

Jeremy Hunt announces plans for a new Communications Act and a new local news channel.

Speaking at the [Oxford Media Convention](#) on January 19th, Hunt made 2 major announcements about the future of media in the UK, including plans for a new Communications Act and the launch of a new local news channel at the end of 2012.

Hunt announced plans for a green paper on the new regulatory framework for communications by the end of 2011 in order to develop a redesigned – “from scratch if necessary” – Communications Act.

Hunt raised key questions such as how to strengthen regulatory certainty? Claiming that in order to ensure continuing investment, government must consider a radical approach and continue

“thinking hard about what is public service content. Should it continue to be the case that the method of delivery determines the method of regulation or should we have a more platform neutral approach?”

Plans for this year involve a thorough review of media and communications because Hunt wants to ensure that

“we have the most modern, innovation and investment-friendly legal structure in place.”

Hunt also announced the launch of “an action plan for local media.” Hunt emphasized his view that whilst the long term future for local media lies in IPTV, Freeview will offer a platform for promoting city stations during the transition. Starting with a network affiliate model on DTTV, Hunt plans to invite input into how the channel will work. Significantly, this action plan means “a new channel dedicated to the provision of local news.” Hunt plans to award local licences by the end of 2012.

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