NEWS FUTURES 2035

June 2023

The News Futures 2035 Foresight Project: Interim Report

A national, multi-stakeholder foresight project bringing together experts from inside, alongside and outside the news industry to imagine, and create, a better future for the supply of trustworthy public-interest news in the UK

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MEDIA INNOVATION STUDIO

Google News Initiative

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Foreword

The News Futures 2035 foresight initiative is a response to concerns about the future of trustworthy public-interest news (PIN) in the UK. PIN is essential for the health of communities, markets, and democracies. It informs citizens, holds power to account, and helps us make informed decisions.

To address this challenge, the News Futures 2035 consortium of news associations, publishers, and individual industry thought leaders has embarked on a participatory, action-research project. With the support of the Google News Initiative, more than 300 experts from industry, policy, and civil society have actively engaged in surveys, interviews, roundtable consultations, and three national roundtables over four and a half days.

Two critical uncertainties impacting on the future supply of PIN were identified and examined: one is the body of policies and regulations that might be either constraining or enabling. The other is the relevance of PIN to audiences and the wider society, on the one hand, and the vision, mission and business models of news-producing organisations and individuals, on the other.

The project has also identified a number of potential solutions to these challenges, which connect with and build on the work of recent government enquiries and public, private and third-sector initiatives aimed at addressing these concerns.

In doing so, participants recognised the importance not only of the insights, but the participatory process of generating them. We came to recognise that efforts to address the challenges facing PIN are more likely to be successful if they are informed by a better understanding of the issues, inclusive of a diversity of voices, and timely and, where appropriate, joined-up.

As such, this interim report is a call to action for all stakeholders who care about the future of PIN. We need to work together in a structured, inclusive way to address the critical issues facing this essential service. The project's findings and recommendations offer a roadmap for doing so by outlining the opportunities for a News Futures Forum. We urge you to join us in working to make these recommendations a reality.

Dr François Nel

Reader of Media Innovations and Entrepreneurship, University of Central Lancashire

Introduction

The News Futures 2035 foresight initiative brings together experts from inside, alongside and outside the news industry to address concerns about the future of trustworthy public-interest news (PIN) in the UK.

This participatory, action-research project has been initiated by Dr François Nel at the Media Innovation Studio (MIS) at the University of Central Lancashire and supported by the Google News Initiative.

The research team included Dr Kamila Rymajdo, who worked closely with the Steering Board comprising: Alison Gow (formerly of Reach Plc and past-president of the Society of Editors), Alan Hunter (HBM Advisory), Emma Meese (Independent Community News Network), Inga Thordar (formerly of CNN), Jeremy Clifford (FT Strategies consultant and Visiting Research Fellow at University of Central Lancashire), Jonathan Heawood (Public Interest News Foundation), Laura Zelenko (Bloomberg) and Steve Matthewson (S&P Global Market Intelligence).

The action-research study helped participants from news organisations such as the BBC, the Guardian, Bloomberg and CNN, industry bodies like the News Media Association, the Association for Journalism Educators and the Society for Freelance Journalists, as well as those focused on diversifying the journalism industry, such as the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity, consider alternative scenarios, develop new insights into what is required and catalyse better relationships, all focused on the question:

How can the supply of trustworthy public-interest news in the UK be secured?

The appetite for trusted news provision has been increased massively by the enormous issues that are confronting the world. So, we saw people turning to trusted news providers during COVID. That, to some extent, has continued with things like the conflict in Ukraine, not least because there's so much disinformation out there, and the growth in misinformation or disinformation on either side – just Wild West lunatic reporting or some more malicious attempt to present a completely false picture – has become much more widespread, with the result that people want somewhere they can go and rely upon what they read. We are going to be living through some very challenging times and the importance of trusted news provision, I think, grows.

John Whittingdale
Minister of State for Media and Data of the United Kingdom
2020-2021, News Futures 2035 Consultation 2022

While the News Futures 2035 process made very clear that people hold differing views on the definition of PIN, we take it to mean

- news and other information produced according to high standards of ethical conduct and best practice in journalism and made accessible to the public, who are able to recognise its authorship, understand it, and assess for themselves its benefits.

These benefits are broadly framed as the following:

- Informing members of the public about matters of relevance to them as citizens
- Enabling local communities to become aware of matters of common concern
- Providing information for people to feel equipped in the democratic process
- Promoting matters of importance to society
- Excluding information that is biased or inaccurate or impinges on a right to privacy

After many years of change and struggle, we believe we're at a turning point in the future – and history – of news.

Ultimately, many have a dystopian vision – where the provision of trusted news is lost – and where people are vulnerable to false information, disengaged or avoid news altogether. It may be that we are not currently able to give communities what they want or need – but if our audiences switch off – we know the public interest is not being served. Is another future possible?

To explore our questions, we worked with two experienced facilitators of participatory, multi-stakeholder processes: Dr Bruno Tindemans, Chief Foresight Officer for the government Department of Work in Brussels, and Alain Wouters, a strategy consultant formerly of the planning department at Royal Dutch/Shell.

While our primary focus is on PIN in the UK, we believe that what we learn is relevant further afield, not least because the British media has often led the way and many external developments shaping the future of the focal issue are international/global in nature.

1

Q2 2022
SECURED FUNDING AND ESTABLISHED THE NF2035 STEERING BOARD

Q2 2022
FORMED THE NF2035 CONSORTIUM

Q3 2022
DEVELOPED THE DISCUSSION PAPER, BASED ON EXPERT INTERVIEWS

2

13/10/22
14/10/22

NEWSPEAK HOUSE,
LONDON

DISCUSSED RELEVANT EXTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS AND FACTORS AND MAPPED DIFFERENT FUTURE SCENARIOS

ROUNDTABLE 1

STRESS-TESTED OUR ASSUMPTIONS FROM THE SCENARIOS BY ELICITING WIDER FEEDBACK FROM A WIDER EXPERT PANEL FACILITATED BY THE COPENHAGEN INSTITUTE FOR FUTURES STUDIES

24/11/22
25/11/22

THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY MUSEUM, MANCHESTER

RE-EVALUATED, ADAPTED AND FURTHER DEVELOPED THE SCENARIOS AND CONSIDERED POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

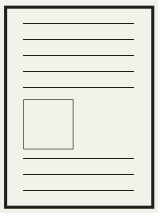
ROUNDTABLE 2

02/02/23
03/02/23

BRIDEWELL HALL,
ST BEDE, LONDON

REVIEWED IMPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS, AND CONSIDERED NEXT STEPS FOR THE NEWS FUTURES 2035 INITIATIVE

ROUNDTABLE 3



CONCLUSION OF THE FINAL NEWS FUTURES 2035 REPORT, AND LINKED SCHOLARLY PAPERS.

3

NEWS FUTURES
Forum

THE PROJECT'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN THIS REPORT OFFER A POTENTIAL ROADMAP FOR MOVING FROM A FIXED-TERM PROJECT TO A NEWS FUTURES FORUM.

Project Summary

How?

Since July 2022, more than 300 key actors from public, private and third sector organisations have been involved in the News Futures 2035 foresight study through interviews, surveys, focus group consultations and 3 x one and a half-day workshops in London and Manchester.

Who?

While the actors across the sector have divergent agendas and priorities, participants in our project all have an interest in the future supply of trustworthy PIN in order to secure the integrity of the discourse in the public sphere and to ensure that public opinion is based on fact-based information, which is deemed an essential ingredient in the functioning of societies, markets, and democracies. While individual actors' endorsement of the report findings will be sought following the completion of the consultation stage, the interim findings are supported by Dame Frances Caincross, the Public Interest News Foundation, the Independent Community News Network, the Digital Editors' Network, the Association for Journalism Educators and others, while the project has also consulted with the government Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and regulators Ofcom, IPSO and Impress.

What?

Drawing on tested foresight methodologies, the participatory action-research project aimed to build shared images of the future and foster constructive networks of actors inside, alongside, and outside of the news media industry. In so doing, participants identified a wide range of external driving forces impacting on the issue and two critical uncertainties - that is, two key issues that are deemed to have the highest impact on the issue and are the most difficult to predict. These are described as:

1. The net effect of **the body of policy and regulation** at supranational, national, industry, sector and organisational levels. Such policies and regulation could be either highly enabling or highly constraining (for the supply of trustworthy PIN).

2. **The relevance of trustworthy PIN** to news consumers as well as to

the values and business models of news-producing organisations and their workers and society at large. As such, the PIN produced could range from being highly relevant to highly irrelevant.

Using these factors as X and Y axis (i.e. the 'scenarios framework'), the foresight study participants developed four scenarios with a 2035 horizon:

- **The Wilderness**, characterised by no or few effective regulations where the PIN providers were left to fight it out in the marketplace with a variety of mis-, dis- and malinformation actors.

- **The Zoo**, characterised by the highly supportive and protective policy and regulations that had the unintended consequence of stifling the innovation needed in the industry to ensure that PIN is not only produced but is also highly relevant to the audiences and society.

- **The Museum**, characterised by highly constraining policy and regulation that both stifles innovation and impedes the supply of relevant PIN.

- **The Nature Reserve**, which is characterised by policy and regulation that seeks to protect, preserve and promote healthy information ecosystems that encourage and promote the ongoing innovations that are essential to the supply of highly-relevant trustworthy PIN.

The plenary sessions further explored the implications of each of these scenarios and concluded there was an urgent need to foster greater understanding amongst actors - across current and emerging news industry, policy and regulation, and research and knowledge exchange - to ensure greater effectiveness and efficiency of the Herculean efforts needed to ensure a healthy, pluralistic fact-based information ecosystem relevant to communities across the UK in the face of enormous threats in a rapidly changing social and technological environment.

BELU
smartwater
MATT
Cooke

Key Recommendation

What now?

The plenaries recognised the major news and information challenges the UK journalism industry is facing. While reach of print and online newspapers in the UK has decreased significantly, from 47% in 2020 to 38% in 2022',[1] our analysis of PcW[2] data suggests that the decline in UK print circulation is going to get steeper, with a drop of 65% projected for the next five years. Trust in the news is also declining, 'down by 16 percentage points (pp) since the Brexit referendum in 2016'.[3] Meanwhile, news avoidance is growing, with almost half (46%) of the UK survey sample of the Reuters Institute's Digital News Report 2022 reporting 'they avoid the news sometimes or often – almost twice the level seen in 2016'.[4] Declining engagement with the news is compounded by the economic pressures on news providers, which are increasing. While the total UK newspaper circulation revenue fell from £2.2 billion in 2007 to £1.7 billion in 2017, advertising revenue fell from £4.6 billion to 1.4 billion in the same period.[5] More recent economic pressures include the BBC's government-imposed license fee freeze at a time of 7% inflation,[6] which has had a significantly detrimental effect on BBC news programmes, such as the April 2023 merging of BBC News and BBC World News, resulting in 70 job losses.[7] In turn, participants noted that government policies like the National Security Bill have had a detrimental effect on media freedom, resulting in the UK being ranked behind almost every other European state in a new global index of freedom of expression.[8]

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1 Ofcom. (2022). News Consumption in the UK: 2022. [online]. Ofcom. Available at: https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/241947/News-Consumption-in-the-UK-2022-report.pdf [Accessed 18 May 2023], p. 5.

2 Nel, F. (2023). 'Circulation forecast underlines the need for a new compact between news publishers and policymakers to secure the future of public-interest news' [online]. LinkedIn. Posted 1 January 2023. Available at: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/circulation-forecast-underlines-need-new-compact-between-nel-phd%3FtrackingId=j%252FhvwbGkr89%252BDbSEWe9%2BmQ%253D%253D/?trackingId=j%2FhvwbGkr89%2BDbSEWe9%2BmQ%3D%3D [Accessed 18 May 2023].

3 Eddy, K., Fletcher, R., Kleis Nielsen, R., Newman, N., Robertson, C. (2022). Digital News Report 2022. [online]. Reuters Institute. Available at: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Digital_News-Report_2022.pdf, p. 62.

4 ibid.

5 Adshead, S., Chan, Y., Lavender, T., Ramsay, G., Stouli, S., Wilkinson, L. (2020). Research into recent dynamics of the press sector in the UK and globally. [online]. Plum Consulting. Available at: https://plumconsulting.co.uk/research-into-recent-press-sector-dynamics/, p. 6.

6 Eddy, K., Fletcher, R., Kleis Nielsen, R., Newman, N., Robertson, C. (2022). Digital News Report 2022. [online]. Reuters Institute. Available at: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Digital_News-Report_2022.pdf, [Accessed 18 May 2023], p. 62.

7 BBC. (2022). 'BBC sets out plans for TV news channel merger in 2023' [online]. BBC, 14 July. Available at: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-62161868 [Accessed 18 May 2023].

8 Index on Censorship. (2023). Index Index. [online]. Available at: https://www.indexoncensorship.org/campaigns/indexindex/ [Accessed 18 May 2023].

Concerns were also raised about technology companies' implementation of generative AI features, which may negatively impact users' ability to recognise the sources of information presented to them, thus increasing their vulnerability to dis- and misinformation, while also noting such features' impact on publishers' ability to monetise their content. As such, it was agreed that interdisciplinary collaboration among all stakeholders of our society and strong leadership is urgently required. Indeed, leaders from industry, government, academia and society at large should commit and collaborate to improve the state of the information ecosystem on which we depend.

It was thus proposed that the News Futures 2035 project transition into a multi-stakeholder News Futures Forum with the following benefits:

- **Generate** a common systemic understanding and language regarding the changing ecosystem and its context (particularly relevant for identifying relevant and effective points of intervention in the system, such as regulation)
- **Foster** diversity of participants representing the stakeholder field, promoting greater engagement and involvement of the public, and ensuring that no one is left behind
- **Enable** a more demand-driven approach to generating trustworthy PIN
- **Set** the agenda through a common diagnosis and gap assessment
- **Engage** in continuous activity that, over time, motivates news providers to ensure the continued supply of trustworthy PIN, adequately resourced and focused on the goal of informing, educating, and interacting with all sectors of society and communities

We also observed that, as of yet, people were not really highlighting the benefits of the proposed News Futures Forum at the level of individuals or companies/organizations. However, anecdotal evidence from participants indicates the emergence of new collaborative activities among various actors, ranging from business development to research and innovation projects.

We know our users want access to diverse and reliable local news so it's in our interest to provide easy access to it. And while news is not a big revenue driver for Google - it's a very low proportion of searches and we don't seek directly to monetise on our site - we're invested in this because we care about the news ecosystem and the more informed societies they create.

Matt Brittin

President of Google EMEA, UK Local News Summit 2023

Link with recommendations in the Cairncross Review

What has become evident is that such a News Futures Forum would also provide a vehicle for several recommendations made by Dame Frances Cairncross in her 2019 Review[9] into the sustainability of high-quality journalism in the UK, in particular:

Recommendation 4. Developing a media literacy strategy alongside DCMS, Ofcom, industry and stakeholders.

As outlined in the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sports' Online Media Literacy Strategy 2021 '[t]here are multiple knowledge gaps within the sector around evaluation, the effectiveness of different media literacy initiatives, platform design interventions, and vulnerabilities to disinformation.'[10] The Forum would complement the work of the 170 online platforms, academics, civil society organisations, news organisations, and education providers undertaking media literacy activity identified by the report and the DCMS' own Media Literacy Taskforce, by indexing their research and identifying pathways towards addressing the knowledge gaps that remain, while encouraging cross-sector collaboration between researchers and delivery organisations, to help foster evaluation methods and effectiveness metrics. Underlining the Online Media Literacy Strategy 2021's finding that '[a] lack of understanding about how online content is created may also have negative implications for the sustainability of the press sector and the

9 Cairncross, F. (2019). *The Cairncross Review: a sustainable future for journalism.* [online]. Department for Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-cairncross-review-a-sustainable-future-for-journalism [Accessed 3 May 2023].

10 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom. (2021). *Online Media Literacy Strategy.* [online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-media-literacy-strategy [Accessed 3 May 2023], p.52.

quality of PIN',[11] the Forum would focus particularly on news literacy,[12] fostering greater understanding and promotion of trustworthy PIN that is accessible to all (cf. formats, news deserts, niche communities, affordability), intelligible (understood by all), assessable (users would be in a position to make their own judgement based on trustworthy information) and whose authorship is clear (cf. synthetic media, copyright, etc). Participants in the NF2035 project identified the need for such literacy amongst not only news consumers but also news producers, educators, policymakers, civil society, business and other stakeholders.

> We're facing a lot of threats, whether in terms of demands on people's attention or losing interest in news as a whole; the legal threats to journalists – how do you safeguard against those? And I thought that there were some really good ideas being raised [during the News Futures 2035 plenaries] in terms of how you partner with other parts of the industry to ensure our industry finds solutions to these threats.
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>
> **Ruth David**
>
> **London Bureau Chief, Bloomberg, News Futures 2035 Consultation 2023**

Recommendation 6. The government should launch a new fund focusing on innovations aimed at improving the supply of public interest news, to be run by an independent body.

The government accepted this recommendation and in their response to the House of Commons DCMS Committee's 2023 Sustainability of local journalism report which recommended that an innovation fund for news was necessary,[13] made clear that lessons learned from the Future News Fund pilot collaboration with Nesta in 2019 should be applied to the development of any potential future fund.[14] The News Futures Forum would be well placed to provide a vehicle to synthesise the lessons learned by all parties. The NFF could also contribute to any new iteration of

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11 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom. (2021). *Online Media Literacy Strategy.* [online]. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/online-media-literacy-strategy [Accessed 3 May 2023], p.13.

12 Defined by the News Literacy Project [online] as 'the ability to determine the credibility of news and other information and to recognize the standards of fact-based journalism to know what to trust, share and act on.' Available at: https://newslit.org/ [Accessed 15 May 2023].

13 House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. (2023). Sustainability of local journalism. [online]. House of Commons. Available at: https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33635/documents/183838/default/ [Accessed 3 May 2023], p. 3.

14 House of Commons. (2023). The sustainability of local journalism: Government Response to the Committee's Seventh Report. [online]. House of Commons. Available at: https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/39981/documents/195044/default/ [Accessed 17 May 2023].

the Future News Fund's governance by providing oversight and inspiration from a recognised multi-stakeholder body focused narrowly on the one area of the system that all actors agree needs to be stressed: the supply of trustworthy PIN that is highly relevant to all communities across the nations and regions of the country.

> When I was doing the [Cairncross Review] report, it quickly became clear that the only way in which one could justify putting any government money into this industry – government, after all, is not putting money into department stores, which are under the same sort of pressures for the same sort of reasons – are in the activities that are in the public interest. Economists of my generation don't like the idea of subsidising any industry that can't cope with the test of the market. But this seemed to me to be the most modest way in which one could make a claim for some government support.
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>
> **Dame Frances Cairncross**
> **News Futures 2035 Consultation, 2022**

Recommendation 8. The Local Democracy Reporting Service (LDRS) should be reviewed and expanded.

Since its inception, the Local Democracy Reporter Service, provided by the Local News Partnership between the NMA and the BBC, has reinforced the provision of PIN reporting of local councils - serving unitary and first tier authorities. This was an area that was being eroded through the retraction of the traditional media landscape.

The Cairncross Review recommended a review and expansion of this scheme which the government supported and, in turn, the Secretary of State charged the BBC with its implementation. Our belief is that a review of the service is timely given the developing nature of media distribution and concerns regarding the distribution of LDRS resources raised more recently as noted in the DCMS Committees' Sustainability of local journalism report.[15] The News Futures Forum, with its multi-stakeholder constituency, would be well placed to oversee such a review and make recommendations for the way in which the LDRS could be expanded - building on the recommendations from Cairncross and more recent reports.

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15 House of Commons Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee. (2023). *Sustainability of local journalism.* [online]. House of Commons. Available at: https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33635/documents/183838/default/ [Accessed 3 May 2023], p.15.

Recommendation 9. Establish an institute for public interest news.

The government acknowledged the value of this recommendation but decided not to take it forward arguing that it was not for the government to lead on this issue. As such, the proposed News Futures Forum offers an opportunity to enact this recommendation by constituting a multistakeholder forum that convenes actors in safe, Chatham House Rule-governed fora to foster constructive networks and collective action around a single focal question: The supply of trustworthy PIN in the UK. As such, we are inspired by the World Economic Forum's founding notion that the 'business of business is everyone's business' and therefore, business leaders need to consider and consult with a wide range of stakeholders.

In its activities, the Forum would fully respect the essential role played by government and regulators, in particular Ofcom, Impress and IPSO, and industry organisations, in particular the News Media Association, the Society of Editors, the Public Interest News Foundation, and the Independent Community News Network. It also recognises the vital role that allied organisations play, such as the Sir Lenny Henry Centre for Media Diversity, the Centre for Media Monitoring, the Google News Initiative, the Digital Editors Network, University of Central Lancashire's Media Innovation Studio, and others.

Towards convening a News Futures Forum

It is proposed that the News Future Forum consider focusing on three core areas:

1. **More effective knowledge sharing and generation**. Activities here would focus on indexing existing research and insight to make it more accessible to all actors; identifying, refining and prioritising research questions to ensure greater alignment, and fostering collaboration amongst private and public researchers to increase quality and effectiveness of outputs, and greater value and impact for funders.

   Example 1: Indexing all research and activities related to news literacy to share best practice and identify gaps in research questions and coordinate activities of funders and researchers.

   Example 2: Developing a cross-industry quality metric for PIN for inclusion in the algorithms of technology companies, promotion by the industry, fostered in training, and supported by business partners.

2. **More effective policy and regulation.** Activities here would be in line with the Institute for Government's 2022 Better Policy Making paper that advocates for more effective and efficient policy and regulations through greater competence and domain knowledge amongst actors across Westminster and Whitehall,[16] which would come from a deeper and systemic understanding of the issues derived by tapping into quality researchers and connecting more closely with all stakeholders.[17] The Institute also criticised as outdated the traditional modes of policy-making that relied heavily on commissions and enquiries and instead advocated for more creative and efficient user-centred approaches such as the foresight methodologies used in this project. The Forum might also provide a non-performative space to deliberate the complex and evolving relationships between politicians and the Press, which was not only a concern in the Leveson Inquiry (2012),[18] but continues to be discussed in the context of Press freedom debates worldwide, including more recently in the appointment of the Chairman of the BBC Trust in the UK.

   Example 1: Bridging the Gap between Police and Media. Moving the current bilateral engagement between parties to multi-stakeholder fora to enhance the performance of the key actors and improve outcomes for communities.

   Example 2: AI and PIN: Engage policy and regulatory actors in the ongoing discussions about the rapidly evolving spaces to ensure, amongst others, the integrity of PIN that is accessible (to all), intelligible (understood), assessable (that is, that the public can judge) and that its authorship is clear.

   Example 3: Convening an independent body to advise on funding of the BBC. As per the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee's recommendation that the government set up an independent body to advise it on the BBC licence fee or new form of funding,[19] the NFF could help convene such a body.

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16 Thomas, A., Sasse, T. (2022). Better Policy Making. Institute for Government. [online]. Available at: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/better-policy-making.pdf [Accessed 3 May 2023], p. 6.

17 Thomas, A., Sasse, T. (2022). Better Policy Making. Institute for Government. [online]. Available at: https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/better-policy-making.pdf [Accessed 3 May 2023], p. 8.

18 Leveson, B. (2012). *Leveson Inquiry - Report into the culture, practices and ethics of the press.* [online]. Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom and Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/leveson-inquiry-report-into-the-culture-practices-and-ethics-of-the-press [Accessed 3 May 2023].

19 House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee. (2022). *Licence to change: BBC future funding.* [online]. House of Lords. Available at: https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/23091/documents/169130/default/ [Accessed 3 May 2023].

3. **Greater Competency and Capability Across the Public-Interest News Sectors**. Activities here would range from fostering PIN media literacy in the round - consumers, producers, policy makers, academia, and civil society - to considering a variety of pressing issues, such as those raised in the Cairncross Review (2019), the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee report on the future funding of the BBC (2022) and the House of Commons DCMS Committee inquiry into the Sustainability of Local Journalism (2022-23).

Example 1: While various challenges to PIN have been highlighted, its economic viability has been identified as one of the biggest threats to the future provision of PIN, especially within the local journalism sector. As such, the Forum would encourage multi-stakeholder innovation to ensure its survival into the future.

Example 2: Building out current media and news literacy activities to foster deeper understanding amongst all stakeholders of the role PIN plays in the public sphere that shapes the public opinion which determines the vibrancy of our democracy.

Example 3: Building on the research of the National Council for the Training of Journalists published in their 2022 Diversity in Journalism report, which found that gender parity, ethnicity representation and employment of journalists with disabilities and health issues has improved but more can be done,[20] the Forum would focus on changes still needed to foster the next generation of diverse industry leaders and innovators the industry requires to thrive.

20 Spilsbury, M. (2022). Diversity in Journalism. [online]. National Council for the Training of Journalists. Available at: https://www.nctj.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Diversity-in-journalism-2022.pdf [Accessed 16 May 2023], p.9.

Further Work

While the News Futures 2035 steering board and project team have considered, and will continue to do so, all the inputs into the process and will be producing a full and detailed report on the project's process and findings, we are interested in continuing the dialogue around the key project recommendation of establishing a News Futures Forum.

With that in mind, responses to several key questions are being solicited from participants and other stakeholders:

- **Who else** might participate in the Forum?
- **What** would be its structure and governance?
- **How** will it be resourced and funded?

Draft Timeline and Key Milestones (Phase 1, 3 Years)

The key recommendation from the News Futures 2035 foresight project is to create a News Futures Forum to facilitate cross-sector collaboration to secure the supply of trustworthy PIN in the UK. The following is a draft timeline and key milestones for this recommendation:

2023:

- *June*: Release of the News Futures 2035 interim report, including the key recommendation for the creation of a News Futures Forum.
- *July-August*: Planning and preparation for the News Futures Forum, including identifying potential participants, developing the Forum's objectives, and securing funding and resources.
- *September-November*: Launch of the News Futures Forum, with the first meeting focused on developing a shared understanding of the challenges facing the PIN sector while discussing the role of the public in the debate and how we differentiate between current consumers of PIN and desired consumers of PIN, and how we include both groups in exploring potential solutions.

2024:

- *January-March:* Second meeting of the News Futures Forum, focused on identifying and prioritising concrete actions to address the challenges identified in the first meeting.
- *April-June:* Development of action plans for each priority area, including timelines, budgets, and responsible parties.
- *July-September:* Third meeting of the News Futures Forum, focused on reporting progress on action plans developed in the previous phase.

2025:

- *January-March:* Continued implementation of the action plans, with regular progress updates provided to the News Futures Forum, alongside identification of further issues to be addressed.
- *April-June:* Mid-term review of progress, with adjustments made to the action plans and activities as necessary.
- *July-September:* Fourth meeting of the News Futures Forum, focused on sharing best practices and lessons learned from the implementation phase.

2026:

- *January-March:* Finalisation of activities and development of a roadmap for sustaining the progress made by the News Futures Forum.
- *April-June:* Presentation of the roadmap and final report at a public event, with stakeholders from across the news industry, policy and regulation, and research and knowledge exchange in attendance.
- *July-September:* Closing meeting of the News Futures Forum, focused on celebrating the achievements of the past three years and exploring potential opportunities for continued activities in the future.

The News Futures Forum would serve as a platform for ongoing collaboration and knowledge exchange, with the potential to influence policy and regulation and drive innovation in the PIN sector.

Shannon

POLITICAL

Additional Background Material

News Futures 2035 Website: The News Futures 2035 summarises the project and contains information about the core research group.

News Futures 2035 Discussion Paper: The scene-setting discussion paper set out the main issues affecting the news industry at the start of the project in Q3 2022. You can download it here. An Executive Summary is available here.

Plenary recap videos: Two short videos were made during plenaries 2 and 3 of the News Futures 2035 study. They summarise the methodology employed and include interviews with some participants reflecting on the process. You can watch the Plenary 2 video here and the Plenary 3 video here.

News Futures Participants

The News Futures 2035 project has consulted with over 300 participants through plenary roundtables, online consultations and surveys. A number of participants and supporters are listed in the table below.

We invite you to provide feedback on this interim report and, if not yet included, to add your details to the list of acknowledged project participants by completing this short form. You will also have the opportunity to indicate if your would like to be invited to the launch of the full report in the autumn and to participate in the News Futures Forum going forward.

Name		Organisation
Matthew	Abbott	ICNN
Richard	Addy	AKAS
Ali-Abbas	Ali	Ofcom
Eliza	Anyangwe	CNN
Rachel	Arthur	Boom Saloon
Benedicte	Autret	Google
David	Baines	Association for Journalism Education
Matteo	Bergamini	Shout Out
Wolfgang	Blau	Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism
Bridget	Byrne	Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity
Frances	Cairncross	
David	Caswell	BBC
Madhav	Chinnappa	Formerly Google
Jeremy	Clifford	FT Strategies
Clare	Cook	University of Central Lancashire / IMS
Matt	Cooke	Google
Olivia	Crellin	Press Pad
Juliana	Da Penha	Migrant Women Press
Ruth	David	Bloomberg

Name		Organisation
Rhiannon	Davies	Greater Govanhill Community Magazine
Natalie	Fenton	Goldsmiths
David	Floyd	Social Spider
Jason	Gibbins	BBC
Tom	Glover	IPSO
Alison	Gow	Formerly of Reach Plc
Rizwana	Hamid	Centre for Media Monitoring
Caroline	Harrap	Society of Freelance Journalists
Sarah	Hartley	Formerly of Google
Blathnaid	Healey	BBC
Jonathan	Heawood	Public Interest News Foundation
Margaret	Hughes	Association for Journalism Education
Alan	Hunter	HBM Advisory
Sofie	Hvitved	Institute for Futures Studies
Shelina	Janmohamed	Ogilvy Islamic Marketing
Lyndsey	Jones	Independent
Deborah	Kelly	Thomson Foundation
Diane	Kemp	Sir Lenny Henry Centre For Media Diversity
Lexie	Kirkconnell-Kawana	Impress

Name		Organisation
Beth	Kitson	IPSO
Aleksandar	Kocic	Edinburgh Napier University
Caro	Kriel	Thomson Foundation
Ed	Little	Govt Dept for Digital Culture, Media & Sport
David	Lush	International Media Support
Lisa	MacLeod	FT Strategies
Keith	Magnum	Citizen News & Media Limited
Rachel	Matthews	Coventry University
Steve	Matthewson	S&P Global Market Intelligence
Douglas McCabe	McCabe	Enders Analysis Ltd
Jonny	McGuigan	BBC
Emma	Meese	Independent Community News Network
Owen	Meredith	News Media Association
John	Mills	University of Central Lancashire
James	Mitchinson	Yorkshire Post
George	Montagu	FT Strategies
Christa	Morrison	McMaster University
Tom	Morrison-Bell	Google

Name		Organisation
Una	Murphy	VIEWdigital
Nic	Newman	Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism
Sameer	Padania	Macroscope
Helen	Philpot	Salesforce
Matt	Rogerson	Guardian
Isabelle	Roughol	The New Humanitarian
Marcus	Ryder	Sir Lenny Henry Centre For Media Diversity
Ed	Saperia	Newspeak House
Dietmar	Schantin	IFMS Media Consultancy
Jenny	Simpson	Natioanl World
David	Spencer	The Media Mentor
Agnes	Stenbom	Schibsted
Kirsty	Styles	University of Central Lancashire
Inga	Thordar	Formerly CNN
John	Whittingdale	Formerly Chair of Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee; former Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, former Minister for Media and Data
Claire	Wolfe	University of Worcester

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