

## Recruitment tops agenda as... NEC backs action to tackle 'tough financial situation'

■ A recommendation from the union's Finance Committee to restrict freelance loss of earnings to two days at this year's Annual Delegate Meeting was rejected.

■ The NEC welcomed the setting up of a new Chapel in the press and communications department at Barking and Dagenham Council following an event held on 5 November as part of the union's Stand up for Journalism day of action.

The union faces an "extremely tough financial period" and urgent steps need to be taken to bring spending back in line with income or the union risks lurching towards a financial crisis, the General Secretary told NEC members.

A pensions deficit, a decline in union membership arising from widespread redundancies across the industry and rising costs have led to the union facing an overdraft of up to £500,000 as well as a pensions deficit of

upwards of £2m.

"This is not a crisis like we have seen in the past but unless we act and take temporary but urgent steps to balance income and expenditure there is a danger a crisis unfolds. We must not make the mistakes others did in the past.

As part of the cost-saving plans the NEC agreed a package of measures including a freeze on new staff posts, a policy of not automatically filling vacancies, capping branch man-

*Continued over*

## RECRUITMENT

### Go get 'em!

Recruitment, building membership and strong workplace organisation are the key to tackling the union's financial problems in the longer term President Michelle Stanistreet told the NEC.

Union membership declined by 226 last year - the first decline in more than 7 years - which was a major factor in the union's current financial difficulties.

The NEC backed plans to put recruitment at the heart of the union's work over the next 18 months - highlighting a number of workplaces and sectors which would be targeted, endorsing plans for a Reps Week later this year, to help ensure recruitment is central to building strong, well-organised workplace chapels and freelance networks.

Alongside winning new members, the NEC will co-ordinate a trial project targeting a number of larger, active branches to persuade lapsed members to return and those who are in danger of being lapsed to continue their membership. The trial will run for 6 months. If it is successful more branches will be included in future.

## President delivers NEC support to Citizen strikers



NUJ President Michelle Stanistreet joined strikers at the Milton Keynes Citizen defending quality journalism as the NEC voted to back the strike. See how you can help overleaf.

## Stand Up for Journalism

# Take campaign in to the workplace

● Broadcasting regulator **Ofcom** is to organise a series of road shows as part of its review of public service broadcasting. The NEC is urging Branches and Chapels to use the public events as an opportunity to build support for the union's Save ITV news campaign. Details of events are at [www.ofcom.org.uk](http://www.ofcom.org.uk). If you are planning to attend one of the events email [campaigns@nuj.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@nuj.org.uk) for a briefing on the key issues for the union. Details of the Save ITV news campaign are at <http://saveitvnews.blogspot.com/>

● Proposals in the **Employment Bill** which would increase the penalties for companies who fail to pay the National Minimum Wage and plans to simplify ballots for industrial action were welcomed. But the NEC expressed its disappointment that the Bill failed to tackle the vast majority of the anti-trade union laws still in place in the UK.

## NEC takes action over finances

*Continued from page 1*

agement allowances, curbing international travel and reducing payments to NUJ Extra. The executive has also tabled motions to the Annual Delegate Meeting to reduce the size of the conference and the National Executive Council and put a cap on future donations to the union's charities. In addition the union's annual report will be produced as a pdf and available to all members via the website. All councils and committees have also been asked to consider savings that can be made over the coming weeks.

The union's **Stand Up for Journalism** campaign should be taken up in every workplace and Branch and become the 'brand' which brings together core strands of the union's work. The NEC backed plans to reinvigorate the campaign at the Annual Delegate Meeting, encouraging local activity around issues such as job and budget cuts, under-resourcing, lack of training and threats to quality journalism. To help build the campaign the union will provide an updated website, new materials for use in local campaigns and commission research on the effects of staffing shortages and cuts in resources on quality in media.



**just when you thought it was safe...**

...those plans will put some additional pressure on existing job numbers...if there are to be further redundancies, I believe we should tell colleagues and get on with them as soon as we can..."

Mark Thompson, 9 February 2007

**SPEAK OUT...**

**before it's too late**

**Oppose compulsory redundancies**

NUJ

## Working with other unions

● The NEC has urged Branches and Chapels to get involved with their local **Trades Union Councils** to help build wider support for NUJ campaigns. Trades Councils bring together unions in towns, cities and regions across the UK and Ireland to campaign and lobby on issues affecting individual unions and the movement as whole. For details of your local trades council see [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk) For details of the working programme see [www.tuc.org.uk/the\\_tuc/tuc\\_13954-fo.cfm](http://www.tuc.org.uk/the_tuc/tuc_13954-fo.cfm)

## Celebrate first pensions

● The NUJ is to join events across the UK to mark the centenary of the introduction of the state pension. Events, to be co-ordinated by the **National Pensioners Convention**, will be used both to celebrate the introduction of the state pension and campaign for it to be raised to tackle pensioner poverty. More details are available at [www.npcuk.org](http://www.npcuk.org)

## Thanks

● NEC members thanked Brussels Branch member **John Chapman** who has stood down as Chair of the union's Continental European Council.

## Executive urges support for disputes

The NEC gave its backing to members taking part in disputes at the Milton Keynes Citizen over pay and at the BBC over job cuts and plans to end allowances worth up to £5000 a year. Members at the Citizen are striking over the company's below-inflation pay offer - this despite the fact that staff have had to take on more work as a result of non-replacement of journalists who have left.

A collection among NEC members for the Milton Keynes strikers hardship fund raised over £175. Updates on both disputes are available at [www.nuj.org.uk](http://www.nuj.org.uk)

Branches can make **donations** payable to NUJ (marked on back 'Milton Keynes Citizen' NUJ') and send them to General Secretary, Headland House, 308 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8DP.

**Messages of support** can be emailed to [campaigns@nuj.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@nuj.org.uk) or texted to MoC Karen Jeffery at 07865 050470. Send **protests** to Managing Director Graham Russell at [graham.russell@mkcitizen.co.uk](mailto:graham.russell@mkcitizen.co.uk)