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## Small-scale radio multiplex licence

### Application form – Part A (public)

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

South Herts DAB Ltd

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

South Hertfordshire

**APPLICATION FORM:**

Publication date: 30 March 2023

# Contents

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## Section

2. Extent of proposed coverage area	3
3. Ability to establish the proposed service	7
4. Involvement of C-DSP providers; demand or support from programme providers	26
5. Fair and effective competition	29
6. Declaration	34

## Summary

- South Herts DAB Ltd is joint collaboration between the two Ofcom-licensed community radio stations in South Hertfordshire – Verulam Community Radio Ltd (Mix 92.6) and The Vibe Watford (Vibe107.6FM)
- Both Mix 92.6 and Vibe107.6FM are significant shareholders and directors of the applicant body
- Mix 92.6 and Vibe107.6FM are two of 5 radio services that will operate C-DSP licensed services on the multiplex
- Excellent coverage from three low-cost transmission sites
- The application is supported by an experienced technical team that has successfully implemented and launched small-scale DAB multiplexes across the UK
- Commitment from over 30 service providers to join the multiplex
- Extensive engagement with more than 47 service providers

## 2. Extent of proposed coverage area

- 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):

South Herts DAB's technical plan uses a three-site SFN to cover the main populated areas of South Hertfordshire. We have included a coverage prediction to illustrate our proposals. The extent of our proposed coverage reaches 87% of the Ofcom licence area polygon population with a further 5% reaching neighbouring towns and villages for whom South Hertfordshire is their main destination for work, leisure, study and shopping.

Our aim is to deliver good quality indoor and outdoor coverage across the polygon in a way that maximises coverage yet stays within the parameters laid down by Ofcom in terms of overspill, overlap and the protection of other named polygons.

### Coverage

South Hertfordshire is a region located in the southern part of the county of Hertfordshire, England. Known for its diverse geography, thriving socio-economics, and a mix of rural and urban areas, it is a prominent and vibrant region within the country.

Geographically, South Hertfordshire encompasses a range of landscapes, including rolling hills, lush green countryside, and several river valleys. The region is predominantly situated within the Chiltern Hills, which provide a picturesque backdrop and offer opportunities for outdoor activities such as hiking and nature exploration. The area also benefits from its proximity to London, as it is located just north of the capital city.

In terms of socio-economics, South Hertfordshire boasts a robust and prosperous economy. The region is home to a variety of industries, including technology, finance, healthcare, and education. It benefits from its close proximity to London, making it an attractive location for commuters and businesses alike. The area has seen significant urban development, with towns and villages experiencing growth and improvements in infrastructure.

The population of South Hertfordshire has been steadily increasing in recent years, driven by both natural growth and migration from other parts of the country and abroad. The region has a diverse demographic profile, with a mix of age groups and ethnicities. It attracts a range of individuals, from young professionals seeking job opportunities to families looking for a high standard of living and excellent educational facilities.

Demographically, South Hertfordshire is known for its relatively affluent population. The region has a higher-than-average income level, with a substantial proportion of residents engaged in professional occupations. This has contributed to the growth of the local economy and the development of desirable residential areas.

Topographically, South Hertfordshire features a combination of flat and hilly terrain. The Chiltern Hills dominate the western part of the region, offering scenic landscapes and opportunities for outdoor recreational activities. The eastern portion of South Hertfordshire consists of flatter land, where agricultural activities are prevalent.

In summary, South Hertfordshire is a diverse and prosperous region characterized by its beautiful geography, thriving socio-economics, growing population, diverse demographics, and a blend of rural and urban landscapes. It benefits from its strategic location near London and offers a high quality of life, making it an attractive place to live, work, and explore.

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

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

Site name	NGR	Antenna ht (m agl)	Antenna type & bearing	New/existing antenna	ERP (W)
St Albans - St Peters Church	TL150076	30	OMNI	New	200
Grovehill	TL065094	10	OMNI	New	100
Watford YMCA	TQ110965	54	Pole mounted Dipole 0deg ETN	New	100

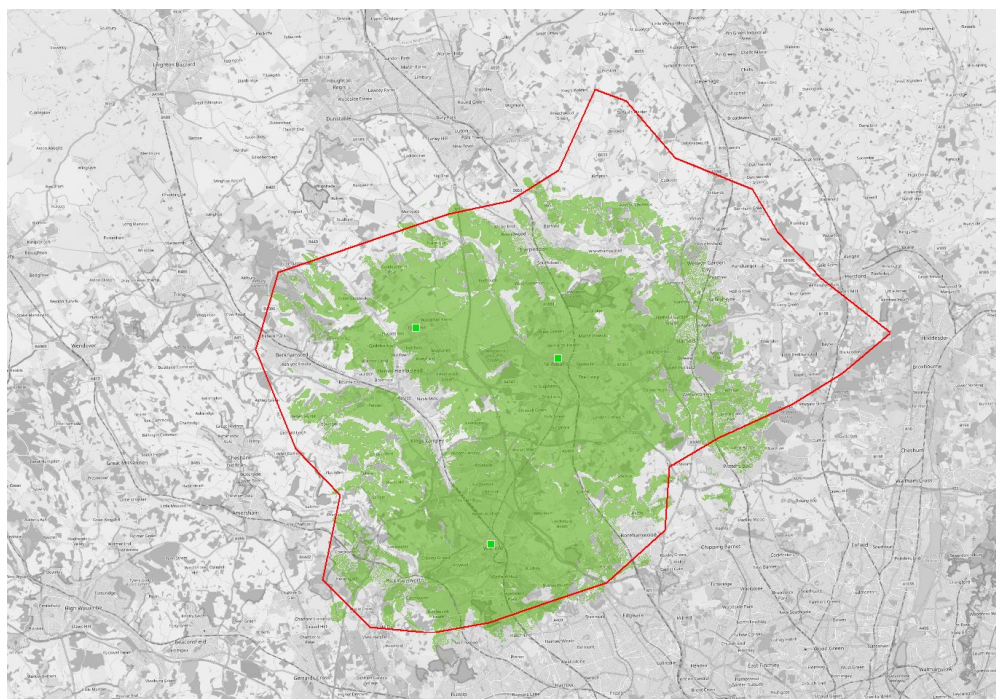
2.3 Please provide a coverage prediction map for the whole transmitter network you are proposing to build within 18 months if you are awarded a licence. The map should show the 63 dBµV/m field strength and the advertised small-scale DAB licence area contour. [Small-scale DAB licence areas in GIS format](#)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

A full coverage prediction map for the whole of the South Herts DAB transmitter network is included in the Appendix G. 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 South Hertfordshire 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.

The transmitter network has been designed to minimise any significant interference above 38 dBµV/m to other proposed small-scale DAB licence areas.



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"> <li>• Diffraction geometry – Deygout 94-2</li> <li>• Subpath attenuation – coarse integration</li> <li>• FZ fraction 0.8</li> <li>• Earth radius (sea and land) - 8,500km</li> </ul>
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):

South Herts DAB Ltd

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

14892356

- 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:

Suite 3 Stanta Business Centre, 3 Soothouse Spring, St. Albans, England, AL3 6PF

- 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 <sup>1</sup>	Country of residence	Other officerships held (and nature of the business concerned)	Other employment
Verulam Community Radio Ltd	SUITE 3 STANTA BUSINESS CENTRE 3 SOOTHOUSE SPRING ST. ALBANS ENGLAND AL3 6PF	UK		N/A
The Vibe Watford Limited	GATEWAY HOUSE 59 CLARENDON ROAD WATFORD ENGLAND WD17 1LA	UK		N/A
Niocast Digital Ltd	20 CREWE ROAD SANDBACH ENGLAND CW11 4NE	UK	Director: Edinburgh DAB Ltd; Cardiff DAB Ltd; (Small-scale DAB licensees); Preston DAB	N/A

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



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

			<p>Ltd; Warrington, Widnes &amp; Runcorn DAB Ltd; Liverpool DAB Ltd; Nottingham DAB Ltd (Small-scale DAB multiplex companies)</p> <p>David Duffy is a director of Wolverhampton DAB Ltd; Cheshire Radio Ltd (Small-scale DAB multiplex companies) and South London DAB CIC (Small-scale DAB applicant)</p>	
Christopher Hurst	<p>SUITE 3 STANTA BUSINESS CENTRE 3 SOOTHOUSE SPRING ST. ALBANS ENGLAND AL3 6PF</p>	UK	<p>Director: Silk FM Ltd and Dee 106.3 Ltd (commercial radio stations).</p> <p>Director: Edinburgh DAB Ltd; Cardiff DAB Ltd; Wolverhampton DAB Ltd (Small-scale DAB licensees); Preston DAB Ltd; Warrington, Widnes &amp; Runcorn DAB Ltd; Cheshire East DAB Ltd; Nottingham DAB Ltd (Small-scale DAB multiplex companies)</p> <p>Director: South London DAB CIC (Small-scale DAB applicant)</p> <p>Director: Muxco North East Wales and West Cheshire Ltd (DAB local multiplex operator)</p>	None

## 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 investment (£s)	Total investment (%)	% of voting rights
Verulam Community Radio Ltd	10	0.10	10	10
The Vibe Watford Limited	10	0.10	10	10
Niocast Digital Ltd	30	0.30	30	30
Christopher Hurst	30	0.30	30	30
Verulam Community Radio Ltd (shares to be allotted after award – take-up optional)	10	0.10	10	10
The Vibe Watford Limited (shares to be allotted after award – take-up optional)	10	0.10	10	10
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, 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 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	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:

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:

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 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.

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

Name of body corporate identified in Q3.8	N/A			
Full name of participant	No. 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; <sup>2</sup>	No	N/A
An individual who is an officer of a body falling within (b) or (c);	No	N/A
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.**

<sup>2</sup> 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) 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.**

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

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	Area
(a)			
(b)			
(c)	CR000090BA/4	2007 - Current	Hertfordshire, St Albans - Verulam Community Radio (Ofcom-licenced community station)
(c)	CR000216BA/3	2011 - Current	Hertfordshire, Watford – The Vibe Watford Limited (Ofcom-licenced community station)
(c)	SSDABWT005	2015 - Current	Small-scale DAB Multiplex - Trial Manchester
(c)	DS103935	2022 - Current	Small-scale DAB Multiplex - Edinburgh
(c)		2022 - Current	Small-scale DAB Multiplex - Cardiff
(c)		2023 - Current	Small-scale DAB Multiplex - Wolverhampton
(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)		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
(c)		2000- 2009	Wave 102 Dundee
(c)		2000- 2009	Wire FM - Warrington
(c)		2000- 2009	The Wave Blackpool
(c)		2000- 2009	The Pulse Bradford

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

(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)		2000- 2009	Juice FM - Liverpool
(c)		2000- 2009	Talk 107 Edinburgh
(c)		2000- 2009	Central Radio
(c)	CR000034BA/3	2009 - 2017	Pure FM - Stockport
(c)	DL000094BA/5	Current	Multiplex - NE Wales and W Cheshire
(c)	AL100840BA/2	Current	Silk FM
(c)	AL000274BA/3	Current	Dee 106.3
(c)	DP000165BA/2	Current	Dee on DAB and Love 80s – Liverpool & Manchester
(c)	DP101065	2015 - 2016	Manchester Business Radio
(c)	CR102895	2019 - 2022	Cheshire Radio Ltd
(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.



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	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.

A detailed financial forecast that sets out establishment costs, annual income & outgoings with 36-month cash flow and profit & loss forecasts is included in Appendix A. This has a contingency for inflation reaching 8.7% built in to the figures.

### **Capital Investment – £48,000**

The main capital investment is the multiplexing & transmission system. In selecting Viamux to provide the small-scale DAB solution as well as professional services (project management, site surveys, network design and build, software configuration, installation, training and ongoing support), South Herts DAB was mindful of their wealth of experience implementing DAB systems, the competitive pricing of their solution and the many customer references they have in the UK.

### **Operating Costs – £25,000 (per annum)**

#### Transmission

The ongoing costs associated with transmission (site rental, electrical power consumption, internet provision) are the single most important recurring operating expenditure for a multiplex company. Our choice of transmission sites is a cost-effective choice that balances delivering the largest audience whilst ensuring 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

South Herts DAB will subscribe to Optimux - the low-cost cloud-based control panel that simplifies management and monitoring of a small-scale DAB network. For a low-cost monthly fee, Optimux allows us to implement cloud encoding - making it quick, easy and cheap to add new services to a multiplex. It also provides us with full invoicing and direct debit collection to streamline the payment of carriage fees. Optimux also monitors the multiplex and will alert us to any issues and notify service providers regarding their audio.

#### Administration

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

#### Funding

The project is funded through a combination of equity and a shareholder working capital loan. 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

**There is no requirement for additional share capital to meet the costs outlined above.**

b) Loan stock

**As indicated in the financial appendices, a working capital investment loan will be provided by the shareholders of South Herts DAB Ltd. 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.**

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 (£)
Verulam Community Radio Ltd	20%	£9,600
The Vibe Watford Limited	20%	£9,600
Niocast Digital Ltd	30%	£14,400
Christopher Hurst	30%	£14,400

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 funding is confirmed and evidenced in the Appendix**

## 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.)

### **General Management**

Post award, we will take responsibility for the day-to-day general management of the multiplex operation - managing commercial, financial and operational matters. This is simplified through the use of Optimux and with the ongoing support of Viamux..

Tasks include, but are not limited to;

- Recruiting new services;
- Issuing carriage agreements;
- Invoice management;
- Payment collection; and
- Working with programme services to ensure DSPS and regulatory licence compliance.
- Monitoring and Ofcom reporting

We will also be responsible for ongoing; accounts, IT, admin, legal, customer service and technical support.

### **Team**

The participants share a track record of successfully establishing and operating broadcasting operations including small-scale DAB multiplexes.

### **Key Personnel**

#### **Nick Hazell – Director, Verulam Community Radio Ltd (Mix92.6)**

Nick has held senior management positions at both BT and Yahoo!, working in Marketing and Corporate Finance areas. His corporate career spanned mergers and acquisitions, working overseas in the USA and Switzerland and driving significant change programmes. He is a Director at Verulam Community Radio Limited (Mix 92.6) and is the station manager, responsible for day to day operations.

Nick first had a passion for radio in his late teens but career goals took him away from the medium until he left corporate life in 2011. Since then, Nick has been involved with Radio Verulam and then Mix 92.6, presenting and working behind the scenes.

#### **Howard Groves – Director, The Vibe Watford (Vibe107.6FM)**

Howard started his career at Shell and worked in various management positions for 12 years finally heading up the Customer Services function.

In 1994 he moved to Camelot as part of the small team that launched The National Lottery and initially led the teams supporting the retailer network and players. Howard became a director at Camelot and during his sixteen years there his portfolios covered various areas of the business including Commercial, Marketing, Customer Service and major Programmes. From 2007 he was Camelot's lead Director on the Olympic and Paralympic Games working closely with The DCMS, London 2012 and the IOC.

Since leaving Camelot he has been the Development Director at Redbus Media Group before joining the Board at Vibe107.6FM and eventually becoming the Managing Director of the station in 2013, where he hosted a visit to the station from Ed Vaizey as Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy.

Howard is also currently a Director at the Watford Palace Theatre.

**David Duffy – Director, Niocast Digital, Viamux & Optimux Digital**

David Duffy is a senior radio professional with over 40 year’s experience in all aspects of broadcast radio. He has contributed to the rollout of DAB in the UK by endorsing Kevin Foster’s Private Members’ Bill which sought to allow flexibility to adapt legislation to create a streamlined and light touch regulatory structure for small scale DAB. The Bill received Royal Assent in April 2017, becoming the Broadcasting (Radio Multiplex Services) Act 2017. David also contributing to the DCMS/Ofcom Small Scale DAB Licensing Consultation 2018 which helped shape the The Small-scale Radio Multiplex and Community Digital Radio Order 2019.

David has successfully launched more small-scale DAB multiplexes in the UK as both a licensee and solutions provider for Niocast and Viamux clients than any other individual. These include complex multi-site networks in major metropolitan markets such as Edinburgh and Cardiff as well as the UK’s fastest implementations - Wolverhampton (53 days) and Blackpool (74 days). To-date David Duffy has been involved in 8 multiplex launches with 6 due to launch shortly and a further 9 awarded an under construction.

David’s involvement in radio dates back to 1981 (Essex Radio). He was launch director of Wire FM, the commercial radio station in Warrington. In 2004 he founded Cheshire FM and served as its first Chief Executive. In 2008 he led a group in the acquisition of Southport commercial radio station Dune FM and subsequently Preston’s Central Radio.

In 2013 David established Niocom Associates (Niocast) to provide professional consultancy services to the broadcast sector. In 2015 Niocast was awarded one of the ten trial small-scale DAB trial licences (Manchester) which has been running successfully for over seven and a half years. In that time Niocast provide a platform for over 60 radio services and made a significant contribution to the development of small-scale DAB in the UK.

**Viamux**

In 2017 David co-founded [Viamux](#) to deliver 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. Viamux is the leading provider of small-scale DAB solutions in the UK marketplace - working with small-scale DAB licensees across the UK (see 3.22).

**Optimux**

In 2020 David co-founded Optimux Digital – developer of the [Optimux dashboard](#) for managing small-scale DAB. Optimux currently power the operation of half of the small scale DAB multiplexes on air today.

**Chris Hurst – Director, Dee Radio Group**

Chris Hurst has worked in commercial radio for over 30 years. He's been a director and Ofcom licence holder for over 23 years. Chris was the Local Radio Managing Director of the LSE quoted Wireless Group PLC with responsibility for 10 local stations and 3 local multiplexes until it was acquired in 2002 by LSE quoted UTV Media PLC he continued in the position until 2009 at which point he had responsibility for 17 analogue radio stations, 7 digital stations and 4 local multiplexes. In 2009 he took a shareholding in Dee 106.3 Ltd and became its CEO a position he continues to hold. The Dee Radio Group went on to acquire Silk FM Ltd.

Chris is a strong believer and supporter of DAB, and the Dee Radio Group has launched digital services Dee on DAB, Love 80s Liverpool and Love 80s Manchester. Love 80s Manchester broadcasts on the small-scale trial multiplex in Manchester and is the only small-scale service in the UK that publishes RAJAR. The Dee Radio Group co owns the local multiplex for NE Wales and West Cheshire and Chris is a director of the holding company Muxco NE Wales and West Cheshire Ltd.

Chris was a consultant general manager of community station Pure 107.9 between 2009 and 2017 during which time Pure successfully applied for a grant to establish the Great Manchester Community Radio Alliance which ran for a number of years.


Chris is actively engaged in the radio industry as a whole and sits on the RadioCentre Advisory Group.

Chris attended Harvard Business School in 2005.

Chris has successfully participated in each round of the small scale multiplex licencing process. He is a participant in the successful applications that launched the complex multi-site networks in Edinburgh and Cardiff and also the fastest launched from award Wolverhampton in 53 days. He is a participant in 5 further successful applications that are currently in the build process.

**South Herts DAB is confident 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	Party	Previous experience
Installation of transmission equipment	Viamux Ltd	 <p>Viamux is a leading supplier of small-scale DAB solutions in the UK &amp; Republic of Ireland. Established in 2017, Viamux specialises in Ofcom licence applications and coverage predictions as well as designing, building, installing, operating and maintaining small-scale radio multiplexes with clients in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manchester,</li> <li>• Edinburgh</li> <li>• Blackpool (launched in 74 days)</li> <li>• Cardiff</li> <li>• Newcastle &amp; Gateshead,</li> <li>• Derry/London Derry</li> <li>• Exeter</li> <li>• Preston</li> <li>• Warrington, Widnes &amp; Runcorn,</li> <li>• Cheshire East</li> <li>• Cheshire Mid</li> <li>• Nottingham</li> <li>• Liverpool</li> <li>• Wolverhampton (launched in 53 days)</li> <li>• Darlington &amp; Bishop Auckland</li> <li>• Middlesborough &amp; Redcar</li> <li>• Llandudno</li> <li>• Torbay</li> <li>• Plymouth</li> <li>• Stirling &amp; Falkirk</li> <li>• North Pembrokeshire</li> <li>• South Pembrokeshire</li> </ul> <p>More info: <a href="http://www.viamux.com">www.viamux.com</a></p>
Ongoing maintenance of the transmission equipment	Viamux Ltd	
Installation of the Multiplexing equipment	Viamux Ltd	
Day-to-day technical management and maintenance of the multiplexing equipment (if different from response to question 3.28 above)	Viamux Ltd	



## 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:

South Herts DAB's aim is to launch the multiplex within 9 months of the licence award subject to Ofcom approval of our final technical plan.

Funding is already in place and commitment from services is sufficient to exceed the operating costs of the multiplex. We are continuing to actively pursue all expressions of interest and are confident to launch with a strong line-up of services.

Following the 'Guide to Launching' flowchart and the procedures set out in Ofcom's Technical Policy Guidance we aim to accelerate the implementation timetable by focusing on stages A to E.



Stages:

- In response to any technical mitigations in the award letter, we aim to finalise our site agreements and technical plan and submit to Ofcom within 4 weeks.
- On receipt of the hole punching document we will liaise with the national & local multiplex operators immediately. Responses received will be sent to Ofcom.
- Once the technical plan is signed off by Ofcom the equipment will be ordered and specifications shared with Ofcom. Installation date is scheduled and Ofcom is notified with twenty days' notice.
- Equipment is installed and commissioned.

As a leading small-scale DAB provider, Viamux will manage the implementation of the project. Availability of all equipment, software and professional services to meet our timescales are already confirmed.

We will be responsible for finalising site agreements and arranging broadband connectivity. A project GANTT chart (Appendix E) details the tasks, activities and timescales under which the implementation will be governed to achieve our target launch date.

- 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 South Herts DAB project GANTT chart (Appendix E) 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?

**No.**

- 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:

N/A

- 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):

Mix 92.6 and Vibe107.6FM are both participants in the applicant and are the two Ofcom-licensed community radio stations in the polygon. Both will be C-DSP licensees on the new multiplex

- Verulam Community Radio Ltd (Mix 92.6) - Ofcom-licensed community radio station in St Albans, Hertfordshire
- The Vibe Watford Limited (Vibe107.6FM) - Ofcom-licensed community radio station in Watford, Hertfordshire

## 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
1	Verulam Community Radio Ltd (Mix 92.6)	C-DSP	Participant in applicant body
2	The Vibe Watford Limited (Vibe107.6FM)	C-DSP	Participant in applicant body
3	Radio Dacorum	C-DSP	One of our transmission sites
4	Welwyn Hatfield Radio	C-DSP	See confidential appendix
5	Mix Extra	C-DSP	Participant in applicant body
6	Zest	DSP	See confidential appendix
7	Zest 60s	DSP	See confidential appendix
8	Nation 70s	DSP	See confidential appendix
9	Nation 80s	DSP	See confidential appendix
10	Nation 90s	DSP	See confidential appendix
11	Cosoro	DSP	See confidential appendix
12	Soho Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix
13	Love 80s (applicant)	DSP	See confidential appendix
14	Love 90s (applicant)	DSP	See confidential appendix
15	Radio Sangam	DSP	See confidential appendix
16	Mom's Spaghetti	DSP	See confidential appendix
17	MMH Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix
18	Great British Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix
19	Panjab Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix
20	Tomorrowland OWR	DSP	See confidential appendix
21	Gaydio	DSP	See confidential appendix
22	SG1 Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix

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

23	Radio LaB 97.1FM	DSP	See confidential appendix
24	Dazzle fm	DSP	See confidential appendix
25	Stony Radio CIC	DSP	See confidential appendix
26	Decades	DSP	See confidential appendix
27	Lite Radio	DSP	See confidential appendix
28	Tring	DSP	See confidential appendix
29	Vibe Rewind	DSP	See confidential appendix
30	Vibe Dance	DSP	See confidential appendix

## 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 the provision of such services.

Prior to submission of this licence application, South Herts DAB has taken the following measures to identify and engage with services providers:

- Online Promotion – We launched a website at [www.southhertsDAB.co.uk](http://www.southhertsDAB.co.uk) to provide information about the project and the opportunities for prospective service providers. The website collected expressions of interest via an online form.

SOUTH HERTS DAB



South Herts DAB is a collaboration between south Hertfordshire's two Ofcom-licensed community radio stations - Mix 92.6 and Vibe 107.6. Supported by Niocast Digital and Chris Hurst, South Herts DAB has been formed to apply to Ofcom to operate the new digital radio multiplex in the south of the county. South Herts DAB aims to bring a wide range of new and exciting digital radio stations to an area where more than half a million people live, travel, work, study and play. If you would like to join the digital revolution and get your radio station broadcasting across south Hertfordshire then

SOUTH HERTS DAB



Come and join us.

**Mix 92.6** is the Ofcom-licensed not-for-profit community radio station based in St Albans and serving Hertfordshire. Their mission is to enhance and connect the lives of people living and working in the area. Mix 92.6 features music from today and great hits from the 80s onwards. Their daytime content involves people, charities, and businesses from across the area, and their evening and weekend output includes shows aimed at parents, local environmental coverage, live sports commentary, local bands and artists and local politics.

**Vibe 107.6** is the Ofcom-licensed not-for-profit community radio station based in Watford and broadcasting to and run by the local people of Watford and South West Hertfordshire. Launched in August 2011, the station's output is a mix of feel good contemporary hits with a mixture of old skool classics including the very popular Vibe Rewind show. The station focuses on entertaining local people with music, engaging local content and has a reputation for training young people in broadcasting.

**Niocast Digital** has been operating the small-scale DAB multiplex in Manchester for nearly eight years. Niocast is also a stakeholder in eight small-scale licence awards in Edinburgh, Cardiff, Liverpool, Preston, Warrington, Cheshire, Nottingham and Wolverhampton. Having also run successful trials in Dublin & Cork, Niocast is one of the most experienced operators of small-scale DAB in the UK.

stations in Cheshire, regional music genre stations in Manchester and Liverpool, and the small scale DAB multiplexes in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Wolverhampton. The launch phase of small scale DAB multiplexes in Liverpool, Nottingham,

We would like to hear from you if you would like to get your station on-air across south Hertfordshire. We expect spaces to go very quickly so please get your name down today and reserve your slot



\* INDICATES REQUIRED FIELD

STATION NAME \*

NAME \*

First  Last

EMAIL \*

PHONE NUMBER \*

SUBMIT

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- **Media Coverage** - Engagement with the website was promoted in a press release which was distributed to local/regional press and published on the Radio Today website. It has also been widely shared on social media.

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### South Hertfordshire community radio stations Mix and Vibe unite for DAB

Written By Roy Martin - June 20, 2023 - 3:12 pm





#### Today's radio news

-  Cheryl Baker to host new weekday show on Great British Radio  
1 hour ago
-  BBC Radio Wales introduces new station sound and sonic logo  
4 hours ago
-  Radio Tyneside gets charity donation of £50,000 to go digital  
4 hours ago
-  Global to turn off Smooth Radio's medium wave transmitters  
5 hours ago

< PREV | NEXT > | 1 of 23




#### Studio Inbox & SMS

Two community radio stations in South Hertfordshire have joined forces to apply for the South Herts SSDAB multiplex licence.

Mix 92.6 based in St Albans and Vibe 107.6 in Watford have set up South Herts DAB Ltd with the help of Niocast Digital and long standing senior radio executive Chris Hurst.

Station Manager at Mix 92.6, Nick Hazell, said: "Bringing an affordable way for radio stations to reach South Hertfordshire listeners is an exciting new venture for us. We're looking forward to enabling local groups and national stations to hit the airwaves."



Vibe 107.6 Managing Director Howard Groves, added: "We are really excited about the potential for DAB in the South Herts area.

"Not only will we be providing our listeners with a further way of engaging with Vibe 107.6FM, but DAB will open up opportunities for other community based stations to expand their reach."

More details and contact info at [SouthHertsDAB.co.uk](http://SouthHertsDAB.co.uk).





- Outreach - South Herts DAB has also conducted research to identify active community and internet radio services. We made indirect contact using social media (see below) and direct contact via email or phone to ensure that radio operators were aware of the opportunity and if they were interested in participating in the project at this time. We contacted the universities and the local college to make them aware of the opportunity that the service could offer their student radio stations. We also contacted the local hospital radio service with the same offer.



- Consultation - Following the receipt of expressions of interest South Herts DAB engaged in early conversations with potential C- DSP and DSP providers, to give them an indication of pricing and capacity. From the consultation we were able to identify those that wanted to commit to carriage on the multiplex and those that were keen but not willing or able to commit at this stage.

**Following the award of licence**, South Herts DAB will take steps to secure carriage agreements with those services that have made their commitment to the multiplex and engage openly with those services providers who completed expressions of interest:

Allocation or reservation of capacity is subject to the Service Provider either holding a DSP or CDSP Licence or being able to demonstrate that they have submitted their application to Ofcom for a DSP or CDSP Licence, respectively.

- If all the reserved capacity spaces on the multiplex have been allocated, additional service providers with CDSP's can be offered an unreserved space
- If the capacity on the multiplex is reached, a waiting list will be created with service providers kept up to date on any future availability.

Throughout this process, South Herts DAB has openly discussed our transmission plans, carriage terms and indicative fees. We have engaged with potential service providers in an open, non-exclusive manner and will continue to do so throughout the duration of this licence. As stated above, 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. In contracting or offering to contract with programme services providers, we will continue to act in a manner that ensures fair and effective competition.

**Following the launch of the multiplex**, South Herts DAB will continue to operate a transparent rate card policy, published on our website. The structure of our rate-card will reflect our core aim of supporting and encouraging community broadcasting by C-DSP licensed services with pricing to help them establish a long-lasting partnership with us for mutual sustainability.

## 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 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 on behalf of the applicant:**

Nick Hazell

**Date of application:**

28 JUNE 2023

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

Company director.