

52nd ANNUAL REPORT



Manweb Branch

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

2023

AGM meetings will be held by Teams Invite

**Tuesday 7th March 2023
12:00 and 15:00**

**Thursday 9th March 2023
12:00 and 15:00**

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AGENDA 2023

1. Chairpersons Welcome
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. Energy Retail
 - b. Energy Networks
 - c. Branch Secretaries
 - d. Retired Members Secretary
 - e. Finance Report to be approved by meeting (Separate document)
5. Election of Branch Officers (See Appendix I)
6. Election of Branch Stewards (See Appendix II)
7. Election of Representatives of Company Bodies (See Appendix III)
8. Re-appointment of Branch Health and Safety Reps (See Appendix IV)
9. Motions
10. Open Forum / Questions

Chairperson's Welcome (Agenda Item 1)

Dear Members, welcome to the AGM of the Manweb Branch of Unison.

This year the AGMs are again being held via Teams meetings. There are four AGMs in total, two on 7th March and two on 9th March you are welcome to join any meeting. If it's not one thing, it's another. I address you today, three Prime Ministers and two Monarchs on from our last AGM. Covid hasn't quite gone away however if we thought that we were getting back to normal, how wrong we were. The war between Russia and Ukraine has caused economies around the world to suffer with massive increases in Gas prices leading to an economic crisis resulting in the highest inflation and interest rates for fourteen years. Our members are facing higher fuel bills, higher mortgage or rental payments, increased food prices and these are just the essentials.

It is fair to say that wage increases aren't keeping up with inflation and unions across the UK are working hard to achieve fair pay increases for their members. Strikes are in the news on a daily basis as members show their dissatisfaction with the offers the government and employers are offering.

Our own industry is going through an extremely difficult period at the moment with increased wholesale prices causing many smaller retailers to close and higher bills causing financial worries for all customers. Unison continues to campaign for the government to review the energy market, adopt a national programme of energy efficiency measures to get every home to have an energy performance rating of C and to prevent suppliers from putting in pre-payment meters for those who are finding it hard to pay their bills.

As pay talks look to commence within our business, Unison has the strength to negotiate the best possible terms for our members. If someone you work with is not a member, encourage them to join now so we can be stronger still. There is no better time to join Unison. Thank you for your continued support during 2022 and here's to a successful 2023.

Geoff Littler (Branch Chair)

First meeting 12PM & Second meeting 3PM

Date	1 st March 2021	
Location	Via TEAMS	
Present	<p>Angela Porthouse (Joint Branch Secretary)</p> <p>Nicky Millar (Joint Branch Treasurer)</p> <p>Dave Read (Retired Members Sec)</p> <p>Steve O'Connor (Chair) – (Joint Branch Secretary)</p>	<p>Jean Jones - Michelle Culshaw Sharon Gumley - Sharon Evans Christalla Buoey - Anthony Edwards Nicky Davies - Dave Watts Angela Jones - Keith Davies Stuart Jones - Neil Marston</p>
In Attendance	Vic Walsh (UNISON) - Janet Caulfield (UNISON)	

Meeting Notes based on agenda

1. Chairperson's opening address

Steve O'Connor took the Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending and referred members to the Chairpersons address on the opening page of the Annual Report.

2. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

The minutes were agreed.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

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

4.1 Branch Committee

The report was received.

4.2 Finance Report

The accounts were agreed unanimously.

4.3 Other reports

None received

5. Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)
6. Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)
7. Election of representatives to company bodies (Appendix III)
8. Appointment of H&S reps (Appendix IV)
9. Motions from the Annual Report
10. Open Forum

First meeting 1PM & Second meeting 4PM

Date	3 rd March 2022	
Location	Via TEAMS	
Present	David Read (Retired Members Secretary) Geoff Littler (Chair) Steve O'Connor (Joint Branch Secretary)	Nathan Clare - Stephen Jackson Mark Bancroft - Michelle Culshaw Yvonne Lucy - Pam Barker Anna Bromilow - Pauline Scotland Sharon Robinson - Lorraine Manning Darren Lynskey - Vikki Young
In Attendance	Janet Caulfield (UNISON) – Vic Walsh (UNISON)	

Meeting Notes based on agenda

11. Chairperson's opening address

Geoff Littler took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending. He introduced Janet Caulfield (UNISON) and Vic Walsh (FTO – UNISON).

Geoff also gave and supplemented the Chairpersons address as set out in the Annual Report.

12. Confirm the minutes of last year's AGM

The minutes were agreed.

13. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

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

4.4 Branch Committee

This report was received

4.5 Finance Report

The Branch Secretary gave a brief update on the key financial reports.

The accounts were agreed unanimously

4.6 Other Reports –

None received

15. Election of Branch Officers (Appendix I)

16. Election of Branch Stewards (Appendix II)

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

18. Appointment of H&S reps (Appendix IV)

Energy Retail (Agenda item 4a)

As reported in last year's AGM, some of our senior reps had been involved in consultation with the company over their proposals to reduce staffing levels throughout the business. Although this had started in December 2021, the actual figures proposed were not given until a meeting held in June 2022, where it was revealed that 299 staff would be classed as "at risk", along with all I&C staff due to the announcement a bit earlier, that S/P were pulling out of that type of work. Although there were no compulsory redundancies made, this was done in a very different manner to previous V/R's. Staff had to apply for their own job in some cases, and in other cases there was no need due to staff wanting to leave & others being matched. Although we still have a few of these staff members still with us, after the company asked for some to stay on, the vast majority left between Christmas & New Year. We would like to thank all our members who have left for their support in the past and wish them all the best of luck, in whatever the future holds for them.

There was some good news to come out of 2022, our senior reps, after years of trying to get this sorted out finally got a resolution, which seen the uplifting of 99 staff from band 2 to band 3, in the first instance for staff completing higher levels of complaints. There was also recognition for a further 34 agents who were completing this type of work from 01/04/2020 until they either got another role or were promoted, as well as two years back pay for these agents. We also managed to get any overtime that had been worked in the same period paid back as well, unfortunately, we had to do this via a collective grievance.

With the current pay deal due to finish on 31st March 2023, we have started negotiations with the company & other Trade Unions, to hopefully secure a pay rise that will be welcome by all, we hope that by the time we have our AGMs, any proposals may be already sent to members to consider voting for or against via a ballot.

Energy Networks (Agenda item 4b)

The 2022 pay negotiations were completed with a 7% increase in salaries. A claim has already been sent to the company for a pay increase from 1st April 2023. Talks will be arranged soon to start the process.

Unison is a major player in the structure of Business Forums and Negotiation committees within Networks. We are looking for new stewards to get involved and be part of our team. Please come forward to support us and your colleagues.

Branch Secretaries' Report (Agenda item 4c)

WOW! What about the last 12 months? Three PM's, three deputy PM's, multiple chancellors, and the Tory cabinet being re-shuffled more times than a deck of cards. The Tories have made a total hash of everything, from an "oven ready" Brexit deal, which now turns out not worth the paper it's printed on, and costing the UK approximately £40 Billion in lost tax per year, let's not mention that they crashed the economy, gave their friends & colleagues lucrative contracts via VIP Lane for PPE, we have the highest taxes in 70 years, one of the highest inflation rates, and more strike action taking place since the 70's & 80's, but none of it is their fault, but

we have to pay. UNISON has been at the heart of most of the action whether it's been directly, by supporting our members on the picket line, or indirectly, offering support to other unions who are also going through industrial action.

Here in the MANWEB branch of ScottishPower we have had our own fair share of troubles, what with the extraordinary wholesale costs, which has seen the price of gas & electric increase by 120% in April & October, with the wholesale costs now decreasing it is hoped that this will in turn decrease customer bills, but like everything, companies are very quick to pass on the increase to gain profit, but are very slow in reducing it back to the levels it should be.

As D-Ream once said "Things can only get better" we hope!

We would also like to pass on our thoughts not only to the people of Ukraine, who are still fighting a war that they didn't want, but also to the people of Turkey & Syria after the devastating earthquakes that happened just a few weeks ago.

Steve O'Connor and Angela Porthouse (Joint Branch Secretaries)

Retired Members Secretary Report (Agenda item 4d)

Since our last AGM I have continued to pursue a group claim to the Pensions Ombudsman on behalf of former IT workers in our branch who were, in our view, significantly underpaid compensation in relation to their pension entitlements when made redundant in June 2020. It took the Ombudsman over 6 months from February to August 2022 before they finally provided an update on our case which we had originally submitted in September 2021. They had been waiting for IBM to respond to our claim and have sent me IBM's latest position.

I had to review IBM's detailed and, in our view, speculative and misleading response and set out our challenges to their comments. This was sent back to the Ombudsman within a week or so of receipt of IBM's position and the entire claim was finally allocated to a Case Assessor. However, after further chasing, it appears that the Ombudsman is now seeking more information from IBM and it is not certain how long this will take. We will continue to follow this and chase where necessary as well as keeping members informed of any developments.

The other long standing and complex issue, which remains ongoing, arises from a Lloyds High Court Case in October 2018 and relates to potential discrimination against a number of retired female members who were active members of the Manweb Pension Scheme between April 1978 and April 1997. We have had no further update from the Trustees of the Pension Scheme but hope that further updates will be forthcoming in the future. It is not clear what level of compensation can be expected at this stage, although it is not necessarily going to be a large amount per person.

I attended the Northwest Region Retired Members AGM in January 2023 and was elected to the Regional Retired Members Committee. At the first meeting of the committee I was nominated and elected to the position of Treasurer – quite by surprise!! I am advised that the role is not especially challenging so hope this is the case.

I have also been thinking about trying to set up a retired members section in our branch. We have a significant number of retired members in the branch so if any retired members are interested in getting involved in this then please let me know.

Dave Read (Retired Members Secretary)

Appendix I – Officer Nominations 2023

Position	Nominee
Chair	Geoff Littler
Vice-Chairperson	<i>Vacancy</i>
Secretary (Shared)	Steve O'Connor, Angela Porthouse
Treasurer	Dana Davies
Education co-ordinator	Dana Davies
Lifelong learning co-ordinator	Dana Davies
Equalities Co-ordinator	<i>Vacancy</i>
Health and Safety Officer	Angela Porthouse
Communications Officer	Stephen Jackson
International Officer	Stephen O'Connor
Membership Officer	Nicola Bishop
Young Members Officer	<i>Vacancy</i>
Welfare Officer	Angela Porthouse
Labour Link Officer	Dana Davies
Retired Members Secretary	Dave Read
Sports and Social Officer	<i>Vacancy</i>
LGBT Officer	Callum Giblin

Appendix II – Steward Nominations 2023

Business	Location	Posts	Nominations	
Energy Networks	Prenton	3	Geoff Littler	
			Steve Jackson	
			<i>Vacancy</i>	
	Liverpool	1	Callum Giblin	
	Llandudno Junction	1	<i>Vacancy</i>	
	Rhostyllen	1	<i>Vacancy</i>	
Energy Retail CSC	Warrington CSC	5	Angela Porthouse	
			Steve O'Connor	
			Karen McCabe	
			<i>Vacancy</i>	
			<i>Vacancy</i>	
	Rhos CSC	4	Dana Davies	
			Nicola Bishop	
			<i>Vacancy</i>	
				<i>Vacancy</i>
		Home Based Members	1	<i>Vacancy</i>
Energy Retail Dataserve	Warrington		<i>N/A</i>	
Everis	Home Working	1	Mark Bancroft	
TCS	Warrington	1	<i>Vacancy</i>	

Appendix III – Steward Nominations to Company Bodies 2023

Company Body	Posts
ScottishPower Company Council	Steve O'Connor Geoff Littler
ScottishPower Company Health and Safety Forum	Steve O'Connor Geoff Littler
ScottishPower Pensions Forum	Steve O'Connor
Energy Networks Company Council	Geoff Littler
Energy Retail Business Forum	Steve O'Connor Angela Porthouse
C.S & S Consultative Forum	Nicola Bishop Dana Davies
Operations Consultative Forum	

Appendix IV - Reappointment of H&S reps 2023

Business	Location	Nominations
Energy Networks	Prenton	Tracey Thompson
		Geoff Littler
		<i>Vacancy</i>
	Liverpool	Yvonne Lucy
Llandudno Junction		<i>Vacancy</i>
	Rhostyllen	<i>Vacancy</i>
Energy Retail CSC	Warrington CSC	Angela Porthouse
		Steve O'Connor
		Nicky Millar
	Rhos CSC	Nicola Bishop
		Dana Davies
		<i>Vacancy</i>
	<i>Vacancy</i>	
TCS	Warrington	<i>Vacancy</i>

Item 9 - Motions

Rule Change -

Rule Change –