

Andrea,

Since filling in the online form for the consultation some days ago, it has now just become apparent that the current local radio licence holder (Heart North Devon) have just stated they are going to include local news specific to North Devon in their future service. Please do not allow this frankly rather pathetic attempt at improving their 'localness' credentials at this critical time to influence the decision on extending the DAB multiplex.

Heart have firmly demonstrated their complete lack of commitment to localness in North Devon over the past year or more. This move is quite obviously just an attempt to quash any commercial competition and their true priorities are not in the needs of the listeners but in maximising their profits on a national level. The feedback I gave to the consultation earlier this week expressed my concern to importance of improved localness, and the allowing for competition and choice through the re-advertisement of the local licence. Localness needs to extend well beyond news bulletins - we need local traffic updates and weather, we need North Devon surf reports for the tourist trade which is a cornerstone to our area's economy, we need interaction with local guests and information on events and what's on in the North Devon area.

I can offer you the following case study - In August 2010 our company was involved in running a comedy festival in North Devon. At the time we spoke with Heart FM in Barnstaple, who agreed for us to come in and talk about the festival. The next week it was announced the North Devon output was closing and broadcast was moving to Exeter - as a result we never got our opportunity to promote on air... We suddenly had become too far away and too insignificant for Heart to have any interest in accommodating us. This was one of the biggest events in North Devon that month (October).

I again urge you, in the interests of true localness, in the interests of FAIR competition, and additionally in the interests of coverage for the North Devon coast - please do NOT approve the Now Digital proposal in its current form, and most importantly please insist on the re-advertising of the local North Devon licence.

I am happy for all of the above to be published. Please can you advise me why my response from earlier in the week using the online form has so far still not been published on your website?

Exanza Marketing