
Small-scale radio multiplex licence

Application form – Part A (public)

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

GTFM (South Wales) Ltd

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

Round Five – Re advertised Licences:
Merthyr & Rhondda Cynon Taff

APPLICATION FORM:

Publication date: 30 March 2023

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1. Overview

The purpose of this form

- 1.1 You should complete this form if you are applying for a licence to provide a small-scale radio multiplex service (a 'small-scale radio multiplex licence'). A small-scale radio multiplex service is the means by which DAB digital radio stations ('digital sound programme services') are broadcast, and can transmit around ten stereo digital sound programme services (or a significantly higher number if the DAB+ standard is utilised). The application form is divided into two parts – **Part A** (which we will publish on our website) and **Part B** (which will be kept confidential). This document constitutes Part A; [Part B of the application form](#) is available separately.
- 1.2 Small-scale radio multiplex licences are awarded by Ofcom in a competitive process. Applications are judged against specified criteria, and Ofcom awards the licence to the applicant which it considers best meets the criteria.

How to complete the form

- 1.3 There are detailed instructions on how to complete this form, and information on the next steps in the application process, in our [guidance notes](#) for licence applicants and licensees. Please read this guidance and the frequently asked questions carefully before completing this form.
- 1.4 If you still have a query having read the guidance and FAQ, you can contact Ofcom's Broadcast Licensing team by email (smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk). The team cannot provide advice or pre-approve applications but can answer general questions.
- 1.5 Please download this form and fill it in on a computer. If completing by hand, please use block capitals and black ink.
- 1.6 Please answer all the questions as fully as possible, use extra sheets if required and provide the supporting documentation listed at Section 7 of Part B of the application form. Sufficient information must be supplied about the applicant and the proposed service to enable Ofcom to consider the application in accordance with the statutory criteria for the granting of small-scale radio multiplex licences. Ofcom may need to request further details from you before a licence can be granted.
- 1.7 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications made using an old version of the form.
- 1.8 Ofcom will accept handwritten application forms, but they must be filled in using block capitals and black ink.
- 1.9 Ofcom reserves the right to reject application forms that are illegible.
- 1.10 You must answer all questions in the application form and respond "N/A" to any questions that do not apply to the applicant.
- 1.11 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications which do not meet the following criteria:

- a) The declarations in Section 6 of this form and in Section 8 of Part B of the application form must both be signed and dated.
 - b) The person who signs and makes the declaration on behalf of the applicant must be:
 - i) A director of the company or the company secretary where the applicant is a company.
 - ii) A designated member where the applicant is a Limited Liability Partnership.
 - c) All supporting documents as requested in the checklist at Section 7 of Part B of the application form must be supplied in legible form and translated into English where applicable.
- 1.12 If you are completing the form as an agent, i.e. you are acting on the applicant's behalf, please note that you cannot sign it on your client's behalf, and that the person signing the form needs to have personally checked the truth and completeness of the responses given. If your client wishes you to be Ofcom's main contact in relation to the application, please make this clear in an accompanying letter, and provide evidence of your authority to act on behalf of the applicant. The form should be filled in so as to include information about the applicant, not the agent. If Ofcom has further questions once the application has been submitted, we will direct these to the applicant, not to the agent, but we will accept responses from the agent.

How to submit the form

- 1.13 We prefer application forms and required supporting documents to be submitted by email to smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk. Handwritten applications and required supporting documents should be scanned and attached to the email.
- 1.14 You should receive a response from smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk confirming that your application has been received by Ofcom. If you do not receive a response, it is likely your application has not been received and you should contact Ofcom's Contact Centre on 0300 123 3333 and ask to leave a message for the Broadcast Licensing team, who will respond to your message as soon as possible.
- 1.15 If the applicant cannot submit the application form and/or the supporting documentation by email, the applicant may submit the application and/or the supporting documentation by post to:
- Ofcom
Broadcast Licensing
Riverside House
2a Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 9HA
- 1.16 Those applicants who submit their application by post will be sent an acknowledgement.

Application fee

- 1.17 A non-refundable application fee of £500 is payable by bank transfer.
- 1.18 Applications will not be assessed until the application fee has been received in Ofcom's bank account.
- 1.19 Ofcom requests that applicants pay the application fee by bank transfer and that immediately after the applicant has instructed their bank to make the payment, confirmation of payment is emailed to ofcom.remittances@ofcom.org.uk.
- 1.20 To ensure that Ofcom can identify the payment, it must include a payment reference which is the applicant's postcode followed by the applicant's name (or as much of the name as is possible to provide within the character limit set by the bank) as provided in response to question 3.1 of this application.
- 1.21 The bank details to be used to pay the application fee are:
- Account Name: Office of Communications
- Bank details: Lloyds Bank, 69-73 Borough High Street, London SE1 1NQ
- Account number: 00782415
- Sort code: 30-97-90
- BIC: LOYDGB21351
- IBAN: GB05 LOYD 3097 9000 7824 15
- SWIFT: LOYD GB 2L

Supporting documentation

- 1.22 You must provide a range of supporting documentation when submitting this application form. Please refer to the checklist at Section 7 of Part B of the application form for full details. Please note that failure to supply the necessary documents will delay your application.
- 1.23 Ofcom reserves the right to reject applications with which the necessary documents are not supplied in legible form.
- 1.24 Please note that Ofcom cannot receive emails larger than 35MB. If your application email exceeds this limit, please send your supporting documents in a separate email(s), clearly indicating the applicant's name in the subject line of the email.

Provision of information

- 1.25 Ofcom requires complete and accurate information to assess applications. In particular, we must be satisfied that those applying for a licence are 'fit and proper' to hold a licence and are not disqualified from participation in a licence.

- 1.26 It is an offence under the Broadcasting Act 1996 (as amended) to provide false information or withhold relevant information during the application process, and may be grounds for revocation of a licence subsequently granted.

Publication of applications

- 1.27 Part A of the application form (i.e. this document) will be published by Ofcom on our website as soon as practicable following the closing-date for applications. Because this is the 'public' part of the application form, and Ofcom is legally required to publish applications for public comments, no questions should be answered by means of the submission of a confidential annex. Part B of the application form will remain confidential.
- 1.28 Ofcom may take into account any comments received from the public, which can be made to it with respect to Part A of the application submitted.
- 1.29 In submitting Part A of the application, you agree that Ofcom may publish contact details for the licensee, which may include personal data, on the Ofcom website and/or in other relevant publications.
- 1.30 When a licence is granted, the name of the service and public contact details for the licensee will be published on the Ofcom website. These are the details supplied by the applicant in the application form. If you have any questions about the information that we publish, or there are any changes to this information, you should contact the team by email (smallscaledab@ofcom.org.uk).
- 1.31 Ofcom considers issued small-scale radio multiplex licences to be public documents and copies of licences will be made available to third parties on request, noting that personal data apart from the name of the licensee may be redacted.

Data protection

- 1.32 We require the information requested in this form in order to carry out our licensing duties under the Broadcasting Act 1990, Broadcasting Act 1996 and Communications Act 2003. Please see Ofcom's [General Privacy Statement](#) for more information about how we handle your personal information and your corresponding rights.

Keeping up to date with broadcasting matters

- 1.33 We strongly recommend that you subscribe to receive Ofcom's regular email updates on broadcasting matters. These include a [monthly radio licensing update](#) that lists new services licensed, licences revoked, licence transfers, and changes to licensed services during the past month. To subscribe to these updates, please visit www.ofcom.org.uk/email-updates and select 'Broadcasting'.

2. Extent of proposed coverage area

About this section

Under section 51(2)(a) of the 1996 Act, we are required to consider the extent of the coverage area an applicant proposes to achieve within the area which has been advertised. This section therefore asks you to describe the coverage you are proposing to achieve. Further questions on the detailed technical arrangements for the proposed service, including questions on the transmission site(s) that you intend to use and your plans for how the multiplexing and distribution of your service will be arranged are contained in Part B of the application form.

Before completing this section of the form, you should read carefully the notes on 'Extent of proposed coverage area' in Section 4 of Ofcom's [guidance notes for licence applicants and licensees](#).

Applicants should note there are confidential questions relating to extent of coverage area in Part B of the application form.

- 2.1 Please 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):

As Ofcom is already aware, this newly advertised two county coverage area was originally proposed by GTFM when it applied to serve only this part of the much larger South Wales Valleys polygon originally advertised in Round 1 in 2020. Although this application was successful, because of the devastating effect of the Covid pandemic it wasn't possible to raise enough capital to launch the proposed service within the statutory 18 month limit.

Our proposed coverage area for this multiplex is therefore largely the same as the advertised licence area, comprising the vast majority of the relatively compact County of Merthyr Tydfil which has a population of around 65,000 and its much larger adjoining neighbour Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough (abbreviated as RCT) which is an amalgamation of three previously separate river valley communities containing around a quarter of a million inhabitants, around a quarter of whom live in the two principle towns Pontypridd (Taff valley) and Aberdare (Cynon valley) each with around 33,000 residents, plus dozens of smaller towns, most of them former mining communities laid out in ribbon developments along the rest of the Taff, Cynon and the two Rhondda river valleys which are separated from each other by high ridges.

In RCT the proposed DAB footprint replicates the combined FM coverage areas of community stations GTFM and Rhondda Radio, both of which its anticipated will be carried on the new multiplex. While 21 year old GTFM presently covers the lower half of the main Rhondda (Fawre) valley plus virtually all of the Taff valley area within RCT (including Pontypridd) and the Cynon Valley (including Aberdare), five year old Rhondda Radio concentrates on serving the two Rhondda Valleys, especially their 'upper' extremities which are largely not covered on FM by GTFM. Our DAB coverage will also embrace the northern boundary of RCT county borough not served by either community station on FM via an additional TX site at Hirwaun.

We are also including the adjacent Merthyr County (in the upper Taff valley) in our DAB footprint because it is socially connected to RCT and would not be likely otherwise to enjoy a wide a range of DAB services compared with residents nearer the South Wales coast - and so it can have its own local radio service, which it has not benefitted from since commercial station Valleys Radio closed down in 2009, although parts of the area do now enjoy some overspill FM reception from GTFM's 3 nearby transmitters.

To this end we have been working for several years with a local radio group called Merthyr Radio which intends to launch a community radio service on our new DAB multiplex, hopefully from the outset as it already has studio premises.*

**Merthyr Radio was previously awarded an FM Community Radio Licence which was not activated by Ofcom after the group's financial backers unexpectedly decided not to go ahead but only informed Ofcom of that decision. Ofcom therefore assumed they were handing back the licence offer and closed the file. In reality however, the rest of the*

Merthyr Radio applicant group including founding chairman Councillor Lee Davies and partners GTFM were not aware of the financiers decision or their direct contact with Ofcom until it was 'too late'. This was particularly unfortunate as there was an alternative funder available to help launch the radio station at the time. Since then Cllr Davies has also won £1.3 million of UK Government 'Levelling Up' funding for a successful creative industries community project in the Merthyr area.

As Ofcom now understands the circumstances behind the apparent FM licence hand back, Merthyr Radio may attempt to persuade it to re-activate it's FM licence as it is still in a position to provide the local radio service exactly as originally described in its application. If this proves possible it will enable a fuller local service to be mounted for Merthyr at the outset on DAB with FM support because digital take-up in this area lags behind that in the coastal cities so a DAB only station would have more limited resources in its early years.

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

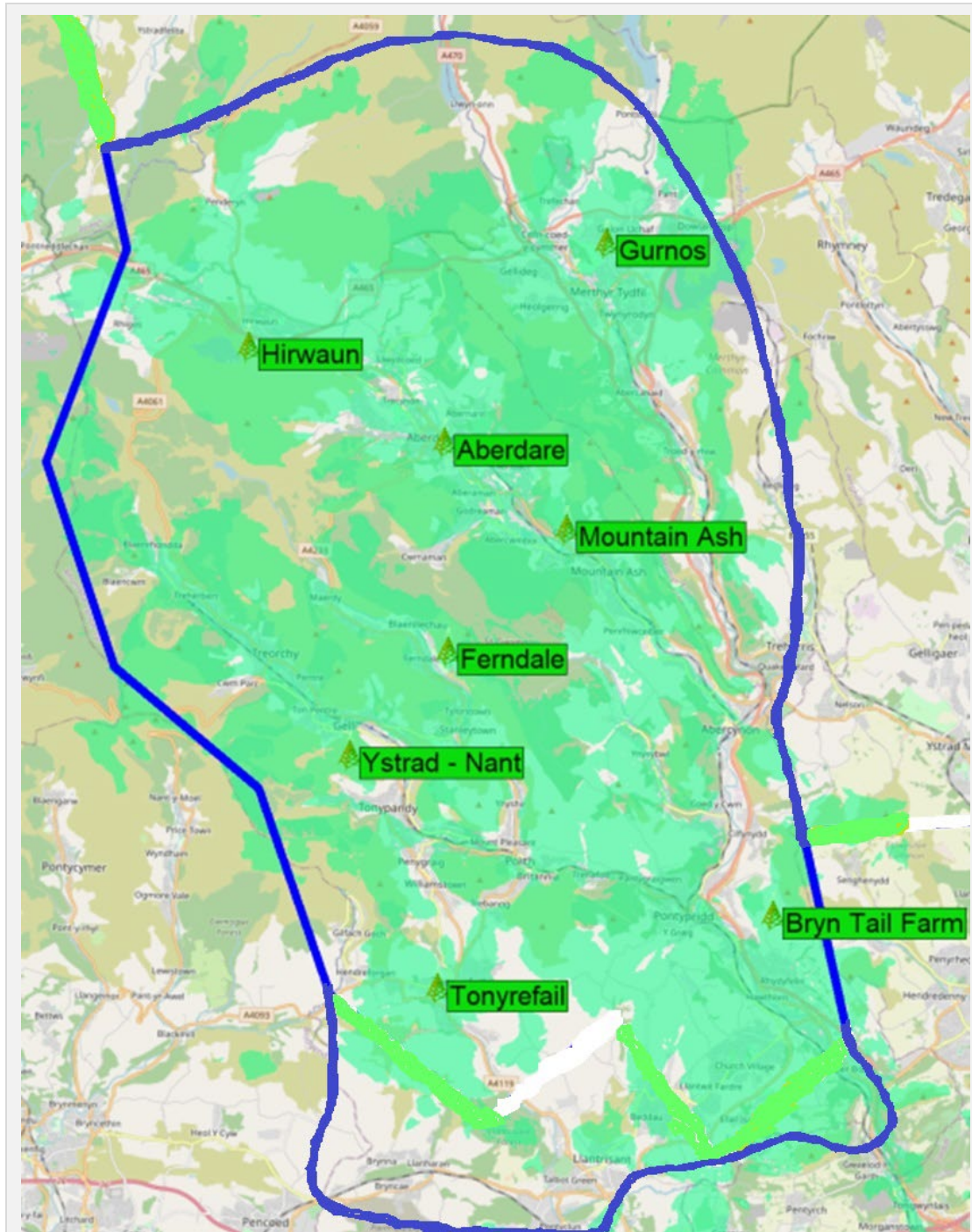
Site name	NGR	Antenna height (m agl)	Antenna type proposed with bearing	New or existing antenna	ERP (W)
Bryntail Farm Pontypridd	ST09358997	13m	Directional: Colinear using the tower to achieve -6dB on a bearing of 140-160 degrees (to protect Yeovil).	New on GTFM FM mast	100w
Sobell Leisure Centre, Aberdare	SO00580258	10m	Omnidirectional Colinear	New at GTFM FM site	200w
Mountain Ash Golf Club	SO03840028	10m	Omnidirectional Colinear	New at GTFM FM site	200w
Tonyrefail Leisure Centre	ST00768815	10m	Omnidirectional Colinear	New at GTFM FM site	100w
Ystrad- Nant y Gwyddon landfill site	SS98079426	10m	Omnidirectional Colinear	New at Rhondda Radio FM site	200w
Ferndale Shooting Club	ST00699702	8m	Omnidirectional Colinear	New at Rhondda Radio FM site	100w

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Hirwaun RFC	SN9538005140	45m	Omni directional Colinear	New on existing mobile phone (etc) mast	200w
Calon Lass - Gurnos, Merthyr Tydfil	SO 049 079	17m	Omni directional Colinear	New on existing building	200w

It has been suggested coverage of the two Rhondda Valleys might be more efficiently achieved with one centrally located transmitter instead of the two originally planned which would also usefully reduce the transmitter total to 7 and save around £9,000 in infrastructure outlay plus ongoing operating costs. However, while a coverage plot from a high spot in Penrhys lit up a lot of hillsides it left the valley floors with insufficient signal strength by comparison with the two-site solution, so we'll stick with that for now. However if we do manage to find a suitable central location (which seems to fit Ofcom guidance about outgoing interference) we may approach you at a later stage for your views on an alternative approach, but only in the Rhondda valleys.

- 2.3 Please provide below 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. In the interests of transparency, you **must** embed an inline map image within this form (even if you also submit a map as a separate supporting file).



GTFM Valleys Multiplex - predicted coverage at 63 dB μ V/m field strength from 8 transmitter sites with reference to the advertised licence area outlined in blue.

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 x64
Detail the terrain model used by the software and its resolution.	DTM: DEFRA 1m and 2m resolution (DSM+DTM)
Detail the ground cover (clutter) data used by the software and its resolution.	Buildings: DEFRA (automatic extraction – slope algorithm - performed at 2 m resolution then resampled) Vegetation (park, wood, forest) and Hydro from Corine Land Cover 2018 and Urban Atlas 2018 (European Environment Agency) Roads and railways from Open Street Map (2019)
What propagation algorithm has been used?	Model pre-set: Fresnel Diffraction geometry: Deygout 94 Subpath attenuation: Coarse Integration FZ fraction: 0.8 Earth radius (sea and land): 28,500km
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 data used
Have your predictions been generated by a commercial organisation? If so, by whom?	UK DAB Networks Limited

3. Ability to establish the proposed service

About this section

In Section 3, we are asking questions about the applicant company, its financial and business plan, the relevant expertise and experience of those who will be involved in providing the small-scale radio multiplex service, and the timetable for coverage roll-out. The answers to these questions will enable Ofcom to assess the application under section 51(2)(c) of the 1996 Act. Additional information is requested in Part B of the application form.

In the first part of this section we are asking for details of the applicant's officers (directors or, in the case of LLPs, designated members), its shareholders and participants. Where applicable, we are also asking for details of the officers of the applicant's parent and associated companies or LLPs etc.

If any of the individuals named in your responses are known by more than one name/version of their name, all names must be provided.

Certain persons are disqualified from holding a small-scale radio multiplex licence. This section asks the questions which enable us to consider this for those types of disqualification which apply specifically to bodies corporate. It also asks questions which are relevant to our assessment of the applicant's fitness and properness to hold a small-scale radio multiplex licence.

The response boxes and tables should be expanded or repeated where necessary, or provided in a separate annex.

'Officerships' in this section refers to: directorships of bodies corporate, designated memberships of LLPs, or membership of a governing body of an unincorporated association (including partnerships).

The remaining questions in Section 3 relate to the applicant's financial and business plan, the expertise and experience of those involved, and the planned timetable for launching the proposed multiplex service.

Applicants should note there are confidential questions relating to extent of coverage area in Part B of the application form.

Applicant's details

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

GTFM (South Wales) Ltd.

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

04874619

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:

GTFM (South Wales) Ltd,
 Pinewood Studios,
 Pinewood Avenue,
 Rhydyfelin,
 PONTYPRIDD
 Rhondda Cynon Taf
 CF37 5EA

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

No (delete as appropriate)

If no, please submit the up-to-date document and indicate you have done so in the checklist in Section 7 of Part B of the application form.

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
Timothy Allan Cooper (Trustee)	38 Chapel Banks, Georgetown, MERTHYR TYDFIL, CF48 1BP	Wales	None	BBC TV Channel Director
Meurig Hailstone (Trustee)	6 Maplewood Avenue, Cardiff, Wales, CF14 2LZ	Wales	None	Self Employed Sound Engineer

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

Haydn Geoffrey Price (Trustee)	25 Whitefield Road, Cardiff, Wales, CF14 2JG	Wales	Director: HPBLEisure Ltd. (Company not trading at present)	Retired
Mrs Wendy Ann Allsop (Trustee)	43 Charles Street, Tonypany, Wales, CF40 2AN	Wales	Secretary: "Friends of the Mid" a voluntary mutual benefit society not registered with Companies House or the Charities Commis- sion	Employed by the Welsh Par- liament as a member of their support staff

Details of participants

3.6 Please complete the table overleaf, 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 invest- ment (£s)	Total invest- ment (%)	% of voting rights
N/A (GTFM is a registered charity)				
Comments				

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 (or 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		

Details of persons who control the applicant

3.8 Complete the table overleaf, 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		

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	

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	

3.11 In relation to each body corporate identified in response to question 3.8, complete the table overleaf, 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				
Full name of participant	Number of shares	Total investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
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	

A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a political nature, or which is affiliated to such a body	Yes	Wendy Ann Allsop is a member of Plaid Cymru. She does not however have any editorial involvement in GFTM output.
A body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature; ²	No	
An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	Yes	Wendy Ann Allsop is employed by the Welsh Parliament as 'Senedd Support Staff' (a non-political post) working largely for a Plaid Cymru Regional Senedd Member.
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	
An advertising agency or an associate of an advertising agency	No	

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?

Yes

Has the applicant ever held an Ofcom broadcasting licence before?

No

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

No - Note: GTFM's Station Manager Terry Mann and Trustees Timothy Cooper and Haydn Price were all involved in various ILR/commercial radio stations prior to the establishment of Ofcom (i.e. under IBA and Radio Authority licences).

² Please refer to sections 3 to 5 of Ofcom's [religious guidance note](#) for details on how we determine the eligibility of religious bodies to hold certain broadcasting licences.

- c) Does the applicant control an existing Ofcom licensee?

Yes

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

- d) 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)?

Yes

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

- e) 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

- f) 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 3.13 above is ‘yes’, please provide the details, expanding the table where necessary:

	Licence number(s) (if known)	Details
(a)	n/a	
(b)	n/a	
(c)	CR000004	GTFM – Community Radio Licensee for Pontypridd Aberdare and surrounding areas
(d)	Unknown	Having been awarded the Round 1 South Wales Valleys license during the Covid pandemic GTFM was unable to raise the necessary capital to launch its 8 transmitter service within the statutory 18 month period because potential funders were either closed or working much slower than normal due to lock-downs (etc) so couldn’t respond in time. GTFM therefore agreed with Ofcom to surrender the offer of this licence on the basis it would be re-advertised, hence this application.
(e)	n/a	
(f)	n/a	
(g)	n/a	
(h)	n/a	
(i)	n/a	

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

If yes, please provide the following details:

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

As eight transmitter sites will be needed we estimate the unusually high **capital cost of constructing such a network estimated at around £72,000 (= 8 x £9,000 per site)** could not be sustained on a commercially viable basis from the revenue likely to be generated from the rental of multiplex capacity to radio stations paying to access a population limited to around 200,000.

We therefore plan to finance our 'Valleys DAB' SSDAB+ transmitter infrastructure with grant funding in order to establish its community ownership on a not-for-profit basis, to be operated by GTFM on behalf of itself, Rhondda Radio, the embryonic Merthyr Radio and any other local community services which may emerge.

To this end we've had constructive talks and guidance from the National Lottery since 2020 with a view to them paying for the establishment of the whole transmitter multiplex, primarily to allow the areas community stations to migrate to digital radio in order to preserve the sustainability of our socially valuable community services in the longer term.

We also have a very good working relationship with the PyC Wind Farm Community Fund which distributes £1-2m a year to community organisations in the upper halves of the Rhondda and Cynon (and three other) valleys and have already financed the construction of Rhondda Radio's two FM transmitters and GTFM's FM relays in Aberdare and Mountain Ash, which came on the air in 2021. As well as the potential to provide further support for the area's community stations to transition to DAB, PyC is also excited by the prospect our multiplex will greatly increase the number of digital stations available to residents in this mountainous area where some national DAB operators may never be able to afford enough relays to ensure consistent reception given the size of the target population. PyC grants could in practice cover the costs of up to five of our DAB transmitters which lie in their funding area if National Lottery funding is unavailable. In that eventuality we now know enough smaller scale grant funders to be able to pay for the remaining transmitters, on an individual basis if needs be.

Among the **ongoing running costs** GTFM will shoulder, expected to total between £12-15,000 per annum, are programming circuit rental, (estimated at around £3,800 per annum), transmitter site rental at sites where its applicable and overall administration costs. This will be paid-for from the income generated by selling remaining DSP capacity on the multiplex which could eventually total £25,000 per annum but is likely to be far lower at the outset.

To keep establishment and running costs as low as possible we plan to co-locate up to six transmitters at existing or planned community radio FM transmitter sites, plus Merthyr and a DAB only site at Hirwaun. This will be located at a mobile phone mast identified by our technical partner UK DAB Networks Ltd at Hirwaun Rugby Football Club, north of Aberdare

While the mast infrastructure of the main site at Pontypridd is owned by GTFM, three of the other sites are owned by community organisations mostly operating on a not-for-profit basis to whom we reimburse our electricity usage, plus up to three owned by the local authority which has so far not charged rent because we are a not-for-profit organisation delivering social gain. Clearly these relationships may need to adapt a little over time when the multiplex becomes profitable so that host organisations share the benefit.

Meanwhile establishment of the multiplex, including its technical start-up and liaison with C-DSPs and DSPs will be carried out by UK DAB Networks.

Multiplexing software will be sourced from leading multiplex software firm Factum Radioscape, a majority Nation Broadcasting owned company.

Nation Broadcasting is a minority shareholder in UK DAB Networks Ltd and as the UK's third largest operator of local commercial radio licences has interests in a number of local DAB multiplexes across the UK. It has considerable DAB launch and operating experience, including in SSDAB, having owned and operated the Glasgow trial multiplex since 2018. Nation also has interests in adjacent DAB areas in South Wales.

Their collective experience brings with it full knowledge of the costs and risks associated with the launch and operation of our proposed multiplex. In addition we are being offered access to Nation Broadcasting's credit and finance facilities which can provide back-office functions and if needs-be additional finance through UK DAB Networks Ltd. This will free-up GTFM management time to focus on providing an excellent service to our multiplex service providers and listeners.

Ongoing Network Operations and maintenance costs will be covered through an arrangement with UK DAB Networks Ltd, an established consultancy and DAB operations company owned by Ash Elford. Ash has established an enviable reputation as one of the pioneers of SSDAB. He will be responsible for the day-to-day technical management of the multiplex and will advise on strategy. He has established UK DAB Networks Ltd to provide an effective management and ownership platform for SSDAB operations. In return, UK DAB Network/Nation will be given access to up to five DSP programme channels on the multiplex.

Carriage fees for the remaining digital channels on the multiplex will then be used to pay GTFM's ongoing costs to manage the operation of the multiplex and it is anticipated that once the majority of the commercial slots on the multiplex are filled, a small operating surplus will be generated which can then be reinvested in the provision of community radio in the area.

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

- a) Share capital
- b) Loan stock
- c) Leasing/HP facilities (capital value)
- d) Bank overdraft
- e) Grants and donations
- f) Other (please specify)

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.

e) Grant funding Name of shareholder or investor:	Percentage of shares held (if applicable)	Amount of funding provided (£)
The National Lottery (Grant Funder 1 of 1)	n/a	£92,500 including all capital expenditure (£77,000 incl mast mod at Hirwaun) and three years operational support (15,500)
PyC Community Fund (Alternate main grant funder 2 of up to 5)	n/a	£50,000 for construction of five transmitters incl mast mods at Hirwaun.
Alternative grant funder 3	n/a	£14,167 For construction of one transmitter (£9,000) and a share of three years operational support (£5,167)
Alternative grant funder 4	n/a	£14,167 For construction of one transmitter (£9,000) and a share of three years operational support (£5,167)
Alternative grant funder 5	n/a	£14,167 For construction of one transmitter (£9,000) and a share of three years operational support (£5,167)

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.

Although we can't actually apply for the specific grants required until we are awarded the DAB Multiplex licence, the two principle funders identified above are expecting us to get back in touch once we have a tangible project with real deadlines.

Meanwhile we are doing all we can in advance so we can apply immediately. For example we are receiving helpful guidance from the National Lottery on how to present our bid to them and are busy gathering the evidence they've requested from local community organisations as to the usefulness of GTFM in communicating their messages to the public, which we are pleased to report are very positive.

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.)

Through our partnership with UK DAB Networks Ltd we have access to individuals with significant DAB experience and this expertise will ensure a smooth, professional launch and successful ongoing operation of the multiplex.

Day-to-day technical management of the multiplex will be by Ash Elford, owner of UK DAB Networks Ltd, a new DAB multiplex consultancy, ownership and operating company.

Ash is one of the UK's SSDAB pioneers who has overseen the establishment and successful operation of the Portsmouth SSDAB trial. He has also worked with Nation Broadcasting for a number of years and has overseen a significant improvement in the reliability, coverage and services available on the SSDAB Glasgow trial multiplex. Previously Ash was part of the DAB digital radio team at Arqiva.

- 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 ser-

vices). 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	Commtronix Ltd	Significant experience of installation of DAB transmission systems for small and large broadcasters
Ongoing maintenance of the transmission equipment	Commtronix Ltd	Significant experience of installation of DAB transmission systems for small and large broadcasters
Installation of the Multiplexing equipment	Factum Radioscape Ltd	Significant experience of installation of DAB multiplexing systems for small and large broadcasters.
Day-to-day technical management and maintenance of the multiplexing equipment (if different from response to question 3.28 above)	UK DAB Networks Ltd	Significant experience of managing DAB multiplexes.

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:

Ideally we'd like to start broadcasting to main RCT County Borough communities by the start of August 2024 to allow GTFM to mount additional coverage of the one-week National Eisteddfod which is visiting the county borough for the first time in decades during the second week of that month. In practice that would ideally require six of our transmitters to start broadcasting at the same time.

So if it's not possible to get all 8 transmitters on-air by then we would look to add the Hirwaun and Merthyr ones as soon as possible afterwards as they serve areas where our community radio stations are not properly audible on FM at present and Merthyr Radio may also need a longer lead time as they hope to launch at the same time as the multiplex transmitter serving their town.

In practice this would probably mean getting the bulk of the multiplex on air less than a year after the outcome of this application is known, which could be challenging given the complexity of the multiplex. But at the time of writing that is our target.

- 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.

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

About this section

Section 51(2)(ca) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to take into account the desirability of awarding a small-scale radio multiplex licence to a body corporate that is providing – or proposing to provide – a C-DSP service in the locality being advertised (or involving such a person as a participant in the licence-holding company).

Section 51(2)(f) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to take into account evidence that the applicant has support from providers interested in having their existing or planned programme services carried on the proposed multiplex.

Note that we do not require applicants to provide us with a full line-up of services they intend to provide, or details about the content of those services.

Involvement of C-DSP providers

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

Yes

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:

We will relay CR000004 GTFM's community radio service for RCT County Borough under a C-DSP licence on this multiplex. GTFM also provides local news bulletins to neighbouring Rhondda Radio

It is also anticipated CR102155 Rhondda Radio will broadcast under a C-DSP licence on this multiplex too in relation to its Rhondda Valleys FM Licence area.

When its established Merthyr Radio is also expected to broadcast under a C-DSP on this multiplex in relation to its coverage area of Merthyr County Borough.

Assuming the three stations outlined above take up their C-DSP slots on this multiplex GTFM also hopes to make use of the 'spare' reserved community broadcasting capacity for 'pop up' special event coverage, hopefully starting with extra material from the National Eisteddfod of Wales which comes to RCT in August 2024, if the multiplex is on-air by then.

4.2 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):

N/A

Demand or support from programme providers

- 4.3 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
Up to Five services	DSP	As part of the co-operation agreement with UK DAB Networks and/or their partners Nation Broadcasting
GTFM	C-DSP	Confirmed
Rhondda Radio	C-DSP	Subject to contract but agreed in principle
Merthyr Radio (new service)	C-DSP	Subject to contract but agreed in principle
GTFM 2 and/or others	C-DSP	Possible 'pop up' stations using spare community capacity.

5. Fair and effective competition

About this section

Section 51(2)(g) of the 1996 Act requires Ofcom to assess whether, in contracting or offering to contract with programme service providers, the applicant has acted in a manner calculated to ensure fair and effective competition in the provision of community and local digital sound programme services.

In assessing applications, we need to have confidence that the prospective small-scale radio multiplex licensee has approached a wide range of potential service providers. Negotiations that have taken place between the applicant and potential service providers need to have been demonstrably fair, and the terms of any contract for service provision must be fair and non-discriminatory.

Applicants should note there is one further question relating to fair and effective competition in Part B of the application form.

- 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 the provision of such services.

For example, how have you sought to engage a broad range of prospective service providers including those not directly involved as participants in the application and those who have decided not to proceed to express an interest or agree heads of terms at this stage, and how have you sought to make prospective service providers aware of your proposals and potential terms for carriage?

Initially GTFM discovered on behalf of itself and other potential C-DSP community radio participants as much as possible about experience gained by participants during the SSDAB trials and how the system works in practice by speaking to participants, plus desk research and by attending seminars organised by the Community Media Association and Ofcom.

Through our local knowledge of providing FM coverage in this notoriously difficult Welsh Valleys area where far more transmitters than 'usual' are required, we have devised a not-for-profit grant supported business model to ensure we can establish the transmitter network, which will then be sustained from income generated by the sale of DSP capacity on the multiplex. This will facilitate capacity for C-DSP service providers at minimum cost to make best use of reserved capacity and we have already secured firm interest in three of the four channels available.

At the same time our technical partners UK DAB Networks have pursued other SSDAB licence areas too and with partners Nation Broadcasting have stimulated interest from broadcasters.

Going forward, in respect of commercial services, as a minimum, we will also:

- Provide a website and social media invitations seeking interested broadcasters to contact us
- Publish a ratecard for multiplex capacity
- Work to ensure that multiplex is as fully utilised as possible
- Allocate capacity in a way that promotes the greatest diversity of formats and providers in the event of demand for multiplex capacity exceeding supply.

6. Declaration

About this section

This form must be submitted by the body corporate which will hold the licence. The declaration must be certified by a company director or the company secretary, and covers all information provided by in the applicant in both Part A and Part B of the application form. The declaration must also be dated.

- 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 shareholders 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:

MR MEURIG HAILSTONE (GTFM Trustee/Director)

Date of application:

30th JUNE 2023

I am authorised to make this application on behalf of the applicant in my capacity as (delete as appropriate):

Company director.

You now need to complete the **confidential section (Part B)** of the application form.