



ACSONI



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Rhona Parry,  
PSB Review,  
Ofcom,  
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Date

Dear Rhona Parry,

**Re: Afro-Community Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI) response to the consultation: Ofcom's Second Public Service Broadcasting Review – Phase One: The Digital Opportunity consultation**

The Afro-Community Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI) is a registered charity and independent community-based organization, which was formed to support one of the largest minority ethnic communities in Northern Ireland. The work of ASCONI has risen to the challenge of developing and implementing a strategic framework through which the needs of our ever-increasing community may be addressed including resources, community support and infrastructure.

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.

We have first hand experience of working with Northern Visions/NvTv and the benefits which local television brings in highlighting both social and economic issues and also in providing arts, entertainment and cultural programmes for a local audience. Empowering citizens of all ages to become content providers and creating media which reflects and raises awareness of local issues and interests constitutes a valuable public service. It enhances the skills base, encourages a sense of place and ownership of the city and has the potential to foster greater citizenship.

Regarding aspects of work required to bring about a UK map of local and community television following analogue TV switch-off post 2010, we would request your assurance that no planning, at this stage, precludes a network of local digital multiplexes.

Central funding provisions have been made in the Communications Act for community radio and local digital television. Ofcom should consider a fund, which could potentially be drawn

from the licence fee and from top-slicing commercial broadcasting licences or other central government sources.

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 those of us who are working for a socially inclusive society in Northern Ireland.

Yours sincerely

Julius Ember Anakaa  
Chairperson