

Summary

For a number of years the BBC Local Radio network of 39 stations has had universal branding – with a range of cuts allowing the package to be tailored to accommodate individual requirements e.g. station names and local programming.

Along with the rest of the UK radio industry Local Radio is living through an important period and the service is constantly evolving to serve the changing face and needs of our audiences across England. We are about “owning the local conversation” and mixing our personality presenters with compelling speech, great stories, local sport and news and listeners’ interaction combined with a great music offer which has been significantly refreshed and enhanced in recent months. We operate in a world where our digital offering including Social Media and BBC Sounds complement our radio output, in many cases attracting equal and sometimes larger audiences. In addition we have introduced new local weekday evening programmes, many aimed at a younger audience and most involving new talent. In short, Local Radio is going through a reinvention.

We are looking for a company with a significant and proven track record of composition, production and delivery of imaging to a large network of stations to produce a quality product that gives the network a truly distinctive and refreshed sound in keeping with our 60/40 speech music brief.

We asked our station teams what they wanted from a new package.

Be memorable, bold, different, big, fresh, younger and evoke an emotional connection were the key words and a clear direction to be ambitious and take some risks.

It is crucial that the product can be easily and quickly adapted for each of our stations. We don't intend for every station to sound identical, but they should all feel part of the same family. In every event we want IDs to sound clean, contemporary and encourage flow and forward momentum – nothing must go on too long!

We would welcome a pitch from your company by Friday 13th September, and we'd appreciate an acknowledgment as to your intention to do so to gerald.jackson@bbc.co.uk and gareth.roberts2@bbc.co.uk

We would expect to roll out this product across all 39 stations in the next few months.

The following briefing is very detailed. To give your company the best chance of success we would encourage you to read it in full, listen to some of our stations from big city services such as London, Newcastle and Manchester to mixed rural and city stations such as Coventry & Warwickshire, Stoke and Sussex and Surrey to successful stations serving more rural communities such as York, Somerset and Norfolk. Get in touch with us if you have any queries about our creative ambitions or the pitching process. Good luck!

Our contact details are:

Project Manager Gareth Roberts gareth.roberts2@bbc.co.uk
Head of Local Radio
Development

BBC Local Radio
Station Sound
Manager Gerald Jackson gerald.jackson@bbc.co.uk

Deliverables

We wish to make the production process as collaborative as possible and would expect a degree of appropriate flexibility from all parties. This will be necessary due to the demands of working with 39 radio stations operating in different markets. However we do not intend remixing the package for each station. This means that the package must be broad enough, with enough mixes to provide the necessary range for the family of radio stations.

Number of cuts and timetable for delivery	<p>The package will total 20 themes including refreshes delivered over 2 – 3 years :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 – 10 including News, Weather, Travel and Sport to be delivered by December 2019 • The remaining themes to be delivered during the next 2 – 3 years in small batches as part of a process to evolve the sound of local radio.
Duration of cuts	<p>Themes will be agreed at commissioning stage but likely to be inspired by music style of local radio core or influenced by programme requirements (e.g. Breakfast) All themes will be deliverable in a number of durations. We'd expect for each theme</p> <p>Cut 1: 60 second Full Mix – including a 10 – 15 secs donut sequence at the top to allow for VO lines using the sonic logo into a loopable bed. (Typically used hour opener)</p> <p>Cut 2: 60 second loopable bed with simple 3 – 5 secs sonic logo start (Typically used for feature e.g. Listings/ entertainment)</p> <p>Cut 3: 5 – 10 3 second short ID incorporating the sonic logo and a 3 secs shelf (Typically used as Station ID)</p> <p>Cut 4: 10 – 15 second donut with sonic logo and 6 second shelf (Typically used as Programme,, & Station ID)</p> <p>Cuts 5 & 6: 2x 5 – 10 second transitioners (Typically used to change pace between tracks)</p> <p>Cut 7 : Logo sting only</p> <p>However, some cuts will be commissioned at different durations / varied arrangement :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are likely to include News builds (build 10 - 15 seconds max) which peak before the hour and then have a loopable bed to run under headline sequences. Plus headline bed only version (stab in no build) and stab only. We hope to standardise the news sequence across LR including use of GTS and this detail will be given to the successful pitch. • Travel – logo start with bed which will run under travel bulletins for up to 3'00. Also no logo start – bed only Remember 3" RDS switching at the top. • Sport or other production beds, which often run at length and need to sustain interest with a variety of musical breaks.

Mixes	<p>Cuts 1 and 2 for all themes will be deliverable in at least 2 significantly different mixes (for instance using overdubs, rather than being a simple sub-mix). The requirements for each mix will vary according to the nature of the track and its use on air, but may include :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix suitable for evening programmes which often target younger demographic (25 – 45) • One mix for young demographic (18 – 30) • One mix to work in conjunction with BBC Music Introducing branding • A warm full mix suitable for one of our more traditional presenters/programmes, versus a more ‘contemporary’ version for a big city personality; ‘builds’ or ‘light’ mixes. • A Christmas mix (not all cuts) • A mix featuring additional specialist musicians to create an appropriate sound for some of our stations with community programmes. <p>We would also welcome simple sub-mixes of each of these cuts.</p>
Sonic Logo	<p>The successful package will incorporate a new memorable sonic logo which is instant uplifting and warm. All tracks will reference this logo – some very explicitly (e.g. News), others more subtly.</p> <p>Our station names vary from BBC Tees to BBC Hereford & Worcester – they vary by length of place-name and some do not include the word ‘radio’ in their title. (BBC Essex, BBC Coventry & Warwickshire) We are therefore not asking for a logo with an ‘average’ number of notes! Instead we suggest but not insist that the logo is built around ‘BBC’ with a creative solution allowing space for stations to voice the station name. This will form a crucial part of the pitching process.</p>
Sound design	<p>We would welcome the provision of a tool-kit of imaging fx for flexible use on station – for instance when using liners. For mixing locally when producing edits for specific voice overs.</p> <p>In any event we will need you to provide a kit of parts to allow us to tailor make ids for individual stations</p>
Sung vs un-sung	<p>Some of our stations have in the past used sung jingles, some did not. Being contemporary and sounding fresh is paramount so we want to avoid anything that feels cheesy, “old” or predictable. We would though encourage companies to be creative and think of how a sung / musical vocal e.g. element could be incorporated into some of the mixes and enhance the sound – this may be as part of or separate to the sonic logo.</p> <p>Please don’t think that singing the radio station name is essential! We would like to hear evidence of a “sing” approach in the demo.</p> <p>It’s unlikely we would ever ‘sing’ news or sport cuts, but you might think otherwise.</p> <p>Please note the following re the funding of sung jingles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sung versions of cuts will be treated for commissioning purposes as an alternative mix and will not attract a separate commissioning fee.

The stems and mixes would be delivered without final processing to allow mastering to be part of the final mixes with VO & local content.

Roll-out

We intend to roll out the package across a 3 month period, we would like a number of our stations to have delivery by December 2019 to launch January 2020 and the remainder to be on air Winter 2020.

This is a much shorter roll-out period than previous commissions for local radio. Therefore we would expect the successful company to work in tandem with a central team of producers in Local Radio to potentially add local VO lines to all packages so they are delivered to stations ready to go. We anticipate having at least one standard VO across the Network which will hugely simplify this process – while still leaving room for local VOs where distinctive.

The creative challenge

This commission is an exciting opportunity for us to re-state our brand values and the successful company will demonstrate that they can meet the creative challenge this entails:

We are a family of 40 radio stations and the package needs to reflect our family unity but also have the breadth and range to encompass the different nuances of our markets.

People may hold out-dated perceptions of BBC Local Radio. It is crucial that this package helps new and lapsed listeners reappraise BBC Local Radio as “for me”.

Our audience consumes Breakfast TV, Radio 2, Heart, Smooth, Virgin, 5 Live, Radio 4's Today, ITV and a whole plethora of other media outlets. Our purpose has not changed – whilst our audience wants us to increase our pace and feel-good factor, we have a clear public purpose which is rooted in news and information. Our audience is likely to be slightly older than CHR / AC stations (45+) however we know this audience still expects a clean and contemporary sound from their radio.

Our stations feature a mix of music and speech. Audio imaging therefore plays a crucial role in creating a sense of flow, punctuation and transition, as well as the more obvious role of branding the station's identity. Some cuts will lead into music; others will link speech segments. In every event we want IDs to encourage flow and forward momentum

If you have any queries about these challenges please don't hesitate to contact us. We hope that you'll relish the complexity of the commission!

The demo

We would like to hear

- One theme delivered with at least 4 various cuts including a transition (alternative mix out of cuts 1 and 2 not necessary)
- A second theme with at least 2 cuts variations
- News build and bed
- At least one cut with a sing
- Your sonic logo proposal should be very evident.

We appreciate this will be a demo and are looking forward to hearing your ideas and approach and not expecting the finished article

Show-reel

Please provide a show-reel of 2 to 3 tracks of previous work which you feel best demonstrate the range of your repertoire.

Logistics

Please provide details of how you would manage this commission logistically. Will you guarantee us a named composer(s) – if so, whom? Who will produce the tracks? What would be your intended process to manage the volume of work?

Please note that in order to ensure that the safety of the BBC's investment, we will be carrying out appropriate financial checks, including Company Searches.

Selection criteria

We will make our decision on the following basis:

- Your proven track record in delivering a project of this scale and complexity
- Your ability as shown in the demo to understand local radio and deliver the tonal values we are trying to achieve.
- Your ability to deliver high-quality, contemporary production values. We are looking for a richly produced, quality sound.
- Your ability to deliver a package that demonstrates enough *range* to be relevant to the entire local radio network
- Your company's capacity to manage *this* contract logistically. We would welcome your suggested timeline for production and delivery both for initial delivery and refreshes.

Timetable

Brief submitted July 2019, closing date for submissions Friday 13th September 2019. We would then hope to notify the finalists by Friday 20th September 2019

Tech Spec

Demo and audio and documents can be sent to Gareth Roberts and Gerald Jackson using the email addresses provided.

Cost & Rights

The package will be on an 'all rights' basis – allowing the BBC to fully own the package in perpetuity and exclusively. The composer will retain their composer rights and BBC Studios, on behalf of the BBC, will take its full available share of publishing rights (i.e. Rights split 50% to Composer: 50% to BBCS).

There is no payment for demo delivery but all rights to demo material remain with you and no material will be used by the BBC unless commissioned. Please ensure your work doesn't contain any non-cleared samples and is all original composition.

About us

BBC Local Radio is a network of 39 radio stations stretching across England. Each of our stations operate in a unique patch with a distinct local flavour, authentic local personalities and a local agenda which reflects the pride and passion we have for our patch and ability to offer first rate local entertainment, companionship with great music as well as news and information. We also operate as an England wide network sharing a common purpose and common values and we want our new package to be part of the glue that brings local radio stations together with a distinct, recognisable and flexible sound wherever you tune in.

All our stations operate in competitive markets, in many we are now the only truly local station (other than community stations). Our 'big city' stations such as Manchester, London, WM and others are broadcasting in markets with dozens of radio stations battling for market share. Some of our more rural stations continue to enjoy higher share and lower market competition – but they have an equally complex challenge in the changing nature of our audience and their consumption / engagement via digital and social platforms and their changing expectations of us.

From time to time we will have joined up all England moments and programming - so we will need a version of this package which can be BBC Local Radio / Across England branded.

We want this package to help tell exiting listeners we are still there for them but with a refreshed feel and we want this new sound to entice new or very light listeners to disregard any preconceptions they may hold about BBC Local Radio and give us a go and find a new friend.

What we do

We broadcast to an audience of around 6 million listeners across England. The majority of our listeners are aged 50+ but be wary of jumping to conclusions about their attitudes to life, we know we need more listeners in their 40s and early 50s to replenish our audiences. We want people of all ages to be able to find something in the local radio offer that works for them, whether it's our mainstream daytime programmes, our sports offering, a podcast or digital clip via BBC Sounds, Twitter, Instagram or Facebook or tuning into our new evening programmes - many hosted by new young talent and targeting audiences 20 – 35.

We are proud to be local. Just as we are (literally) the front door of the BBC in dozens of local communities, our format is a one-stop shop: we play great music, we find and play new emerging local bands through BBC Music introducing, we showcase local stories but we also feature national and international stories. We hold local politicians and industry leaders to account on behalf of our listeners. We'll report the stories from a closer perspective than other BBC services.

We broadcast a mix of music and speech with a distinctive all-speech offer at Breakfast (when clever use of station sound is particularly important to maintain pace, texture, colour and warmth).

After Breakfast our 'live' sequence programmes offer a speech/music mix which have broad appeal and which inform and entertain at a pace that suits the time of day.

Our mix also embraces carefully selected shows that combine special subject knowledge with broad appeal to general audiences: religion at breakfast time on Sundays, specialist music at the weekend (including a celebration of new local talent), specialist programmes serving specific ethnic minority communities and of course our new weekday evening shows that bring new local talent, young voices, music and stories to the fore.

We are famous for our provision of **essential information**: we offer a **news** bulletin service with all the quality hallmarks of BBC journalism, and as a predominantly live service, covering breaking news is an important part of our remit. **Sport** is another highly-valued part of our output, though again appetites for sport vary across England and by gender (from the popularity of sailing and high levels of participation in sport in the South West to the North East's fanatical approach to football – and again this package needs to encompass both

attitudes to sport – winter & summer). We provide regular **travel** and **weather** reports, often supplemented by eyewitness accounts from our listeners. **Travel** is probably heard up to 4 times an hour at Breakfast and Drive

Above all, what differentiates us from our competitors is our ability to own the local conversation and tell great human stories – that’s what gives us our warm, personal tone, whether it’s a ‘news’ story or not. With presenters that build a relationship with the audience and vice versa.

Our most successful stations mix essential information with great company that makes a real emotional connection, delivered with a BBC quality hallmark.

Our changing audience – we need to build an emotional connection

Our listeners have told us they expected the BBC to deliver high quality essential information. But they asked us to increase the feel-good factor and up the pace. They told us they want to be cheered up and stimulated with good company; they wanted to hear presenters who have something interesting to say, and the music they love.

Whilst the majority of our audience is aged 50+ they asked us to judge them on what they feel and do rather than how old they are. They're having the time of their lives. If they have kids they'll soon be off their hands. They're enjoying travel, relationships, new experiences. They have strong values and tell it as it is, but they're open-minded to new perspectives. They want to feel plugged into the world; from culture to current affairs, both on a local and national level. Family is immensely important to them – both children and parents. They long for a greater sense of community and want us to help them express it.

They use Social Media – they are much more the Facebook generation, than Instagram but our content is often found on Twitter and Instagram and doing well.

At its best BBC Local Radio draws its listeners into an informal, tight-knit, like-minded on-air community, making them feel positively part of the place in which they've chosen to live. We cherish our existing audience and we want to add to it with new listeners who are having the time of their life.

Our values are therefore: feel-good, real and connected.

- Feel-good: lively and fun
- Real: warm, inclusive and relevant, authentically local
- Connected: Accurate and Journalistically sharp

We bring people together. We're the spark of local life. We deliver relevant information and we brighten the day and cheer people up. We do it all with the qualities and values you'd expect of the BBC.

How does this affect this commission? Whilst the successful package must have the ability to encompass cuts that lead into news bulletins and other key information strands, it is *essential* that the package has a contemporary sound with high production values, delivering a warm, inclusive feel-good factor to our listeners that works brilliantly with our music mix. This package should help new or lapsed listeners reappraise BBC Local Radio – it may not be what they'd expected or remembered.

Music loved by our target audience

We're refreshing our music and working with colleagues at Radio 2 to provide a distinctive mix of adult contemporary hits along with some of the biggest, familiar songs from the last 4 decades. We have a weekly playlist and increased the size of our recurrents meaning we have a more contemporary sound than before. We know our audience love our mix of great all-time hits and new music, they'll remember Live Aid but still want to go to Glastonbury!

Contemporary Artists:

- Ed Sheeran
 - Katy Perry
 - Sigrid
 - Jack Savoretti
 - Clean Bandit
 - Jax Jones
- Disco /Soul /00s Dance
 - 80s Pop
 - 90s Brit Pop
 - 70s Easy Rock
 - 60s & Timeless

Aside from our playlist here are just a few examples of some artists that we regularly play:

Take That, ABBA, Coldplay, Kylie, Whitney Houston, Pharrell Williams, David Bowie, Elton John, Sophie Ellis Bextor, Shania Twain, Eagles, Queen, Blondie, Eurythmics, Billy Joel,

Examples of Local Radio music hours. (2019 policy)

BBC Stoke 11 July 2019

13:00 Louise Stones

Title	Artist	Category	Year	Runtime	End
News				3:00	
Black Eyed Boy	Texas	90s	1997	3:12	F
Youth & Love	Jack Savoretti/Mika	PLAYLIST A	2019	3:31	E
Give It Up	KC & The Sunshine Band	80s	1983	4:09	F
The Flood	Take That	2000 +	2010	4:11	E
Sweet Talkin' Woman	Electric Light Orchestra	70s	1978	3:44	F
Thursday	Jess Glynne	RECURRENT	2018	3:32	E
Wake Up Boo	Boo Radleys	90s	1995	3:03	E
It Must Be Love	Madness	80s	1981	3:17	F

BBC Coventry 08 July 2019

16:00 Phil Upton

Title	Artist	Category	Era	Gender	Run Time
News 3:00					3:00
Always On My Mind	Pet Shop Boys	80s	80s	Male	3:50
Youth & Love	Jack Savoretti/Mika	PLAYLIST A	10s	Male	3:31
Young Hearts Run Free	Candi Staton	70s	70s	Female	3:48
Fairground	Simply Red	90s	90s	Male	4:18
No One	Jess Glynne	RECURRENT	10s	Female	3:18
St Elmo's Fire	John Parr	80s	80s	Male	3:57

Examples of music hours from stations below piloting new music policy in conjunction with Radio 2 (broader range of music)

BBC WM 95.6

16 July 2019

05:00 Mollie Green

Title	Artist	Category	Gender	Run T...	Ending
News				3:00	
Mary's Prayer	Danny Wilson	80s	Male	3:44	E
I Love You Always Forever	Donna Lewis	90s	Female	3:52	F
Hold Me While You Wait	Lewis Capaldi	PLAYLIST A	Male	3:22	E
Livin' On A Prayer	Bon Jovi	80s	Male	3:58	F
Telephone Line	Electric Light Orchestra	70s	Male	4:30	F
Love Don't Cost A Thing	Jennifer Lopez	2000 +	Female	3:40	E
Hungry Heart	Bruce Springsteen	80s	Male	3:18	F
How Long Will This Last	Blossoms	RECURRENT	Male	3:18	E
For Once In My Life	Stevie Wonder	60s	Male	2:46	F
If I Could Turn Back Time	Cher	80s	Female	3:54	F
Jesus He Knows Me	Genesis	90s	Male	4:13	F

BBC WM 95.6

18 July 2019

18:00 Paul Franks

Title	Artist	Category	Gender	Run T...	Ending
News				3:00	
Ride On Time	Black Box	80s	Female	4:24	F
Just The Way You Are	Bruno Mars	2000 +	Male	3:39	E
Feel The Same	Olly Murs	RECURRENT	Male	3:11	E
Everlasting Love	The Love Affair	60s	Male	2:58	F
Don't Look Back In Anger	Oasis	90s	Male	4:47	E
Hold Me While You Wait	Lewis Capaldi	PLAYLIST A	Male	3:22	E
Band Of Gold	Freda Payne	70s	Female	2:51	F
Never Gonna Give You Up	Rick Astley	80s	Male	3:28	F

YORK

10 July 2019

11:00 Jonathan Cowap

Title	Artist	Intro 1	Run Time	Ending
News 3:00			3:00	
Losing My Religion	R.E.M.	14	4:25	E
Here With Me	Chvrches/Marshmello	00	2:33	E
Dreams	Fleetwood Mac	17	4:13	E
Get Outta My Dreams Get Into My Car	Billy Ocean	17	4:20	F
The Promise	Girls Aloud	05	3:41	E
Girls & Boys	Blur	32	4:17	F
Church Of The Poison Mind	Culture Club	28	3:26	F