

Midlothian MSP argues case for local TV

✖ There is to be a debate on Scottish TV in Holyrood tonight from 5.00pm and SNP MSP Christine Grahame wants to use the opportunity of telling the rest of Scotland that people in the Borders are not being considered by the UK Government.

The motion tabled by Ms Grahame is as follows:-

That the Parliament expresses its disappointment that the Scottish Borders has been omitted from a list of locations eligible to bid for a local broadcasting licence; notes that Jeremy Hunt, the UK minister responsible for broadcasting has stated:- "I want people to be able to watch television that's truly relevant to them, about what's happening where they live and featuring people they know"; therefore is astonished that he seems to have failed to consider the Scottish Borders and towns such as Galashiels as a location in spite of the fact that the Scottish Borders is served not by STV but Border TV, broadcasting from Gateshead and covering also the north of England and the Isle of Man, thus depriving Borderers of both national and local coverage; considers that this is further evidence supporting devolution of broadcasting, and, in the meantime and until such time as Scotland establishes its own digital network, would welcome the Scottish Borders being included on the list of possible sites.

The Midlothian South, Tweeddale and Lauderdale MSP plans to lead the discussion in Parliament on the omission of the Scottish Borders from the list of locations eligible to bid for a local broadcasting licence. She says her constituency and surrounding region suffer from a deficit in national and local commercial TV coverage as people living here are unable

to receive STV.

[The debate](#) comes on the back of a Parliamentary Motion submitted by Ms Grahame last month entitled Jeremy Hunt Doesn't Get the Picture so Neither Does the Borders.

This outlined her concerns about the lack of both national and local coverage in the region.

Ms Grahame will say:- "Local TV services have the potential to bring benefits to viewers in my constituency. However, the UK Government's plans fall far short of the mark.

"I have real concerns about Jeremy Hunt's proposals which would leave gaping holes in provision, particularly in rural areas. My constituency is arguably one of the parts of Scotland most in need of local television."

Ms Grahame will also compliment the South of Scotland Alliance which is currently pursuing the case for local TV in the region.

She will say: "In the meantime, and in parallel, I have been impressed by the operation of URTV in Helensburgh – you can watch on-line – which would be a foot in the local TV door.

"I am enthused by this prospect and I hope the Minister will be equally enthused not only by pressing the case with Jeremy Hunt but additionally examining the Helensburgh example and perhaps commissioning a pilot in, say, Peebles."

You may be able to [watch the debate here](#).