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## Model Letter (Local)

Engaging with elected representatives and putting pressure on them to initiate debates is an essential part of trying to change the media landscape.

Whether it's an email or a letter, this is the first contact, so make it count!

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Several people can sign a letter (sent hard-copy or more usually as a PDF) to show the breadth of support from trade unionists, academics, civil society groups etc. In many cases though, a straightforward email is fine.

Being concrete is good but keep it broad at this stage and go easy on the facts/figures.

Get in touch at least 2-3 weeks in advance of when you'd like to meet, but don't specify a date.

Allow 1.5 weeks before following up with a phone call. When you've managed to schedule a date, provide a list of 2-4 people attending the meeting.



Dear [...],

I'm writing as a resident in your constituency who's passionate about local media. Myself and members of [...insert name of community media platform or campaigning group] would like to request a meeting with you to discuss the current situation regarding media diversity in [...insert name of city/town/area].

In 35% of Local Government Areas across the UK a single publisher has a 100% monopoly on local newspaper circulation, while 25% of LGAs are not served by any local paper at all. Meanwhile Sky News Radio supplies news to almost every commercial radio station, meaning that radio is effectively under duopoly control of Sky and the BBC. The situation in [...insert name of your city/town/area], in terms of mainstream news coverage, reflects this national picture. **[You may want to mention something about specific media outlets in your area - e.g. look up who owns your local newspapers].**

Local media plays a key role in making politics accountable and allows elected representatives to build links with engaged citizens. It has the potential to be a celebration of local life in all its richness and diversity, giving voice to multiple identities and cultures.

The current provision of news from traditional sources is falling short of this potential, being undermined by owners determined to protect short term profits yet unwilling to invest in staff and resources for quality journalism. New initiatives in community journalism point the way forward, but without adequate support they remain precarious ventures.

I would be delighted therefore if you would consider meeting briefly with myself and members of [...insert name of community media platform or campaigning group] to discuss your ideas on local media plurality and your plans to address the existing problems. A brief meeting would be an invaluable guide to developing our own thinking and a chance to talk through some of the main questions.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

**[insert your name, plus names of relevant group representatives]**