



January 2019

### **The NUJ's Welsh Executive Council's response to the BBC's consultation on age-related TV licences**

The Welsh Executive Council (WEC) of the NUJ fully supports the union's opposition to the use of the BBC's licence fee income to fund a welfare benefit, which should be financed by the UK government.

In particular, we wish to draw attention to the additional threat to the financial viability of S4C posed by any diversion of licence fee income to a purpose unrelated to broadcasting.

The BBC has already been required to provide the majority of S4C's funding, following a drastic cut in the finance provided to the channel by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. The net affect has been to cut nearly £20 million from S4C's annual budget over the past 10 years.

The DCMS intends to withdraw the remaining UK Government funding, worth £7 million a year, in 2022. It is essential that this money is replaced as further budget cuts would inevitably undermine S4C's credibility with its audience. Programme quality would suffer and the already excessive number of repeats would rise further.

The WEC is under no illusion that it won't be difficult for the BBC to find the extra money. A further loss of licence fee income could make it impossible.

That is why we support the union's position that the government must fund this welfare benefit.