

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE Informed

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VICE UK wins union recognition at last



VICE members say they hope their success inspires others

Don't be fooled by these adorable smiles. These are faces of steely – if extremely sweet – determination and resolve #UnionStrong

That was the tweet from @VICEUKUNION to promote its bid for union recognition. By posing in their T-shirts, giving out leaflets and tweeting like mad, the mainly young reporters were enthusiastic spreaders of the NUJ's message to fellow staff and management.

It was a great campaign and it paid off. On Thursday 25 July, the union was able to release the news that the NUJ had achieved recognition at VICE UK.

Michelle Stanistreet, general secretary, said she was delighted: "The energy and enthusiasm our reps and members at

the VICE UK chapel have brought to their organising drive has been hugely impressive. Their commitment to delivering a collective voice at work is inspiring and to be congratulated."

The VICE UK NUJ chapel said: "After four months of negotiations, the VICE UK NUJ chapel is proud to have achieved voluntary recognition. This result would not have been possible without the sustained and energetic campaigning of our chapel."

They thanked Michelle Stanistreet and officials Laura Davison and Andy Smith for their help during negotiations and said they hoped other new media organisations would be inspired by their success and seek union recognition.

The VICE story was celebrated at

the recent national executive council meeting, exemplifying some of the great strides made in recruitment, and underlining how important shoring up the union's future is to journalists now and in the future. The meeting discussed reports from treasurer, John Barsby, and a paper written by NEC members and finance committee officers Chris Frost and Tim Dawson, focusing on the fallout from the failure to secure agreement for a subs rise at the last Delegate Meeting (DM), which has resulted in an estimated £2m loss in revenue.

The paper sets out the imperative for a significant subs increase. It charts trends showing losses in traditional areas such as local newspapers and gains made in broadcasting, the freelance sector and new media, and updates on the latest pressure from serving the union's pension fund. The report outlined how, without increased income, staff cuts or closure of union offices will become necessary.

Designed as a discussion paper to be considered around branches, prior to the NEC considering motions for next year's DM in the autumn, the report also recommends membership rule changes to become more part-time-worker friendly; and a new approach to improve student retention.

Michelle Stanistreet said it was vital the NUJ continued to provide its unique service to members. July's issue of NUJ Informed is a testimony to the huge range of work carried out by the union – a union that punches well above its weight in terms of its influence on the national and international stage.

It has won almost £3million for BBC members taking out equal pay claims and significant sums elsewhere on late payments, holiday pay and compensation – and that's on top of negotiating collective pay deals.

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Michelle's Message



A free press needs journalists to be safe from mass surveillance, says Michelle Stanistreet, as NUJ loses challenge to Snoopers' Charter

Losing a case is never easy so, when confirmation came that the High Court case brought by Liberty and supported by the NUJ had failed in its challenge against the government's mass surveillance powers, it was a major blow.

The NUJ fought hard against the implementation of the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 and we have continued to highlight and campaign against the ongoing dangers the Snoopers' Charter poses to journalists and journalism. Supporting Liberty's challenge was an easy decision for the union to take. We know the government's powers under the IPA – not least the power to intercept the private data of the entire UK population – are far too wide and that the parts of the act that allow intelligence agencies to obtain and store communications data and to take remote control of electronic

We'll continue to fight to protect our sources

devices through "bulk hacking" fatally undermine the ability of journalists to protect their sources.

It is hugely disappointing that the court determined that the so-called "safeguards" in the legislation are enough to prevent an abuse of power. Accessing journalistic data in this way – without prior independent authority – very clearly places whistleblowers and sources at risk and makes it much more difficult to hold those in power to account.

But it's battling that matters, and while we decide on the next steps towards an appeal, the fight absolutely continues – not least because the NUJ's work is needed more than ever.

At home and abroad, journalism is under pressure and threat – not least from governments passing laws supposedly to keep us safer which at the same time limit or even criminalise the legitimate work of journalists. Journalism risks being the collateral damage of encroaching surveillance and anti-terror measures because it imposes a blunt-force approach to surveillance rather than something more nuanced and targeted.

The "trust us" message implicit in the government's response in the Liberty case is hugely flawed. Indeed, it was as a result of bringing this case that evidence emerged of MIS's unlawful handling of data – the security services certainly can't be trusted to respect or protect our journalistic principles and ethics.

That goes for the police too. The farcical response to the leaking of cables sent by the former British ambassador to the US, Sir Kim Darroch, demonstrated yet again how the knee-jerk reaction of the police is to make the press a target of its investigations, expecting journalists

to do their work for them and to hell with their obligations under the NUJ's code of conduct.

Threatening journalists with prosecution – with no public interest defence – if they published any further leaked cables was a particularly heavy-handed and foolish move that prompted some rapid back-peddling from the Met assistant commissioner, Neil Basu.

The Mail on Sunday was perfectly within its rights to publish cables sent by Sir Kim Darroch. Its report on President Trump's motives for abandoning the Iran nuclear deal is indisputably a matter of public interest.

"Journalists are not there to do the bidding of the authorities, or to enable shortcuts in police investigations"

The notion that journalists and editors should take pointers from the police about what they should or shouldn't report would be laughable if it wasn't so serious. Journalists are not there to do the bidding of the authorities, or to enable shortcuts in police investigations.

Despite the collective gnashing of teeth and solemn pronouncements about the sanctity of the free press from government ministers and, at that time, wannabe future premiers, the reality is that this government has repeatedly encroached on the rights of journalists and their ability to protect their sources, with secret and draconian surveillance laws that offer scant protections. Here,

again, we had the police targeting the messenger, hot on the heels of the recent case where NUJ members, Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney, were arrested by the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for their film exposing police collusion with paramilitaries responsible for six deaths at Loughlinsland in 1994.

When they were exonerated in court, Lord Chief Justice Sir Declan Morgan made clear that the work of journalists was essential in holding the state to account and that the authorities should expect that journalists would abide by the NUJ code of conduct.

The decision was a significant vindication of the rights of journalists to protect confidential sources of information. It laid bare the Chief Constable of Durham's unconvincing insistence that his officers, called in by the PSNI as lead investigators in the case, "acted in good faith, within the law and followed due process".

That case also raises significant issues about the treatment of our members by the PSNI and Durham Constabulary – something the NUJ has taken up directly with the chair of the Northern Ireland Policing Board, securing a meeting to discuss the issue further at the end of this month.

Dragging journalists to jail in dawn raids witnessed by their families, issuing draconian bail terms and failing to acknowledge the rights of journalists to protect confidential sources of information are issues of fundamental concern that need to be addressed.

Trust and confidence in the police are only possible when the rights of citizens are respected.

Trust in journalists and journalism is only possible when whistleblowers and sources can feel confident that they can come forward and share information they believe the public should know about, safe in the knowledge their identities will be protected.

Without that protection, we simply won't have a functioning free press.

Diary

Shaken not stirred

The identity of the new 007 inspires much comment and speculation. No less interesting for NUJ members is the identity of the old 007. We are, of course, keenly anticipating the arrival of Paul Siegert, our new broadcasting organiser. His credentials as a distinguished on-screen reporter and an equally impressive BBC secondee are well known. Rather more surprising is that he used to work for MI6. Of course, he can share no details of his previous life and insists that "I wasn't exactly James Bond" – but then, he would say that, wouldn't he?

Trousering a pay rise

Receiving her life membership certificate recently, Leeds branch member, Diana Muir, remembered how, when she joined the Yorkshire

Post in 1978, women reporters were banned from wearing trousers. Thankfully, gendered dress codes are a thing of the past, even in God's Own County. Diane also recalled how a strike in her first week at work secured "a huge pay rise on our pittance of a salary" – evoking the brief moment when it was trade unionists who really wore the trousers. Diane also admitted to burning her colleagues' porn stash on the strike brazier.

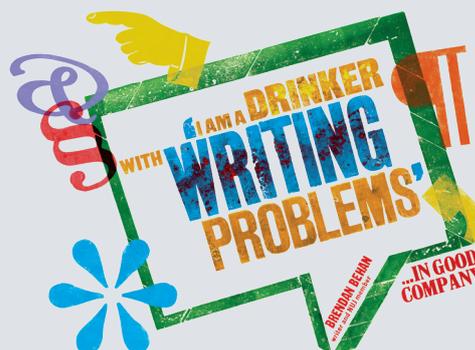
Soho tales

The 90th birthday of retired Irish Secretary, Jim Eadie, provided occasion to celebrate a well-loved member of the NUJ family. Anecdotes flowed. One recalled his inaugural visit to union headquarters, then in Great Windmill Street, Soho. His induction to the staff completed by mid-afternoon, general secretary, Jim Bradley, suggested a drink. The two pounded the neighbourhood but

found that, consistent with the law in the mid-1960s, pub doors were firmly shut. Eventually they arrived at the Raymond Revuebar – a legendary strip club advertised with a vast likeness of the kind of naked entertainer to be found within. "I bet you don't get anything like that in Dublin," said Bradley. "No, but at least you can get a bloody drink," was Eadie's retort.

Bovine bother

Pity Martin Shipton, Media Wales chief reporter and chair of the NUJ's Reach group chapel. An invitation to meet Digital, Culture, Media & Sport minister, Margot James, offered an apparently golden opportunity to share his beefs about the travails of modern news gathering with a government decision maker. Alas, a bovine incursion thwarted the great man's progress. By the time the cows were cleared from Great Western's tracks near Didcot Parkway and Shipton finally arrived in the capital, the NUJ delegation was trooping out of the minister's office. He might have retrieved something from his day by filing an Udderly terrible rail service story – but even at that he was scooped by the Swindon Advertiser.



News Update

NUJ reps tell minister the real news story

Brexit may be all-consuming in Parliament, but behind the scenes officials at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport are beavering away on the recommendations made by Dame Frances Cairncross' review of the press.

To aid their deliberations, NUJ journalists were invited by Margot James, the then digital minister, to discuss what practical steps could be taken to aid an industry where, according to the review's report, journalist figures had dropped from 23,000 in 2007 to 17,000 today, advertising spend by 69 per cent (£3.2 billion) and annual circulation revenue declined by 23 per cent (£500 million).

For the minister it was an opportunity to hear from reps in the local and national press, local democracy reporters (LDRs), photographers, freelancers and those working on new-model news publications. She was told of the constant cuts to newsrooms and the pressure caused by the demands of digital journalism, where the emphasis is on maximising "clicks" and story rates.



Margot James listens to NUJ journalists

"When I started in newspapers, I was told 'check it, check it', now it's 'get it online, get it online, get it online'," said one of the local newspaper reporters.

Richard Palmer, royal correspondent for The Daily Express, said newspapers had to compete with social media peddling rumours and nonsense stories such as Prince Charles and Camilla about to split.

"We want to find a way forward that gives people the news they can trust and where quality news is supported," he said.

The influence and damaging effect of Facebook and Google on journalism were discussed; last year the duopoly sucked

up more than half of the UK's advertising revenue and it was suggested they pay a levy to fund public-interest journalism.

Dame Frances had recommended an Institute for Public Interest News. Tim Dawson, a former NUJ president, said he could see value in an organisation championing public-interest journalism which shared good practice, investigated new news models and provided grants for start-ups.

The need for greater diversity in newsrooms was emphasised. Pay played a role in this, the minister was told, with people leaving newspaper because they couldn't live on their wages. LDRs can start on £22,000, but could earn £36,000 if they got a job in a local council press office, said Lucy Ashton, who spoke positively of her role as an LDR in Sheffield.

As the journalists filed out of her office decorated with photographs of the Queen and Margaret Thatcher, the minister was left with plenty of food for thought. Two days later she resigned to vote against the government on Brexit – fortunately DCMS officials had been taking full notes.

On July 21, the government announced a £2m Future News Fund, administered by the innovation foundation, Nesta, to help the regional press explore innovative ways to provide local, public interest journalism.

Reach takeover "a threat"

The NUJ has raised concerns about offers made by Reach newspaper group to acquire some of the titles owned by JPI Media, which fell into the hands of its creditors last year.

Reach, the largest regional newspaper group in the UK, with titles including the Manchester Evening News and Birmingham Post, also owns the Daily Mirror and Daily Express. JPI Media, taken over by GoldenTree Asset Management from Johnson Press, owns

the i, The Scotsman and Yorkshire Post.

An NUJ statement said: "Any deal that includes JPI Media's flagship regional titles would lead to the market being dominated by just two companies.

"The union is concerned that decisions on editorial policy, news gathering and practice will be concentrated in the hands of fewer people, so we are calling on parliamentarians to investigate the lack of media plurality in Britain."

The NUJ has also asked Reach for

guarantees on realistic, sustainable staffing levels and job security. Reach chief executive, Simon Fox, is leaving the company in August and will be replaced by Jim Mullen, a former News International director of digital strategy and CEO of betting firm, Ladbroke Coral.

Newsquest's American parent group, Gannett, which has just seen off a hostile bid, is in advanced talks to combine with GateHouse Media in a deal that would merge the two largest owners of newspapers in the US by circulation.

Equal pay claims net almost £3m

Without the NUJ's help members would not have won cases against equal pay, holiday entitlement and payment for work done.

Last year the NUJ secured more than £9m for its members in individual settlements; that's £25,000 every single day. So far this year, in equal pay claims alone, members have won almost £3m in compensation and back-pay, plus an increase in salary.

The settlements range from £20,000 to £1.3 million and show just how women have been discriminated against and disadvantaged in the industry.

The floodgates opened when the BBC was first forced to publish its list of top earners - the so-called talent earning more than £150,000. Women were absent from the top 10 (and elsewhere)

of the star earners - latest figures show three women feature in the top spots and the gender pay gap has narrowed. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is investigating equal pay at the BBC.

Thanks to high-profile figures such as Carrie Gracie, the former China editor, who spoke out about male colleagues earning more than she did, many other women have felt able to come forward. But it has been a long and arduous process, with the BBC failing to honour agreed time targets for resolution.

BBC figures shared with the joint unions this month show that since 2017, 1,299 pay queries have been processed, with 90 per cent of cases now resolved. The tally of outstanding cases is now 103 in formal processes, and 25 in informal stages. Cases are being dealt with by the general secretary, officials and

local reps. Every day the NUJ provides a lifeline for members who have not been paid, been unfairly dismissed, bullied and treated unfairly. The union won a significant tribunal victory - which could have consequences for freelances and casuals - David Walsh who had worked for many years as a casual for Scotsman Publications Ltd was awarded £8,360, over his right to holiday pay. The tribunal ruled that David met the statutory definition of "worker" and was entitled to paid holidays. He said: "I had worked for over three years without holiday pay until I turned to the NUJ for help. The union was instrumental in securing victory, using its clout and energy to keep pushing for action. I wasn't fighting in the trenches on my own anymore.

"Hopefully the result will mean

freelances and casuals won't find themselves trapped in quasi-employment without their rights being respected."

The freelance office also secured £7,988.45 for photographer Taz Darling, who specialises in cycling journalism, after a magazine decided not to publish work it had commissioned from her.

The union took her case to the small claims court and the judge made it very clear that if work was commissioned and supplied, it had to be paid for. The company's subsequent unreasonable behaviour led to legal costs being awarded against it.

One journalist who has been made redundant twice said: "Life as a reporter is tough enough, but added to the pressure of meeting deadlines is the constant fear of redundancy. Thankfully,

FT is fined £9,000 for bad practice

The Financial Times was ordered to pay £9,000, plus interest of £794, in compensation to production journalist, Iseult FitzGerald, after a judge said that her return to work after maternity leave had been handled "very poorly".

Iseult said: "Taking your employer to court when you still work for them certainly has its challenges. But if we want change, then we have to face these challenges head on. I am enormously grateful to the NUJ for its help in getting me a fair hearing and access to justice that would have otherwise been out of reach for me because of the steep cost of legal fees.

"There are about 54,000 cases of maternity discrimination in the UK each year, but sadly fewer than 1 per cent make it to tribunal. The widespread use of non-disclosure agreements has silenced thousands of women, covering up companies' discriminatory treatment of returning mothers. Hopefully my small victory can contribute to bigger changes.

"Money was never my motivation. Having a court rule that I had been discriminated against was invaluable to me. The point of going to a tribunal was to shine a light on a case of bad behaviour and management within companies - something that often goes unpunished."

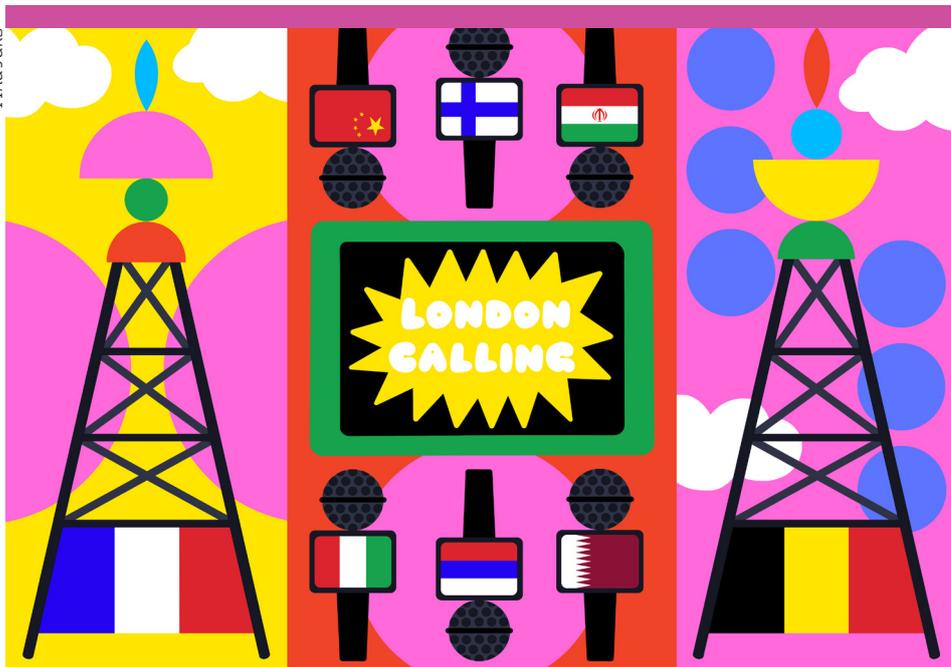
when it has happened to me, I had the NUJ in my corner. My rep was on tap 24/7 giving me advice and a clear plan of attack. If you are not a member of the NUJ, I cannot say it loudly enough - JOIN TODAY!"



Broadcasting

London booms as a global TV hub

Ana Jaks



TV stations from the Gulf, China, Africa and Europe now broadcast from London. Tim Dawson travels to Chiswick to find a global broadcast revolution in progress

Walking into the Chinese state broadcaster's gleaming studios, Mick Hodgkin passes a galaxy of other media outlets. The offices of Yanga! (serving African markets), Aparat Media (TV content producer), Arab News, and Iran International are all close by.

Elsewhere on Chiswick Park's sparkling new, university-style campus are the Discovery Network, Walt Disney and Paramount Pictures. Settling down to continue work preparing for China Global Television Network's (CGTN) planned London launch, programme editor Mick Hodgkin is among hundreds, possibly thousands, of media staff now working in this west London enclave.

It is but one of the international TV hubs that have made the English capital possibly the world's most significant global broadcasting centre.

"Britain has always had a strong international broadcast sector," says

Simon Spanswick, chief executive of the UK-based Association of International Broadcasters.

"The rise of streamed broadcast content and a more general migration from radio to TV, allied with the falling entry costs to produce television, have brought a host of new entrants to the sector in the past few years."

He cites some of the factors drawing broadcasters to the UK (he believes that nearly 1,500 are now based here): Heathrow; a flexible and highly-skilled broadcast workforce; multitudinous established international communities; and the desirability of London life.

Most significant, however, according to Simon Spanswick, is Ofcom. "It is widely perceived to be the strongest and most transparent regulator whose work, unlike some regulators elsewhere in Europe, is not politicised."

The UK represents 21 per cent of the European TV market output, according to a 2018 report by the European Audiovisual Observatory, with 1,203 TV channels of the 3,005 in the EU based in the UK.

Ofcom currently has 893 licences in issue that can be used to broadcast on cable and satellite; for digital terrestrial TV they have issued 135 licences.

Mick Hodgkin's career trajectory gives some sense of how skills networks are key to this burgeoning sector. "I started at Reuters TV and spent several years at Al Jazeera."

Estimates of how many journalists CGTN is planning to hire vary from 150 to 350. There is no question, however, that state-funded broadcasters, such as Al Jazeera, Press TV and Al Araby, provide the bulk of the new employment. They are not alone, however. They have been joined by scores of much smaller operators, many of them dissidents, who choose to make programmes in London for broadcast to audiences elsewhere in the world.

Jobs created by this sector are welcome, they also provide an NUJ organising opportunity. Recognition at Al Jazeera's London centre in 2013 was followed in

2018 by a 6 per cent pay increase and 3 per cent the following year. Constructive talks about NUJ recognition at Al Araby, where about 400 people (not all journalists) are thought to work, are in progress.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, is optimistic about opportunities in this burgeoning sector: "It is London's talent pool that is drawing broadcasters here. We have shown what a difference NUJ organisation can make to those staffing these stations, so I am confident that, in time, we will have a string of recognition agreements in this area.

"We will also be ensuring that NUJ members don't find themselves pressured to let standards slip."

Her concerns are well founded – broadcasters controlled by repressive regimes can be unedifying. A string of Ofcom judgements shows how standards can slip.

Press TV's licence was revoked in 2012 after it broadcast an interview with a Chanel 4 journalist conducted "under duress". RT, the Russian-government-controlled channel, has been the subject of several regulatory investigations for lack of impartiality and several stations have been sanctioned for broadcasting jihadi content.

Troubling as these are, this regulatory attention is assurance that there is some check on standards and, for those who have experienced the decline of much of the UK's traditional media, it is comforting to think that at least one part of our industry is enjoying a boom.

● A report on news consumption in the UK by Ofcom shows TV is the main source among UK adults, while use of social media has increased, with nearly half of all adults using it for news.

Young people aged 16-24 are more likely to use the internet than TV (83 per cent/51 per cent), as are those from minority ethnic backgrounds (82 per cent/65 per cent).

BBC One is most used for news among all adults (58 per cent), followed by ITV (40 per cent) and Facebook (35 per cent).

BBC takes flak over pensioner TV licences

Furious pensioners call on licence fee payers to boycott BBC... Elderly face visits from TV licence fee police... 101-year-old begs government not to take away free TV licence.

These three headlines, the first from The Daily Mail, the second from The Telegraph and the third from the Daily Mirror reveal the horror show the BBC finds itself starring in after deciding it would deprive up to 3.7m pensioners aged over 75 of their free TV licence, with only those on pension credit getting the benefit.

But there was a big difference in the reports. While saying that Elsie Allcock's viewing of her favourite soaps was her "only bit of comfort", the Mirror pinned the blame on the government. The Mail's account pointed to "the BBC's whopping salaries which last year was £148m for presenters alone, with Match of the Day host, Gary Lineker, topping the bill with a pay packet of £1.8m". The Telegraph's

story will have pensioners hiding behind the sofa every time the doorbell rings.

The NUJ has made clear, including in a media select committee consultation on the issue, that this government should have honoured its manifesto commitment to maintain the benefit, and further governments must return the responsibility for funding the free licences to where it belongs – the Department for Work and Pensions. The next licence-fee deal must be made in public or decided by an independent body.

During a quizzing by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport select committee, the BBC said collecting the benefit would result in a one-off fee of £38,000 to set up and £13,000 per annum to run it. The corporation said the overall cost would be £250m a year. Director general, Tony Hall, also admitted that the deal he struck with the government had not turned out to be as favourable as he first thought.

New NUJ BBC team

Paul Siegert, former BBC secondee for the past nine years, is to become the union's national broadcasting officer. The NEC endorsed his appointment and thanked him for his work, particularly during the latest protracted negotiations over the new terms and conditions deal at the corporation. Michelle Stanistreet was also thanked for taking on broadcasting responsibilities during

the illness of Sue Harris, who has now retired. More BBC secondees were elected earlier this month: Moira Rawlings for the regions and nations and a London-based job share of Adam Bowen and Lesley Taylor.

Global not local

Local radio station owner, Global, which runs Smooth, Heart and Capital, has used rule changes agreed by the broadcasting regulator, Ofcom, to close more than 10 stations, cut

local breakfast and drivetime shows and hundreds of jobs, a meeting in Parliament was told. Kevin Brennan, shadow arts and culture minister, said he had asked Ofcom to review its decision on changing the terms which constitute "localness" for commercial radio. Local radio in Wales and Scotland would be hit hard, he added, and he would put pressure on Bauer, the second of the big two in local radio, not to follow suit.

Equalities

Lyra's legacy to LGBT+ cheered



NUJ delegates to TUC LGBT+ conference Marina Kazakova, Guy Thornton, Ann Galpin & Adam Christie

Frances Rafferty rounds up the NUJ's activities promoting equality and diversity

Delegates to the Irish TUC remembered Lyra McKee, the young journalist killed during a riot in Derry. She was given a minute's applause at the NUJ's national executive and a minute's silence by those attending the TUC's LGBT+ workers' conference.

Part of Lyra's legacy was as an LGBT+ activist and her Letter to my 14-year-old Self, written when she was 24, should be on the curriculum. It describes the challenges of growing up gay in Belfast, how it was all OK when she came out to her mother and friends and how she fell in love for the first time, had her heart broken, but fell in love again. She was 29 when she was shot by the dissident republican group, the New IRA, during its attack on the police in Creggan.

She campaigned on issues including mental health, suicide, inequality and social exclusion and her loss to her loved ones and to journalism was recognised at her funeral by two prime ministers,

Theresa May and Leo Varadkar; Ireland's president Michael D Higgins; Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn; and Arlene Foster and Mary Lou MacDonald, leaders of the DUP and Sinn Fein parties. The NUJ's general secretary and Irish secretary were also present and NUJ members formed a guard of honour when her coffin was taken into Belfast's St Anne's cathedral.

The TUC LGBT+ conference heard from Nick Trier, national executive member and delegate for the National Union of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers, who was in Belfast the night Lyra was killed. He joined vigils in her honour, he said, and was moved by the emotion displayed for someone so widely and strongly admired and loved. A book of condolences for Lyra was opened at conference.

The Pride marches are all about celebrating diversity and the battles fought by activists such as Lyra, but this year's London parade appeared to be a victim of its own success. Photographers and the media found that new "security rules" meant they were denied access to parts of the march they needed to do their job.

Thanks to swift negotiations by the NUJ, and complaints by other photographer groups, appropriate accreditation was issued and Pride in London agreed to discuss arrangements for next year with the union.

The NUJ's TUC delegation voted on motions including: protection for those living in countries where homosexuality is illegal; full access to the AIDs prevention drug PrEP; the end of detention of LGBT+ asylum seekers; equal marriage in Northern Ireland; trans equality; and the banning of conversion therapy.

The huge rise in racism, hate crime and far-right attacks because of Brexit and wider global trends were themes picked up by a succession of speakers at this year's TUC Black Workers' Conference.

The NUJ's delegation voted for motions which called on the TUC to co-ordinate a robust response to racism and Islamophobia in workplaces and with

groups which oppose hate figures, such as Tommy Robinson and his supporters. Conference backed a GMB motion which demanded mandatory reporting of the race pay gap and supported an NUJ motion which noted that frequent negative representation of minority groups by the press was linked to lack of diversity in the industry.

At the TUC Disabled Workers' Conference, the NUJ protested against the Department for Work and Pensions' sneaky newspaper wraparound advertorials about Universal Credit, which passed off government propaganda as "unbranded" information.

NEC member Natasha Hirst said it was a gross misrepresentation of the impact of this damaging benefit. An NUJ motion called for greater access to professional development for disabled workers. Conference agreed reporting of a disability pay gap must be mandatory – a TUC analysis found the pay difference between non-disabled and disabled workers was 15 per cent, or almost £3,000 a year.

Thirty years of George Viner

At the TUC's Black Worker's Conference praise was awarded to the NUJ's George Viner Memorial Fund, which this year celebrated 30 years of improving the diversity of newsrooms by providing bursaries to students from ethnic minority backgrounds.

The Observer's chief leader writer, Sonia Sodha (pictured), joined former fund recipients, including Shajan Miah, now a BBC sports journalist, at the ceremony to mark the anniversary and the charity's work in helping more than 200 students get started in journalism. Aspirant journalists are invited to apply for scholarships tailored to their needs and ambitions.

Sharon Thiruchelvam, one of this year's award recipients, said: "Journalism can seem like a closed



shop, but we need black and minority ethnic journalists not just reporting the news, but also shaping the news agenda." Her fellow recipients, known as George Viner scholars, were Precious Adesina, Natasha Onwuemezi and Yinka Oyetade.

Adeline Iziren, a scholar in 1993, said: "My grant was absolutely key to me being able to afford my course." After many years in the national media, including an interview with Nelson Mandela, she now works in the PR department of a major charity.

Snapshot of a sexist workforce

Women photographers can find themselves physically pushed out of the way on jobs by male competitors, but other, more structural, barriers are to blame from preventing them succeeding in a photojournalism career, an NUJ event discovered.

NUJ Women Photographers brought together a mainly-female audience to discuss why the global figure for women photographers in news gathering is only 20 per cent.

A study by Stirling University's Professor Adrian Hadland of 5,202 photographers from more than 100 countries who took part in the World Press Photo Contest between 2015 and 2018 laid out the facts. More than half surveyed said sexism was the problem, a similar number blamed industry stereotypes and practices and almost

half cited the lack of opportunities offered by photo agencies and media companies. The demands of family life were also a major factor.

Speaking at the conference were Charlie Booth, from the Manchester-based Redeye photographers' network, and Celia Jackson, co-founder of Phrame, a photography collective based in South Wales.

Both organisations offer support for those starting out and networking opportunities for those in mid-career. Phrame runs portfolio reviews where women can bring their work and ideas to a friendly environment, puts on exhibitions for women beginners, skill-sharing events and raises funding for bursaries.

Natasha Hirst, chair of the NUJ's Photographers' Council, said it was

important that images were captured by people from all backgrounds.

She had proposed a motion earlier this year, passed by the TUC's Women's Conference, noting the gender imbalance in the industry, saying: "Men and women experience life differently and have different perspectives to offer, yet the view of what constitutes 'good photography' has largely been defined by the work of men."

Those attending the NUJ event agreed they would benefit from a course on confidence-building and more training on the business side of freelance photography.

There was a call for the union to encourage commissioning editors to increase the diversity of their pool of freelancers and the development of mentorships.

International

UK sets up body to protect journalists



Amal Clooney and Jeremy Hunt at the Global Media Freedom Conference

Former Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt is a politician who occasionally has a bright idea.

As culture and media minister it was the launch of Local TV, so when he proposed a Global Media Freedom Conference what could possibly go wrong?

For Jeremy, the timing was terrible. He was in the middle of a battle to become the next prime minister with his personal ambition, not a free global media, his top priority.

The first news from the event in London, co-hosted by the Canadian government, was that a conference to promote press freedom had banned two Russian news organisations, Sputnik and RT.

To be fair, Ofcom, the media regulator, had censured RT for lack of “impartiality” in its coverage of the nerve agent attack in Salisbury. Then “legitimate” journalists found the online media accreditation line blocked them.

Hunt did have one coup, he had persuaded Amal Clooney to provide the glamour he singularly lacks. The human rights lawyer had represented the Reuters

journalists Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo jailed by the Myanmar authorities and is counsel for Maria Ressa, the fearless journalist arrested for her hard-hitting reports on human rights in President Duterte’s Philippines. She also spoke of violations closer to home, including the arrests of Belfast journalists and NUJ members Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney (see page 12) and she chided world leaders for responding with “little more than a collective shrug” following the death of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul last year. Hunt, responsible for £648m arms sales to the regime since the Washington Post columnist’s death, didn’t even have the grace to blush.

The main failing of the event was to initially exclude journalists’ organisations such as the NUJ and the International Federation of Journalists with its 600,000 media professionals from more than 140 countries. Belatedly the IFJ was invited to join a panel talking about women journalists’ safety and Michelle Stanistreet asked to speak on a panel

session about defending press freedom. She said if the UK government was serious about promoting press freedom around the world, its first priority should be to lead by example at home where use of data protection laws are used to harass journalists and “the creeping law of privacy, that is entirely the product of judges and celebrity-funded lawyers, or the use of biometric recognition systems that could compromise a journalist’s sources”.

Coinciding with the event, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg was hearing a case brought by the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and other human rights organisations over UK intelligence agencies’ mass surveillance of millions of UK citizens, including journalists’ communications.

Announcements made at the global media freedom event were the setting up of a High Level Panel to develop legal frameworks to help protect media freedom, and a UK National Committee for the Safety of Journalists to “ensure that those who threaten journalists are held to account and to examine current protections offered to journalists in the UK”.

FCO fact box

- Nine in 10 cases of journalists killed remain unresolved.
- 2018 was the worst year on record for violence and abuse against journalists
- Only 10 per cent of the world’s population enjoys a free press, and media.
- Almost 1,000 journalists and media workers have been killed in the past decade.
- Of those killed, 93 per cent were local journalists and 7 per cent were foreign correspondents.

Figures collated by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Safety convention bid wins congress support



IFJ Congress march for those killed

Support for the International Federation of Journalists' campaign for a UN Convention on the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals is growing and won further endorsement at the organisation's World Congress held in Tunis in June.

The IFJ reported that 95 media professionals were killed in 2018, yet in nine of 10 cases the killers remained unpunished. Conference delegates held a march through the streets on Tunis in memory of dead colleagues, including Ireland's Lyra McKee and Malta's Daphne Caruana Galizia.

Delegates also agreed on a new IFJ Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists as a standard of professional conduct "for journalists engaged in gathering, transmitting, disseminating and commenting on news and information in describing events".

National Union of Journalists' motions about surveillance of journalists and

ending the gender pay gap were passed. Congress called on the new IFJ executive committee to raise awareness of, and build a culture to resist, the surveillance of journalists among IFJ members and to promote technological and organisational approaches to avoid it.

The NUJ's Jim Boumelha was reconfirmed as the IFJ's honorary treasurer and former NUJ president, Barry McCall, was re-elected to the IFJ Finance Commission.

Dr Carmen Draghici, senior lecturer in law, City, University of London, drafted the proposed convention.

She explained during an event in London to mark World Press Freedom Day that it would enshrine safeguards and rights for journalists in international law, including protection of sources and an end to the impunity of killers of journalists.

Kasra Najji, senior correspondent with the World Service's BBC Persian channel, showed a new video on the intimidation inflicted on his colleagues by the Iranian authorities.

The service - on TV, radio and online - provided news and entertainment to Persian speakers around the globe, he said. The TV channel has 12m regular viewers hungry for impartial reliable news. "We will not be silenced," he pointed out.

Michelle Stanistreet described her visit as part of a TUC women's delegation to Jerusalem, Hebron, Jenin, Bethlehem and Ramallah and meeting colleagues from the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate whose members frequently face violence from Israeli forces.

The trip took place immediately after the funeral of Lyra McKee, which she described as the "most surreal, upsetting and inspiring duty I've carried out as a general secretary of the NUJ".

Women attacked

Anahita Shams (pictured), a BBC Persian reporter, has addressed the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on the systematic targeting of World Service women journalists by Iranian authorities. She said: "My female colleagues and I have been consistently attacked online, with concerted sexual defamation



and harassment on social media platforms. One of the main techniques is through the spread of fake images online, and false information accusing us of sexual indecency, to discredit us with our families and the broader public. In one example, a fake Photoshopped pornographic image of a female presenter was sent to her 14-year-old son at his school in London."

Ayşe released

Jailed Turkish journalist, Ayşe Düzkan, focus of NUJ campaigns, has been released six months into her 18-month sentence for putting her name to a pro-Kurdish rights newspaper. She now has to do four hours' unpaid community service daily. She told NUJ Informed: "Food is bad in jail but, then, you don't have to cook. I had so much time to read and chatted with myself. I did get bored and depressed but the best thing is that you are not afraid of going into prison because you are already there!" Ayşe thanked NUJ members for their support. More than 100 journalists and media workers remain in Turkish jails. The NEC has agreed to "adopt" another jailed Turkish journalist.

News Update

Police face inquiry as No Stone Unturned arrests overturned

When three high court judges ruled in June that the warrants to arrest Trevor Birney and Barry McCaffrey were “inappropriate”, it seemed this sorry episode was drawing to a close. But, by an odd quirk of police evidence retention procedures, it seems not.

The NUJ members were arrested the previous August in connection with their part making the film No Stone Unturned. It examined the investigation by the Royal Ulster Constabulary into 1994’s Loughinisland massacre, when six men watching the World Cup in a pub were killed by the paramilitary group UVF. The film suggested that police had, at best, dragged their feet during the enquiry and, at worst, had shielded police informants who were involved in the shooting of the innocents.

After nearly a year on bail, with the warrants overturned and the investigation into their work dropped, Birney and McCaffrey were invited to



pick up those of their possessions that were seized in the early-morning raids.

During the course of the investigation, however, the police had copied the entire contents of the computer server of Fine Point Films – the company for which Birney and McCaffrey work. This

contained millions of megabytes of data, the vast majority of it journalistic, but unrelated to No Stone Unturned. Of course, it should all be deleted, but, apparently, there is a snag.

“The police are saying they use a tape back-up system each month and they have no procedures to edit those tapes to remove the specific items copied from our premises,” explained Barry McCaffrey. “They say they have never had to do this before and that it would cost several million pounds to do so.”

It is easy to see why the PSNI is concerned about costs. Outgoing Chief David Hamilton told the Northern Ireland Policing Board that his force had already spent £320,000 investigating the journalists. However, a complaint to the Police Ombudsman about Birney and McCaffrey’s treatment is being lodged, and fresh legal action is now planned to ensure that the journalistic material is deleted, whatever the cost.

Nicky Morgan

Nicky Morgan, former education secretary and chair of House of Commons Treasury Committee, has been appointed Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, replacing Jeremy Wright. She is the tenth person in the post in the past 10 years. She was elected as MP for Loughborough in 2010. Her in-tray includes an investigation into the sale of stakes in the Independent and the Evening Standard to

an investor with strong links to Saudi Arabia.

Crooks’ get-out

Changes to the way Companies House collects data on directors is severely hampering the ability of investigative and business journalists to hold businesses to account and expose frauds and crooks, the NUJ said in a government consultation on the business register. Directors are no longer required to provide the day of their date of birth

or their home address.

This information is often vital for journalists when putting together a story and verifying the identity of a company director. The union called for maximum transparency and a unique identification code so directors can be tracked.

Snoopers’ charter

The NUJ, working with human rights organisation, Liberty, lost a legal challenge to the UK’s Investigatory Powers Act 2016 which

gives the authorities bulk surveillance powers and access to journalists’ communications.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said the ruling would put journalists’ sources at risk. Megan Goulding, a Liberty lawyer, said: “This disappointing judgment allows the government to continue to spy on every one of us, violating our rights to privacy and free expression.” The NUJ is considering appealing the judgment.