

**UNISON**  
Energy Service  
Group Executive

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Annual Report 2018

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# Foreword

We are pleased to present you with this year's Energy Service Group Executive annual report for 2017-2018. The report has been compiled based on the work that is done by our stewards, reps, officers and members nationwide and reminds us how important it is being part of a union and specifically being part of UNISON.

I have continued in my role as Chair of the Energy Service Group for the last twelve months and again it has proved an interesting and challenging year. I would personally like to thank everyone involved with the Energy Service Group Executive especially my vice chair Angela Greenhalgh and the staff who support the work we do throughout the year. I would also like to thank several members of the Executive who have stood down in the last 12 months for various reasons for their hard work and dedication to their members over their time on the Exec.

Over the last 12 months, the energy industry has not been out of the news and the effects of the instability that impacts the industry, makes life unclear for our members. The introduction of the Energy Price Cap by the current government, the prospect of renationalisation of the industry by the Labour Party and the large scale job losses planned by energy companies, all heap uncertainty at a time when members are facing more attacks on their terms and conditions of employment.

The benefit of the energy price cap to consumers is something that has been lauded by the current government as a way to help drive competition and protect consumers. As Theresa May said in February this year, "Our energy price cap will cut bills for millions of families. This is another step we are taking to help people make ends meet as we build a country that works for everyone." That is all well and good but what is the true cost of the introduction of the price cap? A measure already rejected by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) when it carried out its energy markets review. Many members have already been affected by job losses in our industry and I am well aware that this will not be the end of it. As I write this foreword there is huge uncertainty in the company I work for, Centrica, where another 4000 jobs will go, how will this affect our members across the country. There have also been redundancies in the other big 6 energy companies with both EDF and E.ON announcing job losses because of the changing nature of the UK energy market. With all of the uncertainty in the industry there has never been a more important time to be a member of a union and this is something we need to stress to our members.

This is not however a time of complete doom and gloom. Once again UNISON has achieved several significant victories in the work it has done across the sector. We negotiated with E.ON on changes to their pension scheme and we were able to achieve non-closure of the scheme and changes that were not in any detrimental in comparison to the original proposals E.ON was suggesting. Within British Gas, there was huge support from the members to reject changes proposed by management to new shifts that were proposed as part of a pay deal. Eventually these proposals were completely dismissed and a pay deal with no strings attached was negotiated and supported by members.

Again over the last 12 months, despite UNISON membership being reduced through yet more cuts to public services and the continuation of the savage austerity drive that this conservative government still seeks to pursue, recruitment in our energy branches remains buoyant, with the much contested and aptly named Mike Jeram trophy being won last year by Utility Services Branch and the most improved growth branch being Eastern Energy. This was presented at the annual Energy Seminar and I am very proud to say that over £500 was raised by delegates there to put towards charities that were supported by Mike Jeram, our previous National Secretary who sadly passed away last summer.

It makes me very proud to know that across all of the Energy branches there are reps and stewards working extremely hard to support their members through these difficult times. We hear time and time again of the successes that reps have had in securing better conditions for our workers or saving someone from the sack. It is encouraging to know that people are willing to stand up for others and do this work so go out there and tell people about the good news stories and if someone is not a member, ask them to join. Recruitment builds on our strength and I would again urge you to have the courage to take two minutes to stop and ask them "why not". It could be something as simple as the fact they have never been asked.

Thank you for the contributions of all the representatives on the Service Group Executive who helped put this report together. And to Matthew Lay, Mary Onafalujo, Dave Johnson and Sandra Jean-Baptiste and the other staff at UNISON Centre who keep us all together for all their hard work thank you.

Jenny Middleton  
**Chair of the Energy Service Group Executive**

# Objective 1

## Recruiting, organising, representing and retaining members

### 1.1 Membership profile and recruitment

Yet again UNISON branches and members have seen significant challenges throughout the past 12 months as key energy employers have responded to external pressures by removing thousands of jobs and restructuring organisations with consequent impacts on headcount. An example of this can be seen in the announcement that 4000 jobs will go at British Gas in the next few years and within E.ON we saw the closure of offices as the employer consolidated locations. Clearly membership levels have dipped as a result but this very much varies from employer to employer and branch to branch. It is very apparent from the available membership data that significant recruitment activity is happening but that often the loss of members means that to simply stand still we have to out-recruit from previous years. The response from many energy branches has been fantastic and overall is a credit to all the hard work that UNISON activists carry out day in and day out.

In some areas we have seen membership growth which in the present climate of job losses is a significant achievement. We actually saw a number of branches increase total membership during the past year. The Mike Jeram Trophy award for the most improved branch membership total figures during the year between Energy seminars was presented to the Utility Services Branch who recruits in the metering services sector. The branch has a clear strategy in a challenging area and has strong branch leadership and focus. For the second year running a second award was made for the branch which has seen the biggest percentage increase in membership. This award is set to be named the Donna Marie Lyons trophy in memory of a UNISON activist from the Gas branch Scotland who sadly and unexpectedly passed away in the year. This award ensures that smaller branches can be better recognised for recruitment efforts. The winners of this award were the Eastern Energy branch who mostly organise in E.ON in the Bedford office. This branch was struggling some two years ago but a genuine desire to improve matters assisted by the region has seen consistent and positive recruitment activity. The winners of these awards were all highlighted in the Energy Service Group magazine.

The Scottish Gas Branch is now the biggest energy branch in the Service Group closely followed by the United Utilities branch. We have 7 branches with more than 1000 members spread across the UK

and a total of 28 branches in the Service Group.

At the Service Group Executive (ESGE) level we continue to focus on the need to have an effective organising strategy within all the key energy employers and we have looked to support this activity through our various engagements with lay members and branches. This has included ensuring that organising and recruitment activities feature heavily in our annual energy branch seminar and in ensuring that these issues are on the agendas for all functioning National Sector Committees, with support provided for both activities via the National Strategic Organising Unit.

New membership forms have recently been adopted by the union in line with requirements set out by the trade union bill and new data protection regulations. The new requirements mean that existing employer specific membership forms can no longer be used. However our Communications department continue to produce simple leaflets to support recruitment activity amongst key employers. These have gradually been rolled out to support organising activity when led by National Sector Committees. The leaflets seek to present a clear energy branding for members so that UNISON is seen as the union for respective groupings within energy employers. We now have leaflets in stock for the following national employers; British Gas, EDF, E.ON, npower, SGN, Cadent, SSE and National Grid. We also produced last year a general energy recruitment poster which can be used in any energy workplace to promote UNISON.

### 1.2 Sector Committees and Branch Organisation

As part of the renewed focus on organising activity, the ESGE retains as its key priority the need to take forward a requirement for National Sector Committees to operate with all key national energy employers.

The ESGE agreed that National Sector Committees should exist with the clear purpose of bringing together representatives within national employers where the following exists:

- A common bargaining machinery with direct or indirect powers; or
- Shared bargaining characteristics and

- general approaches to pay bargaining.
- Geographical spread over more than two UNISON regions

Where National Sector Committees should exist within the Energy Service Group, they should also have the following functions:

- The right to determine policy in relation to pay and conditions of service and industrial relations issues;
- Autonomy over arrangements for negotiations, including bargaining machinery;
- The settlement of disputes and conduct of consultation exercises as determined by any NEC/SG guidelines;
- Autonomy over arrangements for elections as long as these conform to UNISON Aims and Values overall rulebook framework including NEC guidance. All sector representatives must be employed within that sector;
- Consultation with members on appropriate intermediate structures outside of the national committee which will promote effective participation and accountability;
- The establishment of Occupational Groups linked to the sector, where budgets and access allow and are appropriate.

They also provide a great opportunity to develop a pan-employer organising strategy that brings together branches, regions and the union nationally to work towards shared common objectives which would work in tandem to deliver improved recruitment and retention of members. This is particularly important in smaller Service Groups like Energy where additional national focus can be required.

A great deal of progress has been made to deliver this priority. British Gas National Grid, Cadent Gas, E.ON, npower, SSE, EDF and Western Power all now have compliant and functioning national sector arrangements and have met on an agreed regular cycle. We are also working currently on developing a National Sector Committee within Scottish Power and a planning meeting has been held with proposals for a first meeting scheduled. We are also planning to manage the new company that will emerge from the npower SSE customer operations merger. This new business will be significant and will become the second largest employer of UNISON members in energy with a

national presence. A new Sector Committee will need to be operational as soon as the new employer is fully functional.

The Sector Committees are also all developing specific employer based organising strategies. Resources dictate that progress will be prioritised to meet identified needs and also to complement existing activity. These new Sectors are also reliant on commitments from UNISON regions to ensure staff time is made available to ensure they are effective bodies. Bringing senior lay reps, regional staff and national staff together when they are all involved in the same bargaining agenda is essential if we are to address the many challenges faced and arrest a slow decline in membership that has been a feature for a number of years.

The success of the National Grid Energy branch, which 3 years ago launched itself and operates with a clear organising focus at its heart, gives us cause for optimism. Branch development weekends have taken place and substantial resources have been allocated to support recruitment through building profile, increasing organising activity and developing new reps. In turn this has delivered real and substantial growth in membership in an often difficult environment.

Recognising that branch structures are often historic and not reflective of labour changes in the industry means we do need to create an environment that lay reps feel is an effective platform for growth. This might necessitate changes to branches if lay members support such movement and the union can see clear long term gains. The National Grid Energy branch development shows that this can kick start positive activity. Recently the Cadent Gas branch in Hinckley was formed with very similar objectives to the National Grid Energy branch. The new branch has seen members transfer from the East Midlands Gas (Southern) branch to create a dedicated branch responding to organisational changes and a desire to focus on what matters to members within the single employer.

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### 1.3 Regional development and support

Most regions continue to operate a regional forum/committee for energy branches and the continuation of such bodies is essential to ensure linkage between energy branches and regional structures. We have

not always been able to maximise regional resources to support organising and this does need to be more effective in the future. The National Officer is committed to supporting regional engagements within UNISON wherever appropriate and invited to do so.

The focus on the development of National Sector Committees has ensured that all UNISON staff engaged with a single national employer can get round the table and contribute to developments and plan strategically. This has increased engagement between UNISON staff and should ensure this continues into the future.

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#### 1.4 Learning and development

The annual negotiating skills course for utility workers did not take place this year following changes to how these events would be supported financially going forward. This was the subject of a Service Group motion which was agreed at last year's Energy conference. The course was specifically tailored to meet the needs of utility workers with a good degree of role-playing involved and was subsidised by LAOS. Moving forward and as a result of engagement with LAOS we intend to advertise the negotiating skills course for later in the year 2018 and see what level of response we receive, we still believe this course represents good value and is a crucial learning and development opportunity for aspiring UNISON representatives working in energy.

In the past we also ran a specific course based around negotiating pay with energy employers. This course was designed to reflect the specific bargaining environment that exists with this sector and how senior lay activists can respond effectively to it. It was highly appreciated by those who took part and we plan to explore again how we can provide this resource for senior reps.

We continue to explore how we might develop a union learning agreement with British Gas in conjunction with LAOS and regional learning officers. As the largest private sector employer with UNISON recognition, such a development could be hugely positive for members and has the potential to be developed with other key energy employers.

We have again been able to run another successful combined Utilities pension seminar. This event was another development opportunity for activists with pension leads/ interests or trustees of private schemes. It is now the fifth year running we have provided such an event led by Colin Meech who is a National Pensions Officer and leads on transactional costs and the governance of schemes. The seminar was very well attended with keynote address given by the Stewart Bevan who sits on the FCA's disclosure working group. The event itself is now becoming a key date in our overall development offer to lay activists.

In addition to the now annual seminar the past year saw the launch of an activist's guide on pension costs and how to address these concerns with employers.

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#### 1.5 Communications

We again produced the UNISON energy magazine. This magazine is designed to showcase the work of our members in the sector alongside key developments and engagements in the world in which our members work. The funding for this remains linked to a distributed physical hard copy which activists and branches can use to raise the profile of UNISON in the energy industry. We have managed to ensure recent editions were sent directly to all home addresses which were done to ensure members were fully aware of its publication. This arrangement is however costly and it is likely that future editions will need to be distributed back through the branch level.

The magazine however will remain an essential part of our national communication strategy for energy members. We will continue to engage with members on its content and how we can maximise its use.

The UNISON Energy members' face-book page has again grown steadily during the year and again a further priority over the next 12 months is increasing its visibility. The page is updated on a regular basis and continues both local and global commentary on developments which could affect energy members. At times throughout the year we managed view figures of nearly 10,000.

The UNISON website portal continues to develop and the energy content on the site has increased significantly.

The energy 'key issues' page on the website continues to develop with the main campaigning themes given coverage and it provides an ability to access energy specific materials.

We are continuing to develop a suite of communication materials to support the 'essential cover in Energy' campaign. Most of our major energy employers have a dedicated leaflet to aid recruitment. We will continue to profile the key employers and also develop key occupational resources which are common across a number of energy employers.

We issued a series of energy related press releases which received coverage in the national media. These energy media releases feature highly amongst the most read news releases by UNISON, across the whole of the UK media. A recent example of this was the widespread coverage given to UNISON when the Centrica job cuts were announced. All media outlets quoted UNISON and we received prominent TV coverage.

We will continue to work with the national press office to pursue opportunities when they present themselves. A press release alone however does not guarantee media coverage, but we recognise the impact a positive mention of UNISON can have in relation to an energy news story can have. We have also introduced forward planning in this area to seek to predict news stories before they are in the public domain so we can influence them more effectively.

## Objective 2

# Negotiating and bargaining on behalf of members and promoting equality

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### 2.1 Introduction

The past 12 months has once again seen continued media attention and huge focus on the energy sector. The continued cost of domestic energy supply, combined with the various geo-political events that have taken place including those within the UK, mean that the sector has been very much part of the developing news agenda in a way that is rarely positive for members in terms of job security or pay and reward.

The past year has seen much commentary on how the energy markets work and the need to make customers move from more expensive standard variable tariffs (SVT's) onto cheaper time limited tariffs. In reality the market is working for a large section of consumers and the past year has seen record numbers of consumers switch energy companies often from one of the big six to a growing band of smaller suppliers. The smaller suppliers are often loss leaders or not making a profit and so the marketplace is not fully functional. In addition the workforces are different with the big six employing workers on reasonable terms and pensions with full trade union recognition rights whilst the newer smaller entrants tend to employ workers on inferior terms with less generous pensions and patchy trade union recognition.

Essentially the primary driver for job losses in the Service Group comes about through the a) loss of customers by the big six retail operators in which many members' jobs are based and b) digitalisation/automation.

In the past year alone the customer losses have exceeded a million within British Gas and the picture is not very different amongst any of the main suppliers. The developing narrative that portrays the big six as bad and every other supplier as good is problematic and does not acknowledge the generally good industrial relationship and terms of employment that we have with these employers. It also simplifies a complex picture full of unintended consequences. A key driver in 2017 (and will be for the future) has therefore been the need to reduce cost to service consumers whilst also improving customer service. The developing digitalisation agenda in which workers are replaced by automation is one very obvious and real response.

The net result of all this turmoil is that the UK's largest energy companies continue to face financial challenges and are implementing recovery plans

which will lead to further job losses, outsourcing and attacks to terms and conditions of workers

On a European level we also continue to witness significant challenge. The impacts of Brexit still remain unclear, but are clearly not helpful in an environment where many of the major employers are European owned and the competition for investment is intense. On top of that the withdrawal from Euratom demonstrated the dogmatic and self inflicting nature of the process at hand. Developments on the continent will have a significant impact on members in the UK. Examples of this can be seen in the announcements concerning assets swaps within E.ON and RWE to create distinct energy giants which will impact on the UK. This cuts across (although does not stop) the merger of the SSE customer business and the Innogy UK business – npower- with consequences which are still unknown. In France the continued the need to address a huge investment programme required to maintain or renew the ageing domestic nuclear fleet has again increased pressure on EDF as it progresses onward with its now approved plans in the UK to build Hinckley Point C.

Developments with European based employers and the continued influence of European energy policy makes it critically important we remain influential not just at a national level but also on a European level. This we do by retaining a UK seat on the European Union's sectoral social dialogue committee for electricity and the presidency of the EPSU standing committee on public utilities. We also support the development of European Works Councils and promote when possible UNISON inclusion in these.

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### 2.2 Pay and Reward

Despite the many challenges faced over the last 12 months we have again seen UNISON securing some reasonable pay settlements for members. It has however not been without struggle.

Most notably a 12 month dispute with British Gas ended favourably for UNISON with an outcome which was overwhelmingly backed by the membership. During that dispute a key factor was the mobilisation of the membership with turnouts in excess of 70% in consultative ballots with clear and decisive messages for the employer that they could not deny. Essentially the

attempt to use pay talks to instigate negative contractual change was decisively rejected and demonstrated that motivated members well organised are still effective.

Another success was the outcome of protracted negotiations within E.ON initially on pensions but which we expanded to include pay and ended up with an offer (still to be balloted on) of 3.5% from April 2018 (year one) which was the best pay offer for retail members in 2018. Once again a well organised campaign of engagement with members and senior activists played a key part in the outcome.

The big six retailers are the major employers of our members; however some of the smaller companies, especially those involved in the distribution of energy, will have seen pay rises which have been in many cases better than those in either generation or supply.

Summary of pay awards in 2017

- British Gas: 2 year deal – year 1 (2017) 2% plus £75 year
- National Grid: 2017 was the last year of 5 year RPI deal at 3.1%
- Cadent Gas: As National Grid – 3.1%
- UKPN: RPI deal
- SSE: 2017 PRP but average expectation of 2.3%
- E.ON: 3.2% in 2017
- SPEN: Average award of 2.2% on base plus £400 non-consolidated
- RWE npower: 1.9%
- WPD: RPI plus 0.5%
- EDF Energy: CPI plus 0.5% plus £100
- Morrison Data Services 2.7%

Within the wider world of our trade union, the pay increases for our members will be seen as an improvement on that which exists within the public sector. However, the pay of our members must be taken in the context of the world in which they are operating, which has become increasingly challenged and complicated, with reward more closely aligned to market rates, and pension provisions substantially watered down. It also needs to be seen in light of yet another year of bumper executive pay within the sector, which has seen Executives receive pay awards many times greater than the average employee, a gap that is growing not closing and is by any measure unjustifiable.

Pay awards which UNISON negotiates within the sector do also reflect the good levels of trade union density, our organisational ability and the dedicated work of activists. Pay negotiations remain an excellent organising opportunity and one we need to exploit effectively.

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## 2.3 Pensions

UNISON remains very much focused on the area of pensions and sees this element as a key priority and one which we should continue to organise effectively around.

We have continued to support bespoke work nationally (joint energy and pensions section) in 2017/18 based around the Defined Contribution (DC) schemes specifically in relation to costs and transparency around transactional cost. We remain concerned at how DC schemes pass on all the associated pension risks onto the worker. We have recognised that within the industry the DC pension is now the standard offering and almost all new entrants into this area will be in receipt of one. Only EDF currently retain a Defined Benefit (DB) scheme.

Although DC schemes are seen as less generous than the DB offering, there are actions we could take to improve them and ensure members have a chance of a decent retirement. One particular focus will be on transactional costs and ensuring that member's hard earned savings are not being wasted supporting costs which are unnecessary. We also need to raise awareness around the performance of schemes and develop a negotiating strategy which supports bargaining for actual improvements, such as was seen in the conclusion to the National Grid negotiations 5 years ago which raised maximum company contributions from 10% to 12%. A specific bargaining guide regarding pension transactional costs has now been produced as part of joint work between the Energy SGE and the pensions unit.

Following on from the positive outcomes in negotiations with National Grid, EDF and Centrica that secured the retention of a DB scheme, discussions began with E.ON on changes they were seeking to make to DB pensions. These conversations were difficult to begin with but UNISON set out clearly its objectives in talks and its willingness to engage on positive grounds with the threat of scheme closure removed. The talks although numerous and lengthy have

ended up with all four recognised unions recommending a proposed deal to members. The ballot for this will take place during the summer. We believe the final outcome to be a good outcome in the circumstances presented.

Fundamentally the performance of DB schemes remains problematic in the energy sector largely due to increasing life expectancy and falling gilt yields on which returns are planned. Undoubtedly we will continue to see challenges in the future as employers seek to balance off the cost of paying for this form of pension provision.

Further complications arose three years ago when the Government introduced its new single state pension provision. This removed the national insurance rebate for both employer and scheme member, increasing yet further the costs associated with this provision. A number of employers absorbed these costs while others passed it on.

We remain committed to helping branches and regions navigate through this difficult area. The national officer is supported by the National Pensions section so expert advice can be sought for a range of issues. External complex advice can be sought in exceptional circumstances.

As part of the ongoing support to energy branches, pension trustees etc we ran again a joint utilities pension seminar for branches in WET and Energy, whose members are in a myriad of private sector schemes, both DB and DC. This was done successfully with a good level of turnout and engagement from attendees.

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## 2.4 Holiday Pay

Following the tremendous success of UNISON in winning the Lock v British Gas Holiday Pay case we continue to progress this matter with employers although we have managed to negotiate agreements with most of the large energy employers. This case related directly to the European Working Time Directive and we will need to wait and respond to any fall out arising from Brexit.

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## 2.5 Promoting Equality – Business and Environment Equal Ops Working Group

The Business and Environment Equal Opportunities Group (B&EEOG) in the last 12 months continues to make good progress in promoting equality in the workplace. In the light of this the Committee working through other stakeholders continues to engage with employers to pay due regard to their responsibilities under the law to mitigate against potential negative outcomes that their processes, policies, systems and changes may have on different groups/strands.

The Equality Act 2010 also makes it clear that all employers have a responsibility (regardless of the size of the organisation) to work towards eliminating discrimination, bullying and harassment; advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations.

The 2017 equality motions that were referred to the Group for action were implemented (please see the last section of this annual report). As a result of these resolutions, many initiatives and actions have moved forward successfully. However, we recognise there is still a lot more to do. Bearing this in mind, we'll continue to enshrine equality into our bargaining machinery and provide support to branches in their engagement with employers. Listed below are some new guidance documents for branches to note, which can be downloaded via the UNISON website under 'Member groups' page:

- A Mental Health Bargaining guide;
- A model equality and diversity policy and guide; and
- A leaflet on "How to be a good ally to trans people at work"

A successful Equalities seminar was held last year. See the report in section 2.5.1 below.

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### 2.5.1 Business and Environment Equalities Seminar 2017

The annual Equalities seminar is a popular way of bringing activists together to learn, exchange good practice and network with like-minded reps. The Business & Environment Equal Opportunities Working Group (B&EEOG) held another successful seminar, which was

attended by more than 45 participants and took place at the Jurys Inn in Newcastle on 14-16 July 2017.

Delegates received a warm welcome from Pam Sian, chair of the B&EEOG. All the speakers provided different insights on the several topics, such as:

- Lucille Thirlby, UNISON's Head of Membership Participation Unit who spoke on the importance of Self Organisation, and encouraged branches to set-up self organised groups should they not already have any;
- John Halligan, MIND England addressed delegates on Mental Health issues. He stressed the role of activists in promoting and raising awareness of Mental Health conditions at work; and the need to work with employers to ensure the right intervention is put in place so that those with mental health conditions can get the support they need;
- Finally, there was an interactive session on Dyslexia by Barrie Morgan-Scrutton who provided practical tips to participants on this issue.

Generally the feedback was positive as delegates found most of the sessions informative and interesting, especially the sessions on mental health and dyslexia.

The social part of the seminar included a quiz and a raffle to raise funds. The proceeds from the raffle raised £285, this amount was matched to make a total of £570. The money was split between two charities, CRY and MIND.

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## Regional, Sectoral and Company Reports

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### 2.6 British Gas

2017 has been another challenging and exciting year across Centrica.

#### Pay

We started pay talks in December 2016 and we finally agreed the deal in November 2017, 11 months after talks started, 2 ballots and potential strike. In February 2018, you will see your pay rise and back pay to April 2017 in your salary.

It was a hard slog but we got there and I want to take this opportunity to say a massive thanks to you all for staying with us and supporting us in our pay campaign, to say it was a bumpy ride is an understatement. We stood together and Scotland showed that we wanted a fair pay rise and no attack on our terms and conditions. You showed that you were prepared to take this all the way with a potential to strike, your solidarity and support was amazing. It was a very emotive subject and we got a deal that the majority were happy with.

After months of negotiation we managed to secure a 2-year deal:

- 2% for 2017 with a £75 one off payment
- 2.4% paid April 2018, with no change to our T&C's.
- Increase for L7 base salary

One good thing about the pay talks was that every time the business sent out a communication, UNISON recruitment increased. We thanked the Director personally but they seemed to have a sense of humour failure. They told us we didn't speak for or know our membership, that they had spoken to "their people" and everyone was positive and that we were wrong... Our members supported us, voted like we've never seen before and the business was made to eat humble pie. Strength in numbers is key and we proved that.

#### Workday

This went live in August 2016 and as I write this in January 2018 we are still experiencing issues. We have members who are not being paid base salary some months, issues for those returning from maternity leave, long term sick and our members being overpaid which has a knock-on effect of cost to the business as they must make exceptional payments and then members having to set up loans to pay this money back. This causes undue stress to our members. It seems to be a major lack of knowledge and training for the team leaders in our business. We will be asking for more training and a better understanding of the impact placed on our members when they are not receiving any salary or being overpaid.

#### Re Org/ Restructure of British Gas/ Centrica

The business is still in disarray, structures not in place, collective bargaining at a standstill as working groups

have fallen by the wayside. Policies and Procedures are not being adhered to, leadership within the business at a national level is lacking, locally UNISON has good working relationships with the site leadership teams and maintains this daily to ensure our members' needs are met and we are representing them effectively. There hasn't been any part of the business left untouched.

Many of our members have been placed under unprecedented stress and workload due to the number of leavers due to change in working processes on sites and high levels of sickness. That said during the cold spell of bad weather, the camaraderie and loyalty to the company and colleagues shone through as staff on multiple sites pulled together to cover high volume call demands of services to customers without heating or hot water and were vulnerable.

The Policies Forum in British Gas is still not meeting, however the business is still pressing ahead to rebrand and merge policies under the Centrica branding. We will be pushing the business to get this set back up and meeting with us under collective bargaining.

Strategic Incentive Review (SIR) is looking at the whole of British Gas reward with a view to have just 2 main schemes. UNISON would prefer that they uplift staff's pay and incorporate the reward (bonus) payment into base pay. The new proposed schemes will be fairer; however, some members (those who go for quick wins) potentially may lose out and may not be happy with this but they will have equal opportunity to earn reward if they step change their behaviours and ensure the best customer outcomes/ resolutions.

And finally a few thanks. Thanks to all our members for your continued support, to all our colleagues locally and nationally who have supported us in our role as National Reps, it has not been an easy year but we will continue to negotiate on your behalf.

Let's see what 2018 has in store. We expect it to be another busy one.

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## 2.7 EDF Energy

### Recruitment and Organising

Recruitment and retention has been the main focus for the branches, and also working to improve regular communications to members. The 4 UNISON branches within EDF Energy have been working over the last year collectively on recruitment. The working group have been looking at initiatives to retain members and improve recruitment figures.

There have been some key wins for UNISON within EDF Energy from the agreed procedure from management on the flexibility clause (working beyond an employee end of shift time) to the commitment from management on the long term future of the bonus scheme.

There are issues regarding holiday availability due to an alignment and the overall poor management of resource and procedures across customer services. The implementation of a new system has seen holidays granted at the last minute, members unable to plan ahead and holidays around the bank holiday weekends being cancelled.

### Pay and Reward

In the last year of a 3 year deal, which in year 3 members will receive 3% + £100 unconsolidated payment. As of writing, the union hoped to persuade the company to commence another round of pay talks in quarter 4 of 2018.

### Pensions

After changes were made to the pension schemes on the back of the pension's reform. The company scheme seems to be stable at the moment. UNISON continues to monitor the progress of the schemes via the trade union pension forum.

### Equality and Diversity

2017 saw the launch of the UNISON Accessibility passport in the South East with the view to roll out across all contact centres. In February 2018, Management finally agreed to look at the issue of domestic violence and to develop a policy on this issue. This issue was initially raised 2 years ago, but it's

now with the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to look at.

## Health & Safety, and Other matters

There are several policies currently under discussion for updates or implementation. These include policies on social media and the management of operational road risk.

Changes were made to health related absence and rehabilitation policies, briefing was issued to both management and members to clarify what the changes were.

2017 saw the company move from the safety aspect to health and wellbeing after acknowledging the impact of stress in the workforce. The company is working closely with the trade unions and MIND, as of writing the employer is to survey all employees within EDF Energy. When the results from the survey are published, the company aims to discuss the findings with the trade unions and at the company's safety council in order to tackle any concerns raised from the survey and to put in place a programme of support for employees.

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## 2.8 East Midlands Region

The East Midlands Region provides bargaining support for members in respect of the employers listed below:

- Siemens Metering
- UNIPER
- Morrison Data Services (MDS)
- Fulcrum

In addition the Region organise British Gas members in the East Midlands Gas (Southern) Branch and Cadent members in the recently established UNISON in Cadent Branch.

### Siemens Metering

Following joint negotiation an offer from 1st January 2018 of 2.5% plus £150 unconsolidated lump sum was made by the company. This was subject to ballot on a best to be achieved basis and subsequently agreed by members.

## UNIPER

This deal covers all employees on collective agreements for Uniper UK Ltd and Uniper Energy Trading UK Staff Co. and was fully recommended by all Trade Unions.

- An increase of 1% to base pay and associated allowances
- The increase will be backdated to 1st April 2017 for all Collectives with the exception of the 1st of January 2017 for colleagues on the Trading Agreement.
- £500 from the maximum of the discretionary collective bonus payments will be deducted and suspended for 2017 (this is due for payment in April 2018).

Offer outlined above was accepted by UNISON.

## Morrison Data Services

A trade union side claim has been submitted to the employer and talks commenced on 25th May 2017. The employer made an offer of 2.6% with an additional increase in bonus values.

As a result of negotiations the company eventually offered an increase in pay of 2.7% which backdated to 1st June 2017 and applied to London Weighting. In regard to bonus payments for Meter Representatives the company also agreed to increase the SV from 24.4p to 28p per SV.

### Statement on Pay Parity (MDS)

Within the negotiations the TU side sought a firm agreement on the question of pay parity.

- That the company acknowledges the TU side aspiration to reduce pay disparity among meter representatives and other staff. To this end the company guarantees and agrees that as part of next year's pay negotiations, the application of the pay award will be weighted to the lowest paid. Furthermore, the company recognises the TU aspiration that no one should be paid less than the Living Wage Foundation rate. The company guarantees and agrees to a meeting with and receiving a presentation at board level from the TUs and representatives of the Living Wage Foundation.

- For sake of clarity the TU side and company do not look towards the harmonisation of pay and terms and conditions of employment but rather, to how pay disparity might be reduced through the pay negotiation process.

The above offer was put to members in a ballot and accepted.

The meeting with the Living Wage Foundation took place on 29th January 2018.

### **Pay Claim for 2018 (MDS)**

A joint pay claim with the GMB has been submitted to the employer for 2018 together with a request for information for the purpose of collective bargaining. The joint negotiations begin on 4th April 2018.

### **Fulcrum**

A 2.7% offer, operative from 1st July 2017, was made to members. This was subject to ballot (without recommendation) and agreed by members.

A survey of members will take place prior to the 2018 pay negotiations to understand their aspirations for the 2018 pay round.

## **2.9 Cadent Gas Branch**

In 2017 the Service Group informed conference about the separation of Gas Distribution from National Grid. That separation has been concluded. We're happy to inform conference that since the separation of Gas Distribution towards the end of 2016 from National Grid, the new owners have rebranded the company and renamed it to Cadent.

UNISON continues to support activists and members that are in the new company (Cadent). A new branch called Cadent Gas has now been formed with members in the East Midlands south transferring into this branch. Membership has been growing since the branch reformed and the new branch has a clear organising focus.

## **Pay**

The existing pay deal comes to an end in June 2018. As of writing, we are in the middle of another pay negotiation with the Business. The Business made an offer of between -3% or 1%. It was rejected as the trade unions felt it's an insult. They are looking to introduce new terms and conditions for new starters, also planning to reduce or remove 'perks' for current staff. Talks continue.

## **Pensions**

Cadent have 2 schemes both DB and DC. There has been an increase of people leaving and taking their pension pot. The union have asked the business to find out how many staff are actually doing this in order to track any issues that may arise.

## **Other developments**

Expired fire marshal training, first aid and evacuation courses – UNISON Health and Safety reps have raised these issues and many others as it has become increasingly apparent that H & S does not appear to be high on the new provider's agenda (Macquarie consortium).

## **2.10 E.ON**

### **Recruitment and Organising**

During the last 12 months we have lost a number of members who left the business on SVS due to the business restructure which resulted in a decline in our membership. In some areas we were successful in gaining new members but in others the business stopped recruiting which impacted our recruitment. However, they have now started recruiting and we are now seeing new members joining week by week and we are now targeting these areas to increase the union membership.

### **E.ON Energy Solutions**

An offer of 3.3% was made, linked to some changes for Grades 2-7, and B2B Sales colleagues. This has been subject to ballot – UNISON recommended

acceptance. The ballot closed on 15th September 2017. This has now been agreed by all TUs and members received back pay on 20th December 2017.

### **E.ON – Business Centre and Services**

An offer of 3.5% was made, linked to harmonisation to the Energy Solutions Agreement. This has been subject to ballot – UNISON recommended acceptance. The ballot closed on 15th September 2017. This has now been agreed by all TUs and members back pay on 20th December 2017

### **E.ON Field Force Agreement**

There was a 3.2% pay offer for Meter Operations Staff, Street Lighting Staff and Data Retrievers. Coupled with this there is to be a grade assimilation for the lowest paid Data Retrievers, bringing them into the Field 2 grade structure, effectively producing a 19% pay award. The offer which was subject to ballot and a full TU side recommendation to accept was accepted and was implemented with effect from 1st April 2017, with payments being made in the July salary.

Within the negotiations the employer sought to incorporate and assimilate employees from other collective agreements and have made this a conditional part of their 3.2% offer to these groups. While pay and shift allowances will be preserved, there will be an impact on holidays and private health care provision. The TUs have therefore opted to recommend rejection of the offer. Again this was subject to ballot and has been rejected by TU members.

### **E.ON IT**

The union has negotiated a 3.2% pay offer – this was subject to a ballot with a full TU side recommendation to accept. This has now been accepted.

### **E.ON Pay offer for 2018 and 2019**

2 year pay deal on the table which is subject to securing agreement to the pension's changes, there'll be a 2 year pay deal for all colleagues on collective agreements across all areas. The pay award comprises of;

- 3.5% for 2018.
- 3% for 2019 (or average Consumer Price Index between December 2018 and February 2019 – whichever is greater).

## **Pensions**

The focus of the review has been on the Defined Benefit Scheme, known as the ESPS Final Salary and Retirement Balance Plan. We negotiated keeping the Scheme open but with some modifications to how benefits build up in the future that we believe limits the impact on members and maximises the sustainability of the Scheme.

We also negotiated some improvements for colleagues on the lowest benefit levels in our Defined Contribution Plan, known as the E.ON Pension Plan.

E.ON has committed to not changing the pensions arrangements for a 5-year period, subject to any extraordinary circumstances.

Subject to securing agreement to the pension's changes, a facilitation payment of 7.5% of salary for all Defined Benefit members is proposed. Colleagues in the ESPS Final Salary Categories will be able to choose between taking the facilitation payment or a contribution to the Defined Contribution Plan.

## **Employment commitments**

As part of the integrated proposal and subject to securing agreement to the pensions changes, we've also jointly agreed a set of employment commitments that will remain in place until 31 March 2021, these are:

- Direct employment of majority of permanent workforce.
- No further outsource
- No further outsourcing of existing jobs beyond those previously announced in Residential and IT.
- Current severance scheme (SVS) will remain in place.
- Commitment to the Employment Security Policy
- This package will be subject to a TU ballot and all trade unions are recommending an acceptance.

## **Equality and Diversity**

The company published its Gender Pay Gap reporting in February 2018 as required by law, by each business area. The report showed the main reason for the gender pay gap is due to disparities between the number of men and women across the organization. When drilled down into the data for each of the legal reporting entities, there were some similarities across each business. E.ON Climate and

Renewable, a relatively small business with a predominance of technical and engineering roles, sees the pay gap reversed in favour of women. This is testament to our success in encouraging women into engineering roles. By contrast E.ON UK plc covers a diverse number of activities and currently has more men in the upper pay quartiles, with a high mean average bonus difference of 33.5% which clearly highlights the need for further action here.

### Other matters

Working Patterns review: The business is currently reviewing all Residential working patterns for both full and part time members.

Company announced the closure of 3 sites - Deane Valley is due to close in May 2018 with approx. 250 job losses.

On the 1 February, the business announced that they were proposing to work with four new outsource providers within the office functions. This would allow the business to work differently in the future so that they can focus on thriving in a changing Smart environment. The proposals are:-

- Working with four new outsource providers, these would be – Tele performance, First Source, Sigma and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).
- Fundamentally change how we work with Outsource partners. Going from a transactional style relationship to a fully collaborative partnership.
- Introduce a champion challenger model with First source and Tele performance to drive continuous improvements in our Front office activities
- Move all Early Collections work to a new outsource partner called Sigma, based in Birmingham
- To blend our Smart and classic back office activity and move the majority of our Classic back office activity to an outsource partner.
- For back office that outsource partner would be Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and this activity will be performed by TCS, offshore in Kolkatta
- A commitment that all customer facing activity will remain on shore.

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## 2.11 National Grid

### Recruitment and Organising

The branch has introduced a number of recruitment initiatives such as matched gift vouchers. Recruitment stands on the street in National Grid, which is once every 3 months as this is regulated. Branch has also participated in the recruitment drive in National Grid training facility for apprentices.

We've recruited somewhere in the region of 150 members in 2017, with December 2017 recruiting a record number of new members in a monthly period. Our attrition rate has slowed meaning we are net positive again for the third year running.

Several new reps are becoming more and more active, and contributory factors towards good recruitment have been incentives, existing and new member raffles, and continued communication from both the branch exec and local reps. We recently had our AGM, and a number of reps have stepped up to branch posts and want to get more involved.

### Pay

National Grid pay negotiations are currently underway; negotiations began in September 2017 with a hope to conclude by July 2018. Companywide surveys were held by UNISON and this data formed a fundamental part of the joint pay claim submitted with three other unions. Despite several meetings, there is a long way to go before an acceptable offer could be sent to members to ballot on.

UNISON's seeking enhancements to the existing DC pension scheme offering, negotiating for a 7/15% contribution offer.

### Equality and Diversity

Branch has worked in collaboration with NG ONE group for the Black History Month event which had a range of activities throughout October 2017. This collaboration will also enable the branch to reach out to diverse members within the business. We hope to continue our collaboration with the ONE group occasionally.

A concerted effort has been to recruit more black members, and develop them into activists too, to reflect our workforce population.

## Health & Safety and other matters

Branch has undertaken Mental Health First Aid training for reps in September 2017; and there are ongoing developments of future Health and Safety Officers within the branch.

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## 2.12 Npower

### Pay

Currently we have been in the process of balloting our members as the company has offered a 2% pay increase. This is nothing compared to last year's 1.9% pay increase, and even then the company were in a worse position last year than they are this year. We have had the results of our ballot back and 77% of our members have now rejected this offer and we will have a meeting with the business on the 5 April 2018 to discuss this further.

### Merger

Also there are no new updates in regards to the merger as currently everything is looking good for the merger as on the week commencing 05 March 2018 the business had filed their merger documentation with the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

SSE retail and Npower propose to create a new company to serve their combined domestic retail customers.

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) will now assess whether this deal could significantly reduce competition in the supply of energy to domestic customers in the UK. The CMA has been discussing the deal with SSE and Npower since it was announced now the companies have provided the information necessary to start an investigation, the CMA has launched its review.

The deadline for this review is 26 April, although this can be extended, after which the CMA might decide it wants a longer review lasting until the end of the year or beyond.

## E.ON take-over

During the week commencing 12 March 2018 it was announced that RWE and E.ON reached an agreement in principle according to which RWE shall sell its 76.8 per cent stake in Innogy SE to E.ON. Binding agreements have not yet been concluded. The sale will be performed via a wide-ranging exchange of business activities and participations.

In exchange for its 76.8 per cent stake in Innogy RWE would receive a 16.67 per cent participation in E.ON. The shares would be issued by E.ON by way of a 20 per cent capital increase against contribution in kind under the existing authorisations. In addition, RWE would – after E.ON has gained control over Innogy – get substantially all of E.ON's renewables business including the economic benefits as of 1st January 2018.

Boards of both companies still need to approve the transaction. For the closing of the transaction additional conditions would need to be fulfilled. In particular, antitrust and regulatory approvals would be necessary.

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## 2.13 ScottishPower - Energy Retail

### Pay Deal 2017 and 2018

Following a three year deal which averaged just under 10% over the life of the deal, it has to be said that the 2017 pay deal was a disappointment. To also be balloted as late as it was added to the general bad feeling about the offer. An average of 1%, or 1.5% for those exceeding plus a non-consolidated payment of £550 pro-rata, was accepted by 68% of UNISON members. However, it needs to be said that only 48% of members voted in the ballot which, from a union perspective, was very disappointing. The talks for this year's deal have started with an initial meeting in January. Hopefully the outcome will be available sooner than 2017.

### Voluntary Redundancy

Following last year's exercise which resulted in 200 colleagues leaving the company, it was a bit of a surprise that another exercise was announced at the end of last year.

It is not clear where the spare capacity for redundancies is to be found. At the time of writing, the company plan to commence this process at the start of March. The unions will be pressing the company as to how they intend to meet the expectations of their 2018 targets whilst reducing numbers.

## Representation

Managing Attendance is the main issue within Energy Retail. Most representations are related to MAP due to the way that sickness is now managed. Since appeals were introduced as part of the process it is disappointing that the number of appeals is so few. We would encourage members to consider using this process if there is justification. Disciplinary actions have not been a major issue over the past year.

## Membership

Membership numbers, as always, are an issue. With the loss of members due to the last VSS opportunity and the pressure of work on stewards there has been limited time to work on recruitment. Hopefully, the Branch development plans for this year will concentrate on recruitment within Retail to help bolster our numbers and our visibility. We are struggling with steward numbers, especially in our Glasgow headquarters so any volunteers will be more than welcome.

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### 2.13.1 SP – Energy Networks

#### Pay 2018

As reported in the 2017 report, our members waited a significant length of time for pay negotiations to commence and an offer was finally made in September of that year. The offer was accepted but the delay infuriated our members after earlier promises which did not materialise. Part of the 2017 settlement was a business commitment to commence pay negotiations in time for January 2018 settlement date. Negotiations commenced in March 2018 and the initial offer was rejected by the Trade Unions.

## Iberdrola Efficiency Programme

While 200 posts are being lost across the UK, SP Energy Networks are only required to find 25 of the total. These numbers will be achieved through VSS and the Business is targeting staff in certain areas – no operational staff will be released during this process.

## Agency Staff

The continued use of agency staff is a concern for UNISON, in some areas accounting for 50% of staff. While we accept that agency staff are sometimes required, to cover peaks in workload, some agency staff have been in the business for years. Use of external staff undermines collective agreements as UNISON do not organise these groups. Additionally these staff miss out on the higher pay, pension and share provisions enjoyed by directly employed staff.

## Recruitment & Retention

During the last few years UNISON, along with the other unions, lost a number of longstanding members due to early retirement. The pension freedoms, introduced by the Government in April 2016, allow staff to access their ScottishPower pensions early without an actuarial adjustment and this has opened the doors to early retirements.

UNISON has retained a membership density of over 80% in SP Energy Networks but we are not complacent and with all the moves around the Business there will be opportunities to recruit non-members that have possibly never been asked to join. Working with our branch we will be putting significant resources in to signing up the non-members during 2018.

As part of this campaign we currently assist agency staff, where possible, although they are not members. We find that this gives UNISON an open door to recruit them if they receive a permanent contract and within the DCC we have had a 100% success rate.

## Communication

Communication is still a problem but over the last year we have managed to get Pay Bulletins out quickly and before the other unions... still far from perfect but improving. We have also cast our net across the business looking

for members who would be willing to act as post boxes and become a communication contact for their local area – we see it as a great way to introduce members to the work that UNISON carries out and possibly encourage them to become a workplace steward.

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## 2.14 SSE Sector

### Recruitment and Membership

In the last 12 months membership has grown by 10% and continues to grow. Branches ensure membership forms are available within the workplace and also assist potential members in completing the form.

### Pay

UNISON has been a key player in the pay talks. As of the time of writing the company has made an offer which was put to members with recommendation to accept. The offer made is based on the following:

- A 1 year deal (1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019) of salary increase of 3% applied to all Joint Agreement Employees;
- Employees in Pay Zone A or B will get 3.6% to promote progression and retention;
- Salary ranges – with effect from April 2018, a 3% increase will be applied to the minimum and maximum of the salary ranges;
- Flow through allowances – a 3% increase will apply to all pay elements that usually move in line with the pay award, specifically standby, shift allowance, London Allowance and London Supplement;
- PRP – Performance Related Pay has stopped with a new Performance tool will be introduced by the end of this year which will not be linked to pay.

SSE announced towards the end of 2017 that it would merge its retail (Electricity – Metering and Home Services) part of the business with Npower. Those staff that will be affected have received letters to inform them that as from 1st April 2018 they will be TUPeD across to the new company. However for the next year they will still be working as part of SSE until the completion of the

merger with Npower which is hoped to by early 2019.

As a result of this development there have been questions from members on what this meant for them. Where it's not been possible to give a response to the question asked, it's been escalated. UNISON is working with the business and have also set-up a local monthly forum group a drop-in session for members to deal with their enquiries about the merger. A regular questions and answer has been put together which was termed 'RENEW' until a name is found for the new company. This information is available for all staff to view.

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## 2.15 UK Power Networks

The employees of UK Power Networks are in year three of a three-year pay deal, with a 3.8% increase on pay and associated allowances. The Branch is involved in some interesting initiatives. UNISON undertook a stress survey that was followed by surveys by the other trade unions that came up with similar results. After a campaign to get the employer to address these issues, they agreed to set up a Joint Working Party on Stress in the Workplace to look at good practice, which is currently meeting. UNISON has been in discussion with UK Power Networks about agreeing a Call Centre Charter. Talks have been very productive and we are expecting a first draft in the near future.

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## 2.16 Western Power Distribution (WPD)

UNISON secured a significant outcome in pay negotiations with a new 2 year RPI plus pay increase agreed with the business and supported by members. UNISON held its first National Sector Committee for WPD in October 2017. It agreed a new constitution going forward and will meet twice yearly.

## Objective 3

# Campaigning and promoting UNISON on behalf of members

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### 3.1 Warm Homes Report

UNISON continues to progress the findings of its 'Warm Homes' report (although some 4 years old) and the actions contained within. Essentially we continue to call for the findings of the report to be implemented and stand by the recommended actions as the best way to address; fuel poverty, energy security, supply constraints and environmental targets. The key ask UNISON identified was ensuring all UK homes meet an energy performance certificate rating of band C by 2030, targeting those in most need first. This would be done by conducting free door to door assessments, providing low income householders with remedial works free at the point of delivery, and giving access to interest free loans for those householders who were able to pay.

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### 3.2 Hydrogen Gas

As the largest staff union in the gas industry we have been leading the debate on decarbonising gas so that it can continue to be used without carbon emissions, keeping homes warm at an affordable price. While it is clear that those involved in the environmental lobby see the future as one which is wholly reliant on renewable electricity we do not consider this to be an achievable objective within current electricity demands and capacity restrictions.

The scale of electrifying the UK's heating needs (domestic and business) is simply off the Richter scale and does not even take into account the demands of electrifying transport which alone would be hugely challenging. As it stands 90% of UK homes rely on methane gas supply to heat domestic boilers and central heating systems and in terms of energy consumption it represents a massive component of all the energy consumed in the UK. The ES&G is therefore supporting the conversion of methane gas into hydrogen gas (carbon free when used) becoming the primary gas source for the use in homes and businesses. This is possible using the existing gas pipe network which is currently being upgraded as part of the national mains replacement programme.

As well as liaising with Dan Sadler (the author of the H21 Leeds City Gate project) and who addressed members at the annual UNISON energy seminar in November last

year. We organised a roundtable event at UNISON Centre inviting key industry figures to attend and discuss the issues at hand and respond to our proposal to set up an all-party parliamentary group to bring the employers and unions together to promote decarbonising gas and also securing a positive future for the gas industry.

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### 3.3 Living Wage

UNISON has continued to raise the Living Wage as a bargaining issue within the energy sector. It remains one of our key priorities and we have continued to press home the need to achieve a positive outcome. Almost all the major employers have pay rates for directly employed staff which are compliant, and the main focus centres around on-site contractors and supply side businesses. We have been able to convene meetings between the Living Wage foundation and key employers to support this objective and address employer concerns. We believe that solid progress has been achieved already but we cannot rest until all key employers have committed to this goal. Presently SSE, Centrica/British Gas, EDF Energy and National Grid have achieved this important milestone. In the past 12 months we have had active discussions with E.ON, Cadent Gas, and Morrison Data Services. Over 100,000 employees are now covered by agreements in the Energy sector reached with UNISON's active participation.

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### 3.4 Call Centre Charter

Despite a great deal of positive feedback we have not progressed the Call Centre Charter as we would have liked. Following the success in getting British Gas to sign up to the charter we have again sought to engage with other major employers to get the charter adopted more widely. National Grid / Cadent Gas did agree to become signatories prior to last year's annual report. We have also been in positive discussion with UK Power Networks and we hope to be able to work with them to develop the charter in their business. The Charter remains highly relevant to the work our members do in the industry, and it has important equality dimensions to it which we are promoting whenever possible.

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### 3.5 Meter Operatives

We continue to discuss ways in which we can support our membership working in the meter operations sector. As the smart meter rollout programme develops it is clear that skill shortages exist in the workforce and recruitment issues mean the programme is massively challenged. We are talking with communications to develop some sector specific materials to help organise in this growing field and raise the profile of these workers in UNISON. In addition we are engaging with employers to ensure members are supported both in the development of roles and in any transition from reading into operations.

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### 3.6 Political Engagement

We continue to seek influence with political groupings both to understand current thinking and to influence that thinking to support energy members. Key stakeholder engagements are supported by Connect public affairs and we have secured meetings with Shadow BEIS ministers, MPs etc and select committee chairs.

This year has seen added activity as we seek to engage with the development of Labour Party thinking around its own energy policy and the public ownership debate. The General Election last year brought into sharp focus the need to develop more progressive thinking around these subjects and we have held positive meeting with those tasked with drawing up new policy strands. A key area is the need to ensure the bulk of our staff membership is protected in any structural proposals. We remain deeply concerned at the notion of public sector challengers sitting alongside unionised private sector suppliers without a developed narrative as to what happens to our member's jobs. It is preferable for a worked proposal that brings these operations into public ownership alongside energy transmission and distribution. We will look for positive outcomes in this area to protect our members fully.

We continue with on-going dialogue with the TUC and other trade unions within the sector on a wide range of policy issues and we have worked together within the TUSDAC grouping (Trade Unions Sustainable Development Action Committee) to develop broad based policy positions.

We have continued to support the work of TUED (trade unions for energy democracy) and hosted a national TUED event at UNISON centre.

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### 3.7 European Engagement

UNISON has continued to be active on the European front working closely with EPSU and other European unions to progress agreed responses. UNISON continues to hold a seat on the European Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee (SSDC) for Electricity, a tripartite body bringing together the European Commission, employers and trade unions. Increasingly, energy policy is being driven by the drive to create the single market for energy and the European energy road map 2050. We continue to recognise that many energy employers in the sector operate across Europe such as EDF, E.ON, RWE and Iberdrola. Over the past 12 months we have led on key issues, including the need to have common standards for training and apprenticeships in the electricity sector, raising the bar for corporate social responsibility statements, developments within the single energy market, the EU's winter package, impacts of digitalisation, energy security and just transition.

In the past year additional work has been undertaken following the SSDC securing a significant grant from the EU to support a project based around entry training and skills in the electricity sector.

In October the National Officer for energy was elected president of the EPSU European Standing Committee for Utilities, which drives the trade union agenda for the SSDC and liaises with the European Commission to progress the agreed work plan. We also use this committee to link in with the work of the ETUC.

The benefit of our European engagements was recently proven when a letter organised by ourselves went from EPSU to the CEO's of RWE, Innogy and E.ON asking for a meeting with the UK unions following the assets swap and merger announcement linked to the SSE Innogy merger. This meeting has been agreed to and is set to take place in June.

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### **3.8 Health and Safety**

UNISON is represented on electricity industry health and safety body HESAC by the National Officer and James Mack (UK Power Networks) from the SGE. This is an important industry-wide forum supported by the HSE. Most eligible companies attend, along with the key trade unions. During the past year the meetings have been dominated by the industry campaign 'Powering Improvements' which has now been phased out. This campaign aims to make the UK electricity industry a world leader in health and safety. It is a joint project between the Energy Networks Association and Association of Electricity producers working with the trade unions and the HSE.

UNISON continues to press for a greater retail focus in the work of HESAC and this is likely to be matched by calls from the merged industry body Energy UK who also represent the retail side of the industry.

UNISON is also represented on HSE/TU Gas Liaison Committee which meets twice yearly to discuss health and safety developments in the gas industry. This covers all the IDN's and National Grid, although these meetings are not convened by the employers and they (unlike electricity) do not lead collectively in this area. A wide range of concerns have been discussed during the past year, and the possible challenges of RIIO 2 (Revenue = Incentives + Innovation + Outputs) will lead to many more going forward. A particular focus of concern has been the role of contractors and subcontractors in incidents. The trade unions remain concerned that cost pressures are leading to potential and actual breaches and that this needs to be addressed.

# Objective 4

## Developing an efficient and effective union

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### 4.1 Introduction

At a national level, the Service Group Executive met four times since the 2017 Energy conference. The Executive is made up of lay members elected to serve for a period of two years (2016-2018). Fresh SGE elections took place in the early part of 2018 and it is hoped that a full committee will be elected to serve 2018-2020. The new Executive members to serve will take their seats at the Executive Annual meeting in July 2018.

The Energy Service Group is represented on UNISON's National Executive Council (NEC) by Paul Glover who was re-elected in 2017 for a two year period. Paul reports in writing to the Executive on the activities of the NEC.

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### 4.2 Obituary

Mike Jeram, former National Secretary, very sadly passed away in August 2017 with his family by his side. A special tribute was given to Mike at last year's Energy Branch seminar, with a memorial at UNISON Centre in December 2017 by colleagues with Mike's family in attendance.

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### 4.3 Chair and Vice-chair

Jenny Middleton was elected chair of the Executive for 2017-18. Angela Greenhalgh was elected vice-chair.

The current Executive membership, sector committees and sub-committees prior to 2017 conference are set out opposite.

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### 4.4 Energy Service Group Executive:

#### Regional representatives

Region	Name	Seat
Eastern	Vacant	General seat
East Midlands	Vacant	General seat
	Gillian Byron	Female seat
Greater London	James Mack	General seat
Northern	Carole Anne Woods	General seat
North West	Michael Melia	General seat
	Angela Greenhalgh	Female seat
Scotland	Tony Grieve	General seat
	Elaine Duffy	Female seat
South East	Mel Valder	General seat
South West	Tony Allan	General seat
Cymru/Wales	Nick Thorne	General seat
West Midlands	Julie Hanna	General seat
Yorkshire Gas	Jenny Middleton	General seat

#### Co-opted from sector committees

Lindsay McNaught	British Gas Sector
Edith Farrar	E-ON Sector
Sharleen Bigby	RWE/NPower
Vacant	Scottish Power/Manweb
Ann Forsyth	Scottish and Southern Energy
Rebecca Reece	Cadent Gas
Tracey Wainwright	EDF Sector
Miriam Latona	National Grid (January 2018)

#### Sub-committee Membership

- i) **Business and Environment Equal Opportunities Working Group**  
Angela Greenhalgh, Ann Forsyth, Gillian Byron, Jenny Middleton and Tony Grieve. Edith Farrar (Sub)
- ii) **NEC Appeals Panel**  
Jenny Middleton and Angela Greenhalgh
- iii) **ENA Health, Environment and Safety Committee (HESAC)**  
Matt Lay and Paul Glover
- iv) **UNISON National Health and Safety Committee**  
Paul Glover and Tracey Wainwright (substitute).

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## **4.5 Energy Branch Seminar 2017**

This year's Energy Branch Seminar took place at the Novotel in Sheffield during the weekend of 3-5 November 2017. The seminar was attended by 79 delegates inclusive of the Executive members.

The Branch seminar started with open remarks from Jenny Middleton, Chair of the Energy Service Group Executive. This was followed with a powerful presentation by Louise Taggart from FACK (families against corporate killings), to promote and raise awareness of their campaign on safety at work. She mentioned that the campaign started as a result of the death of her brother; who was killed at work 12 years ago and also highlighted other work related fatalities caused by employers' negligence. She stressed that her organisation would continue to campaign against these fatal incidents to ensure strong regulations are introduced in order to hold employers to account. She concluded by asking delegates to promote workers' rights on good safety practices in the workplace.

Matt Lay addressed delegates on activities in the Energy Industry and thanked activists for their continued work in ensuring the union is relevant at work. He made reference to the intense competition combined with the announcement of an energy price cap that is likely to have an impact on the big 6, in particular within retail operations. Reference was also made to the remarkable achievement of the union in keeping still despite these challenges.

On the Saturday morning there was a short film in memory of Mike Jeram, ex-National Secretary who passed away recently. Reference was also made to Donna-Marie Lyons of Scottish Gas branch who died suddenly.

There were 4 important presentations during the rest of the morning from Dan Sadler on Hydrogen Gas, Angela Greenhalgh on Domestic Violence, Monica Hirst on The Organising Branch and John Halligan on Mental Health and Wellbeing. The feedback on presentations was positive, delegates found it relevant, educative and informative.

Throughout the Saturday afternoon were workshops. These workshops covered 3 key areas and all delegates to the seminar were allocated to each of the workshops. These workshops gave delegates the opportunity to network, share ideas and compare workplace practices

on each of the activities. The feedback from the workshops was reported by each group to all participants on Sunday morning, the last day of the seminar.

At the social event on Saturday the raffle raised £530, this amount was matched to make a total of £1060 and split between two charities.

The Chair thanked staff, Executive members and delegates for attending, and noted that branches supporting the event is greatly appreciated.

# Action on motions passed at the 2017 Energy Service Group conference

Motion	Status
<p><b>1. Energy Conference and Energy Branch Seminar</b></p> <p>Conference instructs the Energy Service Group Executive to report back to the 2018 conference with a view to putting the proposal into action by late 2019.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>A meeting was held in February 2018 (Recommendation by the sub-committee in Appendix 1 of this report). A motion was put to conference by the Energy SGE as a result of the sub-committee recommendations.</p>
<p><b>2. Activist Learning and Development within Energy</b></p> <p>Conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To make further representation to LAOS to argue for additional Utility specific national activists training and that the fees are reconsidered;</li> <li>• To ensure that it is recognised that energy members contribute significantly to the financial income of the union and having access to some specific training should not be seen as an excess;</li> <li>• To continue to support capacity building amongst lay activists within the energy sector to help them be equipped with the rights skills to negotiate directly with leading industrial employers;</li> <li>• To encourage and facilitate branches holding joint regional training events;</li> <li>• Ask that the Energy SG updates branches on progress on this important matter.</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Discussions took place with LAOS and within the SGE. This was followed by a pause in any further national energy specific training.</p> <p>In 2018 training will be offered again and an analysis will be undertaken of the impact of the increased costs to branches.</p>
<p><b>3. Supporting our Supporters</b></p> <p>Conference calls upon the Energy Service Group to investigate if the union has guidance in place and to identify what support is being provided both regionally and nationally. Run a workshop at the next Branch seminar, link to health and safety;</p> <p>UNISON should increase awareness and access to training opportunities amongst its representatives particularly with regard to equality, counselling and specialist training courses that could enable representatives to build their resilience and that of their branch colleagues to deliver confident and sustainable support.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The UNISON energy seminar devoted significant time to this matter with a detailed presentation and workshop organised. It was also covered in the UNIOSN energy magazine.</p> <p>We continue to look for other developmental opportunities ad this matter is under constant review.</p>
<p><b>4. Changes to the way taxable benefits work through salary sacrifice schemes</b></p> <p>Conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Survey branches to fully understand what is happening, energy employer by energy employer and how they are responding to the HMRC changes;</li> <li>2. Give advice to branches who are being challenged by employers and ensure this becomes a key bargaining objective to prevent any loss to members through schemes being cancelled;</li> <li>3. Share good practice around the Energy Service Group so when energy employers develop new staff benefits we can improve the overall workplace of all energy members.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Branches have been written to highlighting the issue and pointing them towards a brief online survey for them to complete.</p> <p>We have also asked for modals of good practice and workplace schemes.</p> <p>Any good examples will be further discussed at the Energy Service Group.</p>

Motion	Status
<p><b>5. Hydrogen Gas</b></p> <p>Conference therefore calls on the ESGE to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. support UNISON members working in the Gas Industry, by helping progress a sustainable future for the industry;</li> <li>2. help promote through engagement with key stakeholders, the development of a Hydrogen alternative into the future, so that Gas can be used safely in UK homes while still employing thousands of workers and support the UK's environmental obligations;</li> <li>3. Seek to use its influence to promote the work of its members in the Gas Industry and the proud heritage we have in this union.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>UNISON gave a high profile to the concept of Hydrogen Conversion of the gas network. Dan Sadler from NGN addressed the energy seminar with his work based on Leeds. It also featured in the energy magazine.</p> <p>UNISON also hosted an industry round table on the subject that featured attendees from across the industry.</p> <p>We are also working with the GMB to develop an all party parliamentary group to promote this concept in Westminster.</p>
<p><b>6. Safe Driving</b></p> <p>Conference therefore calls on the Energy SGE:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To continue to monitor the situation with regards to safe driving and to survey energy branches to understand the scale of these initiatives;</li> <li>2. To put together a briefing note to Energy branches on how UNISON reps should respond to these developments and negotiate any improvements or mitigations;</li> <li>3. Understand the level of disciplinary action related to this issue affecting UNISON members and branches;</li> <li>4. Raise the issue and seek support from the UNISON health and safety unit and bargaining support unit.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Branch circular issued and guidance, a survey conducted.</p>
<p><b>7. Call Centre Charter – How far have we come</b></p> <p>Conference calls on the energy service group executive, working with the business and environment equal opportunities working group to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Survey energy branches on whether their employer has signed up to the charter;</li> <li>2. If so, investigate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it is being implemented; and</li> <li>• Whether it makes specific reference to tackling anti-LGBT abuse;</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Urge training for managers and staff on LGBT equality issues and combating harassment and bullying;</li> <li>4. Work with branches where the employer has not adopted the charter to negotiate its implementation.</li> </ol>	<p>Joint work to be done with the water, environment and transport service group later in 2018.</p>

Motion	Status
<p><b>8. Race Inequality in the Workplace</b></p> <p>The Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive to work with the National Black Members Committee (NBMC) to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Produce material for Branches and Regions to use to highlight the continued gap between Black workers who hold senior positions compared to white workers, with key points on how to tackle this in the workplace;</li> <li>2. Encourage Regions to work with Branches to ensure that all employers complete Equality Impact Needs Assessments when carrying out reorganisations and to ensure Black members take a lead role in scrutinising these assessments together with representatives from other SOGs; and</li> <li>3. Encourage Branches to work with Employers to seek to ensure more apprenticeship opportunities are open to Black people</li> </ol>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Progress to be reported to the Service Group Executive as and when it's available. To conduct a survey in Q2 2018.</p>
<p><b>9. Workplace domestic abuse policies</b></p> <p>Conference calls upon the SGE to encourage branches to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek recognition from the employer that they have a responsibility for the health and wellbeing of their employees, and therefore to implement workplace domestic abuse policies, based on the UNISON model policy;</li> <li>2. Implement management training on recognising the signs of domestic abuse, incorporated into existing return to work processes where appropriate;</li> <li>3. Raise awareness of the UNISON There for You assistance available to members experiencing domestic abuse;</li> <li>4. Consider providing training for workplace reps on supporting members experiencing domestic abuse.</li> </ol>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Branch circular issued.</p>
<p><b>10. General Election</b></p> <p>Conference therefore asks the Energy SGE to make representations on behalf of the energy membership to all who may have influence across both the political spectrum, within UNISON itself and also the wider trade unions movement and other suitable stakeholders to ensure our energy members are protected and given assurances over jobs and conditions.</p> <p>We also need to do further work to keep alive the prospect of an energy sector and industry that is owned by the public, serving the public and providing quality jobs here in the UK.</p>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The Service Group continues to keep an eye on the political environment and Labour energy policy in order to ensure it's fit for purpose. Meetings have been held with Labour shadow ministers and those involved with drafting Labour energy policy.</p>

# APPENDIX 1: Report back to UNISON Energy Service Group Conference – June 2018

## Energy Conference and Energy Branch Seminar

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### 1. Introduction

At last year's Energy Service Group Conference a motion was proposed by the Scottish Electricity Branch, which read:

'Conference notes the importance of the two main events in the Energy Service Group year – namely our annual conference and our annual branch seminar. Both of these events are occasions of interaction and learning for our activists and also an occasion to recharge the batteries of our enthusiasm.

However, it has been noticeable over recent years that our Energy Conference is not as well attended as it could be and that there has been a decline in the amount of material on the agenda.

It has also been noticeable that the opposite is the case with the Energy Branch Seminar which is always well attended and of great interest because of the many and varied topics for discussion.

In the current economic climate and with the recent decrease in membership numbers it is not surprising that some branches may be finding it difficult to send adequate delegations to both events and that this results in some promising activists missing out on a great learning and networking opportunity.

Conference therefore instructs the National Service Group Executive to investigate the possibility of merging the Energy Conference and Branch Seminar into one event over several days (in much the same way as Police and Justice Service Group have successfully done for several years). This should be done keeping in mind the separate policy making nature of the Conference element. This combined Conference and Seminar should be held at convenient locations rotating around the UK at an appropriate time of the year.

Conference instructs the Energy Service Group Executive to report back to the 2018 conference with a view to putting the proposal into action by late 2019.

The motion was carried.

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### 2. Actions taken

The principle action of the motion was the preparation of this report back via the annual report. This has been done, but in the interest of lay democracy the Energy Service Group Executive decided to not simply to place the report in the annual report but in addition to place a further motion on the conference agenda for the 2018 Energy Service Group Conference, so that energy delegates have an opportunity to consider the findings and recommendations.

To action the report the Service Group Executive convened a special working party to consider the practical issues of joining the Energy Service Group Conference and Seminar together into one single event. This meeting took place on the 11th December.

The working Party included the following; – Jenny Middleton (ESGE Chair) Paul Glover (NEC Member Energy) Dave Johnson (National Secretary, Business Community and Environment) Matthew Lay (National Officer for Energy) Mary Onafalujo (Assistant National Officer - Energy) Angela Greenhalgh (ESGE Vice Chair) Tony Grieve (ESGE member and a member of the motion proposing branch) and Stephanie Grant (UNISON Conferences and Events Manager)

The working party considered the motion with an objective view of looking at what steps would be required to combine the two events, whether these steps were feasible and whether they would improve the present arrangements. During the meeting it became clear that significant practical and resourcing obstacles existed to joining both the seminar and conference together and that a combined event would actually weaken the annual seminar, which has been widely acknowledged as a successful event for energy activists and receives very positive feedback.

Finally it was also noted that the Union was soon to be engaging in a wholesale review of its structures and activities and this review may bring forward radical changes to how UNISON operates. Therefore any changes proposed prior to the outcome of these recommendations being known and debated would be likely perceived as premature and possibly subject to being changed again.

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### 3. Recommendation

For the reasons outlined above the Working Party recommended to the Energy Service Group Executive that:

- No further action is taken at this time to combine the energy conference and seminar together
- That this conclusion be reported back in the annual report and separately to energy branches
- That a motion to this effect is put on the energy conference agenda for consideration
- That the position is kept under review and discussed again when the union's structural review is concluded and any outcomes agreed.

The Energy Service Group Executive at its meeting on the 30th January agreed fully with the recommendations from the working party and the asked the conference to support the actions and recommendations as above.

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### 4. The Practical and procedural challenges of combining the energy conference and energy seminar into a single event.

The working party included the head of UNISON's conferences and events. It was made clear that very significant issues arise in seeking to combine an event at this point in the union's cycle for the following reasons

#### i) The annual calendar of events

UNISON currently has an annual calendar of events and supports a number of conferences as per the UNISON rulebook. Each conference is a significant event in itself with venues, staffing and support services in place many months (sometimes years) in advance. The programme is balanced and spread to ensure it is deliverable within the financial and staffing resources allowed.

To manage costs national events/conferences are often joined together so retired members and police and justice for example. This ensures that the setting up of a venue is

not simply for a single event lasting two days but two events lasting 7 days which are much more efficient and economic. It is not therefore practical to diarise a new single event which might last for two days over a weekend on its own. The other option would be to link it to another event but having considered the annual diary of events it is clear that this would mean having the energy event in the week and not at a weekend. It was felt this would be a significant inhibitor to the numbers who might attend especially when facility time remains under pressure with some employers. It was felt unlikely that another event might be willing to move to accommodate an energy conference/seminar at a weekend. It was also acknowledged that it would not be possible to join any combined event to the National Delegate Conference as the facility would not be able to accommodate this.

#### ii) Resourcing Challenges

Factoring in the problems with finding space within the annual events calendar, it is clear moving to a combined event would require additional expense and also additional staffing demands on top of that already budgeted for. The budgetary impact of these events is significant as each event must comply with accessibility rules and requirements. While it is recognised that the energy conference also requires the same standards, this is efficiently achieved as all the available resource is already on site to support the WET, Local Govt and NDC arrangements.

UNISON's Finance & Resource Management Committee (committee of the NEC) in 2005 adopted a position endorsed by the Service Group Liaison Committee that;

- Stand alone Service Group conferences were discouraged
- They should be clustered together around National Delegate Conference or other UNISON conferences
- Service Groups could be allowed to link together conference and seminars but only on the basis the branches should fully fund all delegates' expenses.

It was recognised that some savings might have accrued to branches as a result of travel costs being met centrally for delegates attending the conference element but this was unlikely to be allowed, further it was very unclear if this made a substantial difference in attendance at either event.

It was pointed out that the venues that can accommodate such events are more limited (due to size and the facilities required) than is for example available for the energy seminar (which itself is challenging) It would also reduce the geographical flexibility we currently have with the seminar, and choice on offer to meet the SGE requirements.

### iii) Time management within combined events

Some Service Groups already operate a combined event and we can look to them to consider the limitations this might place on such an event within energy when compared to the present status quo. The UNISON rulebook requires a minimum full day to be allocated to each conference. Presently this ensures a whole day is allocated to the energy conference and a weekend to the seminar which has far fewer constraints. In combined events the limitation often leads to two half days being allocated to a conference so for example an afternoon and the following morning. This creates a problem in that no planning can be done to use that morning if there is no conference business. It is not unusual for Energy Conference to complete business by the lunchtime of the day allocated. It was felt this time restraint would have a detrimental impact on the scope of the seminar to operate as it currently does. It was noted that already the Police and Justice combined event had been scaled back to just two days from three due to these and other issues. A two day event would limit seminar speakers and workshops to just one day as opposed to the present seminar offering.

### iv) Potential impact on the Energy Seminar

While it was recognised that the energy conference had lost momentum in the years following privatisation (due to there not being single national bargaining for a specific industry) it was also recognised that UNISON conferences are by their very nature formal events, rule based and as such limiting in certain areas such as learning, informal conversations, topical based discussions and networking. It was however recognised that the energy seminar had presented a very good opportunity for members to meet in a more informal setting, to network effectively, develop understandings of key industrial issues and also key union issues tailored to the needs of energy members and not simply generic. A key reason for this it was felt, was that the event took place at a weekend, was relaxed and generally informal and allowed plenty of time for a mix of speakers, workshops and breaks. The energy seminar had had consistently positive feedback and when specific negative feedback was provided it was within the gift of the SGE to address this without too many constraints other than budgetary ones.

It was felt that few positive impacts on the seminar would occur within a combined event although it was recognised that some energy branches would be represented as a small number only attend the conference. It was felt a better way to approach this issue was to contact those branches to understand the reasoning for not attending the seminar.

### v) Potential impacts on the Energy Conference and National Delegates Conference (NDC)

Although it was recognised that a combined event held separately might increase attendance at the conference part, it was pointed out that most branches do send a delegation to energy conference and as a result, also a delegation (often the same people) to the national delegate conference (NDC). It was felt there was limited upside in an increased delegation although a likely increase in visitor attendance due to non-delegates being present for the seminar element.

It had already been recognised that a combined event would not be able to take place prior to the NDC as it presently does. It was therefore considered that a combined event taking place elsewhere in the annual calendar might actually reduce attendance at NDC from energy branches. It was considered that a great deal of the business at NDC was of little relevance to energy branches and branches might be willing to accept any financial penalty when set against the costs of sending a delegation.



