

Labour

Rhona Parry,
PSB Review,
Ofcom ,
Riverside House,
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London, SE1 9HA.
PSBReview@ofcom.org.uk

June 15th 2008

Dear Rhona Parry,

Re: Response to the consultation: Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review - Phase One: The Digital Opportunity consultation

In response to your consultation and in relation to your main objective of furthering the interests of citizen-consumers; in particular, developing "*a new broadcasting licensing regime to foster self-regulation and broaden citizen/consumer choice*" we would recommend that Ofcom considers acceptance of local community television as public service broadcasters.

As you are aware, the main political parties in Northern Ireland have supported Local Public Service Television and signed the Early Day Motion 1013 which looks to '*the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to introduce a licence for the provision of local public service television during the rollout of digital switchover*'.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35211> &SESSION=891

During the passage of the Communications Act, nine Northern Irish MPs supported "*the important contribution community media can make to social inclusion, neighbourhood renewal, citizens' participation, local democracy and lifelong learning and called on the Government to include specific measures for the further growth and development of community media which would include distinct licensing arrangements based on clear public service obligations, reservation of broadcast spectrum, guaranteed access to cable channels and the establishment of a community media fund to help finance start up, development and operating costs*". (EDM1316)

I know at first hand of the social benefits that community arts and media can deliver to local people. Empowering citizens to become content providers and creating media which reflects and raises awareness of local issues and

interests constitutes a valuable public service. It enhances skills, encourages a sense of place and ownership of the city and has the potential to foster greater citizenship.

In relation to the development of local television in Belfast, we should be grateful if Ofcom would support NvTv being carried on Freeview as a local public service broadcaster. Such a development would ensure that everyone in the city has access to a valuable local service and would support the efforts of the community arts and media sector to nurture the Belfast's cultural and creative assets and talent.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Langhammer', with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right. Below the signature, the word 'Council' is printed in a small, sans-serif font.

Mark Langhammer

Chair N.I. Constituency Council
The Labour Party