
Small-scale radio multiplex licence

Application form – Part A (public)

Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Cheshire Radio Ltd

Multiplex licence area being applied for (note this must be a small-scale multiplex area currently being advertised by Ofcom):

Cheshire Mid

2. Extent of proposed coverage area

- 2.1 Provide a summary, fully consistent with the more detailed information about transmission sites supplied separately in Part B, of the coverage area proposed to be achieved by your technical plan. This should include a description of the target area you are seeking to serve within the advertised licence area, and also any areas you are aiming to serve outside the advertised licence area for this small-scale radio multiplex service. (You may refer to your coverage prediction in the response you provide):

The Cheshire Radio DAB multiplex will serve the large semi-rural area that is mid Cheshire and its disparate communities.

The key population centres are Northwich, Winsford and Middlewich - the 'Salt' towns - which have a longstanding shared industrial and social heritage. Whether it's transport links, employment centres, schools or colleges, the community ties between the three towns are incredibly strong and the multiplex will enable service providers to reach those communities.

The three towns have a combined population of around 89,000 people. The area also embraces discrete rural villages including Holmes Chapel (5,605); Weaverham (6,391); Wincham (2,162); Lostock Gralam (2,298); Hartford (5,558), Cuddington (5,333); Davenham & Sandiway (2,745); Moulton (2,370); Bostock Green (229); Byley (235) and Lach Dennis (580).

Our proposition is founded on three principles:

1. Delivery of a reliable, consistent and high-quality DAB service to as much of the indoor population of the Cheshire Mid Polygon as possible;
2. Working to the original DCMS/Ofcom objective to make DAB affordable for community radio, small independent commercial stations and start-up services.
3. Achieving the above within a sustainable, long-term business plan.

Cheshire is perhaps best known for agriculture, cheese and its plain. The plain is the surface expression of the Cheshire Basin, a deep sedimentary bowl that extends north into Lancashire and south into Shropshire. It assumed its current form as the ice-sheets of the last glacial period melted away between 20,000 and 15,000 years ago leaving behind a thick cover of glacial till and extensive tracts of glacio-fluvial sand and gravel. Today's urban areas are low-rise and the surrounding countryside is primarily used for dairy farming.

These are all excellent conditions for terrestrial RF transmission. Our single site at Northwich provides solid coverage of the three key towns with just a small amount of overspill to the north west of the polygon and across towards the rural communities of Frodsham and Netherton.

Future Coverage

In the south eastern corner of the polygon is the market town of Sandbach. The town currently lies outside the coverage of the proposed transmitter. However, we have identified a suitable site in the town centre (School) for a lower-power fill-in transmitter using a directional antenna which will serve the town with limited overspill. We would propose implementing this, subject to Ofcom approval, once the multiplex business has become sufficiently established.

In the north eastern corner of the polygon is the market town of Knutsford. There town also lies within the Cheshire East polygon. However, we have identified a suitable site (Water Tower) in the town centre for a lower-power fill-in transmitter – again using a directional antenna which will serve the town with limited overspill. We would propose implementing this, subject to Ofcom approval, after the proposed Sandbach fill-in.

2.2 Provide summary details of the sites required to achieve this coverage by completing the table below (add additional rows as required):

Site Name	NGR	Antenna height (m agl)	Antenna type proposed with bearing	New or existing antenna	ERP (W)
Hartford	SJ645725	37	OMNI - Colinear	New	120

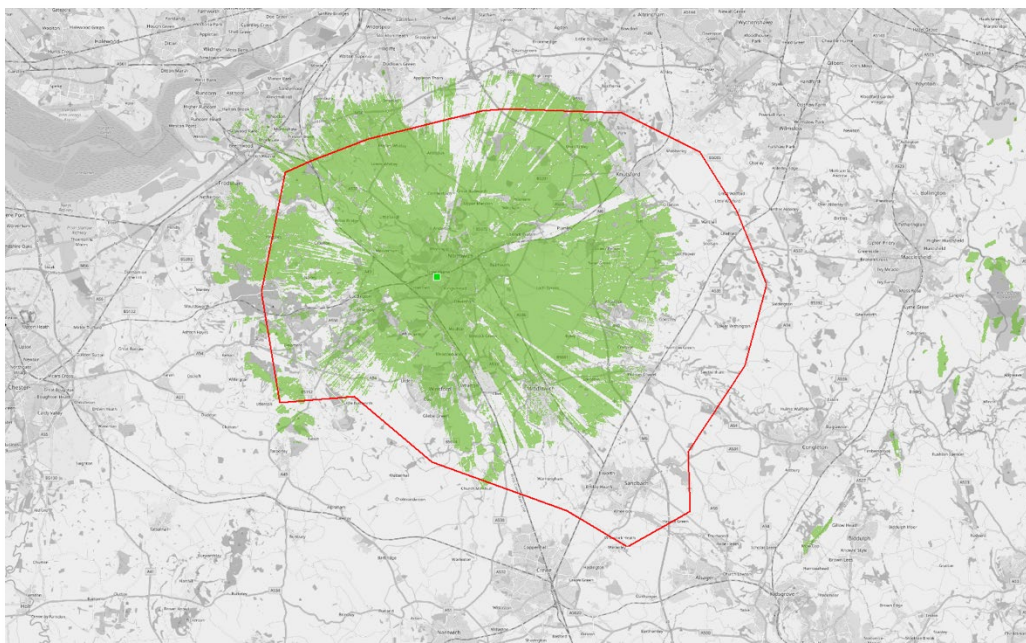
2.3 Please provide a coverage prediction map for the whole transmitter network you are proposing to build within 18 months if you are awarded a licence. The map should show the 63 dBµV/m field strength and the advertised small-scale DAB licence area contour. [Small-scale DAB licence areas in GIS format](#) are available on the Ofcom website.

A full coverage prediction map for the whole transmitter network is included in the annex. It shows the 63 dBµV/m field strength (as well as the 54 dBµV/m and 38dBµV/m contours).

The ward-level population tables (2011 Census) indicate that at 63 dBµV/m field strength;

- the number of people falling outside the polygon does not exceed 30% of the total population within the advertised licence area; and
- the proposed coverage does not overlap more than 40% of the population within the relevant local radio multiplex service’s licensed area.

In deploying only a single transmitter site, Cheshire Radio has designed the coverage to minimise any significant interference above 38 dBµV/m to other proposed licences with the north west Macro area as well as small-scale DAB areas outside of the Macro area.



2.4 Please provide the following details of the prediction software used for your coverage assessments:

Provide the name and version of the prediction tool used.	ATDI HTZ Communications v22 6.9 x64
Detail the terrain model used by the software and its resolution.	DTM: Ordnance Survey terrain data – 50 metre resolution (DSM+DTM)
Detail the ground cover (clutter) data used by the software and its resolution.	Infoterra clutter data to 50m resolution
What propagation algorithm has been used?	Model pre-set – Fresnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diffraction geometry – Deygout 94-2 • Subpath attenuation – coarse integration • FZ fraction 0.8 • Earth radius (sea and land) - 8,500km
Where multiple sites are proposed, describe what methodology has been used to assess the network (SFN) gain	Power sum
If these predictions have not used Ofcom-provided population data, state what population data has been used and its source.	Ofcom-provided population data has been used along with that from the 2011 Census which is included within ATDI's modelling software
Have your predictions been generated by a commercial organisation? If so, by whom?	Coverage predictions have been generated by Viamux using HTZ Communications software from ADTI.

3. Ability to establish the proposed service

Applicant's details

3.1 Name of applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Cheshire Radio Ltd

3.2 Company registration number stated on Companies House (if applicable):

11681350

3.3 For UK registered companies, the address of the applicant's registered office stated on Companies House. For non-UK registered companies, the principal office address:

20 Crewe Road, Sandbach, Cheshire, United Kingdom, CW11 4NE

3.4 If a UK registered company, is the **current** Memorandum and Articles of Association document available on the Companies House website?

Yes

Ownership and control of company which will hold the licence

Details of officers

3.5 Please complete the following table, expanding it, if necessary, to provide the following details for each director or designated member of the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

Full name of individual	Correspondence address ¹	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business concerned)	Other employment
John Evington	20 Crewe Rd, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 4NE	UK	Director: Niocom Associates Ltd (Ofcom-licensed small-scale DAB operator for Trial Manchester); Niocast Digital Ltd (small-scale DAB licence investor); Viamux Ltd (small-scale DAB solutions provider) Manchester Community Radio Alliance (Not-for-profit community radio alliance)	None
David Duffy	20 Crewe Rd, Sandbach, Cheshire CW11 4NE	UK	Director: Niocom Associates Ltd (Ofcom-licensed small-scale DAB operator for Trial Manchester); Niocast Digital Ltd (small-scale DAB licence investor); Viamux Ltd (small-scale DAB solutions provider) Manchester Community Radio Alliance (Not-for-profit community radio alliance)	None

¹ This should be the same address as is held and published by Companies House.

Details of participants

- 3.6 Complete the table, expanding it, if necessary, to list all bodies or individuals which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, in the applicant (i.e. the “participants”). If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

(If parts of this question are not applicable to the applicant – for example, because the applicant does not have shareholders – please respond “N/A” in the relevant parts of the table.)

Full name of participant (existing and proposed)	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
John Evington	N/A	100	50	50
David Duffy	N/A	100	50	50
Comments				
As a company limited by guarantee there are no shareholders. The above figures represent the investment and voting rights of the founding members.				

Details of relationships of control

- 3.7 Complete the following table, expanding it, if necessary, to list any bodies corporate which are controlled by the applicant, any director of the applicant, any person/body corporate with control over the applicant, or any body corporate controlled by a person/body corporate controlling the applicant. Please include bodies corporate under joint control – i.e. which are controlled acting together in concert with third parties (e.g. because of a shareholder’s agreement):

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of body corporate	Address	Person/body controlling the entity (i.e. the applicant itself or its associate)
N/A	N/A	N/A

Details of persons who control the applicant

- 3.8 Complete the table, expanding it, if necessary, to list all persons/bodies corporate who control the applicant, or control any person/body corporate with control over the applicant. Please include persons or bodies that control the applicant (or body corporate with control over the applicant) jointly i.e. acting together in concert with third parties (e.g. because of a shareholder’s agreement). Please note that some of this information may repeat information provided above on shareholders and other participants in the applicant:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of person/body corporate	Address	Person/body controlled by the entity (i.e. the applicant itself or its associate)
N/A	N/A	N/A

- 3.9 Complete the following table, expanding it, if necessary, to list other bodies in which any individual listed in response to question 3.8 is a director or designated member:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of individual	Name of body in which individual is a director or designated member
N/A	N/A

- 3.10 Complete the following table, expanding it, if necessary, to list all bodies corporate which are controlled (including jointly controlled) by any body corporate listed in response to question 3.8:

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Full name of body corporate listed in 3.8	Body corporate controlled
N/A	N/A

- 3.11 In relation to each body corporate identified in response to question 3.8, complete the table, expanding it, if necessary, to list all bodies which hold or are beneficially entitled to shares, or who possess voting powers, in the body corporate concerned (i.e. “participants”). You may, but are not required to, exclude from this table any bodies listed in response to question 3.8. If you are unable to provide a complete answer to this question in relation to beneficial owners, please state whether you have any reason to suspect the existence of any beneficial owners.

(If this question is not applicable to the applicant please respond “N/A” in the table.)

Name of body corporate identified in response to question 3.8	N/A			
Full name of participant	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Comments				

Involvement of the applicant in specified activities

- 3.12 Please state below whether the applicant, or any individual or body corporate identified in questions 3.5 to 3.11 is, or is involved in, any of the below, and the extent of that interest.

Activity/involvement	Yes or No	Please state who is involved; the name of the body/individual/agency they are involved with; and the extent of their involvement
A local authority	No	N/A
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a political nature, or which is affiliated to such a body	No	N/A
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature; ²	No	N/A
An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	N/A

² Please refer to Sections 3 to 5 of Ofcom’s religious guidance note at: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0028/88219/Guidance-for-religious-bodies.pdf for details on how we determine the eligibility of religious bodies to hold certain broadcasting licences.

A body corporate which is an associate (as defined in paragraphs 1(1) and 1(1A) of Part I of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	N/A
An advertising agency or an associate of an advertising agency	No	N/A

Details of applications, licences and sanctions

3.13 Please answer 'yes' or 'no' to the following questions about the applicant (i.e. the body corporate that will hold the licence):

(a) Is the applicant a current licensee of Ofcom?

No

(b) Has the applicant ever held an Ofcom broadcasting licence before?

No

(c) Has anyone involved in the proposed service held an Ofcom broadcasting licence or been involved in an Ofcom-licensed broadcast service before?

Yes

(d) Does the applicant control an existing Ofcom licensee?

No

(e) Is the applicant controlled by an existing licensee or by any person who is connected (within the meaning of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990) with an existing licensee (i.e. as a "participant")?

No

(f) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - made any other application to Ofcom (or its predecessor broadcast regulators – the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority) for any licence which has since been surrendered by the licensee or revoked by Ofcom (or one of its predecessor regulators)?

No

(g) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant - made any other application to Ofcom (or its predecessor broadcast regulators – the Independent Television Commission and the Radio Authority) for any licence which has since been surrendered by the licensee or revoked by Ofcom (or one of its predecessor regulators)?

No

(h) Is the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – subject to any current or pending investigation by any statutory regulatory or government body in the United Kingdom or abroad in respect of any broadcast-related matter?

No

(i) Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been subject to a statutory sanction for contravening a condition of a broadcasting licence in the UK or any other jurisdiction?

No

3.14 If the response to any of the questions (a) to (i) in 3.14 above is ‘yes’, please provide the details, expanding the table where necessary:

	Licence number(s) (if known)	Details (Dates)	Details (Licensed Areas)
(a)			
(b)			
(c)	DP101065	2015 - 2016	Manchester Business Radio
(c)	SSDABWT005	2015 - Current	Multiplex - Trial Manchester
(c)	CR102895	2019 - Current	Cheshire Radio Ltd
(c)		2004 - 2009	Swansea & S Wales Local Multiplex
(c)		2002 - 2009	Bradford & Huddersfield Local Multiplex
(c)		2004 - 2009	Stoke on Trent Local Multiplex
(c)		2002 -2009	Central Scotland Multiplex
(c)	AL100192BA/2	1991 - 2000	Signal Radio Ltd
(c)	AL100192BA/2	1992 - 2006	Imagine FM Ltd
(c)	AL100806BA/2	1996 - 2000	Wire FM - Warrington
(c)		2000- 2009	Signal 1 Stoke on Trent
(c)		2000- 2009	Signal 2 Stoke on Trent
(c)		2000- 2009	Imagine FM Stockport
(c)		2000- 2009	Wish FM Wigan and St Helens
(c)		2000- 2009	Swansea Sound
(c)		2000- 2009	Wave Swansea
(c)		2000- 2009	Valleys Radio - S Wales Valleys
(c)		2000- 2009	Q96 Paisley

Small-scale radio multiplex licence: Application form (Part A)

(c)		2000- 2009	Wave 102 Dundee
(c)		2000- 2009	Wire FM - Warrington
(c)		2000- 2009	The Wave Blackpool
(c)		2000- 2009	The Pulse Bradford
(c)		2000- 2009	Pulse Classic Gold Bradford
(c)		2000- 2009	Peak FM Chesterfield
(c)		2000- 2009	The Wolf Wolverhampton
(c)		2000- 2009	Peak FM Chesterfield
(c)		2000- 2009	Tower FM Bolton and Bury
(c)		2006 - 2008	Original 106 FM
(c)	AL203	2008 - 2010	Dune FM
(c)	AL323	2010 - 2011	Central Radio
(d)			
(e)			
(f)			
(g)			
(h)			
(i)			

3.15 Please provide any further information you hold, relating to the past conduct of the applicant or those individuals listed, in regulatory matters or in matters going to honesty and/or compliance, which may be relevant to Ofcom’s consideration of whether or not the applicant is fit and proper to hold a broadcast licence. If the applicant or the form signatory fails without reasonable excuse at this point to declare any matter of which Ofcom subsequently becomes aware, and which we consider to be relevant to the applicant’s eligibility to hold a licence, we will take it into account in determining the question of whether the applicant/licensee remains fit and proper to hold a licence.

If you have no information to provide, please respond “N/A”.

N/A

3.16 Has the applicant – or any person(s) controlling the applicant – ever been convicted of an unlicensed broadcasting offence?

No

Small-scale radio multiplex licence: Application form (Part A)

If yes, please provide the following details:

Full name	Date of conviction/action (dd/mm/yy)	Penalty
N/A	N/A	N/A

Financial and business plan

- 3.17 Please provide a high-level estimate of the costs you believe will be required to establish the multiplex service.

Cheshire Radio Ltd will establish a successful multiplex operation by providing existing community and commercial broadcasters as well as new entrants with a reliable digital broadcast platform on both affordable and flexible terms. A confidential spreadsheet that sets out detailed income and outgoings with a 36-month cash flow forecast is included in the annex.

Capital Investment - £5,000 (equipment provide by Viamux on monthly rental)

Our core ambition is to be able to offer service providers a low cost, easy to access, high quality digital broadcast platform and to ensure its long-term sustainability. To achieve this, the capital investment we are making has been carefully weighed to provide sufficient funds to meet the needs of establishing the platform and to ensure carriage fees are attractive and sustainable for service providers over the longer term. This principle has guided the number and choice of transmission sites – to keep both the capital and operational cost of transmission to a minimum.

The main capital investment is in the choice of multiplexing & transmission supplier. Our company Viamux will provide the professional services (project management, site surveys, network design, configuration, installation and training) and the multiplexing/transmission equipment on a rental basis.

Operating Costs - £21,244 (per annum)

Transmission

The costs associated with transmission (rental, rates, electrical power consumption, internet provision) are the single most important ongoing operating expenditure for a multiplex company. Our selection of transmission sites is a cost-effective choice that balances delivering the largest audience whilst ensure carriage fees remain attractive to service providers.

Technical Support & Maintenance

Ongoing technical support for maintaining the multiplex and transmission equipment will be provided by Viamux (by way of an annual support & maintenance contract).

Small-Scale DAB Management Software

We will also subscribe to Optimux - a low-cost cloud-based control panel that simplifies the management and monitoring of a small-scale DAB networks. For a low-cost monthly fee, Optimux will allow us to implement cloud encoding - making it quick, easy and cheap to add new services to a multiplex. It will also provide us with invoicing and direct debit collection to streamline the payment of carriage fees. Optimux will also monitor the multiplex and immediately alerts us to any issues and notify service providers regarding their audio.

Administration

The usual administration costs with operating a business of this size are included (insurance, legal and accountancy services) as is the annual Ofcom licence fee.

VAT

We expect for turnover to remain below the VAT registration threshold which will mean all carriage fees will be free from VAT. We expect many service providers will not be VAT registered and that an uplift of 20% would be a very real additional cost to them and a possible impediment to them participating in small-scale DAB.

Funding

The company will be funded through a combination of equity and primarily a member working capital loan of £5,000. The multiplex operation will be established and sustained by providing existing community and commercial broadcasters as well as new entrants with a reliable digital broadcast platform on both affordable and flexible terms.

3.18 Please indicate how the costs outlined in 3.17 (above) will be met, under the following headings:

a) Share capital

The company is limited by guarantee without a share capital

b) Loan stock

A working capital investment loan of £5,000 will be provided by the members. We anticipate this loan being repaid within the term of the licence. Further funding is available, if required.

c) Leasing/HP facilities (capital value)

There is no requirement for Leasing/HP facilities. The multiplex/transmission equipment is being provided by Viamux on rental terms.

d) Bank overdraft

There is no requirement for a Bank overdraft.

e) Grants and donations

There is no requirement for grants or donations.

f) Other (please specify)

None

3.19 Expanding the table if necessary, please list the providers of the funding which will be used to establish the service, and the amount of funding that each will provide. For incorporated investing shareholders, please provide a copy of the most recent statutory accounts if they are not currently available on Companies House.

Name of shareholder or investor	Percentage of shares held (if applicable)	Amount of funding provided (£)
David Duffy	50%	£2,500
John Evington	50%	£2,500

3.20 All of the funding identified above should be confirmed. If any funding has not been confirmed, or if there are any pre-conditions before the funding is released which have not yet been met, provide an explanation of what needs to be done, the dates by which it needs to be carried out, and any steps the applicant needs to take to ensure the funding is confirmed and/or released.

All required funding is confirmed and available. Evidence that sufficient funds are available to each investing member is available on request.

Relevant expertise and experience

3.21 Please provide details of who will be responsible for the day-to-day general management of the multiplex service (for example, dealing with programme service providers and contractual matters). Please also briefly state their previous relevant experience. (Note that any individuals or contractors who cannot be identified at this stage can instead be included in the confidential section (Part B) of the application form.)

Collaboration

Cheshire Radio Ltd is a strongly local applicant group with collaboration at its heart. Cheshire Radio is a not-for-profit organisation that will bring together partner organisations to share the operating costs in a truly collaborative social enterprise.

Cheshire Radio's founders are experienced broadcasters and have a thorough understanding of running a small-scale DAB multiplex :

- David Duffy and John Evington have operated the small-scale DAB multiplex in Manchester, since 2015. Having also run successful trials in Dublin and Cork, they are amongst the most experienced operators of small-scale DAB operators.
 - David Duffy lives in mid Cheshire and was the founder and launch CEO of the original Ofcom-licenced community station Cheshire FM and the recently re-awarded analogue licence for mid Cheshire.

- John Evington was brought up in Sandbach and worked at Cheshire and Staffordshire's Signal Radio for 22 years

General Management

For the past five years, David & John have taken day-to-day management responsibility of the Trial Manchester small-scale DAB multiplex has included, but was not limited to; supporting, maintaining and upgrading the multiplex system hardware & software; recruiting new services to ensure that the multiplex is always full; negotiating carriage agreements; invoice management and payment collection; and working with programme services to ensure DSPS and regulatory licence compliance.

Sector Participation

John and David have taken leading roles in advancing the aims and objectives of the small-scale DAB sector over the past 5 years - participating in DCMS and Ofcom DAB planning meetings as well as parliamentary consultations. During 2019 David & John ran a series of highly successful UK-wide small-scale DAB workshops in Belfast, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Sheffield, Watford and Cardiff. The 20 workshops were attended by over 180 people from 80 applicant groups.

Technical & Operational Experience

David & John also founded Viamux Ltd – which supplies professional services and small-scale DAB solutions. They are also co-founders of Optimux – a software platform specifically developed, in 2020, for the day-to-day management of small-scale DAB multiplexes. Coming out of our experience of running one of the first UK small scale trials, Optimux equips small-scale DAB licensees with an easy to use dashboard for managing, monitoring and reporting on all aspects of a multiplex network as well as providing invoicing and direct debit collection to simplify the payment of carriage fees. Every aspect of the day-to-day management of a small-scale multiplex has been incorporated into Optimux.

Viamux will be responsible for the launch of the multiplex - David and John for its subsequent day to day operation; in particular:

- Overseeing bit rate variations, enhancements or projects required by service providers, such as EPG provision, temporary services and data developments.
- Working with service providers and the transmission subcontractor to maximise multiplex functionality and efficiency.
- Monitoring and fault reporting, ensuring that the output of all service providers is correctly logged and compliant with legislation and codes.
- Developing new revenue streams.

They will oversee any multiplex re-configurations and these will be undertaken in line with our policies and contractual agreements with service providers. They will also

provide ongoing financial management of the multiplex; accounts, IT, admin, legal, customer service and technical support.

Team

As mentioned before, David & John share a track record of successfully establishing and operating radio stations as well as local and small-scale DAB multiplexes. The combined experience of the stakeholders as multiplex operators and service providers demonstrates these capabilities and give us an excellent understanding of what is required in the mid Cheshire area – good coverage, service reliability and easy access for programme providers at an affordable and realistic price.

Key Personnel

David Duffy

David Duffy has lived in Cheshire for over 30 years, His involvement in radio dates back to 1981 working with independent commercial radio station Essex Radio. In later years he went on to be a founding director of Wire FM, the commercial radio station in Warrington. In 2004 he established community radio station Cheshire FM based in Winsford, mid Cheshire and served as its first Chief Executive from launch until 2008. In 2008 he led a group in the acquisition of Southport commercial radio station Dune FM. The station was returned to profitability and successfully sold to a local group in 2010. The group also acquired Preston's Central Radio which was successfully sold to UKRD in 2011.

In 2013 David established Niocom Associates, based in Middlewich, to provide professional consultancy services to commercial and community radio stations. In 2015 Niocom was awarded one of the ten trial small-scale DAB trial licences (Manchester) which has now been running successfully for six years. In 2017 he co-founded Viamux to develop low-cost DAB solutions for small-scale DAB operators. Viamux's first customer was the Irish State Broadcaster, RTÉ. Viamux went on to work with ComReg, Ireland's communications regulator, to operate a DAB multiplex in Cork - the first independent small-scale DAB multiplex trial in Ireland.

In 2019 Viamux ran a series of 20 workshops across the UK designed to provide practical help and advice to stations, groups and individuals interested in applying for and launching their own small-scale DAB multiplex. Viamux is increasingly recognised as the leading small-scale DAB solutions provider and is working closely with many applicants - bringing expertise and experience to their DAB projects.

David is passionate about bringing small-scale DAB to mid Cheshire – one of the few counties in England that does not have a BBC local radio station. Cheshire Radio was awarded an FM community radio licence in March 2020. However, due to the maximum ERP being 20W it was insufficient to serve any of the population centres that are now recognised in this DAB polygon.

John Evington

Brought up in the mid-Cheshire village of Goostrey, John's radio career began as a presenter at Manchester's first commercial station, Piccadilly Radio in 1978. From there he developed his craft at Centre Radio in Leicester before joining Stoke-on-Trent's Signal Radio in 1983 as launch Breakfast presenter and Head of Music. After a stint as weekend Breakfast host for BBC Radio 2 John returned to his commercial roots at Signal, where he became Programme Director, leading his team to deliver unrivalled audience figures. John developed new community-focused concepts such as 'Signal Action', the 'Signal Walkathon' and 'Signal Comes to Town'. He also devised the UK's first adult alternative format, 'ECHO 96' and re-launched the core station as 'Signal 1' on FM and 'Signal 2' on AM. Ultimately, John was promoted to Group Director of Programmes for Signal's parent company, Wireless Group plc, with responsibility for 17 local stations in England, Scotland and Wales, remaining in that role for four years.

In 2006 John was head-hunted by the Canadian media giant, CanWest, to lead the launch team at the south coast's regional adult alternative station, Original 106. He later teamed up with David Duffy to form The Radio People consultancy and, in 2015, successfully applied for the small-scale DAB Trial licence in Manchester.

Most recently John has been focusing on the small-scale DAB opportunity providing a launchpad for new formats and innovative creative thought. He conceived and developed the concept of a formatic 'Ecosystem' for the new small-scale tier designed to enrich listener choice and grow the digital listening share whilst minimising any impact on existing national and local services.

John continues to work closely with David Duffy in running their joint companies.

We believe that this highly experienced team has all the relevant expertise and local knowledge to deliver all aspects of launching and running a successful small-scale operation.

3.22 Please provide details of who will be carrying out the installation and on-going maintenance of your multiplexing / transmitter equipment (or the name of your proposed transmission and multiplex provider if you intend to use a third-party organisation for these services). Please also briefly state their previous relevant experience. (Note that any individuals or contractors who cannot be identified at this stage can instead be included in the confidential section (Part B) of the application form.)

Function	Responsible party	Previous experience
Installation of transmission equipment	Viamux	Viamux is a leading supplier of small-scale DAB solutions. It was established in 2017 by the Niocast Digital team - who have been operating the successful Trial Manchester small-scale multiplex for the past six years. Viamux have installed systems in the UK & Republic of Ireland. More info: www.viamux.com 
Ongoing maintenance of the transmission equipment	Viamux	
Installation of the Multiplexing equipment	Viamux	
Day-to-day technical management and maintenance of the multiplexing equipment (if different from response to question 3.28 above)	Viamux	

Timetable for coverage roll-out

3.23 Please tell us how soon after licence award you expect your multiplex service to become operational and achieve the coverage you are proposing:

Cheshire Radio Ltd intends to launch the multiplex in less than 6 months from award of licence.

Upon award Cheshire Radio will immediately advance negotiations regarding the proposed transmission site(s). Following the procedure set out in Ofcom's Technical Policy Guidance, we will also liaise with other radio multiplex licensees on any impact our proposed transmitters might have. Once completed, Cheshire Radio will seek agreement from Ofcom for the proposed technical plan – mindful that the coverage proposed in our application is an award criterion and that any change will need to deliver broadly equivalent coverage.

Cheshire Radio will send final site details to Ofcom for clearance and evidence of liaison and agreement with those other radio multiplex licensees. Given the time taken to co-ordinate services we recognise the importance getting the final transmitter plans to Ofcom as quickly as possible.

Our timeline then focuses on the following key stages:

- Building and installing the DAB multiplex and transmission chain;
- Finalising carriage agreements with the service providers;
- Commissioning and testing the transmitter equipment for compliance with Ofcom's Digital Radio Technical Code; and
- Providing Ofcom with evidence of compliance with the licence and the Digital Radio Technical Code

Our supplier, Viamux has confirmed the availability of all equipment and services to meet our timescales.

3.24 In addition, please provide, as an annex to be submitted with this application, an outline project plan with timeline (e.g. a Gantt chart or similar) showing the high level activities and tasks leading up to the launch of your multiplex service.

The GANTT chart (included in the annex) sets out the precise, key stages in the implementation of the multiplex together with the timeline.

4. Involvement of C-DSP providers; demand or support from programme providers

Involvement of C-DSP providers

4.1 Is the applicant body proposing to provide its own C-DSP service on the multiplex?

YES

4.2 If the answer to the above question is 'yes', please provide a name and brief details of this proposed service. If the service is already licensed by Ofcom, the licence number should be provided:

The proposed service is Cheshire FM. Cheshire Radio Ltd applied for and were awarded an Ofcom community radio licence in March 2020 for the analogue (FM) service Cheshire FM – with the aim of providing a dedicated community service for mid Cheshire. The service has not yet launched.

If Cheshire Radio is successful, we propose to launch the service on this DAB multiplex platform and relinquish the FM frequency allocation to Ofcom. By redirecting financial resources to the digital platform we will be able to bring upwards of 20 services to air instead of just one and for only a small incremental investment.

4.3 If the answer to the above question is 'no', please provide details of any participant in the applicant body that is proposing to provide a C-DSP service on the multiplex. In this context, a "participant" refers to a person who holds or is beneficially entitled to shares in the applicant or possesses voting power in the applicant. If the service is already licensed by Ofcom, the licence number should be provided. Please refer to the nature of the participation (e.g. shareholding or agreement in relation to voting power):

Demand or support from programme providers

4.4 Please provide in the table below (expanding the table if necessary) the names of providers (or prospective providers) of community or local digital sound programme services who have expressed their demand or support for the provision of the proposed multiplex service in the area to be served by the multiplex service. For reasons of transparency, the response to this question must be answered below and should not be provided as a separate annex. The evidence of the demand or support, such as signed heads of terms or emails, should be provided as a confidential annex, and relate only to the specific multiplex being applied for.

Name of service provider and station name (if known)	Proposed C-DSP or DSP	Nature of evidence of support provided
Cheshire FM	C-DSP	Email
Radio Northwich	C-DSP	Email
Dane Sound Radio	C-DSP	Email
Care Radio	DSP	Email
Cheesy FM	DSP	Email
Cheshire Country	DSP	Email
Cheshire Folk	DSP	Email
Cheshire Rock	DSP	Email
Dee Radio	DSP	Email
Life Radio	DSP	Email
Like One	DSP	Email
Like Pop	DSP	Email
Love 80s	DSP	Email
Love 90s	DSP	Email
Mighty Radio	DSP	Email
Panacea Radio	DSP	Email
Raw Radio	DSP	Email
Retro Zest	DSP	Email
Silk FM	DSP	Email
Zest	DSP	Email

5. Fair and effective competition

- 5.1 Please detail the measures that have already been taken, and will be taken before and during the licence period, to demonstrate that, in contracting or offering to contract with programme services providers, the applicant has acted in a manner calculated to ensure fair and effective competition in in the provision of such services:

Ethos

Cheshire Radio is conscious of its responsibility to ensure fair and effective competition, at all times. We believe that when competition works well, service providers are motivated to maximise audience share and are better able to secure funding on the basis of their service offering - its uniqueness, its audience and the value it delivers. Alongside established brands, competition delivers greater choice for listeners and a better outcome for the public. It also ensures the long-term sustainability of service providers. Constrained only by capacity, our small-scale DAB platform will remain accessible to new entrants – a place where innovative formats will be encouraged and nurtured.

Proven

The members in Cheshire Radio bring together a track record of successfully establishing radio stations and local & small-scale DAB multiplexes. Through their company Niocast, David & John have successfully operated the Trial Manchester multiplex for the past six years providing a platform for existing community and commercial services as well as creating a ‘launch pad’ for a large number of new programme services.

Our unique approach has been to foster a healthy and vibrant radio ‘ecosystem’ – not only embracing existing commercial and community stations but also new entrants, pop-ups and experimental concepts. Niocast’s experience of running the small-scale DAB multiplex in Manchester led to the introduction of a ‘format matrix’ which has proved to be highly successful in ensuring a balanced range of services rather than a preponderance of any particular genre. Cheshire Radio will deliver unprecedented choice for listeners in a carefully controlled, transparent way. Our ambition is to always ensure that our multiplex enriches the listener experience by complementing, rather than competing with, local and national ensembles.

Leadership

An award of this licence to Cheshire Radio ensures that the multiplex is operated by a locally-led community radio company supported by experienced individuals who have successfully implemented and operated DAB multiplexes. All stakeholders are committed to small-scale DAB and have the financial stability to support that ambition. Our team is hugely experienced and well resourced, with significant practical digital radio expertise.

Delivery

Launching a small-scale DAB platform is a significant undertaking and we have been encouraged by the number of positive responses to our plans. We have openly discussed our transmission plans, carriage terms and indicative fees. Cheshire Radio has engaged with potential service providers in an open, non-exclusive manner and will continue to do so throughout the duration of this licence. Each service provider will enter into a Carriage Agreement - the key terms of which are identical for all service providers. All fees charged will be pro-rata to capacity contracted by each service provider.

6. Declaration

- a) I hereby apply to Ofcom for the grant of a licence for the small-scale radio multiplex licence described above and declare that the information given in this application form is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, correct.
- b) I further declare and warrant:
- i) that the applicant is not a disqualified person within the meaning of that expression as defined in Part 2 of Schedule 2 to the Broadcasting Act 1990, as amended, or as a result of a disqualification order under section 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996;
 - ii) that having made all reasonable enquiries neither the applicant nor any person controlling the applicant, as result of the grant to me of the licence, breach any requirement of Schedule 14 to the Communications Act 2003 with regard to the accumulation of interests in broadcasting services or to the restrictions on cross-media interests;
 - iii) that the applicant is not disqualified by virtue of the provisions of section 143 (5) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to political objects and the provisions of section 144 (3) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 in relation to the provision of false information or through the withholding of information with the intention of misleading Ofcom; and
 - iv) that no director or person concerned directly or indirectly in the management of the Licensee is the subject to a disqualification order as defined by section 145 (1) of the Broadcasting Act 1996.
- c) I understand that Ofcom reserves the right to revoke the licence (if granted) if at any time any material statement made to Ofcom is found to be false and to have been by the applicant or any member or officer thereof knowing it to be false. I also understand that under sections 144 and 145 of the Broadcasting Act 1996, the provision of false information could incur a criminal conviction and a disqualification from the holding of a Broadcasting Act licence. I further certify that, to the best of my knowledge, any matters which might influence Ofcom's judgement as to whether the directors and substantial members involved in this application are fit and proper persons to participate in a radio licence, have been made known to Ofcom.

Full name (BLOCK CAPITALS) of the person authorised to make the application of behalf of the applicant:

DAVID DUFFY

Date of application:

1st SEPTEMBER 2021

I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant in my capacity as Company Director.