

# NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE Informed

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On the money: women delegates queue up to talk about equal pay

## DM sets a two-year campaigning agenda

**A major initiative to end pay discrimination, a 10-point plan to support women affected by workplace sexism and harassment, a Journalists Need a Pay Rise campaign and a commitment to work with chapels to fight against work-related stress were all agreed by the 2018 Delegate Meeting.**

The union will now be carrying out research into new business models for journalism to feed into the government's inquiry into the sustainability of the press; recruiting more equality reps; and campaigning for fair terms for freelance payment.

Delegate Meeting (DM) is the NUJ's policy-making body and the three days of

debates in Southport resulted in a union programme of action for the next two years.

A national executive council (NEC) motion calling for an increase to union subscriptions was turned down by conference. John Barsby, NUJ treasurer, had described the proposed increases of 50-60 pence per month, the first for four years, as necessary to ensure the NUJ's future as an independent fighting union.

Delegates argued that the present fees were already too high and, despite Michelle Stanistreet, general secretary, saying there were already measures to help the low-paid, the motion did not achieve the two-thirds majority needed to be carried.

In her speech to DM, Michelle recalled the highlights of the past two years, including the successful events across the UK and Ireland for Local News Matters Week, the landmark victory on collective bargaining for freelancers in Ireland, securing the government inquiry into the future of the press, the Photographers' Summit, #Useitpayfor it campaign and the refurbishment of the union's HQ in London.

She also paid tribute to colleagues working for Newsquest who took strike action over poverty pay and redundancies, and the Penguin Random House chapel which fought for union recognition.

Her personal highlight was the birth of her daughter Nell, which proved that motherhood was no bar to being a general secretary, she said, thanks to help from her senior team who took over the union reins during her maternity leave.

One of the union's major pieces of industrial work in the past two years was representing more than 180 BBC women with equal pay claims. These claims were lodged following the forced publication of the BBC's high-earners list which revealed a dearth of women and black journalists.

Michelle said: "It has given a shot in the arm to recruitment of new members, with spikes of women joining the NUJ in broadcasting, and increasingly in other sectors, as they realise it is through collective action that we can secure meaningful change."

DM applauded three new Members of Honour, Joyce McMillan, Chris Frost and Charlie Harkness; paid a silent tribute to the 162 journalists killed in action around the world during the past two years; and welcomed in the NUJ's new president, Sian Jones, and newly-elected vice-president, Pierre Vicary.

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**NUJ**  
NATIONAL UNION  
OF  
JOURNALISTS

# Michelle's Message



**“DM’s decision not increase the union’s subs means we will have to cut our cloth accordingly... my priority will be to manage this challenge with as minimal impact as possible on staffing levels and industrial servicing .”**

## From DM, back to the nitty, gritty of NUJ work

**After the unique intensity of DM, far from having a bit of breathing space to plan and prioritise the work agreed by conference delegates, there has been no let-up industrially.**

After 22 months of arduous negotiations over the BBC’s proposal to revamp terms and conditions, the joint unions had proposed a final push under the auspices of arbitration service ACAS to try and thrash out important issues that remained. These ranged from night working, acting up and public holiday leave, to the pay offer, weekend working and the creation of new job titles and families.

I led a team of 9 NUJ negotiators, including secondees and reps from Glasgow, Belfast, Devon, London and Birmingham – together with our sister unions, the union-side team was 30-strong. We’d set aside two days for talks with ACAS, taking up multiple rooms from 9am on day one in the chilly if beautiful Royal College of Physicians headquarters overlooking Regent’s Park, finishing that evening at 8pm, reconvening the next day at 9am, this time in the more bustling Royal College of GPs. Progress felt slower on day two but we ploughed on, and when kicking out time approached at 7pm, we all decamped to the BBC’s New Broadcasting House, getting a glimpse of sunshine for the first time that day.

As 10pm beckoned, it was time to dial up the pizzas – a W1A moment as I made the call to a local pizza place our resident London rep recommended, with toppings ranging from beef brisket and pickled carrots, spiced lamb and cabbage and kimchi and porcini cream (amongst which my Margherita was definitely the odd one out!).

A breakthrough moment came soon

after 3am; we had a deal that we felt able to recommend. As most of our team reps headed off, three of us stayed to ensure the deal was written accurately – a painful and occasionally ill-tempered process that didn’t conclude until 6.30am.

Back at the NUJ, I set my alarm clock for 25 minutes and slept on the couch in my office – a quick spruce up and I had to prep for an interview panel I was sitting on, then it was straight on to our BBC MFoC meeting who treated their negotiating team pretty kindly over the next three hours. Whether members vote to accept or reject the deal when it goes out to ballot, the reality is that their reps and officials throughout the BBC have put in huge effort to address the issues they have raised throughout the lengthy process.

Two days later I was back at ACAS – this time with Al Jazeera. Despite having a recognition agreement, the company has refused over the past four years to negotiate a collective pay award. Following a strong mandate for industrial action, a strike day had been called and an ensuing work to rule. With help from the IFJ, the NUJ maximised the pressure on Al Jazeera internationally and in Doha, where the real decision making happens – using World Press Freedom day and one of the company’s own conferences to remind them that trade union rights are human rights too. The first offer the company tabled – 3 per cent – was inadequate but in itself a milestone, as the first collective offer the company had ever made. By 10.30pm that Friday night, we were up to an offer of 5 per cent for 2018 and 3 per cent for 2019 – an offer the union side rejected as we left, making it clear we were willing to reconvene over the



bank holiday weekend. By Sunday we agreed an offer of 6 per cent and 3 per cent as one that warranted suspending the action and taking back to members. A consultative ballot of members at AL Jazeera is now in train.

These are just two recent examples of the nitty gritty industrial work that really matters to our chapels and our members. It is the reason the NUJ needs committed officials and a strong organised lay activist base. Decisions taken by the union's delegate meeting included a refusal to agree a subs rise - meaning that by the time DM reconvenes in 2020, the union will have gone 6 years without a rise in our income.

The NEC had pitched the rise at 50-60 pence a month in order to minimise the individual impact whilst collectively raising our income by £300,000 over the next two years. The last financial crisis - and the painful steps that had to be put in place to solve it - demonstrated clearly what happens when we stand by and allow our income to erode.

We committed then, under the Recovery Plan, to rebuild our reserves to £2million, to ensure staff costs do not rise above 45 per cent of our subs income alongside other measures to preserve our financial and political independence. The NUJ's culture is different to many other unions - the kind of individual representation and support we provide, vital to our freelancers as well as staff members in unrecognised workplaces, simply wouldn't happen elsewhere.

Commitments were made by activists arguing against a rise to prioritise recruitment as the solution to increasing income and I look forward to engagement from reps and activists to achieve this in the coming months. The reality is that we will have to cut our cloth accordingly and the work for the next budget round will start soon. It is disappointing to be in this position once again but as general secretary my priority will be to work with all three staff unions and the NEC to ensure we manage this challenge with as minimal impact on staffing levels and on industrial servicing as we can.

## Democracy in action

*Tim Dawson, out-going president, tries to distil the essence of NUJ activism*

**“What does the NUJ look like?” asked my then seven-year-old daughter Lucy as I was setting off to yet another meeting some years ago. I managed to mumble something about “shared values of press freedom and workers’ rights”.**

Lucy's was a typical primary school category mistake. The NUJ was frequently evoked to explain my absence and she reasonably assumed that it must be something as straightforwardly describable as her school, Disneyland, or the local swimming pool. She is 14 now and has since visited the office, marched behind an NUJ banner and sat through rather too many of my union-related meetings.

Our headquarters, industrial work and ceaseless advocacy for journalism are all integral elements of our union. Until now, however, a single, simple image with which to respond to her question has eluded me. Now, having spent more than 20 hours conducting our Delegate Meeting from the chair, I believe I have that answer. The shared truth-affirming, passionate, sometimes raucous assembly that I sweated to steer towards democratic agreement is what the NUJ looks like.

I don't mean the collage of suits, slogan t-shirts and varied fashions that are the conference's physical manifestation. The essence of the NUJ can be found in what our bi-annual gathering represents.

We journalists have always disagreed - about priorities, strategies and desired outcomes. That is why we have a rule-based democracy in return for collective power seen throughout the NUJ in branches, chapels and governing councils. But nowhere is it more clearly displayed than the disputatious parliament that is our DM.

Other union's conferences are different. I have attended those of teachers, refuse operatives and engineers and, for understandable reasons, the leaders manage their get-togethers. Scores of motions are composited into a few bland statements.

Our DM, by comparison is like something from the Wild West. Hundreds of motions are considered - just as they were written by our branches. Most speeches are delivered off the cuff. Tempers can flare and heckling is not unknown. As journalists, could we have it any other way?

In Southport, we made 200 decisions, including a useful revision of our position on press regulation, but a woeful error in rejecting a subscriptions increase. Every time delegates raised their hands to express their views, they affirmed the voluntary collectivism that is at the NUJ's heart.

That is not to say that our proceedings can't be improved. The first motion adopted called for a more effective and modern DM and I would prefer more delegates who took our finances seriously and fewer enthusiasts for sloppily written motions with little relation to journalism (most of which were rejected). But I accept the DM's decisions because that will be at the heart of our trade unionism.

No doubt our decision-making will change over time - video conferences and electronic voting may be closer than we imagine. But however different these may appear, I suspect that “what the NUJ looks like” will see out our second century.

No doubt our decision making will change over time - direct democracy, video conferences and electronic voting may be closer than we imagine. However, I suspect that ‘what the NUJ looks like’ will see out our second century.

# DM People

## Changing of the NUJ guard

**After his two-year stint as president ended on the last day of DM, Tim Dawson handed over his chain of office to Sian Jones, who will be supported by Pierre Vicary who defeated Steve Bird, FoC of the FT's chapel, in the election for vice-president.**

Séamus Dooley, assistant general secretary, paid tribute to Tim for his great vision in the role, his huge level of energy and commented that his ability to sometimes ruffle feathers was an essential part of the job.

Tim, he said, had put on an innovative programme of events, from cutting-edge poets to journalist Sir Harry Evans, at Downstairs at the NUJ, the new space created by the refurbishment of the union's London HQ. He had travelled to Turkey to train journalists and meet union colleagues whose members had been imprisoned when the authorities cracked down on the press.



*New look: Pierre Vicary & Sian Jones*

Sian Jones is a communications professional who has worked in the private and not-for-profit sectors. She has been active in the PR and Communications branch for 12 years, a member of the national executive committee and has represented the union at the TUC.

The NUJ is in Sian's blood; she recalls

as a wide-eyed youngster hearing about the Newspaper Society strike from her NUJ activist father, Alan Jones. She said: "Becoming NUJ president is a huge and daunting privilege. It's disappointing to be only the third female president in our history, but it is a huge honour to follow in the footsteps of Michelle Stanistreet and my fellow PR comrade Anita Halpin. The NUJ is a great family to belong to and I look forward to getting to know our members and industry better in my time as president."

Vice-president Pierre Vicary is chair of the broadcasting industrial council and covered the US and Balkans for the World Service where he has worked since 1995. His main priorities are to fight for high standards in journalism and against casualisation. John Barsby was re-elected unopposed as the NUJ's honorary general treasurer.

Other elections: <https://www.nuj.org.uk/news/dm18-elections>

## Speaking as a first time delegate....

**If Natasha Bernal, from the magazine and book industrial council, and Francis Clarke from Birmingham and Coventry branch, felt nervous as first-time delegates to conference they didn't show it.**

These representatives of the union's new blood threw themselves into the debate, speaking on a number of subjects, from union subs, a review of lapsing procedures to co-operative models in journalism.

"It's been really interesting," said Natasha,

"but there is a lot of paperwork; I've already got about five paper cuts!" Natasha works for Lawyer magazine and was responsible for setting up a chapel there. She was soon voted on to the magazines and books industrial council and is now a member of the union's national executive council.

"My mother was an active trade unionist and I was brought up to fight abuse and stand up for workers' rights," she said. She feels it is important to give a voice to those in the media



industry on low pay.

Francis Clarke, who works for a university, spoke to a number of motions, including defending whistleblowers and, based on personal experience when a member died and had to be repatriated to Ireland, persuaded DM to accept a rule change to increase the union's death benefit from £600 to £750.

There were lots of new faces at DM18, including six first-timers from the BBC.

Of the delegates, 3.6% were under-28; 12.6% 28-39; 23.4% 40-50; 34.2% 51-61; and 22.5% over 61.

# Three of the best: NUJ Members of Honour

**An emeritus professor and leading expert on journalist ethics, a former government communications guru, and one of Scotland's foremost theatre critics were celebrated for their contribution to the union and industry.**

Being made a Member of Honour is the highest accolade the union can award and the latest recipients, Chris Frost, Charlie Harkness and Joyce McMillan were well-respected and popular choices.

The Stage magazine said of Joyce that her passion for theatre "is echoed by her passion for a society where theatre is a vital and integral part of the social fabric".

Fellow member of the Edinburgh Freelance branch, Mark Fisher, said: "Her dedication through good times and bad has helped make the branch one of the most active in the union, kicking well above its weight and contributing significantly to the NUJ as a whole."

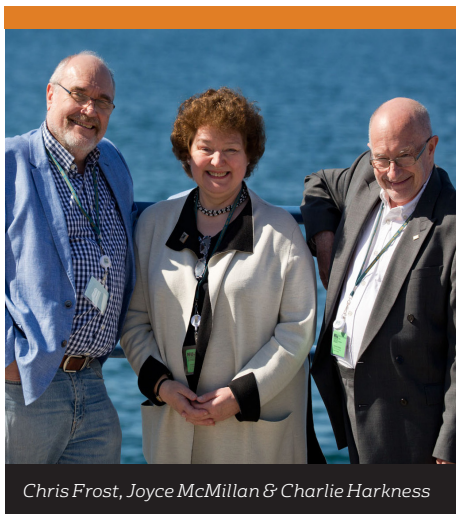
Joyce said the NUJ was a "beacon and haven of common sense and solidarity" during the turbulent years of her 36-year membership, which saw the rise of neoliberal and individualist ideologies.

Professor Chris Frost started in local newspapers and soon became active in the union. In 1985 he was involved in negotiating the introduction of new technology in provincial newspapers.

Since moving to Liverpool John Moores University he has become the author of standard texts on journalist ethics and press regulation and chair of the union's ethics council.

It was Chris, an NUJ president in 1992, who, together with the general secretary, Michelle Stanistreet, fronted the NUJ's response to the Leveson Inquiry into the culture and ethics of the press.

Michelle said: "Chris has played such a formative role in our ethics council,



Chris Frost, Joyce McMillan & Charlie Harkness

chairing it for many years, and has dealt with the thorniest of problems and most nuanced of issues straightforwardly, with honesty and integrity."

Charlie Harkness's long and varied career started on local newspapers and he later became deputy general secretary of the NUJ, working with Ken Morgan and Ken Ashton. From there he went on to head communications at the Post Office Engineering union from where he moved on to the Labour Party and worked with Michael Foot during the 1984 election and then Neil Kinnock in 1987. His knowledge of Whitehall led to jobs as a civil servant working in communications for a number of government departments, despite having an M15 file because of his union activities. He now edits Rye News, a community newspaper. Sian Jones, president, and fellow member of the PR & Communications branch, presented Charlie with the honour.

Charlie recalled his first DM in 1972 when the train taking delegates to the venue in Tenby turned into a bar and disco. "It was a lively trip," he said. "DM has gone downhill ever since."

## Charities boost at DM socials

Delegates raised almost £3,300 for the union's charities, the George Viner Memorial Fund, which provides bursaries for BAME journalists, and the hardship fund, NUJ Extra.

In honour of the George Viner charity's 30th anniversary, there was an 80s-themed evening of entertainment from poet Jess Green, Red Wedge comedian Steve Gribben, and a throw-back quiz with teasing questions from the decade.

Pennie Quinton and Emma Kelly arrived in black, back-combed splendour, Chris Morley sported two-toned shoes. T-shirts spotted included logos from bands such as Depeche Mode and the Smiths, plus one collector's item in support of Beirut hostage, John McCarthy.

Chris Wheal, NUJ Extra trustee, said the charity was not just about giving out money - a former Sunday Mirror reporter who was lonely had requested a journalist who would visit him to talk to about his days in Fleet Street.

Cash was also raised at the Gala Night's famous raffle.

NUJ charities <https://www.nuj.org.uk/about/nuj-charities/>



Rattling good fund-raising fun

# DM Decisions

## Subs rise voted down by DM

**Delegate Meeting voted down a motion which would have increased unions subs by between 50 and 60 pence a month, a measure the national executive said was needed to protect core budgets and carry out the vital work it does on behalf of journalism and journalists.**

John Barsby, honorary NUJ treasurer, reminded delegates of the financial crisis the union faced some years ago and noted that rise of around 2.5 per cent for the next two years would be the first subs increase in four years.

The union's recovery plan to build back up its reserves to £2million by 2020 was vital. He said: "If we don't agree a rise this DM, we will have allowed our subs income to erode for over six years. While our finances are now stabilised, we cannot be complacent."

Changes in the accounting regulations



Treasurer John Barsby argued for the subs rise

and the impact of the Brexit referendum result had knocked a notional £1.8 million off the value of the NUJ's Kings Cross headquarters, but all the building had been let, making around £300,000 a year. The treasurer's report noted a surplus of almost £200,000.

Natasha Bernal, from the magazine and book industrial council, said the proposal

would affect low-earning members much more than the higher paid, but Mark Fisher, freelance industrial council, said: "I want a union that is powerful and well resourced."

Chris Wheal, London magazine branch, called on the NUJ to recruit and organise a mass union, rather than one for wealthy journalists. Michelle Stanistreet, general secretary, said there was already protection for low earners. "We pride ourselves on the level of service given to members, second to none in the trade union movement, and I would never want that to change," she said.

The motion did not win the two-thirds majority needed to make the change.

Members also voted for the NUJ to look at the benefits of offering lower membership subscriptions for first-time joiners and those earning less than £30,000.

### Fair terms for freelances

Freelance delegates were briefed on a new campaign, Fair Terms not Their Terms, by Tim Dawson, the outgoing president. He said it aimed to devise a strategy to end the practises of many publishers which result in freelance journalists being paid only on publication or being offered derisory kill fees if the newspaper, magazine or website changes its mind about running the story. A survey of freelances was proposed to find out how widespread these practices were, the identity of the main culprits and to determine ways to ensure that, as many other self-employed workers do, journalists receive remuneration within 30 days

of invoicing. Pennie Quinton, chair of the London freelance branch, said its members would be supporting the campaign.

### Snappers' safety

**The wholesale sacking of staff photographers has put reporters covering courts at risk of assault when taking photographs of defendants with their mobile phones. A Trinity Mirror reporter for Gloucester Life had his throat grabbed when he photographed a man sentenced to a conditional discharge for shoplifting and possession of cannabis. Reporters using a phone need to get closer to their subjects than**

**photographers with long lenses. Simon Bristow, East Yorkshire branch, said he knew of two local newspaper journalists who had been assaulted while covering courts and a third threatened with rape. DM instructed the NEC to raise awareness of the risks involved and agreed to a campaign on court reporting.**

### Strike threat

Delegates from the BBC voiced frustration at the progress of 18-month-long talks to renegotiate terms and conditions. Pierre Vicary, vice-president, who works for the World Service, said if the corporation did not improve its offer,

industrial action was a possibility. He proposed a motion which instructed the NEC to continue its campaign against the BBC paying for free TV licence fee for over-75s, cuts in staffing and training and to reject any compulsory redundancies. The BBC delegates proposed motions of solidarity for colleagues at Red Bee Media suffering from a toxic combination of out-sourcing, offshoring and extreme cost-cutting measures and at the Qatar-owned Al-Araby where members and reps have been victimised. They also pledged to support colleagues at Al-Jazeera who have voted for strike action over pay after four years without a rise.

## Delegates call for a pay rise... and cake

**Work-related stress and poverty pay were taking their toll on members, delegates were told.**

A shocking dossier of evidence revealed the high levels of stress at Newsquest, the consequence of many years of cuts and crippling workloads; a health and safety survey carried out at Johnston Press showed a similar

picture. The NEC was instructed to organise a campaign against work-related stress and for the stronger enforcement of health and safety legislation.

Julia Armstrong, South Yorkshire branch, won support for the launch of a Journalists Need a Pay Rise campaign for members who had suffered pay cuts.

Richard Evans, Leeds and Wakefield branch, said all editorial staff in Leeds had been invited for lunch on the longest day, with funds from the chapel to provide cake. DM agreed that the NEC should promote the initiative, to highlight the legal rights and the health benefits of taking a break, throughout the union.

# New ownership models sought for press review

**The NUJ has welcomed the government's review of the sustainability of the press, chaired by the economist and journalist, Frances Cairncross.**

The union has long campaigned for an inquiry into the crisis in the press, by launching public events such as Local News Matters Week in spring 2017 and working behind the scenes in Whitehall with the cross-party Parliamentary group to persuade ministers to take up the issue.

Liz Saville Roberts, Plaid Cymru MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd in Wales, a former magazine writer, a longstanding NUJ member and guest speaker on behalf of the Parliamentary Group, said the events held in MPs' constituencies and a successful backbench business debate culminated in a meeting with Matt Hancock, then digital minister, who later announced he would hold an inquiry into the future sustainability of high-quality journalism in the UK.

The only fly in the ointment is that the review panel set up



to advise Frances Cairncross does not include the NUJ or a grassroots journalist or photographer. The NUJ has since asked the minister for a place at the table.

Penny Kiley, Oxford and District branch, congratulated everyone who took part in Local News Matters Week, saying it had felt good to be part of a national campaign that generated support from politicians and the public. Debates at DM discussed

how new business models for journalism must inform how the NUJ takes forward its work on the issue.

Joyce McMillan, Edinburgh freelance branch, said the landscape was changing rapidly and the union needed to research emerging funding models such as crowd-funding, subscriptions and joint projects between consortia of investigative journalists and other organisations.

DM agreed the union would carry out a research project on the subject and hold at least one national conference to share the results.

Claire Sawers, from the same branch, emphasised the importance of new models, such as the Bristol Cable and The Ferret media co-operatives plus the employee-owned West Highland Free Press, in sustaining democratic accountability where traditional newspapers were failing.

Nick McGowan-Lowe, for the NEC, called on the union to lobby for newspapers to be able to become community assets if owners closed them. Scottish delegates said the loss of 59 local titles in the country meant new approaches were needed. The importance of the role of hyperlocals was noted.

Michael Foley, Dublin branch, said media plurality must be addressed, particularly in Ireland, given the concentration of ownership in the hands of Independent News and Media.

**Read More**

<https://bit.ly/2Bd6JRk>





## Conference round-up

**At a largely-comradely conference, full of lively debate, delegates agreed 200 motions, attended fringe meetings and fund-raisers and went home exhausted.**

### *INM scandal*

DM noted the scandal of the newsgroup, owned largely by Dennis O'Brien, which committed a breach of journalists' data which could have compromised confidential sources; and that O'Brien was party to information concerning the minister's decision on his proposed acquisition of the Celtic Media Group. DM agreed to support the Irish Secretary in securing new measures to protect journalistic data and to use World Press Freedom Day to lobby for greater media plurality in Ireland.

### *Leveson Two*

Chris Frost, ethics council, said it was a disgraceful decision by the government to scrap the Leveson inquiry part two, to investigate the extent of unlawful conduct by News International and other newspapers and the relationship between news organisations and the

police. The NEC will now to campaign for the go-ahead of Leveson Two and renewal of the process of setting up an effective system of press regulation with an inexpensive arbitration service.

### *Support for S4C*

A campaign to secure a vibrant, independent and properly-resourced S4C, overseen by the Welsh government, was supported by DM. The Welsh-speaking broadcaster will lose £7m of government grant by 2022. Nick Powell of the Welsh Executive Council (WEC) said its income had been cut by nearly 20m in the past decade. Liz Saville Roberts, Plaid Cymru MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd in Wales, a member of the NUJ's cross-party Parliamentary Group, said it was an issue she would be able to pursue with the union.

### *GDPR gripes*

Tamsin Allen of Bindmans law firm held a session on the implications of General Data Protection Regulations for journalists [<https://www.nuj.org.uk/news/dm18-gdpr/>]. Delegates later agreed the union would provide guidance for freelances and staff about their data protection obligations in the UK and Ireland; lobby to maintain exemptions in law for journalists, including PR; and to campaign for an exemption for sole traders from data controller registration and against the enactment of the Communications (data retention) bill 2017 in Ireland.

### *Highlighting hyperlocals*

A WEC motion, proposed by Rachel Howells, instructed the NEC to develop a strategy to secure union membership in the hyperlocal and co-operative sectors. Francis Sedgemore, freelance industrial council, said many hyperlocals were run by freelances. They often needed support, such as mentoring, and the union should recruit and support them. DM agreed to work with the Centre for Community Journalism at Cardiff University and the recently-established



**Read More**

<https://www.nuj.org.uk/tags/dm2018/>



Pictures: Paul Herrmann

Independent Community News Network.

**Dearth of diversity**

Natasha Hirst, equality council, said the NUJ must to more to embed equality throughout all its structures. Chris Frost, emeritus professor at John Moores University, said during the past 20 years people from poorer backgrounds found it increasingly difficult to get on to journalism courses. Richard Edwards, Leeds and Wakefield branch, said he had been inspired by former George Viner scholar Shajan Miah's speech, talking about how the bursary helped get his role as a BBC sports writer, but the union must persuade media organisations to reach out to recruit a more diverse workforce. Ann Galpin, disabled members' council, said disabled journalists found it difficult to get work and were often shoe-horned into writing about only disability issues.

**TUPE troubles**

A worrying trend of aggressive attempts to derecognise the union by the publishing and magazine industry was identified by Fiona Swarbrick, national organiser, magazines/books/press and PR. New Scientist had succeeded and

Rough Guides was attempting to remove union recognition. Liz Else, London magazine branch, blamed TUPE, the law used when members were transferred to another employer. DM voted to instruct the NEC to campaign for reform of the law, so collective agreements were protected, and to offer guidance to chapels undergoing the process. An attempt by Penguin Random House to ditch the NUJ was roundly repulsed by the union.

**Other DM decisions**

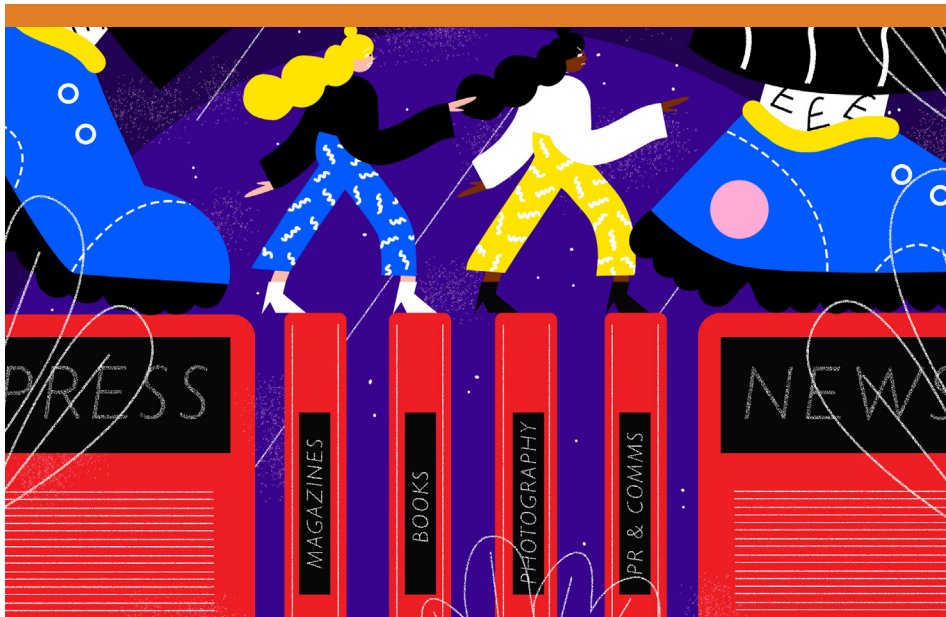
DM agreed: to support the Women Against State Pension Inequality campaign and fight changes to the Irish state pension scheme; to give photographers a place on the ethics council; to campaign against laws which discriminate against part-timers on redundancy pay; that journalists should have access to immigration detention centres; to ask Ofcom to set equality commissioning targets in broadcasting; to lobby for access for photographers to National Trust land and against restrictions on privatised public spaces; and to protect members from cyberbullying; DM voted against setting up a political fund.



# Spotlight

## NUJ Women launched to fight sexism in the media

Ana Jaks



### “Gender pay gaps demonstrate the range of inequalities in our industry”

**A NUJ Women’s network has been launched as part of a major initiative to prioritise a union-wide campaign to support women affected by sexism, discrimination and harassment in the workplace and end discrimination in pay.**

A motion from the NEC, proposed by general secretary Michelle Stanistreet, noted “the long overdue spotlight cast on the scourge of pay inequity” by new regulations which forces employers with more than 250 workers to publish data on the difference in pay and bonuses between the sexes.

The union has been in the vanguard of defending members following the BBC’s publication of a list of its highest earners, which revealed only a third of those paid more than £150,000 were women. The union has now lodged more

than 180 equal pay cases on behalf of NUJ members which have inspired many other cases, and successful settlements, at workplaces elsewhere in the industry.

Michelle Stanistreet said: “Publication of the gender pay gaps demonstrates so clearly the range of inequalities that exist in our industry and we need to work hard – drawing in chapel reps, members, new recruits, to eradicate this scourge and forcing employers to clean up their act.

“We are in the process of negotiating settlements for women who have been short-changed for years in many workplaces, demonstrating how companies will not be able to continue getting away with such blatant discrimination.

“To that end, there is a late notice motion from the national executive setting out an action plan – a battle plan –

for the coming cycle, including the launch of NUJ Women.”

Chapels are now meeting to discuss how to negotiate with their employers to close the gender pay gap, with many carrying out in-house pay audits. Anger among women media workers has led them, and their male colleagues, to ask the union to set up chapels to tackle the issue.

The campaign will involve negotiating improved family friendly policies and flexible working and seeking commitment from employers to more part-time working and job sharing, particularly for senior positions that are too often dominated by men.

The union has a webpage on equal pay and the gender pay gap <https://www.nuj.org.uk/campaigns/equal-pay-and-gender-pay-gap/> which gives details of the gap across the industry and provides information for chapels and reps on how to negotiate fair and transparent pay policies. An analysis by Press Gazette showed that 91 per cent of UK-based media companies on average paid men more than women, based on the mean hourly rate, and 85 per cent paid men more in mean bonus pay. The worst offenders were Condé Nast, publisher of Vogue, GQ and Vanity Fair, The Telegraph, Economist and publishing group Hachette.

DM also voted for a 10-point plan to help women achieve a stronger public voice, combat sexism and to press for all sectors of the media to adopt responsible reporting standards demonstrating respect for women. Eleanor Lisney, London independent broadcasting and new media branch, said the union needed to support women so they felt able to come forward with complaints of sexism and “push for greater diversity in all newsrooms with intersectional

representation, so more women can smash the glass ceiling and fill senior roles in the media”.

A number of measures were proposed, including recruiting more equality reps and providing reps with training, support and campaign resources to negotiate plans with employers and share experiences to create best practice models designed to combat discrimination in NUJ workplaces. Arjum Wajid, NEC member, said it was vital to strengthen the union’s network of equality reps, to train them and support their work.

The #MeToo movement has put sexual harassment centre stage and Debbie Calvadoro, chair of the NUJ’s Equality Council, told DM: “The tide is finally turning.” Natasha Burnal, of the magazines and books industrial council, said it was important that the union provided a safe space for women to bring their experience of sexism and harassment. She said the NEC must draw up a code of conduct for paid and lay officials to “create a climate that would eradicate sexual harassment” which could be adopted by chapels.

Delegates heard that that lessons could be learned from the Stronger Voice for Women project in Scotland [<https://www.nuj.org.uk/news/a-stronger-voice-for-women-in-the-media/>] which has run a series of events to give women

## Stamp Out Sexism: plan of action

- Provide a safe platform for women, including freelancers, to report sexism and harassment and offer them support.
- **Call out examples of sexist reporting in the media.**
- Push for greater diversity in newsrooms and encourage policies to promote more women to senior

editorial positions.

- **Call on the Irish government to include sexual harassment as a protected disclosure under the Protect Disclosures Act 2014.**
- Support initiatives such as the Stronger Voice for Women project and provide training in opportunities for women to develop confidence and assert their rights.
- **Create a model code of conduct for paid**



**and lay officials and officers.**

- Support #MeToo and other campaigns which expose sexual abuse in the media.

more confidence to stand up to sexism and make their voices heard.

Annie Pike, of the union’s health and safety committee, said it was important to promote health and safety awareness so that reps knew how to put in place robust house agreements backed up with legislation to prevent harassment.

The motion said the union must hold the press to account and challenge reporting which objectified women and focused on the way they looked, not what they said.

DM passed a Photographers’ Council’s motion which called upon the NEC to

consider ways it could support women photographers; the photography sector was one of the most gender-unbalanced sectors of the union, with only 17 per cent being women. Natasha Hirst, a photographer and member of the NEC, said that among photographers in their mid-50s, 90 per cent were men. She said: “Stories need to be told from all perspectives – not just men’s. We need to encourage more women activists to take up roles on the union’s decision-making bodies to make the issue of women photographers a priority.”

## Campaign for equal pay: action points

- Encourage the use of equal pay surveys and secure greater transparency of reporting in organisations of all sizes, ensuring chapels can effectively hold companies to account.
- **Provide reps with training, support and campaign resources to create best-practice**

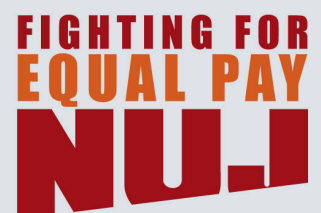
### models designed to combat discrimination in NUJ workplaces.

- Work to encourage women’s and equality reps on all chapel committees and secure NUJ representation on any company-initiated networks set up to address gender pay.
- **Encourage reps to negotiate more transparent recruitment practices and encourage companies’ commitments**

### to unconscious bias training.

- Negotiate improved family-friendly policies, job sharing, commitments to flexible working and practical measures to achieve work-life balance.
- **Campaign to end forced freelancing which is an unwelcome outcome for many women returning from maternity leave.**
- Tackle pernicious inequality, and work with

the NUJ’s parliamentary group, the TUC and the ICTU to extend the provisions of the currently limited gender pay gap regulations.



# International

## Silent tribute to 162 killed journalists

**Delegates gathered together outside the conference hall to pay a silent tribute to the 162 journalists who lost their lives since the last DM two years ago.**

DM guest speaker Anthony Bellanger, general secretary of the International Federation of Journalists, said: "In 2017, Mexico, Yemen, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India were the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists. Last year, the IFJ reported 82 journalists killed and nearly 2,500 since 1990. These statistics are unacceptable because



Message of freedom: Anthony Bellanger

behind these figures are women and men, mothers and fathers. Journalists killed precisely because they were journalists: nothing else. Today, messengers are killed, but the message of freedom of expression will never be erased."

He added: "You know we must remain vigilant everywhere, even in the United Kingdom or in my country, France."

Katrin McGauran, from the Netherlands branch, outlined plans by the Dutch government to allow security services to conduct mass electronic surveillance which would jeopardise the protection of journalistic sources. The NEC was instructed to work with the IFJ and the Dutch unions to oppose these measures. Other motions supported journalists in the Iraqi, Palestinian and Turkish press whose lives are put at risk for just doing their job. The union has also mounted a concerted campaign this year in support of colleagues at BBC Persian who have been intimidated by the Iranian authorities.

### Support the IFJ safety fund

Jim Boumelha, honorary treasurer of the International Federation of Journalists, appealed to



**delegates to increase assistance for the fund which since 1992 had provided €2m in health, welfare and legal aid for journalists and their families who had suffered intimidation, discrimination, or physical violence, or had a member of the family killed.**

Manchester and Salford branch is one of a number with standing orders set up for the fund and one of its delegates, Rzhwan Jaff, said the support provided was always appreciated. The NEC was instructed to allocate funding as part of its budgeting process. You can donate now on the IFJ website <http://ifj-safety.org/en/contents/the-ifj-safety-fund>

### Under Attack

Fallen colleagues were remembered by DM in motions from Continental Europe and the Irish Executive Council, which condemned the deaths of Maltese investigative reporter, Daphne Caruana Galizia, and Belfast branch officer, Martin O'Hagan, plus other media workers.

Conrad Bower, Manchester and Salford branch, told the meeting India was becoming a killing field for journalists, telling of a branch member

who had fled to exile in the UK after being abducted, jailed and tortured in India. The NEC was instructed to work with the IFJ and explore the possibility of raising the issue in Parliament.

The increased attacks on press freedom in member states of the European Union, including Poland and Hungary, was noted and DM agreed to continue to work with the IFJ to campaign against those attacks and that branches would organise events to mark the

International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists on 2 November.

### Homage to Catalonia

**The Spanish state was condemned for its use of violence and repressive measures against media workers during the 2017 Catalan independence referendum.**

TVE and TV3, the region's public-funded stations, were accused of providing biased and unfair coverage.

Journalists at TVE rebuked their bosses for pushing an editorial agenda on them and demonstrated outside their own headquarters.

Anton McCabe from the Derry and North West Ireland branch, who seconded the motion, sent congratulations to colleagues in the Catalan media who, in the spirit of the NUJ ethics code, resisted attempts at censorship and distortion by management and protested against it.