

Revocation of the Eastbourne, Newhaven & Lewes small-scale radio multiplex licence award

Background

Under section 51(6) of the Broadcasting Act 1996 (as modified by the Small-scale Radio Multiplex and Community Digital Radio Order 2019), Ofcom may revoke the award of a small-scale radio multiplex licence where the licence itself has not yet been granted and Ofcom has reasonable grounds for believing that the person to whom the licence was awarded will not provide the service within 18 months of the date of the award.

Decision

Ofcom has taken the decision to revoke the licence award we made on 22 July 2024 to East Sussex Digital Radio Limited ('ESDR') in relation to the Eastbourne, Newhaven & Lewes small-scale radio multiplex service.

This is on the basis that the statutory conditions for revocation as set out above have been met. Firstly, the awarded licence has not yet been granted. Secondly, we have reasonable grounds to believe the service will not be provided within 18 months of award (i.e. by 22 January 2026), as ESDR has asked that the award to be withdrawn on the basis that it no longer intends to launch the multiplex.

Next steps

ESDR was the sole applicant for the Eastbourne, Newhaven & Lewes locality when the area was advertised. In explaining its reasons for not proceeding, ESDR indicated it would be unlikely to re-apply for the licence should one be re-advertised for the same area. For that reason, we do not plan to re-advertise this locality in Round Eight. As noted in our [2024 small-scale DAB licensing progress report](#), Round Eight is the last round within Ofcom's planned small-scale multiplex licensing programme, but this does not mean we are ruling out licences being advertised or re-advertised in future based on expressed demand.

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