

Lord Faulks

Chair of the Complaints Committee at the
Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO)

20 May 2024

Dear Lord Faulks,

Anti-racist Wales and the use of racially pejorative language

The Foreword to the Equality and Social Justice Committee's report which looked at the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan sets out:

*"the aim of becoming an anti-racist nation by 2030...requires us to be active, not passive.
To resist, rather than resign ourselves to racial discrimination."*¹

As a cross-party Committee we have supported the Welsh Government's overall aim while noting that the "institutional, political and cultural change required (to build an anti-racist Wales) will need to involve all of society".

On 11 May the Mail Online published an article on the 25th anniversary of devolution.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-13407979/The-great-devolution-disaster-Grotesque-levels-corruption-Pygmy-politicians-obsession-woke-dogma-upsurge-nationalism-supposed-tame.html> .²

We have no quarrel with the criticism of Welsh Government performance; that is what the 3rd estate is supposed to do to keep people in power on their toes. We do however take issue with the term "Pygmy politicians" alongside a photograph of our First Minister who is the first black leader of a national government in Europe. The term is widely considered to be offensive, and within the context of the article, highly likely to be interpreted as a racially pejorative remark.

Please will you consider whether the Editor's Code of Practice that the press "must avoid prejudicial or pejorative" references to race and colour has been breached. That is certainly the conclusion that we have

¹ Actions Not Words: Towards an Anti-racist Wales by 2030

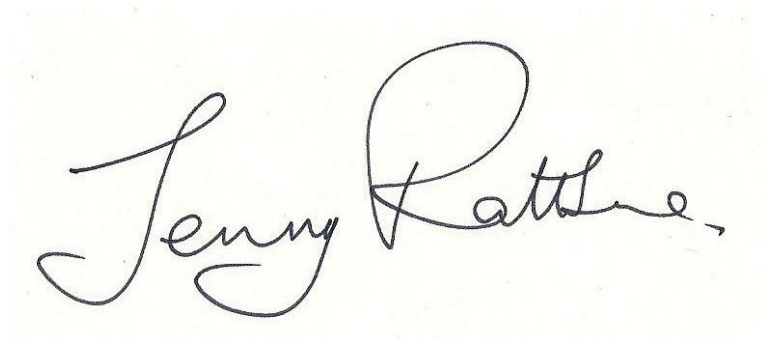
² An electronic link to the original article is provided in the cover email

made. Please advise what action IPSO may take in the hope of avoiding a repetition of what we consider to be an offensive, racially prejudiced remark.

Separately we would welcome your views on how you are ensuring that the Press more generally is playing its part in tackling racism and discrimination in the sector and in society given your influential role in upholding values and standards in the sector.

I look forward to your response in due course.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature reads "Jenny Rathbone" in a cursive, flowing script. The first letter 'J' is large and loops back under the name. The name is written in a single line.

Jenny Rathbone MS

Chair of the Equality and Social Justice Committee

Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.

We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.

