

Press release: Chair appointed to lead review of press sustainability in the UK

Since 2001 UK newspaper circulation has halved and over 200 local newspapers have closed their doors since 2005. With a rapidly changing media world, news reaches people through many new channels, and existing publications have often had to compete with digital media.

[Terms of reference](#) published today outline how the Cairncross review will investigate the overall state of the market, threats to financial sustainability, the role and impact of digital search engines and social media platforms, how content and data flows are operated and managed and the role of digital advertising.

Speaking at the Oxford Media Convention, Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Matt Hancock said:

Although the internet has been an immense force for good, it has torn apart the established order and raised real questions about the sustainability and profitability of traditional journalism.

Dame Frances Cairncross will bring her experience in journalism and academia to tackle these issues with a view to examine the press and protect the future of high quality journalism.

Dame Frances Cairncross said:

Having spent much of my working life as a journalist, and seen how the digital revolution has changed both the fortunes of newspapers and the opportunities for distributing news, I am excited to be undertaking this review.

This is both a challenging and an exciting time for the press, both locally and nationally, and I hope the review will clarify both ways to ensure the future of high quality journalism and the options for public policy.

Dame Frances Cairncross will be supported by a panel of experts which includes experts in the fields of journalism, academia, advertising and technology. The panel will act in an advisory capacity, with the review's final report and recommendations being determined by and issued in the name of the chair. The panel includes: Peter Wright, Matt Rogerson, Ashley Highfield, Geraldine Allinson, Mimi Turner, Douglas McCabe, Stephen Woodford, Akshat Rathi, Polly Curtis, and Azeem Azhar.

As well as identifying challenges, the review will make recommendations on what industry and government action can be taken, with a final report expected later this year.

Note to editors:

Dame Frances Cairncross is a former economic journalist, author and academic administrator. She is currently Chair of the Court of Heriot-Watt University and a Trustee at the Natural History Museum. Dame Frances was Rector of Exeter College, Oxford University; a senior editor on The Economist; and principal economic columnist for the Guardian. In 2014 she was made a Dame of the British Empire for services to education. She is the author of a number of books, including “The Death of Distance: How the Communications Revolution is Changing our Lives” and “Costing the Earth: The Challenge for Governments, the Opportunities for Business”. Dame Frances is married to financial journalist Hamish McRae.

Advisory panel members:

Jo Adetunji

Jo Adetunji is a journalist and Deputy Editor at The Conversation UK, a comment and analysis website that delivers evidence-based, accessible journalism by experts from universities across the UK and Europe. The Conversation aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and the public via a newsroom of editors. Jo has worked in more traditional media as a reporter for The Guardian, covering stories from UK knife crime to live blogging the Arab Spring, and has also written for The Independent. She recently contributed to Philanthropic Journalism Funding in the UK, a report commissioned by the European Journalism Centre, and was an interviewer for the latest round of the Journalism Diversity Fund. She holds a degree in the History of Art from The Courtauld Institute of Art in London.

Geraldine Allinson

Geraldine is the Chairman of the KM Media Group, part of Iliffe Media. KM is a Local Multimedia business that serves the people and organisations of Kent through Newspapers, Radio, Online and more recently local TV. The company employs award winning journalists and has highly trusted brands within its stable of products. Through online, print and broadcast KM reaches over 1 million people each week. Geraldine has been with KM Media Group since 1993 and became its Chairman in 2006. Prior to this she worked for Northcliffe Newspapers and the Midland News Association. She is currently a Non-executive Director at the PA Group (parent company of the Press Association), Director of the Radiocentre and a Director of the News Media Association (NMA). Previous industry positions include: President of the Newspaper Society, Chairman of the Independent Publishers Forum and the Weekly Independent Newspaper Association.

Azeem Azhar

Azeem runs Exponential View, a newsletter looking at how our world is

changing in the face of the accelerating pace of technology. This is built on the back of 20 years as an entrepreneur, corporate innovator and journalist. He is currently senior adviser to the Chief Technology & Innovation Officer at Accenture, focusing on frontier technologies. Azeem advises Harvard Business Review, the Huxley Summit and several founders of disruptive technology firms. He lives in London with his wife and three children.

Polly Curtis

Polly Curtis joined HuffPost UK in August 2017 as Editor-in-Chief with 17 years of media industry experience. Immediate prior to joining HuffPost, Polly was director of media for British Red Cross during a time that included the organisation's largest emergency response in decades, as they operationalised after the Manchester bombing, London Bridge and Finsbury Park attacks and at Grenfell. Prior to her position at British Red Cross, Polly was digital editor at The Guardian, where she led digital plans for the Scottish referendum, the EU referendum and the 2015 election as well as the live coverage of some of the biggest breaking stories in recent times. She has a background as a news editor and reporter, having served as the Guardian's deputy national editor, Whitehall correspondent, education editor and health correspondent.

Ashley Highfield

Ashley Highfield is CEO of Johnston Press plc, one of the largest local media groups in the UK, and owner of the i newspaper. He has worked in high levels in companies including Microsoft – where he was UK Managing Director (Consumer & Online) – and the BBC, where as executive board director for New Media & Technology, he was responsible for the development and launch of BBC iPlayer. During his tenure there he oversaw a growth in the BBC's online presence from 3.5m to 17m users. In June 2015 Culture Secretary John Whittingdale named Ashley as one the advisory board members tasked with working on the renewal of the BBC's Royal Charter, which led to the local democracy reporter initiative. In October 2015 he was appointed Chairman of the News Media Association for a two year period. He has previously served on the boards of William Hill plc and the British Film Institute in non-executive roles.

Douglas McCabe

Douglas is a leading expert in tech and publishing media. He analyses supplier strategies and forecasts consumption, revenue and marketing expenditure. He is a former director of Fish4, the online advertising portal, and was director of sales development and market insights at Waterstones. Douglas holds a degree from Stirling University.

Akshat Rathi

Akshat Rathi has worked for both established publications and new media startups. He is a reporter for Quartz, covering science and energy, and previously worked for The Economist and The Conversation. His work has also been published in The Guardian, The Hindu, and Nature. He holds a doctorate

in chemistry from the University of Oxford.

Matt Rogerson

Matthew Rogerson is the Head of Public Policy at Guardian Media Group (GMG). Matthew joined GMG in 2013 following 5 years at Virgin Media, where he worked on a range of issues, including responses to the Digital Britain report, the Government's Communications Review, and broadband policy. Matthew's work at GMG covers areas such as press freedom, media plurality, digital advertising and brand safety, and the changing nature of digital news. Before working in the private sector, Matthew worked as a parliamentary researcher.

Mimi Turner

Mimi Turner is Founder of brand strategy consultancy Mimi Turner Associates and has more than twenty years experience in print and digital publishing. Mimi has been instrumental in growing some of the UK's biggest digitally disruptive media brands including the Lad Bible, GIVEMESPORT and Vice Media, and has developed a deep understanding of millennial and Gen Z audiences. She is a board advisor to TRUTH, the media agency using blockchain technology to provide transparency in the advertising supply chain, and is an advisor to online video platform Suggestv, which helps publishers build brand context through video. Prior to transforming the Lad Bible, Mimi spent three years working for Richard Desmond as Group Director of Communications of Express Newspapers, Channel 5 and OK Magazine, and was also Sales and Marketing Director of The Health Lottery. Mimi spent over a decade in journalism with the Hollywood Reporter and began her career writing about science and technology for the Sunday Times and the Times.

Stephen Woodford

Stephen was appointed CEO of the Advertising Association in September 2016. Having held management roles in three agencies (Leo Burnett, WCRS/Engine and DDB/adam&eveDDB), Stephen currently chairs youth marketing agency Livity, a social purpose-driven business that seeks to transform young peoples' lives, especially from BAME backgrounds. He was recently Chairman of Lexis PR and a founder and director of U, a challenger to conventional banks. Stephen is a past President of NABS and serves on the board of the History of Advertising Trust. He was IPA President (2003-05) where he led both their first ethnic diversity initiative and transformed its professional qualifications for new industry entrants, which over 15,000 people have now sat and passed.

Peter Wright

Peter Wright has been Editor Emeritus of Associated Newspapers, publishers of the Daily Mail, Mail on Sunday, MailOnline and Metro, since 2012. He was Editor of The Mail on Sunday 1998-2012. He is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) Complaints Committee, and the News Media Association Legal, Policy and Regulatory Affairs Committee. He is also a member of the Thomson Reuters Founders Share Company Nominations Committee. Previously he was a commissioner and later director of the Press Complaints

Commission (2008-14) and the Editors' Code of Practice Committee (2004-8). He sat on the Defence, Press and Broadcasting Advisory Committee Review (2014-15).

- The terms of reference can be found [here](#).
- Recent estimates suggest that current average annual revenue per digital media user is only c.£15, compared to c.£124 per print media user: [“UK News Media: an engine of original news content and democracy – A study on the economic contribution of the UK news media industry”](#), Deloitte, December 2016.
- An estimated two thirds of Local Authority Districts in the UK now not served by a local daily newspaper: [“Monopolising local news: Is there an emerging local democratic deficit in the UK due to the decline of local newspapers?”](#), Gordon Ramsay and Martin Moore Centre for the Study of Media, Communication and Power, May 2016.
- The review will not address politically motivated disinformation and propaganda.