



Branch Newsletter

July 2013
ISSUE No 80

The truth and final conclusions on the demise of a Trust Board that NHS patients, staff and public all placed their trust in

Unison Calls for Accountability Following the Marsh Report

Today has been very significant with the release of Dr. Anthony Marsh's report, commissioned by the NHS Trust Development Agency, after concerns were raised by MPs in the region.

This report is highly critical of the Trust and the scale of the problems that were known about at board level, if not before, then certainly from July 2011; when Peter Bradley, the former National Ambulance Director visited to offer advice, his advice was not applied.

The implications of the Marsh report are likely to be as far reaching as the Francis report for this Trust, and there are several things UNISON has noted.

Back door privatisation

Given the recent appointment of the new sector leader for Essex, with strong ties to Private Ambulance providers as well as our Director of Operations declared interest. It is hard to understand why the Trust has continually chosen to have a long term recruitment freeze, with declining levels of performance, and at the same time increased its use/reliance on PAS/VAS.

Branch and MPs have commented on the decision of Andrew Morgan to employ a senior manager with such strong links to private providers.

We are asking Andrew Morgan to show us the evidence that the Trust is reducing their reliance on private providers – and after comments in the media from Thames Ambulance Group – this information needs to include details of any long term contracts the Trust has signed.

Anthony Marsh is of the opinion the management review has not gone far enough. There needs to be more resources on the frontline and a stripping out of excess layers of managers.

Too many RRV's and not enough Ambulances... who is accountable?

Anthony Marsh also criticises the rota redesign process, that was 'handled badly, further eroding morale.'

There are also, 'too many RRV's and not enough Ambulances.' Quite crucial things for an Ambulance Service, as well as being the only Ambulance Service to ever fail a CQC on care and welfare.

Anthony Marsh speaks of a 'lack of accountability' and 'limited urgency and pace moving forwards.' As well as the welcomed comment, 'Board members have not been held to account as robustly as I believe is required when an organisation is in a position as this.'

UNISON would publically ask the remaining board members to think hard over their positions in the Trust, and their personal accountability for the scope of the failings.

'In the current situation, it is not possible for the Trust to achieve FT status in 2013/14.' This is another very welcome comment. A focus on FT above patient care and welfare led to the horrendous failing in Mid Staffs. The phrase from that report rings true for our Trust, 'It's not that the failings were not known, they were ignored.'

Thanks to the work of staff and MPs, especially Norman Lamb MP, the truth about EEAST is exposed. Let's hope things can now move forwards with patient safety at the front of our minds.

Steve Imrie

Branch Chair

Fraer Stevenson

UNISON Women's Officer

Fraer.stevenson@gmail.com

Question time at Westminster....

Westminster Hall Tuesday 25th June 2013

East of England Ambulance Service – selected quotes

Peter Aldous MP Waveney:

'The trickle of complaints became a torrent. When an elderly lady suffered a stroke, the paramedics and rapid response vehicle arrived within 10 or 15 minutes, but the ambulance to take her to hospital did not arrive for another 105 minutes.'

'Staff I met were dedicated professionals, but they were worn down by the pressures of the job. Their pleas for understanding to the trust's senior management fell on deaf ears.'

'There were too many cars and not enough ambulances. There is concern that the cars are used to reach patients quickly and to meet targets—effectively acting as clock-stoppers.'

Robert Halfon MP Harlow:

'The board must be refreshed, replacing those members with people who have a proven track record of driving up standards.'

'The worker made the important point that we need more ambulances on the road, telling me that the rapid response vehicles were only being used to ensure that targets were hit. To deliver the best patient care, according to the worker, rapid response vehicles should be in addition to ambulances, not a replacement for them.'

That view is held across the trust, with more than 300 staff supporting a move calling on the management to claim the A19 target only when an ambulance arrives.'

Anna Soubry. Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health:

'There are too many stories—we have heard many today—of patients in distress having to wait hours for ambulances, or solo paramedics being sent when an ambulance is needed. Solo paramedics cannot transport patients.'

'Concentrating resources in towns and effectively abandoning people in the countryside is simply unacceptable.'

'There is a clear feeling of anger—that is no criticism at all; it is based on frustration.'

'It is just that it is now being exposed, often through the admirable work of Members of Parliament and because of the work of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health. That is a mates culture, where people's priority is to protect their mates, systems and procedures, as opposed to what should be the absolute priority for somebody in the NHS, which is to protect the patient—not their friends and the structures, but the patient.'

Dr Therese Coffey MP Suffolk Coastal:

'The trust has been dragged kicking and screaming into showing its performance targets in a meaningful way—first by county, now at clinical commissioning group level—but that took a long time. It used to say, "You can look in the minutes of your local primary care trust to find response times." It is unacceptable for those at the very top to say, "Well, that's all right; we're hitting our regional target."

'In October 2012, Hayden Newton resigned. Coincidentally, that was a week after a series of complaints. However, Newton was still on the payroll until the end of March 2013, and the chair at the time gave him a glowing tribute, saying that he would be greatly missed and

"a hard act to follow"

...and that under his leadership, front-line staff were still being recruited and quality of care had improved. The chair also said:

"Thanks to Hayden's stewardship, EEAST is now a stable, sustainable and financially sound organisation".

I am afraid that the Marsh report blows that out of the water.'

Henry Bellingham MP North West Norfolk:

'If the trust was a company listed on the main stock exchange, the directors would have had to resign. It is staggering that they have somehow decided that it is okay to cling on to their jobs and stay.'

Priti Patel MP Witham:

'Before I run through many of the problems with the trust encountered by my constituents and I, and the challenges, including delays, response times, damning reports from the CQC and from Dr Anthony Marsh, I should like to begin on a positive note and pay tribute to the outstanding work undertaken by the front-line staff. Despite many problems with the trust and its board, the front-line staff have earned admiration and a great deal of respect from all our constituents. They work in difficult conditions, all made worse by the failure of the trust's board, but they continue to save lives daily.'
'Transparency and accountability are key things. "Whose interests the board is serving. It should be putting patients first. By choosing to remain in post they are putting their own interests above those of the public, patients and front-line staff.'

'With the board and the trust, we have seen a complete failure of not only leadership, but skills; there is a question about the skills base of the board and the non-executive directors, and it is clear that they have failed in their duties and responsibilities. "It is scandalous that almost one third of patients needing to go to hospital by ambulance were left waiting. "The trust's board sat idly and did nothing while the situation got ever worse. The failures have led to the trust becoming the worst performing ambulance trust in the country. The statistics are terrible and the delays can have serious consequences for the lives of patients affected.' **'Members have experienced horrific delays, particularly across our rural constituencies. I know of delays in excess of two hours. That is unacceptable. Lives are put at risk. "The biggest danger to patients, which many hon. Members have experienced, is delays getting ambulances to them.'**

Richard Bacon MP South Norfolk:

'I have been the Member of Parliament for South Norfolk in the east of England for 12 years, and until the last year or two I do not recall people regularly writing to me with complaints about ambulance delays. I do not remember regularly turning up at meetings in the House where there were 15 paramedics talking to the Minister, Earl Howe, facilitated by east of England MPs, because there was no possibility of their having a sensible conversation with the management of their own organisation. This is an extraordinary state of affairs and it requires radical reform. "Some have a calling to help at the roadside those who are in critical danger following dreadful accidents and those of us who are unfortunate enough to face near death. Imagine what it must be like to have that calling, to feel that one's life purpose and work is to help such people, to have the training of a practitioner in emergency medicine, but to have to hold someone who is dying because an ambulance trust does not work properly and those higher up let down the practitioners. What would be the reaction?

There would come a point when people would say.' **"I can't stand this any longer. I can't stand coming to work and failing people because those above me are failing me."**

Update on the A 19



The A19 Formal Grievance has now been submitted. Thank you to everyone that has signed in support. This has been widely supported by hundreds of staff, and a change in how we claim this target will really make a huge difference to patients in the trust and potentially beyond...

Now the grievance has been submitted, there is a need to keep the details confidential, which is a requirement of the Trust's policy although we will endeavour to keep you updated as to the stage (s) and the outcome.

Please follow the progress on the EEAS Unison Website:

<http://eeas-unison.com/index.php/component/content/article/1-latest-news/332-a19-hot-news>

UNISON is renowned for its effective Campaigning

At National, region and Local levels. UNISON can help staff to take ownership of issues and support them in devising and running their own campaigns. One of the main things to consider when planning a campaign is to look at the 'Allies' that share your concerns and aims, and potentially may help you to rally public support, and therefore ultimately, reach your goal.

UNISON has supported staff in North Norfolk, in their campaign against Ambulance reductions, and the A19. This support included helping them throughout the grievance process, liaising with the media, providing resources for them to travel to Parliament, and providing training, support and encouragement. If you'd like more details on how UNISON can support you with your campaigning, PLEASE speak to your local rep, county lead or UNISON Officers.

Note—General Campaigning advice can be found by following this link :

WWW.unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/campaigning/

Fraer Stevenson UNISON Women's Officer UNISON Workplace Representative—North Walsham.

Unison Membership

Membership fees are based around the salary level of the individual.

Employees who are within the membership Band A can expect to pay **£1.30 per month**.

Let us have a brief look...

What else can you purchase based upon £1.30?

£1.30 will satisfy your hunger with a large bag of chips on the market at Great Yarmouth

£1.30 will quench your thirst with a 330 ml bottle of Coke (Leaded or unleaded) **OR**

After three months

You could relax after work with a pint of Stella priced at **£3.90**

OR instead of that pint of Stella you could have:

Three bags of chips from the Great Yarmouth Chippie **OR**

Three 330 ml bottles of leaded or unleaded Coke **OR**

An employee in membership Band A could have 3 months membership....

After one year the options on what to spend £15.60 could include

One employee having a night out and drinking 4 Pints of Stella **OR**

12 employees could have chips from Great Yarmouth Market Place **OR**

One employee could guzzle a stomach fizzing twelve 330 ml bottles of Coke **OR**

ONE employee in membership Band A could have a year's membership of Unison...

How does this compare with higher paid employees?

An Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Q-SAP in Band H pays **£14.00 per month**

The monthly membership fee for an EMT / Q-SAP equates to **just 3 ½ pints of Stella**

A recent report in the Daily Telegraph covered an investigation into the plight of Celebrity Cruise Ship members of staff who earn a miserly \$600 a month. **This equates to only £1.30 an hour** and the UK minimum wage is £6.19 an hour.

Join online at joinunison.org or call free on 0800 171 2193

Jeff Pittman

Unison 20106

UNISON essential cover for you 

PRIDE EVENTS 2013



It's that time again when UNISON and the TRUST get together to attend Pride events

Essex Pride 22nd-23rd June.

London Pride 24th June.

Norwich Pride 27th July.

Brighton Pride 3rd August.

Herts Pride 31st August.

Every year a group of ambulance staff attend the prides in our region and further afield, we have a fantastic time whether we walk in the parades or just attend these events. This year will be no exception. Have you ever thought about going to a pride event? Why not come and join us at one of them. New faces always welcome.

Contact

Candy Tillson Unison LGBT officer 07508 111351

Paula Lacey Equality and Diversity 07804 593834

Craig Borrett Equality and Diversity 07716 890070

Dates subject to change, but up to date as far as we are aware.



PLAY OCTOPUS

Support your charity

Start playing the lottery now and you will be entered into our special prize draw to win a car

UNISONdrive

Everyone who is registered by **July 14th** will be entered into this special draw so sign up to play **OCTOPUS** lottery now!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Over 4,000 members are helped every year
- Since 1993 we have given over £10 million in financial assistance
- In the last 10 years we have seen a 64% increase in members needing our help

Over 50 cash prizes every month!

- £1,000 first prize
- £500 second prize
- £250 third prize
- And 50 prizes of £25 each

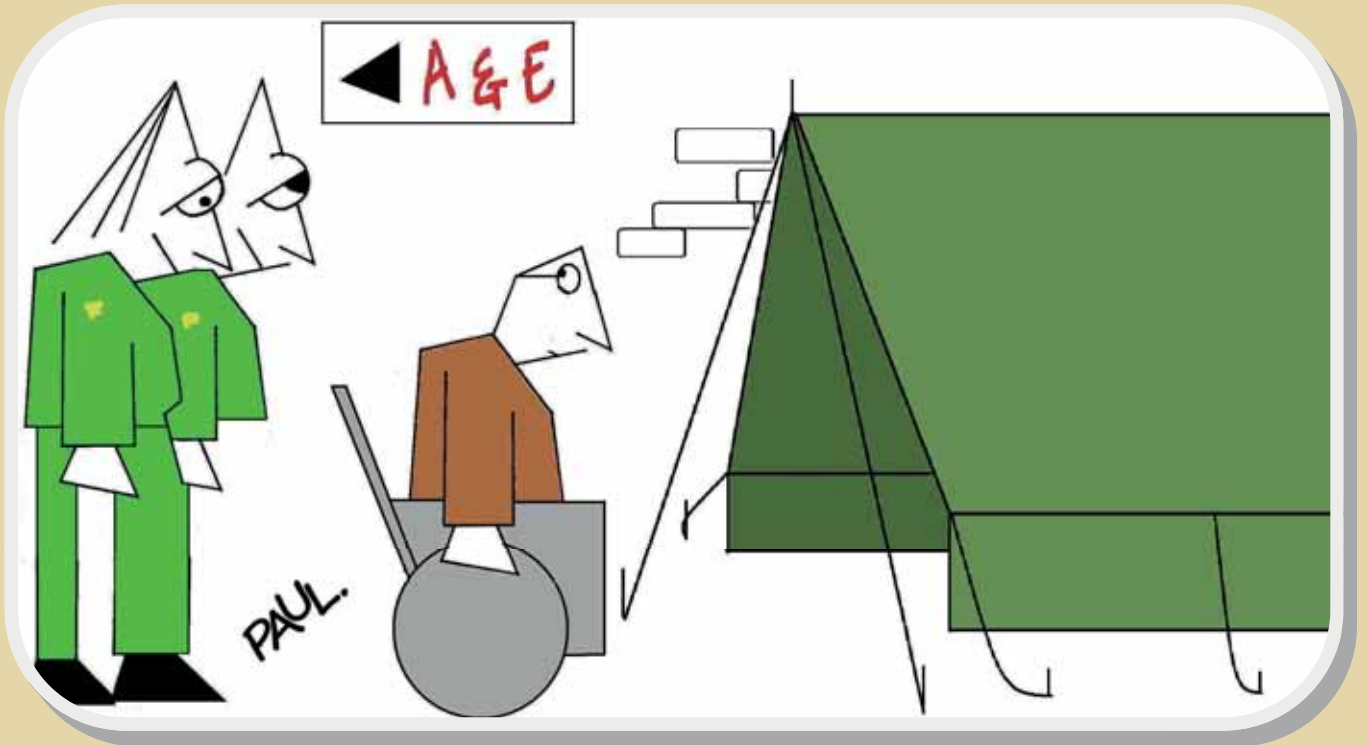
Winners can choose any new or used car from the UNISONdrive range up to the value of £8,000.00. Winner can opt to purchase a more expensive car and pay the difference themselves. Prize cannot be exchanged for cash or any alternative prize. Winner is responsible for paying their own motor insurance. All existing players and all new players registered by July 14th will be entered into the draw to win the car. The draw will take place on August 8th.

UNISON

For more information and an application form visit unison.org.uk/octopus or call **0207 121 5620**

there for you

Thinking outside the Box



Wow, what perception, is this a pre-cursor to a week in Provence or, don't tell me, your forward thinking visionary's have actually done their research and looked at me war records, Would you good folk mind if I spent a couple of nights under canvas; I thought MI 5 were on top of the job, but what with your secret operational strategy lean on information over privatisation you had me fooled right up to and including the time of your arrival, the wife got a bit alarmed with the different liveries going past the door, worried she might have to tip the driver, but the 4 hour wait and tour of the counties has made it all worthwhile; this all takes me back to the lads strategic landing at Monty Casino when we were all in it together, and I've been following your strategic direction in the EDP, what a good job it was that the local caretakers, the Suffolk 'Tractor boys' were not too busy "making the simple job more difficult", or been distracted by the mystical green shoots coming out from behind their ears, including the Norfolk lower decks up in the crows-nest capturing the signs of camouflaged vehicle movement of their resource over from Nelson's County to the urban enabling them to dig in and claim the high ground.

This military taskforce initiative sounds like an exiting opportunity, what with the forced landing imminent to plug the holes, and the reports of the Airborne Division parachutists already being drafted in, it all reminds me of them old days when it was 'backs to the wall' at El Alamein, but you understand the memory does fade. Being's you guys have time on your hands perhaps you would be kind enough to show me around, I'm not one for blowing my own trumpet but I'll need to know where the siren is and any hidden escape routes, as an accountable member of the central decision making committee responsible for faking decisions, I always was a bit of a dab hand at thinking outside or even inside the box when it came to working out how I could make good my escape when the going got a bit tacky.

Aside from the obvious, and either by accident or design, I hear you're tactically marking time with a few hundred frozen vacancies, what with the cuts I suppose these could be kept on ice and preserved into the next century, if not I don't want to push myself forward, or jump the queue as the 'call up' process escapes me, but when it comes to transformation roundabout plans my C.V for enlisting talks for England, (gagging orders excluded) you won't find me wanting if it means, support, backup and engagement, or ticking all my own self assessment boxes, of course we realised we had job enough to do without promoting the 'infighting' or the time to manufacture the 'sense of helplessness,' never mind the bonuses for doing it, we were just stuck with the accountability, those were the days when leaders were made leaders because they were their own person..... Well that's enough about that.

Anyway before you go, when stuck in the trenches inspecting the foundations, there is a tendency to bury your heads in the sand and lose a bit of focus, but like you guys I've been listening to the uplifting stories of the golden parachutes coming down from the custodians of the public purse-strings; has this got any relationship with the Golden Oldies, whilst I appreciate I've probably missed the 'golden hello's' being handed around; I know I'm past me best but is there a chance for this golden oldie to get the 'golden goodbye', or even a sort of phone in, you know X factor style," else all I'm left with is the golden boys in charge master-minding my austerity package, as well as being forced to read month on month all about the Houdini styled 6 figure bonus failures posturing as 'Heroes' including the 'Bunkers' I don't know what school they all went to, but what I find strange is that when asked for an accountable statement they don't seem to know how to provide the answer related to the question; I know I get muddled at times but do you think they realise they're doing it? Anyway onwards and upwards things can only get better. Whoops, sounds like they need a vehicle in Southend; you better get going; my only hope seems to lay with 'equity relief,' which reminds me. ... You do a wonderful job have a safe journey. EM Comms

Sickness review and - or Capability Hearing ?

If you have a condition that affects your everyday life, is a long term or progressive condition, then you may be classed as disabled under the Equality act 2010 (EqA10). This is especially important if you are facing a formal sickness review process and a possible capability hearing.

The definition of disability is much more encompassing than a lot of people realise. The EqA10 defines 'disability' as someone who has a 'physical or mental impairment, that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out everyday activities.'

Having been involved in a few long term sickness issues with women members, it concerns me that some staff may have protection under the EqA10, and are not being afforded the legal protection that this powerful European law requires of employers.

Whether someone is classed as disabled can only be determined by the courts, although there is guidance and case law that can help to determine if someone may be covered.

The Trust will usually ask an Occupational Health Doctor for their opinion on whether someone is classed as disabled under the EqA10. This is important to realise, as some people may 'play down' their symptoms when faced with a health appointment instigated by their employer. It's important to contact your UNISON rep or county lead as soon as possible, so they can advise you early on.

How does this Equality Act help me?

If you are classed as disabled under the EqA10, then you have greater protection in law. This includes the duty on an employer to make 'reasonable adjustments.' On the face of it these words, used to describe the steps an employer has to take to enable a person classed as disabled under the EqA10 to return to the workplace, can be viewed in many ways. Over the years case law has defined the steps employers are supposed to take and the level of 'reasonable' that the courts view as necessary. Historically this has been underestimated by employers.

Why is case law important?

Case law sets a precedent for the way the laws are interpreted. This means that over time the bare bones of the law and the working of these laws are used by Judges to define how it will affect the people the law relates to. The actual wording of the law is not changed, although over time the meaning and application is defined by this case law.

A good example of this is the case of Meikle -v- Nottinghamshire County Council (2004 IRLR 703 CA)

Ms Meikle was signed off work as she was unable to continue in a situation where her employer had failed to make necessary reasonable adjustments to her workplace. The employer reduced Ms Meikle's pay to half after 6 months, and this was viewed as disability discrimination by the courts. It would have been a reasonable adjustment for the employer to continue to pay her full pay, while they looked into reasonable adjustments, rather than penalise her financially for her disability.

The duty of the employer to make 'reasonable adjustments,' can include, allocating some of the disabled employees duties to another employee, transferring an employee into a vacancy without the need to get through a competitive interview process, creating/devising a new job role, offering training to allow the employee to take on a different/higher paid role, moving a non - disabled employee to make room for the disabled employee. Under the act employers are allowed to favour disabled employees.

Generally the larger the employer the more they have at their disposal to make these adjustments.

In the case of Ridout -v- TC Group (1999 IRLR 628 EAT) it established that the onus to suggest reasonable adjustments lies with the employer - they cannot assume that their duty has been discharged if the disabled employee and their adviser cannot suggest any suitable adjustments.

Although it is always advisable, to make some suggestions on reasonable, as this makes it more difficult for the employer to argue that no adjustments exist.

UNISON can offer advice to members who may be classed as disabled under the EqA10, including referral to a specialist employment law solicitor, if necessary.

If you'd like more information, or need help with capability, please contact your local rep, county lead, or a branch officer.

We also have a dedicated Officer for Disabled members (David Edwards) who you can contact for help, support advice.

Contact details can be found on the branch website: <http://www.eeas-unison.com/> or on the back of this Newsletter.

Frazer Stevenson Women's Officer.

The Carbon improvement Group

Following a suggestion by Peterborough based EMP Jo Gamble, the need for fridges at Response Posts is being reviewed across the Trust at a local level. Jo observed that in the Peterborough locality nothing was usually found in any fridge apart from Milk Cartons, which do not actually need to be stored in a fridge as they are long life— thus fridges running , burning carbon needlessly. I took this suggestion to the Carbon Improvement Group where it was well received; a proposal to Branch Committee was made supporting Jo's idea.

Thus it has been agreed that if approved locally at LPF— there may be areas in our vast trust that do use the fridges— fridges will be relocated, not replaced when they come to the end of their life.

Well done Jo. If anyone has any other suggestions do let me know.. Faith Ecuier Branch Environmental Officer.



LIVERPOOL RULES

Don't worry, I haven't forsaken my beloved Kings Lynn Town FC in favour of some premiership glory but instead bring you an enthralling account of this year's rules section at the recent National Unison conference held in Liverpool. For those of you that don't know the Unison rule book, it contains all those rules that govern our union and can only be changed by the branch delegates attending National conference. Each year any branch, region, self-organised group or Unison national executive committee (NEC) can propose changes to any of the rules or new ones to be added. To make their way into the rule book they have to be carried by the voting branch delegates by at least a two-thirds majority. For me, being a sad so and so, it's my favourite afternoon at Conference and I was hardly able to contain my excitement as two o'clock Thursday got ever closer.

First came a technical change to rule D1.3.3.1 which didn't even get my pulse racing but hot on its heels came new rules requiring branches to use the national online branch accounting system (OLBA). This has come out of a large current piece of work looking at every aspect of Branch resourcing and although this has yet to be concluded the NEC felt that so many branch treasurers supported its use, that they should bring in the rule early, well, conference didn't quite see it that way and felt that there hadn't been enough consultation to make the change but after a long debate and a show of hands that was inconclusive, the first card vote was held (each branch rather than having one vote in a show of hands has one vote per member) and this did return a majority in favour of 470,793 more than the two-thirds majority required) Following hot on the heels of this and coming from the same piece of work was a requirement for all branches to hold their current account with Unity Trust bank, again, not wholly to everybody's liking but still voted in. (are we all awake still?... good, I'll continue)

Next came a replacement rule D 1.3.1 concerning the grouping of smaller branches (500 and below) to enable them to save money on sending delegates to conference (every branch is required to send delegates and get fined if they don't, small branches without much funding find it cheaper to pay the fine as this is based on their membership rather than fund a delegate to conference, last year 200 branches didn't attend and most of these had less than 500 members). Delegates felt that they make this change it would be better to properly

to properly fund each branch so that they could attend
as heavily defeated along with a linked change to rule D 1.10.4.
The next three changes concerning Self organised Groups, retired members and Unemployed members all enjoyed a smooth passage through.

period for receiving legal assistance from Unison, whilst the time stays at 4 weeks its now from when the incident or occurrence happened, rather than what it had been, which was, from when the member had knowledge of it. The idea behind this change is to stop people only joining when they know that they are in trouble and making it fairer for you who are members all the time. This change was overwhelmingly carried. Then came what turned out to be the last two rules of the day and they were to most keenly debate. Both had been proposed by Cymru/Wales Gas and concerned members of the NEC holding seats on the Service Group Executive, and as to when they should resign from the Service group if standing for election for the NEC. It was a true conference war, two tribes of vocal heavy weights coming to the rostrum with punch and counter punch slugging it out, it used all of the remaining time allotted for rules (which meant the last 7 didn't even get debated) and eventually after yet another card vote both were lost (even though the second had more votes in favour than against it didn't quite have the two-thirds majority)

Well that's it for another year of rules, well done if you made it to the end and if like me you love rules and require any more details please email me just to say good luck to the mighty Linnetts (oh and I suppose to Liverpool to!!) Baz

Barry Jarvis Convenor Branch 20106

Branch Officer List 2013



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Please Note— Your items and input into the Newsletter is always appreciated, remember we are circulating and servicing an area of 7500 sq miles. Each Newsletter goes straight onto the branch website and can easily be accessed by going into the site at- www.eeas-unison. The circulation is 600 copies, sent via County Leads for distribution. It is also mailed out to the Retired Members and available on PDF, if you wish to be included in this mailing list please forward your e-mail address to myself.
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Welfare Contacts—Branch Contacts—Jeff Pittman and Darren Jones - as well as your own County Leads.

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National Ambulance Sector Committee (Vice Chair) Jackie Robinson (Elected by the RHC) 0750811082 Jackie.robinson2@nhs.net
All other UNISON Health & Safety Representatives and Workplace Representatives contacts and can be found on the Website

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