

# Written Ministerial Statement on Secretary of State's 'minded to' intervene decision in the acquisition by Newsquest of Archant

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has today written to Newsquest Media Group and Archant Community Media, to inform them that I am 'minded to' issue an Intervention Notice. This relates to concerns I have that there may be public interest considerations – as set out in section 58 of Enterprise Act 2002 – that are relevant to the recent acquisition of Archant Media by Newsquest Media and that these concerns warrant further investigation.

A 'minded to' letter has therefore been issued to the parties on one public interest ground specified in section 58 of the Enterprise Act 2002:

(2B) The need for, to the extent that it is reasonable and practicable, a sufficient plurality of views in newspapers in each market for newspapers in the United Kingdom or a part of the United Kingdom

It is important to note that I have not taken a final decision on intervention at this stage. In line with the statutory guidance on media mergers, the 'minded to' letter invites further representations in writing from the parties and gives them until 29 April to respond. I will then make my final decision, which needs to be made on a quasi-judicial basis, on whether to issue an Intervention Notice.

If I decide to issue an Intervention Notice, the next stage would be for Ofcom to assess and report to me on the public interest concerns and for the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to assess and report to me on whether a relevant merger situation has been created and any impact this may have on competition. Following these reports, I will decide whether to refer the matter for a more detailed investigation by the CMA under section 45 of the Enterprise Act 2002.

I will keep Parliament updated on progress with this media merger case.