



UNISON Water Environment and
Transport Service Group Executive
Annual Report

2015/16

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Foreword from Ruth Davies, Chair of the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive

We are pleased to present you with the 2016 Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive annual report. It outlines the key areas of work delivered across our service group since last year.

The 2016 annual report sets out the actions that we have been undertaking across all our sectors to tackle a wide range of issues facing members and branches. It describes how we have worked within the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group to support our members.

Since our 2015 Water, Environment and Transport service group conference, we have seen the continued, relentless impact of austerity economics, which remains highly favoured by the current government; as a result of this, circumstances for members remain challenging across the scope of our service group. This political ideology continues to impact on the services delivered by the work of the members in our service group, whether employed in the public or private sector. Alongside this, since last autumn, UNISON has been working to influence politicians to oppose the impacts of the Trade Union Bill, which contains many features that are blatantly anti-trade union measures.

Since we met at our 2015 service group conference, it is evident that ongoing change and reorganisation remains a key feature of working life across all our branches, whether their jobs are in the public or private sector. Job security continues to be uncertain for many of our members. Pay levels are still largely stagnant, although our members working in the private sector seem to be slightly - often just very slightly - exceeding the restraint of the public sector 1% pay cap. Pension schemes continue to face attacks. Within the water industry, UNISON has made some good progress with persuading employers to pledge their commitment to paying a real Living Wage. We also continue to see the importance of the health and safety activity we deliver across our branches, as well as many of our members being fully supported with problems that they face at work.

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. We are currently working to deliver an organising and recruitment campaign, aimed at supporting the wide range of circumstances that our branches operate within. You will also hopefully

already be aware that we continue to expand our means of engaging with members, to reflect the many different ways that members now access UNISON information.

Please share the information from this report within your branches, as this is work that we have undertaken on behalf of our members. This has been delivered thanks to the commitment of our lay activists, who are working in very demanding circumstances, and with the support of full-time staff at both regional and national level. We continue to work together to meet the challenges we face.

I trust that you will find this report informative and I would like to thank you all for continued commitment to our union.

Objective 1

Recruiting, organising, representing and retaining members

1.1 Membership Profile and Recruitment

Overall recruitment and retention continue to be a significant and pressing problem for the service group, as they are for many parts of the union. West Yorkshire Transport, Canal & River Trust (South), Portsmouth Water UNISON, United Utilities, Northumbrian Water and Environment Agency North West all saw net increases in membership of their branches in the twelve months to March 2016. However, this did not prevent an overall decrease in WET membership of 4.05% over the year. Of our sectors, the smallest percentage reduction in net membership came in the Environment Agency and the largest came in the public transport sector. Yorkshire and Humberside, Scotland and North West were the best performing regions in terms of net WET membership over the twelve months to March 2016.

In December 2015, the service group executive signed off and distributed the new recruitment and organising strategy for the service group. The strategy contained a number of actions for branches, regions and national office with the aim of improving recruitment and organising. Publication of the strategy followed extensive consultation with branches. Delivery of the actions within the strategy continues to be monitored via the service group executive meetings and sector committees.

A key part of the strategy is the distribution of monthly league tables showing the increase in net branch membership since October 2015. We will be distributing awards to the best performing branches at the Water, Environment and Transport branch seminar in October 2016.

Dedicated recruitment leaflets aimed at workers in transport, the Environment Agency and the water industry were published in January 2016. WET branches have been making good use of these materials since they were published and feedback on the content and look of the leaflets has been positive.

1.2 Branch Organisation

There have been no major changes to branch structures over the past year, with the exception of several transfers from public transport branches to other branches. In one example, the branch membership in First Manchester was transferred into

Transport for Greater Manchester branch. The Environment Agency sector committee has held a series of discussions regarding the possibility of changes to branches arising from the Agency's move to an area based structure following the Strategic Reviews Response Programme (SRRP). So far these discussions have not led to any concrete proposals for branch structure change.

1.3 Regional Development and Support

UNISON regions have sought to maintain a viable regional WET structure, to differing degrees of success. London region once again 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 topics covered included national campaigns, updates on the UNISON response to the election of a Tory Government, and an update on national trends in the service group and legal updates.

Smaller branches, particularly in the public transport sector, continued to report a lack of regional support for their work. This is an issue which may need to be further addressed in the coming year.

1.4 Learning

In May 2016, there was an organising and recruitment training day held in Birmingham, specifically aimed at WET branches. This targeted training attracted varying levels of participation across our sectors, but this has been a practical step, aimed at supporting branches with their recruitment activities.

The joint WET and Energy Pensions Seminar held in December 2015 was very well attended. The event covered a number of issues including updates on legislative changes relating to pensions, and an excellent presentation on the issue of pension costs. WET and Energy activists were given an insight into the importance of driving down pension costs in order to maximise benefits and limit contributions. Feedback from the seminar was overwhelmingly positive.

1.5 Communications

The WET service group has made use of a variety of communications channels over the past year to promote our campaigns and ensure our members' voice is heard. Press releases and website news updates were used to good effect both during the floods of December 2015 and as part of the dispute over pensions at United Utilities.

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

We are also reaping the benefits of our long-term work on social media. More and more members are accessing news about the service group from Facebook and Twitter. The number of Twitter followers for the UNISON WET account has risen significantly in the past year.

UNISON's communications department has played a vital role in supporting the "Making Waves for the Living Wage" campaign. The tool on the UNISON website which enabled members to quickly and easily email their MP in support of the campaign was particularly effective.

Objective 2

Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality

2.1 Introduction

This has been a year of very tough negotiations across the sector on a range of different issues.

As ever, pay is a crucial area for the union to show its worth to members, and this has never been more important than the 2015 pay reform negotiations in the Environment Agency. With the Government forcing the Agency to remove progression pay, UNISON had to go into negotiations with a firm steer from members which could shape the reformed pay system.

Our consultation with members at the start of the process was invaluable when it came to negotiations. Many members identified not being able to move above pay point 3 and the complexity of the existing system as key concerns in this UNISON consultation exercise.

We secured compensation for the removal of contractual progression of 2.5%, as a non-consolidated lump sum for staff at or above pay point 3 and a consolidated increase for staff below pay point 3, bringing them up to pay point 3 - or a combination of the two. Under the new system, workers who are performing well will be eligible for additional reward. The annual pay deal which was negotiated alongside this also secured the Living Wage for all directly employed and contracted-out staff. Frustratingly, the 1% government cap on annual deals limited room for manoeuvre again in terms of the annual pay rise, but UNISON was able to secure further improvements in flexible working.

In the PTE sector, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) had been on the verge of leaving the Public Transport Forum (PTF) in 2015. However, UNISON, working closely with Unite, persuaded management from exiting and instead gets them involved in improving the forum's terms of reference. At the start of March 2016 we finally got the great news we had all been hoping for: TfGM would be remaining in the PTF, including negotiating on pay and conditions. This is a great success, in particular for the trade unions at TfGM who were so well organised throughout the campaign.

Across the water industry a number of UNISON's Water branches are in the midst of pay negotiations. Some have not yet received pay offers, while other branches are currently consulting members.

Examples of strong deals negotiated by UNISON include Severn Trent, where a 2.25% award with £367.00 of shares plus 2.62 % of salary as a lump sum bonus was secured. At United Utilities, the union negotiated hard for a one-year deal, securing 2% on headline pay backdated to 1st April 2015. In Yorkshire Water, UNISON struck a deal for a 2.25% pay rise from April 2015 plus 2% from April 2016. This was a two year deal which also secured no changes to pensions and the company picking up the increase in the employer NI contribution. At Portsmouth Water UNISON negotiated 2.40% across the board.

2.2 Pensions

The attack on pensions in the water industry stepped up again this year with the announcement by United Utilities (UU) in December 2015 that they would be seeking to close the defined benefit pension scheme from April 2016. Following a robust response from UNISON, including a ballot for industrial action which was strongly supported by members, UU confirmed withdrawal of the proposal and said they would engage in further talks on the future of the pension scheme when the costs of future service were confirmed in May 2016. At the time of writing, those further talks are pending. The UNISON response was well marshalled both by regional and branch officers. The branch was also supported during the talks by UNISON's national pension's team. This support will continue to the conclusion of this campaign.

2.3 Promoting Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

This report outlines the progress made by the Business and Environment Equal Opportunities Group following the 2015 service group conference in promoting equality in the workplace. A paper was produced in the summer of 2015 called Driving Equality/Diversity for members; this was distributed to branches. The paper has been taken to branch meetings to promote and raise awareness of the importance of workplace equalities and to ensure that our lay activists are well equipped in driving equality at work. It was well received.

Another achievement was the mapping exercise to

establish our membership composition and the diversity of branch structures. This data will be used by the Group in understanding areas to focus its work programme for the next twelve months after conference.

The lead officer continues to update the Group on any changes in equality legislation and also provides advice to support the work of the Group in order to channel their work-plan appropriately. Furthermore, the Group holds an annual equalities seminar; more details of this can be found in section 2.4 below. This event brings lay activists together, to educate, network and empower them with the tools they need to engage with employers in driving workplace equality and diversity initiatives, even though the majority of the employers are not bound by this aspect of the Equality Act 2010.

The Group's objectives for the future will be to:

- Promote diversity in branch structures, through targeted recruitment activities;
- Promote an inclusive environment for under-represented groups in order to boost representation;
- Encourage branches to set up self-organised groups or an equality forum;
- Encourage branches to organise events and activities that promote equality and diversity at work;
- Improve the way communications and information are disseminated to branches

The Group continues to work with UNISON's national self-organised group committees and the service group executives in embedding bargaining on equality into our bargaining agenda to ensure employers' equality/diversity initiatives are fit for the future.

2.3.1 2016 Equality survey report

The 2015 service group conference resolutions on equalities mandated us to survey members. The response rate to the survey was very limited, which means that it cannot be assumed to represent the views of the whole service group membership. In total 70 members responded, made up of 30 in Energy, 22 in Environment Agencies, 3 Water and 5 Transport members. 10 respondents didn't say in which sector they work.

63% of respondents were female, 32% were male and 5% preferred not to say. Amongst those that responded the majority were between the ages of 36-45 (40%) and 46-55 (33%).

The key focus of this survey was to establish the barriers to participation at self-organised group (SOG) conferences. 83% of respondents said they have not attended any of the SOG conferences in the last 2 years. The barriers for non attendance were attributed to: lack of awareness, lack of branch funds, lack of time, location, childcare, issues of proportionality and cost to small branches. Generally lack of awareness seemed to be the main issue for not attending.

The results from the survey also provided a very useful snapshot of members' knowledge of equalities and the barriers to participation at events. The key comments that emerged from the survey were calls for more training, effective communication and the need to extend attendance to all not just the self organised groups.

Despite years of work done in the service group to promote and raise awareness of equality and diversity at work these findings suggest that more needs to be done in raising awareness of the equality/diversity agenda within our structures and among members.

On this note, the Business & Environment Equal Opportunities Working Group, working with the service group executives, will continue to actively promote the importance of workplace equality/diversity initiatives and stress the need to ensure that more efforts are made to encourage fair representation at future events.

We are happy to report that three winners were each awarded a £30 book token on entering the prize draw linked to the survey.

2.4 Business and Environment Equalities Seminar 2015

Once again the service group held another successful seminar which took place at the Novotel Sheffield Centre on 15-17 May 2015.

The sessions covered at the seminar included: bargaining for equality, hate crime, and organising under-represented groups. Generally the feedback was positive and delegates reported finding all of the sessions educational, informative and interesting. Delegates felt it was an excellent opportunity to network and compare workplace practice with others.

A DVD, Still the enemy within, was shown, which gave an insight into the miners' strike of 1984-85 and the effective end of the UK mining industry. The film also reflected the strong power of solidarity in the trade union movement at the time. This power was weakened during Mrs Thatcher's government in the

1980s. The hostility of the government in that same period saw a decline in union membership and the privatisation of major public services.

The social part of the seminar included a quiz and a raffle to raise funds. The proceeds from the raffle raised £225, which was donated to Stop Hate UK.

Sector Reports

2.5 Environment Agency Sector

The sector committee has met four times since the 2015 conference. The membership of the committee during the year was as set out below:

MEMBERS 2015/2016

Branch	Non-Manual	Manual	Additional
N. West	Sarah Peet	Vacant	Ruth Davies
N. East	Jackie Hamer	Paul Breeze	
NR Wales	Kevin Aitken	-	
Southern	Shane Harper	Ian Woolven	
S. West	John Rowlands	Jamie McClaughlin	Louise Robinson
HO	Mark West		
Thames	Andy Theaker	Mark Saunders	-
Midlands	Simon Peate (Retired Feb 2016)	Joe Andrew	Shirley Flannery
Anglian	Andy Hunkin	Jonathan Greaves	
Labs.	Dave Gardner		
H&S Lead	Steve Bleakley		

i. The National Negotiating Group and its related committees dictated the main areas of business for the committee, and pay reform has probably been the biggest single item dealt with (see iii below). Further funding cuts to the Agency are ongoing, and the Secretary of State for Defra, Liz Truss, has made it very clear that she has a vision of 'One Defra', where many support functions are shared, and those arm's length bodies (ALBs) which remain will have to work much more closely together, to realize further efficiencies. This

will undoubtedly involve further job losses. EA trade unions and senior HR staff have a standing invitation to join the fortnightly updates held by Defra to brief the Defra trade unions on the latest thinking on the transformation of the department and its ALBs.

One positive aspect which has emerged over the last year or so is that the Agency is much more willing to share sensitive information with the trade unions, and this is probably because key senior figures within HR have come to realize that the trade unions are a positive force who try to look for solutions to problems, and are key to managing change successfully.

The whole Environment Agency workforce has been under great pressure since early last December due to the serious flooding in the North, and UNISON, along with the other trade unions, has repeatedly called for the Agency to revise its delivery targets, or risk the health and wellbeing of the workforce who simply have too much to do.

ii. Organisational Change

Whilst there have been no changes or restructuring of the Agency on the scale seen during the SRRP restructuring in 2013-14, there have been a number of other changes which have impacted on employees.

The outsourcing of payroll and transactional HR services to SSCL, and the subsequent closure of the Leeds operation, has been reported upon previously. However, since our last conference, the Peterborough centre, which is where all of the ex-EA payroll staff were based, has also closed. A TUPE transfer was not possible so no staff transferred to the new payroll centre at Newcastle and there were further redundancies. Consequently there is no-one working for SSCL who knows anything about the (complicated) pay systems which exist in the EA. Since the introduction of the new Oracle system (SOP) last October, this lack of knowledge has been seriously exposed, although SOP itself appears to be inadequate for the job. We have had recurring issues of unclear payslips, incorrect deductions for a whole range of reasons, and incorrect data held on the system. SOP was basically imposed on the EA on cost grounds, and many of our fears about its suitability have been realized.

There have been a further (small) number of voluntary exits from the Agency as areas finally confirmed their affordable structures, and some team sizes needed to be reduced.

One consequence of the 'One Defra' initiative is that the Agency and Natural England (NE) will be aligning their area boundaries, although the two organizations

are not merging. The realignment will be complete by the end of this summer, but at this point it would seem unlikely to have a serious impact on operational staff.

iii. Pay

Once again employees did not receive their pay rise plus back pay until February (2016), this despite the award yet again being identical to the previous 2 years (1% on scale plus any progression due). Part of the delay this time was that it was wrapped up with proposals for the new pay system. On Cabinet Office's insistence, any contractual right of agency employees to an annual pay rise had to be removed. UNISON fought hard for compensation for staff that lost this entitlement, and worked with management on shaping the new performance management system.

Staff have moved onto a new 'broadband' system, with only a minimum and maximum salary per grade, and no fixed pay points in between. This is very different, and it will be a challenge to ensure that performance decisions are fair and transparent.

In addition to this, improvements were secured to the flexitime system, compressed hours were restored as a flexible working option, and a firmer commitment was made by the Agency to pay the Living Wage to its contractors.

iv. Pensions

The Environment Agency Pension Scheme continues to have a very high proportion of the workforce in membership, and is still well funded, though, like last year, actual membership has fallen as the workforce has reduced further. The fund is actively engaging with the process to set up large, pooled LGPS investment vehicles.

UNISON continued to be represented on the Agency's Pension Committee by Jackie Hamer, Simon Peate (until early 2016), Ian Brindley and Dot Holding. At the time of writing a process to find a replacement for Simon was about to start.

v) Terms and Conditions

As previously reported, a new trade union recognition agreement needed to be drawn up to reflect the fundamental restructuring of the Agency as a consequence of SRRP. After much work the agreement was finally signed off in April, and one of its features, the establishment of a National Operations Joint Council, has already had two meetings.

The long running efforts to devise a fair and simple reward system for staff who participates in incident

response have finally borne some fruit in terms of harmonising current reward ('Phase 1'). However, there is still a lot of work to do on a better, long term reward framework ('Phase 2') which incentivises staff to sign up for incident response rotas. The goodwill of so many EA workers in supporting the flood response effort over the winter of 15-16 December 2015 really underlines why it is so important to finally resolve this issue. Field Operations Delivery staff were not affected by Phase 1, but will be included in Phase 2.

vi) Health and Safety

The National Health and Safety Working Group (HASWAG) met 4 times in either Ergon House, London or in Birmingham.

Management have continued to voice their desire and support for trade union interaction throughout all our meetings. Sub-groups have been formed to provide input on specific issues as required.

In order to become more efficient, we have arranged a series of face to face meetings or telephone conference calls for the trade union members of the group. This enables us to debate issues that affect the widest range of members and determine our priorities for discussion at the national HASWAG Group. The first of these was in May 2015, where we challenged whether those attending were truly representing the views of members in their constituencies.

Notable items raised for discussion with management have been asbestos, working times during incidents, SHERMS 2 fitness for purpose and whether records have been deleted, telematics amongst others.

Asbestos

Asbestos exposure to staff has been a concern for some time, particularly in regard to whether the waste industry has changed over the last decade or so. Much more material is being sent through trammels and crushers for re-use or recycling and materials separation. Whilst on the whole an environmentally beneficial process, this is likely to lead to any material containing asbestos being physically broken down and fibres released.

Historically, many staff had some understanding of asbestos from earlier experience; however, newer staff have had little, if any, training on the risks. We have successfully persuaded the organisation to review its training provision. Pilot courses have just run. Risk assessments are being revised and there is likely to be some work on fibre identification and assessment at sites that we visit.

Incident response

One area of concern that has been re-presented to management is the varying approach to hours worked during incidents. Some staff are still being expected to work a 12 hour shift and travel at either end of this, sometimes between one and two hours each way. This is clearly unacceptable. Management have themselves issued a HASLE notice relating to the dangers of driving when tired.

This concern has been taken on board by working groups looking at the whole remit of incident response, from how we interact with the military to working hours.

SHERMS 2

Concerns were raised about the fitness for purpose of SHERMS 2. We have evidence that records have been deliberately deleted or amended in such a way that they cannot be searched against. This goes against the principle that SHERMS 2 is a replacement for the accident book, where entries cannot be modified.

Management have agreed that some entries have been modified. Discussion has taken place to ensure that this does not happen again.

We have also had input into the recently released SHERMS2 to allow it to be more user friendly, to notify trade union representatives of incidents and prevent modification of the original entry.

Telematics

Concerns were raised about the quality of telematics installation and the effects that the units were having on vehicle operation.

Fleet Operations carried out an audit and found some issues, but on the whole it was considered appropriate to now roll out switch-on across the fleet.

Fleet Operations were taken to task about a SHERMS logged incident which had a potential outcome of a fire in a piece of plant, which was not commented upon in the audit review as it was a piece of plant not audited. We have asked for clarity on presentation in future and this was noted.

2.6 Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs)

Three employers participate in the negotiating element of the Passenger Transport Forum (PTF) – Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM), 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.

In May 2015 TfGM (Employers Side) advised they will be withdrawing from the PTF. The trade unions ran a long-term and concerted campaign to keep TfGM in the negotiating element of the PTF. As a result TfGM paused on their decision to exit and have re-engaged with the PTF. TfGM management have worked constructively to assist in the redrafting of the terms of reference of the PTF and we are hopeful the decision to exit will be fully reversed in due course. Industrial relations between the trade unions and employers in the PTF have been positive over a period of time and we believe members best interests are served by strengthening the PTF.

UNISON and Unite have long-stated our desire strengthen the PTF. Newcastle and North East Transport Authority “Nexus” had, in recent years, become disengaged from the PTF. On 8th February, it was very welcome to hear that new management at Nexus wishes to come back into the fold. The fact that Nexus hosted the meeting is itself significant and bodes well for the future.

i) PTE Sector Committee

The members of the sector committee are:

Ivan Anson	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

ii) Passenger Transport Forum

iii) Trade Union Side Membership of the Passenger Transport Forum

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

UNISON

Ivan Anson	Tyne and Wear PTE
Gurdip Suthi	Centro
Roger Irvine	Merseytravel
Andrew Coley	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Cassie Bell/ Louise Fannon	South Yorkshire PTE
Tony Short	Transport for Greater Manchester
Pam Sian	West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Equal Opportunities
Gavin Edwards	Secretary of the Trade Union Side
Kevin Osborne	Regional Organiser, Yorkshire and Humberside
Dean Harper	Regional Organiser, Y&H (from November 2015)
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 as chair of the trade union side. Tony Short was elected vice chair. Gavin Edwards is the trade union side joint secretary.

iv) 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 2016 the staff side submitted their claim for 2016 as follows:

- A 3% increase on all salary points and allowances.
- 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 this to be an ongoing commitment up-dated 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.

v) PTE Pay Outside the Passenger Transport Forum

Three PTEs negotiate pay independently of the Negotiating Element of the PTF:

• Merseytravel

In Merseytravel, at the time of writing, there is a proposal for a further two year tie-in with the Local Government pay award. In addition the Trade Unions are asking Merseytravel to become an accredited Living Wage employer.

• South Yorkshire

UNISON are currently in negotiations with the employer and intend to submit a pay claim at the end of March 2016. This is likely to reflect the local government award as the four South Yorkshire authorities pay very close attention to the organisation's finances. UNISON is also investigating no cost enhancements as part of the claim.

• Tyne and Wear (NEXUS)

The final offer from the 2015 pay talks was accepted by 95% on a 70% turnout.

Nexus have two sets of terms and conditions – Red Book (mainly Metro operational staff) and Blue Book (for APT&C staff). Negotiations on the 2016 Nexus pay claim began at the end of February 2016. Management's disappointing response was 'framed' by the financial circumstances, so tough pay talks are envisaged and talks resumed in March and April.

vi) The future of the PTF

In December 2015, a sub-group of the PTF met to start re-drafting the terms of reference of the Forum. The aim is to make sure the Forum was focussed on issues relevant to employees and the member organisations and to adapt to recent changes in the responsibilities, structures and names of those organisations.

A new draft terms of reference were taken to the 8th February PTF meeting and the draft was, in principle, agreed. The new terms of reference were signed off at the PTF meeting in May 2016.

The new terms of reference sees a new name for the Forum: "Urban Transport Employment Forum". Members can be reassured that the new terms of reference and newly named Forum maintain the negotiating link with the 'PTE Green Book'. Member

organisations acknowledge this implies no change in the way terms and conditions of employment are negotiated.

vii) Equal Opportunities

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

viii) Other issues

Other issues considered by the Forum included:

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

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2.7 Public Transport Sector

Fran Hill, sector chair, reports that ‘I wish that I could say that things have improved for bus company branches since last year – but, like a broken record, I have to say that unfortunately they have not.

‘Austerity cuts continue to squeeze the money available to councils for tendered journeys and concessionary schemes and also bus service operator grants. We have seen more services and journeys cut and smaller operators go to the wall. Bigger operators have all restructured, altered pension schemes, cut back on depots, services and staff, and face difficult operating circumstances. Passenger numbers continue to drop outside London. The current low price of fuel has not helped as people see it as cheaper to run their cars and more convenient to use them rather than a now less frequent bus service with higher fares. Until this government realises that it needs to invest properly in buses, not just trains, we will continue to suffer as an industry and as usual the more vulnerable and less well-off will continue to be worst hit.

‘In January we had a delegation to meet Daniel Zeichner of the Shadow Transport team to discuss bus matters – a meeting which went very well. We had positive opening dialogue with them. Daniel used to work for UNISON, as did Lillian Greenwood and Richard Burden, so we are well represented in that department! We talked about devolution, BSOG, loss of tenders and services and the PTF problems with getting their managers to agree to take part. Like us,

they were awaiting the publishing of the Buses Bill that the government suddenly introduced via the Queen’s Speech.

‘Devolution and the formation of Combined Authorities (CAs) could have great effects on bus companies – depending which way CAs decide to go down – Quality Partnerships or Franchising. Quality Contracts seem to be less likely since the one at Nexus failed after much hard work and money put into it. Some authorities place more importance than others on transport.

‘We continue to support and work with Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) and have submitted a further GPF bid to aid their work. Staff at CBT have become UNISON members.

‘Pay settlements have come in to be around 1-3%

‘Branches continue to progress mergers – with PTE/ CA branches or local government branches. This is the only solution left to us, as the idea of one national branch could not get off the ground. The down side to this is less branches to take part in things like the WET service group conference, but we want to be able to grow membership and offer them stability through merger.

‘Several branches took part in the anti austerity march in Manchester at the Tory party conference and it was good to see other WET members there. No doubt we will be doing the same this autumn! We have to show our opposition to austerity measures and the Trade Union Bill.

‘I would like to thank the staff at the UNISON Centre for their continued support this year.’

2.7.1 Canal and River Trust (CRT) Update

Recent company survey has shown only 40% of staff are “engaged” and only 32% feel they are adequately rewarded for the work they do. The company is using workshops to do something about the situation. These are on-going and members have given a mixed response so far.

The 1% pay rise was accepted by only the slightest of margins.

The Living Wage should be implemented in November 2016 to all CRT employees and subsidiaries

Recruitment is a major concern for all CRT branches as the ageing workforce begins to reach retirement age. We have instigated a new recruitment campaign headed up by a retired member who is visiting every office and outstation in the organisation and speaking to every person available. This will continue through to mid October. A full report will be made. Hopefully this will produce new members. But at least no-one can say they weren’t asked.

The trade unions have recently identified a serious breach of the Data Protection Act by the HR department, wherein the personal details of all staff were passed to an outside retail company. The Information Commissioner is investigating, HR have apologised and new protocols are being put in place.

2.8 Water Industry Sector Committee

Clive Craske, sector chair, reports that 'It's pleasing to see the union getting really good deals for our members in a number of places across the industry. In Northumbria Water UNISON secured a 1.9% consolidated increase from 1st April 2016 and two special half days leave on the mornings of 23rd and 30th December 2016. This extends the usual Christmas and New Year special leave arrangements so everyone gets two full days off. At Portsmouth Water UNISON got 2.40% across the board. At Severn Trent the union secured a 2.25% award with £367.00 of shares plus 2.62 % of salary as a lump sum bonus. In Yorkshire Water, UNISON pushed the employer for a 2.25% pay rise from April 2015 plus 2% from April 2016. This was a two year deal which also secured no changes to pensions and the company picking up the increase in the employer NI contribution. At United Utilities, the union negotiated a one-year deal, securing 2% on headline pay backdated to 1st April 2015.

Recruitment and retention of members remains a concern. In the 12 months to March 2016, membership in the sector reduced by 4.6%. However, it is good to see that this trend is starting to change. Since the launch of the new organising and recruitment strategy in October 2015 we have seen membership reductions stop and in some branches we are seeing significant increases in membership. Thames, United Utilities and Southern Water branches are notable in this respect.

In terms of the more general trends in pay in the industry there are several areas I would like to highlight. There have been moves in some employers towards market-indicator-based pay, and "broad-banding" (Southern Water following the lead of Thames Water). This does away with traditionally banded and graded pay structures, leading to a much more unpredictable environment, both for employees and the unions who represent them.

More positively, I welcome moves to increase the wages of "underpaid" staff by companies which has, in part come from UNISON's own Living Wage campaigning. We have always been clear that such moves are about the companies making an additional commitment, and money to pay to the Living Wage, for example, should be funded from excess profits

and profligacy at the top of water companies.

For obvious reasons, ongoing market reform continues to be a massive issue for the industry and our members. Many companies have still not decided whether to spin off an internal company or to enter into a joint venture, as United Utilities and Severn Trent have. Another, more radical, option is to do a hard exit from the retail of water services to non-household customers, which has been the approach taken by Portsmouth Water.

Some UNISON members in the water industry who have previously been TUPEd are now facing changes to their terms and conditions as contractors and subcontractors try to make money out of very thin-margin contracts. In this respect, I would highlight the importance of Motion 14 at this year's conference entitled "The Contracting Out of Services in the Water Industry." This is clearly an issue which should be moving up the agenda of the sector group rapidly.

As mentioned above, partnership working and joint ventures will become a growing feature of the water industry landscape. This will inevitably lead to our members having line managers who are not employees of the same company. We need to be on the look-out for problems caused by differing cultures and HR policies coming into conflict. One area which is of particular concern is on grievance and disciplinaries, where these differences could be crucial to our members' jobs.

Another particularly worrying trend appears to be the use of disciplinaries and capability hearings to reduce headcount, rather than making people redundant. The union has a key role to play here in making sure our members are well represented during disciplinary hearings.

We have also seen continued attacks on pensions. Adverse changes have recently been made to defined benefit pension schemes this year in Severn Trent, Dwr Cymru, Northumbrian Water and United Utilities. The latter's success forcing the company to take this proposal off the table (for the time being at least) shows how a united, robust trade union response can move the debate back in our members' favour. Well done to everyone who has been working so hard on the UU campaign. As the motion to this year's conference says: "UNISON has to stop this race to the bottom when it comes to pensions"

The final workplace issue I would like to mention is the increased use of individual phone tracking and vehicle tracking – again, we have a motion on this at this year's conference dealing with this problem. In some of the employers we are seeing this tool being abused by managers and it is even causing some health and safety issues.

Last, but by no means least, I would like to put on record my huge thanks to Rosealene Ballan who is retiring this year. She has been a great vice-chair to me and has done a massive amount of work for the union over the years. Her branch at Yorkshire Water has consistently been one of the best recruiters in the sector. Her knowledge and good humour will be badly missed by comrades. Good luck to Rosealene for her retirement.'

Objective 3

Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members

3.1 Water Industry Report

UNISON's profile in the water industry has been boosted by the continuing hard work of WISC members and UNISON activists on the "Making Waves for a Living Wage" campaign. Thousands of low paid workers have received a significant increase in their pay as a result of the campaign which has continued apace since the 20th April 2016 Parliamentary launch event. The press coverage and significant success of our social media work on the Living Wage campaign means that more people know that UNISON is the biggest union in the water industry, with significant positive influence over its development.

The union has also campaigned for workers in the industry to have access to a fair pension on retirement. The excellent work done by United Utilities branch to stop their employer from closing the defined benefit scheme shows that our union understands the concerns of people working in the industry.

3.2 Environment Agency (EA) Report

This year UNISON has campaigned hard to make sure that politicians and key decision makers know the value of EA staff and that the organisation has already been cut to the bone in terms of staffing numbers. This has been supported via negotiations, press releases, engagement with Shadow Ministers and online campaigning. This work has secured coverage for the union and ensured that the key issue of staff numbers has remained uppermost in DEFRA ministers' minds. Our strong line throughout the year has been that the Environment Agency's emergency response to flooding relies on sufficient people being available to carry out the work. Cuts to staff numbers and attacks on terms and conditions do nothing but damage the organisation's ability to respond in testing circumstances.

It should also be noted that this year UNISON's EA activists finally achieved their objective of making the Environment Agency a Living Wage employer. This will benefit many low paid workers and ensure that nobody providing services for the Agency is paid poverty wages.

3.3 Transport Report

UNISON has continued to work with the Campaign for Better Transport (CBT) to shape new legislation and oppose cuts to local bus services. UNISON is now working with other trade unions, through the TUC to support CBT's work in the coming year.

3.4 Political and Stakeholder Engagement

In the water industry we have continued to maintain strong relationships with key stakeholders. We have held regular meetings with Ofwat and the Consumer Council for Water. In the case of Ofwat, they have now told the water industry to create a cross industry forum to speak to the trade unions about strategic issues relating to the workforce, as a result of our engagement. This is a significant step forward and presents an opportunity to further shape the development of the industry so that the interests of the workforce are not ignored. Alex Cunningham MP, the Shadow Water and Environment Minister sponsored UNISON's Parliamentary launch of the "Making waves for a Living Wage" campaign. He has also been supportive of the work done by our members in the Environment Agency in Parliament and in the press.

Many Members of Parliament signed Early Day Motion 1185, calling for a Living Wage in the Water Industry. At the time of writing this number is 53, but this is expected to rise significantly.

Objective 4 Developing an efficient and effective union

4.1 Introduction

At a national level, the service group executive (SGE) met four times since the 2015 WET conference. The executive is made up of lay members elected to serve for a period of two years (2014-2016). Regular SGE elections took place in the early part of 2016 and it is hoped that a full committee will be elected. The new serving executive members will take their seats at the executive's annual meeting in July 2016.

The Water, Environment and Transport service group is represented on UNISON's National Executive Council (NEC) by John Jones. John reports in writing to the executive – and to branches - on the activities of the NEC.

4.2 Retirements

In October 2015, Ian Blakeley resigned from the service group executive. In April 2016 Steve Scott (Scottish Water) and Al Watson (Environment Agency) announced their plans for an early retirement, and therefore resigned from the Water, Environment and Transport service group executive. The executive recorded their thanks and appreciation for the contributions made by all those reps whilst on the executive and within their respective sectors.

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

Environment Agency (7 seats)

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

Water Industry (9 seats)

Stephen Scott Male seat
 Daniel McDermott Male seat

Vacant Male seat
 Amanda Bailey Female seat
 Vacant Female seat
 Vacant Female seat
 Ian Blakeley (resigned Oct 2015) General seat
 Brian Scrutton General seat
 Sikander Rashid General seat

Transport (4 seats)

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

Co-opted From Sector Committees (5 seats)

Clive Craske Water Industry Sector
 Jackie Hamer Environment Agency Sector
 Pam Sian Passenger Transport Executive Sector
 Fran Hill Public Transport Sector

Sub-Committee Membership

i) Policy and Strategy Sub-committee

Clive Craske, Ruth Davies, Jackie Hamer, Fran Hill, John Jones and Pam Sian

ii) Business and Environment Equal Opportunities Working Group

Amanda Bailey, Fran Hill, Andrew Goring, Brian Scrutton and Pam Sian. John Jones substitute

iii) NEC Appeals Panel

Andrew Goring and Pam Sian

iv) UNISON National Health and Safety Committee

John Jones (Clive Craske substitute)

v) Local Government Pension Scheme Steering Committee

Ruth Davies, Jackie Hamer, John Jones, Ian Brindley and Pam Sian. The vice chair of the service group executive remains a member of the LGPS committee, to be reviewed annually, taking into account LGPS membership.

4.3 2015 WET Branch Seminar Report

On 9th – 11th October 2015 the Water, Environment and Transport service group held another successful branch seminar for lay activists. The service group executive and full-time staff were also in attendance - At this event in Chester. The key objectives of the seminar were: to identify the key issues in the water, environment and transport sectors and the challenges posed by the Trade Union Bill; to network; and to share best practice amongst participants. The details of the presentations are summarised as follows:

Martin Abrams: He outlined the massive cuts to buses since 2010, with over 2000 reduction to bus routes, and the huge impacts on communities as a result of the cuts. He acknowledged the union's support on campaigning for better transport and highlighted some new provisions by the Government, such as air passenger duty to apply to business jets.

Pat McDonagh, branch chair, Manchester Local Government branch: He presented the Government's devolution agenda, with devolved responsibility to a directly elected Mayor, and more powers for local authorities to control their affairs. He stressed on the need for trade unions' engagement in the process in order to influence employers' policies and ensure that local authorities do not take undue advantage of their new powers to bring in changes that may be detrimental to workers' terms and conditions.

Living Wage Campaign – Tom Chigbo, representing the Citizens UK Alliance: Tom gave an overview of the formation of the Living Wage Foundation, which began in 2001 through local initiatives in East London. The campaign was to understand a wide variety of religions and culture within the community. However, he referenced that this local initiative has developed into a national

campaign, in which there is an ongoing debate in Parliament to introduce a National Living Wage. The success of the campaign was attributed to an extensive community engagement, diversity across all spectrums of society and the positive press releases to recognise employers that signed up as a Living Wage employer.

An Organising Strategy was launched at the seminar. The strategy came about as a result of a survey which was conducted after the 2015 conference, and also part of an action that was ratified at the 2014 service group conference. The strategy is a tool for branches to respond to the changing external pressures and ensure our density remains high through sustained recruitment and organising activities.

Finally, Matthew Lay, national officer, gave a presentation on Climate Change and the impact on humanity/jobs. The ongoing work on Just Transition was referenced at the seminar.

The seminar closed with a message of thanks from the chair to all delegates, speakers and organisers for their input in making the seminar a success. She expressed the hope that members will participate at the next seminar, to be held in the autumn of 2016, and that increased numbers of delegates are always welcomed.

Action on motions passed at the 2015 Water, Environment and Transport conference

Motion	Status
<p>1. Raising the profile of LGBT Workplace Equality in WET</p> <p>i) circulate available guidance to branches to raise awareness of LGBT self-organised group;</p> <p>ii) To conduct post-conference survey – which should seek to identify branches with LGBT Officers;</p> <p>iii) To follow-on the campaign in the Water Industry on accreditation – working with Stonewall</p>	<p>Completed. The survey analysis is noted in section 2.3 above. Guidance distributed to branches on LGBT self-organisation.</p> <p>Work ongoing with the National LGBT Committee to foster a relationship with Stonewall. Progress will be reported as and when it becomes available.</p>
<p>2. Encouraging Diversity in WET Committees</p> <p>i) To survey branches to identify black members in WET branches;</p> <p>ii) To conduct a mapping exercise against the employers' ethnicity stat;</p> <p>iii) To encourage black members participation in WET branches. To support branches in recruiting more ethnic minority and active monitoring.</p>	<p>Completed. Survey analysis and outcome of the mapping exercise is noted in section 2.3 above.</p> <p>This part of the action is ongoing and update on progress will be reported on a regular basis to the executive.</p>
<p>3. Living Wage for Employers within WET</p> <p>The Executive to produce appropriate communication materials for branches in the WET Service Group to use in pay claims and/or in other negotiating bodies to strive to also achieve this basic standard of living level with employers within WET.</p>	<p>Living Wage delivered in the Environment Agency. Significant progress with new companies signing up following the “Making Waves for the Living Wage” campaign. Included in PTF pay claim, with negotiations ongoing.</p>
<p>4. Ergonomic Risks to Water Field Based Employees</p> <p>The Officer to write to branches and collate employers' guidance on the use of DSE for 'mobile workers'.</p>	<p>Completed. Guidance issued to WET branches.</p>
<p>5. Campaign Against Polymer</p> <p>The Executive to work through the Water Industry Sector Committee and the National Health and Safety unit to produce appropriate guidelines.</p>	<p>Completed. Guidance issued to WET branches.</p>

Motion	Status
<p>6. Is VS in the Water Industry the Answer?</p> <p>The Executive to consult Regional WET SGE's and branches with members employed in the Water Industry to start a debate on the use of Voluntary Severance (VS), and to report back to the 2016 WET conference on its findings.</p>	<p>Consultation with Regional WET SGEs has begun. General feeling so far appears to be that, although job losses are always opposed, it is preferable to allow those who wish to leave on VS/VR to go rather than have compulsory redundancies. To do otherwise could leave UNISON in the perverse position of calling for compulsory job losses. Also, if UNISON members wish to leave on a voluntary basis it would clearly be wrong to try and stop them. We have to represent and respect those members' wishes.</p>
<p>7. Tackling Biphobia in the WET Industries</p> <p>i) To maintain a high profile commitment to equality, including bisexual equality, in all negotiating, organising and campaigning;</p> <p>ii) Promote the use of UNISON's 'Bisexuality: a Trade Union Issue' factsheet and other LGB bargaining factsheets and materials;</p> <p>iii) Encourage branches to equality proof their WET companies' policies to ensure that they specifically challenge biphobia in the workplace.</p>	<p>Completed. Guidance issued to branch secretaries.</p>
<p>8. The Policy Making Role of the Environment Agency</p> <p>i) To produce a report which presents the evidence for re-introducing the Environment Agency's policy making role;</p> <p>ii) To work with Labour Link to campaign and lobby for the re-introduction of the Environment Agency's role in policy making, highlighting the knowledge and experience of UNISON members working in the Environment Agency;</p> <p>iii) Build links with Non-Governmental Organisations to seek support for the restoration of the Agency's policy making role.</p>	<p>Working ongoing. Information gathering has begun with regard to this motion. This has been raised with the employer and with the Shadow Minister for Environment.</p>
<p>9. Protecting Bus Services</p> <p>i) To continue to support the Campaign for Better Transport in its work on the 'Save Our Buses' campaign;</p> <p>ii) Ensure UNISON members working in the bus industry are aware of the ongoing damage which the lack of adequate funding has on members' terms and conditions;</p> <p>iii) To work with Labour Link and the Labour Party's parliamentary transport team to develop a transport policy that includes improving funding for bus services;</p> <p>iv) To encourage UNISON branches to support local campaigns to protect bus services.</p>	<p>The Public Transport Sector Executive has successfully bid to the GPF to support the Campaign for Better Transport (via the TUC) in their campaigning work to save local bus services. This will include engagement with local UNISON branches. We have met with Shadow Transport Minister Daniel Zeichner to raise these issues and encourage the Labour Party to oppose cuts in Parliament.</p>

Motion	Status
<p>10. Stop the Destruction of South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTTE)</p> <p>The Executive to work with the NEC, Labour Link and other relevant bodies to lobby these Councils to highlight the adverse impact that the cuts in SYPTTE have had on staffing levels, on the pay and conditions of staffing working for the organisation and on the level of services offered to the public.</p>	<p>The Chair of the PTE Sector, Pam Sian, has written to all relevant council leaders to raise the issue of cuts at SYPTTE.</p>
<p>11. Opposing TTIP</p> <p>i) To work with UNISON's International Unit to support the campaign to stop TTIP;</p> <p>ii) To raise awareness among UNISON WET members about TTIP and the campaign to oppose it;</p> <p>iii) Ensure UNISON WET members know that TTIP could have a very negative impact on job numbers and terms and conditions in their workplace;</p> <p>iv) To lobby MPs, MEPs and Ministers to highlight the threats posed by this deal and to oppose its implementation.</p>	<p>Completed. Guidance issued to WET branches. Issue raised with Shadow Minister.</p>
<p>12. TTIP and the Water Industry</p> <p>The Executive to continue to remain vigilant, ready to mount a robust campaign and work with all other relevant groups to protect all European water companies in public ownership, not least Scottish Water and Dwr/Cymru.</p>	<p>Circular issued to all transport branches to highlight this issue.</p>
<p>13. Public Information or Invasion of Privacy</p> <p>The Water Industry Sector Committee in conjunction with the Executive and others to establish acceptable boundaries. This will enable an informed dialogue with employers so public information can be given without compromising personal privacy.</p>	<p>This issue was raised in discussions with the Consumer Council for Water (CCW). CCW feel that acceptable boundaries already exist and are widely understood.</p>
<p>14.Changes to the Constitution of the WET Service Group</p> <p>The Executive to communicate the proposed changes to the NEC to seek final approval.</p>	<p>Completed. The Constitution was ratified at the NEC meeting following conference as mandated by the Service Group Conference that was held on 14 June 2015.</p>

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