

## **NUJ response to consultation on BBC Royal Charter Review green paper**

### **About the NUJ**

The National Union of Journalists (NUJ) is the voice for journalism and journalists in the UK and Ireland. It was founded in 1907 and has 22,000 members working in newspapers, news agencies, digital media, magazines, book publishing, public relations, photography, videography and broadcasting. The NUJ is affiliated to the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and is not affiliated to any political party.

The NUJ represents around 3,000 members working at the BBC across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as thousands of freelances working in the media sector. Our response to this consultation is informed by our members' experiences over many years as well as responses to an internal union survey on Charter Renewal.

The BBC plays a vital and prominent role in our society, reaching 94% of adults on average each month and providing the most trusted source of news in the UK. The need for accurate, impartial, and universally available journalism has only grown at a time of social media disinformation, AI-supercharged fake news, and corporate consolidation of media ownership.

Charter Renewal offers a unique opportunity to secure the funding and systemic reforms the BBC needs to guarantee its future at the centre of UK cultural life for decades to come. The NUJ welcomes the chance to engage with the government on Charter Renewal, though the scope and framing of some of the questions in this consultation is limited. The union trusts that the opinions of audiences, workers at the BBC, and the organisations representing them will be taken on board. The NUJ would welcome the opportunity for further engagement on Charter Renewal and calls for future public consultations to be widely promoted via the BBC's on air and online channels. The white paper and key decisions affecting the BBC's funding must also be subject to parliamentary scrutiny.

We call on the government to be bold and back the BBC, its audiences and its workers.

## **Introduction: The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes**

**Question 1. Do you agree or disagree that the BBC's current Mission and Public Purposes should remain the same?**

- Agree - The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes should remain the same
- Disagree - The BBC's Mission and Public Purposes should change
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should have a specific Public Purpose to support economic growth?**

- Strongly agree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should definitely be added.
- Agree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should probably be added.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should probably not be added.
- Strongly disagree - A Public Purpose aiming to support the growth of the creative economy should definitely not be added.
- Unsure

*The BBC already supports the growth of the wider creative industries. This is acknowledged in the fourth Public Purpose, which states that the BBC should “reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all of the United Kingdom's nations and regions and, in doing so, support the creative economy across the United Kingdom.” Investment in the BBC is an investment in the wider creative sector and freelance opportunities, thus driving economic growth. The BBC's inherent value as a public service must be recognised; supporting economic growth should not be pursued at the expense of the BBC's public service broadcasting obligations.*

**Question 3. Which option, if any, most closely represents your feelings on whether the BBC should continue to provide a wide range of content and services that represent all audiences in a way that brings communities together, supports social cohesion, and helps build a unifying national story throughout the next Charter period?**

- The BBC should do more to represent all audiences. The BBC should provide more content and services aiming to represent all audiences.

- The BBC is doing the right amount to represent all audiences. Currently, enough is being done to ensure all audiences are represented. The BBC should continue to provide content and services aiming to represent all audiences.
- The BBC is not doing enough to represent all audiences, but no further action should be taken. Currently, not enough is being done to ensure all audiences are represented. However, there are other areas the BBC should focus on instead of providing more content and services aiming to represent all audiences.
- The BBC does too much to represent all audiences. The BBC should provide less content and fewer services aiming to represent all audiences.
- No opinion either way
- Unsure

**Question 4. If you agree that the BBC should continue or do more to play this role, what options aiming to improve how the BBC reflects and represents all audiences do you support, if any? (Please select all that apply)**

- Producing more content that is distinctive to the UK
- Covering genres which are less covered by other broadcasters e.g. arts, minority language broadcasting
- Producing more content that brings people together around shared moments
- Sharing diverse voices and perspectives from all parts of the UK
- Improving on and off screen diversity
- Other, please specify [Free text box; 50 words]
- No changes are necessary
- Unsure or no opinion

Local radio cuts should be reversed to reach underserved and underrepresented nations, regions and communities. The BBC should also lead a national media literacy initiative to help people navigate disinformation and divisive narratives, improving social cohesion. The BBC can only achieve this and the options above with enhanced, sustainable funding.

## **Chapter 1: A trusted institution**

**Question 5. To what extent do you agree or disagree that new requirements on the BBC should be introduced so that the BBC does more to improve workplace standards?**

- Strongly agree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should definitely be introduced.

- Agree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should probably be introduced.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should probably not be introduced.
- Strongly disagree - New requirements on the BBC to improve workplace standards should definitely not be introduced.
- Unsure

**Question 6. How, if at all, does the amount those working for the BBC are paid impact your view of the BBC? When responding, you may wish to consider how much it impacts your trust in the BBC's outputs and whether it affects how much you engage with BBC services. [200 word open box]**

While the salaries of the BBC's top earners and senior management attract headlines, most workers have experienced a real-terms pay cut since 2010 due to freezes and reductions to the licence fee. There must be improved pay and conditions to retain experienced staff and maintain quality editorial standards.

Addressing pay disparities will enhance the BBC's reputation as an employer. There have been high profile examples of women journalists being paid less than their male counterparts, including presenters winning landmark equal pay cases in recent years. Yet in 2025 the BBC's mean gender pay gap increased to 5.7% while the mean ethnicity pay gap increased to 3.5%. More action must be taken to ensure pay structures are clear and transparent, workers are treated equally and that their work is valued fairly.

**Question 7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC is currently accountable to the public?**

- Strongly agree - The BBC is almost always accountable to the public.
- Agree - The BBC is mostly accountable to the public.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The BBC is rarely accountable to the public.
- Strongly disagree - The BBC is almost never accountable to the public.
- Unsure

**Question 8. Which of the following options aiming to enhance the BBC's accountability, if any, do you support? (Please select all that apply)**

- Requiring the BBC to use consultative forums, such as citizens' assemblies, so that decision-making represents the public's views and voices

- Requiring the BBC to hear regional perspectives through new consultative frameworks or other structures, representing each of the UK's nations and/or regions
- Enhancing how the BBC conducts audience research to help inform decision making
- Strengthening requirements of the Board to ensure the BBC engages with the public in a meaningful way
- Changing the structure of the Board to enhance its effectiveness and accountability
- Changing the Board's appointment process, this could include reducing the government's role in board appointments to appointing the Chair only
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of board members, this could include setting out duties for the Chair
- Enhancing the role of the independent board members and their ability to hold the BBC to account
- Strengthening the external scrutiny of the BBC, this could include, for example, greater oversight by Ofcom or Parliament
- Other (please specify) [free text]
- No changes are necessary
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 9. The government is considering targeted changes to increase transparency in the BBC to enhance BBC accountability over the next Charter period. Which options, if any, do you support? (Please select all that apply)**

- Improving the way the BBC communicates important information so it is clear, concise and able to be understood by everyone
- Requiring the BBC to communicate important information better to industry stakeholders, particularly to other UK broadcasters
- Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its complaints process, particularly to those who submit complaints
- Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about the process for selecting which programmes should be made and broadcast
- Requiring the BBC to communicate more information about its editorial decisions
- Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]
- No changes are necessary
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 10. Why, if at all, does the BBC's independence matter to you? (Please select all that apply)**

- It allows the BBC to be free from government or political influence in the content it releases

- It allows the BBC to be impartial when reporting on elections, government policies, and political parties
- It allows the BBC to hold government to account and/or be critical of government
- It allows the BBC to be editorially independent and make the final call on what stories to cover and how to cover them
- It allows the BBC to pursue its own agenda, without interference, so it can provide content that serves audiences across the UK
- Other, please specify [Free text]
- The BBC's independence does not matter to me
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 11. What measures to increase the BBC's independence from government, if any, should be prioritised to support greater trust in, and engagement with, the BBC? In your response you may wish to explain your reasoning and provide relevant evidence. [free text limited to 200 words]**

Governance reform is fundamental to improving the BBC's independence. To increase accountability and trust both internally and externally, workers must have a say on the BBC's most important oversight and decision-making body. In an NUJ survey on Charter Renewal completed by hundreds of members at the BBC, 90% agreed that there should be worker representation on the BBC board, with at least a quarter of board seats filled by employees from non-management roles to champion public interest journalism without political interference.

In addition to worker representation, the BBC board and its chair should be chosen by an arms-length body to protect the corporation from government interference and guarantee greater independence. 91% of respondents to the NUJ's Charter Renewal survey agreed that there should be no political appointees to the BBC board. NUJ members have also called for improved whistle-blowing procedures for staff so that breaches of editorial standards can be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Ultimately, a secure funding settlement with sustained licence fee increases will enable the BBC to deliver quality news provision and improved, pay, conditions and training for staff, further protecting journalists' right to report freely - without fear or interference - and thus the BBC's independence.

## Chapter 2: Delivering services for the public good

**Question 12. What, if anything, should the BBC focus on to ensure AI is used for the public good, and for the benefit of the wider creative industries? Please select all that apply.**

- Transparently explaining its own use of AI, for example, in the creation of content and services
- Having new requirements (for example, transparency obligations), to set the ethical standards for AI's use in public service media organisations
- Teaching audiences how to recognise where AI has been used, and to critically assess the reliability of information and content
- Helping audiences to use AI themselves, for example, teaching them basic prompting skills
- Find innovative uses of AI to drive efficiencies within the BBC and in the wider media sector
- Act as a bridge between AI companies and smaller public service media who have less time and money to negotiate, helping to support wider collaboration
- Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]
- The new Charter should not introduce obligations around AI for the BBC
- Unsure or no opinion

The NUJ welcomes the recognition that AI should only be used for public good. AI-generated news presents a significant threat to public trust in journalism so the BBC must adopt a careful, transparent approach. The BBC should be an industry-leading employer in the ethical use of AI within journalism and the wider creative industries. To do this, new technology must be deployed with proper safeguards and only after consultation with workers and their trade union representatives.

The BBC should therefore focus on engaging meaningfully and routinely with the NUJ and other unions that comprise the Broadcasting, Entertainment & Arts Unions (BEAU) - who collectively represent thousands of workers at the BBC - to ensure that all workplace AI policies are shaped and signed off by staff.

Any collective licensing agreements that would allow the BBC's journalism or archives to be used to train AI must be revocable and aligned with the BBC's public service remit. They must not contain blanket agreements for 'any and all future uses'. The government should also require the BBC - and all publishers - to ensure that any text, images, video or audio created with AI is clearly labelled as such.

**Question 13. What kind of programming, if any, do you think the BBC should make more visible on its platforms? (Please select all that apply)**

- News and current affairs programming
- Arts, religious and international affairs programming (sometimes referred to as 'underserved' genres)
- Children's and educational programming
- Programming showing different voices and perspectives from across the UK
- Locally relevant programming
- Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]
- The new Charter should not require the BBC to make specific types of programmes more visible
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 14. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should make greater use of third party platforms to share its content?**

- Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely make greater use of third party platforms to share its content
- Agree - The BBC should probably make greater use of third party platforms to share its content
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way
- Disagree - The BBC should not make greater use of third party platforms to share its content
- Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not make greater use of third party platforms to share its content
- Unsure

**Question 15. Reflecting on your response above, please explain why you agree or disagree that the BBC should make greater use of third party platforms to share its content. Please provide relevant evidence, where possible. [free text limited to 200 words]**

Any partnerships with third party platforms must not compromise the universal accessibility, impartiality or public service remit of the BBC's journalism. The NUJ opposes any measures that would open the door to the commercialisation of the BBC. Markets fluctuate and the BBC must not become overly reliant on revenues generated through third party platforms. Use of third party platforms by public services broadcasters should be considered in the round by government and regulators as part of the evolution of public service broadcasting in the UK.

**Question 16. What, if anything, do you believe would improve the value and relevance of BBC news and current affairs to you? This includes all BBC news and current affairs content, including its TV, radio and online news services, and local, national and international news outputs.**

- A renewed focus on accuracy and impartiality
- More clearly marking when content is news versus where it is opinion
- Robust and transparent editorial guidelines applied consistently
- Greater explanation of the editorial and journalistic decisions taken when reporting the news
- Greater transparency when mistakes and errors are made
- More effort to be made in taking into account the public's views in its news coverage
- Reporting more news stories which are local to you
- Reporting more international news stories
- Highlighting stories which are not reported by other outlets
- Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]
- No changes are necessary
- Unsure or no opinion

**Question 17. Thinking about the next Charter period, what role, if any, do you think the BBC should have in ensuring UK citizens can recognise and access trusted and accurate information? Please provide any relevant evidence to support your response. [200 word text box]**

As a public service broadcaster and the most trusted source of news in the UK, the BBC should play a central role in enabling people to recognise and access accurate information. The BBC should lead a nationwide media literacy initiative with government alongside other public broadcasters, equipping children and adults with the necessary skills to navigate an era of disinformation and deep fakes. This should be complemented by investment in news resources like BBC Verify that help the public assess and interrogate the veracity of sources and information.

The BBC can best champion access to accurate information by ensuring its own journalism is an example of how to deliver trusted news to diverse audiences. The BBC's ability to produce locally-relevant, community-centred reporting is central to maintaining democratic accountability and public trust. The government therefore has a responsibility to deliver sufficient funding to enable the BBC to reverse damaging Local Radio cuts and increase investment in both digital and linear news.

Improving access to trusted information is not the sole responsibility of the BBC. The NUJ's News Recovery Plan outlines various measures the government can introduce to

improve access to quality journalism and stem the spread of inaccurate, untrustworthy information.

**Question 18. The BBC's international output showcases the UK, its culture and its values to a global audience. This includes the BBC World Service, which seeks to provide access to trusted news around the world in an increasingly challenging international environment. To what extent do you agree it is important that the BBC continues to perform these roles internationally?**

- Strongly agree - The BBC must continue to provide this role internationally.
- Agree - The BBC should continue to provide this role internationally.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The BBC should not continue to provide this role internationally.
- Strongly Disagree - The BBC must not continue to provide this role internationally.
- Unsure

### **Chapter 3: Driving growth across the UK**

**Question 19. What, if anything, do you value about the BBC being UK-wide? (Please select all that apply)**

- Bringing people together from different communities across the UK, including its nations and regions
- Representing people from across the UK
- Telling local stories to a national audience
- Providing local news and information
- Money spent in local areas
- Stimulating local creative clusters (e.g. MediaCity in Greater Manchester, BBC's new headquarters in the West Midlands), including through supporting the independent production sector.
- Jobs and skills development for local people
- Other, please specify [free text limited to 200 words]
- None of the above
- Unsure

**Question 20. (1) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the BBC should be required to spread more of its spending, activities, and decision-making across nations and regions of the UK?**

- Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.
- Agree - The BBC should probably do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The BBC should probably not do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.
- Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not do more to spread its spending, activities and decision making across nations and regions of the UK.
- Unsure

**Question 20. (2) Which option(s), if any, would you support for spreading the BBC's economic impact and role supporting the production sector across the UK nations and regions? (Please select all that apply).**

- Requiring the BBC to develop long-term strategies for regional creative sector development
- Further quotas or obligations for producing content outside London and the M25
- New quota targets for basing staff involved in commissioning content across the UK nations and regions
- Governance changes to give regional or local leads for commissioning content more control over their budget and decision-making
- Changing the rules so location is factored into decision-making around commissioning content from independent production companies
- Other: please specify
- None of the above
- Unsure or no opinion

The NUJ endorses the proposals made by other BEAU unions to support the production sector. More broadly, the NUJ supports potential expansion of the Local Democracy Reporter scheme and notes the mention in the green paper of a potential mandate for the BBC to “develop a public service partnerships strategy, including a requirement that it must explore partnerships with high quality local media outlets.” The NUJ has argued that the LDR scheme should also be reformed so that no public money goes to companies cutting frontline journalistic roles, taking executive bonuses or blocking trade unions. This followed concerns raised by NUJ members that some employers were taking advantage of the scheme, demanding unacceptable story counts and offering low pay. Expansion of the scheme should not be based on top slicing the licence fee from elsewhere.

**Question 21. What, if anything, do you think the BBC could do to fill skills gaps in the creative sector? Please provide any relevant evidence, where possible. [Free-text box; 200 words]**

The BBC should improve on- and off-screen diversity initiatives, offering training programmes and apprenticeships to people from diverse, working-class backgrounds who are traditionally denied entry to journalism.

The BBC should lead the way in ethical AI training to equip journalists and other creative workers with an understanding of the legal, regulatory, and ethical implications of AI usage. The NUJ recognises the potential to use AI within journalism - but only as an assistive tool with human oversight and not as a means to replace the skill, knowledge and experience of journalists. Workplace training is essential for upholding standards and retaining experienced staff.

Again, the BBC must receive the requisite funding to achieve this. The BBC is a major enabler and driver of the UK's creative economy. The BBC needs adequate funding to invest in programming and journalism that allows it to compete with digital news organisations, social media platforms and other state-funded news services around the world.

**Question 22. If you represent an organisation that has worked with the BBC in the past, please share your reflections and provide evidence on your experience of how your partnership has worked and how it could be improved. You may wish to consider how you aligned vision and goals for the partnership, trust, communication, transparency, decision-making, or other aspects of partnership working.**

**What went well? [Free-text box; 350 words]**

**What could be improved? [Free-text box; 350 words]**

The NUJ engages regularly and constructively with the BBC as a recognised trade union within the corporation. Budgetary pressures, continuous restructures and job cuts have at times put the relationship between the BBC and the union under strain as members' workloads and stress increase while their real-terms pay decreases. The union will always welcome further meaningful engagement and action in response to issues raised by members. Worker representation on the board and robust independent governance will provide an improved framework for relations with the BBC's staff. The BBC should set standards that positively impact the rest of the sector, lifting terms and conditions and protecting freelancers.

**Question 23. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation with an interest in R&D (e.g. a production company, university, a technology hardware company), how would you like to see the BBC supporting innovation? Please provide relevant evidence, where possible. In your answer, you may wish to consider any specific areas where you think it should focus its leadership; what point of the R&D lifecycle is the BBC's support most valuable; and how would you like the BBC to partner with organisations like yours in R&D. [Free-text box; 350 words]**

*No response.*

**Question 24. If you represent an organisation in the creative industries, please share your reflections on your experience of the current market impact regulation process and how it could be improved. Please provide relevant evidence, where possible.**

**What went well? [Free-text box; 350 words]**

**What could be improved? [Free-text box; 350 words]**

*No response.*

#### **Chapter 4: Sustainable and fair funding**

**Question 25. To what extent do you agree that the licence fee should continue to fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate and entertain audiences?**

- Strongly agree - The licence fee should definitely fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate, and entertain.
- Agree - The licence fee should fund a wide range of services and output that aim to inform, educate, and entertain.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The licence fee should not fund a wide range of services and output that aims to inform, educate, and entertain.
- Strongly disagree - The licence fee should definitely not fund a wide range of services and output that aims to inform, educate, and entertain.
- Unsure

**Question 26. To what extent do you agree that the BBC should use the funding it receives through the licence fee to deliver a broad range of benefits to the UK? This**

**could include objectives such as investing in the nations and regions to drive growth across the UK, and developing skills that support the creative economy.**

- Strongly agree - The BBC should definitely use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.
- Agree - The BBC should use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The BBC should not use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.
- Strongly disagree - The BBC should definitely not use the licence fee to fund a broad range of benefits to the UK and the creative economy.
- Unsure

**Question 27. To what extent do you agree that the scope of the licence fee should be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability, which could involve requiring more households to pay but with each paying less?**

- Strongly agree - The licence fee should definitely be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.
- Agree - The licence fee should be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The licence fee should not be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.
- Strongly disagree - The licence fee should definitely not be reformed to support the BBC's long term sustainability.
- Unsure

*This question cannot be answered clearly without the reforms being specified. The green paper discusses different types of reform. The NUJ supports sustained increases to the licence fee and has consistently opposed cuts and freezes to the licence fee that have resulted in job losses and reductions to the BBC's coverage. The majority of members who completed the NUJ's Charter Renewal survey expressed support for the licence fee with some calling for changes to the presentation and promotion of the licence fee to make it clear that it is not just a 'TV licence' but also encompasses a wide range of digital, audio, and other services. The NUJ would be open to engaging further on potential changes to the scope of the licence fee. However, the costs of any potential concessions to support households, including the over 75s, should be borne by the government - not the BBC.*

**Question 28. To what extent do you agree or disagree that BBC content or services should carry advertising, bearing in mind how this could provide a new income stream for the BBC, how it might impact the audience experience and the impact on other broadcasters?**

- Extensive advertising - The BBC should carry advertising on all of its content and services, including live TV and radio.
- Limited advertising - The BBC should carry limited advertising on some of its online content and services, but not on live TV or radio.
- No advertising - The BBC should not carry any advertising on its content and services.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Unsure

**Question 29. Would you be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content, in addition to your licence fee, assuming it was a similar price to other popular video-on-demand subscription services?**

- Strongly agree - I would definitely be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.
- Agree - I would be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - I would not be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.
- Strongly disagree - I would definitely not be willing to pay for a BBC top-up subscription service focused on premium and entertainment content.
- Unsure

**Question 30. To what extent do you agree or disagree that new concessions for households facing significant financial pressures should be introduced?**

- Strongly agree - The government should definitely introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures, even if other households have to pay more or the quality of BBC services is reduced.
- Agree - The government should introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures only if there are no negative impacts on the BBC or higher costs for other households.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - The government should not introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures.

- Strongly disagree - The government should definitely not introduce new TV licence concessions for households facing significant financial pressures.
- Unsure

*This question lacks nuance. The BBC's funding must be enhanced and sustainable to protect jobs, quality journalism and the principle of universality. The NUJ reiterates that the costs of any potential concessions should be borne by the government - not the BBC.*

**Question 31. To what extent do you agree or disagree that technology should be used to support compliance, for example by requiring households using BBC iPlayer to enter details from their TV licence?**

- Strongly agree - Technology should definitely be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should definitely require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.
- Agree - Technology should be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.
- Neither agree nor disagree - No opinion either way.
- Disagree - Technology should definitely not be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should not require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.
- Strongly disagree - Technology should definitely not be used to support compliance, for example the BBC iPlayer login system should definitely not require households using the service to enter details from their TV licence.
- Unsure

*The NUJ opposes decriminalisation of nonpayment - which remains an effective deterrent against evasion - and supports simple, non-invasive ways to enforce compliance so long as these do not create a further barrier for people to access BBC journalism and programming. Accessibility is a key measure of universality and must be considered when implementing any compliance measures.*

**Question 32. Do you have any other views on the BBC's funding model that you wish to share? In your response, you may wish to explain why you agree or disagree with the potential changes above or suggest a different funding model. [Free-text box]**

NUJ members have been united in calling for the BBC's funding model to protect the principle of universality and for the government to agree a funding settlement that is sufficient to deliver quality public service journalism locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Since 2010 the BBC's funding has been cut in real-terms by around 30% following reductions, freezes or below-inflation rises in the licence fee. At the same time the BBC has been required to bear additional costs, including directly funding the BBC World Service and additional free licences for anyone eligible over 75.

This has weakened the BBC's radio, television and digital output and resulted in the loss of skilled staff. In recent weeks the BBC has announced further job cuts with the disbanding of the central investigations team, plus cuts to live and daily news. In addition, the NUJ was alarmed by outgoing director general Tim Davie's statement that the BBC World Service faces a financial cliff-edge if an agreement with the government is not reached urgently. This was followed by the corporation announcing an additional 10% cut to its cost base by the end of 2028/29, raising significant questions and concern over the potential impact on programming and jobs.

These job cuts, funding warnings, and cost-saving measures illustrate the imperative for Charter Renewal to deliver a secure, sustainable funding agreement that prioritises jobs and the BBC's ability to deliver a quality public service.

The NUJ has consulted members on what funding models would best protect the BBC's political independence. The union supports sustained increases to the licence fee. Members are open to engagement on alternative funding mechanisms, for example direct or progressive forms of taxation, so long as these boost the BBC's budget and preserve its universality.

The NUJ categorically rejects any form of commercialisation. This includes advertising that undermines the BBC's integrity and impartiality or subscriptions that lead to a two-tier service and undermine universality. Almost all survey respondents (99%) agreed that the BBC should always be universally accessible and protected from commercial and political influence. The NUJ supports the licence fee model and opposes decriminalisation of nonpayment, which remains an effective deterrent against evasion.

The government can further alleviate financial pressure on the BBC by providing direct funding for free licences for eligible over 75s and re-establishing full funding for the World Service, which is among the UK's greatest global assets, operating across 43 languages and reaching 320 million people worldwide every week. It is in the UK's national interest to end the annual cycle of uncertainty and provide journalists at the World Service with the resources needed to continue serving audiences around the world with quality, trusted news.

Any decisions over the BBC's funding model must be subject to both public consultation and parliamentary scrutiny; for too long the BBC's funding has been decided in closed-door meetings with ministers. The BBC Charter is the only one in the UK that requires regular renewal, potentially exposing the BBC to a fight for its survival every ten years depending on the political intentions of the government of the day.