

Revocation of the Wetherby and Harrogate small-scale radio multiplex licence award

Background

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

Decision

Ofcom has taken the decision to revoke the licence award we made on 16 November 2022 to Wetherby and Harrogate Local DAB Limited ("WHL DAB") in relation to the Wetherby & Harrogate small-scale radio multiplex service.

This is on the basis that the statutory conditions for revocation as set out above have been met. Firstly, the awarded licence has not yet been granted. Secondly, we have reasonable grounds to believe the service will not be provided within 18 months of award (i.e. by 16 May 2024), as WHL DAB had confirmed that it had decided not to go ahead with launch, citing escalating projected costs since award which, in their opinion, would make the service as proposed at application uneconomic.

Ofcom will consider re-advertising the Wetherby & Harrogate multiplex licence should we receive any expressions of interest following today's announcement.

Should we decide in principle to re-advertise, it may be appropriate to adjust the advertised area to reflect actual coverage of launched multiplexes nearby, and any potential applicant expressing an interest may wish to express a view on that issue and on timing of re-advertisement.