

44th ANNUAL REPORT



Manweb Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2015

AGM meetings will be held at:

Queensferry on Tuesday 3rd March
Warrington on Wednesday 4th March
Rhostyllen on Tuesday 10th March
Liverpool on Wednesday 11th March
Prenton on Thursday 12th March

(see local posters for details)

** Disabled Access **

** Travel Expenses **

** Free Buffet & refreshments**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA 2015

1. Chairpersons Opening Address
2. Receive the minutes of last year's AGM meetings
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. To receive reports for the last year (Annual Report) including
 - a. Branch Executive Committee
 - b. Finance Report to be approved by meeting (Separate document)
 - c. All other reports set out in the Annual Report
5. Recommendations in respect of Honoraria
Propose a payment of £300 to the Branch Auditor
6. Election of Branch Officers (See Appendix I)
7. Election of Branch Stewards (See Appendix II)
8. Election of Representatives of Company Bodies (See Appendix III)
9. Motions received
10. Open Forum / Questions
11. Prize Draw

Mini AGM Minutes

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Date | 25 February 2014 | |
| Location | Queensferry | |
| Present | David Read (Branch Secretary) Tom Gibbons (Chair) Howell Watson Eugene Gallagher David Dawson Barbara Jones Janet Edwards Deborah Ross Andrew Scanlon Steve Flewitt Phil Keable Jeremy Lawes Martin Nield | Dave Righton Pete Booth Paul Dutton Ewan Clare Paul Faircloth Sue Kavanagh Harry Beech Anthony Jennings Dave Fenton Peter Jung Sally Banks Margaret Maloney Paul Murphy |
| In Attendance | Paul Summers (Regional Secretary) Amanda Duffy (Thompsons) | |

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

1.1. Tom Gibbons welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

2.1. Minutes of the main AGM and Queensferry AGM were agreed as an accurate record

3. Matters Arising

3.1. None

4. Receive reports for the last year (Annual Report)

4.1. Branch Committee – the Branch Secretary spoke to the report and gave a brief update on the key issues in IBM. The report was received.

4.2. Finance report – the treasurer gave an update on this year's accounts and made the following points

4.2.1. This is the first year we have moved to the OLBA system

4.2.2. We have saved money by moving branch committee meetings from a hotel to a local village hall.

4.3. The Finance report was approved at the two meetings 22-0 and 6-0.

4.4. The remaining reports were received.

5. Recommendations in respect of honoraria

5.1. It was recommended that a payment of £290 be made to the Branch Auditor in recognition of his services. This was agreed at the two meetings 22-0 and 6-0.

6. Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

6.1. The list of officer nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix I was received.

7. Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

7.1. The list of steward nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix II was received.

8. Election of Representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)

8.1. The proposed nominations for the IBM Company Council posts set out in Appendix III were agreed.

9. Motions

9.1. No motions were presented

10. Guest Speakers

10.1. Amanda Duffy (Thompsons) gave a brief outline of the services offered by Thompsons.

10.2. Paul Summers (UNISON Regional Officer) introduced himself and gave a brief outline of his role. He thanked the representatives for the work they had put in over the last 12 months and congratulated them for the success in winning a significant out of court settlement in the IBM/Accenture TUPE transfer case. He also encouraged members to attend the March and rally scheduled to take place in Liverpool on Saturday 15th March over cuts to public services.

11. Open Forum

11.1. There were a couple of questions about possible bonuses due as part of the pay deal and one of the members made a presentation to the reps on behalf of the IBM members as a vote of thanks for the work the reps have done in winning the TUPE settlement.

| | | |
|-----------------|---|--|
| Date | 4 March 2014 | |
| Location | Rhos | |
| Present | David Read (Branch Secretary) Karen Pettican (Chair, mtg1) Steve O'Connor (Chair, mtg2) Siobhan Howson Andy McEwan John Clarke | Annette McEwan Charizma Patel John Lundy Mike Hanmer Chris Jackson |

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

2.1 Minutes of the main AGM and Rhos AGM were agreed as an accurate record with one correction – Joe Morgan was in the chair for the main 2013 AGM – page 1)

3. Matters Arising

3.1 None

4. Receive reports for the last year (Annual Report)

4.1 Branch Committee – the Branch Secretary spoke to the report and gave a brief update on the key issues in ScottishPower and Energy Retail. The report was received.

4.2 Finance report – the Branch Secretary gave an update on this year's accounts. The Finance report was approved at the two meetings 5-0 and 3-0.

4.3 The remaining reports were received.

5 Recommendations in respect of honoraria

5.1 It was recommended that a payment of £290 be made to the Branch Auditor in recognition of his services. This was agreed at the two meetings 5-0 and 3-0.

6 Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

6.1 The list of officer nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix I was received.

7 Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

7.1 The list of steward nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix II was received. Steve O'Connor was nominated and approved for the vacancy in Wrexham/Rhos.

8 Election of representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)

8.1 The proposed nominations for the all the ScottishPower Company posts set out in Appendix III were agreed.

9 Motions

9.1 No motions were presented

10 Guest Speakers

10.1 There were no guest speakers

11 Open Forum

11.1 A member asked whether the pay deals had been agreed. Steve O'Connor responded and explained the recommended pay offer from the joint negotiations on 26-27 Feb and which would go to ballot shortly. In summary this included:

11.1.1 A pay pot of 2.5 to 3% each year of a 3 year deal

11.1.2 Holidays increased to a minimum of 28 days plus 8 bank holidays which the company claimed would cost £700 million.

11.1.3 Ballot papers would be issued w/s 10th March

11.1.4 The ballot will close on 4th April

11.1.5 The pay rises will be paid in May if approved.

11.2 In response to a question regarding the current Voluntary redundancy scheme one to one meetings are due to start w/s 10th March for all those who have shown an interest. The company have been challenged over "deskside chats" where managers have been asking members to make decisions.

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Date | 5 March 2014 | |
| Location | Liverpool | |
| Present | David Read (Branch Secretary) Geoff Littler (Chair) Shirley Vickery Howard Ball | Yvonne Lucy Jayne Furlong Joe Morgan |

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

2.1 Minutes of the main AGM and Liverpool AGM were agreed as an accurate record with one correction – Joe Morgan was in the chair for the main 2013 AGM – page 1).

3. Matters Arising

3.1 A short update was given by the Branch Secretary on the campaign against fracking.

4. Receive reports for the last year (Annual Report)

4.1 Branch Committee – the Branch Secretary spoke to the report and gave a brief update on the key issues in ScottishPower. Geoff Little gave a brief update on the Energy Networks pay outcomes of year 1 of the pay deal. 5 employees (0.9%) received no pay rise due to unsatisfactory performance. 2,080 employees (80%) were rated as partially or fully competent and got a normal pay rise. 485 employees (18%) were rated as exceptional and received an additional pay rise . The report was received.

4.2 Finance report – the Branch Secretary gave an update on this year's accounts. The Finance report was approved at the two meetings 3-0 and 3-0.

4.3 The remaining reports were received.

5 Recommendations in respect of honoraria

5.1 It was recommended that a payment of £290 be made to the Branch Auditor in recognition of his services. This was agreed at the two meetings 3-0 and 3-0.

6 Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

6.1 The list of officer nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix I was received.

7 Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

7.1 The list of steward nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix II was received. Kelly Thomas was proposed for the vacancy in Liverpool subject to her accepting the post. Yvonne Lucy and Howard Ball agreed to act in a contact / support role to assist.
[Kelly accepted the nomination following to the meeting]

8 Election of representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)

8.1 The proposed nominations for the all the ScottishPower Company posts set out in Appendix III were agreed.

9 Motions

9.1 No motions were presented

10 Guest Speakers

10.1 There were no guest speakers

11 Open Forum

11.1 There was some further discussion on pay and representation but no specific new issues were raised.

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Date | 6 March 2014 | |
| Location | Prenton | |
| Present | David Read (Branch Secretary) Joe Morgan (Chair) Geoff Littler | Diane Bellis Daug Appleyard |

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

2.1 Minutes of the main AGM and Prenton AGM were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 None

4. Receive reports for the last year (Annual Report)

4.1 Branch Committee – the Branch Secretary spoke to the report and gave a brief update on the key issues in ScottishPower including the success of the pensions campaign. Geoff Little gave a brief update on the Energy Networks pay outcomes of year 1 of the pay deal. The report was received.

4.2 Finance report – the Branch Secretary gave an update on this year's accounts. The Finance report was approved 2-0.

4.3 The remaining reports were received.

5. Recommendations in respect of honoraria

5.1 It was recommended that a payment of £290 be made to the Branch Auditor in recognition of his services. This was approved 2-0.

6. Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

6.1 The list of officer nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix I was received.

7. Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

7.1 The list of steward nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix II was received. Joe Morgan and Geoff Littler were approved for the two vacancies in Prenton.

8. Election of representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)

8.1 The proposed nominations for the all the ScottishPower Company posts set out in Appendix III were agreed.

9. Motions

9.1 No motions were presented

10. Guest Speakers

10.1 There were no guest speakers

11. Open Forum

11.1 There was a short discussion on representation of members in situations where one member may have a grievance against another member. It was confirmed that in such circumstances we would ensure that both members would be properly represented by UNISON.

| | | |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Date | 12 March 2014 | |
| Location | Warrington | |
| Present | David Read (Branch Secretary) Christine Dempsey (Chair, mtg1,2) Sylvia Fox (Chair, mtg 3,4) Elaine Inman (Chair, mtg 5,6) Jenny Henderson Jim Brown Vicky Geering Anita Williams Helen Duncan Gill Wilde John Caton H Atherton | Dawn Goulden Pam Murphy Anthony Edwards Janet Kernot Kevin Nicholls Donna Wall June Woan Carol Fairway Pat Hoppan Janet O'Brien Ross Pell |

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

2.1 Minutes of the main AGM and Warrington AGM were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 Jim Brown explained the background to the pension campaign outlined in last years resolution and congratulated the branch for spearheading a successful campaign – the government have withdrawn their proposals. He requested the branch write to the national union to draw attention to the poor response from other union branches to the formal government consultation process and asked that this is addressed for the future.

4. Receive reports for the last year (Annual Report)

4.1 Branch Committee – the Branch Secretary spoke to the report and gave a brief update on the key issues in ScottishPower and Energy Retail. The report was received.

4.2 Finance report – the Branch Secretary gave an update on this year's accounts. The Finance report was approved at the six meetings 5-0, 4-0, 5-0, 2-0, 1-0, 5-0.

4.3 The remaining reports were received.

5. Recommendations in respect of honoraria

5.1 It was recommended that a payment of £290 be made to the Branch Auditor in recognition of his services. This was approved at the six meetings 4-0, 4-0, 5-0, 2-0, 1-0, 5-0.

6. Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

6.1 The list of officer nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix I was received.

7. Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

7.1 The list of steward nominations received before the deadline and set out in Appendix II was received.

8. Election of representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)

8.1 The proposed nominations for the all the ScottishPower Company posts set out in Appendix III were agreed.

9. Motions

9.1 No motions were presented

10. Guest Speakers

10.1 There were no guest speakers

11. Open Forum

11.1 Jim Brown asked about noticeboards and commented that the branch and stewards should encourage their use and use them to promote the activities of the union.

11.2 Jim Brown encouraged the branch to ensure there was adequate cover for representatives to ensure that the branch was fully represented at all joint company meetings and appropriate succession planning for branch officer and steward positions. In particular he was concerned at the high number of vacancies in Energy Networks.

11.3 There was considerable discussion at all meeting about the current Energy Retail VSS process and in particular:

11.2.1 Whether the application of different VSS packages for members based on their pension arrangements was discriminatory. The Branch Secretary confirmed that we had received legal advice that although the scheme may be regarded as discriminatory, the discrimination was against younger employees who were not in the final salary pension scheme but it is likely the company could successfully argue this is acceptable based on legal precedence.

11.2.2 There as concern expressed about members being approached at their desks to make decisions on VSS. Members were advised that the trade union has made representations about this and the practise should have ceased.

Motions

Motion A - Update to Branch Expenses Policy

This Annual General Meeting agrees to update the Manweb Branch Expense Policy to the following:

UNISON MANWEB BRANCH POLICY ON REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

1. Members are entitled to claim expenses from Unison in accordance with National Rules and Branch Policy.
2. The general principle relating to expenses is that expenditure should have been incurred and that payment is by way of reimbursement.

Detailed below is a summary of the current rates and rules governing reimbursements for stewards, officers and members. The full rules are detailed in the National document "Honoraria Payments and Expenses" as amended from time to time.

PRIVATE CAR

Travel by private car is reimbursed at the HMRC rate in force at the time of travel for members attending meetings on trade union business. Members giving lifts to other members are entitled to a supplement of 5p on the above rate for each member carried. Members receiving lifts are not entitled to reimbursement.

TAXIS

Taxis should only be used when public transport is not available, for carrying heavy luggage, where disability requires it or where personal safety is at real risk. Receipts must be provided for all journeys taken by taxi. If receipts have been mislaid etc, then a brief explanation must accompany the claim concerned. No payment for taxi journeys will be made unless these criteria are met.

ACCOMMODATION

Overnight en-suite B&B accommodation will either be paid for directly by the branch or will be reimbursed (minus any deposit the branch has already paid) supported with a receipt up to a maximum of £75.000 (£90.00 in London). Any booking in excess of £75 will only be refunded in exceptional circumstances and by prior or subsequent agreement of the Branch Committee.

SUBSISTENCE

This is reimbursed on the basis set out in the National Rules and summarised below. You may claim either non-receipted or receipted reimbursement but not both. Where the claimant is attending a seminar or other such event where meals are centrally provided, £15 per dinner and £5 per lunch must be deducted from the amount claimed:

Overnight stay

- £38 (=£40 less £2 tax) for each complete 24 hour period plus the appropriate receipted or non-receipted allowance for the remaining period

No overnight stay (non-receipted)

- For periods away from home/work over 5 hours - £5
- For periods away from home/work over 10 hours - £10
- In addition to above if returning home after 8:30pm a dinner allowance of £15

No overnight stay (receipted)

- Breakfast: when leaving home before 7.00am – up to £5.45
- Lunch: where absence from their normal place of home / work is between 12:00pm and 2:00pm – up to £7.10
- Dinner: when returning home after 8:30pm – up to £20.15 (excluding alcohol)

CHILDCARE OR DEPENDENT ADULT (up to 17 years of age)

Where a child or dependent adult requires home care an allowance of up to £16 per night rate can be claimed. The name and address of the carer must accompany all receipts.

LOSS OF EARNINGS

Any Branch delegates to the National Delegate Conference or National Service Group Conference who are denied a period of paid release from their employer to attend the conference will be entitled to claim for Loss of earnings. Loss of earnings compensation for attendance at any other approved trade union activity will be subject prior agreement by the BEC. Loss of earnings can only be reimbursed upon production of an official letter from the employer stating the date of unpaid leave and the net amount deducted from your salary.

Officer and Steward Reports

Branch Committee Report

Introduction

In the run up to the next General Election the debate on Energy policies is likely to intensify as the public grow increasingly angry that the private energy market appears to be geared to rewarding directors and large shareholders at the expense of ordinary people who face higher bills and poor service.

Fuels bills in 2014 were up between 1% and 6.5% compared to 2013 after the companies made some minor reductions in the massive hikes announced at the end of 2013. This action followed a public outcry which led the government to promise to reduce certain "green" obligations. Since then, despite a halving oil prices from over \$100 a barrel to around \$50, the Big 6 - who were happy to put up prices when the cost of oil went up - have dithered. After several months of falling oil prices they have finally offered some minor adjustments to fuel costs of just a few percent – trivial by comparison to the 50% reduction in oil costs.

The Labour Party pledge to cap energy prices raises the prospect of a direct confrontation between the Energy Industry and the government. UNISON's demand that the industry is brought back into public ownership is the only way in which the conflict between the vested interests of shareholders and the public need for affordable energy can be resolved.

In ScottishPower the company decision to deploy a major new billing system in parallel with running a year-long VSS programme - which has seen upwards of 350 long-standing and experienced call centre staff made redundant - has provide to be a big mistake. ScottishPower has been pilloried in the press for appalling customer service levels and staff who have been told one minute that they are not needed have then been asked to work overtime evenings and weekends to make up for the shortcomings and failures of the new system.

Many of those who have been selected for redundancy have been asked to stay on for many more months to cope with the backlog and it is only because of the hard work and commitment of UNISON members across the call centre that the company is not facing even greater public opprobrium.

In Energy Networks activity has been dominated by the restructure and the RDO dispute with the industrial staff which has delayed pay negotiations

UNISON successfully won a campaign to prevent compulsory redundancies in the outsourced IT workforce in IBM although up to 20% of staff agreed to take voluntary redundancy during 2014.

Energy Retail

2014 ended with some of our friends & colleagues leaving ScottishPower after the VSS announcement back December 2013. Staff left throughout the year with the bulk from both North & South gone by the end of November 2014.

We have encountered the same problems as the previous year regarding the introduction of the new SAP billing system which has seen all of ScottishPower's customers being migrated on to the new system. Whether certain defects are now fixed or staff's hard work and getting used to using the system is starting to pay off time will only tell.

Lay reps from UNISON North & South met with senior Managers and Directors after a news article was published with a ScottishPower spokesperson being quoted as saying "staff have not adapted to the new system as quickly as was hoped". Management advised the reps that this was so far from the truth and the article only used a small part of a transcript provided. They also advised that they know how hard ScottishPower staff have worked in challenging circumstances.

Energy Retail staff are just entering the second year of a three year pay deal, which will see an average of 2.5% being distributed in accordance with the pay matrix with the possibility of an extra 0.5% being awarded again depending on ScottishPower reaching certain goals.

As usual our reps in Energy Retail have worked extremely hard throughout the year dealing with all the usual issues - MAP, disciplinary, grievances and performance management, along with the VSS as mentioned above. We have also lost some of our reps to VSS who have taken the opportunity to retire or seek pastures new. We will of course take the opportunity at the forthcoming Annual General Meetings to give our formal thanks for all their hard work and time which as we know is so precious to everyone, We will also wish to take time in welcoming the new reps who are coming forward to fill the vacancies and taking up the challenge of training as stewards and representing members.

As in previous years we know that this coming year will be just as challenging for everyone at ScottishPower but hopefully the company will continue to grow and employees will share in the wealth with higher pay awards in the future. We will need to stand together as a union to make sure that our Terms & Conditions are kept at a level that we have become accustomed to and that if any attempt is made to erode them then members will give their full backing to any campaign to defend what we have fought so hard to win over many years.

Energy Networks

Restructure

This has been another difficult year of change with the business currently in the middle of another restructure. The trade unions have helped to ensure that there will be no job losses but the reorganisation means that some people will have to change roles and in some cases move locations as we see a movement back to districts. Any members needing representation during this process should contact one of their local union reps.

Pay

Having come to the end of a three year deal last year we had hoped to be able to report on progress with the next round of pay negotiations which should have started in the Autumn of 2014. These have however been held up due to the current dispute between the company and the industrial unions over company attempts to remove the Rostered Day Off (RDO) agreement. At present this remains to be settled but once this dispute is over all unions will get round the table and the negotiations can get underway.

IBM

Redundancies

A significant chunk of IT activity in 2014 was focused on the final stages of the implementation of the FIS project and the subsequent decommissioning of many legacy applications. With the bulk of SAP support and development work carried out in India and Spain and following the conclusion of detailed contractual discussions between IBM and Iberdrola, IBM announced plans for a major redundancy exercise starting in April. The proposal to reduce the workforce by 20% to just 193 employees in a 4-6 week period was a significant challenge, especially as it included a threat of compulsory redundancies.

We made it clear that any move to compulsory redundancies would end up in a direct confrontation with members who would take action to defend jobs. After intense discussions IBM agreed to work with the trade unions to achieve reductions on a voluntary basis and after several extensions the 4-6 week timeline became 4 months and all redundancies were achieved on a voluntary basis.

Pay

2014 also represented the final year of the three year pay deal and pay increases of between 1.5% and 3% depending on performance. The next set of negotiations is likely to start in the spring of 2015 as the current pay agreement ends on 30th June 2015.

More TUPE?

Further significant challenges may arise in 2015 after Iberdrola announced their intention to put the Project Services element of IBM's contract out to open tender. We have launched a strong public campaign to challenge this plan urging Iberdrola to abandon any plans to introduce 1970's style demarcation zones in their IT operation. Such a change would artificially divide a highly successful and integrated workforce with thousands of years of combined experience. It would represent a further attempt to weaken trade union organization putting terms and conditions at risk, create additional overheads, reduce efficiency and demoralize a workforce which has seen three different employers in the last 5 years.

Branch Office

The Branch once again renewed our contract with the United Utilities UNISON Branch for provision of branch support services from the UU UNISON Branch Office. We have been supported by Diane Rimmer who provides full time branch admin support for both our branch and the United Utilities UNISON Branch and Sharon Travis who provides additional part-time support.

The Branch Website which can be found at www.unison-manweb.org.uk contains the contact details for the branch as well as a range of other basic information which will hopefully provide help and guidance to members needing advice and representation. If you have any suggestions for additional information and ideas to help make this a first point of contact for any queries then please email any comments to the unison-manweb@btconnect.com.

In order to keep UNISON's membership records up to date please can you check your membership details are correct? You can view and update your membership records by logging onto to www.unison.org.uk and clicking onto the box on the right hand side "Update your details, Members login here". Hopefully the process should be relatively straightforward but if you do get any problems please contact your local steward.

Representation in the wider union

Each year representatives from the Manweb branch attend meetings and conferences at Regional and National level to ensure that our voice is heard in the wider union and the branch is able to participate in discussions and debates with colleagues across the country. The following is a summary of some key activities we have participated in:

National Energy Conference – Brighton - June 2014

UNISON branch delegates from all Energy companies met to debate and agree policy at the annual conference in June last year. Branch delegates included Irene Adams, Peggy Rice and Christine Dempsey. There were debates on Call Centre working, Stress in the workplace, Offshoring, Equality and recruitment. Climate Change Secretary Ed Davey was invited to the conference and was put under strong pressure over the government's appalling record on fuel poverty.

National Delegate Conference – Brighton - June 2014

This is where delegates from UNISON branches across the country meet to debate and agree UNISON's National policy and where the national union leadership has to report on their activity over the previous 12 months. Irene Adams attended this 4 day conference which considered a wide range of issues from public services and pensions through to national and international issues. Delegates agreed to campaign on a wide range of issue include zero hours contracts, opposition to continued NHS privatisation, improved pay and to challenge the racist and divisive policies of groups like EDL and UKIP.

Energy Branch Seminar – Chester – November 2014

This is a seminar held each year for delegates from Energy Branches to discuss matters of common interest and share ideas and experiences about a range of issue affecting members in the energy industry. Peggy Rice, Angela Porthouse, Irene Adams and Andy Jones attended from our branch and took part in discussions on Fuel Poverty, recruitment and organising.

David Read
Branch Secretary

Finance Officer Report

During 2014 the profile of the branch has changed somewhat due to redundancy programmes in ScottishPower and IBM. The upshot of this is that branch numbers have now fallen below 400. With the associated drop in income the efforts over the past couple of years to rationalise branch activities by agreeing a shared service arrangement with the United Utilities Branch and moving our meetings to a more cost effective venue have gained sharper importance.

We continue to look for further ways to ensure that our financial operations remain sustainable, a particular focus on recruitment gaining renewed importance.

I cannot let the AGM pass without mentioning the contribution of Eddie Rothwell our branch bookkeeper who is standing down after many years of sterling service and would like to place on record my personal thanks for his kind assistance whilst I have been treasurer which has been invaluable and for his long association with and efforts on behalf of the branch.

Thankfully Eddie will still be involved as he has agreed to take on the role as one of the Branch Auditors.

Tom Gibbons
Branch Treasurer

Equality Officer Report

The last 12 months have brought several challenges. Flexible working is an important benefit to members which helps them manage work-life balance. I have helped push for the benefits of Flexible Working Hours to be made available helping members to seek positions in different departments so Flexible Working Hours can be continued.

We have also encountered issues with opportunities for staff to progress their career by applying for higher graded jobs. With the increased use of agency staff this has become quite a challenge and there is much work still to be done on this matter.

If you have any Equality issues you believe need to be tackled then please contact me.

Irene Adams

Irene.Adams@spenergynetworks.co.uk

Membership Service Officer Report

Recruiting new members has not been easy over the last 12 months as the company is increasingly relying on the use of agency staff to fill posts. It is understandable that many agency staff do not recognise the importance of union membership for a number of reasons.

We are however actively encouraging all agency staff to join the union so we can help represent them in formal procedures. In addition UNISON nationally has recognition agreements with a number of agencies so we may have additional rights to negotiate on a wider range of options.

If you are working with long standing ScottishPower employees who have not joined a union then please encourage them to join UNISON as the importance of strength in numbers as a means to improving the outcome of negotiations cannot be emphasised enough.

Irene Adams

Irene.Adams@spenergynetworks.co.uk

Warrington Stewards Report

As representatives here in Warrington we are increasingly facing issues regarding workloads and the impact of this on our Members. Our work as Level 3 Complaint handlers has seen a vast increase in complaint volumes since the implementation of SAP. Due to those volumes, technical issues and minimal training offered, there has been an increase in the levels of stress within the Contact Centre and this in turn has increased sickness rates. Our role has been mainly to support members during Managing Attendance hearings and ensuring that are members are aware of the recent changes within the company agreement relating to the sickness policy.

We are also trying to relay to members the importance of agreeing to realistic targets in their objectives, advising of the appeals process if they believe that unfair targets have been set. Unfortunately due to the recent agreement regarding complaint handling between the CEO and the Energy Ombudsman, there is even more pressure on members to turn over the work as quickly as possible to ensure that targets set by Higher Management are met.

We do communicate regularly with the Management Team here who have been made aware of the pressure facing staff, however collectively members need to work together and ensure they are not agreeing to unrealistic and unachievable targets by utilising the appeals process.

Christine Dempsey (Steward)

Appendix I - Officer Nominations 2015

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Chair | Joe Morgan |
| Vice-Chairperson | Sylvia Fox |
| Secretary | Dave Read |
| Treasurer | Tom Gibbons |
| Branch Auditor (1) | Jim Brown |
| Branch Auditor (2) | Eddie Rothwell |
| Education co-ordinator | Sally Williams |
| Lifelong learning co-ordinator | Sally Williams |
| Equalities Co-ordinator | Irene Adams |
| Health and Safety Officer | Sally Williams |
| Communications Officer | Andy Jones |
| International Officer | Stephen O'Connor |
| Membership Officer | Irene Adams |
| Young Members Officer | Mike Hanmer |
| Welfare Officer | Sylvia Fox |
| Labour Link Officer | Mike Kay |
| Retired Members Secretary | Shirley Vickery and Jim Brown |
| Sports and Social Officer | Angela Porthouse |
| LGBT Officer | <i>Vacancy</i> |

Appendix II - Steward Nominations 2015

| Business | Location | Posts | Nominations |
|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|--|
| Energy Networks | Prenton | 3 | Irene Adams Geoff Littler Joe Morgan |
| | Aberystwyth | 1 | |
| | Caernarfon | 1 | |
| | Chester | 1 | |
| | Liverpool | 1 | |
| | Llandudno | 1 | |
| | Mold | 1 | |
| | Oswestry | 1 | |
| | Rhostyllen | 1 | |
| Energy Retail CSC | Warrington CSC | 6 | Michael Kay Sylvia Fox Sally Williams |
| | Rhos CSC | 5 | Dana Davies Michael Hanmer Andy McEwan |
| | Lpool Direct Sales | 1 | |
| | Home Based Members | 1 | |
| Energy Retail Dataserve | Warrington | 2 | |
| | Rhostyllen | 1 | |
| IBM | Queensferry | 2 | Dave Read Tom Gibbons |

Appendix III – Steward Nominations to Company Bodies 2015

| Company Body | Posts |
|--|-------|
| ScottishPower Company Council | 1 |
| | 2 |
| ScottishPower Company Health and Safety Forum | 1 |
| | 2 |
| ScottishPower Pensions Forum | 1 |
| Energy Networks Company Council | 1 |
| Energy Retail Joint Negotiating and Consultative Forum | 1 |
| | 2 |
| Sales, Services & Marketing Consultative Forum | 1 |
| | 2 |
| | 3 |
| Operations Joint Consultative Forum | 1 |
| | 2 |
| Learning and Development Forum | 1 |
| IBM Company Council | 1 |
| | 2 |