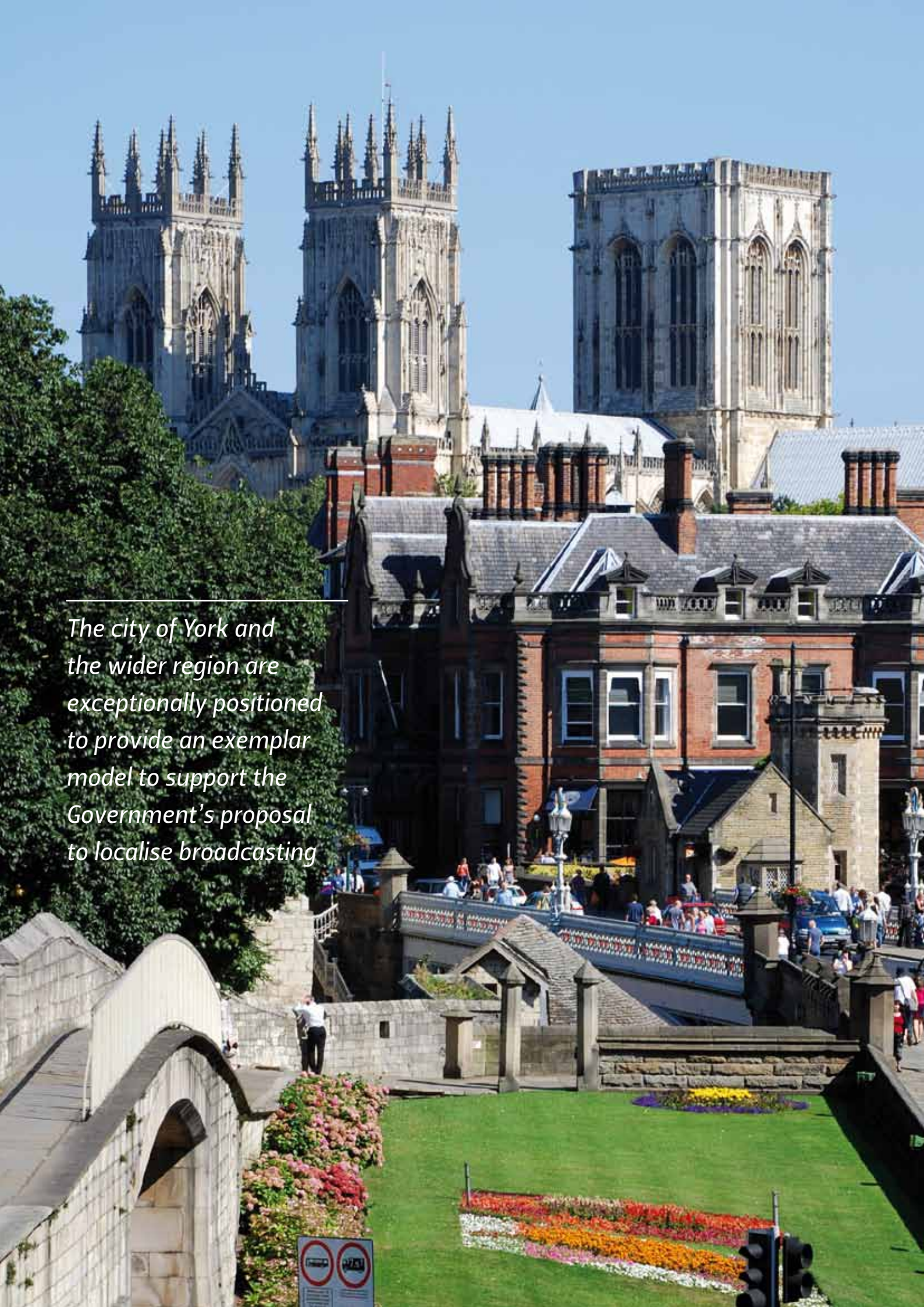


York: an exemplar model for local television





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This document has been prepared by Science City York in collaboration with key stakeholders in York, whose signatures are noted on the back of this document.

The purpose of this document is to:

- Respond to the Government's Local Media Action Plan
- Locate York at the forefront of developing viable, sustainable and high quality local television

1. Background

The city of York and the wider region are exceptionally positioned to provide an exemplar model to support the Government's proposal to localise broadcasting.

York is an ambitious city where creative experimentation, technological innovation, economic growth and social progress are united. This strategic convergence is evidenced by well-established partnerships between civic bodies, educational institutions, private organisations, the media, voluntary organisations and the tourism sector, working collaboratively for the greater benefit of our city and region.

York is one of only three cities in the North of England to feature in the top quartile for economic performance nationally. It is also the UK's first Science City and boasts a growing science and technology base, enhanced by a recent £19.7m European Regional Development Fund investment (part of the University of York's £750m campus expansion), and supported by a network of over 500 vibrant companies. Science City York, which is coordinating the bid for York Local Television, was founded by an alliance of the City Council and the University of York, with subsequent support from York St John University.

2. Local television as a vehicle for change

York and North Yorkshire will work together to deliver a decentralised broadcasting model to provide quality television for local communities. York's track record as the UK's first Science City provides an opportunity to develop innovative delivery platforms. Working in conjunction with the University of York Department of Electronics, we will demonstrate the long-term economic viability of local television and ensure it makes a significant

contribution to our regional economy. Furthermore, we will use local television as a vehicle to link disparate developments (creative and technical) in York and North Yorkshire, to engage communities in innovative ways, and to stimulate civic pride.

3. Uniting world class facilities, technology and strong local media

York is exceptionally placed to become an exemplar for local television:

Facilities, technology and people

- The city has undergone a major upgrade in its communications systems: a new network of fibre-optic cables has been installed throughout the city, which equips York for state-of-the-art digital data transfer and provides some of the highest-specification broadband capabilities in the UK.
- The University of York has recently completed a £24m 'production complex' comprising theatrical spaces, two high definition broadcast television studios, advanced post-production facilities and a green screen shooting stage. This flagship facility is home to the newly established Department of Theatre, Film and Television and the complex has already attracted significant commercial activity during its first six months of operation.
- The development of a local television station would exploit the investment of both of York's universities in media and arts facilities, and boost their engagement with regional business and knowledge transfer. This would have the positive effect of encouraging higher graduate retention, work-ready students and media cultural business start-ups.



We have access to a core group of production experts, who will lead on the development of high quality content in collaboration with stakeholders from across the city and North Yorkshire

A modern city making history

- Science City York has a track record in pioneering digital and creative media – one of the fastest growing clusters in York and North Yorkshire. Businesses in York spend three times as much on research and development activity per head than the regional average and over 14% of firms in York link their R&D to York’s universities – significantly higher than the regional average of 8.5%.
- York is home to two universities and two further education colleges, with over 5,000 people taking courses in creative and digital media at one time. Together, the institutions have invested more than £100m in media arts facilities and resources in York in the first decade of this century. More than 1,800 media arts students graduate in York each year. Students at York’s universities and colleges are already producing hours of high quality content for TV as part of their course.
- An additional £8m of investment over recent years in media and arts provision at York St John University’s city centre campus adds to the city’s excellent production facilities and links with industry and the broader creative sector.
- The city of York is an internationally renowned ‘brand’, York and North Yorkshire have a combined population approaching 1 million. This figure is significantly amplified by the take-up of more than two million bed-nights sold each year and the broader North Yorkshire population (just under 600,000). In order to align Local TV with the extensive tourism industry in York, we will work in alliance with the strong culture and heritage sectors to produce compelling content of interest not just to the local audience but also of major benefit to the city’s visitors. York welcomes more than seven million visitors every year – there are enormous opportunities to exploit new and emergent media technologies to enrich the visitor experience and help strengthen our local communities by enhancing York’s position as a vibrant tourism and business destination.
- We have access to a core group of production experts, who will lead on the development of high quality content in collaboration with stakeholders from across the city and North Yorkshire – we are confident that our timeframe for establishment and delivery will be shorter than in many other areas.

4. Collaborative producers of high quality content

Producing high quality local television is demanding. York can act as an exemplar, because:

- One in every five businesses in the county is in the culture, creative and visitor economy sectors including a strong local media (York Press, BBC Radio York, Minster FM), visual and performing arts, music industry, computer gaming, software and electronic publishing – all of which would enable the development of quality content for a local television station.
- The city of York’s local media are in favour of the development of local television and its potential for cross-media partnerships to develop high quality news content for a York local TV station.
- Colleagues working in York have meaningful links across North Yorkshire, which will enable us to mobilise production sites which have been traditionally isolated, including coastal sites such as Scarborough.



One of the fastest growing cities in the country

5. Response to the Local Media Action Plan

What would be the appropriate balance of local and network content?

There is a concern that there may be a conflict of interest for a local TV channel operating within a national TV spine. This would apply when a local TV station is paid a percentage of total revenue of the national TV channel advertising sales. As the number of hours turned over to local TV delivery increases, the opportunity for the national channel to generate national advertising revenue decreases, thereby de-incentivising the national channel to accept long periods of local TV output and a limit on the number of TV stations. Because of this, it is envisaged that there would be a maximum of only two hours of local content per day with this type of model. A new start-up local TV channel may require as little as 30 minutes a day transmission time, whereas existing local TV channels are on-air around six hours a day with a rotating schedule. The support for a flexible balance of local vs network content on a station-by-station basis is strong, however, this approach is not conducive to the production of an easily executable national TV schedule with a regular local opt-out pattern. Due to this we are open to exploring the benefits of alternative delivery ideas provided by a national approach.

Would local perspectives on national and international news be desirable and/or feasible?

The popularity of local news is directly related to its relevance within the local community, therefore local impacts from stories relating to national and international news can generate a great deal of interest. This has applications in the dissemination of government policies, health, sport and investment etc. It is important to recognise that this can have both positive and negative aspects. For example, a national good news story about job creation and green electricity at a new wind farm may generate a very negative local story about the dramatic effect on the local community and its environment.

Apart from news and current affairs, what other local content would be desirable?

Desirable programming would focus on community engagement, educational attainment, active lifestyles, increasing interest in the arts and culture, promoting economic development, and supporting employment. Specific programming examples could include:

- Y - Lifestyle (local magazine programme)

- Health Matters (focus on health with GP services)
- Past and Present (local history programme)
- What's On (local guide)
- Business Express (overview of local business developments and their impacts).

Content would be built on the values of supporting communication and engagement with the local community and providing an effective and efficient high quality service.

What times of day are most appropriate for the broadcast of local content?

The most appropriate time to broadcast local TV news content is following on from the current national news coverage. Morning, lunchtime, early evening and late evening are popular slots. Initially it is envisaged that lunchtime and early evening slots would generate the best audience opportunities for a growing local TV channel. As so many communities in York are dependent on tourism and the city alone receives seven million visitors each year it would be most useful to show 'What's On' programming early morning and early evening to ensure visitors watching in local hotels can benefit from sign posting to local attractions and events. Local TV stations should also ensure their output is available in a multi-platform on-demand environment.

Serious consideration needs to be given to live vs pre-recorded news content and the logistics of transmitting the local TV schedule. This has an impact especially when considering the advertising sales scheduling system including proof of transmission and invoicing.

Additionally local non-news content should be scheduled according to local audience demand, ie a 'Whats On' guide should be available first thing every morning and children's content Monday to Friday from 3.30pm to 4.45pm.

Would a selection of local interest content be well received if broadcast as network programming?

There is an opportunity for local TV stations to 'pool' content and manpower to generate national network programming. However, York is a rich and historic city, world famous for its Gothic Minster, cobbled streets and Roman walls. So there are many opportunities to develop programming from this area that will appeal to the TV network, for example:

The city of York is an internationally renowned 'brand' and welcomes more than seven million visitors every year

- a programme about York Minster feeding into a documentary on cathedral cities
- documentaries about recent archaeological excavations in Hungate, a Victorian industrial area, a local poet, for example W H Auden, or a focus on bioscience in health care
- the pooling of local programming to enable access to archives (including access to the BBC and Yorkshire Film archives) when the railway came to York and tourism past and present.

How local should the content be? Community, town, nearest city, county, borough?

Local TV content should be as local as geographical coverage will allow. For example TV stations working in conjunction with local newspapers or radio can enhance opportunities to reach out to the community for stories of interest. Community members should be encouraged to file stories and be actively involved in local TV. A robust editorial policy needs to be applied to ensure accuracy, impartiality, privacy, fairness and suitability of material. This needs to be managed at local and national level.

How do these issues differ across the devolved nations? Broadcasting policy remains a reserved matter but what do audiences in the nations want from any local TV services?

Issues relating to the devolved nations should be addressed by the nations themselves. They form an integral part of the whole local TV network and participate as equal partners in the network. Their programming content may be in their native languages and subtitled in English for network use. They form an integral part of the whole local TV network and participate as equal partners in the network. Their programming content may be in their native languages and subtitled in English for network use.

The York channel as the local TV business model

York is ideally placed to deliver a commercially viable and sustainable local TV channel, which will provide the blueprint for partnerships in other areas.

Key players from across York, including the City Council, representatives from the universities and colleges, Science City York, the BBC, the local press and key stakeholders from the private sector have united to establish an ambitious partnership within the framework of the Government's Media Action Plan.



www.visit-york.com

York is a thriving city, well-known across the world for its rich heritage and cultural dynamism, and at the heart of a substantial rural economy. The city is home to scientific entrepreneurship, digital infrastructure, and creative innovation. Local TV requires imagination, expertise and collaboration, and our strong partnership will exemplify this skills base to act as a pioneer for others.

6. Contact details

Professor Nicola Spence
Chief Executive
Science City York

Tel: 01904 870040

Email: nicola.spence@scy.co.uk

Enterprise House
Innovation Way
Heslington
York, YO10 5NY
North Yorkshire
01904 870040
science.city@scycity.co.uk



We are delighted to support the development of a York local television station

CLlr Andrew Waller, Leader of City of York Council
and Liberal Democrat Group Leader

CLlr James Alexander, Labour Group Leader, City of York

Council CLlr Ian Gillies, Conservative Group Leader,
City of York Council

CLlr Andy D'Agorne, Green Group Leader, City of York Council

The Lord Mayor of York

CLlr Susan Galloway

Kersten England, Chief Executive, City of York Council

Professor Brian Cantor, Vice-Chancellor, University of York

Greg Dyke, Chancellor, University of York

Sir Ron Cooke, Chair, Without Walls Partnership

Professor David Fleming, Vice-Chancellor, York St John University

Dr Alison Birkinshaw, Principal, York College

Liz Philip, Principal, Askham Bryan College

Professor Nicola Spence, Chief Executive, Science City York

Hugh Bayley, Member of Parliament for York Central

Julian Sturdy, Member of Parliament for York Outer

The Archbishop of York, Dr John Sentamu

Richard Haynes, Governor, The Company of Merchant Adventurers
of the City of York

Jayne Brown, Chief Executive, North Yorkshire and York Primary
Care Trust

Tim Madgwick, Assistant Chief Constable, North Yorkshire Police

John Lister, Chief Finance Officer, Aviva Life UK

Stephen Kennedy, Chief Operating Officer, CPP

Patrick Shepherd, Deputy Chairman, Shepherd Group

Adam Sinclair, Managing Director, Mulberry Hall
(major independent retailer)

Mike Thomas, Centre Manager, McArthur Glen Designer Outlet

Maria Florou, General Manager, Cedar Court Grand Hotel

Lionel Chatard, General Manager, Middlethorpe Hall
(leading hotel owned by the National Trust)

Tom Percy, Director, York Maze

Peter Brown, Director, York Civic Trust

Janet Barnes, Chief Executive, York Museums Trust

John Walker, Chief Executive, York Archaeological Trust

Delma Tomlin MBE, Director, National Centre for Early Music

Lizzie Richards, General Manager, Grand Opera House York

Liz Wilson, CEO of York Theatre Royal

Nick Reed, Theatres Director, SMG, York Barbican

Julia Unwin CBE, Chief Executive, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Angela Harrison, Chief Executive, York CVS

Sally Hutchinson, Chief Officer, Age UK

Tim Smith, Look North Editor and acting Head of Region, BBC

Steve Hughes, Editor, The Press, York

Sarah Drummond, Managing Editor, BBC Radio York

Dave Fleming, Co-ordinator, Khaoz Media

Bridget Davies, Managing Director, 104.7 Minster FM

Cherie Federico, Editor, Aesthetica Magazine

Rose Kent, Director, Accessible Arts and Media Business forums

Peter Kay, Chair, York Economic Partnership

Gary Verity, Chief Executive, Welcome to Yorkshire

Shaun Watts, President of the Leeds York & North Yorkshire
Chamber of Commerce

Neil McLean, Chair, Leeds City Region LEP

Barry Dodd, Chair, York and North Yorkshire LEP

Neighbouring local authorities

CLlr John Weighell, Leader

Richard Flinton, Chief Executive

William Derby, Chief Executive and Clerk of the York Racecourse

Jason McGill, Chairman, York City FC

Neil Hunter, Chair, York Athletics Club