

Letter to Marks and Spencers

I am following up my questions to you about the possible closure of the Wokingham store after hearing the views of more of my constituents.

There is a general feeling amongst those interested in the issue that we would like Marks and Spencer to stay in the town. The Town Centre as you know is currently undergoing a substantial redevelopment to make it a more attractive retail centre with more floorspace. Wokingham Borough is expanding with four major new sites for additional housing, including two nearby in Wokingham itself. New residents will need good shops. The Borough expects these changes to generate more footfall in Wokingham centre. The area around the Marketplace is a great setting for shopping, with a rich diversity of places to have a coffee or buy a meal. The Town actively promotes itself with a calendar of events designed to bring more people into the centre.

Your sales figures and market research will of course inform your judgements about the retail offer that would work best for your business. There does seem to be more direct competition on food than on some of your standard textile lines which might have a bearing on how best to trade your current unit.

I would be happy to help find a way to keep it open to serve future Wokingham customers.

Andrew Gwynne response to Theresa May's speech this afternoon in South Wales

Andrew Gwynne MP, Labour's Campaigns and Elections Chair, in response to Theresa May's speech this afternoon in South Wales, said:

"It is clearer than ever that a vote for the Tories is a vote for the few, not the many. Rather than uniting the country and tackling the challenges we face, their policies are divisive and are taking us backwards.

"Only Labour will invest to create shared prosperity. Only Labour will protect our public services."

Press release – Media services: same rules needed for TV and internet to protect children better – Committee on Culture and Education

Children should have the same protection whether they are watching TV, a web-shared video or a web-streamed film, said committee MEPs on Tuesday.

Culture Committee MEPs advocated tightening up the child protection provisions of EU rules on audiovisual media services and also those on advertising and promoting European audiovisual works. Their ideas still need to be endorsed by Parliament as a whole.

Protecting children against violence, hatred, terrorism and harmful advertising

Video-sharing platforms will have to take corrective measures if users flag any content as inciting violence, hatred or terrorism, MEPs agreed. To this end, these platforms would need to put in place an easy-to-use mechanism allowing users to report content and be informed of measures taken.

MEPs also propose banning advertising and product placement for tobacco, electronic cigarettes and alcohol in children's TV programmes and video-sharing platforms.

Rapporteur Sabine Verheyen (EPP, DE) said: "One of our main priorities is the protection of minors. We proposed adapting some of the rules applying to programmes on television to internet services, such as rules on advertising, product placement and sponsorship. Certain advertising in programmes aimed at a children's audience will be restricted, allowed only to a very limited extent or will be prohibited in general."

New quotas on TV advertising

For TV advertising, MEPs agreed on new rules imposing a maximum 20% daily quota, giving the broadcaster the flexibility of adjusting their advertising periods.

European content quota of 30% for on-demand platforms

To reflect Europe's cultural diversity, MEPs called for a 30% quota of European works in on-demand platform catalogues, instead of the 20% proposed by the EU Commission. This quote should include works in the languages of the countries where they are distributed.

Under the amended rules, EU member states could ask on-demand platforms to contribute financially to the development of European audiovisual productions, either by investing directly in content or by contributing to national funds. Their contributions should be proportional to their revenues in the country where they would contribute.

Rapporteur Petra Kammerevert (S&D, DE) said: "To increase quotas for video-on-demand offers does not necessarily ensure a stimulation of new European audiovisual content, but it is a clear EU policy signal. Such a quota should be achievable and should not be an undue burden on anybody". "At the same time, we want to enable member countries to commit video on demand platforms to payments of national film funds that can stimulate the production of new European works".

Next steps

Parliament as a whole will decide on 15 May in Strasbourg whether to open inter-institutional talks, for the final approval of the legislation, on the basis of the committee proposals. The Council plans to adopt its negotiating mandate on 23 May.

[ESMA publishes an opinion on MAR accepted market practices on liquidity contracts](#)

Background

MAR's purpose is to guarantee the integrity of European financial markets and promote investor confidence. The concept of market abuse typically consists of insider dealing, unlawful disclosure of inside information, and market manipulation.

However, some exceptions apply. The prohibition of insider dealing and market manipulation does not apply to trading in own shares in buy-back programs or trading in securities for the stabilisation of securities when some conditions laid down in MAR are met. Moreover, MAR does not apply to public

authorities in pursuit of monetary, exchange rate or public debt management policy. Other specific exceptions apply in the framework of the EU's climate policy or the EU's Agricultural Policy for instance. MAR also provides a defence against market manipulation if the transaction was legitimate and carried out in accordance with an AMP and MAR describes the non-exhaustive factors that a competent authority should take into account before deciding whether or not to accept a market practice.

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