



Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy Launch Supporting Quotes

Lord Aberdare, Vice Chair, All Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships

“This inaugural workforce renewal and skills strategy for the energy and utilities sector sets out the evidence showing the large numbers of experienced people who will retire or move on and must be systematically replaced, plus the changing skills and competences that will be required to be truly sustainable. This is a real challenge for companies which provide infrastructure and services that are essential to all our daily lives, but which find it difficult to convey the value and attractiveness of the careers they offer. I commend the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership for their work to bring together this strategy and tackle these challenging issues on a collective basis. I have already witnessed some of the results of this collaboration first hand, including the completion of the first ever apprenticeships under the new Trailblazer system and the signing of the Procurement Skills Accord, committing a range of businesses to increase their investment in training and development.”

Kevin Fowlie, Managing Director for Utilities, Amey

“Collaborating with other organisations within our sector to address the skills shortages and recruitment challenges will provide more efficient and effective outcomes for us all. We are proud to be one of the companies leading the initiative and welcome the launch of this inaugural workforce renewal and skills strategy by the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership.”

Peter Simpson, Chief Executive, Anglian Water

“Without action, the UK’s STEM skills gap could bring our country and economy to a grinding halt, which is why we’re working hard to inspire a future generation - the engineers, architects, scientists and managers of tomorrow - and make the sector more attractive to young people. Around 150 14-19 year olds are now getting a first class technical education and their first step on the career ladder thanks to our sponsorship of the Greater Peterborough University Technical College; hundreds of apprentices and graduates are in permanent employment in our successful schemes; and we’re making inroads on diversity by getting more women in engineering. But to fill the skills gap and future-proof our businesses and economy, we need to do more.

“Anglian Water is a huge contributor to the UK economy; we’ll deliver our £5bn investment programme between 2015 and 2020 and for every £100million we invest we create or secure around 2000 jobs. Those jobs need filling with high-calibre candidates. Supporting this industrial partnership and skills strategy is the beginning of a collaborative step in the right



direction. We'll be using our role as a leading water company, as well as the relationships with our partners - who are among the biggest engineering names globally - to help young people graduate school with the right skills and experience, to nurture talent and attract the brightest and best to the industry."

Ian Currie, Managing Director for Power Transmission & Distribution, Balfour Beatty

"So many of the things that are essential to our everyday life rely on modern, efficient infrastructure. Without a skilled workforce to maintain and upgrade these services, the UK will fall behind, making our businesses less competitive and our lives less comfortable. Therefore, investment in training and then retaining those skills, is an essential strategy for ensuring that the UK remains competitive and that we can all have the quality of life we expect."

Matthew Bateman, Managing Director for Field Operations, British Gas

"Our Energy and Home Services business is successful because of the capability of our teams. Investing in a highly-trained and multi-skilled workforce is essential to meet the needs of our customers, both today and in the future.

"That's why it's important that we collaborate with our peers, to support the workforce renewal and skills strategy for the energy and utilities sector. From the rollout of smart meters, developing new services for the Connected Home to the decentralisation of energy markets, innovation and technology are fundamental in helping our business to thrive.

"Having a long-term strategy to nurture the skills and talent to continually deliver for our customers is key."

Lloyd Martin, Chief Executive, British Water

"British Water welcomes this initiative and views the wellbeing, skills and competence of the utility sector's workforce to be of key importance for its efficiency, sustainability and stability. In what is becoming an ever more competitive business and customer-focused environment, having a joined-up and effective strategy to deliver a fit-for-purpose workforce has never been more necessary."

Chris Train, Chief Executive, Cadent

"Energy is a basic requirement for every community, and National Grid Gas Distribution consistently keeps energy flowing to provide heat and cooking to communities through safe, high performing, innovative and enthusiastic people. A skilled and sustainable workforce is vital for us as an organisation and our sector as a whole. I am therefore pleased to join the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership, as the key utility businesses come together to attract the very best people and work on our shared workforce renewal challenges in close collaboration."



Steve Holliday, Chair, Careers Lab

“Careers Lab was created to help address the very skills gap issues and careers advice improvement that this inaugural energy and utilities workforce renewal and skills strategy raises. We work directly with business partners, in order to make a real difference to the quality of information but also the life changing insights that careers education in schools can bring. We applaud the significant work that has been done by the Skills Partnership to bring together this UK-wide strategy, and Careers Lab look forward to bringing schools and businesses together, to provide young people with the inspiration and knowledge they need to consider a career in this vital sector.”

Seamus Keogh, Chief Executive, Clancy Docwra

“Here at Clancy Docwra, our vision is to become the most trusted provider of the essential services that keep the UK running. To achieve this, we must continue to attract the right people who have the right skills and passion to do so safely against strong competition from other sectors. We are delighted to work with Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership and its other partners from across the sector, because we believe that the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy can help tackle the problems we face together. Within the Partnership we’ll be using our role to share our knowledge, highlight the gaps we face and support a collaborative approach in nurturing the next generation of talent. It’s time to show young people how fantastic a career in this industry can really be.”

Ian Pretty, Chief Executive, Collab Group

“The Energy and Utilities sector is a vital employer and we are proud that Collab Group colleges are leading the way in providing high quality provision across a range of specialisms to meet the skills needs of this diverse industry. Ensuring a skilled and sustainable workforce is vital and so we are delighted to see the publication of the first ever workforce and skills strategy from the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership. The strategy will build on and strengthen opportunities for collaboration and we look forward to working with Energy & Utility Skills to support its implementation.”

Nicholas Pollard, Chief Executive, Cory Riverside Energy

“This initiative is an excellent way of addressing the skills shortage currently facing our industry. A cohesive and comprehensive strategy is vital for attracting the top talent which will ensure that the energy sector is fully future-proof, and I wholeheartedly welcome the work which the Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership is doing and am proud to be a founder member of its Leadership Council.”

Julie Nugent, Chief Executive, The Design and Technology Association

“The Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy demonstrates well how the UK’s utility sector offers a huge range of exciting and challenging careers and employment opportunities. The Design and Technology Association welcomes the work and is keen to play its part in



delivering change by promoting these opportunities to young people when they leave school, university and wider training.

“For many students, Design and Technology is the place where they are encouraged to develop design and engineering skills and consider the ways in which technology can address contemporary social, economic and environmental issues.

“The Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership has set out clearly the need for technical and engineering skills, and we are committed to help them appeal to those young people with an interest in innovation, sustainability and the creative application of new technologies.”

Marcus Rink, Chief Inspector, Drinking Water Inspectorate

“Consumers are consistent in their expectation that their water supply will be clean and safe at all times. A skilled and competent workforce is essential to providing that service by protecting public health and maintaining confidence in drinking water quality. I welcome the publication of this important document, and I encourage all participants in the water industry to use it as a springboard to building the sustainability of our sector.”

Peter Emery, Chief Executive, Electricity North West

“Electricity North West continues to respond to the changing energy market and we are committed to building a sustainable workforce for the future. We welcome and support the first-ever Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy. It provides an essential focus for the energy sector as we navigate our way through a rapidly changing market place.”

Nick Ellins, Chief Executive, Energy & Utility Skills & Chief Executive, National Skills Academy for Power

“The energy and utility sector performs a critical role in our society and economy: providing our essential services; underpinning the economic plans of governments and serving around 65 million people and countless businesses every single day. To fulfil that vital duty, now and in the future, requires a resilient, skilled and sustainable workforce. The Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership recognised the resilience challenge, along with the clear signs of a tightening labour and skills market and has taken action.

“The Workforce Renewal & Skills Strategy sets out that case for change, and stresses that individual businesses must not be left to manage UK workforce resilience alone. The partnership of Chief Executives from across water, power, gas and environmental infrastructure are proactively encouraging collaboration across UK governments, policy makers, regulators, key interest groups and allied sectors to coordinate workforce strategy, maximise investment in skills and take targeted action to ensure sustainability in addressing the UK’s known skill gaps and shortages.”



David Smith, Chief Executive, Energy Networks Association

“Our networks are undergoing a transformation to deliver electricity and gas in a smarter, low carbon energy system. Ensuring that the right skills are available in the workforce will be crucial to meeting new challenges and will require long term thinking in order to be successful. I welcome the launch of the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership workforce renewal and skills strategy, which makes a valuable contribution to what is a very important issue for the energy industry over the coming years.”

Lawrence Slade, Chief Executive, Energy UK

“The energy sector is vital to the future of the UK, driving economic activity to the tune of £87bn and delivering high levels of productivity, with every employee contributing the equivalent of £181,000 to the economy (2015). This activity provides around 137,000 jobs and supports another 500,000 across the United Kingdom. That means one in 49 workers is directly or indirectly employed by the energy industry.

“To keep that significant UK workforce safe, sustainable, resilient and equipped with the latest skills needed to give customers the best possible service takes a concerted and well-coordinated effort by the whole sector. I welcome the work done by the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership to build this first-ever workforce renewal and skills strategy, and look forward to Energy UK playing its part in supporting the conversations and activity that will result from it.”

Michael Lewis, Chief Executive, E.ON UK

“Over the next few years we face huge changes within E.ON as we continue to transition from an energy supply business to providing solutions to meet the future energy needs of our customers. The government-led transition to smart meters represents one of the biggest infrastructural changes to the energy industry in years and we’re going to need to ensure we have the right skills within the energy sector to successfully manage this change and the others that we’re going to see over the next few years.

“I believe it’s vital therefore that the utilities sector organisations continue to work together to ensure we develop the right skills frameworks to set us up on the best path for the future and the Energy and Utilities Partnership is a great catalyst for making this happen.”

Tony Cocker, former Chief Executive, E.ON UK and former Chair, Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership

“Our sector touches the lives of almost everyone in the UK each day, providing essential services for our homes and businesses. In order to deliver and continually develop these services, we need a skilled, productive and sustainable workforce that can help businesses supply the UK’s power, fresh drinking water, safe sanitation, recycling and much more. We face an ageing workforce, increasing competition for talent with unemployment reaching its



lowest recorded levels and a lack of proficient skills leading to over a third of vacancies being hard-to-fill. Therefore, as a partnership we seek to be the catalyst for change, sharing an ambition to achieve a more sustainable future.

“It is key that businesses across our sector work together to raise the profile of the issues and recommendations outlined in the strategy and, ultimately, encourage and support more people, whatever their background, into training and long-term career opportunities in the energy and utilities industry.”

Paul Taylor, Chief Executive, FCC Environment

“As one of the UK’s leading waste and resource management businesses, we employ 2,400 people and operate more than 200 facilities across England, Scotland and Wales. Our industry has changed dramatically in a generation, moving away from disposing of waste to recycling valuable materials and generating energy from what is left.

“This new infrastructure requires new skills as our industry forges ahead with ever more innovative ways of harnessing the value in waste. Combining the upskilling of our existing workforce and bringing in new talent is vital to our success. FCC Environment is therefore delighted to be supporting the sector’s first-ever workforce renewal and skills strategy which will help us to develop and manage the green energy infrastructure the UK needs for its economic growth.”

Paul Horton, Chief Executive, Future Water Association

“Future Water Association recognises that to truly deliver a resilient water sector from utilities right through the supply chain, having a workforce with the right skills and competence is essential to maintaining sector sustainability and resilient stability. It is critical for the future to have a skills strategy that is at the core of utility service delivery therefore and Future Water Association welcomes and supports this initiative.”

Justin Bowden, National Secretary for Energy, GMB

“You need look no further than the shortfall in Smart Meter Installers than to realise how important and how welcome this new Skills Strategy is for the success of UK plc going forward. GMB has long argued that the energy sector has a hugely important role to play in driving the post-Brexit economy and a well-trained and highly skilled workforce will be fundamental to the achievement of that goal and sustaining the sector.”

Dr Matthew Penrose, Head of Manufacturing and Utilities Unit, Health and Safety Executive

“The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) fully supports the inaugural workforce and skills strategy for the energy & utilities sector and the work of the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership in making this happen. The new Health and Safety Strategy for Great Britain



(Helping Great Britain Work Well [<http://www.hse.gov.uk/strategy>]) celebrates Great Britain's health and safety record as being the envy of much of the world - whilst setting the challenge of improving even further on this impressive record.

“Central to this is ensuring that risks are managed in a proportionate and effective way, which requires a skilled and competent workforce capable of making the right decisions and doing the right thing to protect themselves and others. The workforce and skills strategy will complement wider work ongoing across the energy & utilities sector to meet the future health and safety challenges and to Help Great Britain work well.”

Sarb Bajwa, Chief Executive, IGEM

“The gas industry provides essential services to the customer and industry and is critical to UK plc. Currently the industry is embracing its role in developing a low carbon future for the UK. This will require developing new set of skills to ensure that everyone working in the gas industry has access to the best possible training and once qualified is competent to carry out their job. I welcome the launch of the Skills Strategy which comes at a critical time for the gas industry and as a strategic partner of EUSG I look forward to working with all stakeholders on its successful implementation.”

Lynn Cooper, Chief Executive, Institute of Water

“Our vision is for the UK water industry to be served by the best people. For over 70 years members have been sharing experiences with people in other companies and this collaborative approach continues today, even with the arrival of competition. Many skills and behaviours are common throughout the energy and utilities sector. Instead of competing with one another, a combined approach to recruitment, training and workforce planning will put the energy and utilities sector in a strong position when competing in the labour market against other sectors. The Institute of Water is ready to play its part in implementing the shared workforce renewal & skills strategy which will increase the chances of achieving our vision.”

Barry McNicholas, Chief Executive, McNicholas

“McNicholas welcomes the opportunity to work with other businesses and organisations in the Utilities sector to join with the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership. With McNicholas enjoying over 65 years of working within the Utilities industry, we understand how important it is to have a sustainable and skilled resource pool. We see the EU Skills Partnership as a true opportunity to redouble our efforts to renewing and revitalising this critical talent base through collaboration and a shared commitment.

“Many employees on whose skills and experience we have relied are retiring over the next five years, at the very time when we see infrastructure project requirements on the rise, increasing the competition for talent.



“Brexit may affect the availability of skilled resource within the UK and I see it as imperative that we do all that we can to promote our sector and encourage people into the industry from schools and colleges, as well as ex-military and returnees to build the necessary talent pool.”

MOSL’s Chief Executive

“The water industry is changing faster and more fundamentally than at any time since privatisation. While safety and compliance remain imperative, the arrival of competition is forcing companies to find new, innovative ways to meet customers’ growing service expectations. The challenges ahead put the focus firmly on having a high-performing, upskilled and adaptable workforce. The winners will be those that that develop the capabilities they need and mobilise them quickly and effectively. I applaud this first ever energy and utilities workforce and skills strategy and look forward to MOSL playing its part in helping move this document from ambition in to tangible action.”

Jim Arnold, Chief Executive, M Group Services

“Given the challenges that surround the issue of our sector’s ageing workforce, along with ever evolving requirements regarding skills development, the need for a collaborative approach to encouraging new entrants is vitally important.

“We are delighted to pledge our support to the Energy and Utility Skills Partnership which sets out the key priorities for achieving a sustainable future. This collaborative approach will play an instrumental role in addressing future skills requirements by increasing sector attractiveness, upskilling the existing workforce and ensuring the provision of high quality training.”

John Pettigrew, Chief Executive, National Grid

“Sustainable low cost energy is vital to helping our economy and communities to thrive. As a sector, we need to make sure we attract people who have the skills and passion to build and run the networks of the future. The launch of the inaugural Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy will help us to engage the industry, government and key partners to make this happen.”

Mark Horsley, Chief Executive, Northern Gas Networks

“Being part of the Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership and supporting the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy provides a powerful platform to collectively address the long-term workforce challenges we face.

“Our industry is going through a period of great change as we look for new ways to improve efficiency and pave the way for secure, affordable, low carbon forms of energy. The sector relies on a high level of technical expertise, so it’s vital that we recruit and develop the right people with the right skills, both now and in the future.



“At Northern Gas Networks we’re continually evolving our workforce to ensure that we can adapt to the rapidly changing needs of our customers, assessing the skills and capabilities we need for a sustainable future.

“Our apprenticeship programme continues to thrive, providing a launch pad for new talent and we deliver employability and education programmes for students of all stages of academia, focusing strongly on under-represented STEM subjects to inspire and educate about future careers in the industry. At the heart of it all is people and we’re focused on making our business a great place to work to ensure we have a contented workforce, inspired to make a difference.”

Phil Jones, President and Chief Executive, Northern Powergrid

“Put simply: attracting the significant number of skilled people that we need in our sector is a significant challenge - and there is strength in numbers. Being part of the Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership and supporting the workforce renewal and skills strategy gives both the energy industry - and Northern Powergrid - a platform to collectively address the long-term workforce challenges we face. More broadly; businesses, regulators and government - local and central - must look for every opportunity to collaborate and find the right solutions. A concerted effort has to be the right answer.

“The strategy work highlights a number of key priorities that are not only relevant to our sector, but to the wider economy, for example the need to drive a significant increase in STEMs skills. Apart from mattering to businesses like ours, the lack of these skills could be a real brake on growth across the UK, not least in the part of the country we serve.”

Heidi Mottram, Chief Executive, Northumbrian Water Group

“Attracting people with the right skills to meet the future needs of the energy and utilities sector is a challenge we all face and the importance of taking collective action cannot be underestimated. This strategy is a welcome development and a timely one. This is an exciting time for our industry that offers a variety of fantastic career opportunities and, as we face future anticipated skills gaps and shortages we need to take action now to highlight the many opportunities on offer.

“Our sector is changing at a rapid pace. Innovation and emerging technologies are shaping new developments and new ways of delivering our service. Artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and digitisation are setting the agenda for change and we need people with the right skills to help us take advantage of these emerging opportunities.

“This also means ensuring we attract people from a range of diverse backgrounds, truly representative of the communities we serve. We are already taking action and looking at new ways of attracting and retaining talent. We have recently employed degree apprentices in information technology who gain vital work experience with us as they study part time for their degrees. And it’s also about encouraging young people to consider careers in Science



Technology Engineering and Maths and promoting the benefits of working in our sector, which is why we are out and about in schools talking to young people about water. The strategy marks the start of a journey to place our industry at the forefront of people's minds when choosing careers and will prepare us for the future.”

Dermot Nolan, Chief Executive, Ofgem

“The clean, reliable and affordable supply of energy is vital to customers and communities across the land. The development of a smarter, more flexible energy system and increasing use of smart technologies will transform the way our industry operates in the decades to come.

“Delivering this future vision will be very challenging, particularly as many skilled people in the energy industry will soon retire. Not only do they need replacing, but more advanced skills are required to deliver the technological changes that are central to the future of the industry.

“Success is dependent on attracting talented people into the sector from diverse backgrounds and developing the advanced skills that are needed. The Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership and their comprehensive workforce renewal and skills strategy offers a blueprint to achieve this challenging objective.”

Cathryn Ross, former Chief Executive, Ofwat

“A workforce with the right skills is vital for a resilient water sector. The challenges we now face mean that the sector must pay even more attention to the long-term skills it will need and the ways in which they will differ from the needs of the past. That's why we welcome the first Energy and Utilities Workforce and Skills Strategy and we encourage water companies to work together with their workforce to successfully transition to the water company of the future.”

Andrew Meaney, Partner, Oxera

“Having a sustainable and skilled workforce is the key to delivering the next generation of UK infrastructure, and this workforce renewal and skills strategy is therefore a vital tool for the energy and utilities industries. It is no longer sufficient to think about skills by sector—to make the most efficient use of our current talent pool and develop the workforce for the next generation, these sectors all need to work together. Only then will we see how infrastructure investment can really drive productivity.”

Dai Hudd, Deputy General Secretary, Prospect

“As a leading and progressive Trade Union in the Energy Sector, Prospect is proud and enthusiastic about being associated and involved with this launch. The continued commitment to the application of National Occupational Standards, for the vocational



training and Apprenticeship Programmes, bring added confidence to the underlying strength and purpose of the workforce renewal and skills strategy.”

John Morea, Chief Executive, SGN

“At SGN, we are dedicated to keeping our customers safe and warm by leading the way in energy delivery. Gas currently provides around 80% of the UK’s total energy demand at peak times and is the main source of energy for 85% of households. The role of the industry is therefore critical for the UK economy and society, and we must all ensure that we have a resilient, skilled and sustainable workforce needed to deliver that responsibility.

“Like many companies across the energy industry, we have an ageing workforce and are taking action to address and mitigate the impacts of skills gaps which will occur when a large number of experienced employees retire in the coming years - 47% of our industry’s workforce will leave or retire by 2023 so the talent pool to hire from is changing. We’re encouraging fresh, new talent into the industry through our award-winning apprentice programme.

“We are proud to be founder members of the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership and to have played an active part in producing the first ever workforce renewal and skills strategy for the sector. This is an exciting opportunity for us, and our approach to hiring and promoting talent will allow employees to bring innovation, passion and new competencies to our company.”

Douglas Millican, Chief Executive, Scottish Water

“Our vision at Scottish Water is to be trusted to care for the water on which Scotland depends. We are therefore committed to developing the skills and capabilities of our people so that they can be trusted by our customers to deliver the vital and sustainable services that will be needed in the years ahead. We commend the strategic intent of the new Energy and Utilities Workforce Strategy 2020 and the ambition to create solutions that will have applicability across all of the nations of the UK and which meet with the policy expectations of our governments and regulators.

“We have participated in the Energy and Utilities Skills Partnership because we believe that working together in a collaborative approach can help to create a new and attractive brand for the utility sector. A brand that has broad and inclusive appeal to attract the diversity of people, skills and talent that our sector will need to meet the evolving needs and expectations of our customers for many years to come.”

Keith Anderson, Chief Executive, ScottishPower

“As many as four out of five workers in the energy sector are set to retire over the next 15 years, which comes as ScottishPower is looking to deliver the most important upgrades to the electricity network in over half a century.



“We’re pleased to play our part in the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership, which drives excellence by bringing employers, skills organisations and stakeholders together. By working closely in partnership, we can attract, nurture and retain talented people for the long-term benefit of our business.”

Steve Scrimshaw, Managing Director, Power & Gas and Power Generation Services, Siemens Plc

“Sustainable, secure and affordable energy is vital for society to thrive. Our ‘Ingenuity for Life’ ethos shows our aim to provide innovative products and services that benefit the markets that we operate in. At the heart of this are people: as a company we need to attract and retain people with the skills, passion and ambition to make a difference to our ever-changing industry.

“The Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy is a welcome and timely initiative that sparks the conversation about what we can do, collectively, to tackle the common challenges such as an ageing workforce and lack of diversity. The strategy paper will help identify the urgent priorities and engage the many stakeholders across the energy sector and beyond.”

Dr Stephen Bird, South West Water Managing Director and Pennon Group Plc Board Member

“Action today will help to deliver the right workforce of tomorrow. We welcome this national initiative to address the UK’s skills gap. Ensuring that we have skilled engineers and scientists to create a prosperous future is mission critical. As one of the largest environmental infrastructure groups in the UK, Pennon employs around 5,000 people across the water and waste sectors. We are continually looking to deliver our services in ever-more efficient and innovative ways, and our people are crucial to our success. In a constrained jobs market it is important that we work collaboratively with other businesses to get more people work and job ready.

“At South West Water, our award-winning apprenticeship programme and sponsorship of the new South Devon University Technical College is helping to attract a pipeline of new talent to serve our customers’ future needs and delivering a more sustainable future for the region.”

Rob Goodhew, Chief Executive, SPIE UK

“As an engineering-led business, and one of the largest Overhead Line Engineering companies in the UK, SPIE is committed to obtaining a skilled workforce and is continuously working to attract and harness new expertise. With the skills gap being a significant issue in our industry, it is essential for companies to work in partnership and take a measured, but proactive approach, in promoting training opportunities alongside our educational faculties.



“With the millions of homes and businesses dependent on the energy and utilities sector, sustaining its reliability is fundamental, and we fully support the launch of the Workforce Renewal & Skills Strategy.

“Educating the next generation about the delivery of innovative, energy-efficient and high-tech engineering solutions, will not only ensure the future success of our industry, but also our nation’s economic growth.”

Colin Nicol, Managing Director, Networks, SSE

“We work in a dynamic industry that provides many interesting, challenging and rewarding opportunities. However, recent research shows that 20% of the workforce in the energy and utilities sector is due to retire by 2023 - leaving a significant skills gap that we must work together to address.

“The Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy will play an important role in helping close this skills gap and ensure we have a sustainable workforce. Taking a collaborative approach through the partnership is vital as together we can identify a consistent way to recruit and train people and standardise the required qualifications across the sectors.

“This will create a clear route to lasting and fulfilling careers and help our industry compete for future talent. The strategy also complements SSE’s own ambitions around diversity. I look forward to working with the project partners to create an easy pathway into the industry for people of all backgrounds, creating a workforce reflective of our customers and wider society - an important asset to any successful business.”

Steve Robertson, Chief Executive, Thames Water

“Our keen involvement in the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership and its Workforce Renewal & Skills Strategy, closely supports our own schemes for attracting new talent, including our long-running apprenticeship and graduate programmes and industry-first traineeship scheme, along with the vast number of events we run in schools and colleges to showcase the wide variety of careers on offer in the water industry. Finding and nurturing new talent now is crucial for Thames Water as we need bright and enthusiastic operational staff ready to take over from those nearing the end of their careers. These experienced team members hold a wealth of knowledge and we can’t afford for them to go without having the next generation trained-up.”

Basil Scarsella, Chief Executive, UK Power Networks and Chairman, Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership

“It is vitally important to develop a sustainable workforce in an industry that is essential to meet people’s everyday needs. UK Power Networks has already trained more than 250 apprentices in the past five years to help fill the industry’s skills gap and we will continue to attract talented and promising new recruits over the coming months and years. Every company is only as good as its employees.



“We are delighted to be part of the Energy and Utility Skills Partnership to encourage collaborative work, and address the findings of the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy which aims to raise the profile of exciting job opportunities.”

Dave Prentis, General Secretary, UNISON

“A well-trained, well-skilled workforce is essential for assuring the resilience of the utility sector and for maintaining the delivery of high quality services. UNISON has long campaigned for greater awareness of skills shortages and professional development in the workforce, and so we welcome the launch of this new strategy and the renewed focus the Energy & Utilities Skills Partnership brings to our members who are absolutely essential to the success of any business. We must invest in our workforce and use their skills, experience and commitment to the full to sustain continuous improvement and proactively respond to change. UNISON look forward to playing our part in achieving that aim.”

Graham Edwards, Chief Executive, Wales & West Utilities

“Gas networks have a key role to play in delivering a value for money, secure and sustainable energy future and preparing our business - and our industry, to face the challenges of the future is a key business priority for us. At Wales & West Utilities, we’ve recruited almost 150 apprentices since we started operations in 2005 - with a further 23 to be recruited in 2017 so we can continue to deliver outstanding levels of safety, reliability and service to the millions of people we serve every day.

“We’re looking forward to working alongside other utilities as part of the Energy and Utilities Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy to make sure that as an industry we can attract and retain a workforce that not only help build, manage and maintain the networks of the future but also deliver the levels of service that our customers expect.”

Michael Roberts, Chief Executive, Water UK

“The water sector, like others, needs continuously to improve to meet our customers’ expectations for providing water services safely, affordably and responsibly. It is therefore essential that we upskill our current people and attract the very best young talent for the future, and the Workforce Renewal and Skills Strategy is a powerful initiative to help us do that.”

Dr Neil Bentley, Chief Executive, WorldSkills UK

“Young people want careers which are appealing, challenging and inspiring. The opportunities in the energy and utilities sector in the coming years are exciting and it is today’s young people who will possess the high quality skills that businesses need to ensure this vital part of our economy continues to thrive. WorldSkills UK works with young people from all backgrounds to give them the kinds of careers they want - to help them fulfil their



potential. We welcome this important strategy and look forward to working with the sector to help our young people succeed.”

Richard Flint, Chief Executive, Yorkshire Water

“Skills are a critical issue for the utilities sector, with the ageing workforce creating a risk of a future skills gap. As a former apprentice I know the value great-quality training schemes can bring to both the individual and their employer. “We’re proud of our apprenticeship and graduate programmes which feed many of the highly-skilled roles within our business and attract the next generation of talent. We offer a really diverse range of opportunities in science, engineering, IT and environmental roles so there really is something to interest everyone.

“Yorkshire Water was recently named in The Times as one of the Top 50 Employers for women. The future of our business will be shaped by our young workforce and we’re determined to play our part in showing young people how fantastic a career in the utilities sector can be.”