

Your response

Question	Your response
<p>Question 1: Do you have any comments on Ofcom's proposed Work Plan for 2025/26?</p>	<p>Confidential? – N</p> <p>The Community Media Association (CMA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to Ofcom's Proposed Plan of Work for 2025/26. As the members-based representative body for the UK's community media sector, we appreciate Ofcom's ongoing commitment to supporting diverse and accessible media. We wish to address several priorities outlined in the Plan of Work and their relevance to our members.</p> <p>Media We Trust and Value</p> <p>The CMA shares Ofcom's commitment to ensuring that media content is "duly accurate, duly impartial, and trusted." We look forward to collaborating with Ofcom to uphold these values across the community media sector. Our members are volunteer-led and not-for-profit organisations, often embedded within underserved communities, and play a significant role in building trust and promoting local content.</p> <p>We urge Ofcom to support our members in competing fairly and openly for audiences. Specifically, we request Ofcom's help in encouraging commercial stakeholders such as IRN not to price our members out of essential services like news bulletins that provide audiences with important information. Many community radio stations cannot afford the additional costs, particularly with regard to licencing, associated with creating on-demand content. We would welcome support from Ofcom to level the playing field in this area, ensuring that local audiences benefit from diverse and accessible media offerings.</p> <p>Community radio stations are increasingly leveraging social media platforms to promote their content, especially local news and issues. This approach facilitates discussion and engagement, particularly among younger audiences and communities that mainstream media often overlooks. Community radio stations act as trusted sources of online information while adhering to broadcast codes. We would appreciate Ofcom's support in highlighting and reinforcing the trustworthiness of our members' content.</p>

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	<p data-bbox="699 271 1104 300">Local FM Frequencies and SSDAB</p> <p data-bbox="699 327 1378 589">We urge Ofcom to continue advertising new FM frequencies, particularly in areas and for communities currently underserved by Small-Scale DAB (SSDAB). FM remains an essential platform for many of our members and their audiences. Expanding FM availability will ensure that community radio continues to thrive and serve local needs.</p> <p data-bbox="699 616 1118 645">Internet and Post We Can Rely On</p> <p data-bbox="699 672 1385 1055">Community radio increasingly encourages audiences to listen via IP platforms such as Radioplayer and devices such as smart speakers. We welcome Ofcom’s initiatives to improve access to reliable internet, especially in areas with poor data coverage. Reliable connectivity is essential for ensuring that local audiences can access community radio services via modern platforms. Improved internet access will enable community radio to further engage with audiences and remain a vital source of local information and entertainment.</p> <p data-bbox="699 1081 1118 1111">Additional Points of Collaboration</p> <p data-bbox="699 1137 1339 1205">We acknowledge and support several other priorities within the Plan of Work:</p> <ol data-bbox="746 1232 1385 1977" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="746 1232 1385 1379">1. Voice Assistant Technology: We look forward to working with Ofcom on ensuring that community radio remains accessible via voice-activated devices. <li data-bbox="746 1406 1385 1592">2. Content Standards for Radio: Our members are fully committed to adhering to high standards, and we value the opportunity to collaborate with Ofcom on maintaining and evolving these standards. <li data-bbox="746 1619 1385 1767">3. Local Media Review: We welcome the planned review of the local media market and hope to contribute insights from the community radio sector. <li data-bbox="746 1794 1385 1977">4. Online Safety and Trust: The CMA supports Ofcom’s focus on protecting audiences from harm while safeguarding freedom of expression. Many of our members play a pivotal role in fostering safe and inclusive online communities.

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	<p>5. Complaints Procedures: We are pleased to see Ofcom’s consultation on revising general procedures for investigating breaches of broadcast licences. Clarity and fairness in these procedures are essential for our members.</p> <p>We would like to thank Ofcom for its ongoing support of the community radio sector, including the work conducted in 2024 on the consultation regarding key commitments. Additionally, we appreciate the opportunity to provide input into the recently opened consultation on revising procedures for investigating breaches of broadcast licences. Such initiatives demonstrate Ofcom’s dedication to fostering a vibrant and diverse media landscape.</p> <p>The CMA remains committed to working closely with Ofcom to ensure that community radio continues to serve as a trusted and valuable resource for local communities. We look forward to further collaboration on the priorities outlined in the Plan of Work for 2025/26.</p>

Please complete this form in full and return to planofwork@ofcom.org.uk