



Director-General's Office

23 May 2019

Danny Lawrence
Chairman
Community Media Association – 2019
The Workstation
15 Paternoster Row
Sheffield
S1 2BX

Dear Danny,

Thank you for your letter.

I'm glad you shared the Association's ideas about tailoring news and information to communities and I thought you might like to know more about what the BBC has in mind.

We propose to create a new body, the Local Democracy Foundation, to build on the work of the existing Local News Partnerships (LNP). The LNP team produces an Annual Review and BBC Nations and Regions will carry out a separate, detailed review early in 2020. The CMA's contribution through the Advisory Panel forms an important part of these reviews.

The current partnership work between the BBC and the UK regional news industry aims to support public service reporting, sustain local democracy and improve standards in journalism. Enhanced civic engagement would certainly be a welcome by-product of better reporting, but we have not specifically committed to delivering that, as it is a much wider goal that we could realistically achieve.

The focus of the LNP is public interest journalism and the production of news content. As you know, a number of community radio stations are already Partners (and other stations which can meet the eligibility criteria are welcome to apply). We envisage that any expansion of the LNP will produce more content by including other types of public interest journalism, rather than a significant change in scope.

You raise a number of interesting points about media literacy and direct public engagement with the content-making process. These are important issues but fall outside the scope of the LNP work. However they might be more effectively considered in the context of BBC Local Radio, whose remit is much broader than the LNP in terms of content, community engagement and serving diverse audiences.

I hope you agree that the BBC and the CMA work well together and I've asked Chris Burns, Head of BBC Local Radio to make contact and talk about ways in which we may strengthen our partnership.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony Hall', written in a cursive style.

Tony Hall
Director-General