



department for
culture, media
and sport

Your Ref:
Our Ref: CMS 122860/mk

Steve Buckley
Sheffield Live
15 Paternoster Row
Sheffield
S1 2BX

24 August 2009

Dear Steve,

Thank you for your open letter of 20 July to the Prime Minister, from 82 community radio leaders, media scholars and experts including representatives of 60 community radio stations from all nations and regions, about community radio. I am replying to you as Minister for the Creative Industries.

The Government recognises the importance of community radio and its contribution to the communities which they serve. The Government already makes around £500,000 a year available to support the work of the community radio sector. However, it was never the intention for the community radio sector to be fully, or even majority, publicly funded.



improving
the quality
of life for all

We recognise that the current economic climate has brought with it greater challenges for community radio stations. This is one reason why the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is currently consulting on a number of changes to the regulatory framework for community radio. We are proposing the removal of the 50% funding limit from any one source and the restriction preventing a station being licensed in an area overlapping with a small commercial service. At the same time we are proposing to grant licence holders a five year renewal of their existing licences.

More generally we are extending our commitment to promoting best practice within the community sector and encouraging self-sustainability by allocating funds to support the work of the Community Media Association. In addition, DCMS will continue to work with other Government Departments and Agencies to identify other sources of funding, specifically where there are community cohesion and social gain objectives, for community radio.

With all good wishes,
