

As political leaders we recognise the need for a robust and diverse media in Northern Ireland.

It can be a vehicle for reflection, communication, investigation and analysis and has provided, in its different forms, a valuable role here over many turbulent years and can provide a similar role in years to come.

Television has contributed greatly in this regard with a strong independent sector competing with the BBC.

Recently we have learned of plans by UTV in Northern Ireland to radically cutback its workforce on the back of Ofcom proposals which may allow the broadcaster to reduce some of its programming. These are minimum proposals which Ofcom has put out for consultation.

However UTV is moving ahead with its cutbacks before the consultation has ended. The process may in fact mean that the cutbacks will have gone ahead before any meaningful discussions conclude.

We fully understand the economic pressures UTV finds itself under but we think it reasonable that UTV should halt its plans to allow for those discussions to go ahead and also for the completion of the Ofcom consultation and final report.

David Purvis
6th November 2008

George Adams
6/11/08

Dairíe Ó Súilleabháin
6.11.08

Martin Mc Guinness
6.11.2008

Paul Givan
7.11.08

Mark Durkan
7.11.'08