

Solihull Ratepayers Association

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Serving the Entire Community since 1974

Chairman – Alan Scott
Vice Chairman Mary Beattie

Reply to
Trevor Eames (Secretary)

BBC Age-Related TV Licence Consultation
BBC Corporate Affairs
Room 5045
Broadcasting House
Portland Place
London W1A 1AA

6th February 2019

Our ref 1530/JTE

Dear Sirs

BBC Age-Related TV Licence Consultation

Solihull Ratepayers is a long established voluntary community organisation from 1974 with a current membership of some 550 households plus a substantial following of supporters via our Electronic Mailing Lists, Web Site, Facebook and Twitter feeds.

We also take a close interest in services provided for the Elderly & Disabled with many of our members being retired.

The proposals for the BBC to review the provision of Free TV Licences from June 2020 has been the subject of considerable discussion and concern by our Management Committee and in our Members and Public Forum as this Free Access to the Television is regarded as so very important to this oldest and most dependent section of the community.

It is understood that changes in the Government Funding will reduce the income in future years for the BBC and will require changes and indeed reductions in service and programming provision all of which may not be offset by efficiency savings and cost reductions that would be necessary.

It is our view that imposing the additional cost of a TV Licence currently £150.50p.a. for this most vulnerable section of the community that are so dependent on Television to maintain a quality of life and would cause real hardship for very many and is unacceptable as it far outweighs the value of some reduction in the BBC viewing content.

It is also noted that as recently as 21st January the Under Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport stated that the Government have made it very clear they expect the BBC to continue the Free TV Licence Concession to the over 75's.

As members on the Council of the West Midlands Pensioners Convention with its branches across the Greater West Midland Region we are aware this view is very widely shared amongst the elderly community.

We are therefore requesting that the BBC continues to provide Free TV to the over 75's by copying the present concession as set out in Option 1. on your questionnaire.
Yours faithfully



Trevor Eames FAIA
Executive Secretary – Solihull Ratepayers Association