

3 June 2008

Rhona Parry
PSB Review
Ofcom
Riverside House
2A Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HA

Dear Ms Parry

NICVA RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION: OFCOM'S SECOND PUBLIC SERVICE BROADCASTING REVIEW – PHASE ONE: THE DIGITAL OPPORTUNITY CONSULTATION

I am writing on behalf of NICVA (the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action), the umbrella body for voluntary and community organisations in Northern Ireland. NICVA is a membership body with approximately 1,000 member groups, of which Northern Visions is one. We provide advice and information to voluntary and community groups on a wide range of issues from management consultancy and finance through to policy development and lobbying. In its work NICVA adopts a community development approach and acts as a catalyst to promote innovation and new approaches to the challenge of social need.

NICVA works for justice, equality and dignity throughout society by promoting opportunities for community participation in the essential decisions which affect the lives of people in Northern Ireland.

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.*”

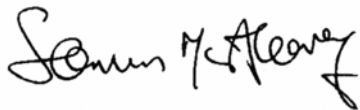
<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=35211&SESSION=891>

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)

In response to your consultation, we would recommend that Ofcom considers acceptance of local community television as public service broadcasters.

In relation to the development of local television in Belfast, we would 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 which would provide an outlet for the city's cultural and creative assets and talent.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seamus Mc Aleavey'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'S' and a stylized 'M'.

SEAMUS Mc ALEAVEY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE