



UNISON Water Environment and
Transport Service Group Executive
Annual Report

2014/15

Contents

Foreword	3
Objective One: Recruiting, organising, representing and retaining members.	4
Objective Two: Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality	6
Objective Three: Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members	15
Objective Four: Developing an efficient and effective union	17
Action on motions passed at the 2014 Energy conference	19

Foreword

We are pleased to present you with this year's Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive annual report which sets out an overview of the key areas of work delivered since last year.

Since our 2014 Conference, we have seen the ongoing impact of austerity economics, which continues to impact on the services delivered by members in our Service Group whether employed in the public or private sector. Pay levels remain largely stagnant. Job security remains uncertain for many members. Health and Safety for our members remains a key priority, with many branches undertaking work to support good mental health in the workplace.

Since the last election, things have been pretty tough right across our Service Group. Within the water industry, work continues to investigate practices within the water companies, such as their commitment to paying a Living Wage and the availability of social tariffs, alongside supporting water industry members who face job losses in the wake of Ofwat's latest price determination. Since 2010, the position for members in the environment agencies has been subject to ongoing change, underpinned by 'efficiency savings' and budget cuts, leading to widespread restructuring and job losses. Seventy per cent of local authorities have cut bus services since 2010 and this continues to be a significant issue. In the past year alone, for example, half of all local authorities in England have cut supported bus services. The impact of such cuts isn't solely upon our members in the bus sector, as the effects are felt widely by the passengers that had relied on those services. Changes to local government structures since 2011, moving towards Combined Authorities, has involved many of our Passenger Transport Executive members.

At the time of writing, the 2015 General Election is less than forty days away. We'll know the outcome when we meet at our Annual Service Group Conference in June and by then it will be becoming clear what the next five years may look like for our members, our families and our communities.

As you will see from the report, UNISON remains active in our workplaces and at a wider political level, seeking to secure the best outcomes for all our members. This work has been delivered thanks to the commitment of our lay activists, who are working in very difficult circumstances, and with the support of full-time staff at Regional and National level. We continue to work effectively together to meet the challenges we face. The 2015 annual report sets out the actions that we have been undertaking across all our sectors to tackle a wide range of issues and outlines how we have worked to support our members. I trust that you will find it informative.

Ruth Davies,

Chair of the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive

Objective One: Recruiting, organising, representing and retaining members

1.1 Membership Profile and Recruitment

It has been a challenging year for recruitment in the WET service group, not least because of job losses, particularly in the Environment Agency and in some other sectors. Despite these challenges branches have worked tirelessly to recruit new members, both through locally driven recruitment campaigns and by taking advantage of national initiatives. The biggest branch in the service group remains the United Utilities branch.

TV, newspaper, internet and social media have all been utilised throughout the year as part of the national recruitment campaign. In response to feedback from the WET service group, materials used in the campaign have been modified to broaden the appeal beyond publicly owned and run services. This has often included the tagline 'Wherever you work'.

The joining method of WET members continues to develop. Almost 30% of new members in the service group joined online in 2014. This compares to just 10% in 2010.

In February 2015 the WET Executive agreed that an organising and recruitment strategy for the service group should be developed. The development of this strategy will include a survey of WET branches to see what additional support and advice would assist with organising and recruitment at a local level.

1.2 Branch Organisation

Branch structures have been the subject of review and proposed changes in both the Public Transport sector and the Environment Agency in 2014/15.

Following extensive consultation the Public Transport Sector Committee has decided to pursue the option for change, including the possibility of amalgamating into a single national branch. The process of investigating this change is still in its early stages and will be the subject of full and proper consultation with all relevant bodies.

In the Environment Agency there has been a need to review branch structures as a result of the SRRP restructure. This has led to the Agency moving from a three tier to a two tier structure, removing the regional level. Branches and the sector committee have been consulted throughout the year and final proposals for

change are being finalised. There is a clear commitment from branches and the sector executive to ensure fair and effective representation of members under the new bargaining and consultative structures.

1.3 Regional Development and Support

Most regions have sought to maintain a viable regional WET structure, to differing degrees of success. Greater London Region ran a successful combined WET and Energy regional seminar. This event was well attended and fully supported by the region to make sure it was financially viable for branches to send key representatives. The wide range of topics covered included using the union's approach to the General Election campaign, updates on allowance and holiday pay, an update on national trends in the service group and legal updates.

The West Midlands region also held a regional WET seminar in Birmingham. This event was again successful and well attended, with reps from across all sectors present. Key themes included developing organising objectives to enable better recruitment and sector updates. Events for both the Greater London and West Midlands regions were supported by the National Officer.

1.4 Learning

UNISON held a well-attended WET Health and Safety Seminar in May 2014. This event provided briefings and advice on issues such as behavioural safety and dynamic risk assessment

As part of the programme to support water industry branches and pension trustees, UNISON held a utility company's pension's seminar in January 2015. The seminar was designed primarily for UNISON pension trustees and branch secretaries within utility companies. The seminar covered the key issues, such as pension fund transaction costs, trade union workers capital structures and forthcoming corporate governance campaigns.

The negotiating skills course for utility workers was held in Birmingham during September 2014. This 2½ day course was specifically tailored to meet the needs of members interested in developing negotiating skills

and who work in either the WET or Energy service groups. The course was over-subscribed for the third year running and feedback has been positive.

The National Officer also attended and spoke at WET training seminars in both Greater London Region and the West Midlands.

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1.5 Communications

Funding was secured to continue with the production and publication of 'Network' magazine. This is a quarterly magazine produced by professional journalists dedicated to WET and Energy. Two issues per year are for WET. The magazine has been distributed to all branches with enough copies to ensure all members are able to receive it. The magazine showcases the work of members within the service group and in doing so raises the profile of the diverse range of activities carried out.

Social media is a key way of opening up the work of the service group to the wider membership. Lots of work has been put in to ensure that the WET service group's social media presence is expanded, ensuring that UNISON WET members can see updates and information via Facebook and Twitter. The number of Twitter followers for the UNISON WET account has more than doubled over the course of the year.

UNISON communications officers have worked hard to improve the speed and performance of the unison website. The UNISON WET website has been regularly updated with news stories and campaigning tools.

Regular direct communication between regions, national office, and branches continues to be the most important method of keeping members up to date. Branch circulars, surveys and updates on pay negotiations, bargaining issues and national initiatives are a crucial way of keeping in touch with members and providing feedback for the national union.

Objective Two: Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality

2.1 Introduction

UNISON's 'Worth It' campaign for a fair pay policy for public services has continued to put pressure on the Government and other politicians in 2014/15. Clearly this has been particularly important in the run up to the 2015 General Election. The campaign has also focussed on targeting communications at UNISON members to make it clear how unfair and inequitable the current public sector pay cap is.

In the Environment Agency, despite its being subject to this cap, UNISON fought hard to secure a positive outcome from pay negotiations. The union was able to delay for a further year the Government mandated attack on pay progression in the Agency. All progression payments for 2014/15 have been fully paid as a result. Through the pay negotiation process UNISON was also able to secure improvements in flexitime including a lunch break of up to 2 hours and workers being able to carry up to 15 hours forward from one 4 week period to the next. UNISON secured a commitment from the Environment Agency to ensuring no directly employed staff are paid less than the Living Wage. For new tenders for outsourced contracts the Agency will request alternative pricing based on paying the Living Wage to contracted out staff.

In the Passenger Transport Forum (covering Transport for Greater Manchester, CENTRO and West Yorkshire Combined Authority), the unjust 1% public sector pay cap continues to provide a very difficult context to pay negotiations. The trade union side of the Forum has submitted a pay claim calling a pay rise reflecting the rise in the Retail Prices Index in the last 12 months. The claim also called for two additional days annual leave and for all authorities to introduce a minimum rate of pay matching the national Living Wage rate both for contracted out and directly employed staff. Negotiations are ongoing.

A number of UNISON's Water branches are in the midst of pay negotiations. Some have not yet received pay offers, whilst other branches are currently consulting members. At Northumbrian Water UNISON has negotiated a 2.6% pay rise for 1 year from April 2015.

A piece of work is being carried out with UNISON Water branches to map key terms and conditions across UK water companies. This will assist UNISON branches in future negotiations.

In November 2014 UNISON welcomed the news that South East Water had become a fully accredited Living Wage employer. Again, this came only after concerted campaigning by the local union. UNISON South East regional organiser Caroline Fife commented: "We are delighted to see South East Water become the first water company to sign up to the Living Wage. We asked for this during pay claim negotiations and are pleased to see the company has taken this step."

Following the Lock vs British Gas and other tribunal cases the principle has now been established in law that holiday pay should reflect normal remuneration, including commission and allowances. In WET, UNISON has worked hard to ensure that employers adapt their practices to reflect this new reality. UNISON has issued more detailed bargaining advice for all branches across its membership. This bargaining advice also provided links to the new holiday pay case forms to be used if members have a case to take forward.

2.2 Pensions

UNISON remains concerned about the continued attacks on the pensions of our members working in the WET employment arena. In Severn Trent the defined benefit (DB) scheme closed on 31st March this year. The defined benefit scheme was also closed to Thames Water employees in the previous year.

Changes within DB schemes are set to continue with the likely introduction of a new single flat rate state pension from 2016. This is likely to have an impact on all remaining DB members as the national insurance rebates for both employer and employees end. Further engagement will be required on this, and guidance for members will need to be provided.

The changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) continue to be implemented and discussed and went live from April this year as it moved over to a CARE scheme. The focus on the new governance arrangements are at the forefront of recent activity. Those LGPS members within the Environment Agency scheme have already benefited from model arrangements.

As mentioned above, UNISON held a utility companies pensions seminar in January 2015. The seminar was designed primarily for UNISON pension trustees and branch secretaries within utility companies. The seminar covered the key issues such as pension fund transaction costs, trade union workers capital structures and forthcoming corporate governance campaigns.

2.3 Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

This report sets out the activities of the Business and Environment Equal Opps Working group in the last 12 months since the last service group conference. It is normal practice to remind conference delegates on the composition of the group, which is made up of representatives from both WET and Energy Service Group Executives.

The purpose of the committee is for representatives to identify equality priorities in line with the union's four objectives and also work with the Service Group Executives to promote and raise awareness of these issues in the workplace and ensure equality is incorporated in the union's bargaining agenda with employers. The following are some of the activities of the committee:

- To report the outcome of its meetings to WET and Energy Service Group Executives;
- To implement conference decisions with equality dimension as requested by the Executives, and recommend actions to the Executives;
- To identify equality priorities and propose actions to meet these priorities and monitor progress;
- To benchmark and become influential equality champions in the workplace;
- To work with Self Organised Groups (SOGs) to ensure the service groups issues are incorporated into their agenda as may be required; invite National SOG officers to meetings for updates on relevant developments;
- To monitor the diverse range of the union's membership, and to request analysis of the union's membership by all protected characteristics such as gender, disability etc;
- To compare workplace practices and share best practice to enable positive change to be supported.

2.4 Business and Environment Equalities Seminar 2014

The annual 2014 equalities seminar for members working in Business & Environment was held over the weekend of 18–20 July in Bristol. The feedback was positive as most respondents said they enjoyed the seminar and would attend in future.

The seminar serves as a platform for close interaction and education and provides an opportunity to empower lay activists on relevant equalities developments, with the hope of developing further dialogue and engagement with employers on issues concerning equality. The Business and Environment equalities seminar is an annual event which has become popular with lay activists over the years.

The theme for the seminar covered the important subject of mental health issues at work. It provided an in–depth understanding on the role of activists in supporting members with mental illness. Activists were also provided with information on how to spot different impairments and how to work with employers to develop a robust procedure to assist in the recovery process, such as reasonable adjustments for affected people. The last day of the seminar focused on participation and the confidence needed to be out in the workplace as an LGBT person.

The social event at the seminar raised £170, which was donated to the President's charity 'Meningitis Now'.

The seminar closed with a final message from Win Wearmouth, a former Energy SGE chair, who expressed her hope that participants would be energised in taking back what they have learnt to the workplace. As it was Win's last seminar, the officer thanked her for her support and contributions over the years and wished her well in her retirement. Win Wearmouth had been the chair of the committee for many years and retired at the end of July 2014. She had been instrumental in the formation of the Business and Environment Equal Ops Working Group, and took an active part in the organisation and delivery of successful seminars year on year.

The 2015 seminar took place over the weekend of 15–17 May 2015. However, as of the time of writing this report the Committee are yet to meet to ratify the report that was produced from that seminar. This will be reported in the 2016 annual report to conference.

Sector Reports

2.5 Canal and River Trust Sector

Following the latest re-structure it is clear that management value only certain members of the workforce. Whilst engineers were asked for their preferences on where in the new structure they see themselves, administration staff for the most part have been either ignored or railroaded into positions without any consultation. Discussions are ongoing in this area; however, it is apparent the organisation is trying very hard to convince people the changes to their conditions do not mean they could invoke our "Employment Stability Process" and as staff are spread throughout the country, often they feel isolated and find it is easier to just accept or leave rather than fight.

Over the next 3 years the company car scheme will be phased out. Reactions have been mixed so far. The trade unions have ensured that all staff currently in the company car scheme will without exception receive the car cash allowance in the future. The replacement car lease scheme will be open to all who earn more than the minimum wage, but the vehicles provided are not of the same standard.

We are still campaigning for the Living Wage, even though the organisation has approached the Living Wage Foundation – because it would like the badge on their letter heading – and it has agreed that paying staff working for the organisation is the "easy bit". They have not yet been forthcoming with an increase which would lift those still below the threshold. The fight will continue when we meet to discuss 2015 pay claim in May.

Recruitment is a major concern for all CRT branches as the ageing workforce begins to reach retirement age. Northwest branch is the most successful in this field but Northeast Navigations and the South branch are struggling to recruit new members and it is difficult to keep activists motivated.

2.6 Environment Agency Sector

The Sector Committee met 4 times since the 2014 conference. The membership of the committee during the year was as set out below:

i) Membership of the Environment Agency Sector 2014/15

Branch	Non-manual	Manual	Additional
N West	Sarah Peet	Vacant	Ruth Davies
N East	Jackie Hamer (Chair)	Paul Breeze	–
Nr Wales	Kevin Aitken	–	–
Southern	Shane Harper	Ian Woolven	–
S West	John Rowlands	Jamie Mcclaughlin	Louise Robinson
Head Office	Mark West	–	–
Thames	Andy Theaker	Mark Saunders	–
Midlands	Simon Peate	Joe Andrew	Shirley Flannery
Anglian	Andy Hunkin	Dave Lockey	–
Labs.	Dave Gardner	–	–
H&S	Steve Bleakley	–	–

ii) The National Negotiating Group and its related committees dictated the main areas of business for the committee, and the agenda has been dominated by responding to huge cuts to the Environment Agency, as reported in the 2013 version of this document. The cuts were imposed upon the Agency by the coalition government, and translated into job losses of around 1200 posts, announced in October 2013. Both management and trade unions have worked hard together ever since to minimize compulsory redundancies.

As the restructuring worked its way down the organization, it became clear that some areas, and some functions, were being particularly badly affected, and UNISON has pushed relentlessly for extra help to be directed to these parts of the business. It also became apparent that the Agency had a poor understanding of the funding and resource issues in some parts of the business.

The restructuring was largely completed by the end of October 2014, with 96 redeployees declared in early December. This number significantly reduced as

some people were able to find other jobs within the Agency. As of the end of April, 15 people had left, 13 on VERS and 2 as compulsory redundancies. There were still a small number of redeployees, and also a similar number who were in time-limited roles. This is a far better overall outcome than most expected at the start of the reorganization.

Following the loss of the regional layer of the Agency, many staff who worked in regional teams are now working in areas, or in national services/functions. For some it has been a very stressful move, and even now new ways of working are not fully understood. There is an ongoing project which has looked more closely at funding, workload and resourcing and should enable more accurate workforce planning going forwards.

iii) Other Organisational Change

As reported at the 2014 service group conference, we had concerns about the future of EA staff who were outsourced to the new Shared Services Connected Ltd (SSCL), a joint venture between Defra, DWP and the Agency. These concerns were borne out when it was announced that the Leeds site would close. In addition, a further group of staff who we expected to TUPE over to SSCL in 2015 were told that any transfer would NOT be covered by TUPE, so these have been added to the redeployee pool, as the work they do is transferring out of the Agency.

The Agency is to outsource a significant amount of fisheries work, in a number of contracts worth collectively up to £10m. This comes hard on the heels of losing highly experienced fisheries officers via VERS and compulsory redundancy.

iv) Pay

There was little improvement in how long it took to settle the pay claim due in July 2014 compared to 2013, and employees did not receive the rise plus back pay until February 2015, this despite the award being identical to the previous year, 1% on scale plus any progression due. One very positive component of the pay award was the restoration of the flexi time scheme to what it was several years ago, which should mean a lot less lost time for staff. Another aspect which UNISON pushed hard for was a commitment by the Agency that contractors based in Agency premises would be paid the living wage. We made significant progress, and hope to build on this in the future.

Cabinet Office is still intent on getting rid of any contractual entitlement to a progression rise, but talks on any new pay system have not yet begun. Clearly the outcome of the general election will have a

bearing on whether and when this subject is progressed.

v) Pensions

The Environment Agency Pension Scheme continued to have a very high proportion of the workforce in membership, and was still well funded (in excess of 90%) though actual membership has fallen as the workforce has reduced. The fund continues to be recognized for its high governance standards and the effort it puts into developing sustainable investments, and trying to influence others to do the same.

UNISON continued to be represented on the Agency's Pension Committee by Jackie Hamer, Simon Peate, Ian Brindley and Dot Holding.

vii) Terms and Conditions

One consequence of the restructuring of the Agency is that the TU Recognition Procedure urgently needs to be re-written. The existing agreement is all based on a 3-tier structure which no longer exists. In addition, we need to take the opportunity to address concerns raised in a motion at last year's service group conference calling for proper representation and negotiating arrangements for the many members we have located in area offices but working for national services. At the time of writing we are consulting branches about a new agreement.

The trade unions are still pressing Agency management to come up with some fair and sensible proposals for dealing with prolonged environmental incidents, such as major floods or pollution incidents. This has been going on ever since the big floods of 2008, and we have yet to see any proposals. Several previous attempts have failed to secure approval from the Agency's Directors.

viii) Health and Safety

The changes brought about by the SRRP programme has meant that we have moved from a 3 tier to a 2 tier organisation. Regional Health and Safety Action Groups have disappeared which has meant that both the Areas and National Health and Safety Action Groups will need to have a much stronger role in the future.

Work is still underway to ensure that staff working in National functions have direct line of sight through an appropriate Health and Safety Action Group. This may not always be through a local group. Discussions in this regard are ongoing.

The National H&S Group has met four times with good attendance from union reps and senior management. The Agency Director of Operations usually chairs the Meeting. It is with regret that we

note that David Jordan will be stepping down in March 2015, as he has always been a supporter of the trade union having strong input. UNISON has membership on this Group drawn from each of our existing branches.

Each of our working areas has a local Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group (HASWAG) where every member can express any concerns. Every Agency colleague can report their concerns on our incident reporting system and we encourage everyone to report every H&S concern.

Earlier work from one of our H&S reps organized and lead a 'Reps Engagement Project.' Work from this continues to prove useful with an electronic users forum coming on line for all safety reps to access an exchange ideas or ask questions.

We will work to 'shadow' all operational functions and make sure we have active H&S reps involved in all our activities. We will endeavour to encourage more members to become active H&S reps.

2.7 Passenger Transport Executives/ Combined Authorities

i) PTE Sector Committee

The members of the sector committee are:

Alvin Dimes	Tyne and Wear PTE
Gurdip Suthi	Centro
Roger Irvine	Merseytravel
Andrew Coley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Cassie Bell	South Yorkshire PTE
Tony Short	Transport for Greater Manchester
Pam Sian	West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Equal Opportunities

Pam Sian was elected as chair of the sector committee in March 2014.

Members of the PTE Sector Committee plus full time officers form the UNISON representation on the trade union side of the Passenger Transport Forum (PTF).

ii) Passenger Transport Forum

Three employers participate in the negotiating element of the PTF – Transport for Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire Combined Authority and CENTRO. In the other three – South Yorkshire, Merseyside and Nexus (Tyne and Wear PTE) – terms and conditions are negotiated separately and locally, though they participate in the consultative element of the Forum.

iii) Trade Union Side Membership of the Passenger Transport Forum

The trade union side membership of the PTF is as follows:

UNISON

Alvin Dimes	Tyne and Wear PTE
Gurdip Suthi	Centro
Roger Irvine	Merseytravel
Andrew Coley Authority	West Yorkshire Combined
Cassie Bell	South Yorkshire PTE
Tony Short	Transport for Greater Manchester
Pam Sian	Equal Opportunities Rep, West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Gavin Edwards	Secretary of the Trade Union Side
Kevin Osborne	Regional Organiser Yorks and Humbs
Colin Baker	Regional Organiser North West

Unite

Ged Heginbottom	Transport for Greater Manchester
Carol Wroe	Transport for Greater Manchester

At the annual meeting Pam Sian was elected chair of the trade union side. Tony Short was elected vice chair. Gavin Edwards was the trade union side joint secretary.

iv) Retirements

In June 2014 Alan Jackson retired from UNISON and as the trade union side joint secretary. The PTF recorded their thanks and appreciation to Alan for his many years of contribution.

In Autumn 2014 the PTF were advised that following a number of months of illness Steve Chatwin, the former chair and secretary of the employers side, had lost his battle with cancer. Steve was the longest serving member of the employer's side. He was a firm believer in the value of the Forum and he will be missed. The PTF is in negotiations with the employers' side regarding a tribute to Steve.

v) Pay in the Passenger Transport Forum

The negotiating element of the PTF negotiates pay on behalf of three PTEs – Combined Authorities – West Yorkshire, CENTRO and Transport for Greater Manchester.

- In January 2015 the staff side submitted their

claim for 2015 as follows:

- A 2% increase on all salary points and allowances, reflecting the rise in the Retail Prices Index (RPI) in the last 12 months;
- Two additional days annual leave to be added to the Green Book, replacing all local arrangements and bringing Transport Authority leave arrangements into line;
- For all authorities to introduce a minimum rate of pay matching the national Living Wage rate (currently £7.85);
- For the Living Wage to be an ongoing commitment up-rated each year to the new national Living Wage rate as set by the Living Wage Foundation;
- For authorities to apply the same Living Wage policy to all new contracts, meaning all outsourced staff would also receive the Living Wage as an absolute minimum.

Although the employers stated that this was a reasonable claim, at the time of writing this report no formal response has been received from them.

vi) Equal Opportunities

The Forum continued to monitor developments relating to all equal opportunity issues. Pam Sian occupies the equalities seat on the trade union side of the Forum and kept the committee fully informed of developments.

vii) Other issues

Other issues considered by the Forum included:

- Impact of public sector funding reductions
- Connectivity
- Rail devolution
- Combined Authorities
- Smartcards
- HS2

2.8 Public Transport

Once again this past year proved to be another difficult one for bus companies – financial circumstances remain precarious with changes to Bus Services Operators Grant, Concessionary Fares Schemes, mass cancellations of council tendered contracts and the general economic climate leading to a drop in passenger journeys. At the time of writing this report, like all other sectors in UNISON,

we await the outcome of the General Election to see what effects the government or coalition will have on the industry – quality contracts? Means testing for bus passes? Smart ticketing? The list is endless.

The committee contributed towards UNISON's submission to the Labour Party manifesto for the general election – disappointingly the party has not chosen to make transport one of the major topics to campaign on.

We continue to support Campaign for Better Transport's 'Save our Buses' campaign. They are monitoring service cuts using freedom of information requests to access details of councils reducing or ending altogether their subsidies of tendered services. They have produced an excellent report (Buses in Crisis), on bus funding in England and Wales. Since 2010 local authority funding has been slashed by 15% and half of them have cut funding for bus services. It makes horrifying reading, and if the Tory threat to reduce concessionary passes is implemented, there will be few services that will be viable – 'Buses in Crisis' multiplied. From an election perspective they have mapped key marginal seats where transport is a major concern – some constituencies have more rail commuters and season ticket holders than electoral majorities and could swing a change in voting.

A successful GPF bid has been made for us to sponsor further work from CBT.

Pay settlements have ranged from 1% to 2.5% this year.

As transport branches get smaller and activists are lost, there is pressure being put on them in certain regions to merge with other branches. We have agreed to look at the possibility of one national branch for bus company branches – not an easy solution but one that may work best.

Unfortunately Anne Kilker from East Midlands Airport – our stalwart from the airport sector was made redundant so we have lost our major link to airport members. We wish Anne well in her new post at Nottingham University.

I would like to thank the colleagues and branches in the Public Transport sector for sticking in there and surviving in what are getting to be very difficult circumstances for many in our service group

2.9 Water Industry Sector Committee

The impact of Ofwat's final determinations for PR14, and the massive financial penalties levied against certain companies, has been of widespread concern.

This has so far led to 500 redundancies in middle management at Central Water (formerly known as Severn Trent) – but it is likely that several other water companies will follow suit where the penalties for underperformance have been especially severe. Too few workers on the ground, and too many managers is a common perception of members. Low pay awards, pay freezes or even cuts may follow in some companies – especially at a time when inflation trends are negative. Drives to improve customer service and SIM scores are another common theme throughout the water sector.

The following are the activities within the water companies in the last 12 months:

Organising and Recruitment Development

The Water sector continues to provide examples of best practice in organising and recruitment.

Two Water branches merged to create more efficient and effective branches. These are the:

- South East Water Branch and Southern Water Branch are now Southern Counties Water branch.
- Severn Trent and South Staffordshire Water are now combined as Central Water branch.

Efforts continue towards achieving a 10% density of UNISON members in Source Contact Management (SCM), the spun-off call centre organisation of South West Water so that UNISON can invite ACAS in to do a ballot for union recognition.

Yorkshire Water branch used a mapping exercise following WARMS training (WARMS does this kind of reporting well) to work out where they needed to target recruitment efforts. The branch is planning recruitment at KWS Alpha (Northern Ireland), Grampian (NE Scotland) and Defence (S England and Wales). This will be done by email and each worker will be contacted, and then followed with a phone call.

Many branches, including Northumbrian Water branch and both the Southern Counties Water and South East Water sections are getting slots at their company induction days to improve membership take-up by new starters.

Central Water branch now has a local organiser working with both their Severn Trent and South Staffs Water sections, supporting plans to run recruitment events right through the year at all operational and large manned sites.

Thames Water branch has held recruitment events

with GMB and Unite to increase union membership across the company.

United Utilities branch has been a major contributor to the North West region's being the top recruiting area of the country. They have been set very stretching recruitment targets for 2015 – which they fully intend to meet!

When Southern Counties Water found it was losing all its stewards in Kent through their being promoted to management positions or leaving the company, they decided to temporarily fill the gap by using ERA trained retired members (with the agreement of the employer companies and UNISON Regional Offices).

Pay and Pensions

Water Industry Sector Committee (WISC) is rolling out the results of a benchmarking survey of all Water Sector branches, covering a selection of significant job roles and general terms & conditions for the Water Industry. This first draft is ready for this year's pay round.

Companies aiming to boost productivity and lower cost-to-serve, such as Southern Water (who have tied a 2% cost of living pay increase into a package that implements broad pay bands, Market Indicator based pay and a performance related annual bonus), are moving towards frameworks with more financial incentives and penalties. This mirrors the structure of personal contracts already in use for management and senior technical level staff.

Whilst the final salary pension scheme at Affinity Water is still being looked at, Severn Trent has been running pension roadshows about the end of contributions into their DB scheme. From April 2015 the only scheme will be a new Black Rock DC scheme, although benefits of the DB scheme will run until 2020.

Changes to Terms and Conditions

Many of the companies that have not already done so are looking to change terms & conditions for employees. Some changes are viewed as positive, others less so. Terms & conditions are most easily changed by outsourcing work – new workers in the service providers faring worse than their TUPEd counterparts. The WISC Chair is researching this area, to report back in the autumn.

At Portsmouth Water, mainly at the employees' request, there is now flexibility for early start or late start. Several other companies are proposing some form of early and late roster pattern – this already

being common practice already at other water companies.

Holiday pay and working time

At Northumbrian Water a new package of simplified terms and conditions means that:

- To comply with the judgements on the Lock v British Gas Trading case, average standby and contractual overtime payments are now to be automatically made in line with the contractual rota during annual leave and bank holidays. All companies should be aiming to do something similar.
- Overtime overnight attracts a higher overtime rate as well as the accrual of compensatory rest on a time-for-time basis. There is an obligation under the Working Time Regulations to ensure employees are not overworked.

However, several branches have reported that team leaders in call centres have to work many extra hours, but don't get paid overtime because of their job grade. The introduction of new or upgraded billing and CRM systems also often leads initially to an increase in workload for staff (covering for seconded colleagues; getting used to the new systems) and (hopefully temporary) decrease in performance and quality of customer service when initially introduced.

Two branches reported that subcontractors are getting a much worse deal than their directly employed counterparts – hired to do near maximum hours under the WTR at near or possibly below the Living Wage, and being used to replace employees doing standard 38 hour weeks on a union-negotiated pay scale.

Use of telematics data in disciplinary: WISC's sector survey to identify best practice agreements and company policies, will be completed soon – the aim being to eliminate spurious and punitive disciplinary by getting companies to adopt policies like that of **Scottish Water** (telematics data is not to be used to trigger disciplinary).

In **Thames** a penalty points system has been introduced to try to improve driver behaviour. When a trigger level is reached, the driver is sent on training and their points total then reduced – a supportive rather than punitive approach.

Wellbeing, Equality & Diversity

Portsmouth Water has an equality agreement and pay is determined by the job. The UNISON branch is looking into the proportionality of women on higher grades. Central Water now has an equality and

diversity group and Southern Countries Water is working on its LGBT strategy. UNISON's Water Industry Sector Committee are hoping to persuade all the water companies to follow the lead of Dwr Cymru Welsh Water and the Environment Agency and work towards inclusion in Stonewall's "Starting Out" annual LGB careers guide.

Yorkshire Water has signed the Mindful Employee Charter to show their commitment to supporting colleagues with mental health issues.

Many employers such as Central Water are increasing referrals to Occupational Health as part of a drive to reduce absence. The target there is to get the rate below 2% and be the best in the industry. However, levels of stress-related illness seem to be on the rise, especially within the call centres, at most organisations. A rise in disciplinarys for not reaching (automatically monitored) call-duration targets is also in evidence at some companies – though at **Thames Water** agents are being allowed as much time as they need, to reduce repeat calls (that would lead lower Ofwat Service Incentive Mechanism scores).

The latest medical research (published in New Scientist magazine) show that arterial blood flow is reduced to almost half when a person sits for three hours. However, walking for 5 minutes every hour negates this effect. This, together with UNISON's Call Centre Charter, is being used by branches to try to change call centre policy on breaks.

Other Best Practice Developments

Staff Consultation Process Improvement

At Southern Counties Water UNISON branch officers are working with the People (HR) management on developing and delivering training courses for employee reps, and updating the Staff Council intranet pages with business process maps, etc. A new role is being created focussing on the improvement of all representation and consultation processes – and auditing the introduction of changes to ensure that they are being introduced fairly and to agreed standards. For restructures, this includes a director chairing every meeting, and an internet portal collating all minutes, actions and Q&As plus job descriptions and vacancies where holes have been left after slot-ins and best-fit alternative have happened. This ensures more transparency, and ownership of the change at most senior level.

It is hoped that similar initiatives can be promoted by other branches where industrial relations allow. However, "talent spotting" is often being used by companies to drop people into vacant positions (possibly bypassing normal recruitment protocol); these are often inexperienced graduates, or

managers from other industries.

Internal mergers between Water and Wastewater operations can be used by companies (such as Central Water) to eliminate parallel hierarchies of management. Resulting redundancies need to be handled following best practice, with the minimum of acrimonious severances.

TUPE, Subcontracting and the Wholesale-Retail split

Contracts have now been awarded for the Ofwat AMP6 period (2015 to 2020) by most of the water companies – with many of the partner organisations changing. This usually results in one or more of the following:

- Former staff members (who were TUPEd across previously) being TUPEd again (possibly back into the parent company).
- Existing staff members being TUPEd out, or seconded to partner organisations
- Redundancies and redeployments with former partner organisations that have lost contracts

Most water licence holders have not finally decided whether to create separate companies to handle the Ofwat-driven split between wholesale and retail water activities (enshrined in the Water Act). This could lead to further TUPE.

Objective Three:

Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members

3.1 Water Industry Report

Following the success of the launch of the Water Industry report in 2014, UNISON has funded an update of the report to be published in April 2015. The new version of the report updates figures on water bills, the availability of social tariffs and other campaigning issues. It also contains a new section comparing the performance of a privatised companies with publicly owned and not for profit alternatives. This includes issues such as investment in capital infrastructure and the treatment of workers. There is also a new section exposing which companies do and do not pay the Living Wage.

The report has received significant positive coverage in the national press and online.

3.2 Environment Agency Job Cuts

The campaign against job cuts in the Environment Agency has continued into 2015. In the House of Commons, Early Day Motion 947 "Environment Agency Budget" has now been signed by 64 members of Parliament. Before the cuts programme began the Agency had 11,250 staff. By 2016 the Environment Agency is budgeting to employ 10,316 full time equivalent staff. However, the UNISON campaign has saved many posts as originally there were 1,700 job losses planned.

Throughout the 'SRRP' re-organisation UNISON has engaged with the process in order to get the best possible outcome for members. We have argued for the maximum possible flexibility to ensure that Environment Agency workers can continue in roles using remote working arrangements. Where appropriate and where members are in agreement, we have also argued for the Environment Agency's voluntary redundancy scheme to be made available. Our focus has always been to keep compulsory redundancy to an absolute minimum. A huge amount of credit should go to UNISON reps in the Environment Agency who have worked so hard engaging with the SRRP process to the benefit of UNISON members.

UNISON is currently gathering information on the job roles which have been removed as a result of the cuts programme. This information will help us to campaign against future cuts and adequate secure

funding for the crucial job that the Environment Agency does.

3.3 Transport

UNISON has continued to support the Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) 'Save Our Buses' campaign and has looked at ways it can provide further support. As a direct result of UNISON funding and engagement the CBT was able to produce their excellent report "Buses in Crisis – a report on bus funding across England and Wales 2014/15".

The report revealed that half of local authorities in England and Wales have cut funding for buses in the current financial year, with over £9m cut from supported services in total in 2014/15. It also showed that since 2010, local authority funding for bus services has been slashed by 15% (£44m) with more than 2000 routes being cut or withdrawn entirely, leaving many people and communities cut off completely.

The report received extensive national media coverage, exposing the failures of the Coalition Government's free market approach to the funding of buses.

CBT have also successfully supported numerous local campaigns against bus service cuts and produced a local campaigners' guide which has been utilised by UNISON activists to campaign against cuts to their bus services.

3.4 Call Centre Charter

UNISON has continued to promote the Call Centre Charter as a means to raise the profile of workers in WET who are call centre operatives. Branches are seeking improvements to call centre working environments on the back of this academic research commissioned by UNISON. All branches have been notified on how to organise and campaign effectively around the charter and encouraged to work with employers to get joint agreements in place.

3.5 Political and Stakeholder Engagement

UNISON has continued to engage with politicians and other relevant bodies to progress WET service group campaigns, in particular our work on social tariffs, our campaigns against cuts in the Environment Agency and cuts to bus services.

UNISON has held three separate meetings with Labour's Shadow Water Minister, Angela Smith MP, in the past year. In these meetings we have argued for Labour to take a robust stand on forcing water companies to make available effective social tariffs to ensure that those on low incomes are able to afford their water bills. The fruits of this activity can be seen in the commitment Labour has recently made to introduce a mandatory 'National Affordability Scheme' for the water industry. The affordability scheme will mean that, under a Labour government, all water companies would be required to put those struggling most with their water bills on a cheaper tariff. These affordability measures will be written into reformed water companies licenses. UNISON has also highlighted the issues of attacks on workers' terms and conditions in the water industry. As a result of our work more and more questions are being raised both inside and outside parliament about the failure of water companies for commit to becoming accredited Living Wage employers.

In addition to our work with the Campaign for Better Transport (see above) UNISON has held meetings with Shadow Labour Transport Minister Michael Dugher and with the relevant Special Advisers. The protection and expansion of local bus services has been high on the agenda for these meetings. We believe that this work will have a significant influence on the 2015 Labour Manifesto.

UNISON has also met with Shadow Labour Environment Minister Maria Eagle to raise the issue of cuts to the Agencies' budget at a time of ever increasing demand. We have also engaged with the Shadow Minister's special advisers to raise the issue of the threat to pay progression in the Environment Agency.

At the October 2014 UNISON WET Seminar in Harrogate our guest speaker was OFWAT Chief Executive Cathryn Ross. Following this successful session we have arranged for a delegation from UNISON's Water Industry Sector Committee to meet with Cathryn Ross to raise issues of concern facing UNISON members in the Water Industry.

UNISON has also continued to engage with the Consumer Council for Water (CCW). At our meeting in January 2015 we secured a commitment for CCW to test the popularity of introducing the Living Wage in Water Industry with water customers in one of their

regular surveys. UNISON will be able to use these results in future campaigning work on the Living Wage.

The UNISON National Officer has worked closely with both Connect PA and Labour Link during the past 12 months and would like to acknowledge this support, which has been most helpful in progressing the aims of members.

Objective Four: Developing an efficient and effective union

4.1 Introduction

At a national level, the service group executive has met four times since the 2014 WET conference. The Executive is made up of lay members elected to serve for a period of two years (2014–2016).

The Water, Environment and Transport Service Group is represented on UNISON's National Executive Council (NEC) by John Jones who was re-elected in 2015 for a two year period. John reports in writing to the Executive on the activities of the NEC.

4.2 Obituary

The WET Executive is saddened to record the death of John Kidd, ex-chair of the Water and Environment Service Group Executive. John Kidd played an active role in the Water Aid campaign for which he campaigned until his death. John's funeral was attended by representatives and full time officials of the union from local, regional and national level. The Executive extends its sympathy to John's family and friends, and to all other members who have suffered bereavements in the past year.

A request was made for contributions towards the Water Aid campaign from friends and colleagues of John Kidd in his memory.

4.2 The 2014–16 WET Executive members and sub-committees are:

Environment Agency (7 seats)

Ruth Davies	Female seat
Ian Brindley	General seat
Dee Smith	General seat
Vacant	General seat
Gillian Shelton	Female seat
Alastair Watson	Male seat
Gregory Marshall	Male seat

Water Industry (9 seats)

Pamela Hinds (resigned Feb 2015)	Female seat
Amanda Bailey	Female seat
Sikander Rashid	General seat
Vacant	Female seat
Daniel McDermott	Male seat
Ian Blakeley	General seat
Brian Scrutton	General seat
Alan Gray (resigned Dec 2014)	Male seat
Stephen Scott	Male seat

Transport (4 seats)

Vacant	Female seat
Andrew Goring	General seat
Richard Sherratt	Male seat
Roger Irvine	General seat

Co-opted From Sector Committees (4 seats)

Clive Craske	Water Industry Sector
Jackie Hamer	Environment Agency Sector
Pam Sian	Passenger Transport Executive Sector
Fran Hill (until March 2015)	Public Transport Sector

Sub-Committee Membership

i) Policy and Strategy Sub-committee

Clive Craske, Ruth Davies, Jackie Hamer, Fran Hill (until March 2015), John Jones and Pam Sian

ii) Business and Environment Equal Opportunities Working Group

Amanda Bailey, Fran Hill (until March 2015), Pam Hinds (until February 2015), Brian Scrutton and Pam Sian

iii) NEC Appeals Panel

Andrew Goring and Pam Sian

iv) UNISON National Health and Safety Committee

Andrew Goring and Gill Shelton (substitute)

v) Local Government Pension Scheme Steering Committee

Ruth Davies, Jackie Hamer, John Jones, Ian Brindley and Pam Sian

4.3 WET Branch Seminar 2014

The service group had another successful branch seminar which was held in October 2014. The seminar was opened with a welcome address from Ruth Davies, Chair of the WET service group executive. It attracted a good turn-out with over 72 delegates inclusive of members of the Executive.

Cathryn Ross, Chief Executive of Ofwat, was the keynote speaker at the seminar. In her opening presentation, she highlighted the role of the regulator and their new approach for 5 year strategies (2015–2020). Ms Ross stressed that as part of their plans water companies are required to submit a business plan setting out charges to customers for these period, and the services they propose to deliver for these charges. She pointed out that companies are assessed on their plan against outcomes set by Ofwat. She stated that the companies that had already demonstrated the level of achievement expected by the regulator are Affinity Water and South West Water.

She expressed keen interest in continuing to engage with the union on areas of mutual interest such as skills shortage in the industry and price control. However, she pointed out that the focus for the regulator is primarily on customers, not those employed in the sector. The platform gave delegates the opportunity to engage with a high profile executive.

The rest of the weekend was covered by workshops on branch organisations, in which some sectors are already considering the proposals from the seminar.

The 2015 seminar will be held on 9–10 October in Chester.

Action on motions passed at the 2014 Water, Environment and Transport conference

Motion	Status
<p>1. Review of Organisation and Branch Structure in the Environment Agency</p> <p>i) conduct review of the organisational arrangements within EA</p> <p>ii) To identify and consider options;</p> <p>iii) To identify a preferred option, consult members on moving to this preferred option and, depending on the outcome of this consultation to seek to implement the preferred option</p>	<p>Consulted with sector officers, with sector committee and branches, including options paper. Updated options for change paper discussed at February 2015 Sector Committee.</p> <p>Agreed actions now being progressed.</p>
<p>2. Recruiting and Organising Under-Represented Workers</p> <p>i) Develop a recruitment and organising strategy designed to increase membership and participation of all under-represented workers;</p> <p>ii) Continue to encourage branches to recruit women stewards and monitor how effective these measures are.</p>	<p>A circular was issued to branches with UNISON guide on self organisation. The Equal Ops group to monitor and request for 6 monthly analysis of the union's diverse membership by protected characteristics.</p>
<p>3. Getting Equality on the Bargaining Table and Winning it for Members</p> <p>i) Seek to ensure that all policies include agreements on publicity, implementation and monitoring;</p> <p>ii) Seek to ensure that when and where appropriate, all equality monitoring is shared with trade unions. Branches should refer to the UNISON LGBT Monitoring factsheets to ensure that monitoring is only used to help identify discrimination and build equality;</p> <p>iii) Seek to ensure that employers assess the impact of any proposals such as restructuring, redundancies or changes in employment contracts with the trade unions before making any decisions.</p> <p>The Equal Ops Committee will continue to monitor progress and provide regular updates to branches on equality legislation. At the back of the motion 6 monthly monitoring information will be requested from branches on membership composition by the protected characteristics i.e. gender, ethnicity and disability.</p>	<p>A bargaining guide was produced and distributed to branches. The 2015 Equality seminar had a slot on this issue to educate activists, which provided an opportunity in understanding their role within the guide.</p>

<p>4. Celebrating Equality in WET Workplaces</p> <p>i) Provide information to WET branches on these various months and days;</p> <p>ii) Encourage branches to raise the marking of these with managers and employers;</p> <p>iii) Promote the involvement of the self-organised groups and young members in such activities, circulating information about these groups to all WET branches;</p> <p>iv) Collate and distribute examples of good equality practice within WET.</p>	<p>Completed. A circular was issued to branches with a diversity calendar to promote in the branch and raise awareness of these events.</p>
<p>5. Public Conveniences</p> <p>i) The Executive to work with the National Health and Safety Unit, NEC and (via the NEC) other trade unions with a view to calling for free, convenient and safe access to public conveniences for those that are mobile workers.</p> <p>ii) Joint work with the Health and Safety unit to develop guidance for branches.</p>	<p>Letter sent to Minister with responsibility for workplace health and safety (Lord Freud). Members given standard letter to write to MPs. Factsheet distributed to branches.</p>
<p>6. Zero Hours Contracts</p> <p>The Executive to work with the NEC and other service groups with a view to stopping the exploitation of zero hour contracts.</p>	<p>Guidance distributed to all WET Branches</p>
<p>7. Environment Agency Cuts</p> <p>i) Continue to support the campaign built around the Early Day Motion 947, calling for a moratorium on any funding cuts and a full risk analysis of the likely damage that will be caused as a result;</p> <p>ii) Raise the profile of the full range of activities undertaken by EA employees, in particular during the winter crisis;</p> <p>iii) Lobby the government and opposition to invest more resources in the EA;</p> <p>iv) Map the net impact of the cuts on members and the services they provide.</p>	<p>The EDM 947 is completed with good support from Labour MPs. Information on list of job roles cut has been requested from Environment Agency management to enable mapping of the impact. Once mapping in complete further press and campaigning work will be done to highlight this.</p>
<p>8. Pension Fund Trustees</p> <p>The Executive should develop a policy that is transparent and inclusive, which provides opportunities for member representation as pension's trustees or pensions committee members. The arrangements should be reflective of the union's fair representative policy, in such that all UNISON members within the workplace have an equal opportunity to seek election to those positions.</p>	<p>UNISON held a utilities pensions seminar in January 2015. The seminar was designed primarily for UNISON pension trustees and branch secretaries within utility companies. The seminar covered the key issues such as pension fund transaction costs, trade union workers capital structures and forthcoming corporate governance campaigns.</p>
<p>9. Flu Jabs</p> <p>The Executive in conjunction with Sector Committees should devise a negotiating guide on the subject for branches to achieve this end.</p> <p>To produce a factsheet and circulate to branches to raise awareness of this issue and engage with employers to put an action plan in place where they are not already doing so.</p>	<p>Specific guidance issued to all branches on this issue.</p>

<p>10. Tackling Stress in Water, Environment and Transport Workplaces</p> <p>i) Urge WET branches to revisit well-being, harassment and equality policies and make sure they are inclusive and up to take;</p> <p>Incorporate as part of Wellbeing agenda. Referred to the B&E Equal Ops Working Group for further work.</p> <p>ii) Seek to ensure that policies and practices are monitored and evaluated, including giving staff an opportunity to report in confidence their experiences of stress and harassment;</p> <p>iii) Promote UNISON's Call Centre Charter, which seeks to establish a decency agenda for staff working in call handling;</p> <p>iv) Publicise the resources and support on offer from UNISON's self-organised and young members groups amongst members;</p> <p>v) Working with branches, consider the impact that austerity is having on WET members, including on their mental and physical well-being;</p> <p>vi) Develop training through the national WET branch seminar to identify symptoms of stress, raise counselling skills, and to develop sickness absence policies that emphasise the need for support and welfare as opposed to the routine management of sickness absence.</p>	<p>As of the time of writing guidance is being put together to be circulated to branches. Also working with sector committees to ensure workplace health and safety policy is fit for purpose and where there are concerns to initiate a review of existing policy.</p>
<p>11. Means Testing for Bus Passes</p> <p>i) The Executive to work with the NEC and (via the NEC) seek the support of other trade unions to support the National Pensioners Convention campaign to protect the bus pass for the elderly.</p> <p>ii) The Executive to continue to support the campaign for better transport, and engage with Labour Shadow team to influence Labour Transport policy.</p>	<p>Issue has been raised with Shadow Ministerial team. Awaiting response. Martin Abrams from the Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) is to address the next Transport sector committee. UNISON has also written to the Shadow Transport Minister on this issue.</p>
<p>12. Save the Pensioners Bus Pass</p> <p>i) Support the National Pensioners Convention campaign to protect the pensioners bus pass;</p> <p>This issue has been identified as part of conference business at the Retired members' conference in Southport.</p> <p>Write to shadow transport minister</p> <p>ii) Work with Labour Link and the Shadow Transport Ministry team to ensure maintaining the pensioners bus pass is part of the Labour manifesto for the forthcoming General Election.</p>	<p>Issue has been raised with the Shadow Ministerial Team in meetings, and received a positive response. This has been followed up in writing.</p>

<p>13. Combined Authorities: Good or Evil?</p> <p>The Executive to initiate an investigation to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) The theory and practice of the Combined Authority; ii) Comparing and contrasting the different forms of Combined Authorities emerging across England; iii) The potential opportunities and advantages that the new organisations may offer the travelling public and their employees; iv) The potential pitfalls and dangers they may precipitate; v) How the Combined Authorities may develop and evolve in the future. <p>Report needs to be written. Put this on the Agenda for PTE sector Committee meeting</p>	<p>Circular to be issued to all Transport branches to highlight research into how Combined Authorities are operating. This work is ongoing.</p>
<p>14. Support for Public Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Promote UNISON's transport policy to a wider audience; ii) Support the Campaign for Better Transport in its work on the Save Our Bus campaign; iii) Work with Labour Link and the Shadow Transport Ministry team to develop a transport policy that includes improving funding for bus services. 	<p>GPF funding secured to fund highly effective campaigning work on this issue carried out by the Campaign for Better Transport. Regular meetings are held with CBT to monitor this ongoing work.</p>
<p>15. HS2 Rail Project and Other Rail Developments</p> <p>The Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) To consider the merits of the case put forward by Unison-supported Kelvin Hopkins MP; ii) Together with the CBT, the TUC and other like-minded Transport Unions prepare a policy document on Improved Rail Investment for presentation to the 2015 Water, Environment and Transport Service Group conference with a view to reference to the National Conference subject to such approval; iii) To meet with the Labour Party spokesperson on rail matters: Lilian Greenwood MP to discuss rail infrastructure development and the value for money of HS2 and any knock-on rail service detriments arising from that project with particular reference to any loss of jobs. 	<p>Initial discussions held with CBT. This is a long term piece of work. Current resources mean this piece of work has not been prioritised. The issue has been raised with Labour's Shadow Transport team.</p>
<p>16. Mitbestimmung in the Water Industry</p> <p>The Executive to work with progressive thinkers such as Ruskin College, university contacts, NEC, Labour Link and other relevant sections within UNISON to plan a strategy on how this co-determination model could be adapted and introduced within a reasonable time-frame to eligible companies and entities in the WET sector who would consider this a positive step forward in working relationships and protecting their members jobs and terms and conditions.</p>	<p>Some of the issues raised by this motion are addressed in the updated version of the 'Water Industry Report'.</p> <p>Mitbestimmung in the Water Industry was also discussed with the Consumer Council for Water and will be raised again at our next meeting.</p>

<p>17. Social Tariffs</p> <p>The Executive to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Build a campaign with a key objective to get the UK water industry to adopt a social tariff; ii) Engage with the water industry, OFWAT and key stakeholders to ensure that the introduction of a universal social tariff is set at a meaningful level; iii) Work with Labour Link to build a political narrative and seek to get inclusion in future party manifestos; iv) Work with the UNISON charity 'There For You' to raise awareness of water debt issues. 	<p>This has been directly raised with the Labour Shadow ministerial team in multiple meetings. UNISON should take some credit for the Labour policy to be included in the 2015 manifesto of a 'National Affordability Scheme' for the Water industry, which will include making social tariffs available as part of the licences issued to water companies. A new section on social tariffs was included in the new "Water Industry Report", demonstrating the inadequacy of current social tariff schemes.</p>
<p>18. Utilities: Not for Profit and Alternative Company Model</p> <p>The Executive to work with appropriate UNISON partners to debate the feasibility and implications of campaigning for a change towards "not for profit models" or other models for our water companies. This will increase benefits to members in the long term by reducing charges and offer better terms and conditions to employees.</p>	<p>The updated Water Industry Report has a new section directly addressing the issues raised in this motion.</p>

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