



Business planning process

You are a WPD customer if you live or work in our region.

- Ofgem regulates how much revenue we can earn and what we must deliver
- Price controls are set by Ofgem to determine how much we can spend and what customers will receive as a result
- Our Business Plan sets out, in detail, our commitments to stakeholders, performance targets and planned investment and expenditure
- 2023-2028, the next Business Plan period, will run for 6 years and is called "RIIO-ED2"

"RIIO-ED2":
Revenue + Incentives + Innovation + Outputs
(Electricity Distribution 2)

A SMART NETWORK THAT WORKS FOR EVERYONE

We're evolving the way we operate the electricity grid to facilitate:

- Huge volumes of low carbon technologies and local generation
- Electrification of heat and transport
- Energy storage
- Demand side response

Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop Milton Keynes March 2020

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1 | INTRODUCTION

On 5 March 2020, Western Power Distribution (WPD) hosted the last in a series of six stakeholder workshops aimed at gathering feedback with a view to co-creating its business plan for the next price control period, R110-ED2, which runs from 2023–2028. The workshop took place at the MK Dons Stadium in Milton Keynes.

The event consisted of four presentations given by WPD representatives, with stakeholders giving their feedback during three round-table discussions and via several electronic votes over the course of the day. The full presentation can be found online here: <https://www.westernpower.co.uk/downloads/132043>.

The workshops covered the following topics:

Workshop One	Workshop Two	Afternoon Sessions
Network reliability Network resilience Cyber resilience Whole systems approach to net zero Innovation and new services	Environment Electric vehicles Vulnerability and fuel poverty	Safety and health Connections Workforce resilience Digitalisation, data and DSO

Stakeholders were asked to review the 14 headline priority topics that had been suggested by stakeholders in previous years, removing or adding to them where necessary. They were then asked to suggest commitments for WPD to deliver under these priorities. In the spirit of co-creation, the topics for each workshop were split into two sets, with half of the tables discussing the first set and the other half discussing the second set in tandem. Halfway through the workshop, stakeholders were asked to review, amend and add to the priorities and commitments suggested by a neighbouring table in order to truly co-create these with the group as a whole.

Following each round-table discussion, stakeholders were asked to vote electronically to indicate which priorities they felt were the most important under each topic area. Each stakeholder had three votes to cast on each question, with the option of allocating all three votes to one particularly important priority or splitting their votes between two or three priorities. Importantly, the voting options also included those priorities that had been suggested in the discussions.

WPD instructed EQ Communications, a specialist stakeholder engagement consultancy, to independently facilitate the workshops and take notes of the comments made by stakeholders.

Every effort has been made to faithfully record the feedback given. In order to encourage candour and open debate, comments have not been ascribed to individuals. Instead, notes have been made of the type of organisation that each stakeholder represents.



2 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The workshop began with an introductory presentation from Richard Allcock, Stakeholder Engagement Manager. Richard explained WPD's role distributing power to nearly 8 million homes and businesses across its network area. He then explained WPD's business planning process and how stakeholder engagement feeds into the company's business plan.

INTRODUCTION: THE RIIO-ED2 BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS

Andrzej Michalowski, Planning and Regulation Special Projects Manager, outlined the regulatory framework in which WPD operates and explained how stakeholder commitments will be applied by the company. Stakeholders were then asked to introduce themselves and state their primary reasons for attending the workshop.

- Stakeholders had a number of interests, including the environment, local resilience against extreme weather events, new connections and the opportunity to use innovative solutions such as heat pumps in new housing.
- There was widespread interest in community energy and how local schemes could be used to benefit communities, the environment and fuel-poor customers.
- Stakeholders from across the spectrum were interested in engaging and collaborating more closely with WPD, with several stakeholders looking to inform themselves on WPD's plans.

CO-CREATING OUR BUSINESS PLAN COMMITMENTS: WORKSHOPS ONE AND TWO

The main workshop was split into two sessions. The first workshop session was presented by Ben Godfrey, Network Strategy Manager, and included the following topics: network reliability; network resilience; cyber resilience; whole systems approach to net zero; and innovation and new services. The second workshop session was introduced by Alison Sleightholm, Resources and External Affairs Director, and included the following topics: environment; electric vehicles; and vulnerability and fuel poverty. The topics considered in both workshops and some detail of the priorities discussed are shown below.

Network reliability

- The most popular priority with 19% of the vote was 'work with domestic and business customers to reduce demand'. This was newly suggested by stakeholders at the workshop.
- The second highest priority with 14% of the vote was 'overall health of network assets'. Stakeholders wanted to ensure that WPD's assets are future-proofed and able to accommodate the future growth in demand driven by electrification of heat and transport.
- 'Affordability' was suggested as a new priority by one table as it was felt WPD should not lose sight of this.

Network resilience

- Stakeholders ranked 'scenario planning / data analysis' as the top priority by some margin, with 39% of the vote. They wanted WPD to undertake long-term scenario planning, as well as to work alongside emergency planning partners.
- The impact of severe weather conditions was of concern to stakeholders in this session, with a new priority 'all weather resilience (e.g. lightning)' being ranked second (24%) and the existing priority of 'flood protection' being ranked third (22%).

Cyber resilience

- Stakeholders ranked 'network security – risk of power cuts due to a cyberattack' as the top priority under cyber resilience, with a 27% share of the vote. It was felt investment in this area should be increased.
- Two priorities were ranked joint second, with 21% of the vote each: 'incident recovery plans' and a newly suggested priority 'identify critical infrastructure (e.g. communication masts)'. The latter was particularly in relation to ensuring that infrastructure like 5G masts has increased protection.

/ continued

Whole systems approach to net zero

- The top rated priority, with 17% of the vote, was 'coordinate network planning with other utilities to find best solutions.'
- The second rated priority was 'help local communities to achieve their net zero carbon emissions targets' with 15%. This was particularly in relation to the role stakeholders felt WPD should play in educating customers to reduce their energy use.
- Another key theme in this session was the need to encourage the uptake of more renewables by encouraging local generation. As such, the third priority was newly suggested: 'incentivise and promote local generation (lobby for 100% renewables)'.

Innovation and new services

- The top priority was 'facilitate microgrids and net zero developments', receiving 16% of the vote, which was a new priority suggested by stakeholders during the session. This reflected that stakeholders wanted to see whole developments running off microgrids and using new technologies to help achieve net zero.
- The level of communication and the quality of information provided by WPD was felt important during this session. Consequently, the second and third priorities were 'support community energy projects to connect to the network' (14%) and 'communication, education and advice for customers' (13%).

Environment

- The top three priorities were all newly suggested by stakeholders during this session. The first, with 20% of the vote, was 'sustainable procurement and circular economy'. Given how much metal the company consumes, this was felt particularly important.
- The second was 'WPD declare climate emergency, demonstrate leadership and raise awareness' (16%) followed by 'WPD become carbon negative (establish carbon reduction team)' (15%). While there was some disagreement as to whether WPD should declare a climate emergency, it was felt they must lead by example in terms of the delivery of their own carbon reduction plan.

Electric vehicles

- The priority that was rated highest, with 18% of the vote, was a newly suggested priority: 'enable transport model shift (flexibility and adaptability)'. The second highest was 'facilitate electric vehicles on a mass scale' with 14%. In both cases, stakeholders were keen that the network infrastructure does not act as a blocker to EV uptake.
- Stakeholders wanted the level of information provision improved in this area, particularly the identification of suitable charge point locations. They suggested a new priority which was ranked fifth: 'information and network data provision'.

Vulnerability and fuel poverty

- The highest priority with 26% of the vote was 'protect the interests of vulnerable customers in the switch to a smarter network'. There was concern that new technologies could mean that vulnerable customers are left behind.
- The second highest priority was a new one, 'promote and raise awareness of PSR', with 17%. Stakeholders felt the current level of awareness in that regard was low and needed improving.
- Three new priorities were added in relation to supporting fuel-poor customers, demonstrating that some stakeholders felt WPD could play an important role here. There was, however, some disagreement on this point, with others feeling that fuel poverty was the role of the supplier and that WPD should focus on supporting the vulnerable during power cuts.

AFTERNOON SESSIONS

In the afternoon, there were four optional sessions on specific topics. Most of them followed a similar format as the morning workshops (a discussion on priorities and commitments), albeit without a formally facilitated discussion. The session on digitalisation, data and DSO followed a more informal format.

- ‘Safety and health’ was hosted by Mark Shaw, ED2 Business Plan Manager.
- ‘Connections’ was hosted by Vanessa Buxton, Connection Policy Engineer.
- ‘Workforce resilience’ was hosted by Alison Sleightholm.
- ‘Digitalisation, data and DSO’ was hosted by Ben Godfrey.

Safety and health

- Stakeholders’ top priority was ‘maintaining a safe, healthy and motivated workforce’.
- Commitments included ensuring debriefing procedures are reviewed and observed when an accident occurs / is logged and that staff are sufficiently trained for severe weather events such as working in high winds.

Connections

- Stakeholders’ top priority for the business plan, with 38% of the vote, was ‘low-carbon technology (including EV)’ with some wanting to see renewable connections prioritised as part of the allocation and reservation of capacity. A series of commitments was proposed to improve the connections process.
- In terms of the ICE plan for 2020/21, ‘low-carbon technology’ again ranked highest amongst the priorities receiving 29% of the vote. However, despite this, all commitments raised were in relation to the fifth ranked priority: ‘communication’.

Workforce resilience

- Stakeholders’ joint top priorities were ‘a happy, healthy and motivated workforce where WPD is the employer of choice’, ‘increasing the STEM pipeline’ and ‘improving the diversity of our workforce’.
- Key commitments revolved around expanding the LGBT+ work of WPD through the promotion of existing LGBT+ groups in WPD, closer partnership with advocacy groups and a review of LGBT+ policy. Other commitments were suggested on the provision of staff, particularly newly promoted managers with the necessary soft skills for personal resilience and management respectively.

Digitalisation, data and DSO

- Stakeholders were of the view that the increased digitalisation of the network would bring a range of benefits, including helping WPD to become more efficient and helping stakeholders to access much needed data to enable them to plan ahead.
- Some concerns were raised regarding data security. It was felt that while relevant data should be accessible for all, it is imperative that cyber security remains a top priority.

WRITTEN FEEDBACK

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to complete a short feedback form. Some of the key findings are shown below:

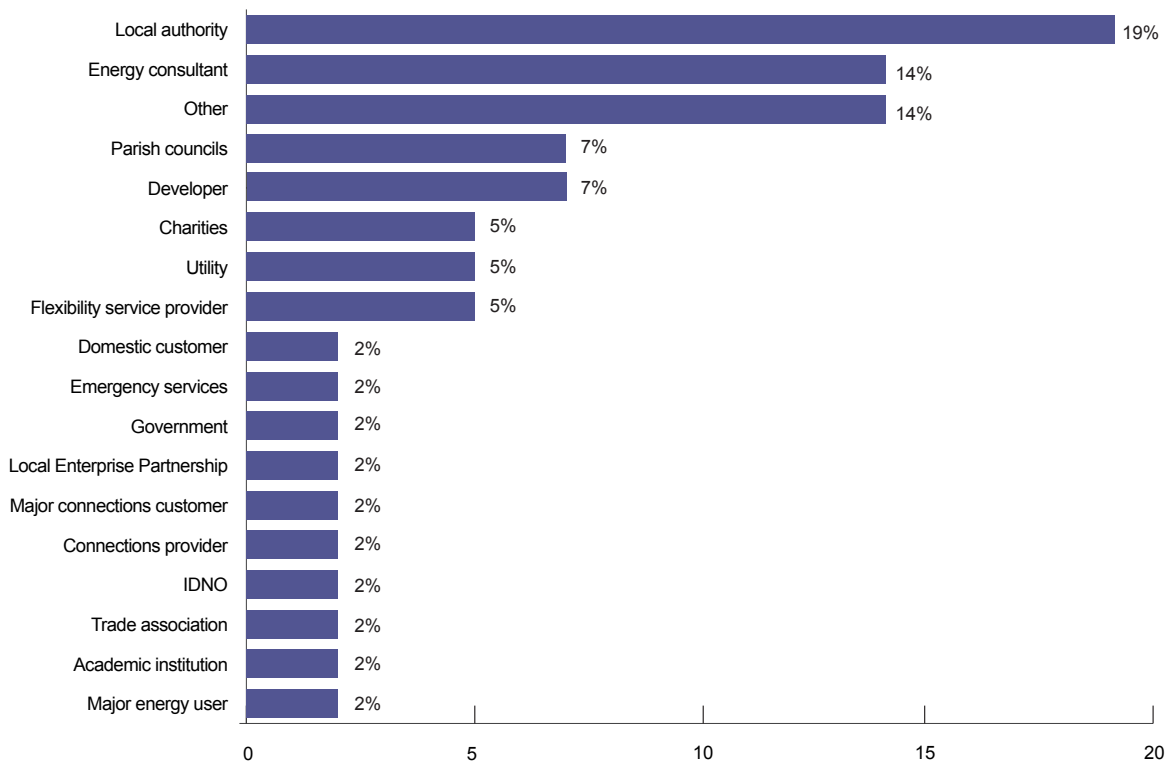
- 100% of attendees who filled out a feedback form told us that they found the workshop either ‘very interesting’ or ‘interesting’.
- 100% of stakeholders ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they had had an opportunity to make points and ask questions.
- 94% ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that the right topics were discussed on the day.
- 69% thought EQ Communications’ facilitation was ‘very good’, with 31%, opting for ‘good’.
- 97% felt the venue for the day was either ‘very good’ or ‘good’.

3 | ATTENDEES

A total of 45 stakeholders attended the workshop, representing 37 organisations. The organisations represented on the day are shown below:

- Accenture
- ACL Planning & Development
- AgilityEco
- Ampleon
- Bentley Systems
- Brush Transformers Ltd
- Care & Repair Northamptonshire
- Cherwell District Council
- Corby Borough Council
- E.ON UK Ltd
- EA Technology
- Eaton Electrical Products Ltd
- Energy Assets Networks
- Fundamentals Ltd
- Geldards
- Greater South East Energy Hub
- Harborough District Council
- Headway
- IBECCS Ltd
- IBM
- Joint Protective Services Command for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire
- Joint Radio Company
- Milton Keynes Council
- Moulsoe Parish Council
- Northampton Borough Council
- Open University
- Oxfordshire County Council
- Push Energy Ltd
- RO Group
- Scribbilib Consultancy Ltd
- SenTec
- South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership
- Stadium MK
- Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum
- West Bletchley Council
- Woburn Sands Town Council
- WPD Customer Engagement Group

During the electronic voting, delegates were asked to identify which stakeholder group they belonged to. The graph below summarises the results.



4 | INTRODUCTION: THE RIIO-ED2 BUSINESS PLANNING PROCESS

Many of the stakeholders who attended the workshop in Milton Keynes were concerned about the growth agenda, particularly the planned growth in local housing and commercial developments. They were primarily interested to learn how WPD plans to accommodate these new developments, particularly given the requirements for them to include new sources of demand such as electric vehicle charge points and heat pumps.

A number of stakeholders represented local authorities, many of whom had declared a climate emergency. They were keen to learn more about how they could reduce carbon emissions to net zero ahead of the targets set by the government.

Stakeholders, including those representing major energy users, attended the workshop to discuss with WPD how they can incorporate low-carbon energy sources. In addition, many were interested in how the process to connect these technologies to the electricity network could be made easier for them.

Several stakeholders, including those representing the charity sector, were interested in how customers in vulnerable situations and those living in fuel poverty would be supported as the electricity networks transition to a smarter future. A number of these stakeholders were involved in initiatives relating to WPD's social obligations commitments and wanted to discuss these further. Others were interested in how WPD is progressing with the development of its RIIO-ED2 business plan and wished to be part of the process to enable the business plan to address the many challenges facing the electricity network.

1. WHY HAVE YOU ATTENDED TODAY?

"We've just started a climate change group in our local community. We're here on a fact-finding mission to see what WPD are doing in the area." **Parish council**

"We do strategy allocations and are looking at different development sites to see if they're suitable. I want to see if there's anything coming out in that area with regard to strategic priorities." **Local authority**

"Cyber security is a big issue when discussing a smarter grid, especially considering how bad we are with cyber security in this country." **Major connections customer**

"Our main goal is to drive economic development in our area. The main thing for me in terms of what WPD can do is to manage some of the constraint in our area a bit more effectively. I have an interest in the growth agenda." **Business customer**

"I am here to understand a bit more about what WPD do and how they do it. We are a connections provider, so we do quite a lot of work with WPD at the moment. I am interested in network efficiency and how that is progressing, especially around sustainability issues, renewables, EVs, power grid networks and smart networks. We are involved in Bristol kicking off a project for smart city concepts called Gravity." **Utility**

"I have many hats, primarily working on the climate emergency in order to get the district to zero carbon by 2030. We have declared a climate emergency. In terms of electric vehicles in Oxfordshire, there is 10 times the national average in sales." **Local authority**

"I am just looking at how the business plan is written and developed." **Consumer body**

"I work for charity for people with brain injuries and help to support their families. I want to know how WPD is supporting vulnerable people and how to get the best deal for them. My colleague has done some work with WPD already." **Charity**

"Is there a shared cost for flats that are getting connections for EV chargers? Is the charge paid by people who are not using the EVs?" **Charity**

"I work for the council here in Milton Keynes. I'm here to learn more about what WPD can do for Milton Keynes and the impact on our residents. Two days ago, a decision was taken on a local carpark and I was disappointed that only 1% of spaces were for EV. I want to be able to push that agenda as we need to race toward becoming carbon neutral by 2030 in Milton Keynes." **Local authority**

"We work with WPD on a daily basis. We have a number of big projects, such as Open LV. It's about making the grid suitable for low-carbon technology and considering where to place power points for charging. We have a number of big projects with WPD." **Energy consultant**

"We're heavily invested in housebuilding which touches on utilities provision. We also have assets in solar farms. This is of interest in terms of grid connection and how we interact with the network. I'm keen to learn about the thinking behind the long-term planning." **Major connections customer**

5 | NETWORK RELIABILITY

The most popular priority was one newly suggested by stakeholders at the workshop, ‘work with domestic and business customers to reduce demand’. It received 19% of the vote. Stakeholders were of the view that new technologies could assist with this by providing incentives for customers to reduce or shift their usage to save money.

The second most important priority for stakeholders according to the electronic vote was ‘overall health of network assets’ with 14% of the vote share. Stakeholders were keen to ensure that WPD’s assets are future-proofed and able to accommodate the future growth in demand. It was felt that WPD should continue to focus on monitoring its assets and that, in order to do this, it should make better use of data and new technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI).

‘Classify customers for reconnection in a power cut (e.g. schools, mobile networks)’ was the third most important priority for stakeholder, with 11% of the vote. This was a new priority that was suggested by stakeholders in the discussions. Although no commitments were attributed to this priority, stakeholders were of the view that certain customers such as public buildings and utilities should be given precedence in the event of a power cut.

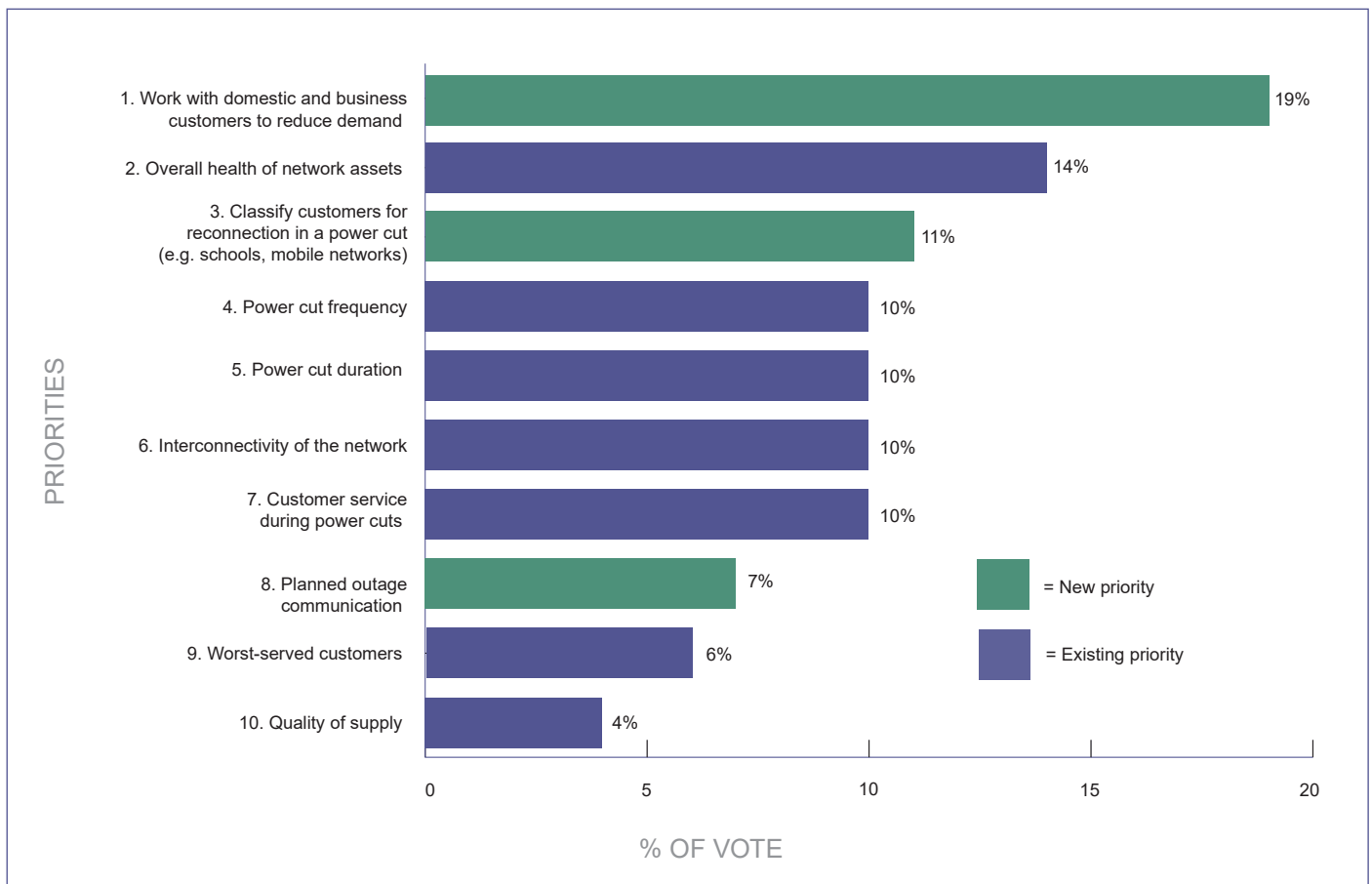
Four priorities were all ranked fourth by stakeholders in terms of importance: ‘power cut frequency’; ‘power cut duration’; ‘interconnectivity of the network’; and ‘customer service during power cuts’. These were all priorities that had been suggested at previous engagement events.

Stakeholders in Milton Keynes felt that research ought to be done to identify the level of acceptance of power cuts in terms of both their frequency and duration and how the improved interconnectivity, including with local sources of generation, would help network reliability. In terms of ‘customer service during power cuts’ it was felt that this was particularly important for customers in vulnerable circumstances and that WPD should work with local authorities and make use of its own Priority Services Register to prioritise these people.

‘Affordability’ was suggested as a new priority by one table, although it was not voted on during the electronic voting.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



NETWORK RELIABILITY

The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)

11. Affordability

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Work with domestic and business customers to reduce demand — Proposed Commitments

a) Explore the opportunity for financial incentives to encourage demand reduction

b) Explore the opportunity to reduce voltage through demand reduction

“If you had an app on your phone to show your usage on your street for EV, would you use it?”
Energy consultant

“Some would use it, but you need to link it to the supplier and have a financial incentive.” **Major energy user**

“Reduce customer demand.” **Connections provider**

“One project we’ve got at the moment with WPD looks at opening up demand on the grid to all users. It’s an open platform so community groups and businesses can access it. It shows how much you can save through changing your energy patterns. WPD has one of best network knowledges and it is taking an active approach.” **Energy consultant**

Priority 2: Overall health of network assets — Proposed Commitments

a) Ensure assets are future-proofed for future demand growth

b) Continue to focus on condition monitoring and asset management

c) Adopt AI and use data to effectively monitor assets

“It’s about future-proofing the overall health of the network.” **Major connections customer**

“WPD should look into using AI to ensure reliability of network assets.” **Major energy user**

“One of the big things for me is what the asset management system is like, regarding life cycles and replacement. There might be a conversation around the risk of these assets. If you get problems, you want to minimise them to keep customers happy.” **Utility**

Priority 3: Classify customers for reconnection in a power cut (e.g. schools, mobile networks) — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, receiving 11% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“Prioritisation of assets is quite important and could be new priority. Get schools and hospitals sorted first in the event of a power cut.” **Energy consultant**

“In this instance it’s important to identify what buildings and areas need to be tackled first.” **Major connections customer**

NETWORK RELIABILITY

Priority 4: Power cut frequency — Proposed Commitments

a) Review what frequency of power cuts customers consider acceptable

b) Reduce the frequency of power cuts in the Milton Keynes area

“I think we need case studies of testing to show what would happen in a scenario where there are more outages.” **Energy consultant**

“As a user, I hadn’t been that aware of dips in service until last month. This was unprecedented. Over two weeks we had a dip in the evening. It was fractional but then suddenly you get all these updates from your neighbours and everyone is panicking. It was unusual.” **Local authority**

Priority 5: Power cut duration — Proposed Commitments

a) Review what duration of power cuts customers consider acceptable

b) Invest in storage

“There needs to be more investment in storage assets to help keep things going during an outage. Flexible storage solutions for emergencies will be really useful here.” **Connections provider**

Priority 6: Interconnectivity of the network — Proposed Commitments

a) Improve interconnectivity of the network to improve reliability

b) Promote local generation and flexibility services to big business

c) Consider DC transmission from renewables

d) Raise awareness of energy consumption

“I think the fragmentation of the grid is something that should be addressed. You need more flexibility but as the grid fragments more it’s going to affect your ability to tackle reliability issues.” **Major connections customer**

“Yes, raise public awareness. Extend the knowledge that things are changing. Someone should be increasing public engagement.” **Major connections customer**

“I think that part of it is understanding how power is being generated. Maybe more investment could be made in DC transmission, which is far more energy efficient?” **Connections provider**

Priority 7: Customer service during power cuts — Proposed Commitments

a) Work with local authorities during power cuts to support vulnerable customers

“I think it’s about having good communication with the local authority. Local authorities have different lists than the PSR. Recently we had a water outage and liaised with the water company to make sure that all customers on their and our lists were accommodated and would be getting what they needed.” **Local authority**

Priority 8: Planned outage communication — Proposed Commitments

- a) Support customer resilience during planned outages

“There needs to be more investment in storage assets to help keep things going during an outage. Flexible storage solutions for emergencies will be really useful here.” **Connections provider**

Priority 9: Worst-served customers — Proposed Commitments

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| a) Adopt innovation to find new ways of supporting worst-served customers | b) Do more to promote new options for worst-served customers | c) Consider the level of impact on worst-served customers | d) Understand and prioritise critical infrastructure and vulnerable customers |
|---|--|---|---|

“It is a priority, but WPD should be looking at new ways to improve it. Use innovation.” **Academic institution**

“There needs to be more promotion of new options for customers.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“The impact on the worst-served customers really needs to be the new benchmark for measuring how support needs to be provided.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“Last year, a lot of hospitals went down due to major outage. Does WPD know about all this critical infrastructure connected to its network?” **Business customer**

Priority 10: Quality of supply — Proposed Commitments

- a) Focus on improving the quality of supply, as it has worsened recently

“On quality of supply, it’s going to get worse with EV.” **Business customer**

“Yes, and those dips in energy have more of an impact on the kind of sensitive technology we’re seeing coming onto the market.” **Major energy user**

Priority 11: Affordability — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“Keep costs down.” **Consumer body**

6 | NETWORK RESILIENCE

The most important priority for stakeholders was ‘scenario planning / data analysis’, with 39% of the vote share. Stakeholders suggested a number of commitments under this heading, including that WPD undertakes a programme of long-term scenario planning that takes into consideration the health of its assets, as well as working alongside emergency planning partners.

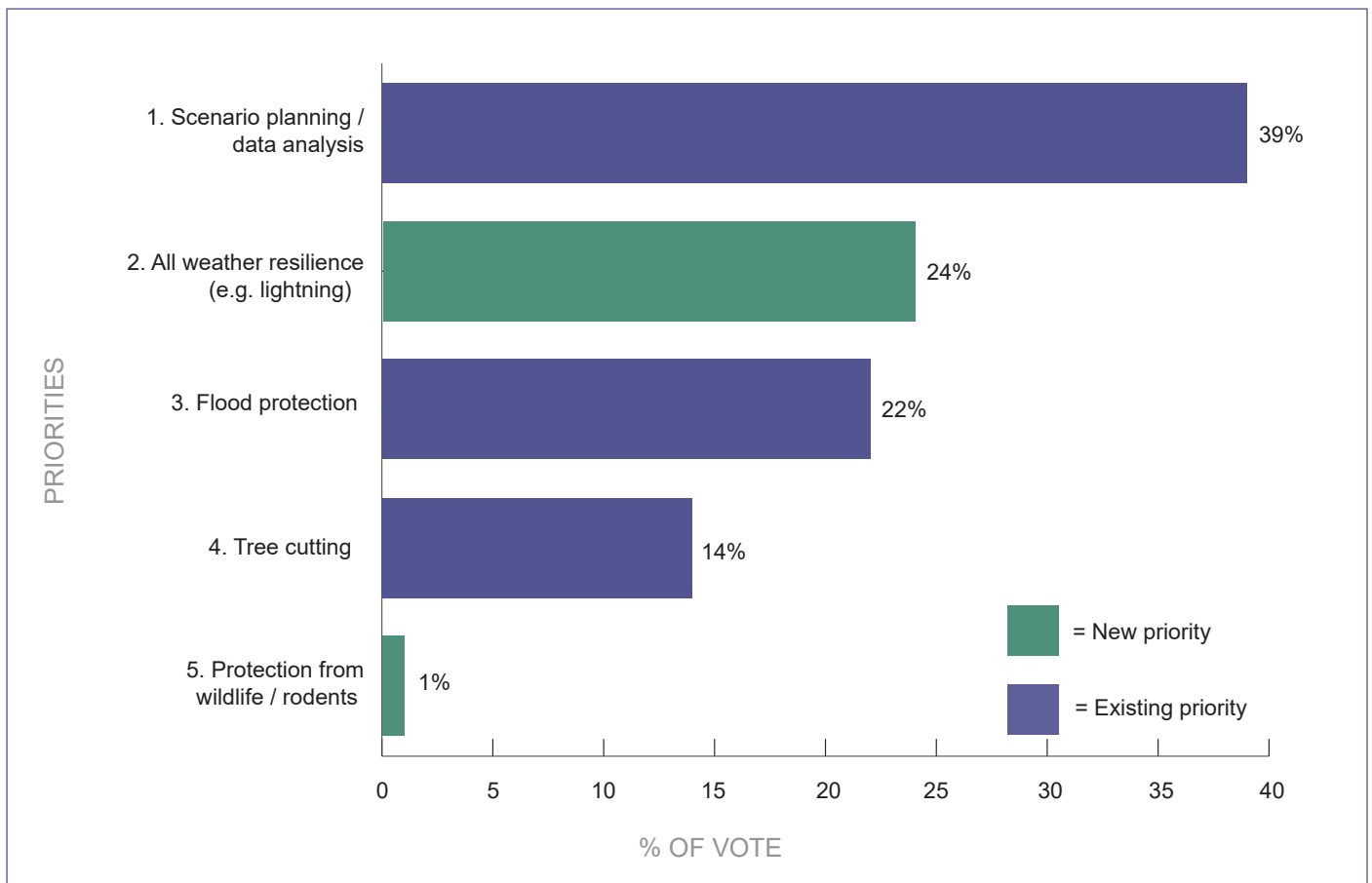
Stakeholders were of the view that WPD should prioritise ‘all weather resilience (e.g. lightning)’ and ‘flood protection’, giving these priorities 24% and 22% of the vote share respectively. It was suggested the WPD considers the risk of lightning strikes and continues to maintain its programme of flood protection for substations.

While WPD’s tree cutting programme was ranked fourth priority, stakeholders still suggested various commitments against it. This included developing a sustainable tree cutting programme that replaces ones that are removed, as well as looking to work with local stakeholders who can identify suitable locations for new trees and get involved in tree planting programmes.

A series of other priorities were suggested by stakeholders at the event. This included: ‘protection from wildlife / rodents’; ‘identify parts of the network vulnerable to being targeted by environmental campaign groups’; ‘work with councils on flood protection issues e.g. car park infrastructure’; and ‘lobby to be a statutory consultee on development plans’.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



NETWORK RESILIENCE

The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)		
6. Identify parts of the network vulnerable to being targeted by environmental campaign groups	7. Work with councils on flood protection issues e.g. car park infrastructure	8. Lobby to be a statutory consultee on development plans

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Scenario planning / data analysis — Proposed Commitments					
a) Work with emergency planning partners	b) Undertake longer-term scenario planning (10 year)	c) Link scenario planning with the health of your network assets	d) Increase under-grounding	e) Increase the use of AI to help improve network resilience	f) Review plans to prevent sparks from network causing fires

“Are sparks from transformers fire hazards from lines in rural areas?” **Parish council**

“There should be a requirement from Ofgem to do a joint emergency planning exercise. If the local resilience forum had a request and WPD responded to it, this could help with network resilience.” **Energy consultant**

“Undergrounding should be looked into, but it is more expensive.” **Domestic customer**

“WPD should be extending their long-term planning to help the community better.” **Local authority**

“WPD should use AI more to ensure resilience.” **Major connections customer**

“What is flood protection? Are we talking sandbags or actually moving your assets? Does that involve upgrading substations that are in floodplains, for example?” **Local authority**

Priority 2: All weather resilience (e.g. lightning) — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider protection against lightning strikes

“Climate change and the increased frequency of weather events. I don’t remember anything about implications for infrastructure and flooding.” **Emergency service**

Priority 3: Flood protection — Proposed Commitments

a) Maintain and enhance flood protection schemes

“I think this is all about maintenance. You can’t prepare for the unexpected so you simply need to have an extremely well-maintained network that can handle the unexpected.” **Local authority**

Priority 4: Tree cutting — Proposed Commitments

a) Develop an environmentally sustainable tree cutting programme	b) Work with local stakeholders to identify locations for tree planting and encourage the involvement of local groups	c) Plant new trees to offset ones that are cut down	d) Consider undergrounding to avoid tree removal
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“Does the tree cutting feed into your environment programme?” **Major connections customer**

“Tree planting schemes should be implemented to offset cutting.” **Parish council**

“Maybe WPD could partner with local authorities to coordinate where trees are planted? This could mean that they are far away from grid equipment.” **Local authority**

Priority 5: Protection from wildlife / rodents — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, and received 1% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“Has anyone ever talked about resilience in terms of wildlife or rodent infestation?” **Local authority**

Priority 6: Identify parts of the network vulnerable to being targeted by environmental campaign groups — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“I wonder if there is a consideration of the increase in environmental groups campaigning against things like new substations and tree cutting. You might start seeing more extreme campaign groups.” **Local authority**

Priority 7: Work with councils on flood protection issues e.g. car park infrastructure — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“WPD have the knowledge of where to put the cables in for EV chargers in car parks. It would be useful for councils to understand that so they can include it in the investment plans.” **Local authority**

Priority 8: Lobby to be a statutory consultee on development plans — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“WPD should absolutely lobby to become a statutory consultee, especially given the push towards net zero. WPD are key players in the process and they’re always absent.” **Major connections customer**



7 | CYBER RESILIENCE

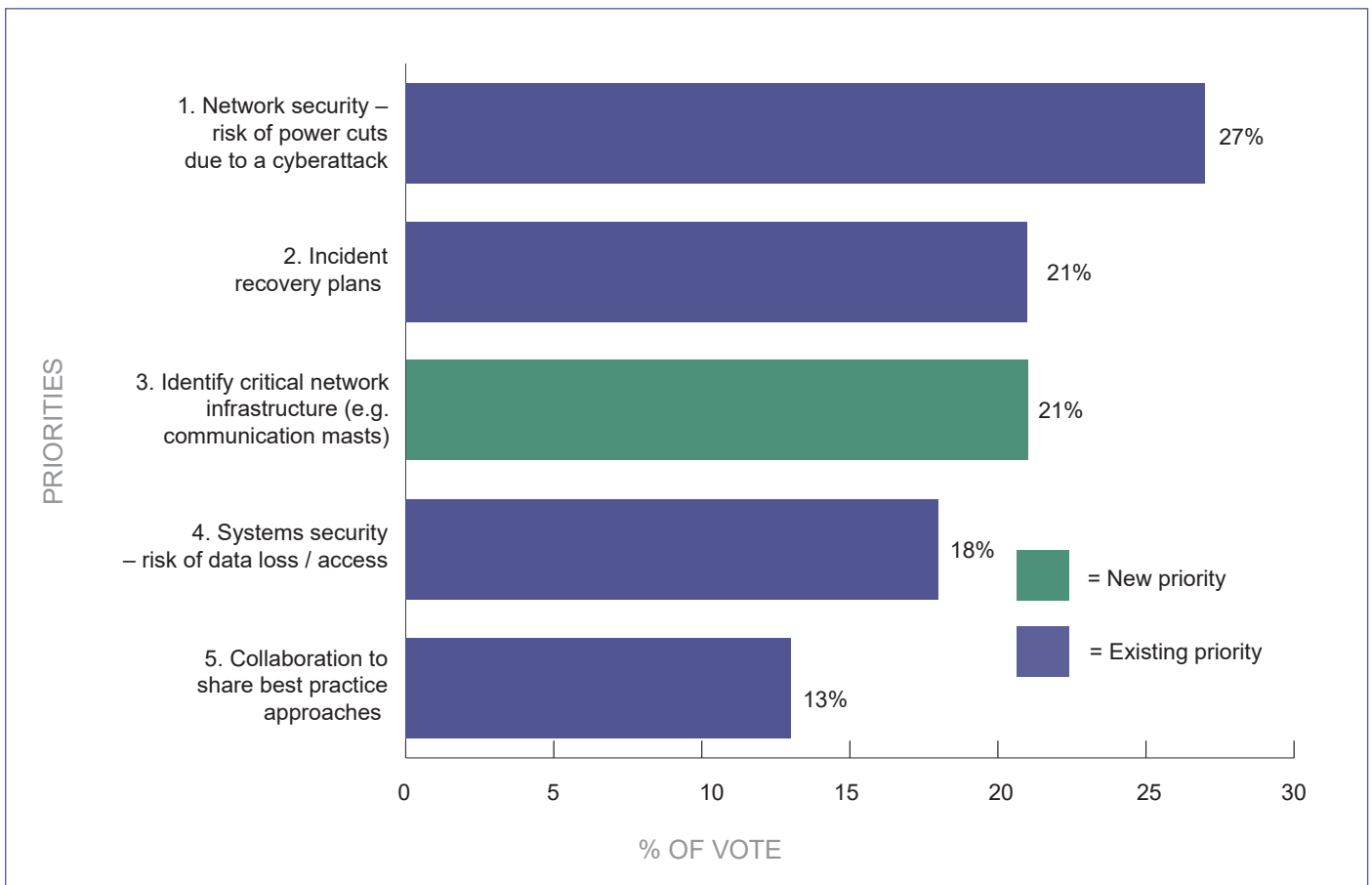
Stakeholders ranked 'network security – risk of power cuts due to a cyberattack' as the top priority under cyber resilience, with a 27% share of the vote. It was felt that investment in this area should be increased and that WPD should undertake mapping to understand the vulnerability of the network in this regard.

Two priorities were voted joint second with 21% of the vote each. 'Incident recovery plans' was one, with stakeholders wanting to see WPD take a more proactive approach in this area, have business continuity plans in place and improve the information it shares with local resilience forums. The other priority was a newly suggested priority: 'identify critical network infrastructure (e.g. communication masts)'. While no commitments were suggested against this priority, it was felt that critical infrastructure that relies on electricity like 5G masts needs increased protection.

As well as the risk of cyberattacks on the network, stakeholders also recognised the threat of attacks on system security and the potential risk of data loss. Consequently, stakeholders ranked this priority fourth and suggested some related commitments, including for WPD to weigh up the benefit to the consumer against the risk of losing sensitive data and to consider the security of customer data.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)	
6. Raise awareness [of network security]	7. Ensure direct contact for resilience forums

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Network security – risk of power cuts due to a cyberattack — Proposed Commitments

a) Focus on mapping network vulnerability	b) Increase investment in this area	c) Clearly separate network communications and business enterprise communications
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“There are mapping systems in progress in Wales and Cornwall to understand where the vulnerable people are.” **Energy consultant**

“Arguably, this is more risk potential than tree cutting, so more investment should go into it.” **Business customer**

“There needs to be a separation between network communications and business enterprise communications.” **Business customer**

Priority 2: Incident recovery plans — Proposed Commitments

a) Maintain up-to-date business continuity plans	b) Adopt preventative measures for high risk areas of the network	c) Improve information provided to resilience forums
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“Make sure business plans are up to date in the event of a cyberattack. They can work with emergency planners to make sure their business continuity plans are up to date.” **Local authority**

“WPD should ensure better communication and information exchange with resilience forums.” **Emergency services**

“WPD needs to put preventative measures in place. This means that there is a more proactive approach.” **Local authority**

Priority 3: Identify critical network infrastructure (e.g. communication masts) — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, and received 21% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“The future potential of 5G masts and autonomous vehicles make resilience and cyber security a much more pressing issue. If there’s any fluctuation in supply in this future scenario it could be a disaster. You need to prepare for this electric-dependent critical infrastructure.” **Major connections customer**

Priority 4: Systems security – risk of data loss / access — Proposed Commitments

a) Ensure the security of WPD’s sites to prevent theft

b) Consider GDPR in terms of customer data from EV charge points

c) Consider data access to ensure critical information is secure

“Is site security an issue for WPD? Do people go in stealing cables or parts from transmitters? If people can access sites, they can access data and systems. The company should commit to shoring that up.”

Energy consultant

“Is there going to be a privacy issue with connecting EV and GDPR? It should be considered by someone. I don’t care about you knowing my electricity usage but if a third party had that information, it might be used for something sinister.”

Major connections customer

“There needs to be a reconciliation of critical information versus consumer benefit. There is a potential risk of sensitive network information being made available.”

Business customer

Priority 5: Collaboration to share best practice approaches — Proposed Commitments

a) Share best practice

b) Work with organisations outside of the energy industry

“How does the organisation carry out best practice and share this information around? Getting feedback on this to find out other views on best practice would be useful.”

Utility

“Work with outside agencies (non-energy).”

Local authority

Priority 6: Raise awareness [of network security] — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“Awareness raising for network security.”

Local authority

Priority 7: Ensure direct contact for resilience forums — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions.

8 | WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO NET ZERO

The top rated priority, with 17% of the vote, was ‘coordinate network planning with other utilities to find best solutions.’ Stakeholders wanted to see WPD take a long-term approach to network planning that was much more coordinated with other utilities, including the other DNOs, as well as gas and water companies. They also wanted to see WPD undertake more network planning with local authorities, LEPs and developers.

The second rated priority was ‘help local communities to achieve their net zero carbon emissions targets’ with 15%. A range of commitments were suggested in relation to this priority, but many of these related to the role stakeholders felt WPD has in educating customers to reduce their energy consumption. Encouraging this behaviour change was a theme throughout this session, with stakeholders wanting WPD to collaborate with suppliers and local authorities too to help customers reduce their energy usage.

Another key theme during the session was the need to encourage the uptake of more renewables, particularly through encouraging local generation. The third priority, which was newly suggested by stakeholders, reflected this: ‘incentivise and promote local generation (lobby for 100% renewables)’. It was felt that increasing the uptake of local generation was an opportunity to address network constraints. Stakeholders wanted to see WPD do more to promote this opportunity and also to find ways of incentivising customers to do so.

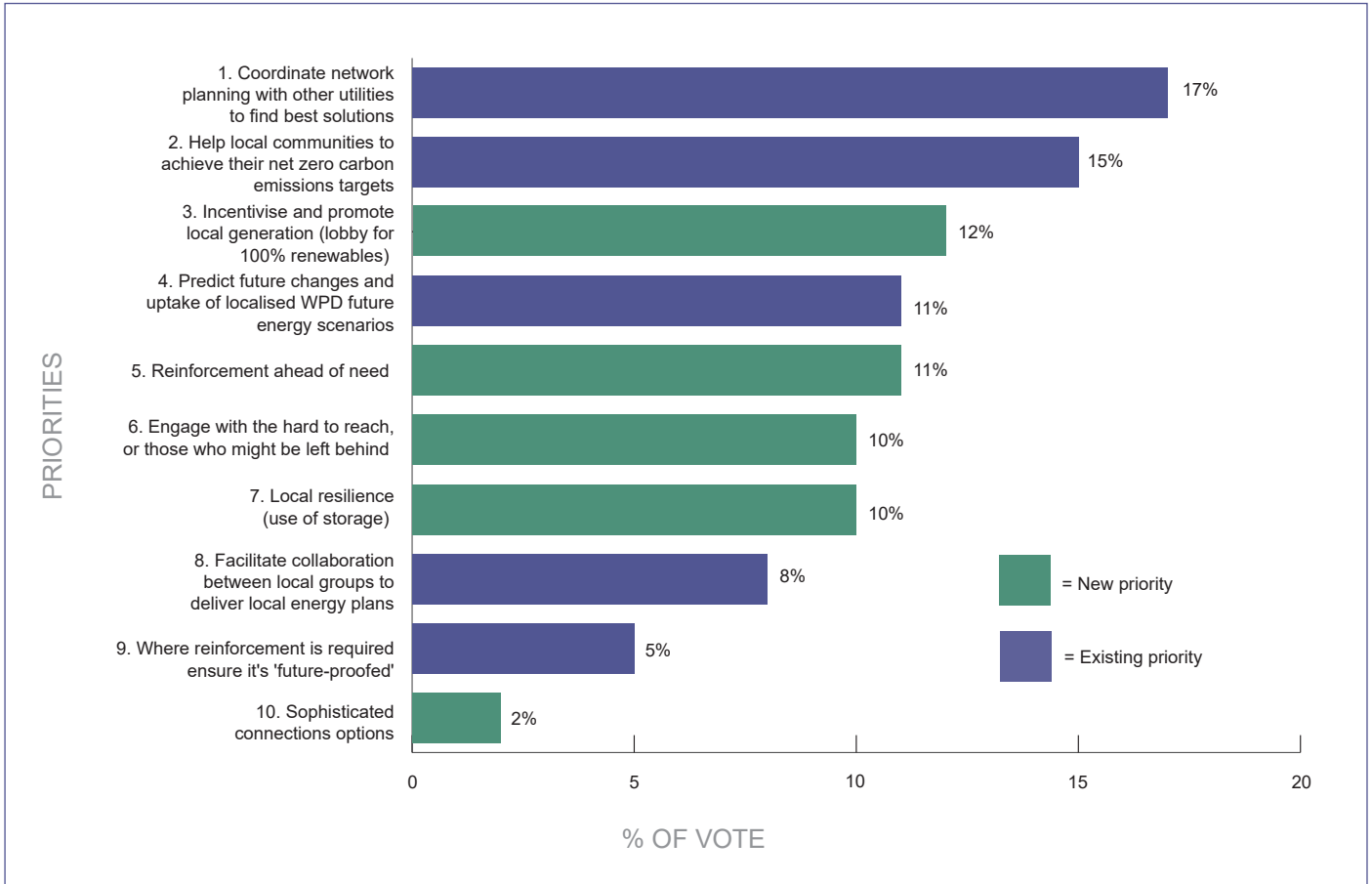
The need to continue to reinforce the network to deliver enough capacity was important to stakeholders as part of a whole systems approach. It was felt that a lack of capacity can be a constraining factor and that WPD should therefore be able to strategically invest ahead of need. Reflecting this, they suggested a new priority, ‘reinforcement ahead of need’, which was ranked joint fourth with 11% of the vote. An existing priority, ‘where reinforcement is required ensure it’s “future-proofed”’, also reflected stakeholders’ emphasis on network capacity, ranking ninth and gaining 5% of the vote.

Another new priority proposed by stakeholders was ‘engage with the hard to reach, or those who might be left behind’ which received 10% of the vote. While a specific commitment of engaging with private landlords / social housing providers to help improve resilience and reduce energy use was proposed, it was noted that this is a priority that should be included across all topic areas given its importance.



PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)	
11. Electric vehicles	12. Share data on capacity with other relevant utilities

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Coordinate network planning with other utilities to find best solutions — Proposed Commitments		
a) Also coordinate network planning with local authorities, LEPs and developers to find best solutions	b) Adopt a consistent, long-term approach to network planning	c) Adopt a more joined-up rigorous approach to network planning

“My passion has been for utilities to join up around a common agenda. Water, gas and electricity need to be bound around a common theme and work with local authorities.” **Energy consultant**

“There needs to be people round the table rather than emails exchanged. A proper process of engagement with the utilities and the local planning authorities.” **Energy consultant**

“I think WPD should facilitate the combined efforts for DNOs”. **Energy consultant**

“Local authorities would be a good avenue here because they would know where local energy projects are located and would be able to help best manage the big picture.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“There needs to be consistency and long-term planning.” **Major connections customer**



WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO NET ZERO

Priority 2: Help local communities to achieve their net zero carbon emissions targets

— Proposed Commitments

a) Take a multi-level approach, working with regional stakeholders down to individuals	b) Collaborate with suppliers	c) Encourage battery storage	d) Help to publicise a carbon calculator
e) Educate customers on reducing carbon footprint	f) Lobby government to decarbonise generation	g) Develop KPIs to measure the impact of your activities	h) Support local authorities with their strategies, sharing best practice and encouraging consistency

“WPD must recognise that they’re not the supplier, so they need to collaborate [with the supplier] on educating those stakeholders.” **Business customer**

“With decarbonising generation, WPD should lobby government for the transition to 100% renewables.” **Major connections customer**

“People don’t know what their carbon footprint is. We have to look at how individuals understand their energy consumption. This is with regard to holidays, transport, etc. WPD can do this through schools and therefore get it embedded in the households through the children. There needs to be a better understanding. It will take 10 to 15 years to recover the energy and cash being put into this innovation, but this is how to change behaviours.” **Energy consultant**

“It would be good to know what the KPIs are for achieving net zero. Everyone needs to know what they’re being compared against and how they should move in that direction.” **Energy consultant**

“I think people need to connect with this through something like a calculator that shows and shares how much carbon people are using.” **Utility**

“Maybe it could be coordinated by the local authorities by placing a graph on the website about where things should be? There should also be more education about how people can bring down their energy use.” **Local authority**

“Educating customers on their carbon footprint.” **Business customer**

“WPD should work with local authorities to help them in any way possible.” **Local authority**

“People need to know about how to save energy. WPD needs to work with customers directly.” **Local authority**

“There are work groups and committees in my local council associated with hitting net zero emissions. WPD could give people advice, strategy and ideas going forward.” **Local authority**



Priority 3: Incentivise and promote local generation (lobby for 100% renewables) — Proposed Commitments

a) Provide support and advice to encourage local generation in areas of network constraint

“For different scales of generation or connection applications there should be different processes for connection. When we’re talking about facilitation of small-scale domestic customers you need it to be as simple as possible. It’s about making it easier for the smaller domestic customers.” **Government**

“Is there any way you could purchase energy produced so that we could have a greater benefit for the community?” **Domestic customer**

“Incentives towards local communities to produce their own generation.” **Domestic customer**

“What are the plans around solar farms and wind power? How will renewables be connected? They are good ways of generating electricity and are clean. With the right technology in place, solar panels can feed excess charge back into the grid, which can meet the demand in busier areas.” **Local authority**

“You could look into ways to distribute the load better. I think that there should be a shift in investment behaviours and financial incentives should be created to help people generate their own energy to reduce the strain on the network.” **Local authority**

“There’s a lot of local generation there, as many people don’t know about the potential of these initiatives. People could play their own role in reinforcing the network.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“These people need to feel empowered to join in the green revolution.” **Charity**

“Decarbonising generation to 100% renewables should be a priority.” **Parish council**

“You really need to consider incentivising local generation more prominently.” **Local authority**

Priority 4: Predict future changes and uptake of localised WPD future energy scenarios — Proposed Commitments

a) Participate in a statutory forum to establish cross-utility collaboration

b) Roll out the work you do with Energy Capital (West Midlands Planning Authority scheme)

c) Invest in the local network

“There has to be a duty to cooperate with police, health and emergency services. This is essential infrastructure. There should be a statutory forum that operates at least twice a year to establish cross-utility interaction as a duty.” **Energy consultant**

“Energy Capital could advise you on this. It’s a public-private delivery method under the West Midlands planning authority.” **Major connections customer**

“WPD need to invest to overcome local obstacles in the network.” **Local authority**

Priority 5: Reinforcement ahead of need — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, and received 11% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“Yes, reinforcement ahead of need is really important.” **Major connections customer**

“WPD should be more forthcoming in providing reinforcement.” **Developer**

“WPD should upgrade their capacity proactively in an ideal world. It’s a constraining factor for us that we then would not have to think about.” **Major connections customer**

Priority 6: Engage with the hard to reach, or those who might be left behind — Proposed Commitments

a) Work with private landlords / social housing providers

“As a new priority, I think that WPD should undertake greater engagement with people who are more likely to be left behind. This is a theme that must run throughout all the topic areas today. They must not be left behind. They have the most to gain and the most to lose in the energy future.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“How would the solar model work with solar panels and getting enhanced insulation? Are there any initiatives for private landlords and social housing to encourage people to move towards net zero?” **Charity**

Priority 7: Local resilience (use of storage) — Proposed Commitments

a) Lobby government for battery storage

b) Consider whether storage is an appropriate solution for local resilience

“Resilience and storage are interlinked priorities that should be included.” **Business customer**

Priority 8: Facilitate collaboration between local groups to deliver local energy plans — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider heat pumps as part of local energy plans, including thermal storage options

b) Create consensual partnerships between local groups

c) Maintain an emphasis on affordability, including for ‘eco-flex’ customers (working poor)

d) Provide illustrative constraint information

e) Take a leadership approach, providing training and information

“Drive towards heat pumps.” **Local authority**

“The triumvirate of the asset developer, DNO and LA creating a more comprehensive partnership would be fantastic.” **Major connections customer**

“I think that while keeping up with the demands in technology and electricity, keeping the cost down for consumers is key. Affordability is key to this whole strategy.” **Local authority**

“Better information should be made available to facilitate decarbonisation and make capacity constraints clear.” **Business customer**

“Maybe collaboration with local groups needs to be about training. So local colleges with engineering courses should perhaps take WPD’s current needs and requirements into account.” **Major connections customer**

“Under this heading, you need to have information that everyone can read and understand.” **Major connections customer**

Priority 9: Where reinforcement is required, ensure it is ‘future-proofed’ — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider installing three-phase supplies

b) Adopt a consistent, long-term approach to reinforcing the network

“Three-phase consideration.” **Energy consultant**

“Increase the priority of this, because you can’t do a lot of things without this priority.” **Local authority**

WHOLE SYSTEMS APPROACH TO NET ZERO

Priority 10: Sophisticated connections options — Proposed Commitments

- a) Facilitate data sharing between the DNO and asset owners to enable sophisticated connections options

“Sophisticated connection options should be a priority. There can be tensions between asset owners and the network operator otherwise. Energy sources need to be dispatchable in the future and therefore connection options need to be sophisticated.” **Business customer**

Priority 11: Electric vehicles — Proposed Commitments

- a) Develop an EV capacity map (in clear language that customers understand)
- b) Encourage car parks to become self-sufficient by generating their own energy

“Could you have something on WPD’s website where you could see a local network capacity map specifically for EV? Would that be useful?” **Energy consultant**

“We build car parks with solar panels on top so they are all self-sufficient. Why can’t all car parks consider doing that?” **Developer**

“We all talk in language that normal people don’t understand. ‘Capacity map’ might not mean a lot to the average user.” **Business customer**

“I’d like to see EV as a priority under net zero.” **Business customer**

Priority 12: Share data on capacity with other relevant utilities — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions.



9 | INNOVATION AND NEW SERVICES

The top priority for innovation and new services was ‘facilitate microgrids and net zero developments’, receiving 16% of the vote, which was a new priority suggested by stakeholders during the session. They wanted to see whole developments running off microgrids using new technologies to help achieve net zero. It was even felt by a couple of stakeholders that Milton Keynes, which was created as a new town, would be a good place to trial the concept of microgrids.

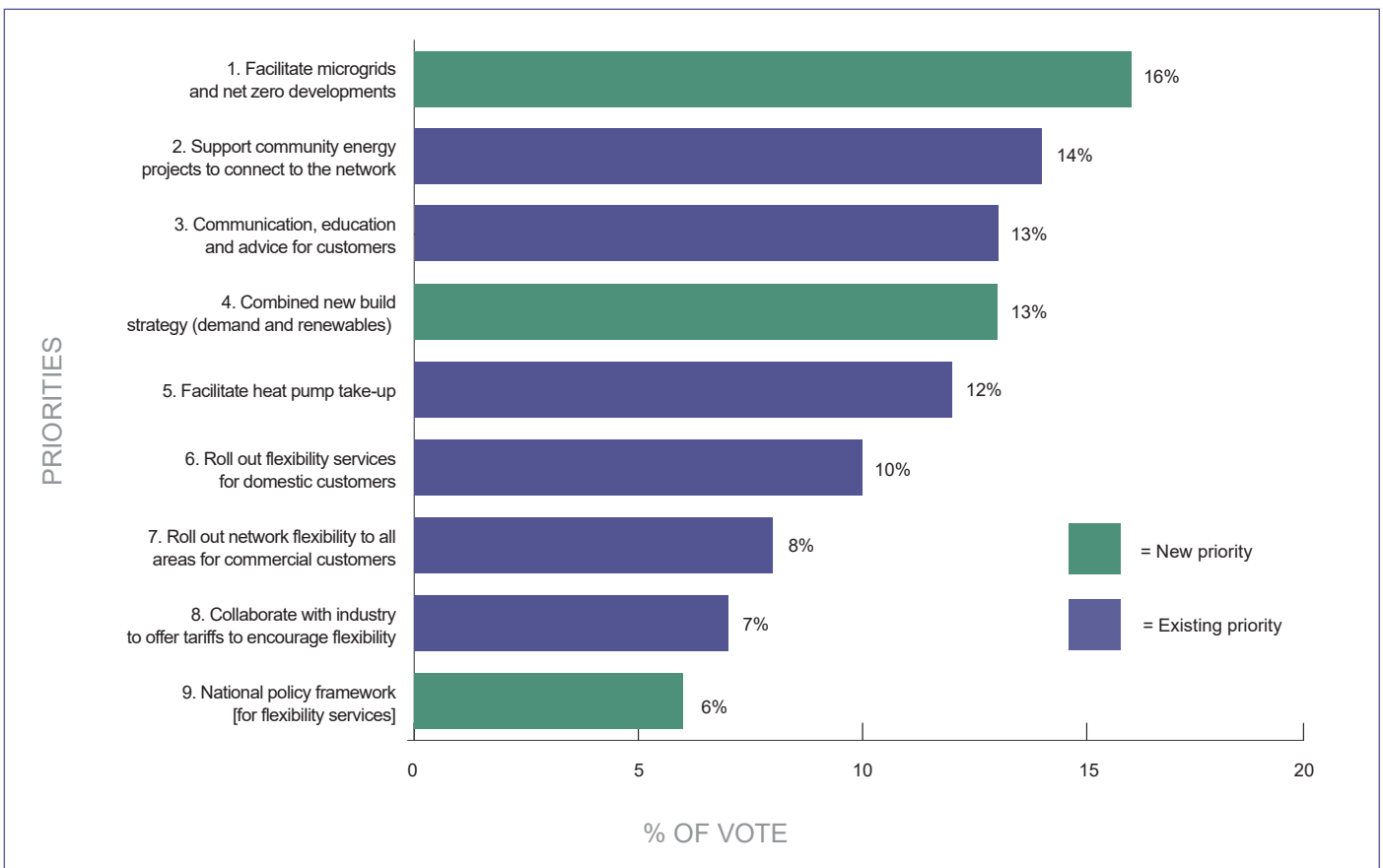
The next top two priorities, and the commitments stakeholders proposed against them, were primarily around improving the level of communication and the quality of information that WPD provides. The second priority with 14% of the vote was ‘support community energy projects to connect to the network’, with stakeholders wanting to see a dedicated point of contact at WPD, forums, case studies and champions to help improve information provision for community energy groups. The third priority with 13% of the vote was ‘communication, education and advice for customers’, with stakeholders wanting WPD to increase the level of information provided to customers to help influence behaviour change and reduce energy usage.

The fourth priority was another newly suggested priority, ‘combined new build strategy (demand and renewables)’, with 13% of the vote. An important theme across the whole workshop, stakeholders wanted more collaboration and incentives to encourage developers to install low-carbon technologies as part of all new build developments. Working with developers and local authorities to drive the uptake of heat pumps also came into the fifth rated priority: ‘facilitate heat pump take-up’ with 12%. One stakeholder suggested that WPD help cover the capital cost of heat pumps, selling back the heat to customers in a model similar to that purportedly being implemented in Iceland.

Encouraging the roll-out of flexibility services for domestic customers ranked sixth (10% of the vote) and seventh for commercial customers (8%) in Milton Keynes. It was acknowledged that flexibility is easier to achieve with commercial customers, but that the priority should be encouraging commercial customers where the network is constrained. The role of aggregators was felt to be very important to support uptake among domestic customers. It was noted that vulnerable customers may find flexibility very challenging and must be considered carefully to ensure they are not left behind.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



INNOVATION AND NEW SERVICES

The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)

10. Broaden definition of innovation schemes to include behaviour change / community schemes

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Facilitate microgrids and net zero developments — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, and received the highest number of votes with 16%, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“Air source heat pumps are an easy solution for new developments. Electric vehicles and battery storage for houses should also be looked at so that they can be self-sufficient within that environment. This microgrid concept helps to achieve net zero. It doesn't even have to be a microgrid. E.ON is looking at the sustainability issue through smart concepts and energy hubs. We have done it already in Exeter, Bristol and the City of London.” **Utility**

“It is good to have case studies and things that have been successful. I have a community energy organisation working with planning systems to build new properties on a microgrid.” **Local authority**

“Milton Keynes is only 50 years old and we were meant to be leading the show but I think we should try to forecast as much as we can. With CO2 reduction, we have to explain to people what that will involve.” **Major connections customer**

“Can you do any studies on this? I think Milton Keynes would be a good place to do this because we are quite technologically advanced around here and could act as an example for other places.” **Major connections customer**



Priority 2: Support community energy projects to connect to the network — Proposed Commitments

a) Establish a dedicated point of contact for community energy groups	b) Hold forums for community energy groups	c) Create training information, including real-life case studies	d) Consider community energy projects as part of your social contract	e) Assist with the development of smart grids to facilitate large-scale projects	f) Create ambassadors / champions
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“It would be nice if there was a contact in WPD to advise local groups and councils as to how to reduce their carbon consumption.” **Parish council**

“WPD need to share knowledge with communities for their projects via training and information.” **Parish council**

“WPD must assist with the development of smart grids if community projects are to be viable on a larger scale.” **Business customer**

“Consider social contracts.” **Developer**

“They can find champions to do this. Local authorities can be champions but so can individuals like celebrities.” **Energy consultant**

“Why can’t the three utilities get together and work with schools to send out packages of information? It doesn’t need to be select group of people. We need to find a transformational way to shift the paradigm. The voters of tomorrow need to understand.” **Energy consultant**

“We need to make a case study and YouTube video and even just this will make a difference.” **Local authority**

Priority 3: Communication, education and advice for customers — Proposed Commitments

a) Work with Citizens Advice to promote energy efficiency / tariffs	b) Roll out education programmes in schools	c) Review lessons learnt from ED1	d) Provide information, educate and empower customers	e) Raise awareness among local authorities
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“Sitting down with customers that can’t afford electricity isn’t really the DNO’s responsibility. Instead you need to be working with the likes of Citizens Advice Bureau.” **Major connections customer**

“It would be good to understand how WPD have achieved these priorities in ED1.” **Connections provider**

“Provide information to make decisions.” **Domestic customer**

“I tried to write a decarbonisation strategy in my area and it’s about education for councils.” **Business customer**

“Outreach and public awareness. Teach our children and they can teach theirs.” **Major connections customer**

Priority 4: Combined new build strategy (demand and renewables) — Proposed Commitments

a) Install renewables as part of all new builds	b) Create a statutory incentive to encourage developers
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“WPD should encourage combined strategies mandated by building regulations or otherwise. These could include heat pumps and solar.” **Business customer**

“There needs to be more discussions with developers now to see what they are doing in terms of building homes.” **Local authority**

“Heat pump placement should be encouraged at the start of the planning process and WPD can collaborate with partners in this area. There need to be developer incentives.” **Parish council**

Priority 5: Facilitate heat pump take-up — Proposed Commitments

a) Also facilitate take-up of PVs, battery storage and district heating	b) Collaborate with developers and local authorities to drive uptake through planning process	c) Invest in the infrastructure and hardware to encourage large scale take-up
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“WPD should be investing in innovation projects to help them get to net zero. They should be buying the boilers and then selling the heat back to them. Iceland have been using this model for years.” **Energy consultant**

“Using local areas such as school fields and car parks for people who don’t have large enough gardens could be a great potential solution to mass heat pump usage.” **Energy consultant**

“I don’t really know a lot about the basics of heat pumps, so I need to know a bit about them to tell people in my councils about it. There seems to be a lack of knowledge about capital investment for them, their link with smart metering and WPD’s role in their deployment. Maybe there could be an educational piece on that?” **Local authority**

Priority 6: Roll out flexibility services to domestic customers — Proposed Commitments

a) Ensure that the most vulnerable are not left behind	b) Collaborate with charge point manufacturers to deliver a platform that facilitates smart charging	c) Build trust with customers to encourage take-up	d) Develop financial incentives to encourage take-up	e) Work with aggregators to encourage take-up
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“Flexibility services are not ideal for my clients, as they have brain injuries. They can only just get through remembering basic daily tasks. WPD will need to commit to establishing more partnerships to assist vulnerable people in this area.” **Charity**

“What are WPD doing to ensure that people who are struggling to afford normal electricity aren’t left behind? How will they be helped to improve net zero?” **Local authority**

“There are aggregators out there, but they don’t seem to work with domestic very well.” **Connections provider**

“You need to provide a platform to facilitate this smart charging. If it’s a personal choice to have to go to turn it off and on then people won’t engage. You need a smart charging service that doesn’t require the engagement of the end user.” **Government**

“There’s only two drivers here really: fear and money. There’s very few people that do things just because it’s the right thing.” **Major energy user**

“Being realistic, it’s about financial incentives for individual flexibility.” **Major connections customer**

“Vulnerable people need routine, so these flexible services will be a shock to the system. WPD needs to consider these people more.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“It doesn’t even have to be a huge financial incentive, as long as people feel as if they are saving money.” **Major energy user**

“Aggregation services will be key for rolling out flexibility and should be promoted.” **Emergency services**

Priority 7: Roll out network flexibility to all areas for commercial customers — Proposed Commitments

a) Only roll out network flexibility to those areas that need it	b) Simplify the process for commercial customers	c) Develop financial incentives and opportunities for capacity sharing between major users
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“It’s easier to do this with commercial customers and not domestic.” **Academic institution**

“I don’t think this is a priority. Certainly not to all areas. This implies you’re putting it to areas that don’t need this support. This is a bad allocation of resources.” **Energy consultant**

“With capacity, we already know how much we have spare so I’d support making it simpler to give your capacity to someone else. As part of our business model we know when our football matches will be, so perhaps consider other businesses which also know their energy needs far in advance.” **Major energy user**

Priority 8: Collaborate with industry to offer tariffs to encourage flexibility — Proposed Commitments

a) Lobby government to encourage flexibility	b) Develop incentives to encourage flexibility
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“WPD’s hands are so tied in that respect. It doesn’t matter how much research you do, it all depends on what the government decides to do.” **Energy consultant**

“How are you able to influence the suppliers? They’re providing a service that someone is paying for so what’s the incentive for them?” **Major energy user**

Priority 9: National policy framework [for flexibility services] — Proposed Commitments

a) Support a national energy campaign to build trust and extol the financial benefits	b) Include a framework to encourage investment ahead of need	c) Support an incentive for developers to fit low-carbon technologies into new builds
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“The network is ageing, and some cables are 60 years old. Should it be made public so that people understand the necessity of upgrading cables? A national energy campaign is what we’re seeing and that’s not just applicable to WPD.” **Energy consultant**

“Heat pump placement should be encouraged at the start of the planning process and WPD can collaborate with partners in this area. There need to be developer incentives.” **Parish council**

Priority 10: Broaden definition of innovation schemes to include behaviour change / community schemes — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions.

10 | ENVIRONMENT

The three top priorities for this topic were newly suggested by stakeholders during the session. The first one was ‘sustainable procurement and circular economy’ with 20% of the vote. While no commitments were suggested against it, stakeholders highlighted the importance of having a circular economy policy given how much metal the company consumes.

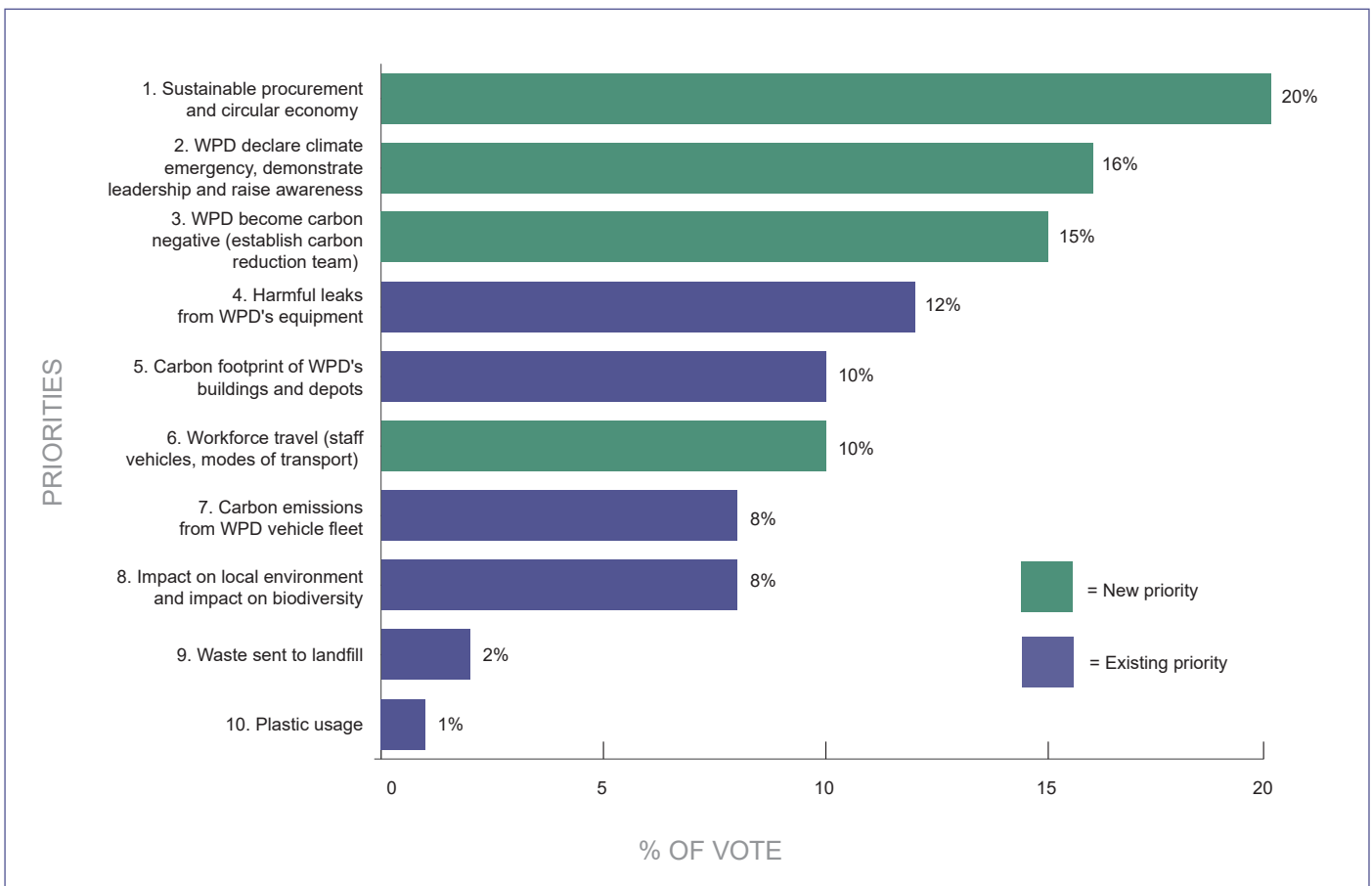
The second ranked priority was ‘WPD declare climate emergency, demonstrate leadership and raise awareness’ with 16%, which was closely followed by ‘WPD become carbon negative (establish carbon reduction team)’ with 15%. Both followed similar themes, with stakeholders wanting to see WPD reduce its carbon footprint so as to lead by example. There was some disagreement on how best to achieve this: for example, some felt that declaring a climate emergency wasn’t important and that the critical factor was achieving net zero or even becoming carbon negative as a business, whereas others felt WPD should declare a climate emergency.

The fourth rated priority was ‘harmful leaks from WPD’s equipment’ with 12%. Stakeholders recognised that SF6 was incredibly harmful and felt that WPD need to be finding innovative ways of monitoring and replacing this harmful gas. ‘Carbon footprint of WPD’s buildings and depots’ ranked joint fifth with 10%. Stakeholders wanted all new buildings to meet the very highest environmental standards and wanted to see existing buildings retrofitted and best practice shared in this area.

The impact of WPD’s vehicle fleet, including staff vehicles, was considered important by stakeholders. They suggested a new priority here—‘workforce travel (staff vehicles, modes of transport)’—which was joint fifth with 10%. This overlapped with the existing priority ‘carbon emissions from WPD vehicle fleet’ which was joint seventh with 8%. In both cases, stakeholders supported a reduction in emissions for example by creating a considered working from home policy or by replacing the existing fleet with electric vehicles.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



ENVIRONMENT

The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)

11. Reduce network losses

12. Changes to operational practices by greater use of telephony / AI

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Sustainable procurement and circular economy — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, and came top with 20%, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“Is there any kind of circular economy policy? All this expansion will require vast quantities of things like copper, so how will WPD ensure these resources are sustainably sourced?” **Major connections customer**

“I think you are in a unique position with regard to metal. You’re one of the biggest consumers of metal and you need to have iron-clad policy on your metal reuse and recycling.” **Energy consultant**

“Your circular economy policy is important. Copper can be recycled from old transformers that you already own. WPD need to think about how you’re utilising and reusing the materials you already have.” **Energy consultant**

Priority 2: WPD declare climate emergency, demonstrate leadership and raise awareness — Proposed Commitments

a) Demonstrate leadership around carbon reduction

b) Provide information and support on carbon reduction

c) Publicise energy saving and efficiency measures

“If you are leading in this area, you need to be leading with the best example.” **Local authority**

“Declare a climate emergency.” **Local authority**

“WPD should do a short TV ad or social media ad encouraging people to take measures to reduce their carbon footprint. It will raise awareness.” **Local authority**

Priority 3: WPD become carbon negative (establish carbon reduction team) — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, receiving 15% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“Why is WPD aiming for carbon zero? Why not carbon negative?” **Business customer**

“There should be a new priority to consider a commitment to achieve net zero. It’s up to the organisation whether they want to declare a climate emergency.” **Local authority**

“Do WPD publish their carbon emissions?” **Local authority**

“WPD should look into its own employees’ behaviours to lower their carbon footprint. Car-sharing for commutes is an obvious one for me.” **Local authority**

“WPD should establish a carbon reduction team.” **Major energy user**

“It doesn’t matter if WPD declares a climate emergency but doesn’t do anything. It needs to do something.” **Charity**

Priority 4: Harmful leaks from WPD’s equipment — Proposed Commitments

a) Focus on innovation to replace harmful materials

b) Increase the replacement of assets

c) Monitor the environmental impact of leaks over time

“More innovation is needed in the replacement of SF6.” **Energy consultant**

“I have a suspicion that SF6 is far more important than the vehicle fleet.” **Energy consultant**

“SF6 is a big problem and you need to invest in new technologies to replace SF6 in your network.” **Major connections customer**

“One of our innovation projects with WPD is looking at ways of detecting SF6 at the earliest sign. I know WPD have just launched hi-tech cameras that spot tiny leaks.” **Energy consultant**

“A couple of years ago I did work mapping environmental damage from ordinates in the area. Part of this is using open source imagery and satellite imagery to monitor the spread of leaks on the environment. WPD could map any spills to see whether there have been any effects on the environment.” **Local authority**

“Is there an alternative to SF6? I have a feeling an alternative insulator would be less efficient. There might be a role for WPD to take the initiative at the research level to find an alternative.” **Domestic customer**



Priority 5: Carbon footprint of WPD’s buildings and depots — Proposed Commitments

a) Ensure all new buildings have high environmental standards	b) Retrofit existing buildings to improve energy efficiency	c) Share best practice in this area	d) Lead by example in this area (target EPC C+ rating)	e) Stop using gas by 2025	f) Identify and measure key priorities in this area
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“When you build your new buildings do you look at passive house standards? What are you doing to influence new developments at an early stage?”
Major connections customer

“There is a set of things that have to be looked at including insulation, windows, floors and everything. There is a benchmark they have to follow.” **Utility**

“Target EPCs C+.” **Domestic customer**

“Do an audit for all of your old buildings so that you can identify your priorities.” **Connections provider**

“Retrofitting existing buildings is a serious issue. WPD should take the initiative and find ways to develop best practice which can then be used elsewhere on existing buildings.” **Domestic customer**

“You should look to remove gas by 2025.”
Major connections customer

Priority 6: Workforce travel (staff vehicles, modes of transport) — Proposed Commitments

a) Develop a working from home policy

“A work from home plan needs to be valued on a case by case basis. You close the local office, but you massively increase your home heating. You also live further away because you don’t have to be there so often but then you drive five times the distance a third of the time.” **Energy consultant**

“Staff could be new priority. Staff travel to and from work. Is there a cycling policy or incentive? Generally supporting staff in reducing their personal emissions could have a big impact.”
Major connections customer

“A work from home plan is very important.”
Major connections customer

Priority 7: Carbon emissions from WPD vehicle fleet — Proposed Commitments

a) Set a target to replace existing fleet with electric vehicles	b) Set stretching, measurable targets	c) Review the relationship between digital strategy and call out times	d) Establish a prioritisation process for fleet replacement	e) Reduce miles travelled
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“Vehicle recycling is now up to 100% so there’s no need to worry about the wastefulness of scrapping your current fleet.” **Major connections customer**

“Whatever you do, set challenging targets.”
Business customer

“The other thing is that when you have a vehicle parked to maintain the inverter to run the electrical equipment off it, the vehicle is running.” **Utility**

“Company cars are now also all electric in my business.”
Utility

“What is their relationship between their digital strategy and their call out time?” **Consumer body**

“Companies recruit from the Internet, meaning that people travel hundreds of miles to get to work. Try and find a way to make your worker base close to you. Recruit from the local area or help them to relocate to nearby, so that people can walk or cycle to work too.”
Energy consultant

“Measuring carbon levels are important. We need a benchmark so that we have something to work towards. If we have a starting point, it gives us somewhere to go. Measuring KPIs will be key.” **Energy consultant**

Priority 8: Impact on local environment and impact on biodiversity — Proposed Commitments

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| a) Adopt alternative transport
e.g. drones | b) Plant more trees to replace ones
that have been cut down | c) Adopt partnership working
in this area |
|---|--|--|

“Using drones to carry out inspections.”
Local authority

“Perhaps you should develop partnership
working to offset your environmental impact.”
Major connections customer

“Don’t you trim trees though rather than actually
chopping them down?” **Developer**

Priority 9: Waste sent to landfill — Proposed Commitments

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| a) Improve metal and cable reuse and recycling | b) Reduce the overall level of waste |
|--|--------------------------------------|

“Copper can be recycled from old transformers that
you already own. At WPD, you need to think about how
you’re utilising and reusing the materials you already
have – metals in particular.” **Energy consultant**

“They should look at reducing overall waste too, not
just recycling it. Less can be produced. I’m not aware
of a commitment to achieve net zero by a certain point.”
Local authority

Priority 10: Plastic usage — Proposed Commitments

- | |
|-------------------------------|
| a) Increase plastic recycling |
|-------------------------------|

“Do WPD use a lot of plastic? Is there a number on
that?” **Major connections customer**

“Reducing, recycling and reusing.”
Domestic customer

Priority 11: Reduce network losses — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“What is the efficiency of the transmission
of the network? What is the efficiency loss?”
Major connections customer

Priority 12: Changes to operational practices by greater use of telephony / AI — Proposed Commitments

- | |
|--|
| a) Upskill staff to be able to adopt new practices |
|--|

“You could change your operational approach
by integrating more AI and telephony.”
Major connections customer

11 | ELECTRIC VEHICLES

The priority that was rated highest, with 18% of the vote, was 'enable transport model shift (flexibility and adaptability)'. While stakeholders didn't propose any specific commitments under this priority, it was felt WPD must be able to respond to how transport demand changes in a flexible way – whether that be changing transport technologies or differing energy sources. As in previous engagement sessions, some stakeholders saw Milton Keynes as a technological trailblazer and wanted to see the development of new technologies while noting the need for WPD to support the development of smart cities.

The second highest priority was 'facilitate electric vehicles on a mass scale' with 14%. This reflected similar themes as the top priority, in the sense that stakeholders were keen that WPD ensures the network infrastructure does not act as a blocker to the uptake of electric vehicles. They also picked up on a theme from earlier sessions, which was the opportunity to use local generation to provide the power for charge points.

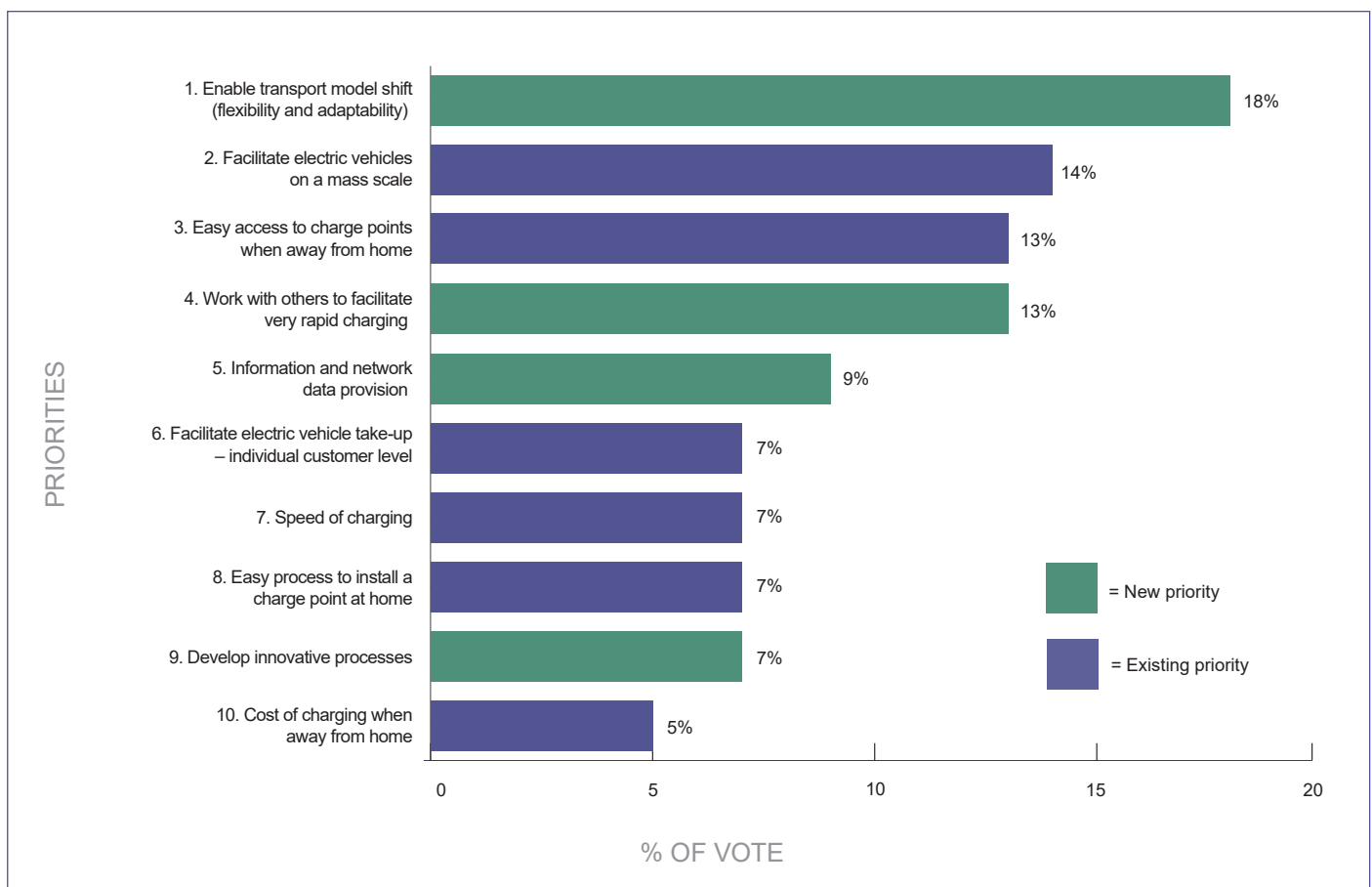
Stakeholders expressed concern about the availability and compatibility of charge points away from home, with some sharing personal experiences of difficulties they had encountered and expressing range anxiety. It therefore followed that the two joint third priorities, with 13% of the vote each, were 'easy access to charge points when away from home' and a newly suggested priority, 'work with others to facilitate very rapid charging'.

Stakeholders wanted WPD to increase the level of information provided on electric vehicles, with local authority stakeholders wanting WPD to provide clear instruction on where charge points can feasibly go. Reflecting this request, stakeholders suggested a new priority of 'information and network data provision', which was ranked fifth with 9% of the vote.

Two of the other new priorities suggested by stakeholders (but not voted on electronically) were 'invest in EV infrastructure ahead of need' and 'lobby government on infrastructure'. These priorities again reflected the concern among stakeholders that the network infrastructure is ready to help facilitate the rapid increase in numbers of electric vehicles. It was felt that the government needed to provide a much clearer strategy to help facilitate this transition.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)	
11. Invest in EV infrastructure ahead of need	12. Lobby government on infrastructure

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Enable transport model shift (flexibility and adaptability) — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority and was the top rated priority, with 18% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“In Milton Keynes we have seen lots of trials of new transport systems like robot deliveries and driverless pods. The network needs to be able to support these transport changes and the trials of this new technologies, and not to be an obstacle. **Local authority**”

“Promote smart cities.” **Consumer body**

“Flexibility and adaptability.” **Academic institution**

“If everyone shifts to EV, you’ll need a massive change in infrastructure.” **Major energy user**

Priority 2: Facilitate electric vehicles on a mass scale — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider all low-carbon vehicle / transport options as well as EVs	b) Focus on the quantity of charge points	c) Reconsider the structure of connection charges	d) Lobby for changes to the NPPF to support uptake of EVs	e) Encourage more local generation to power charge points	f) Consider alternative charge point models e.g. induction pads
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“There should be a role for encouraging people who have hybrid vehicles to use the electric side.” **Domestic customer**

“I think that the biggest issue is where the power is going to come from. There needs to be more thought about how that will be done. WPD needs to encourage more generation to cope with all the potential charging on the system.” **Energy consultant**

“Prioritise the amount of facilities for charging.” **Connections provider**

“Should we be looking at inductive charging rather than plug ins?” **Domestic customer**

“The structure of connection chargers is not set up for mass demand. Look again to make sure they don’t penalise EV patterns.” **Academic institution**

“There is a lot of focus on EV but perhaps we should be looking at the provision of other transportation. Some people can’t afford EVs.” **Local authority**

“There is no link between the energy requirements for a new development and transport development. There needs to be an ask of central government that their planning policy needs to change.” **Local authority**

Priority 3: Easy access to charge points when away from home — Proposed Commitments

a) Address safety concerns at charge points	b) Deliver rapid chargers	c) Identify priority areas e.g. taxi ranks	d) Look to provide reassurance about range anxiety
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“There’s a lot of social issues surrounding electric vehicle charging points that a lot of people don’t think about. We think about the technology first and the end user absolute dead last. There’s a lot of safety issues when it comes to charging points. I was followed back to my car by someone that I felt threatened by but I couldn’t drive away because my car was connected.”
Major connections customer

“What WPD can do is have the infrastructure in place to ease that range anxiety.”
Major connections customer

“I had somebody install a charge point at home but the only issue is the availability of rapid chargers away from home. If everyone knew that every motorway was well equipped with 20-minute smart chargers, it would be much better.” **Major connections customer**

“WPD needs to explore priority areas for placing chargers. Taxi ranks are a big one that comes to mind.”
Local authority

Priority 4: Work with others to facilitate very rapid charging — Proposed Commitments

a) Collaborate with local authorities and parish councils

“You should collaborate closely with LAs and parish councils.” **Parish council**

“The only issue is the availability of rapid chargers [away from home]. We’re very well serviced in Milton Keynes but when I go somewhere else I’m not sure. I need to make sure in advance. If everyone knew that every motorway was well equipped with 20-minute smart chargers, it would be much better.”
Major connections customer

Priority 5: Information and network data provision — Proposed Commitments

a) Make more data available to support planning, including network capacity, potential locations and future demand forecasts
--

“There is an electric vehicle capacity map that WPD have released. This is a good start but it needs to be far more extensive to help facilitate local authority planning.” **Energy consultant**

“Can’t they get WPD to share with local authorities where the best places to put chargers are? They should continue to do this.” **Utility**

“There needs to be more communication around where these chargers can go.” **Local authority**

Priority 6: Facilitate electric vehicle take-up – individual customer level — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider interaction between EV, heat pumps and storage	b) Improve understanding among customers	c) Enable alternative charging options	d) Deliver rapid charging
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“In terms of network planning you need to consider that electric vehicles won’t have as much drain on the grid as the uptake of electric heating systems like heat pumps. Consider the interaction between electric vehicles, heat pumps and storage.” **Energy consultant**

“I think that people would be more inclined to EVs if they knew the potential benefits. WPD should think about an education piece about that in order to improve understanding.” **Energy consultant**

“Enable alternatives, for example inductive charging.” **Academic institution**

“If 80% of vehicles can only be fuelled at an alternative location, you need to resolve the storage issue to facilitate rapid charging.” **Business customer**

“Enabling alternative charging.” **Local authority**

Priority 7: Speed of charging — Proposed Commitments

a) Enable rapid charging using DC charging	b) Provide reassurance to customers to address range anxiety
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“WPD should look into implementing DC electric vehicle charging.” **Energy consultant**

“What WPD can do is have the infrastructure in place to ease that range anxiety.” **Major connections customer**

“The equipment will be very expensive, so I don’t know about the commercial viability of the charging model for fast-speed charging.” **Local authority**

Priority 8: Easy process to install a charge point at home — Proposed Commitments

a) Work with partners to address capacity constraints	b) Provide a central advice service for customers
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“Government and authorities need to work with partners to address capacity constraints.” **Local authority**

“One-stop shop for requests.” **Academic institution**

“People need to have the confidence of home charging.” **Major energy user**

Priority 9: Develop innovative processes — Proposed Commitments

a) Use innovation to address land rights
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“We obtain the land rights that WPD need for cabling or substations. I’m interested in speeding up the legal process for connections. For example, we recently established a collaboration partnership protocol to that end. It has increased our 50-day completion KPI by over 70 per cent since its introduction.” **Energy consultant**

Priority 10: Cost of charging when away from home — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, receiving 5% of the vote, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“It’s more the cost of charging that DNOs have some influence and flexibility on.” **Energy consultant**

Priority 11: Invest in EV infrastructure ahead of need — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“There should be a new priority to invest in infrastructure before the need arises. A commitment under this is for more granular information about the charge points and where they should be. They are showing the supply but not where the demand is and this needs to be matched up.” **Business customer**

Priority 12: Lobby government on infrastructure — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“There needs to be lobbying from central government to make this EV system viable. They are banning petrol cars, but there are no plans for it to create the infrastructure to help smooth out the transition. Lobbying the government to put this infrastructure in place should be a new priority.” **Connections provider**



12 | VULNERABILITY AND FUEL POVERTY

The top rated priority in this area was ‘protect the interests of vulnerable customers in the switch to a smarter network’ with 26% of the vote. There was concern that the smart transition might leave people behind and stakeholders wanted WPD to consider the impact on the vulnerable, with particular mention of those on pre-payment meters. There were several discussions about the role of smart meters and the benefits this could bring if they were rolled out effectively.

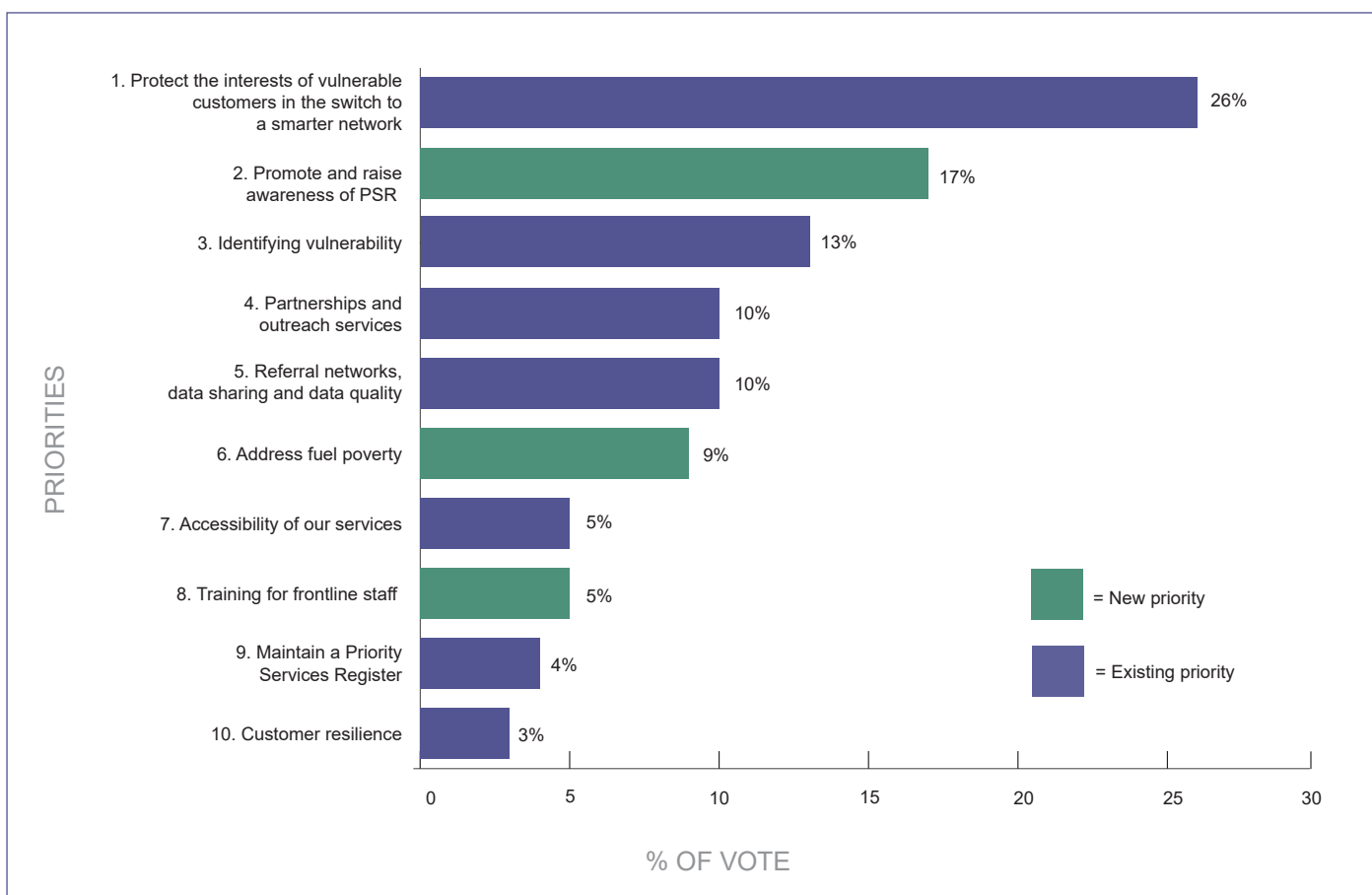
The second highest priority was a new priority raised during the session: ‘promote and raise awareness of PSR’ with 17% of the vote. It was felt that awareness of the Priority Services Register is low, and a range of suggestions were put forward for how to promote it. ‘Identifying vulnerability’ was ranked as third priority with 13% of the vote. Some stakeholders felt that the definition of vulnerability was too narrow and that WPD must work with charities to develop it. It was noted, however, that many customers would not want to identify themselves as ‘vulnerable’ and that the definition ought to remain narrow to ensure that only the most vulnerable in society are included and therefore assisted.

Two priorities were ranked joint fourth with 10% each. Stakeholders wanted to see WPD continue its priority of ‘partnerships and outreach services’ as they felt that WPD was a trusted brand that could be used to help coordinate a relatively fragmented third sector network. They also supported the priority ‘referral networks, data sharing and data quality’, with stakeholders wanting to see more data sharing taking place between agencies. They felt that existing data could be used in a better way, but also that new data should be included such as that from smart meters.

As well as supporting vulnerable customers, stakeholders also discussed WPD’s role in supporting those in fuel poverty. Three new related priorities were added: ‘address fuel poverty’, with 9% of the vote; ‘identify fuel poverty’ (not voted on); and ‘raise awareness of fuel poverty support’ (not voted on). It was therefore felt by some that WPD had an important role to play in relieving fuel poverty. However, there was some disagreement on this point with others feeling that this was really the duty of suppliers and that WPD should focus on supporting the vulnerable.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order during the electronic voting. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested during the table sessions.



VULNERABILITY AND FUEL POVERTY

The table below includes new priorities that were suggested by stakeholders during the table sessions but were not included in the electronic voting afterwards. These are numbered for reference purposes. The order does not imply prioritisation.

Additional stakeholder priorities (not voted on during the electronic vote)				
11. Make everything free and fund energy through taxation	12. Identify fuel poverty	13. Raise awareness of fuel poverty support	14. Standardisation of PSR service across industry	15. Use new tech to innovate in this area

PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Where no commitments were suggested against a given priority, this has been noted.

Priority 1: Protect the interests of vulnerable customers in the switch to a smarter network — Proposed Commitments				
a) Use smart metering and tariffs to help demonstrate benefits to customers, linking to initiatives like the Warm Home Discount Scheme	b) Consider your impact on vulnerable customers	c) Use innovations in monitoring to support vulnerable customers	d) Focus on supporting customers on pre-payment meters	e) Incentivise suppliers via variable system charges

“The warm home discount provides some relief but there needs to be some kind of automated system that links tariff discounts to the benefit system. You could even link a tariff relief to the PSR.” **Government**

“I disagree, I think WPD should be focusing its resources on vulnerability. Fuel poverty should be the focus of suppliers and government.” **Energy consultant**

“There needs to be a focus on pre-payment meters as these are problematic.” **Major connections customer**

“The problems we’ve had have been with pay-as-you-go meters rather than debit. Someone who may not be able to afford it or be digitally connected will be left behind.” **Consumer body**

“You could look into innovations in monitoring to help vulnerable customers.” **Business customer**

“WPD should encourage the roll-out of smart meters.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“Accessibility to smart meters needs to be something that WPD looks at.” **Connections provider**

Priority 2: Promote and raise awareness of PSR — Proposed Commitments

a) Use social media to promote the PSR	b) Provide leaflets to rural authorities	c) Promote via GP practices and blue badge schemes	d) Run a national campaign like the donor register
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“The PSR is working very well, but I’m surprised by how little I had actually heard about it.” **Local authority**

“I know as a council we produce leaflets that highlight the PSR. In terms of advertising, there could be a section within the exiting door-to-door leafleting.” **Local authority**

“Could you publicise through things like GPs and practices? A lot of older people are too proud to accept any help but they regularly see doctors.” **Major connections customer**

“I think there should be more of a national campaign to raise awareness on it so that people can empower themselves. WPD could lead on it and work with other DNOs. There also needs to be periodic reminders.” **Local authority**

“There’s a massive lack of awareness about the PSR. If there was more awareness of it, people would sign up.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“The likelihood is that the people on the PSR aren’t using social media.” **Local authority**

Priority 3: Identifying vulnerability — Proposed Commitments

a) Include groups and institutions, for example sheltered housing	b) Use smart meter data to help identify the vulnerable	c) Review terminology to ensure it doesn’t put customers off	d) Engage with charities to develop the definition of vulnerability
e) Develop automated registration for customers reliant on medical equipment	f) Continue to develop one PSR across utilities	g) Target where high-risk groups are e.g. work with housing associations and special education schools	h) Work with the postal service

“I thought my sheltered housing scheme was registered as somewhere that should be considered vulnerable. I want to know whether I am one customer of many within the sheltered housing or if the whole group is one. If it is done by institution then they should go into this institution and ask them to identify individuals within there.” **Domestic customer**

“Use smart meters to identify vulnerability.” **Academic institution**

“Maybe there should be more criteria and definitions that can be applied to these areas.” **Utility**

“There needs to be more engagement with charities to find out what people want and how they classify themselves.” **Charity**

“I think there should be a single PSR that can be shared across all of the utility networks. That would be so helpful.” **Energy consultant**

“WPD should target special education schools for PSR registration.” **Connections provider**

“WPD should collaborate with the postal service as is the case with Japan. That way, postal workers are the first point of call if something goes awry.” **Major energy user**

“You don’t necessarily want everyone on it. You want the people who are the most vulnerable on it.” **Local authority**

“With some gas networks or water networks that have similar registers, time and work could be saved by having more contact between the utilities. There will be a lot of overlap.” **Local authority**

“I feel that the notion of vulnerability is very narrow. Many people who have brain injuries are very vulnerable. They have a long-term condition. There needs to be more engagement with charities to find out what people want and how they classify themselves.” **Charity**

VULNERABILITY AND FUEL POVERTY

Priority 4: Partnerships and outreach services — Proposed Commitments

a) Develop partnerships with carers	b) Tie this work into your social contract	c) Continue existing partnerships with charities and CABs, helping to bring together a fragmented network	d) Use WPD's brand as a trusted partner
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"It's worth WPD taking a leadership role in this." **Major connections customer**

"People who aren't ready to receive information won't hear it. It should be marketed to the people who will be supporting these vulnerable people. This includes carers and family members. There could be a register of domestic carers." **Domestic customer**

"WPD has a trusted brand and you're not exploiting that fully at the moment." **Business customer**

"Work with charities more, as these vulnerable people trust them more and have a stronger relationship with them." **Charity**

"Tie to the social contract." **Business customer**

"Work with Citizen's Advice Bureau, who can tap into the information that you can provide." **Local authority**

"It is quite fragmented at the moment. You've got lots of different organisations and there needs to be coordination." **Major energy user**

"This should be the first part of your conversation as a business. It seems that growth and profit are considered first, and vulnerability and social responsibilities are the last things considered." **Local authority**

"WPD has a trusted brand and you're not exploiting that fully at the moment." **Business customer**

Priority 5: Referral networks, data sharing and data quality — Proposed Commitments

a) Make data sharing between agencies easier	b) Use existing data in a smarter way	c) Amalgamate existing data	d) Gain more access to smart meter data
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"Our company is a big energy supplier. If there can be connection through smart meters then the information can be shared. I am thinking about studying the usage to profile rather than the energy for people in fuel poverty. They could be smarter with the data." **Utility**

"Are there any metrics that are shared with customers regarding the PSR?" **Utility**

"For community groups, access to that smart meter data would be helpful. It's a question of is it worth continuing with smart meters if there's a way of giving the DNO better access to information? Are we spending time trying to demystify the wrong thing?" **Energy consultant**

Priority 6: Address fuel poverty — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider the extent to which this is your responsibility

"If it's not WPD's responsibility to tackle fuel poverty, can you at least use your influence to lobby suppliers or government?" **Major connections customer**

"WPD still have a role to play in fuel poverty. They have a lot of influence and can put pressure on the DSOs to tackle this problem." **Major connections customer**

"I think WPD should be focusing its resources on vulnerability. Fuel poverty should be the focus of suppliers and government. I think it would be better if the lines of responsibility were drawn a little more clearly. WPD could lobby government in some capacity if they want to influence this." **Energy consultant**

VULNERABILITY AND FUEL POVERTY

Priority 7: Accessibility of our services — Proposed Commitments

- | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| a) Continue to engage with customers face-to-face to build trust | b) Develop a local authority resilience version of the power cut app | c) Provide community information |
|--|--|----------------------------------|

“Face-to-face engagement is key. People don’t like talk about these problems on the phone.”
Vulnerable customer representative

“You need to go expand on the power cut app and push for a local authority version of this.” **Parish council**

Priority 8: Training for frontline staff — Proposed Commitments

- | |
|---|
| a) Continue to train staff to be able to identify vulnerabilities |
|---|

“There needs to be better training of staff, as many people don’t understand these people. Staff need to be able to ask the right questions and not accidentally be rude to people.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“People with brain injuries often present as drunk. More specialised training from specific charities could help WPD workers to identify them and provide them with appropriate support.” **Charity**

Priority 9: Maintain a Priority Services Register — Proposed Commitments

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a) Facilitate better data sharing | b) Support a central PSR body |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|

“WPD should champion a central PSR authority rather than having disparate operations. Perhaps the regulator should do this.” **Major energy user**



Priority 10: Customer resilience — Proposed Commitments

a) Install battery storage / combined heat and power	b) Trial innovation projects	c) Look to reduce incidents rather than react when they happen	d) Work with housing providers, as well as GPs and libraries
e) Invest in community centres	f) Educate customers on resilience	g) Provide power cut information	h) Run power cut drills

“The other option is to think about a scheme in a distribution arrangement through a CHP heat network to satisfy the heating within an estate. It would be a minor win for WPD to get involved in it. They could gain an incentive by showing innovation, helping everyone else do the same thing. It could then be used as an example within other communities.” **Utility**

“If they built more resilience to the network using innovative schemes then they could clearly show that they would be able to cater for more vulnerable customers.” **Utility**

“Is there any role for reducing vulnerability in consumers by putting in battery storage? This way they can survive an outage and be less reliant.” **Domestic customer**

“What about public awareness around LED lightbulbs? Most people don’t understand what energy savings can be made.” **Major connections customer**

“Housing providers should be more involved in customer resilience.” **Vulnerable customer representative**

“You can provide information on how power cuts can affect customers.” **Parish council**

“You can invest in community facilities or centres. Every community will have a village hall or something that you could seek to do something with.” **Business customer**

“More generally, they can find ways to reduce the vulnerability rather than reacting to it.” **Domestic customer**

Priority 11: Make everything free and fund energy through taxation — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following comments were, however, captured during the workshop.

“My suggestion is that we make everything free and pay for it out of taxation. This doesn’t necessarily mean nationalising the network. You can socialise the cost without it being nationalised.” **Major connections customer**

“The electricity system and market is inherently unfair. The design of the market itself is the problem. It’s designed to benefit the most fortunate.” **Government**

Priority 12: Identify fuel poverty — Proposed Commitments

a) Consider rural areas

“With fuel poverty you’re more likely to see that in areas like Cornwall due to weather and a poorer standard of housing quality.” **Major connections customer**

“Can we take one step back and ask what WPD’s role should be in fuel poverty?” **Energy consultant**

“With regard to identifying fuel poverty, housing associations will know which of their tenants have financial constraints.” **Major connections customer**

Priority 13: Raise awareness of fuel poverty — Proposed Commitments

a) Raise awareness of ways to reduce energy consumption

b) Support energy saving initiatives, such as home insulation and solar panels

c) Offer variable system charges

“There are a lot of big costs in a house. I think people get into a lifestyle where they are using a mixture of these high costs.” **Domestic customer**

“Rather than home insulation, why not put solar panels in instead? Prioritise free solar rather than free electricity.” **Business customer**

“There could be variable system charges as part of your corporate social responsibility.” **Business customer**

Priority 14: Standardisation of PSR service across industry — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following verbatim comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“There needs to be more standardisation in terms of what is offered on the PSR. People need to all receive the same thing.” **Charity**

Priority 15: Use new tech to innovate in this area — Proposed Commitments

While this was established as a new priority, no formal commitments were articulated against this priority in the discussions. The following comment was, however, captured during the workshop.

“Use new technology to innovate in this area, but then also try reach out to those vulnerable people who aren’t necessarily going to respond well to the new technology.” **Academic institution**



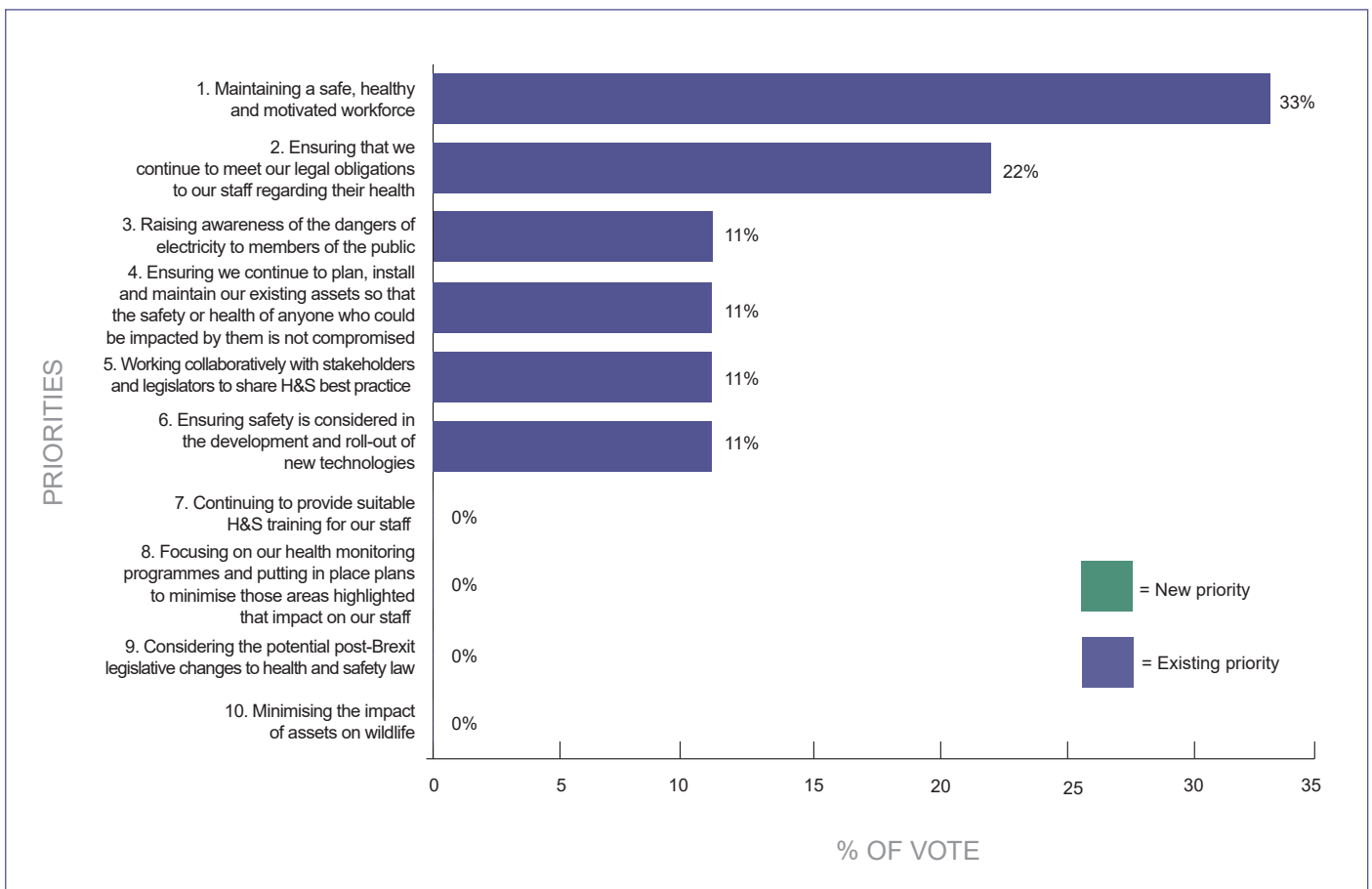
13 | SAFETY AND HEALTH (AFTERNOON SESSION)

The top priority identified by stakeholders in this session was ‘maintaining a safe, healthy and motivated workforce’ followed by ‘ensuring that we continue to meet our legal obligations to our staff regarding their health’. Two new priorities were also suggested, which were ‘considering the potential post-Brexit legislative changes to health and safety law’ and ‘minimising the impact of assets on wildlife’.

Stakeholders suggested a whole range of new commitments for the next business plan, for instance, ensuring staff are trained regularly to be prepared for extreme weather events and reviewing debriefing procedures when accidents occur out in the field or elsewhere. There were also a range of suggestions related to WPD’s role in providing electricity checks for customers at home and what WPD can do to create mental health or LGBT+ champions in the workforce to align with health monitoring programmes.

PRIORITIES

The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order as part of a written feedback form completed at the end of the session. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, as well as some new priorities that were suggested on the feedback form. In total, three stakeholders completed these feedback forms.



PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities in the electronic voting. Those priorities that did not have any suggested commitments have not been included below.

Priority 1: Maintaining a safe, healthy and motivated workforce — Proposed Commitments

- a) Deliver public health advice to employees

“Do you deliver public health advice to your employees?”

Priority 2: Ensuring that we continue to meet our legal obligations to our staff regarding their health — Proposed Commitments

- a) Review debriefing procedures when an accident occurs
- b) Resource staff with the correct equipment when working around hazards such as water

“What is your debrief procedure? When someone’s had an accident, what is the process?”

“How often do your staff go through working around water? Is there any PPE for them?”

Priority 3: Raising awareness of the dangers of electricity to members of the public — Proposed Commitments

- a) Provide electricity checks for home, for example checking the safety of wiring in households

“I’m looking at it from the point of view of the household. We’ve been with a couple of suppliers, but I don’t ever remember them talking about our wires. So not everybody is going to be that wired up. What is the lifetime of these wires? There doesn’t seem to be a great deal of expertise.”

“Presumably you’re not going to do it for free, but perhaps have an electricity check service, for a fee? I think people are willing to pay.”

“Is it not like if you take a gas boiler, you know to have that serviced every year? Should you not be thinking: why is there not a service here for wiring?”

“I’m interested in this topic because coming from an old town, we have quite a lot of Edwardian / Victorian houses. We must have a lot of antique wiring around the place. That’s a worrying thing out there.”

Priority 4: Ensuring we continue to plan, install and maintain our existing assets so that the safety or health of anyone who could be impacted by them is not compromised — Proposed Commitments

“The issue of operating assets: how do you manage this?”

Priority 5: Working collaboratively with stakeholders and legislators to share H&S best practice — Proposed Commitments

- a) Ensure contractors comply with similar health and safety standards to WPD

“Do you score contractors on your health and safety score?”

SAFETY AND HEALTH (AFTERNOON SESSION)

Priority 7: Continuing to provide suitable H&S training for our staff — Proposed Commitments

a) Ensure staff preparedness for extreme weather events

b) Maintain regular staff training

c) Educate staff members on the potential health and safety aspects of Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF6)

“I was looking at the wind aspect of severe weather events. Do you train your guys in what to do in this? Do you increase your team size when this is going on?”

“How are you going to assure there’s an understanding of health and safety switching from SF6 to a new alternative?”

“Are your staff kept up to date?”

Priority 8: Focusing on our health monitoring programmes and putting in place plans to minimise those areas highlighted that impact on our staff — Proposed Commitments

a) Undertake well-being at work assessments

b) Create and support the development of champions in mental health and LGBT+

“Do you undertake wellbeing at work assessments?”

“Do you have champions of LGBT+?”

“Do you have any mental health champions?”

Priority 9: Considering the potential post-Brexit legislative changes to health and safety law — Proposed Commitments

“With regard to post-Brexit legislative changes to health and safety: is there anything changing?”

Priority 10: Minimising the impact of assets on wildlife — Proposed Commitments

“What about impacts on wildlife? Some of your operations must influence the local environment. Do you have people working on this?”

14 | CONNECTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

This session covered priorities and commitments for both the upcoming business plan as well as the 2020/21 ICE work plan.

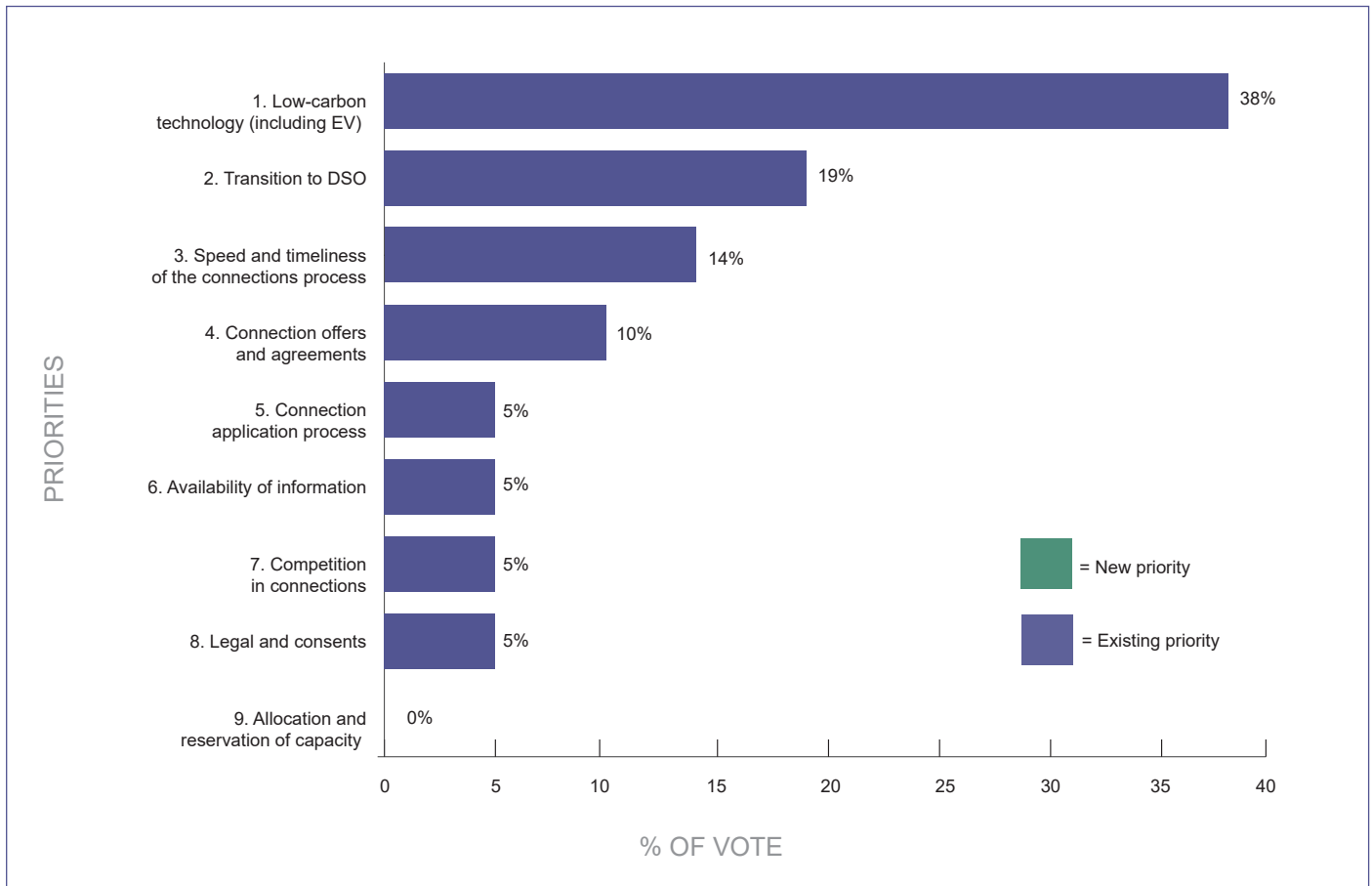
In terms of priorities and commitments for the business plan, the top rated priority was ‘low-carbon technology (including EV)’. However, while this received a considerable proportion of the vote (38%) the discussions instead focused on commitments relating to the process of connecting itself covered by other priorities, namely ‘connection offers and agreements’, ‘connection application process’, and ‘competition in connections.’

Various commitments were suggested, for example ensuring the accuracy of the connection offer, better collaboration with the IDNOs and providing a single point of contact for customers. Some stakeholders did, however, refer to low-carbon technologies because they wanted to see prioritisation applied to the allocation and reservation of capacity – including prioritising renewable connections.

In terms of the Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) plan for 2020/21, ‘low-carbon technology’ again ranked highest amongst the priorities receiving 29% of the vote. However, despite this, all commitments raised were in relation to the fifth ranked priority: ‘communication’. A series of specific commitments were suggested, for example creating a clear and concise guide to the process and hosting more video conferences for customers.

PRIORITIES (BUSINESS PLAN)

Stakeholders were given three votes each to allocate to their choice of priorities below by way of a written feedback form completed at the end of the session. The list of priorities was those that had been previously suggested by stakeholders. There was space to write down new suggested priorities, but none were put forward. The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order. In total, seven stakeholders completed these feedback forms.



PROPOSED COMMITMENTS (BUSINESS PLAN)

During the afternoon sessions, which were run without facilitation, stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities for the business plan. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities when individually ranking via written feedback forms. Owing to the unconstructed nature of these discussions, in some instances priorities included on the written feedback forms had no specific commitments attached to them and are therefore not included below.

Priority 4: Connection offers and agreements — Proposed Commitments

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| a) Commit to being more accurate in the initial connections offer | b) Maintain a focus on the design of the connection | c) Consider on-site visits to ensure the accuracy of connection offers |
|---|---|--|

“Design is a bit silent here for me. In the whole scenario, there’s quite a lot of variables. I don’t know how much of an issue it is, but I’d think there’s a place for keeping it in there. You should commit to be more accurate in your initial offer as long as there is transparency in terms of what areas are likely to change. It would be good to try and nail it down a bit.”

“You could have a meeting on-site where the offer is issued. Then at least an engineer is looking at the issues. You need further visibility to ensure accuracy of quotes.”

“The same things that are beyond our control are beyond your control. You need to get the right design in the first place.”

“But WPD would have to charge for those on-site meetings and no one would be prepared to pay for this.”

“Well perhaps, then, you could do a walkabout once the offer has been issued, because the connections customer still has three months before they have to accept.”

Priority 5: Connection application process — Proposed Commitments

- | |
|--|
| a) Provide a single point of contact for the whole connections process |
|--|

“At the moment you’re very quick on getting back to us with your quotations.”

“The application process is fine and quite straightforward. However, you don’t get a project manager assigned to you and it’s always different people. Could you issue individual project managers? That would help if something goes wrong during the process as it can be hard to get problems resolved. As a connections customer I’d like a single point of contact for the whole process.”

Priority 7: Competition in connections — Proposed Commitments

- | |
|--|
| a) Look to improve the process between WPD and IDNOs |
|--|

“I’m having a major problem between yourselves and the IDNO. There doesn’t seem to be any restriction on your timeline. The IDNO are my customer and they keep chasing you but I’m still here with my 90-day deadline. I’ve been waiting for months. I get the impression that you’re doing the design, you’re going to charge the IDNO and therefore they’re going to charge me.”

CONNECTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

Priority 9: Allocation and reservation of capacity — Proposed Commitments

a) Establish a methodology to prioritise certain connections applications, for example for new housing or renewables

a) Lobby Ofgem to become a statutory consultee on planning applications

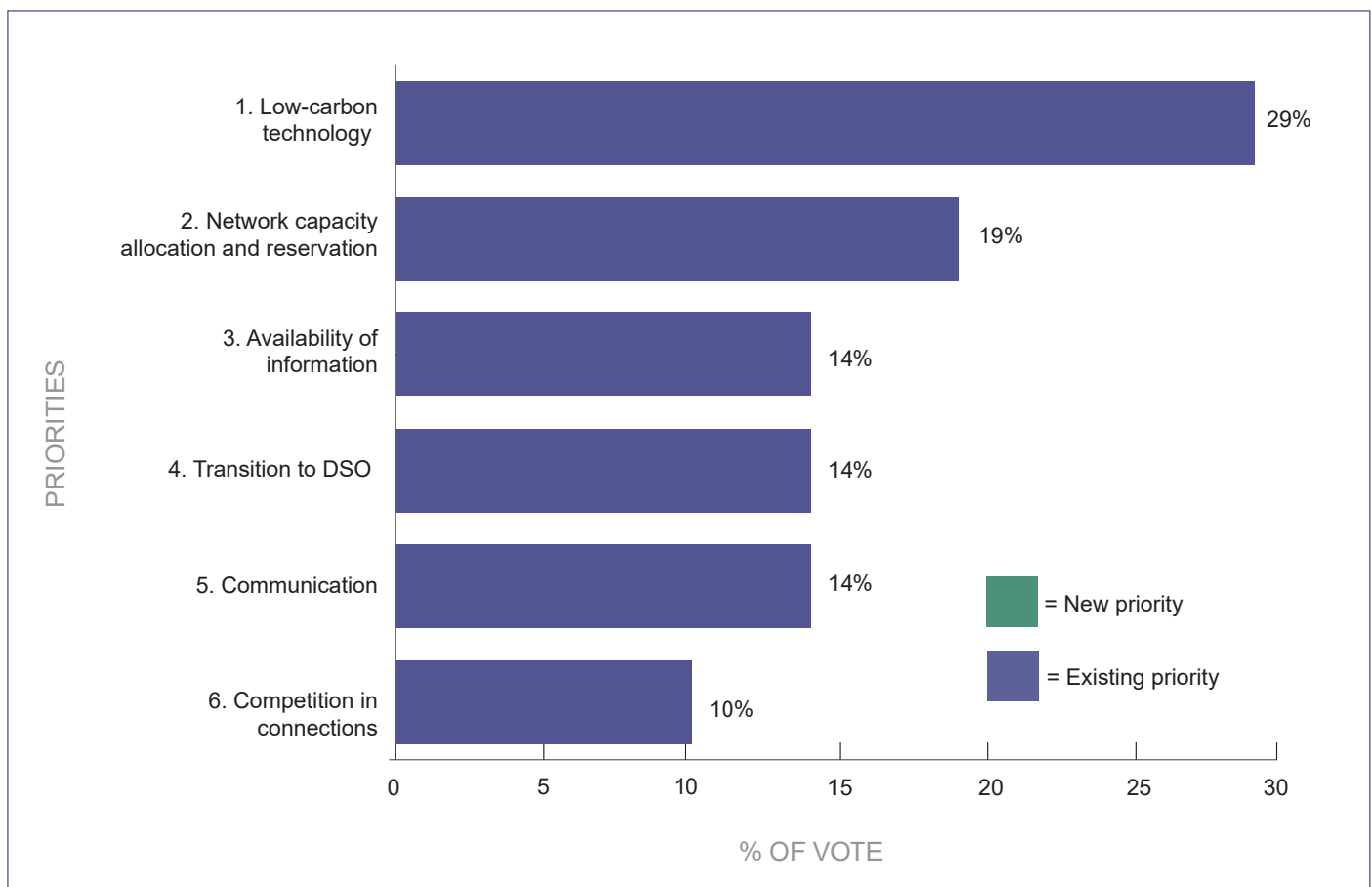
“Do you have a criteria for priorities? If we say we want to connect 1,000 houses, would that be prioritised or are connections applications just ranked in date order? A lot of these requests in your system may be speculative too, so they might not even happen. My personal view would be that you need to have a kind of algorithm that you adopt. I'd support you lobbying Ofgem to enable you to prioritise connections applications.”

“And if Ofgem is part of the government, surely they'd support the sustainability agenda and therefore prioritise renewables connections?”

“WPD should absolutely lobby Ofgem to ensure that it is allowed to be a statutory consultee on planning applications.”

PRIORITIES (ICE PLAN)

The graph below details the priorities for the 2020/21 ICE plan ranked in order as part of a written feedback form completed at the end of the session. It includes those priorities that had been previously suggested by stakeholders. There was an opportunity to suggest new priorities but none were put forward. In total, seven stakeholders completed these feedback forms.



COMMITMENTS (ICE PLAN)

Stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities when individually ranking via feedback forms. Those priorities that did not have any suggested commitments have not been included below.

Priority 5: Communication — Proposed Commitments				
a) Create a clear and concise guide to support customers through the application process	b) Deliver more video conferences	c) Collaborate with other professional bodies to help communicate with customers	d) Consider collaborating to set up an online forum or community	e) Provide local authorities with the contact details of planners to engage with on planning applications

“It took a long time to get the new G99 forms. It was a headache to find out what to fill out and send back. All your forms are listed but there’s no clear or concise guidance on your website as to what forms you need at a certain stage in the process. Saying ‘look on our website’ isn’t that useful.”

“I think more video conferences would be useful. Also, do you use other professional bodies to try to get your message across to others? I think those bodies would welcome that too.”

“The problem for us as a local authority is that you have a list of consultees, but you don’t have websites or access points where you can find addresses or email addresses. We try to keep that up to date but sometimes we might miss one. I think there’s a role for WPD to help us with this.”

“A couple of people have mentioned communication. There seems to be a theme running through this which is that you’re helping WPD customers as closely as you can. One of the things that my law firm have been mulling over is whether there’s an interest in an online community or forum outside of official stakeholder engagement sessions which people would be encouraged to contribute to. It would fit in quite nicely for the other legal and customer forums. You could have live comments and that would be even better engagement than you currently have. I’m very keen on the idea because if there was an issue somewhere that you hadn’t spotted, connections customers could post it on there.”



15 | WORKFORCE RESILIENCE (AFTERNOON SESSION)

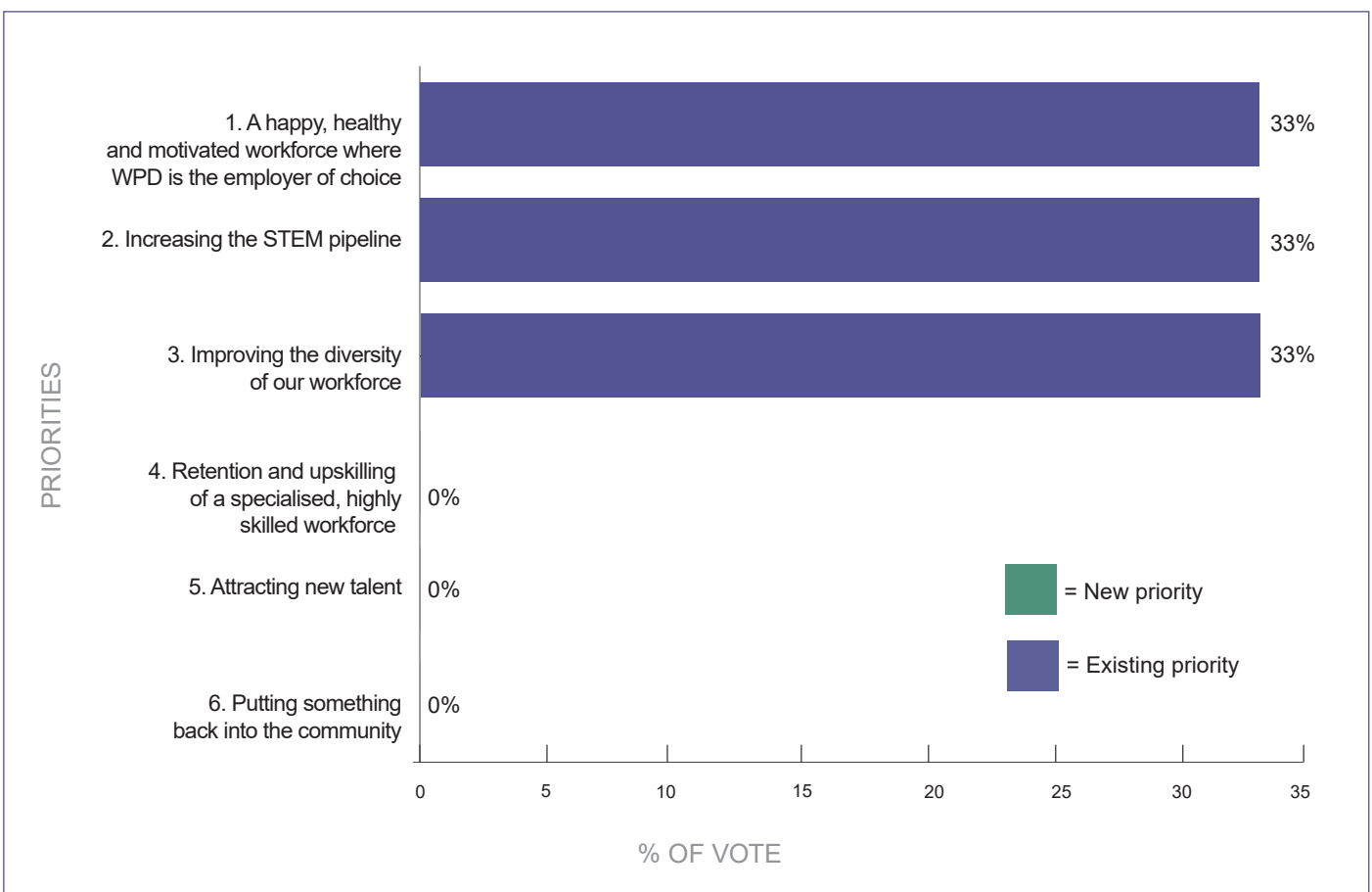
Three stakeholders ranked the priorities in this session, during which it was identified that ‘a happy, healthy and motivated workforce where WPD is the employer of choice’, ‘increasing the STEM pipeline’ and ‘improving the diversity of our workforce’ were of joint greatest importance.

The discussion centred around several themes and explored initiatives to make WPD have a more active presence in attracting the LGBT+ workforce through revisiting existing policy, closer partnership with advocacy groups and a better internal promotion of existing LGBT+ groups within WPD. Championing senior management from minority backgrounds was also discussed as a way of promoting inclusivity to WPD staff and as a means of supporting a happy, healthy and motivated workforce.

The discussions identified a whole range of commitments to include in the business plan. As well as including commitments against some of the themes and priorities highlighted above, a series of commitments were suggested on the retention and upskilling of the workforce such as providing meaningful personal development programmes that help build employee trust and equipping staff with the necessary soft skills to build personal resilience as well as support the management of others.

PRIORITIES

Stakeholders were given three votes each to allocate to their choice of priorities below by way of a written feedback form completed at the end of the session. The list of priorities was those that had been previously suggested by stakeholders, although there was space to write down new suggested priorities at the bottom. The graph below details the priorities for this topic ranked in order. In total, three stakeholders completed these feedback forms.



PROPOSED COMMITMENTS

During the afternoon sessions, which were run without facilitation, stakeholders were then asked to start identifying commitments against these priorities. These have been set out under the priority headings below, which are in the order that stakeholders ranked the priorities when individually ranking via written feedback forms. The afternoon sessions were more informal and were not led by facilitators. Owing to the unconstructed nature of these discussions, in some instances priorities included on the written feedback forms had no specific commitments attached to them and are therefore not included below.

Priority 1: A happy, healthy and motivated workforce where WPD is the employer of choice — Proposed Commitments				
a) Instil a sense of belonging through emotional engagement and sincere gratitude	b) Create an inclusive environment that accommodates young and old working habits	c) Educate the workforce on the adoption of new working methods to ensure continuity from process-driven to data-driven working	d) Introduce flexible working packages and opportunities including flexible working patterns, TOIL and sabbaticals	e) Champion senior management from minority backgrounds

“The idea of ‘do I fit into this workforce?’ is absolutely key to keeping people happy and motivated. If they have a sense of belonging, they will commit themselves to the company. Emotional engagement makes a big difference.”

“Employees need to feel that the company has their back and they need to get a sense of reassurance from it. For example, with the coronavirus outbreak, they need to feel that the company will support them. Proactive communication comes into this.”

“One new priority that I would create is emphasising how you ensure that workers are aware of your gratitude towards them for their efforts and therefore establish workforce resilience. That feels topical at the moment with all the extra work required as a result of the recent storms.”

“Even something as simple as an email saying ‘thank you for going out all weekend to fix everything during the awful weather’ following Storm Dennis and Ciara would be great.”

“I think that WPD needs to think carefully about how it transitions to a younger workforce in a more balanced way. Both older and younger workers need to be able to operate harmoniously.”

“You need to think about how working methods have changed within the industry too. Until recently, everything had been very process driven, but with systems driven by digital data, there is a greater scope for uncertainty. Maybe there needs to be an education piece to help workers transition and consider how they work in this new age?”

“I would agree that flexible working patterns and sabbaticals would be good things to add.”

“Do people get time in lieu for all their efforts? You don’t want your employees feeling stressed or burned out.”

“WPD should champion more senior figures in the company representing minority groups (LGBT community, BME community, etc.) as a means of motivating staff on a wider level. This will demonstrate to them that they are in an inclusive environment.”

WORKFORCE RESILIENCE (AFTERNOON SESSION)

Priority 3: Improving the diversity of our workforce — Proposed Commitments

a) Promote minority representative groups within WPD internally and externally	b) Work closer with minority advocacy groups such as Stonewall	c) Reposition WPD towards non-traditional audiences (i.e. non-male)	d) Ensure the transsexual community is represented as part of LGBT+ strategy	e) Review and develop LGBT+ policy that can then be implemented locally
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“Could WPD not promote its groups in the company which represent its LGBT or disabled workforce? It would make these people feel included and represented in the company community.”

“WPD could use these types of forums to promote the company externally too because people will see that WPD is reflective of the British public.”

“I think that it would be worth talking to Stonewall more and it would give you bonus points.”

“Maybe you could go further and think about talking to Stonewall on a UK level rather than just on a regional level?”

“Representing transsexual community as part of your LGBT approach.”

“I think that a key way to improve gender diversity is going right back to thinking about how you present yourselves. The engineering industry presents itself as a male industry, so that will influence the make-up of the workforce. If you can get around this, you will make progress.”

“At Oxfordshire Council, where I work, data is collected on workers’ gender, which has created a greater feeling of mutual sensitivity and has enabled support for them to be targeted better.”

“WPD should have an umbrella LGBT policy for the whole company and let individual offices implement it locally as appropriate.”

Priority 4: Retention and upskilling of a specialised, highly skilled workforce — Proposed Commitments

a) Develop meaningful personal development programmes that build employee trust	b) Encourage a positive mindset to help embrace and prepare for new ways of working in future	c) Train all staff on soft skills to increase worker resilience	d) Equip new managers with soft skills
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“At Thames Valley Police, we have one-to-ones either with our manager or a senior person to discuss personal and professional issues. You feel free to speak about what you want and there will be no judgment. Maybe you could tap into a process like this? I have found it very helpful.”

“The most important thing about one-on-one development sessions is that employees don’t feel that they are a tick-box exercise. Employees need to feel that managers and the company care about you as a person too.”

“I agree that it’s important to train staff with softer skills, such as managing with their mental health.”

“I agree that potentially flexing the workforce to deal with the uncertain needs in the future electrical-system picture will be an important priority.”

“I like that the company encourages its workers to try things out and share best practice if it works. If the idea doesn’t work, that’s ok too. You should keep pushing this approach.”

“If you become a manager, you are likely to have been made one from an engineering base. These people need more training in soft skills to help them flourish as a manager.”

“I think that insourcing your workforce is key to your successful operations. It creates a sense of pride within the company.”

“Encouraging employees to adopt a can-do attitude will be empowering for people and will help WPD to transition to the new energy future. It will help them to adapt to the changing picture and get them excited about it.”

WORKFORCE RESILIENCE (AFTERNOON SESSION)

Priority 5: Attracting new talent — Proposed Commitments

- a) Consider localised social media campaigns to attract applicants

“I agree that using regionally-specific targeted social media campaigns would help overcome the problem of lower numbers of applications in the East Midlands.”

Priority 6: Putting something back into the community — Proposed Commitments

- a) Build flexibility within staff to react and support communities during crises

“This is slightly moving away from how you outline it on the sheet but ensuring that your staff can slot in and help each other across departments during a crisis would enable you to serve communities in the best possible way. We have a similar approach at Thames Valley Police and it helps us get through.”



16 | DIGITALISATION, DATA AND DSO (AFTERNOON SESSION)

This session followed a different format from the other sessions. There was a short presentation summarising WPD's digitalisation strategy followed by some open questions asking stakeholders for feedback on what they'd heard.

Stakeholders were interested to learn more about the benefits that digitalisation could bring in terms of the accuracy of data that WPD provides. It was commented that more up to date information would be useful for a range of stakeholders who rely on data based on demand and generation to help them plan. It was also noted that improved information on the condition of assets would help WPD with its maintenance and make the network more efficient. In addition, it was felt that digitalisation could help with the roll out of flexibility services which would also aid efficiency and mitigate the need for network reinforcement.

It was acknowledged that there that there is a limit to the granularity of the data that can be derived without increased take-up of smart meters. It was also felt that data cleansing presents a challenge, as does making that data accessible.

Stakeholders had some concerns about the security of the data that WPD derives. It was felt by one stakeholder that WPD should outsource data security to a third party and there was general recognition that cyber security is of paramount importance.

"We clearly need to do more to introduce flexibility into the market."

"I'd like to know more about the electronic dispatch process. Is it split into 30-minute periods?"

"Yes, there are 15-minute response limits as well. Also, as part of DSO, providers have to provide minute-by-minute data."

"I was looking at UKPN MW requirements and how these vary year-on-year. I suppose as base demand rises, you're going above forecast lines all the time. It would be good to understand more about your forecasts and what you base these on. Are you asking for particular times in the day / week as part of your tender?"

"Which of the DSO functions do you see WPD doing more of?"

"Have you identified any gaps in your flexibility for DSO?"

"Data cleansing sounds simple enough, but it's an enormous leap in practice."

"I imagine there's qualitative data for the EHV network but less quantitative data."

"There are two challenges: cleansing the data you already have to make it accessible, and then there's new equipment, instrumentation and resources."

"With the ElectraLink / Ofgem / NIA information project, as it's early days all the regulatory questions haven't yet been thought through. It may become clear that existing structures are not fit for purpose."

"With demand response, more companies are saving money by predicting ageing. This could be massively helpful for predicting when assets become obsolete."

"With GIS, it's fascinating to think about all the helicopter data you have. You could perform a lot of sophisticated asset management with that data."

"There's a bigger discussion as to whose role it will be to centralise information. Does it stay within your organisation, or will companies step in to take over?"

"I was trying to make the point earlier that WPD should have nothing to do with fuel poverty. You have a role with vulnerability but there is a difference. The same is true with data."

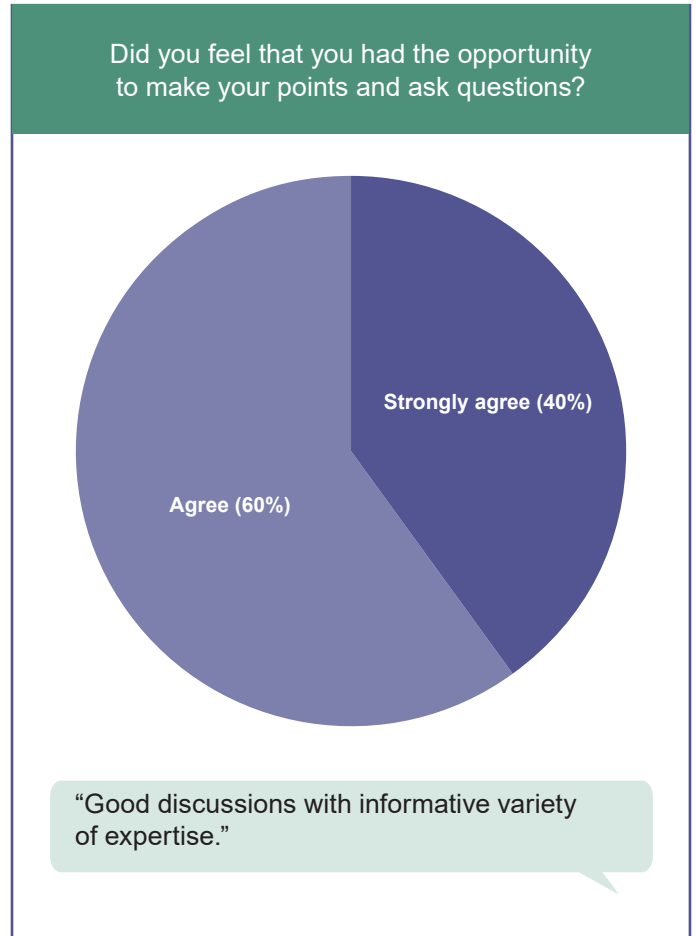
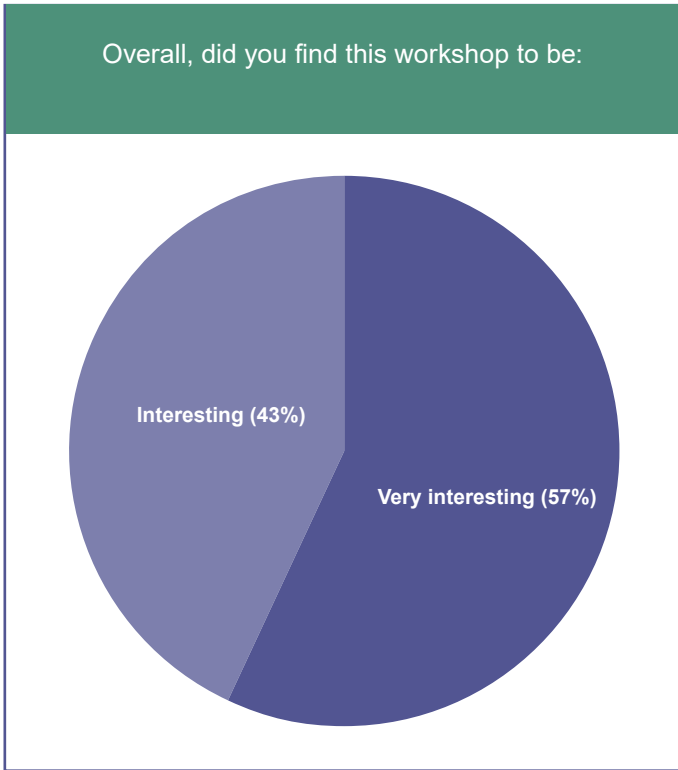
"Do you have a sense of the quality of data you're sharing?"

"Are there any major insight areas you want to get into? I assume that the main thing is helping to make the network more efficient."

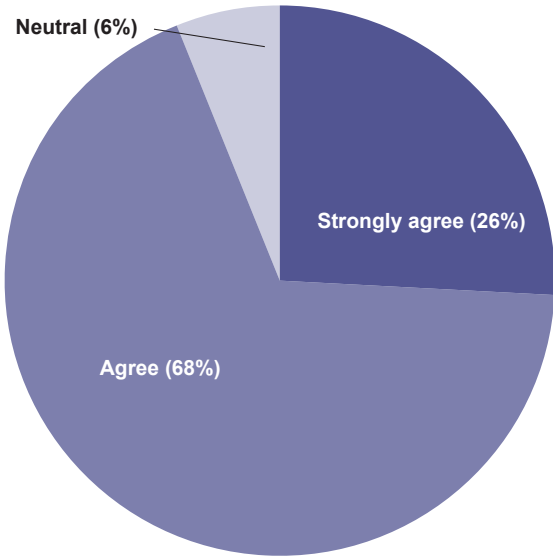
"My main concern relates to how data sharing ties into cyber security."

17 | WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

After the workshop, stakeholders were asked to complete a short feedback form. The feedback was as follows:

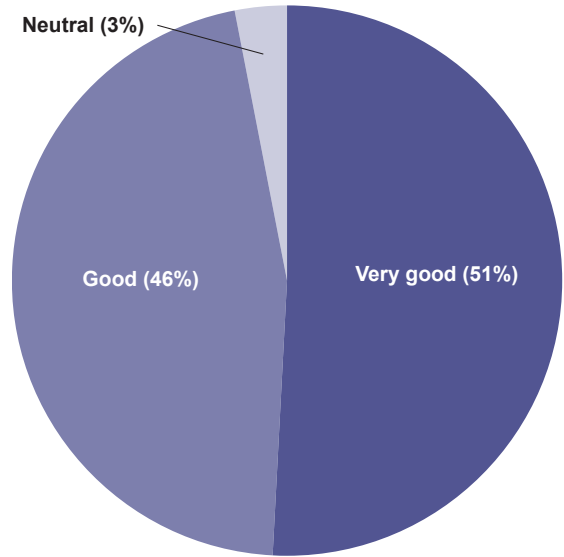


Did we cover the right topics on the day?



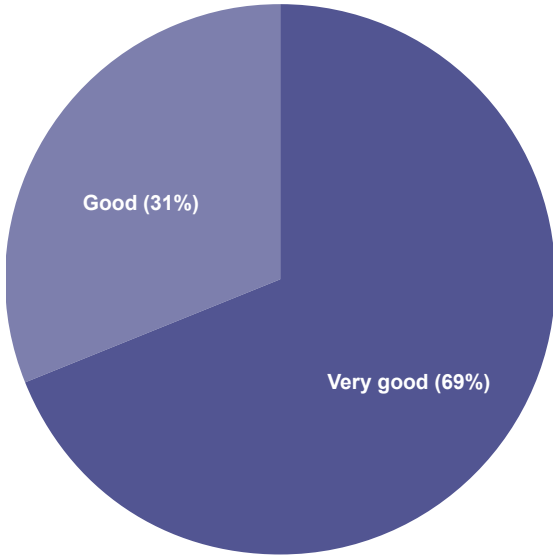
“Having a range of sectors and interests around the table was good. There could also be a place for more focused discussions.”

What did you think of the venue?



WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

What did you think about the way that the workshop was chaired by your table facilitator?



"Very good input from facilitators."

Any other comments?

"Afternoon workshops are a bonus."

"Good to understand how we can align innovation to meet WPD goals."

"Voting system worked well."

"Interesting and informative."

"Thanks for a very instructive meeting. I learnt a lot of useful information about both WPD and distribution in general."



