

Steffan Rhys,
Executive Editor,
Wales Online.

24 March 2017

Dear Mr Rhys,

Concerns Raised Over South Wales Evening Post

I write to you as Chair of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee of the National Assembly for Wales after a number of concerns have been brought to the Committee's attention about South West Wales Media being merged into national Media Wales and specifically Swansea-based South Wales Evening Post website merging with Wales Online.

As a result of the merger, we have been given to understand that:

- Reporters in Swansea will now have to travel to Cardiff to offer cover for staff shortages. Concerns have been raised over the impact this will have on the coverage of local news in south west Wales.
- The reporting team in Swansea has lost a member of staff to the commercial sector who will apparently not be replaced, thereby putting further pressure on the service being provided to the south west.
- Staff based in your Swansea office, across all departments, will be paid less than their counterparts in Cardiff (we understand that you are aware of this discrepancy and have stated that you do not plan to take any action to rectify it).
- Trainees at the Evening Post on a Trinity Mirror contract are being paid more than the Evening Post's senior reporters and department editors, further highlighting the discrepancies in pay.
- There are also discrepancies in the sickness benefits available to staff, whereby Evening Post staff are being afforded less favourable conditions than those on Trinity Mirror contracts.
- There will no longer be staff representative meetings with the management on these issues.
- Furthermore, we understand that redundancies are not being offered and that staff are simply being told to leave if they are not content with their current situation.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to express my grave concern over these issues.



I am of course aware that I may not have the full picture. I would, therefore be grateful for any reassurance you can offer as a matter of urgency.

Yours sincerely,

Bethan Jenkins

Bethan Jenkins AM

Chair of the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

