criteria as set out in the summary? (The Broadcasting Act 1990 Section 106 (1A) (b) and (d) relating to Format changes). :**

No. The station must remain as a station that is PRIMARILY for listeners of African or Afro-Caribbean origin with a requirement that Black music will always make up a MINIMUM of 50% of its playlist during PEAK times and with specialist programmes supplementing this to include in particular REGGAE, SOCA, HIP-HOP and SOUL.

I would like to see the words "reggae, and hip-hop" and the words "primarily for listeners of African or Afro-Caribbean origin" to remain in the wording of the proposed format.

I am also not happy about the drastic cut in specialist programmes from 26 hours to 12 hours a week, which I am sure will be only 6 hours on each of Friday and Saturday night. I fear that the rest of the time Capital will just play non-stop Top 40 hits like it historically has always done in London.

I believe that the new proposed format implies that there will most probably be just one specialist programme a week that is of specific appeal to listeners of African or Afro-Caribbean origin. At present the 3 hour programme that is presented by Sacha Brookes on Sunday early morning is just non-stop dubstep and does not really fulfil the requirements of the existing licence as there is no reggae played on Capital Birmingham at present at all. Capital Birmingham do not appear to have any other specialist programs at present that attempt to fulfil the requirement for having reggae and hip-hop during specialist hours. Based on this breach of the existing license and the very significant changes still proposed that will still make Capital too similar to BBC Radio 1 and BRMB at peak times, Ofcom should also reject the amended format change request. The new format still significantly reduces listener choice. Global would be much better off reintroducing Choice 102.2 to fulfil the existing requirements by networking the Choice London programmes with local breakfast and drive, instead of trying to alter the current format and reduce listener choice.

The amended proposed new format is still too significant a change as it implies that the "rhythmic-based music-led service" will no longer be targeted at listeners of African or Afro-Caribbean origin. Rhythmic music will inevitably evolve over time and if rhythmic music eventually becomes club dance, trance, techno and rock etc, it will mean that the station will be totally unidentifiable from its current form and will leave a gap in the market for urban music that risks being filled by illicit pirate stations as was the case 10 years ago when UK Garage went mainstream yet legal radio would not give such music adequate exposure to its fans. Ofcom ought to reject the amended format change request and Global ought to reinstate Choice 102.2 as an expansion of the Choice London station which plays a much more distinctive range of urban rhythmic music than Capital Birmingham and has virtually no overlap in its playlist with BRMB, Heart, Kerrang! and Smooth and is significantly different to BBC Radio 1.