

Complaint re Nolan Show on Radio Ulster aired on 05/11/2025

I am writing to formally complain about the above programme broadcast on Radio Ulster on 5th November.

The entire debate on the Motability scheme was set up on a false pretence – that is that

- young people are accessing luxury cars via the Motability scheme and that;
- there are no rules in place ensuring the cars are used for the benefit of the disabled person.

These are inaccurate claims made freely by the presenter and easily debunked by ‘googling’ or going to the Motability website, which is something I’d expect Nolan and his team to have done before even deciding to cover the topic.

Given the entire premise of the angle was manufactured from falsehoods, it leaves the listener wondering what BBC Radio Ulster’s agenda was with this piece and where it came from? Other than to sensationalise the issue further and vilify disabled people in the process, of course.

The distorted portrayal of the issue by the media is causing distress and harm to disabled people on a daily basis and, as such, I would expect the BBC to have a rounded out discussion instead of focusing almost exclusively on luxury cars (only 6% of Motability leases in UK), fraud (0%, UK Govt stats) and 18/19 year olds in Motability leased BMWs & Mercs at night (0% due to those specific cars being unavailable to under 25s).

The broadcast piece was also full of inaccuracies. Instead of listing them all, I have highlighted the most egregious below. As a result there were multiple breaches of the editorial guidelines and I argue that the entire premise of the debate from the beginning, as a result of a decision to rely on inaccurate and imaginary scenarios instead of factual or evidenced information, breached the principle of impartiality.

Contrary to statements made by the presenter live on air, people under 25 cannot drive luxury cars like BMWs or Mercedes via the Motability Scheme. This information is readily available on the Motability website. Breach of editorial guidelines on accuracy, fairness and impartiality.

Contrary to statements made by the presenter live on air, there is a rule that the car must be used for the benefit of the disabled person, again, information readily available on the Motability Website. There is also a penalty attached to the rule. Breach of editorial guidelines on accuracy, fairness and impartiality.

Contrary to statements made by the presenter live on air, the lowest advance payment for a BMW or Mercedes on the scheme is six times the amount quoted, being £2,999, not £400/£500. Again, this information is readily available on the Motability Website. Breach of editorial guidelines on accuracy, fairness and impartiality.

The show could have focused on the great many people who can already no longer afford to lease a car that meets their needs under the scheme due to ever increasing Advance Payments.

The show could have focused on the great many people who would love to lease the electric cars being pushed at £0 Advance Payments but can’t due to the lack of driveways in social housing, for example and how governments will be unable to meet targets without addressing it.

The show could have focused on how people who may end up completely excluded from the scheme will also be completely excluded from society due to the underfunded and underdeveloped public transport system we have here in NI.

But instead a decision was made to incite the public to look a little closer at who is driving Motability vehicles in a society that already discriminates against disabled people but in particular those with invisible disabilities.

Shame on the Nolan Show and BBC Radio Ulster.

N.B. I am unable to submit this complaint via the Website as there is insufficient space to do so.

Please pass to complaints team for investigation and I would like a response.

Thank you.

NAME

ADDRESS

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