

# Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop: Bristol 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016



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## 1. Introduction

Western Power Distribution (WPD) submitted its draft Business Plan in 2013 as part of Ofgem's most recent price control, RII0-ED1. The plan was produced following considerable engagement with stakeholders and was 'fast-tracked' by the regulator in 2014.

WPD is committed to continued engagement with its stakeholders on the delivery of the Business Plan and other key strategic decisions.

In January 2016, WPD hosted six workshops in locations across its network area in order to get feedback from stakeholders. The second of these workshops took place at the Bristol Pavilion on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2016.



Westbourne (WB) was appointed, as a specialist stakeholder engagement consultancy, to independently facilitate the stakeholder workshop on behalf of WPD and neutrally report back on the outputs.

Each of the workshops began with presentations by senior WPD representatives followed by roundtable discussions and electronic voting on set topics. The roundtable workshops were facilitated by trained WB facilitators and stakeholders' comments were captured by WB scribes.

Where possible, verbatim quotes have been noted by the WB scribes. However, comments were not attributed to individuals in order to ensure that all stakeholders could speak as candidly as possible. In some cases, individual tables did not answer all questions. Where this is the case, the table has not been included in that section of the report.

This report is a recording of the outputs from the stakeholder workshop. A copy of the presentation given by WPD can be found here<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Jan-2016-stakeholder-workshops-presentation.aspx>

## 2. Overview of the workshop

There were three discussion sessions within the overall workshop that provided an opportunity for stakeholders to review the Business Plan and provide WPD with feedback. The discussion sessions were as follows:

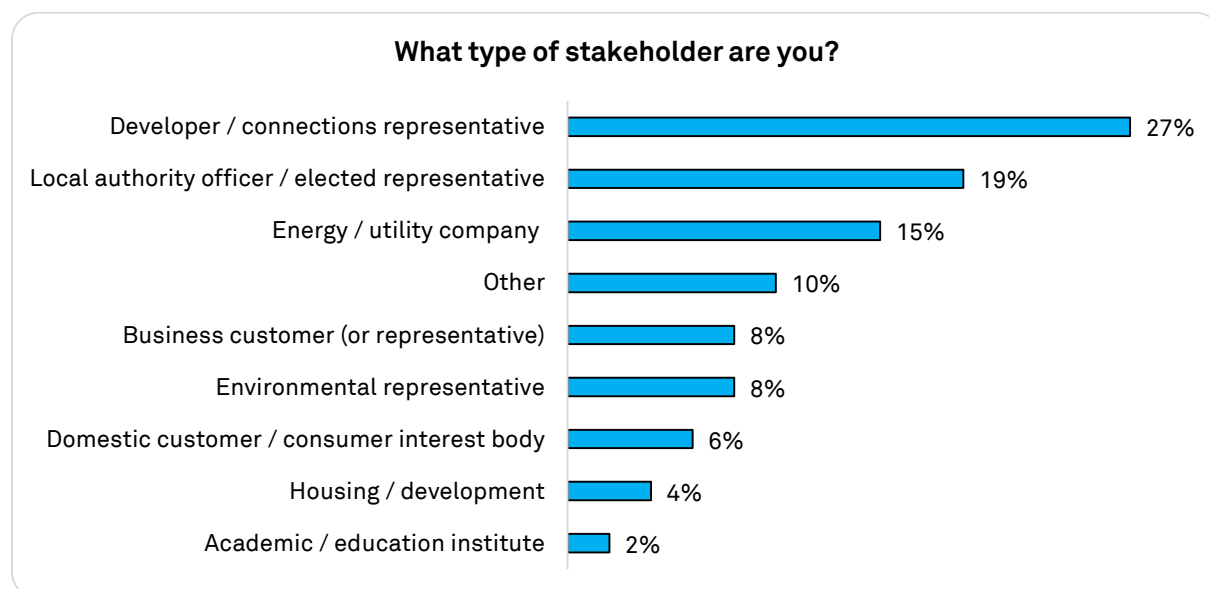
- **Workshop 1: Re-cap of WPD's long-term priorities.** The first workshop involved an update on WPD's long-term priorities in the last year and an interactive session where the groups ranked each of the nine priorities as high, medium or low.
- **Workshop 2: WPD's Business Plan & Current Performance.** The second workshop involved an outline of WPD's performance in the work plan and an interactive discussion on WPD's approach to reporting back to stakeholders.
- **Workshop 3: Long term – starting to address these priorities.** The third workshop involved a more detailed look into two specific long-term priorities: “*Smart networks*” and “*Affordability*”. This included an in-depth discussion on WPD's approach to “smart networks” and an interactive session on WPD's planned actions and ideas from other DNOs to address “affordability”.

Separate surgeries also took place on the Connections Improvement Plan, social obligations and the role of a distribution system operator (smart networks).

### Attendees

A total of 50 stakeholders attended the workshop. There were a range of representatives from different backgrounds, including the domestic, business, local authority, political, developer/connections, environmental, energy/utility, regulatory/government, academic/education, housing/development, voluntary, law and technology sectors.

Stakeholders were asked to identify themselves as one of ten listed stakeholder types or select ‘other’ if none of the options matched. The results can be found below:



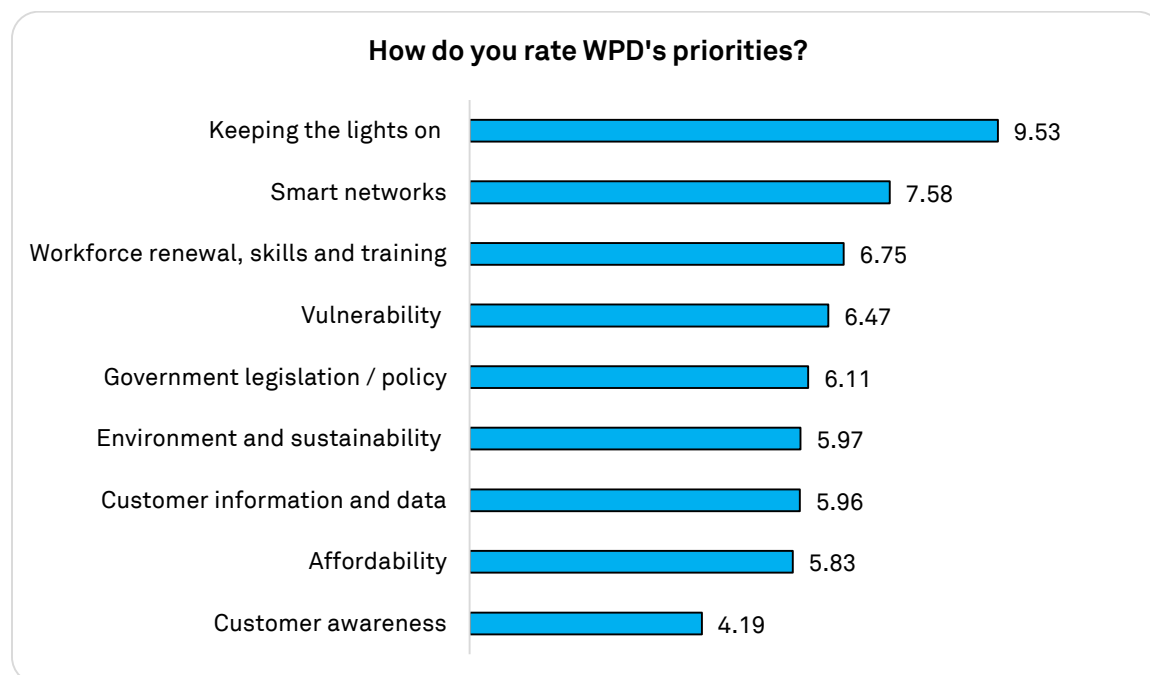
Alongside those attending in a personal or domestic customer capacity, the organisations represented were:

- ADAS UK
- Airbus
- Alstom Grid
- Bristol City Council
- British Solar Renewables
- Centre for Sustainable Energy
- Combe Hay Parish Council
- Country Land and Business Association
- Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils
- Dorset County Council
- EDF Energy Plc
- Energy Saving Trust
- First Gen International
- Geldards LLP
- Green Frog Connect
- Hermes Energy Services
- Institute of Engineering and Technology
- JRC
- Kier
- Lightsource Renewable Energy
- Low Carbon
- Martifer Solar UK
- Mendip Hills AONB
- Minchinhampton Parish Council
- Monmouthshire County Council
- National Grid
- North Somerset Council
- Public Power Solutions
- Regen SW
- Renewable Power Systems
- Renewable UK
- South Gloucestershire Council
- South West Water
- Stephens Scown
- Sustainable Direction
- Triconnex Bristol
- University of Bath
- Wales and West Utilities
- West of England LEP
- Westbury-on-Seven Parish Council
- Whitchurch Parish Council

### 3. Summary of feedback

#### Workshop 1: Re-cap of WPD's long-term priorities.

- The future of the industry, both in terms of a move to low carbon generation and the shift to smart networks was given as a key reason for stakeholders' attendance.
- Other key issues for stakeholders attending were “keeping the lights on” and issues or concerns over the connections process.
- Similarly “keeping the lights on” was the top priority on every table, with “smart networks” usually second.
- “Customer awareness” was consistently amongst the lowest priorities, often the lowest.
- “Environment and sustainability” was generally seen as a high/high-medium priority.
- There was a clear desire amongst stakeholders for more and easier communication with WPD, particularly around the connections process.



#### Workshop 2: WPD's Business Plan & Current Performance.

- There was clear support for the ‘three levels’ model of reporting that WPD will be using to report back to stakeholders on their performance against the business plan.
  - A number of stakeholders felt that it should be online rather than in paper format, suggesting that hyperlinks are used to switch between reports.
- The shorter, 20 page summary document received a positive reaction from stakeholders.
- There were however, suggestions on how to improve this, such as offering more explanations and context, including comparisons with other DNOs.



- The longer document was considered necessary and useful, particularly for stakeholders with a specific focus.
- However, most said that they would not read the longer report themselves.

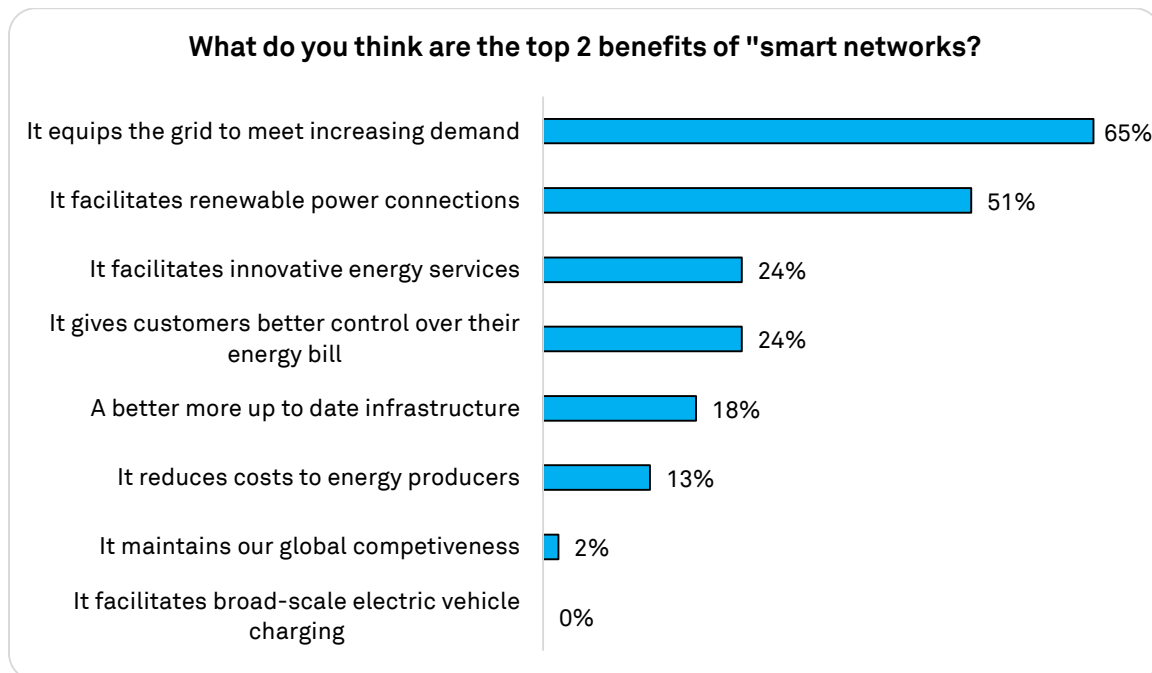
In WPD's summary (20 page) report: What are your top 2 topics for inclusion. By topic area:		
Topic area	Topic	% of attendees
Safety	Accident frequency rates	78%
	Substation security measures	50%
Reliability	Power cut frequency and duration	86%
	Percentage of customers restored within 1 hour	34%
Environment	Facilitating increased volumes of Low Carbon Technologies (e.g. solar PV)	84%
	Reducing the carbon footprint of the business	48%
Connections	Time taken to provide quotations and completed connections	62%
	Customer satisfaction with the connections process	58%
Customer satisfaction	Customer satisfaction results	62%
	Consultations and engagements with stakeholders	54%
Social obligations	Improving the support services for customers during power cuts	64%
	Data analysis to identify vulnerable customers and to better target services	52%

### Workshop 3: Spotlight on two WPD strategic priorities

#### Smart Networks

- There was general consensus on most tables that smart networks had been well explained by WPD.
- A number of stakeholders however pointed out that there was no accepted definition of a smart network.
- There was general consensus that the list of challenges WPD identified would face in transitioning to a smart network were all correct and relevant, albeit very technical.
- Additional suggestions included:
  - The role of the political environment

- Customer engagement and behavioural change
- Commercial and market issues
- Long term energy storage
- When asked about WPD's identified strategy areas, market integration and customer propositions were flagged as crucial, with the latter involving a lot of public engagement.
- While the tables generally agreed that the areas are all important, concerns were raised around data sharing and privacy.

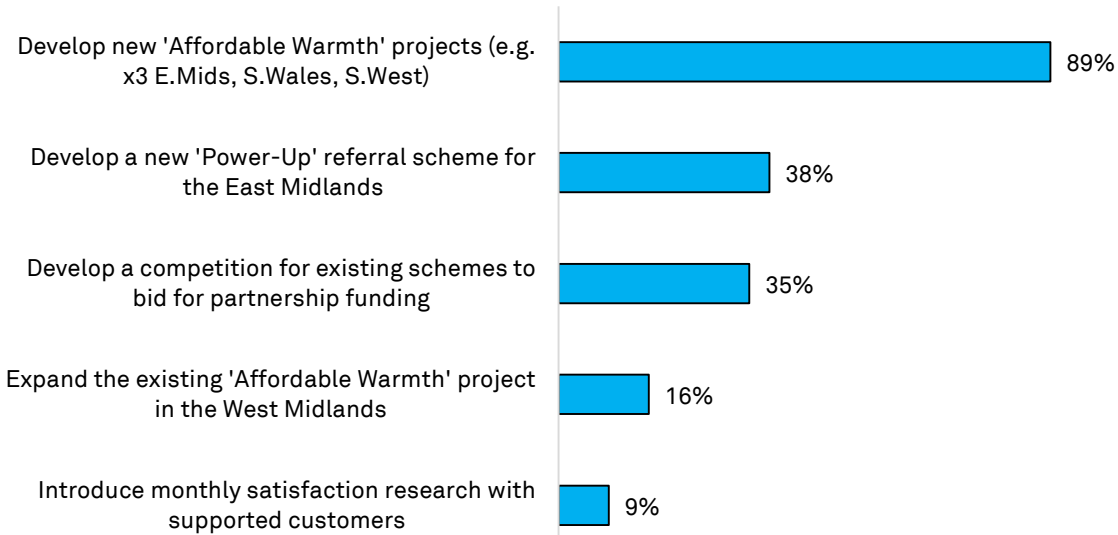


### Affordability

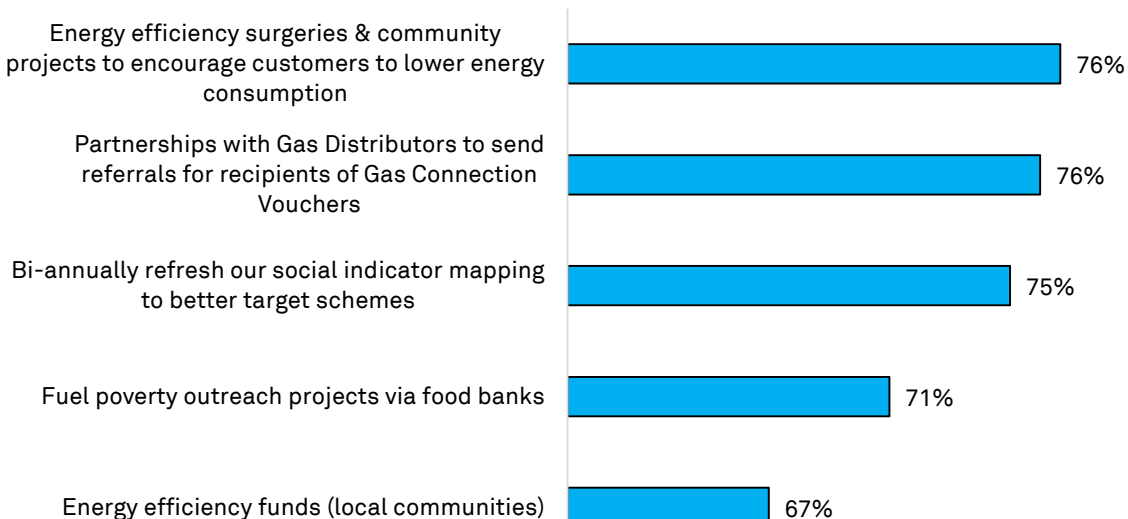
- WPD were thought by stakeholders to be taking the right steps and heading in the right direction.
- There is risk that WPD could go beyond their remit that stakeholders recognised, but a few felt that this proactive approach to affordability was a good thing.
- WPD needs to make sure they are using the right methods and partnerships or collaborations to identify people at risk of fuel poverty.
  - This was a recurrent theme in discussions on both WPD's planned actions and the ideas from other DNOs.
- The most popular of WPD's planned actions was developing new Affordable Warmth projects, with monthly satisfaction surveys the least popular.
- The most popular idea from other DNOs was the community energy efficiency projects aimed at encouraging consumers to reduce their energy consumption.
- The least popular was energy efficiency funds.



### Of the WPD proposed actions what are your top 2 priorities?



### Of the wider DNO actions, do you think WPD should implement these?



### Written Feedback

- 52% of attendees found the workshop **very interesting** while 48% found it interesting.
- 40% of attendees **strongly agreed** with the statement that they had the opportunity to make their points and ask questions. 58% agreed with it while only 2% disagreed.
- 18% of attendees **strongly agreed** that the right topics had been covered, while 78% agreed and only 4% disagreed.

Stakeholders were also given a chance to make additional comments on the feedback form. These included: *'it makes a pleasant change for all to be asked/encouraged for feedback'*; *'excellent use of electronic voting and discussion'*; and *'there was a bit too much covered in too short a time.'*

## 4. Workshop 1: Re-cap of WPD's long-term priorities

The first workshop focussed on WPD's long term priorities. This involved discussions around the following key questions:

- What are your hot topics/priorities?
- Do you agree with WPD's listed priorities?
- Could WPD work with you more/differently to address these priorities?

### 4.1 What are your hot topics/priorities?

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative stated that *'I have an interest in a low carbon future, cost connections and grid capacity in that low carbon world. This includes issues like storage rather than building extra capacity.'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'I would like to talk about WPD being a connection service rather than just a network operator.'*
- A business customer representative pointed out that *'I am most interested in ecology aspects related to WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'I would like to know more about WPD's future investment plans and smart network ideas.'*

Table 2:

- An elected representative stated *'there's no argument that your topics are definitely the hot ones, but they're hot as far as the sessions are concerned. I do hope you're working on more than that.'*
  - An energy/utility representative asked *'is "environment and sustainability" going to have a rating today?'*
  - An energy/utility representative commented *'I'm surprised "environment and sustainability" wasn't on the agenda last year. Those two definitely don't belong together though, they're very different.'*
- “I would like to know more about WPD's future investment plans and smart network ideas.”**

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said that *'we install large utilities and solar projects along with clean energy projects, so for us network capacity is an issue - especially in the South West. I'm also interested to see exactly how WPD can keep the lights on.'*

- A developer/connections representative stated *‘I’m more involved with connections and the connections process. Also, what’s the difference between a ‘big issue’ and a ‘long term priority’? Three of those are related to new connections while longer term issues aren’t so related.’*

Table 4:

- An elected representative asked *‘how do recent changes in government legislation impact Western Power Distribution?’*
- A voluntary representative commented that *‘with the focus moving away from green energy, the solar power industry could collapse.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that (s)he did not *‘understand what the role of the DNO is regarding trying to change government legislation.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *‘due to legislative changes, a lot of businesses will go bust.’*

Table 5:

- A domestic customer said *‘I am very glad you have added environmental responsibility to the list but I am very displeased with the decision to build networks over ground when other networks are burying all their lines much deeper. You are going to put up a cable measuring 37 miles which is a beautiful target for any terrorist. Security is a huge issue.’*
- A local authority officer representative mentioned that *‘for the council, it is smart meters and how data can be used to manage our own buildings and network of energy supply that we do internally. We can use smart meters to collect data on vulnerable homes and make sure they are okay.’*
- A business customer representative commented that *‘we have a huge plan for a housing development so our main priority is securing the connection for this.’*
- An elected representative stated *‘I am from a very rural parish so our biggest issue is vulnerability. We face the risk of blackouts quite often. I have to say that the average number of power cuts has reduced though.’*



Table 6:

- An elected representative stated that *‘this meeting itself is crucial. It is an intrinsic part of my being a representative of my electorate.’*
- An energy/utility representative concurred, saying that *‘electricity generally is very, very important.’*

- An energy/utility representative stressed that (s)he had *‘quite a lot of hot priorities. These include the fact that the community is very unhappy with WPD using oil. Maybe WPD should be looking at biofuels, rather than dirty fossil fuels.’*
- An energy/utility representative contended that *‘in London, there is a project with local councils looking at tariffs which is an excellent initiative, and looks at helping the fuel poor so that bits of that tariff can be used to help “system-balance”. Bristol, as a green capital and as a place that is trying to help vulnerable people, could perhaps do something similar.’*
- An energy/utility representative observed that *‘in Germany hydrogen is being used a lot. Maybe that’s something that really ought to be looked at. This includes low carbon networks. There is also now a rise in 2020 projects on electricity storage. This is a twelve million pound project across the three countries looking into how storage may help the network. But it may also help the network reduce carbon emissions.’*
- An energy/utility representative underscored *‘the importance of progress in the network, and new tolls regarding the capacity of the network, and new information.’*
- (S)he wanted to better understand *‘the works that WPD is preparing and to learn what WPD is doing for capacity. The government is currently building a new central nuclear station, when will this be built?’*
- A law firm representative stated the (s)he was *‘concerned with securing legal rights for the land, and for cables overhead and underground.’*

“ Particularly interested in what will happen with smart grids ”

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative started off by stating that they are *‘particularly interested in what will happen with smart grids, and the system operator priorities that WPD have.’*
- A housing/development representative then said that they want to *‘make sure we understand WPD’s long-term strategy’*, so (s)he can work out how to help.
- An environmental representative says (s)he was attending *‘to keep “environment and sustainability” on WPD’s agenda.’*
- A business customer representative said they want more competitiveness from WPD. (S)he stated that *‘distribution and transmission charges are too high, and I would like DNOs to be more competitive.’*
- (S)he complained that *‘this is damaging our business.’*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative was particularly interested in the *‘data availability.’*
- An elected representative wanted to discuss “keeping the lights on” as a hot topic.
- (S)he said that *‘our lights go out 4 or 5 times a year.’*

- A local authority officer representative was interested in *‘the low carbon agenda, fuel poverty and the smart grid.’*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *‘I’m quite narrowly focused on the legal aspect.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘my focus is entirely on distributed generation.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘the term disruptive influences summarises my concern – from a climate, social, business and technological perspective. I don’t think the distributive energy sector is immune to economic disruptions. A lot of agility is required.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *‘my concern is around what effect the integration of the Requirements for Grid Code will have on distributed generation (DG) in particular. And more broadly, the new requirements on new grid development on DG – in particular, wind.’*
- A law firm representative said *‘my concern is around the best practice on getting our sites up and running on time, and the relationship between WPD and National Grid. There should be better visibility around what National Grid are requiring from the DNO with regards to things like fault levels. Beyond that, I agree that “smart networks” and collaboration between different types of energy generation is still a priority. We all talk about smart cities, but what are they and how are we going to get there?’*
- An elected representative added, *“keeping the lights on” is very important – everything relies on power.’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘how can we make the process of energy distribution more personal?’*

 **the lack of connectivity is a great concern.**

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative stated that *‘the lack of connectivity is a great concern. We have projects attracting lots of overseas investment in renewable energy, doing a lot of good, but they will literally be turned off.’*
- A developer/connections representative added that (s)he has been frustrated by WPD reporting that *‘connections south of Bristol will be difficult if not impossible, as this is putting an end to lots of good, particularly solar, projects.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘we are a contractor for WPD. We face problems with finding a trained workforce. There is an ageing workforce across engineering and construction and the government has not promoted apprenticeships. This is only a problem when there is a boom in economy as there is currently in renewables – this means there is not enough unskilled and skilled labour for growing demand. The cost of labour is growing because of this shortage.’*

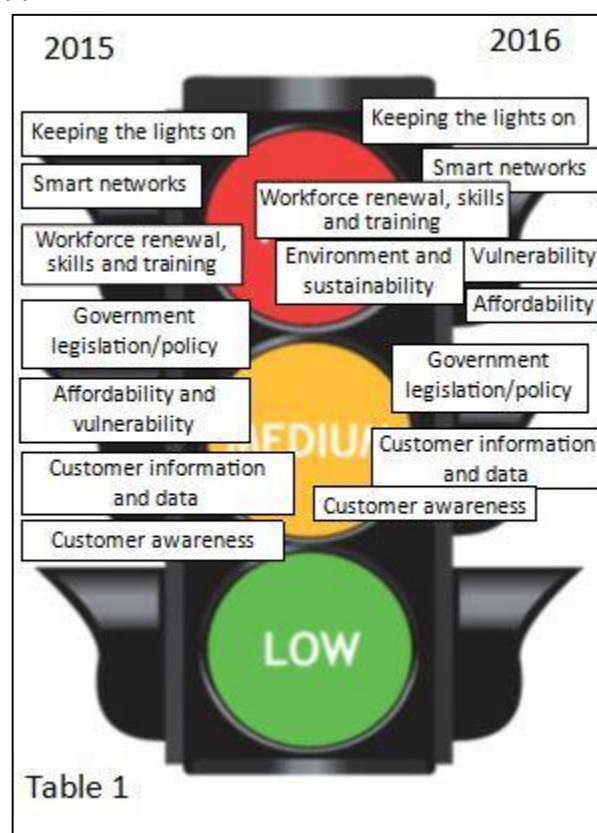


- A housing representative said that *‘they were interested in fuel poverty and affordability in particular.’*

## 4.2 Do you agree with WPD’s listed priorities?

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative raised the point that *‘with regards to “customer information and data” you can inform customers all you like but if the lights stay off, you have missed the main objectives.’*
- An academic/education institute representative considered *‘some people are right at the junction of “affordability” and “vulnerability”. I am thinking of farmers who are often in receipt of more help than many other groups. An energy meter measures both domestic and farm consumption. They can get help for the domestic use but not the farm consumption. There should be a means of splitting those supplies but there is a responsibility to both WPD and the electricity supplier.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘I would place “affordability” somewhere between high and medium.’*
- A business customer representative stated that *‘I would not put “environment and sustainability” that high compared to other areas where money is spent, it is important but is probably in the middle.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued *‘actually I think it is higher, if you look at the big picture in terms of climate change it becomes a very important. Distribution and generation is put in the “environment and sustainability” agenda and WPD should have a role in that.’*
- An academic/education institute representative made the point that *“smart networks” are important since they ultimately save money and are more ecologically sensible. You can make much more use of existing resources and there are existing problems in a lot of areas with consumption and generation.’*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *‘with regards to “government legislation and policy”, since there are so few MPs with a technical background, it is necessary that you interface with them to educate and inform them about the energy situation.’*





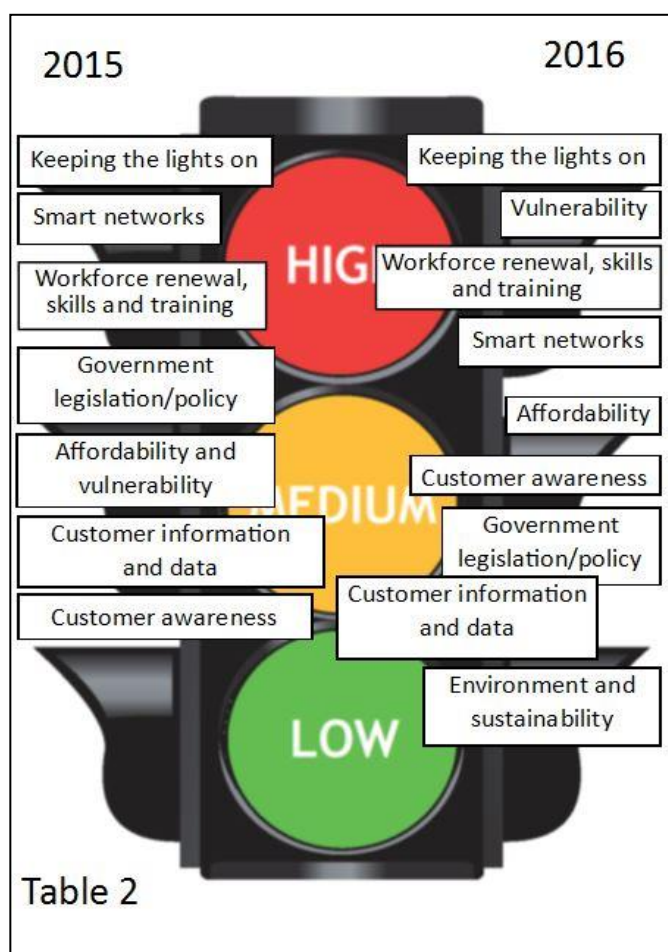
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘there is also a need to look at council planning, not just the top level of government. More demand means more rural manufacturing demand for WPD.’*
- A business customer representative agreed *‘yes, I would place “government legislation and policy” near to where it was last year in the list of priorities.’*
- A domestic customer felt that *“vulnerability” is an ever increasing issue.’*
- A business customer representative said that *‘I would say it is similar to last year as a priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘yes, it is about the same.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *“keeping the lights on” is a high priority but in many ways government policy and infrastructure projects are a far bigger factor in this priority than other local factors.’*
- An academic/education institute representative added *‘I would keep this as the top priority.’*
- There was a general consensus to keep this at the top of the list of priorities.
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *‘the skills and training gap goes hand in hand with “smart networks”; it is important.’*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *‘WPD have done a pretty good job on “customer awareness”, at the suggestion of the customer panel they put the WPD telephone number on all vehicles which has helped raise awareness. There is a much higher public awareness of WPD compared to other DNOs. Customers are also very complimentary about WPD. I joined the customer panel with a very cynical attitude but was pleasantly surprised and found no worms in the apple, it was very well done. The distribution of fridge magnets also helps raise awareness.’*
- An academic/education institute representative considered that *‘it is important from the point of view of knowing who to call.’*
- A business customer representative said *‘I would rate this issue about the same as “customer information and data”.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘yes I would go with that.’*



Table 2:

- The table agreed that “workforce renewal, skills and training” should be about the same as last year.

- An energy/utility representative argued *‘the “workforce renewal, skills and training” is a different metric; it’s an internal priority. Stakeholders are definitely interested in this though and it’s good that you’re identifying it. In 10 years’ time it’s going to be totally different; machines will do your cable lighting in the future. It’s a huge issue that the country isn’t yet grasping. Robots don’t need lights.’*
- An energy/utility representative shared that (s)he had *‘been working on power projects in this country since the mid-80s, commenting ‘I don’t think we need a big grid anymore; we need smart grids. We don’t have big aluminium plants. We need a lot more distributed energy and a lot more storage. You guys, as the DNO, should be leading on this.’*
- An elected representative agreed, pointing out *‘that’s an interesting view; the big aluminium works were really a minority.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *‘you guys are in the right place to lead this discussion.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I’d put “smart networks” at the top.’*
- An elected representative said *‘I’d put “smart networks” in the middle.’*
- A local authority officer representative commented *‘I’m not sure what you mean by “smart networks” so it’s difficult saying where it should be. My local suppliers have said they want to install a smart meter. What’s it going to do for me? This could possibly upset lots of customers.’*
- A local authority officer representative argued *‘you don’t need a smart meter to tell you to run the washing machine at night.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued *‘I’d rather “smart networks” be put higher. My company are currently putting smart meters into houses using a grid that WPD don’t even play with. This means neighbours can sell their excess electricity through a micro grid to each other.’*
- An elected representative stated that *“customer awareness” is important.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed and continued *‘yes, and WPD are excellent at delivering that.’*

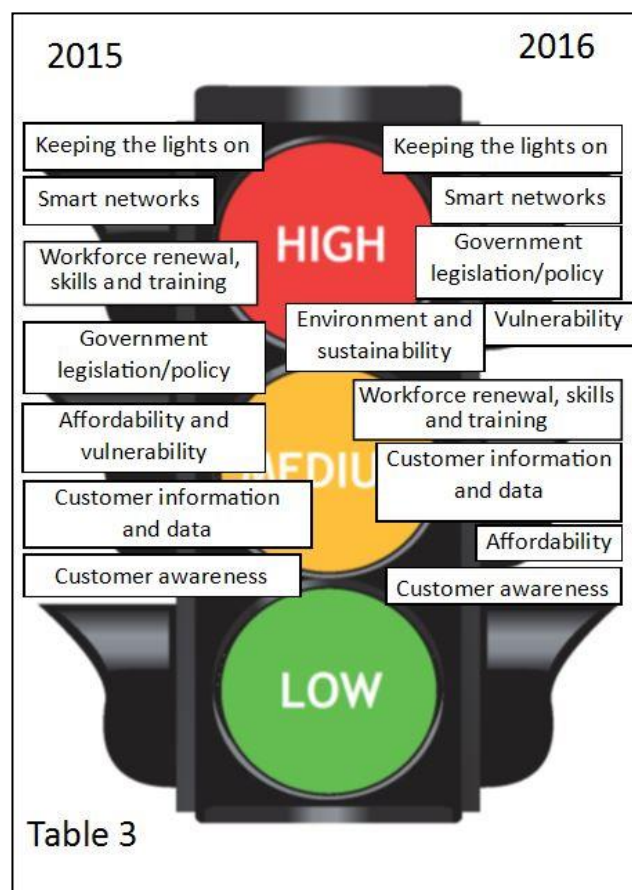


- A developer/connections representative argued *'I'd put "customer awareness" in the middle.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *"keeping the lights on" needs to be at the top.'*
- An elected representative commented that *"affordability" should be a medium-high priority.'*
- A local authority officer representative said *'I'd put "affordability" just below "keeping the lights on". Having looked at your accounts for the past year, you're making far too much profit.'*
- An energy/utility representative questioned *'are you going to lead or influence government policy? "Smart networks" belong high up and you do need to change the system – so "government legislation and policy" should be a medium priority.'*
- There was general consensus that "government legislation and policy" was a medium priority.
- On "environment and sustainability" an energy/utility representative stated *'this needs to be two separate subjects. Environment is the environment and sustainability is a lot more than that.'*
- An elected representative raised the point that *'a lot of customers don't care if it doesn't affect them. Customer worries are "affordability" and "customer awareness". With the environment they rely on your staff to look after this properly.'*
- An elected representative stated *'I think "vulnerability" should be high.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed arguing *'it's got to be high.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I think "customer information and data" is medium.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *"customer information and data" is part of the smart network future anyway; so I'd put that higher.'*
- An elected representative pointed out *'it's important to have "customer information and data", but it's not important to consumers. They don't want or need to access data. To most people or customers it's irrelevant.'*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative remarked *'I think having nine priorities is a risk because you have so many things to focus on and deliver - however I'm not sure I'd cut any of them. I attended these workshops last year and it's nice to see you've added the environment point and updated everything as a result of what we discussed last time!'*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned *'in terms of you saying that you're neutral and don't bill customers, there are actually costs that are passed on to the consumer so it really should be one of your priorities to keep costs low. Just stating you have no impact on the bills of customers is a bit unfair.'*

- An academic/education institute representative pointed out *‘under “customer awareness” you need to be more proactive in not just calling them a “customer” but also in literally naming them “suppliers” on the grounds they may well produce some energy for you – especially as the trend of microgeneration is likely to increase.’*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted *‘the amount of data I see on DNOs is huge and very impressive, but the raw information layer isn’t very good. Coming to it fresh it would be useful if you could provide some level of interpretation rather than just throwing us a huge volume of raw data. The mapping data in particular is just so huge!’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘I guess as WPD it’s your primary business to keep the lights on!’*
- A business customer representative agreed *‘yes it’s your key role in life.’*
- An academic/education institute representative remarked *‘it’s number one on your priority list; it’s your core business to keep the lights on.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued *‘I’m slightly worried with raising legislation on the current government as you don’t know what you’ll get out of them!’*
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘what work has WPD done on “workforce renewal, skills and training” in the past 12 months? It would be good to know.’*
- A developer/connections representative stated *‘it sounds like you should put “workforce renewal, skills and training” a little lower if you’ve got plans in process, maybe keep it on medium as something that should still be looked at and kept on track but not moved to a higher or lower priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point *‘you’re not a supplier, you’re a DNO but you do affect customer bills. You did say your network costs are coming down so maybe that should be reflected in the percentage cut you do put on top of customers’ bills?’*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *‘just to be slightly controversial – energy should be less affordable for people that use more energy. Yes some people do have to be helped and can’t afford it, however*



*“ I guess as WPD it’s your primary business to keep the lights on! ”*



*most people can afford to pay and energy is so cheap they use it a lot more of it. Maybe it should be more expensive so people use less of it?’*

- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘the discussion around “affordability” is that it’s always a good idea to reduce costs but I’m saying that I don’t agree with that narrative.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘I was going to say that, put “vulnerability” above “affordability”.’*
- An academic/education institute representative highlighted that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” and “customer information and data” go hand in hand so they should really be together.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘for new customers with connections who aren’t familiar with DNOs, it can be quite helpful but I’d still rank “customer information and data” as quite a low priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘I would put a high or medium ranking for “environment and sustainability” - it interlinks with “smart networks” and sustainability so should be a key part of your company plan.’*

Table 4:

- A voluntary organisation representative said it was *‘worth asking to what extent WPD is influenced by those who generate their own electricity. How would it behave with its own systems?’*
- An elected representative commented that *‘another strand is the fact that renewable energy is coming on-stream; when electricity peaks, is there enough capacity for this?’*
- An energy/utility representative said that it was *‘not worth putting effort into changing the mind of the government.’*
- A domestic customer suggested that WPD was *‘heading for a major problem – with the changes that have taken place over last four years on wind turbines, how are we going to keep electric cars running? There’s not the energy to deal with it. “Smart networks” need to be a big priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *“keeping the lights on” will always be the biggest priority.’*
- An elected representative said there was *‘a strong need to focus on storage of electricity, especially with electric cars.’*
- A domestic customer argued that they *‘would like to see more of a focus on research and development. A lot of politicians want better information from WPD. Many politicians are ignorant.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative agreed, saying it *‘could be a money-spinner from the start. We’d be well ahead of the game.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘innovation should be added as a new priority.’*

- A developer/connections representative said that *‘there was not enough incentive given to WPD to promote innovation.’*
- A domestic customer said that *‘WPD is up against it, because things will move on quicker than you can implement “smart networks”.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *“affordability” is very important. But “vulnerability” is even more important.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘attempts to help with the environment have been disappointing on WPD’s behalf, but all DNOs are in the same boat. None of them commit to renewable energy. WPD is too passive.’*
- An energy /utilities representative said that *“environment and sustainability” should be placed above “government legislation and policy”.*
- An elected representative argued that *‘skills and training should be low priority, as this is not the job of a DNO to focus on.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said that *“customer awareness” can be brought down a bit, as WPD has been doing a good job on this.’*

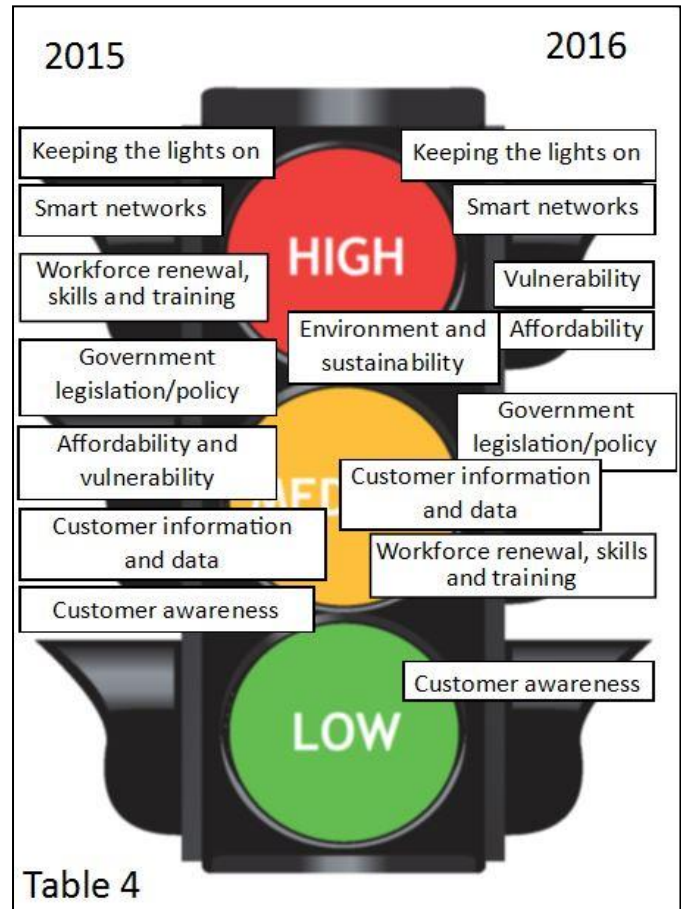
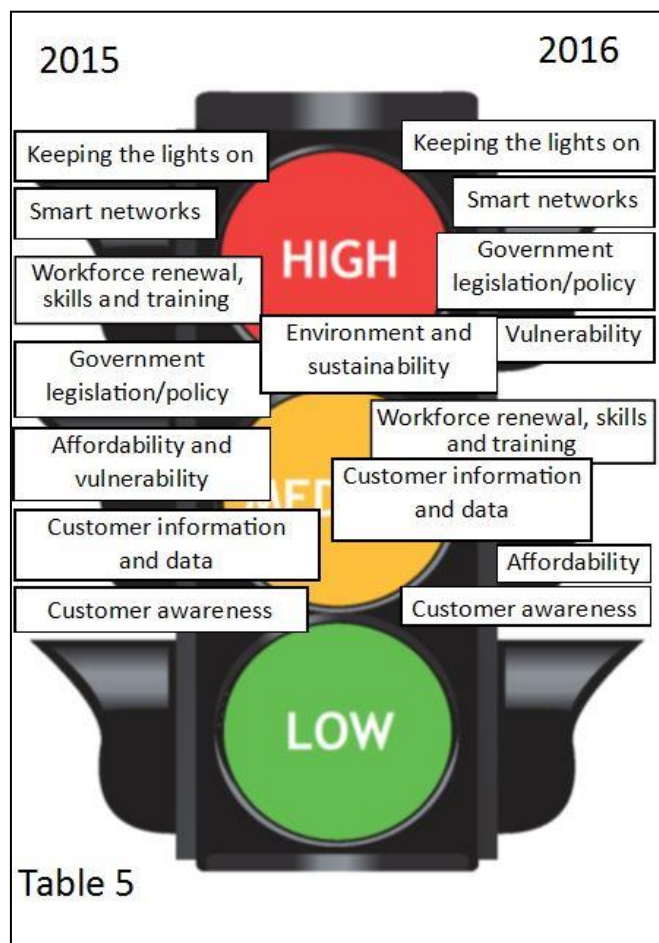


Table 5:

- A domestic customer suggested *‘WPD are trying to make the system less vulnerable such as by replacing copper wires by fibre optics. I think the security of a network, in light of what has been happening in the last 18 months, is quite important and I don’t think it’s there.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘maybe security and “keeping the lights on” are the same thing then.’*
- A domestic customer insisted that *“keeping the lights on” means alternative routing, for example, when wires come down in storms. Security is a different thing.’*
- An elected representative added that *“customer awareness” should be as high as others. I am surprised to see “environment and sustainability” at the bottom.’*
- An elected representative highlighted that *‘there is a huge amount of inevitable contamination by WPD so I think they have to be conscious of it.’*

- There was general consensus that “environment and sustainability” should be a high priority.
- There was also consensus that “government legislation and policy” should be more of a medium priority.
- A business customer representative felt that *“affordability” and “vulnerability” should be far higher.*
- A domestic customer agreed and considered that *‘WPD can do more in terms of “vulnerability” than influencing “government legislation and policy”.*
- A domestic customer raised the point that *‘people can still be vulnerable even though they have the money to pay for the bills. An old person who has a well-funded pension is still affected when the power goes out.’*
- A business customer representative insisted that *‘they are different issues. They are both very important but have different characteristics.’*
- The table agreed that “affordability” and “vulnerability” should be separate issues.
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *“affordability” should be a lot lower seeing as WPD’s portion of the entire bill is fairly low. Even if you halve the, it doesn’t make much of an impact on the amount people have to pay.’*
- A local authority officer representative agreed and said *‘you shouldn’t put more attention into something you can’t change. I think WPD can do so much more in terms of “vulnerability”, which they can actually do something about.’*
- A business customer representative made a point that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” go a bit under “keeping the lights on” because it has to do with planning for the future.’*
- There was general consensus that “workforce renewal, skills and training” was a high priority.





- A business customer representative stated *'I think perhaps WPD should be going to colleges and providing relevant information about the jobs available and the opportunities they can seek through them. That's what we do and it works quite well.'*
- A domestic customer pointed out that *'a lot of your people are very hands on and working in all weathers. It seems that in this regard, apprenticeships are far more important in developing the skills required than a university degree.'*
- There was general consensus that "keeping the lights on" should remain a top priority.
- A local authority officer representative felt that *"smart networks" and "customer information and data" go hand in hand. For Bristol as a city, that is pretty high on our agenda in terms of our energy plans and what we want to do in terms of energy.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'we have been installing embedded generation and our ability to do that is affected by the fact that the grid can be so charged up at some days. The idea of a grid which can respond to real time changes is very useful to us and others.'*



Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative felt that *'keeping the power going is crucial for the country and customers, particularly with the cutting down of coal-powered electricity.'*
- An energy/utility representative noted that *"government legislation and policy" should be above "smart networks" as a priority. First, you need the policy.'*
- There was, however, little consensus on this point.
- An energy/utility representative contended that *'you can be quite well off, but vulnerable. If you're in a bath hoist, for example, and the power goes off, then you're in a bad situation. So we need to concentrate on vulnerable consumers. People aren't aware of these issues, despite all the work that Western Power has done. This is also tied to "government legislation and policy" because the government can say that we're going to make it more of a requirement to look after vulnerable customers. So "vulnerability" should be higher, above "smart networks". It can be a matter of life and death.'*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed, however, suggesting that *"smart networks" will help the vulnerabilities and stabilities of the network. If you have a failure in some part of the network, and can easily identify it, you can resolve the problem immediately.'*

- An elected representative stated that *“vulnerability” has to be above “affordability”.*
- An energy/utility representative and an energy/utility representative agreed.
- There was a general consensus that “affordability” should also be below “workforce renewal, skills and training” as a priority.
- An energy/utility representative noted that *‘you need a strong, smart workforce for a smart network.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *‘the environment is very important. You have to convince the Government, yet anything you convince the Government of now, it’s still going to take four to five years for it come into effect. The skills you need now in the workforce within electricity distribution are extensive and need lots of training.’*
- There was strong agreement that “keeping the lights on” was the absolute top priority.
- An elected representative contended that *‘we need flexibility in how we produce electricity and shouldn’t blindly follow the green agenda. The ability to generate electricity and sustainable electricity no matter what the conditions means we need a broad spectrum of electricity sources available to us.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *‘WPD needs to know about its customers, but customers also need to know more about WPD.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *“customer information and data” is more important than “customer awareness”.*
- An energy/utility representative agreed.
- An elected representative proposed that *‘we can’t just take the easy option.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘we need longer business plans. Current business plans are too stop and start. The government also comes in and changes lots of pieces of legislation, and people aren’t really prepared for that to happen and it has affected lots of industries, including solar and wind. And storage could have been a solution.’*

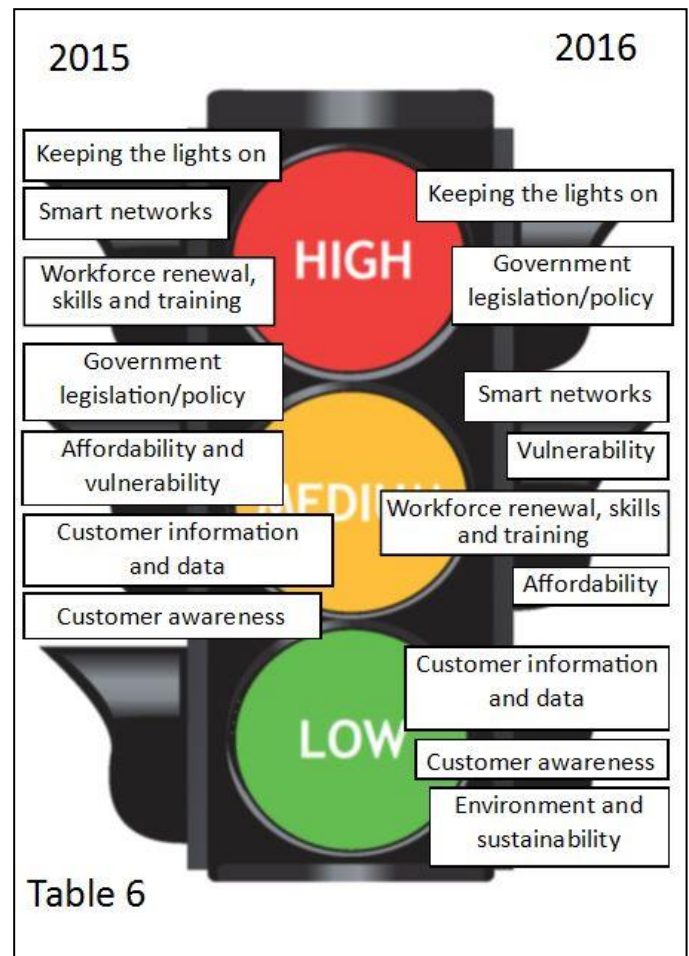
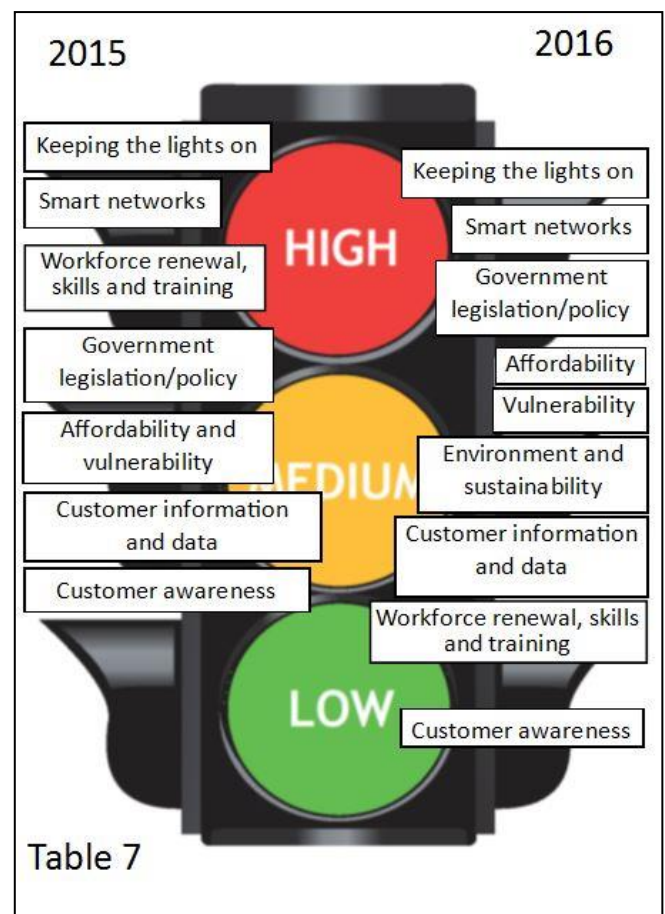


Table 7:

- All representatives agreed that “keeping the lights on” is still the most important priority.
- An energy /utility representative pointed out *‘it is not clear what is meant by “smart networks”, depending on how you define it, it could be a higher or lower priority.’* (S)he defines it as *‘doing things that keeps costs down and improves efficiency, thus deferring reinforcement costs.’*
- A business customer representative said that “workforce renewal, skills and training” is a low priority, however an energy/utility representative commented that it *‘depends how it impacts “keeping the lights on”’*. The environmental representative admitted it is of high importance, *‘but for you, not for us. It is WPD’s job, not the job of stakeholders.’*
- An energy/utility representative added that *“affordability” is an issue here too.’*
- The environmental representative thought *‘it is important to keep abreast of government policy developments, but not be bound by it.’*
- (S)he continued that *‘government policy is favouring the big players, and maintaining the status quo. Most policies are geared towards existing firms, because they have lobby power.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested making it a higher priority, to help solve affordability and vulnerability.
- An energy/utility representative said interaction with local government was only of medium importance.
- When it comes to “customer awareness”, an energy/utility representative asked *‘what do customers need to be aware of, apart from if there is a power cut?’*
- This was not seen as a high priority.
- An energy/utility representative suggested that the importance of “customer information and data” *‘be kept roughly the same.’*

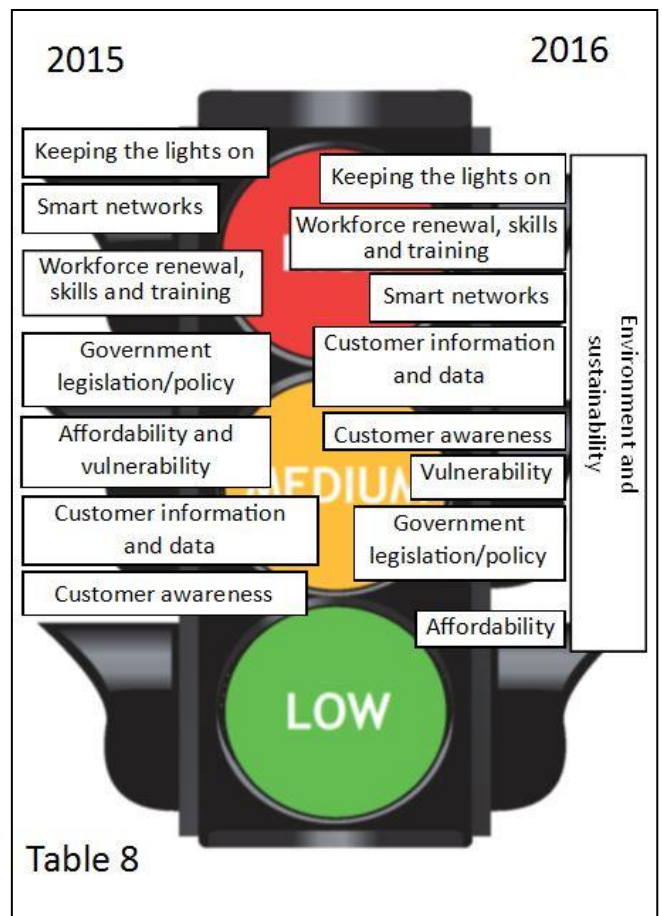




- Another energy/utility representative said that *‘it will become more important as “smart networks” grow, with energy storage and so on.’* (S)he added however, that *‘it is an industry issue, not one for individual companies.’*
- A business customer representative suggested “environment and sustainability” should be a higher priority. An environmental representative commented that *‘the countryside is a business, and a little bit of money can go a long way.’*
- An energy/utility representative added that *‘energy efficiency and low carbon vehicles are very important.’*
- A business customer representative argued that “affordability” *‘is a social issue, not a business one. I am in a contest with firms in other countries, where costs are cheaper.’* (S)he continued by stating that *‘the definition of “affordability” as a priority has moved too far into “vulnerability”.’*
- An energy/utility representative was *‘not sure if industry or government should play the role in “vulnerability”.’* A business customer representative placed it as only a medium priority for businesses.
- (S)he expanded on that by stating that *‘the amount of people who are vulnerable is quite small.’* An environmental representative said that *‘increasing numbers of dementia sufferers and elderly people make it of growing importance, but it is not necessarily WPD’s responsibility.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, and felt that *‘industry has a role, but not an exclusive role.’*

Table 8:

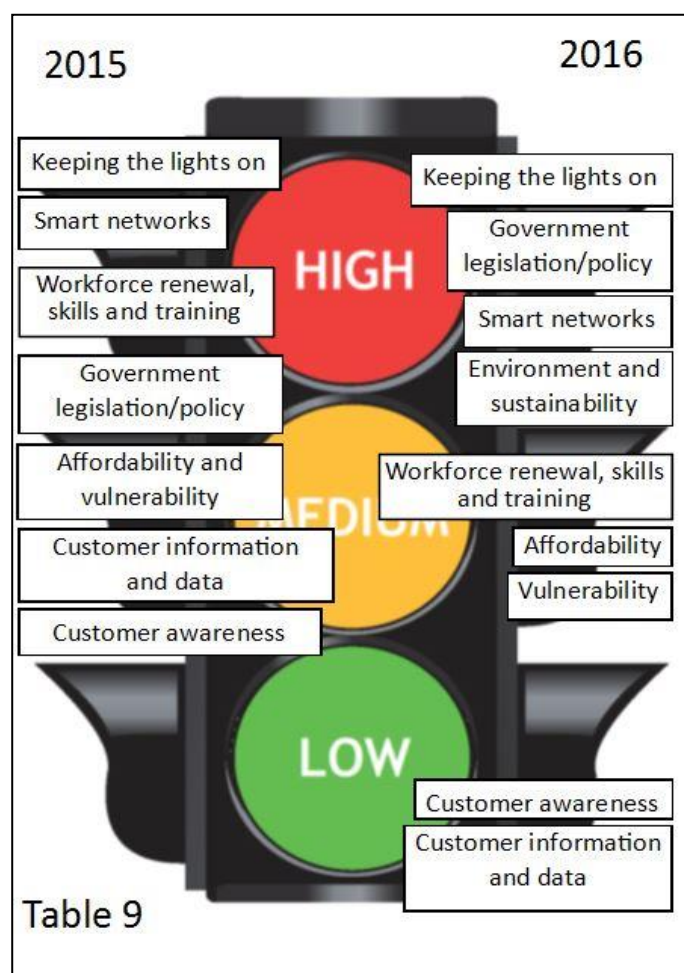
- A local authority officer representative was glad to see that *“environment and sustainability” is one of WPD’s long term priorities.’*
- A local authority officer representative said *‘keeping lights on is still a very high priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘the capacity of the grid is important for them. More so than “keeping the lights on”.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated that *“keeping the lights on” is an expectation. WPD must make sure that the necessary infrastructure is in place.’*
- (S)he added that *“environment and sustainability” should not be a separate priority, the lights should be kept on sustainably.’*



- A local authority officer representative agreed that *“environment and sustainability” should not be a separate priority but should underline the running of the service.*
- A technology representative stated that *“customer awareness” is becoming a higher priority.*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned that *“the average customer does not have interaction with WPD, so “customer awareness” is more important for commercial businesses than domestic customers.*
- A local authority officer representative mentioned that *“affordability” and “vulnerability” are an increasing priority.*
- A voluntary organisation representative interjected that *“vulnerability” is more important, as WPD have more of an influence on this than they do on “affordability”.*
- A voluntary organisation representative added that *“government policy sometimes does not take into account what can actually be achieved.”*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *‘I’m surprised to see “government legislation and policy” was above “affordability and vulnerability” last year.’*
  - An energy/utility representative argued *‘it’s very difficult to see what’s missing in a list. More generally, we need to get more fluent in system dynamics.’*
  - An energy/utility representative said *“keeping the lights on” is a very fractured concept – there’s no specific time frame under which that applies. All of this is feeding into “keeping the lights on”.*
  - The table agreed that “keeping the lights on” should remain at the top.
  - An energy/utility representative said *“smart networks” is a much misunderstood and abused term, so it’s difficult to form an opinion – it’s a very complicated area.’*
  - An energy/utility representative said *‘unless we get “smart networks” right, the problems in the near future, let alone the long-term future, will be insurmountable.’*
- A law firm representative agreed.

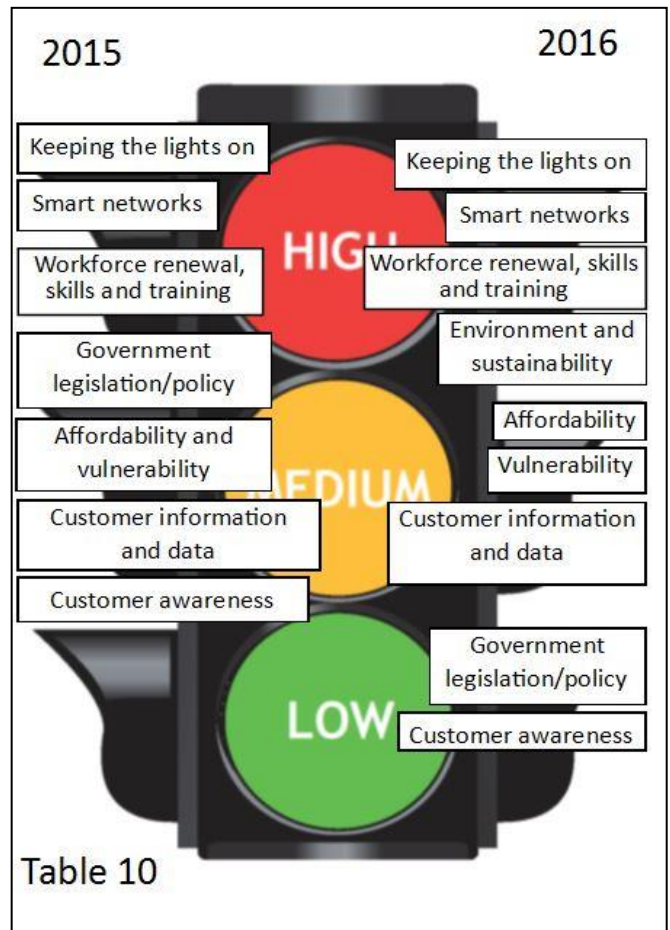


- An energy/utility representative suggested *“workforce renewal, skills and training” is a hard one to judge, because only WPD can judge their own workforce. I would have it in the medium bracket.*
- A law firm representative said *“workforce renewal, skills and training” only becomes a high priority when I need somebody to activate my site.*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘accountability is an important issue – so there needs to be a Director who, when they get it horribly wrong, their head is on the block. I’m not joking.’*
- A developer/connections representative offered *‘to me, “workforce renewal, skills and training” would be quite high.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed.
- An energy/utility representative said *‘government policy is where stakeholders are also voters and lobbyists, and a more educated stakeholder group is more important, because we can go and bang on the doors of parliament.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘I would put “government legislation and policy” above “smart networks”, because if this isn’t right, “smart networks” can’t happen.’*  
An energy/utility representative and a developer/connections representative agreed.
- A law firm representative agreed that *‘a sudden change in policy can create an influx of connections that becomes too much for WPD and other DNOs.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested, *‘I think there’s a concern that the regulatory workforce is not up to scratch – there’s a systems connection there.’*
- The table agreed that “environment and sustainability” remains a high priority.

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative said that *‘connectivity should be on list.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *“environment and sustainability” is a medium to high priority and is more important than people are currently accepting.’*
- An environmental representative pointed out that *‘it was important to clarify exactly what we mean by “environment” before we can attach any importance to it.’*
- A developer/connections representative stated that *“keeping the lights on” has to be at the top.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *“keeping the lights on” is absolutely crucial.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *“smart networks” are the future. It’s inevitable that we will all be a part of these and WPD will have to deliver. These are the only way to make the grid suitable for the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of making it possible to fit renewable energy onto the grid - a higher priority than ever.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” is a medium to high priority.’*

- A developer/connections representative raised the issue that *“government legislation and policy” has fairly aggressive targets to meet in sustainable energy. They feel they are producing as much sustainable energy as they are able to and that the industry is overwhelmed with investment due to these aggressive targets.*
- On “government legislation and policy”, an environmental representative made the point that *‘if you are unable to influence it, then it should be a low priority. There is no point wasting millions of pounds if this is essentially ineffective.’*
- An environmental representative stated that *“affordability” is very important.*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *“government legislation and policy” and “affordability” are very strongly linked as when we ask the Government for undergrounding their response often relates to increased costs to tenants.*
- A housing representative said that (s)he felt *‘data is very important, as how are we able to identify the vulnerable customers without it.’*



#### 4.3 Could WPD work with you more/differently to address these priorities?

Table 2:

- An elected representative shared that (s)he felt *‘it’s very difficult to speak to one’s opposite number. It’s irritating when someone at a medium level is answering the phone to people and there is no system for registering a reasonable question and being responded to in due course. If I want to find out what WPD is planning for future system enhancement I’ve got no idea who to ask. I want the answer in less than three months.’*



- An elected representative said that (s)he couldn't *'see, in the context of smart systems, vulnerability and flood effects, any mass re-enforcement of the system, circuits and additional grid sub-stations to strengthen the whole thing. I'm a great fan of solar energy but the network has to accommodate a full day, it has to accommodate the energy coming from numerous places.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point *'I'm pretty happy with WPD.'*



Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative felt that *'working collectively and collaboratively with us would be very helpful, such as working to address fuel poverty. We've got processes to share these things already agreed but continuing this would be good'*
- An energy/utility representative remarked *'I sit on a lot of WPD working groups and I must say there has been a vast improvement in the past few years. You tackle even the smallest, most specific issues with a wide range of stakeholders, where we then have some really good and useful discussions.'*
- A business customer representative agreed *'I have spent a long time working with many DNOs in my area and I have a far better relationship with WPD than any other DNO. If there's a problem I can get through to someone quickly, explain the issue and resolve it! Unfortunately with someone like Scottish and Southern it's very different – they just don't want to talk to you!'*

Table 5:

- An elected representative highlighted that *'visual intrusion of the network if it is over ground is also important. You can spend a lot of money removing visual intrusion only for it to be replaced by the rail lines.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative thought that *'WPD are doing pretty well in these areas.'*
- An environmental representative praised the fridge magnet sent out by WPD, in terms of "customer awareness". (S)he then added that *'I don't know who my local manager*

*is, I don't know them personally. I would like a clear way to contact the person who is responsible if I have problems.'*

- An energy/utility representative stated that *'WPD is leading on "smart networks".'*
- Another energy/utility representative also commented that *'our main interest is in smart networks and smart grids. WPD have a big role in this area.'*
- A housing/development representative said *"customer information and data" and understanding could become more important with the rise of smart networks. However, is it the responsibility of WPD or the supplier?'* (S)he also commented that *'joining up data between different DNOs into one system would be great.'*
- An energy utility representative also raised the point that *'there is fierce debate about how much access DNOs should have to smart meter data, with many privacy concerns.'*
- Another energy/utility representative said that *'WPD have to take great care, as customers are can be very suspicious.'*
- An environmental representative also raised the point that the image of pylons used by WPD is an *'old fashioned 1950's design'*, and *'it is not a positive image for a company.'*

**“ I would like a clear way to contact the person who is responsible if I have problems. ”**

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said that *'the application of a formal request for data takes too much time. Freer access could avoid this lag. It would be great if data was available online.'*
- A technology representative asked about the introduction of *'a single emergency number.'*
- A local authority officer representative wondered whether (s)he should *'contact the suppliers and whether this was always rerouted to WPD.'*
- A technology representative asked *'who the contact would be for the smart meters.'*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative commented that *"environment and sustainability" could do with more information on WPD's website, for example on waste management and recycling. The same is true of "smart networks", otherwise we only find out about these things at this sort of event.'*

#### 4.4 Are there any other points you would like to make?

Table 8:

- A voluntary organisation representative asked whether *‘the skills are in place for the introduction of smart networks, or whether further recruitment of new talent is necessary for the introduction of this innovation.’*
- (S)he noted that *‘the right people are needed for it to work.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *‘with no one to build and operate the smart networks, this would be an issue.’*
- An elected representative asked about *‘preventative maintenance such as tree cutting.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *‘working with WPD is a very positive experience. Compared to other DNOs and energy suppliers WPD have been forward thinking and good at listening and adapting to customer needs.’*

“ WPD have been forward thinking and good at listening and adapting to customer needs.”

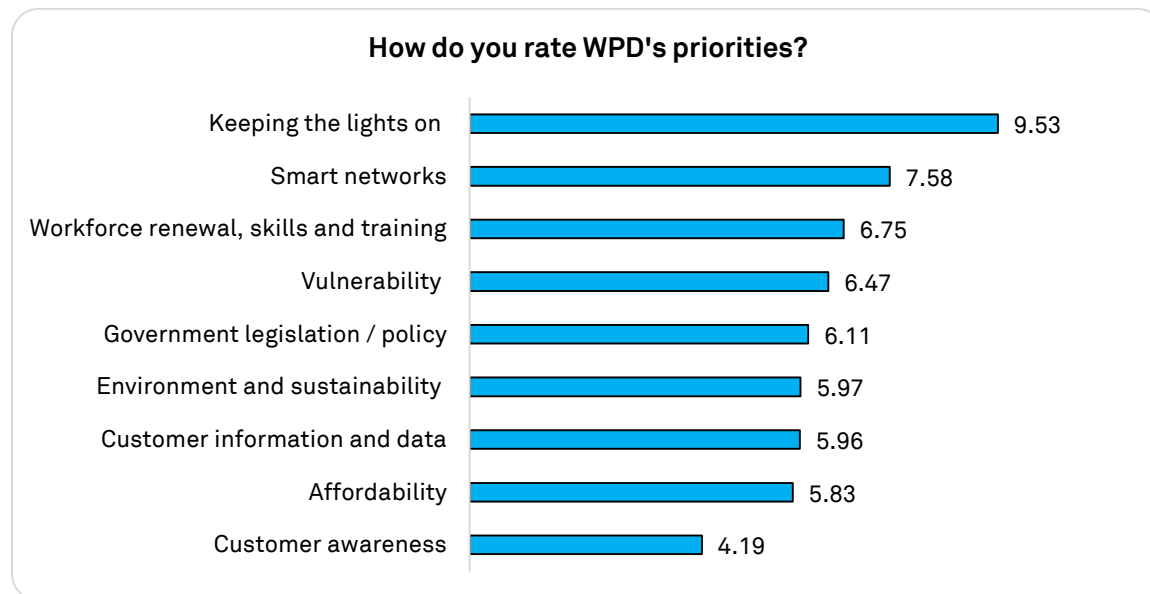
Table 10:

- An environmental representative was *‘in favour of solar power but I think they look awful. The panels should be on roofs and not in open countryside. Both aesthetically unappealing and a waste of agricultural land.’*

#### 4.4 Individual voting results

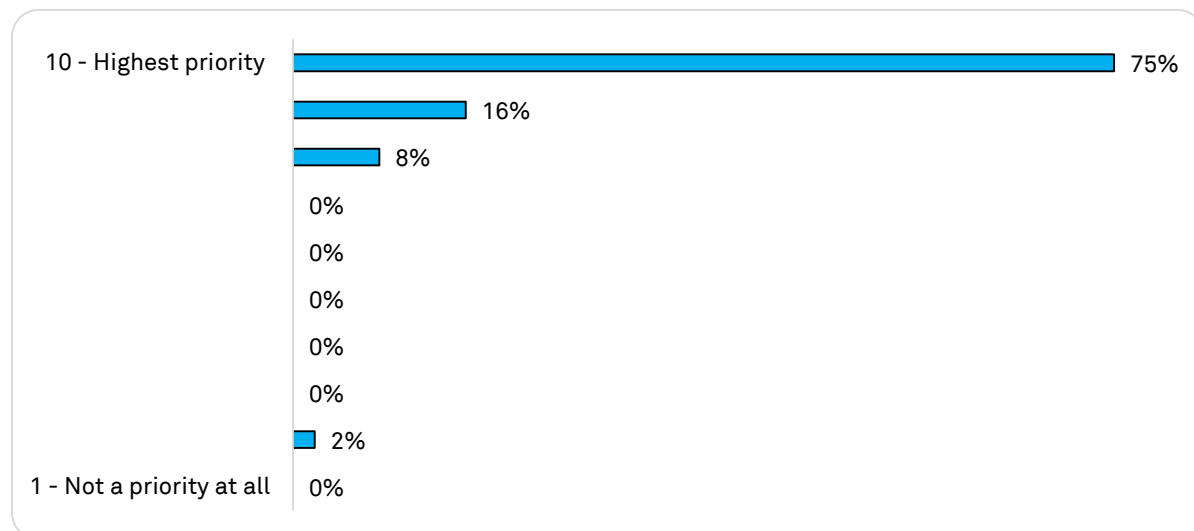
After group discussions, the stakeholders were asked to vote individually on what they considered to be top priorities. Each person was able to cast a vote through an electronic voting system. The results are displayed below.

## Overall results:

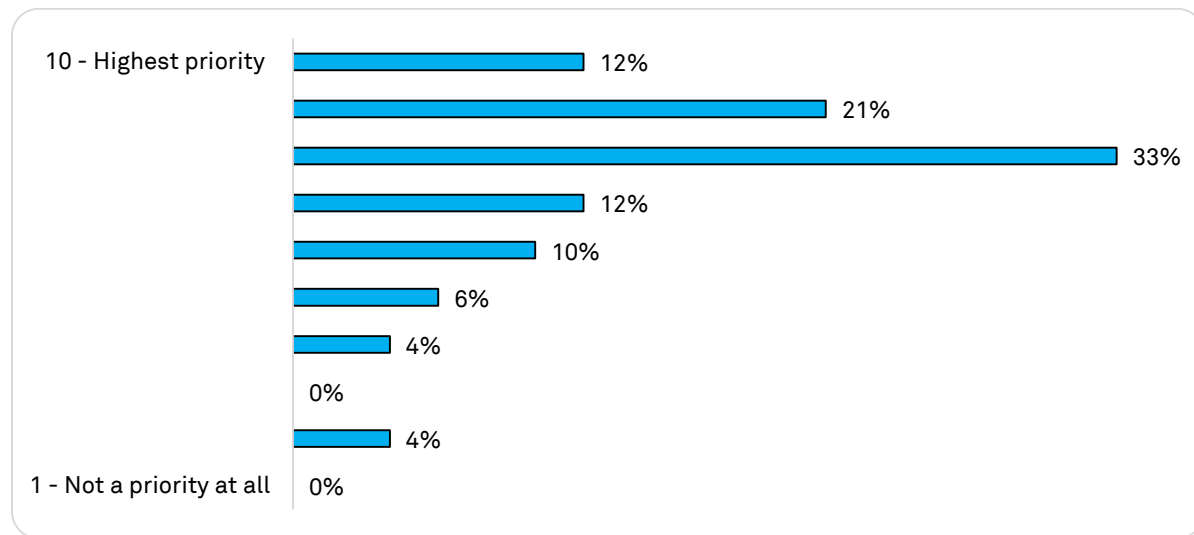


## Priority-by-priority results:

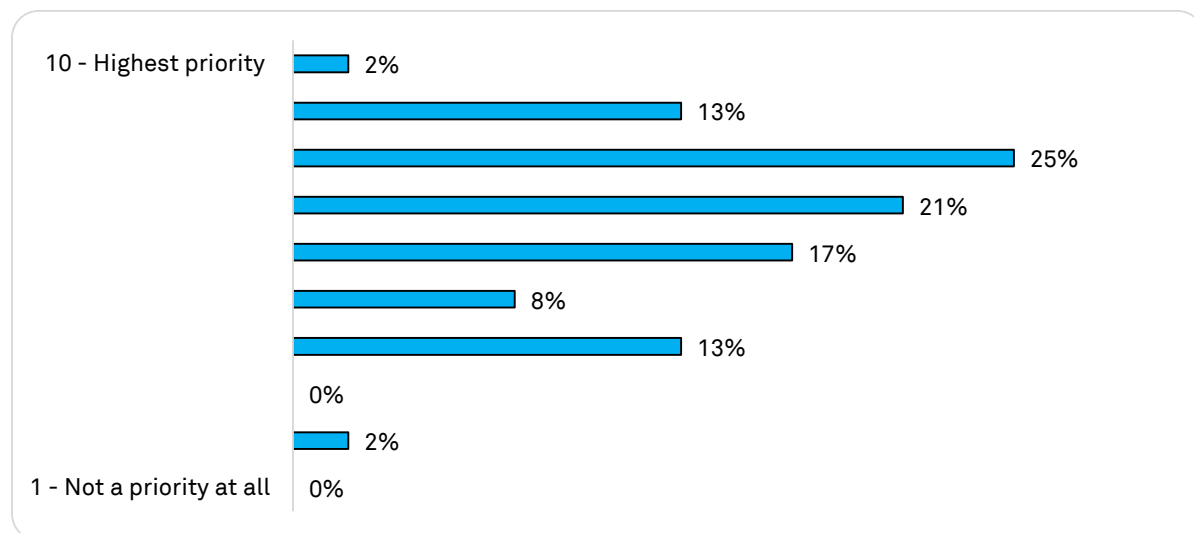
How do you rate “keeping the lights on” as a long-term priority?



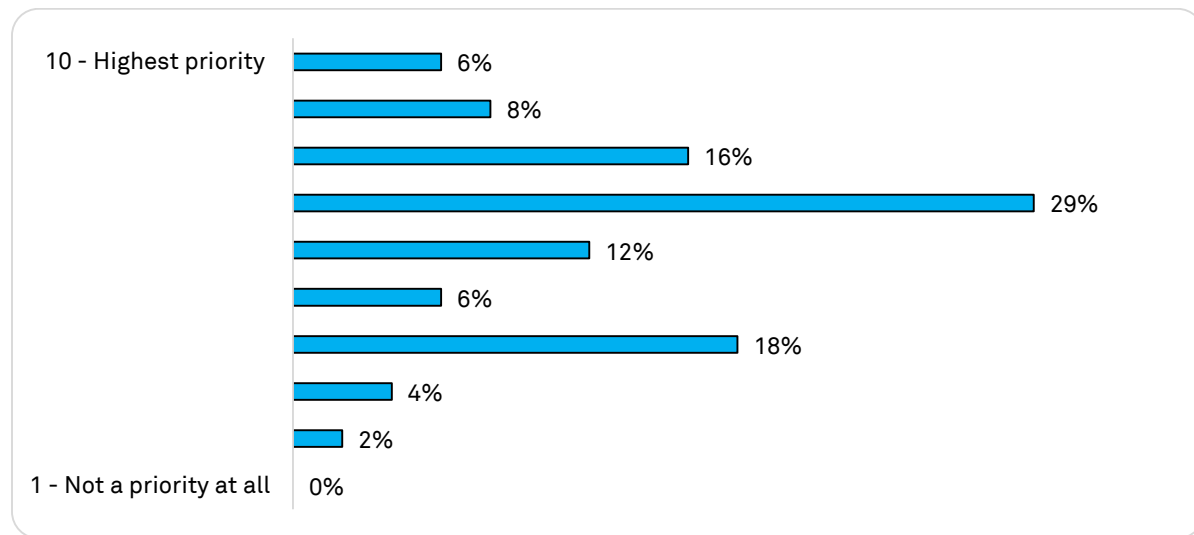
How do you rate “smart networks” as a long-term priority?



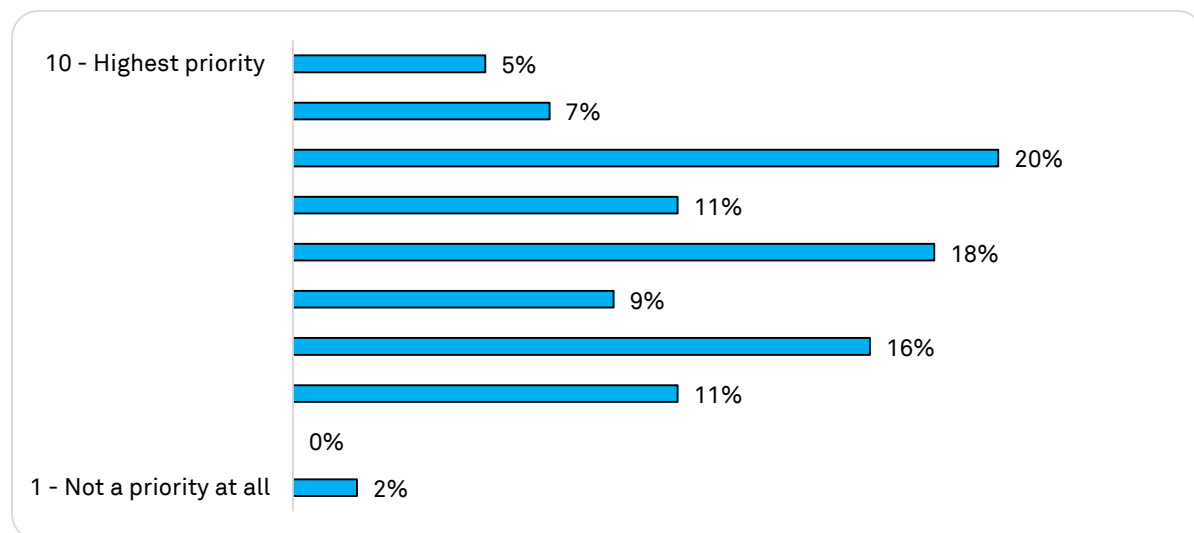
How do you rate “workforce renewal, skills and training” as a long-term priority?



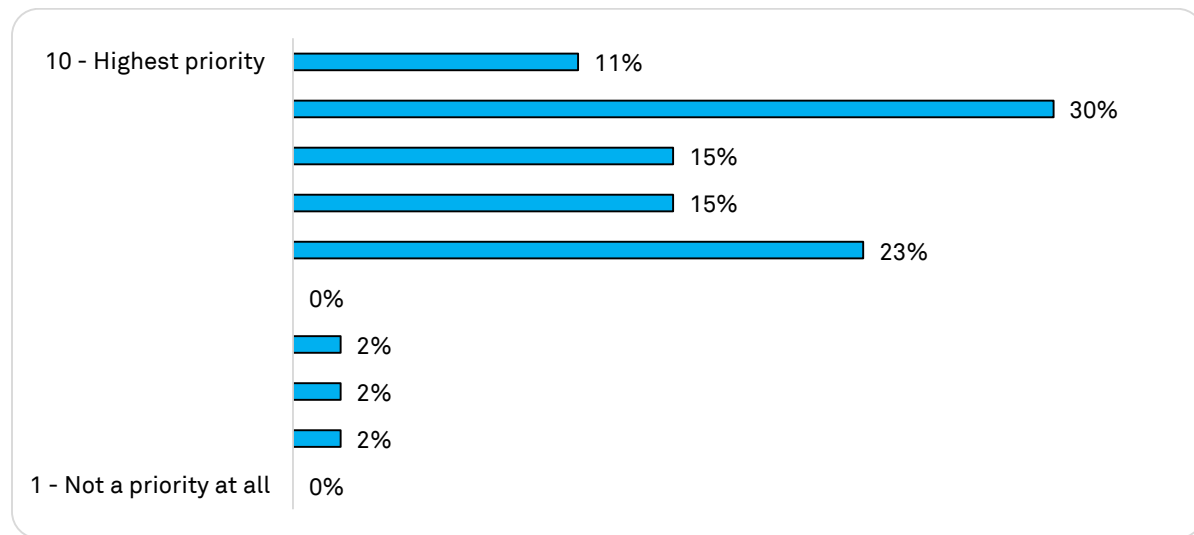
How do you rate “vulnerability” as a long-term priority?



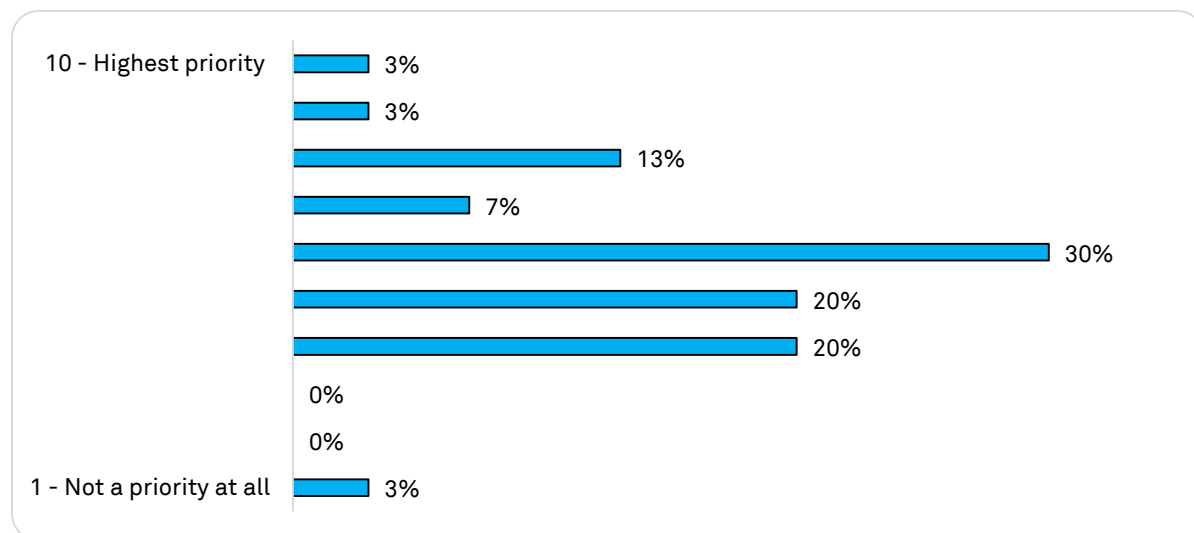
How do you rate “government legislation/policy” as a long-term priority?



How do you rate “environment and sustainability” as a long-term priority?

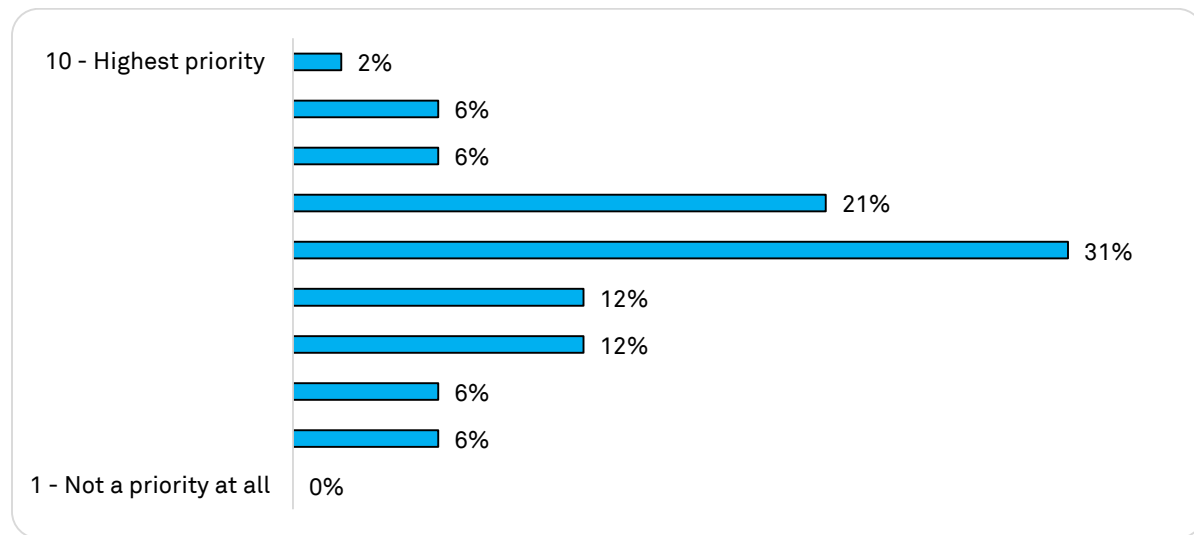


How do you rate “customer information and data” as a long-term priority?

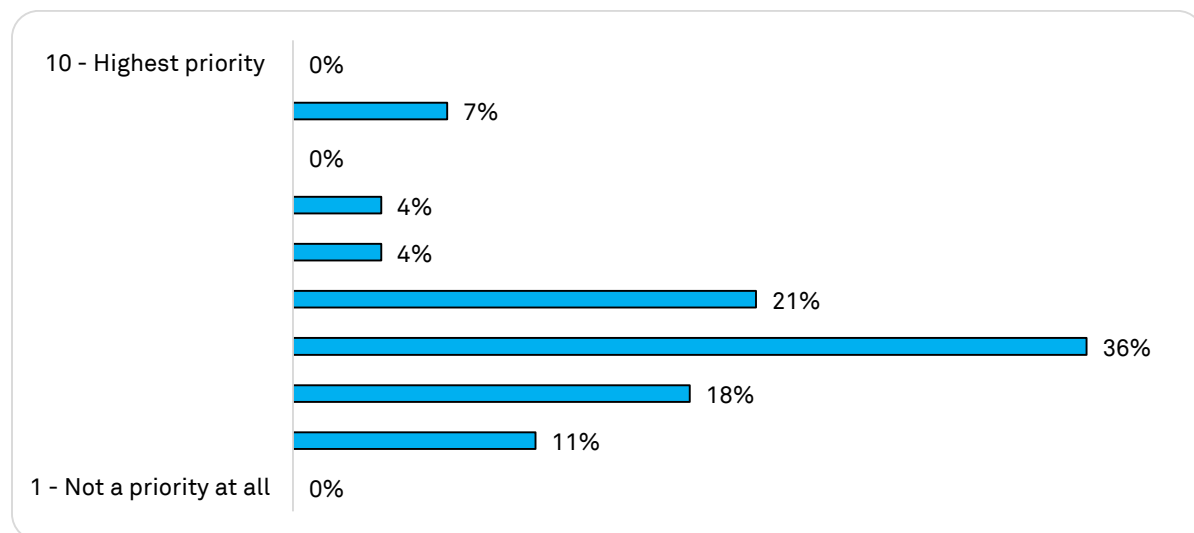




How do you rate “affordability” as a long-term priority?



How do you rate “customer awareness” as a long-term priority?



## 5. Workshop 2: WPD's business plan & current performance

The second workshop involved a discussion on the reporting of WPD's business plan and current performance. The regulator, Ofgem, has asked all DNOs to report annually on the delivery of their business plans. However, they have asked companies to engage with their stakeholders around the format that this reporting would take.

This workshop included a number of handouts in order to give stakeholders an indication of the types of format that WPD were considering. This involved discussions around the following key questions:

- Is our proposed approach (three levels of reporting) still suitable?
- What do you like/dislike about the short summary document?
- What do you like/dislike about the detailed report of performance?

### 5.1 Is our proposed approach (3 levels of reporting) still suitable?

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'when there are 76 commitments they may not all be useful to you.'*
- A business customer representative argued that *'this way seems good, but I would like to see some more case studies with regards to the environmental impacts.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered that *'WPD could hyperlink from one report to another, in all reports, so if you want to know more about a certain issue, it open up the details you need.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'there should be reports in the reception area of your offices, I know you have a copy of 'Powerlines' but it is a good opportunity to have a read. I do approve of a hard copy document as well as a PDF but it is about the distribution of that copy as well.'*

Table 2:

- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'your stakeholders are 7.8m customers, who are members of the public. They have a fairly generic requirement. We are a different stakeholder group who need more information. You should provide basic information for the public and something much more detailed for us.'*
- There was general consensus that last year's method was good.

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative raised the point *‘I personally think it’s sensible to give access to all three. However the more detailed report should be able to be accessed via the lighter reports. Maybe have hyperlinks within the lighter reports which would not only be really useful to take you to the relevant area of information you want, but would also show WPD which topics are clicked on most so you could tailor a better report the year after.’*
- An academic/education institute representative stated *‘twenty pages is just about right, beyond that many people aren’t going to bother looking at it.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘I can’t say I’d read the biggest report as you get a full report from every other DNO not just WPD! The twenty page report is definitely best.’*
- A business customer representative commented that *‘the one page summary is most useful for me, it’s best just to see the overall picture.’*
- A developer/connections representative concurred *‘my client probably wouldn’t read any of them, however for me it’s really helpful to have something like the traffic light system that is easy to explain to my client who doesn’t have the time to spend on a full report or enough understanding in the sector to go through the detailed report on their own.’*
- A business customer representative said *‘I think you’re attempting to be honest with us, in the presentation you just gave you said there was room for improvement in some areas of your company performance. So for me the traffic light system works really well as an indicator of how WPD is performing as long as you’re being honest!’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘targets are very arbitrary, you might want to put up what targets Ofgem has set and then compare them with your own - maybe you could normalise some targets and show the variations with other DNOs and how they are comparing to yourselves?’*

“ twenty pages is just about right, beyond that many people aren’t going to bother looking at it. ”

Table 4:

- A voluntary organisation representative said that *‘it is important that all stakeholders are adequately defined. They need to be put on a comprehensive database.’*

Table 5:

- A local authority officer representative felt that *'the approach you are doing right now with different tiers seems fine.'*
- An elected representative said *'I am interested in the distribution to 7 million customers because I have never received one. If you are registered as a customer, surely you should get one. I can't recall ever having correspondence with WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I got a fridge magnet once for Christmas with a number to ring.'*
- A domestic customer said *'I have a fridge magnet and it's on my fridge. My rationale though is if the power has run out, I won't be able to see the magnet.'*
- An energy/utility representative made a point that *'we don't use the traffic light system particularly. By the time the report comes out, it is a bit late already in my opinion. From my operational point of view, it is much more interesting to track information as it goes independently of the report.'*
- An elected representative suggested that *'a copy can be mailed through my post which then lets me go online and subscribe to a full report online.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'primarily web-based is the best. I don't think people will be disadvantaged by having to go to the web to find information.'*
- An elected representative insisted that *'you have to take advantage of the fact that most people are connected. The other utilities do it on the computer.'*

Table 6:

- A developer/connections representative agreed with the approach.
- An elected representative commented *'yes, I guess so.'*
- An energy/utility representative concurred.
- An energy/utility representative contended that *'Southern Electric's DNO was worse than WPD's. The WPD approach to reporting is very clear.'*

Table 7:

- Most representatives thought the approach was about right.
- An energy/utility representative asked *'is there a way online to navigate through the different documents easily?'*
- A housing/development representative said (s)he *'could not remember seeing these documents on the WPD website'*, and asked that they are easy to find from the front page of the website.
- An energy/utility representative said that *'hard copies just go in the bin, which is not great for sustainability.'*
- There was a general consensus around the table on this point.
- An energy/utility representative said it should *'depend on demographics, and what young and older customers prefer.'*

- A business customer representative commented that *'these documents have no operational value to WPD, because they only cover six months.'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'presumably there is an internal WPD summary and newsletter too'.*

Table 8:

- A voluntary organisation representative suggested that *'there needs to be a hierarchy.'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'it seems a good approach, as not everyone will read the longer reports.'*
- A local authority officer representative stated that *'the 3 tiers is key. Different people need different levels of information.'*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative said *'I'm wondering whether there might be a platform for a map-based reporting system?'*
- An energy/utility representative offered *'my members want as much detail as possible. For somebody in my position, I'll skip to the details, so the first two levels are not really for me to comment.'*
- A law firm representative said *'three levels are fine – it's important to have reports on different sections, with good indexing, because I'll skip to the bit I want.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *'a Google Maps approach to network information, connection restraints and storage possibilities would be useful. A customer could zoom into where they want to put a system and find the data in that area.'*
- An energy/utility representative conceded that *'this suggestion is in a different area to business-plan reporting.'*
- An elected representative thought *'the bullet points are good – I want something concise and to the point.'* A developer/connections representative agreed.
- An elected representative said *'if there was reference and links to further details - that would be useful.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *'graphs would be useful to explain how WPD are doing.'*



Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative said that (s)he assumes *'it will be clear on the WPD website how to access all three levels. I would like to see an easy to operate version online.'*
- An environmental representative hoped that *'online versions can make it easier to filter through the levels as we can hyperlink from one level to another rather than struggling through the whole 76 pages.'*



## 5.2 What do you like/dislike about the short summary document?

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative said that *'there is a good level of detail.'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'the case studies are useful.'*
- An academic/education institute representative added that *'it is perfectly acceptable.'*

Table 2:

- An elected representative said that (s)he liked the short summary document. *'It's a connection between the organisation and the customers. It's the sort of thing you should produce in exactly this format. It either leads on to more detailed questions or to the reader putting it in the bin. It's very good. It's a starter.'*
- A local authority officer representative asked *'how is it going to go out to the customer – as paper? I think it should go out as an email or on the website, although I suppose there are problems with this method. As a customer I would say it looks great, I'll skim through it – unless there's a particular problem.'*
- An elected representative disagreed as (s)he felt *'this is worth sending out on paper. It's expensive but worth it. It could go out electronically too, but do you know everyone's email addresses? You should at least ask if people want a paper version.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'people should be offered electronic or paper versions.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'this format will be very appealing to local councillors.'*

Table 3:

- A developer/connections representative remarked *'I always like to see what you're doing compared to the other DNOs. Maybe you could have some comparison highlights section? As long as you are sure it's a like-for-like comparison it would be very useful.'*
- An energy/utility representative queried *'clearly WPD will be changing their targets soon, once the traffic light targets go green and are achieved you'd expect new targets with some amber or red traffic lights for next year – is that a good assumption to make?'*

Table 4:

- A developer/connections representative said that *'it's good to have to dip in and out for the specific things that you are looking for.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative asked *'how does it compare to other DNOs? It would be good to have comparisons in the document.'*
- An elective representative disagreed, however, saying *'I wouldn't like to see that actually, there's not much I can do about it. It sounds like league tables, which I think is a bad idea.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I know Ofgem do something like this.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative made the point that it was *'a good format to read over the breakfast table.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'it could be helped by having the infographics on the smaller document.'*

Table 5:

- A domestic customer complained that *'there is no explanation as to the technical terms in the report. It is meaningless to me. I would like to know what they mean.'*
- A business customer representative stated *'I assume in the full report there would be a glossary with definitions.'*
- A business customer representative raised the point that *'with the summary publication, there is the risk of losing the traffic light system. As you reduce your number of indicators, you need to highlight the bad as well as the good. You shouldn't just keep the bad bits in the big report.'*
- A business customer representative added that *'with the traffic light system, where do you actually draw the line with what is perceived as good or bad?'*

“ the report needs to be as simple as possible with no jargon or acronyms. ”

Table 6:

- An elected representative proposed that *'the report needs to be as simple as possible, with no jargon or acronyms.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'WPD should make clear that it can provide further information if needed.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'the infographics are good. Although they do take a bit of time, you need a designer to create them, they can often*

*communicate information very well. Whereas the traffic light approach is a bit monotonous.'*

- There was a general consensus on this point.
- An elected representative commented that *'we should be able to colour code the specific area.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered that *'the younger generation would probably appreciate the infographic approach. So maybe there's a fourth option, you should do some research about your target audience and find out how your audience wants to receive it.'*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *'the newsletters are usually texts though. It's very intense.'*
- An energy/utility representative noted that *'the report is full of graphs. But people don't really understand what a graph is!'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'let's not go overboard on this. There's such a thing as dumbing down. You've got to say, you've got have the deeper information for people who want it too.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it's very good.'*
- An energy/utility representative also argued *'it's good, although I'm a bit techie and I like graphs, but again perhaps a different audience would maybe not connect well with graphs and more tech things.'*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *'it's designed for a very techie audience.'*
- An energy/utility representative noted that *'we get these reports every week. We do get constituents who do read these with a fine-toothed comb. Admittedly though they are a bit older. So if people want to get the detailed report, then they should be able to.'*
- An elected representative reasoned that that *'the short report is great if you want to meet with a committee, it's well laid out. The detailed report is more for scrutiny.'*
- There was a general consensus that the summary should be the annual report, but with the caveat that people can access the detailed report if they want it.

Table 7:

- An environmental representative said the traffic light report should be sent out in hard copy, but the second and third should be on the website. (S)he points out that he/she is *'less likely to throw something away if it comes through post, rather than via email.'*

Table 8:

- A voluntary organisation representative wanted to know whether it could include *‘competitors not just in the UK, but around the world.’*
- An energy/utility representative *‘would like it to include references to further data.’*
- A local authority officer representative suggested that *‘an indication of future progress would be useful.’*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘I like to see the sources on which numbers are based, to check for errors and details.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘I like numbers and I like trends.’*
- An energy/utility representative observed, *‘aesthetically it’s quite pleasing, which is important, and I like the clickable links. It’s starting to look a bit like a dashboard, which is useful, although it requires consistency from year to year.’*
- A law firm representative said *‘I think it’s very good. I think Ofgem will like having all the figures in one place.’*

Table 10:

- A housing representative asked *‘when we are looking to the 20 page summary is it very clear which priority is matched to each measure?’*

### 5.3 What do you like/dislike about the detailed report of performance?

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘there is rightly more depth for this report; numbers, data and comparisons. You can say you perform better than a competitor but you need to back this up with data. It is also interesting to have the figures to challenge any comments or for if something is not maintained, so it is good to have the report.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *‘it would be interesting to see how the choice is made in what is cut out to make a shorter report, but all the information does seem to be in the shorter one.’*
- An energy/utility representative asked if *‘WPD announce where they need to improve as well as what they have done well? Are WPD’s rankings and achievements benchmarked against data such as customer numbers or population densities? There should be something that brings commonalities between all DNO rankings and achievements, possibly with Ofgem involvement.’*

- An energy/utility representative added that *‘there will be iterations as each report comes out.’*
- An academic/education institute representative said that *‘the customer information panel does actually ask penetrating questions to key WPD staff.’*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘I haven’t seen this one before. I’m a business professional and think information for the general public is addressed by the first one. I’ve found that most of the time getting detailed information and answers is difficult. That’s a business issue that would be sorted by a meeting with WPD.’*

Table 3:

- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘until you need some data from the report it’s quite hard to say how well designed the report is!’*
- A business customer representative remarked *‘to an outsider the initials mean very little - maybe you should have the names of the DNOs in full as opposed to acronyms. If you want non-industry people reading it you need it in plain English with less technical terms and acronyms.’*



Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative said that (s)he *‘would look at the bits most relevant to me in the detailed document after using the short summary.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *‘it would be good to know that you’re heading in the right direction for that target.’*

**“If you want non-industry people reading it you need it in plain English with less technical terms and acronyms.”**

Table 5:

- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘the detailed report should definitely sit on the website, if not we are going to be left with reams of paper.’*

Table 6:

- An elected representative felt that that *'although everyone uses acronyms, the detailed report needs a glossary.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'the report might benefit from having a top-paper which forces the writers to summarise the contents of the report.'*

Table 7:

- A housing/development representative asked *'does the high level document get distributed within WPD? Do the operatives and engineers carry it around with them? It should be issued out to all workers, so they are up to date.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that the extra detail is interesting, *'but I would probably only read the shortest document.'*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer representative mentioned that *'the level of information is important to be able to challenge it in the future.'*
- An elected representative said (s)he *'does not need such a detailed report.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted that *'it should include information on the plan for next year and expected future trends.'*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative explained, *'in my experience this is most useful, usually.'*
- A law firm representative said *'I would skip straight to this – this is good and helpful. You can still get to what you need to see.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'something with hundreds of pages will be thrown out of the window, so this is good.'*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'it contained a lot of information.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'if it is as it is described with all 76 WPD commitments then it seems logical.'*



## 5.4 Are there any other points you would like to make?

Table 3:

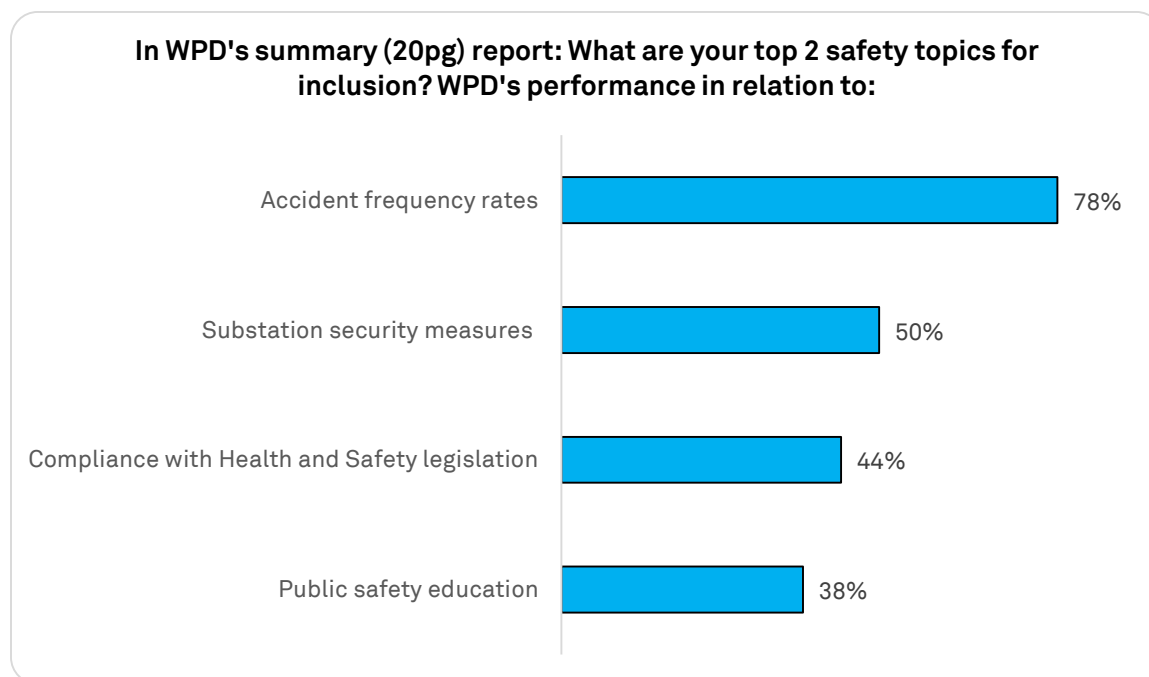
- A developer/connections representative stated that *'the key thing is access to the right people. You should make sure that you put contact details down so that we can get through to the right person instead of being a bit clueless on who you need to contact!'*

Table 6:

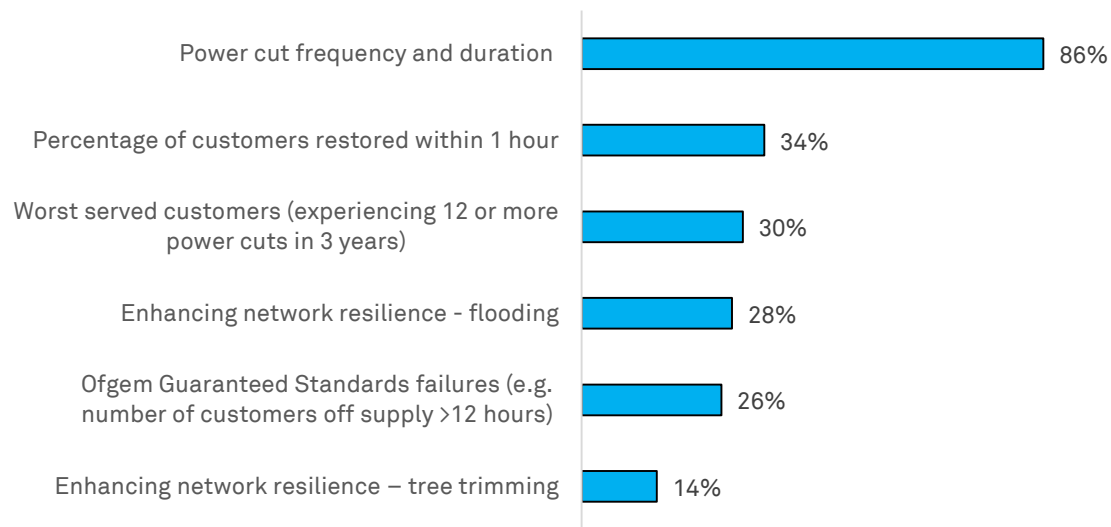
- An energy/utility representative said *'we have a problem in my ward, there's a big push to deliver everything electronically, but a lot of people are not on the internet, don't want to use it, or are scared of it. As time has passed, a new generation has come through but we should profile the recipients.'*

## 5.5 Individual voting results

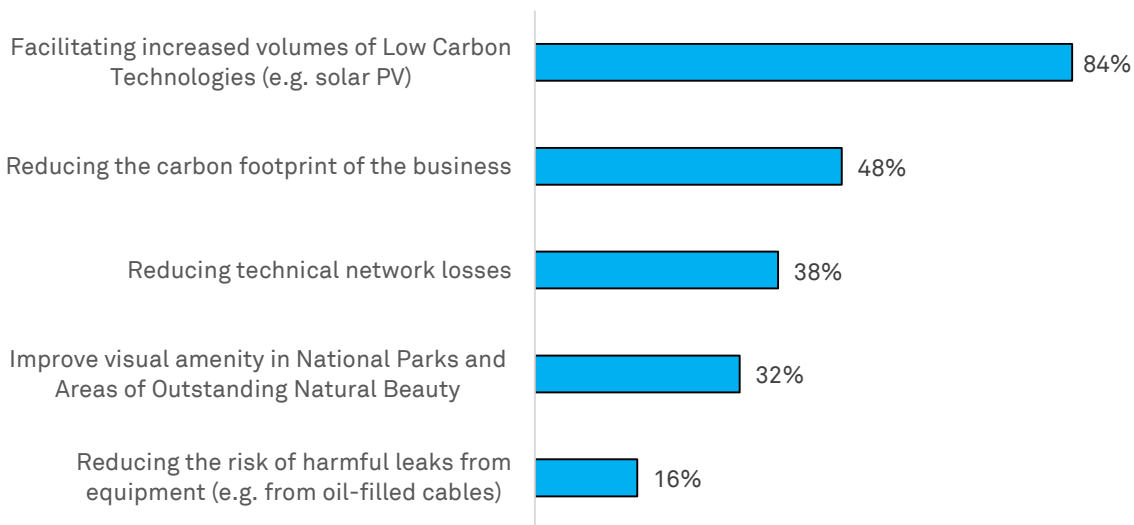
After group discussions, the stakeholders were asked to vote individually on their top two topics to be included in each section of the summary report. The results are displayed below.



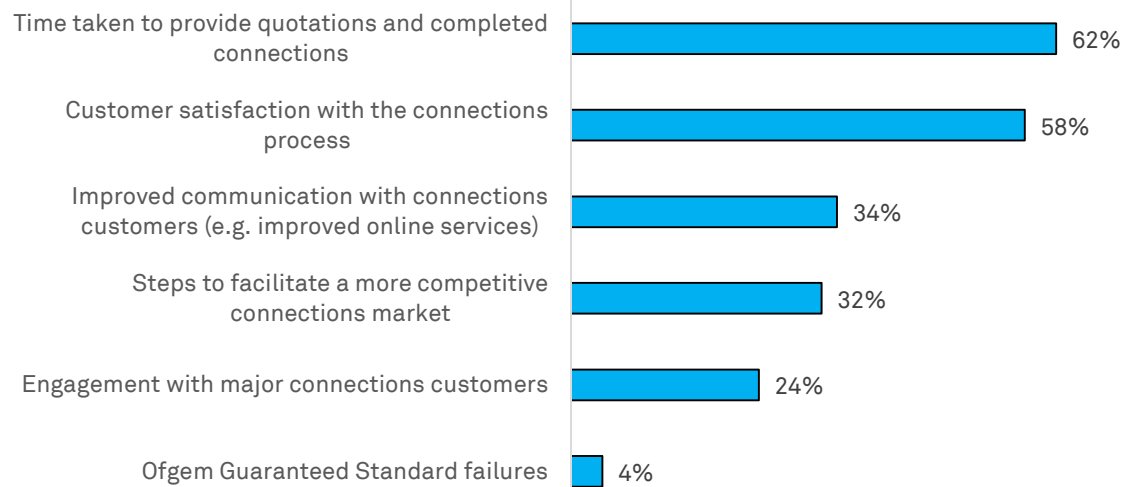
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 reliability topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



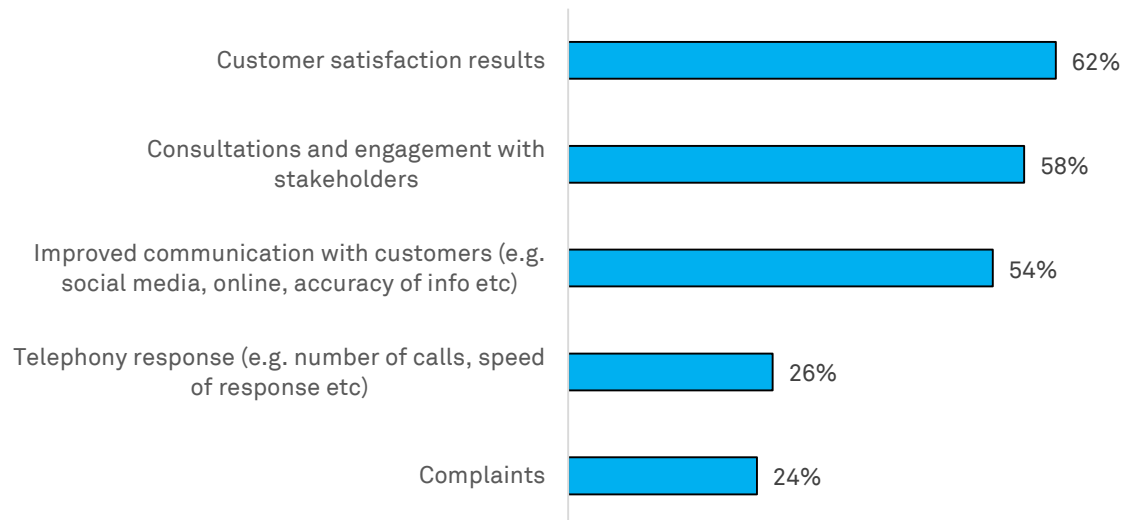
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 environment topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



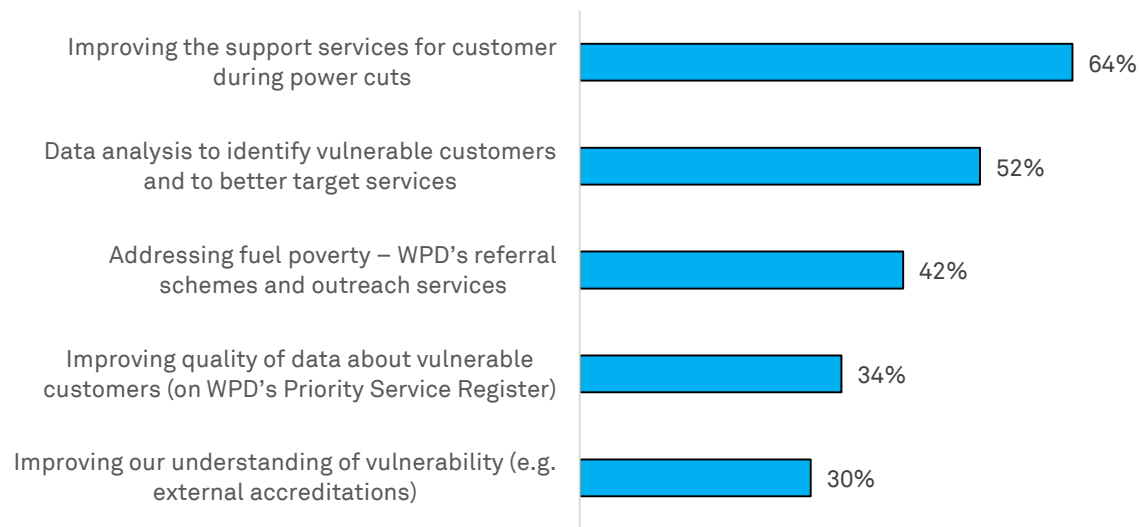
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 connections topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 customer satisfaction topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 social obligations for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



## 6. Workshop 3: Spotlight on two WPD strategic priorities

The third workshop involved a detailed look at two specific WPD priorities:

- “Smart Networks”
- “Affordability”

### Smart networks

Within this workshop session, discussions were held around the following key questions:

- Do you understand what a smart network is and what its advantages are?
- Have WPD correctly identified the key issues in transitioning to be a smart network?
- What do you think of WPD’s five strategy areas?
- How should WPD engage with stakeholders on this issue in the future?

#### 6.1 Do you understand what a smart network is and what its advantages are?

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative stated that *‘the rollout and the concept of smart meters are a long way from what they could be doing. The French tried an intelligent network over 30 years ago with a system that could share household loads and there has been nothing like that here, it is all based on a pricing basis instead. There is an assumption that people will have smart tech and it will be turned on but this may not happen.’*
- An academic/education institute representative said that *‘smart networks are linked to what is happening nationally and a number of incompatible smart meters have already been rolled out.’*
- An energy/utility representative complained that *‘someone really needs to set an agenda, there needs to be a consistent view of the framework to show where we all need to go or not go. If this is not the case we may have a difference in opinion of where we are going. By the way I am not a fan of the child voice in the video explaining important technical issues.’*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *‘if you are cash-strapped you will not go for the smart washing machine. So for the smart system idea to work, the cheapest washing machine has to be a smart one as well, otherwise there is a danger of the wealthy getting the largest discount.’*
- An academic/education institute representative added that *‘this is often the case where people are reluctant to change supplier.’*

- An energy/utility representative considered that *‘there should be industry-wide definitions or standards. I am not looking at saving money; I am looking at where the industry should go as a whole. Is it the case that if electric cars do not happen then the whole smart networks idea falls flat?’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘we need the consistency of direction and an idea of where things are going otherwise if the government does something such as removing subsidies, then there will be a lack of trust for the whole idea.’*
- A domestic customer pointed out that *‘the biggest hurdle for smart meters is National Grid, I have seen the transmission system in my area that cannot accommodate these new meters and until it can the whole idea of smart meters is just lip service.’*

Table 2:

- Stakeholders around the table all understood, in general what a smart network is.
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘smart networks help the customer save money and reduce carbon. There are probably loads more advantages though.’*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *‘its advantage is that we won’t need to keep installing more and more generation. It makes a difference to the customer.’*
- An elected representative said (s)he was fully informed on smart networks. *‘I know where we are. The customers will pay heavily. They will pay for the smart meters. You may make savings by not enforcing the system excessively. The billing companies will pay for smart meters, pass these costs on to the customers and maximise profit. It’s a win-win situation for the suppliers. If we were taking this seriously we would be having a standard format for smart meters, which we haven’t got. I understand there are good points about connections and ports. But these are surely standard system design considerations given to solar. Someone will calculate cable sizes and port levels; you don’t need smart metering for that, you know the demand. Not everyone needs to be on one.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative mentioned *‘yes, I’ve got a good understanding; it was all explained very well.’*





- A business customer representative said *‘I’m no expert but my understanding is this scheme will allow greater capacity for the grid, which is great. We’ve had cases of a completed project that doesn’t get the right planning permission or ability to connect because there simply isn’t enough capacity on the grid!’*

Table 4:

- An elected representative said that *‘the video was very clear and helped. Looking at the graph, WPD meets its peak in the winter so smart networks would definitely help.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘demand has been dropping and will continue to drop, so there’s going to have to be a better distribution network. We think that batteries are the next big thing to come. They will solve a lot of the problems. But how do you take energy off the grid when it is not needed and back on when it is?’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said that *‘with so many factors, the job of DNOs is getting increasingly more difficult.’*

Table 5:

- A domestic customer voiced that his/her *‘concern from watching the video is whether this will become a “big brother” in your residence and whether it will be an issue of confidentiality. I didn’t like when the video said it wouldn’t switch on the washing machine if the machine didn’t think it was the right time. I want to use the washing machine when I want to.’*
- An elected representative explained that *‘you should use electricity when it is cheap rather than turning on because it is there.’*
- A domestic customer complained that *‘the history of large companies holding sensitive information about customers is not good. Too many companies have been hacked in the past.’*
- An elected representative agreed and added that *‘the bigger the organisation, the more tempting it is.’*
- A local authority officer representative also agreed and made a point that *‘on a local scale, we need to make sure the connection is secure because if they can access your router through your washing machine, then that becomes problematic.’*

**“You should use electricity when it is cheap rather than turning on because it is there.”**

Table 6:

- There was a general consensus around the table that they understood smart networks and their advantages.
- An elected representative said *‘it’s a bit like smart metering.’*
- A developer/connections representative reasoned that *‘it’s managing the network.’*

- An energy/utility representative argued that *'it's essentially a matter of changing and monitoring a one-way flow to a multiple flow, which will probably be one major input and a lot of outputs, and then realising your capacity level. It is also about being smarter in balancing power within the network and maybe even between networks. You've also got to get involved with National Grid.'*
- A development/connections representative pointed out that that *'everybody becomes a bit of everything under a smart network. Even the customers become generators and suppliers. That's why WPD needs to start thinking about billing different prices for different things.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative mentioned *'the definition of smart networks can vary. I'd want WPD to be clear what their definition is.'*
- A number of representatives felt that as the technology is moving so fast, our understanding of smart technology is constantly changing. One person added that *'smart meters going into people's homes today are already out of date'.*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer representative said (s)he *'understands the principles behind it but not the nuts and bolts.'*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative asked, *'do people have a common, shared picture of what a smart network is? We could do with a rich picture of it.'*
- A law firm representative said *'what are WPD doing with regards to smart networks? Smart networks must consider more than just electricity generation.'*
- A law firm representative said *'you have a lot of cities talking about smart cities, but they're talking about different things.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I wish they wouldn't use the word smart – it's such a buzzword of the last ten years. Once you place a flag in the ground, you have to pick it up and run with it.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *'intelligent would be a better word than smart.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'a colleague of mine says that once smart meters start going online, it could undermine the integrity of the internet.'*
- A housing/development representative said *'I understand that concept of smart networks, but I don't understand what we in local government can be doing to push it forward.'*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘the investment and organisation in actually delivering a smart network are going to be huge.’*
- With regard to privacy, an environmental representative made the point that *‘people can refuse to share data and are able to opt out.’*
- An environmental representative made the point that energy suppliers *‘only have to deliver smart meters if they have at least 300,000 customers and at the moment smart meters are not really designed for consumers, but are designed for industry. They are more helpful to suppliers.’*
- An environmental representative added that *‘I find my own smart meter incredibly helpful with regard to cost management and reducing my energy usage.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘smart meters must give consumers helpful information in order for people to be engaged by the prospect.’*
- An environmental representative responded by stating that *‘meters can be very advantageous when used practically, for example the cost of boiling a kettle.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘it doesn’t sound like smart networks and meters can be used to promote green energy any time soon, which they have great potential to do.’*

## 6.2 Have WPD correctly identified the key issues in transitioning to be a smart network?

The issues that WPD identified were:

- Voltage rise/drop
- Two-way power flows
- Thermal capacity
- Fault level
- Equipment suitability

Table 1:

- A domestic customer argued that *‘there are a number of factors; the reverse capability of the system, the age of transformers and the system as a whole affect the implementation. Newer systems accommodate smart systems better. It is WPD’s network but the question is: who will fund it all?’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘the UK Government stands up for the consumer who wants lower bills and this is incompatible with the idea of a fast rollout of smart tech.’*

- An energy/utility representative considered *‘what ability do WPD have to shape and guide some of this stuff? If something is not in the Ofgem license, for example energy storage, then can WPD could take an active role in managing it or do they say we are not allowed to take part according to our license? There should be a facilitation role for WPD.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *‘some of the costs to us come out very high due to certain rules. These rules mean certain investment decisions cannot be made which may benefit the wider network. I would sum this up as an issue of mechanisms for the payment of new connections with a specific look at reinforcement of the system as a whole.’*
- A domestic customer added that *‘there is a forum, on distribution connections and use of system agreements, to address these issues. There was a change in second-comer charges, where they no longer got it for free - some of that is supposed to go back to developer but it never does.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘five years for the second-comer charges is a bit short for the second comer rule, in the water industry it is more like eight.’*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative felt WPD had identified the key issues in transitioning to a smart network, pointing out that *‘thermal capacity isn’t big enough at the moment. It has to go in isolators. You guys required us to do this.’*
- An elected representative asked *‘why aren’t you investing in equipment to deal with that proposed load? It is self-evidently a good thing.’*
- An elected representative argued that (s)he controls *‘the load and demand by switching lights off wherever possible, I don’t need a smart meter.’*
- A local authority officer representative agreed *‘you don’t need a smart meter to do that.’*
- A local authority officer representative asked *‘how does a smart meter help you? Are you saying you’re pumping electricity into the network and it may or may not be used?’*
- An energy/utility representative complained that *‘WPD have no knowledge of the micro grid at all.’*
- A local authority officer representative raised the point *‘all smart meters are telling you is what’s happened in the past. Why do you need to give them out on an individual customer basis when you’re just using old data? If I bought an electronic car you wouldn’t know the change had taken place until I start charging.’*
- An elected representative said that *‘wind is dealt with by amalgamating the entire wind load across the country and establishing the percentage for the next hour.’*
- A local authority officer representative stated *‘you’re pumping electricity into the system and this may or may not be used. So you don’t know the demand at any given time? A smart meter doesn’t tell you demand.’*

- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘WPD should start with customer demand and understanding – that is the main challenge. Behavioural change is the issue.’*
- An energy/utility representative explained that *‘in the old days you knew if you had a thousand houses your energy bill is going to be this. These days they have no idea what it’s going to be. WPD need to have an idea so they can provide electricity.’*
- An elected representative argued *‘it doesn’t matter because your grid control engineer is planning the increase in generation every half hour until 10am the next day. National Grid is already programming the power stations on a minute by minute basis. And they do it on the basis of the frequency? Do you need more or less? Is it hotter or colder? It’s a real time control problem.’*
- An energy/utility representative complained *‘you don’t need smart meters because they’re not going to change that much from day to day.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘you’ve missed the commercial and legislative angle. They’re two separate challenges but they do link together very closely. National Grid has a system in place to pay customers and help them contribute to the network - maybe you can look at doing that too?’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘they’re very technical challenges, both the customer acceptance of the technology and communication around that. You’d need engagement with end users who will adopt the technology. I wouldn’t like it in my house but you’d have to find a way to encourage all customers to adopt it! Also the benefits are more for the networks than the end users.’*
- A business customer representative warned *‘it’s all very well in an urban situation with broadband and smart phones but a large number of rural people don’t have any signal and only very intermittent broadband! You need to make sure there is one hundred percent coverage everywhere. One farm I know hasn’t got electricity and they have their own generator - how will you link them to the smart network?’*

Table 4:

- A developer/connections representative said that *‘there needs to be more engagement with third parties. WPD does not exist in isolation, it is one part of a huge energy network.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘significant parts of the smart network system will be funded by third parties. I don’t know where storage will fit on the smart energy network.’*

Table 5:

- The table agreed that the key issues had been identified.

Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative commented that *'maybe WPD as a company could work with domestic customers and business customers as well. It could facilitate installations of generation which could be a completely new role. It's really vital to understand your network in a smart way, not wasting energy and it would have the potential for storage.'*
- A developer/connections representative contended that *'what is important is that we have good kit out there. If we upgrade this kit with storage accumulation systems, then that would be a really positive change. But we need to know how much we're going to get paid for those services and then we can build a business model around this information.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated that *'we're doing some product development, and we also manufacture technology. One of the things we are missing right now is understanding profitability. If we had this knowledge, then there would be more of a business case around adding storage to our existing installations or to new installations.'*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *'it's also a political question. The government has to decide too. We have been able to persuade the government to take certain policy decisions, the Government has to assess its priorities and is moving away from wind energy. You won't get the technology development for this transitioning without the background political context.'*
- A developer /connections representative commented that *'now we have the possibility of adding storage and getting rid of one of the key issues here, which was a driver for smart network and the indeterminacy of generation. Battery costs are reducing significantly. They are now around at a ten-year payback, which is a key commercial threshold. If you can get investments below ten years, it can drive the investor community into putting more money. That can only be supported by the regulatory environment.'*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative stated that *'National Grid could also be a problem, as it can be a cap. This needs to be addressed and there needs to be a plan in place to resolve these issues, particularly with regards to requests and timings.'*



- A technology representative said that *‘telecoms needs to be further up on the list of issues. This seems to get pushed to the bottom. Telecommunications are very important for smart network implementation.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative noted that *‘storage is missing from the list of issues.’*
- (S)he asked *‘what can WPD do to store data generated at peak times?’*
- A voluntary organisation representative questioned whether *‘in localised areas where network is at capacity and no more can be invested in generation, is it possible to re-invest that connection into the community or take them off the grid?’*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative argued that *‘one thing that might be missing is the market linkages behind distribution and charges. From an innovation point of view, if you don’t have those markets, innovation won’t happen.’*
- A law firm representative observed that *‘with equipment suitability there is a big challenge – you want to work with the existing network and not add costs to upgrade, but on the other hand a smart network may not work without those upgrades.’*
- An elected representative said *‘if the equipment isn’t right, you’re stuck.’*
- A developer/connections representative added *‘equipment is where cost comes in again.’*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *‘this is a great question but these are all fairly technical issues.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *‘actually employing two-way power flows at the volume needed will involve greater investment than the business plan currently allows for and requires more government guidance.’*
- A developer/connections representative made the point that *‘I bet there are loads of things missing from the list but we don’t have the expertise to spot them.’*
- An environmental representative summed up by saying *‘you need all these anyway, whether it’s a smart network or not.’*

### 6.3 What do you think of WPD's 5 strategy areas?

The strategy areas WPD identified were:

- Data integrity
- Market integration
- IT systems
- Customer propositions
- Equipment

Table 1:

- A domestic customer stated that *'coordinating WPD's operations with National Grid is one small aspect of getting all DNOs to cooperate. It is great to propose but unless all sides agree to it, it will not go anywhere.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered that *'you need to play the part of an honest broker, reconfiguring your role. You are the owner of the network but cannot make changes, so WPD can choose to ask people to make positive changes or not.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'some of these issues need to go above WPD, revenue goes to shareholders but some of the ideas we have are in conflict with those shareholders. How is this going to work and what will you make charges for under a smarter system network compared to the old model where you have equipment that people pay to use?'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'Grid and electricity suppliers do not like how things are going to go, I worry if someone has all the strings to make sure all changes happen.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'will the DNO or the market make the changes that are required?'*
- A domestic customer added *'I think the government doesn't have a clue what to do.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I am not sure who should take charge.'*
- A domestic customer pointed out that *'Ofgem has a commitment to provide better energy sources at the lowest cost and that may not work with the smart system.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *'when the DNOs come up against each other is that a clear interface? If you have an intelligent system this may mean routing positive or negative flows through areas which could get complicated. This may need to be increased.'*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative thought the five strategy areas were good but (s)he felt *'customer propositions needs a higher profile. This is driven by behavioural change. I make money on my energy consumption by buying low carbon energy. My house is carbon neutral.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'customer demand and customer behaviour is crucial to this. It won't happen otherwise; the customer proposition area is the driver.'*
- There was consensus around the table that the customer proposition area was the most important.

Table 3:

- An academic/education institute representative stated *'data integrity and IT systems go in hand in hand and we've had good experience of this in the last two years. You get a good two tier service when one company provides access and the other transport. From WPD's viewpoint I think they need to take more control of end data delivery which obviously you're in a far better position than the rest of the DNOs to do. In our trials we've had to go to commercial service providers and they say they can deliver it but data quality usually suffers – perhaps there's a bigger role for WPD there?'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'you could say the same with market integration and customer propositions as it's that market that will drive it.'*

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative argued that *'a lot of the areas are about the current situation, but it doesn't look closely enough at the future. You need to look 20 years ahead. That's the real challenge. Getting in that mind-set is of the utmost importance.'*
- An energy/utility representative said that there was *'a need to focus on electric vehicles. It is really important to ensure the network can cope with 50% of people owning electric cars.'*

“ You need to look 20 years ahead. That's the real challenge. ”

Table 5:

- A domestic customer felt that *'the worry for some people is whether it is going to cost them personally if they have to install it as they don't see any personal benefit to it.'*

*For this kind of technology, it is going to be incumbent on the people providing it to take measures to pay for the cost of running it.'*

- *An energy/utility representative pointed out that 'education is the point missing here. With a smart meter, there is a benefit to the end user because it saves electricity but I feel that information is missing to them on that.'*
- *An elected representative said 'I just don't want to be whacked with a bill to buy the meter and then another bill to install it.'*
- *An elected representative raised a point that 'smart networks are vital though. We cannot carry on for another 200 years with a "dumb" network.'*
- *A domestic customer disagreed and stated 'quite often when I have had outages in the past, as soon as the phone is answered, they are aware of the outage. I don't think there is an issue about knowing where the power cut is. I have always been impressed by that.'*
- *An elected representative emphasised that 'we do need smart monitoring because without it, WPD cannot know which chunks of the network have gone down as some of the networks was built in the 1930s.'*
- *A business customer representative argued that 'there is a risk with disadvantaging people here. While you are reducing bills in general, it is harder for them to access the specific information as to how they can reduce it, meaning that they could end up paying a higher tariff.'*
- *An elected representative emphasised that 'there should not be a charge for smart meters at the point of delivery. The more it is available to vulnerable people, the more it is helpful.'*
- *An energy/utility representative pointed out that 'domestic customers can be financially incentivised to have more of a demand side response. The vulnerable and older people, however, won't have that ability to know about demand movement and therefore they end up paying more for something which is simply unavoidable for them. The disadvantaged are often disadvantaged in many ways.'*
- *A local authority officer representative agreed and reiterated that 'this leads to everyone having a smart meter. The market will be opened up and bills will become more complicated by what time you are using it. However, obviously, if older and more vulnerable people don't understand how to get the benefit of that, their bills are going to end up being more expensive.'*
- *An elected representative said 'I come from a very close community where we can spread the word but I think that is quite exceptional. I think it would be good to ask someone who lives in quite a deprived area of a big town.'*
- *A local authority officer representative mentioned that 'local authorities have a big role to play in that sort of communication.'*
- *A local authority officer representative made a point that 'with how much WPD is looking at storage to be accessed via the smart network, it would be nice to see more investment in that area. That can then go with more decarbonisation.'*

- A local authority officer representative commented that *'in the solar industry, there has been a real shift towards storage and how can you combine large scale batteries with solar farms. That affects the sale price and various things so I think that could be really important in the future.'*
- A domestic customer brought up the fact that *'people of my generation, unless you work in an industry where you work with IT, have never seen a computer. They don't even have an email and are quite fearful of the internet. We need to be aware that there are quite a lot of people who don't have access to these newer technologies.'*
- An elected representative argued that *'it is a disappearing problem though.'*
- An energy/utility representative brought up that *'commercial organisations are highly incentivised not to consume based on timing tariffs so we do what we can to get that. However, there aren't any domestic incentives of the same sort.'*
- An elected representative added and emphasised that *'we need to be careful that it doesn't get too complicated for people.'*

Table 6:

- A development/connections representative commented that *'the indeterminacy of renewables is a crucial issue.'*
- An energy/utility representative claimed that *'you reach network capacity, and now you need to reinforce it and change it to make it more efficient.'*
- A developer/connections representative underscored the *'issuing of all these licences. If you're a supplier, you need to get very difficult, expensive licenses. But with a smart grid these roles need to become freer and blended. The Conservative Party are always talking about liberalising markets, so why don't they go for it?'*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *'the energy flows into the network. Whether it does so from new or stored generation is irrelevant. It comes into the network and then leaves it. WPD's job is to manage the transmission of that job. You've also got to pick up the new micro sources of energy and transmit them back.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *'market integration is the most important issue.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'if you have bad data all the others [issues] won't matter anyway.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *'market integration is very important.'*
- There was a general consensus that all the strategy areas were very important.



- An energy/utility representative reasoned that *‘the tariffs there just assume you’re using what’s available. But there also the possibility of designing of specific tariffs.’*
- An energy/utility representative queried *‘whether this is really WPD’s job though?’*

Table 7:

- Most people agreed that all 5 were important to some extent.
- An environmental representative said *‘data is crucial to smart meters and creating smart networks’.*
- A number of stakeholders warned about taking too much of customers’ data, and invading privacy.
- An energy/utility representative said that unless WPD explains how customers’ data will be used, *‘some people may become reluctant to allow access to their usage data.’*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *‘market integration is the most important. This needs to be done quickly so that once it is ready it can be introduced swiftly.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *‘there needs to be more communication with the customer.’*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *‘this is all important, and if you don’t have customers involved with these smart networks – and there has been a lot of opposition – you can’t have the networks. This runs through the various considerations: you need to have clients on board.’*
- A law firm representative said *‘sharing information is an issue, too – it’s terrifying to think what will happen if the internet goes down.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *‘this is a really big issue – a lot of people are really concerned about information sharing.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘the market integration and customer propositions are key here – if there’s no way for people to get paid to enter this market, nobody is going to do it.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued *‘you’re looking for some quite smart policy makers to guide this, and I’m not sure we have that.’*



Table 10:

- A housing representative asked *‘what exactly do you mean by market integration?’*
- An environmental representative inquired *‘will the data collected go back to energy suppliers as well? Will it get passed on to companies like Facebook?’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘how instant will the information collecting be? For example, when I go on holiday and turn off the power will WPD be able to keep track of me on this level and is this valuable information?’*
- A housing representative stated that *‘it is important that any data you collect stays within your industry.’*
- A developer/connections representative made the point that *‘we must incentivise people to get a smart meter perhaps with buying your energy day-by-day or week-by-week, dependent upon the usage measurements on the smart meter.’*

#### 6.4 How should WPD engage with stakeholders on this issue, in the future?

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘domestically it will be very challenging, local MPs would probably have to be involved. 262 customers were spoken to out of nearly eight million last year which isn’t too many! You need to work with local government and communities. I see it as a challenge, there needs to be a major customer awareness push before making any big decisions.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘the suppliers talk to the customers so they should really be the forum that convinces the customers to get on board with the smart network ideas.’*
- A developer/connections representative stated that *‘at the moment Bristol has decided to be one of the first totally green cities, so Bristol should really be part of this plan. Local authority engagement should happen across the board but Bristol should be your starting point.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘manufacturers are an important stakeholder to engage with too.’*

Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative reasoned that *‘the programme that WPD has for managing networks – that you pay something for the energy that is consumed – is important.’*

- An energy/utility representative suggested *‘we’ve got to go through the councils too. WPD needs to interact with their consumers to work out how much power they’re going to have to move and where they’re going to have to move it to. WPD has got to try to forecast this.’*
- An elected representative questioned whether *‘WPD interacts with what’s happening “outside”? WPD needs to interact with other bodies by saying this is the technology that we need to have to do this more efficiently. WPD just seems to react to what’s going on outside. WPD needs to say “this is what we want to make us a more efficient company”.’*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer representative commented that *‘consumer education should focus on the use of smart networks, as they might have access to it but not know how to utilise it.’*
- A technology representative said that WPD *‘could educate customers slowly. Instead of introducing the initiative all in one go.’*
- A technology representative noted that *‘everyone needs to be involved but the main focus should be on those constrained at the moment.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said that *‘the majority of customers want to know what is in it for them.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative mentioned that *‘the customer will need to change their behaviour, so there should be an incentive.’*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative suggested *‘just standard industry consultation – existing protocols and things like DG and DNO working groups. Those channels need to be kept open.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘the Major Energy Users Group could be a good start.’*
- A housing/development representative offered that *‘economic development teams in local government have all the contacts for all the big energy users.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *‘the electricity industry is generally very well organised, from generators through to DNOs, DECC and Ofgem. Industrial and commercial customers are not very well connected into the development of the energy industry. For instance, the DSR industry struggles to*

“ the majority of customers want to know what is in it for them ”

*connect with industrial and commercial clients. DNOs should partner with suppliers, as they have the direct relationship with industrial and commercial clients, and know details of location and consumption.'*

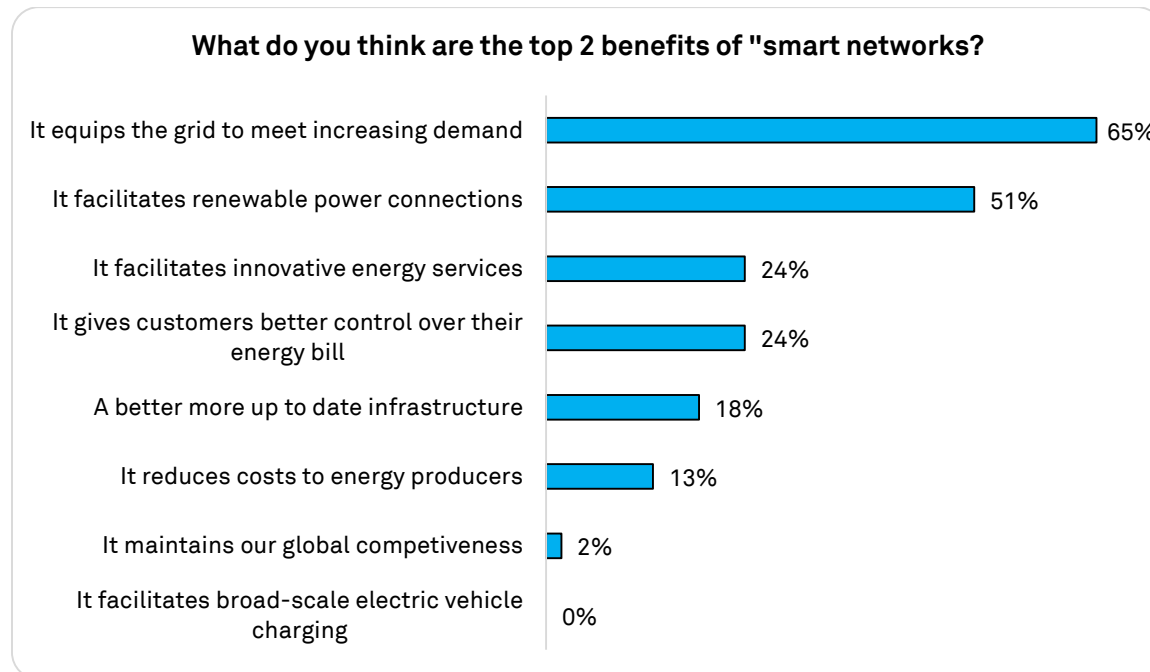
- A housing/development representative asked *'do WPD have a timeframe for all this work?'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'what is the smart-network work being driven by?'*
- An elected representative asked, *'where do WPD come in, in terms of installing smart meters?'*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative said that (s)he felt *'a TV advert to actually reach and educate all their customers would be helpful as not everyone can attend a workshop.'*
- A developer/connections representative added that *'there should be a general education programme to explain exactly why they should be interested.'*
- An environmental representative asked *'are commercial entities having the same metering?'*
- An environmental representative asked *'what is the split between residential and commercial power used?'*
- A developer/connections representative queried *'who is responsible for installing the meters?'*

## 6.5 Individual voting results

After group discussions, the stakeholders were asked to vote individually on what they considered to be the top two benefits of smart networks. The results are displayed below:



## Affordability

Within this workshop session, discussions were held around the following key questions:

- What do you think of WPD's current approach and the projects so far?
- What do you think of WPD's proposed next steps?
- What do you think of ideas from other DNOs?

## 6.6 What do you think of WPD's current approach and the projects so far?

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative highlighted that *'WPD are doing a good job, better than I would have ever expected. They are taking on social obligations willingly rather than feeling they are being forced to do it against their will.'*
- An academic/education institute representative added that *'I am not aware of WPD having contact with Women's Institutes, because if you really want to get into families then that is a really good way.'*

- An energy/utility representative stated that *'I am unclear of where the funding is coming from.'*
- An academic/education institute representative noted that *'it is a requirement of the license that they must spend a certain amount.'*
- A business customer representative added that *'there is funding available to charities from government as well.'*
- An academic/education institute representative said that *'there are a huge amount of charities to help with a large mix of funding, there are a lot of local charities, and they can give a loan or a gift with minimum fuss that WPD does not know about and can't be expected to know about.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *'I didn't know much about this but I can now understand why "vulnerability" and "affordability" has been separated. I agree with what was said last time, WPD should not deviate too much, this is a license requirement.'*

Table 2:

- An elected representative felt WPD's current approach to projects so far is about right, suggesting *'in areas of high deprivation there should be a general approach including meetings to tell people basic things like switching the lights off. It's obvious I know, but I have a neighbour who has all their lights on all the time. Every organisation is missing out vulnerable people who are old, surviving on a limited income, but living in large houses. They are poor, but embedded in a wealthy area because 20 or 30 years ago they were well off. I wouldn't say your scheme is perfect because you're not able to pick up the "asset rich but cash poor". It's an impossible task because they won't talk to you about it; they will struggle on until they die of cold.'*
- An elected representative made the point that *'you're going beyond your remit if you train your staff to be alert to these signs. It's a good idea in theory if you had infinite resources.'*
- An elected representative said that (s)he felt maximisation should be left out, continuing that *'this has nothing to do with WPD and is a general problem. I would also leave out boiler replacement as I assume you're not going to replace people's boilers, you might just give advice that it needs replacing.'*
- An energy/utility representative added that *'in Gloucester there is a local strategic partnership. One of the benefits is that all of the public services, health, fire etc. talk to each other and identify all of the people in need. This might help pick up people in this situation. I don't know if this is something you guys could tap into.'*
- An elected representative agreed stating that (s)he felt that was *'a very good point, I know people who will talk to firemen about important things. People relate to them better than counsellors or the police. WPD should have additional partners like the fire service and blue light organisations.'*

Table 3:

- A developer/connections representative queried *‘a while ago all DNOs had to promote energy efficiency to everyone not just people in fuel poverty – why has that got lost? If it’s not been lost how does it need to be duplicated? Has it moved to a supplier obligation not a DNO obligation?’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘the list is very comprehensive in terms of interventions. The only thing not on the page is explaining the methods to talk to people, maybe that is built in another category but a number of ways to deliver the interventions would be quite useful. For some vulnerable people just a telephone conversation wouldn’t be especially appropriate.’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed *‘Yes for some people a more focussed one-to-one engagement would be better.’*

Table 4:

- A voluntary organisation representative said that *‘without overstepping the mark, it does seem that WPD is making customers more aware of WPD and what it does. In fact, DNOs have far more interest in the electricity supply than the companies that are selling it. It seems that you are closing the gap between the DNO and what the customer actually receives.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *‘if I’m buying electricity from a supplier I’d prefer to take advice from someone like WPD.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘DNOs should work closer with the health service and particularly discharge teams and hospitals. We’re planning on doing that in our own company.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative made the point that *‘you also need to talk about social services getting involved.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that this was *‘a good opportunity to test next steps.’*
- A domestic customer asked if *‘the pot of money set aside for these projects will be adequate?’*





Table 5:

- An energy/utility representative said *'I think the five steps so far are fine to me.'*
- A local authority officer representative commented that *'it might be good to have data sharing between local authorities and WPD. Those who are vulnerable or fuel poor could have other problems and the council can intervene to address that.'*
- There was general consensus that WPD is engaged in the right direction and taking the right steps.
- A domestic customer stated *'the fact that you have more upfront knowledge about the end user than their energy supplier does, really puts you in the best place to do it. It's just the way it is. You know more, and hence, morally you should do more.'*

Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative noticed that *'some of the people in most serious situations are those who don't have gas. Gas is still the most efficient form of heating. We need to expand the gas network.'*
- An energy/utility representative queried whether *'we can use heat-pumps instead of gas? Changing the priority to heat-pumps would also be more efficient.'*
- There was a general consensus that direct contact in the communities is an important priority.
- An energy/utility representative asked the group *'should we be looking at poverty or demand management?'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'demand management is important, to create a need for what's there. And this is more relevant to WPD as a distribution company.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'we don't need new installations though.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative encouraged WPD to *'find a reliable and decent partner in the renewable market to help innovation.'*
- A housing/development representative suggested that *'rather than competition, focus on the track record of your partners.'* (S)he then proposed that WPD should *'identify possible partners, and get them to tender for bids, to reduce risk.'*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer representative required clarification on *‘what income maximisation is.’*
- An elected representative wanted to know *‘how long WPD have worked with the fuel poverty referral schemes.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative mentioned that *‘there needs to be a logic about where to go with these schemes. The data must match up to the needs of people on the register.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated that *‘it is very important to develop the power up scheme in the East Midlands.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted that *‘monthly might be too frequent for satisfaction research for supported customers.’*

Table 9:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘there’s the long-running open sore of pre-paid meters – is that being looked at?’*
- An energy/utility representative observed *‘there’s an issue with domestic devices – a customer may have a time-of-use tariff and be unaware of that, so may be charged more than expected. That’s the exact type of behaviour that the time-of-use tariff is designed to avoid.’*
- A law firm representative wondered *‘why the South West project has less savings.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘these three separate projects are an opportunity to see who’s doing the best.’*
- A law firm representative said *‘generally fuel poverty is not WPD’s fault, but it is probably very good to take a lead on this is, and very good research which the energy suppliers can learn from.’*

Table 10:

- A housing representative felt that *‘the five interventions are pretty much on the money. Behavioural changes are key – a lot of old people don’t know how to work thermostats and so some I.T. education is needed. When we install a new boiler, for example, we talk through that, let them understand how to use it and set it up for them. This allows for customised usage and gets good feedback.’*

## 6.7 What do you think of WPD's proposed next steps?

Stakeholders were asked to refer to the list of next steps WPD had identified to address “affordability” and identify any that may be missing. The list can be seen in the table below.

Table 1:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new ‘Power Up’ referral scheme for the East Midlands	✓		
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers			✓
Expand the existing ‘Affordable Warmth’ project in West Midlands	✓		
Develop new ‘Affordable Warmth’ projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		✓

- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘in reference to a new referral scheme for the East Midlands, it makes sense.’*
- There was general consensus amongst the group on this point.
- An academic/education institute representative highlighted that *‘urban deprivation is often more visible than rural deprivation.’*
- A domestic customer complained that *‘if you introduce monthly satisfaction research people would view it as a nuisance.’*
- An academic/education institute representative agreed *‘it is a bit too frequent.’*
- An energy/utility representative said that *‘six months is frequent enough.’*

- An energy/utility representative added that *'people do not go to WPD as a consumer, 6 months is better, I see these things running away if not.'*
- An academic/education institute representative stated that *'I would approve of introducing the affordable warmth project in the West Midlands.'*
- A domestic customer said *'I am surprised these initiatives are not across the board already, if WPD is happy this should happen across the board.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'WPD has 4 license areas, there is a potential for a lot of bureaucracy, is money being wasted? Maybe have just WPD and one other organisation with an easy style of working.'*
- A domestic customer stated that *'I am confused, I live in the West Midlands and see adverts on TV for affordable warmth, if it is not there why it is being advertised?'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'if WPD introduces a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding how often would a competition be? It sounds like there would be a lot of administration that takes the benefit away from what it should be doing in the first place.'*
- There was general disagreement amongst the group about a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding.
- An academic/education institute representative considered that *'competitions do not go down well with charities in general.'*


Table 2:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands	✓		
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers	✓	✓	
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)		✓	
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		

- There was consensus that the Power Up referral scheme should be expanded.
- An elected representative felt that *'the referral scheme is an excellent idea; of course it should be on the list.'*
- An elected representative argued *'monthly research is too frequent, but annually is too long.'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested *'can you do this seasonally, so summer and winter research for instance.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'we don't have enough information to give you accurate answers. They're all good ideas but our answers will have to be generic. My answers aren't informed, but I do think you guys are doing a great job.'*
- There was consensus that the affordable warmth project should be expanded.

Table 3:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands	✓		
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers		✓	
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty			✓


  
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- A developer/connections representative stated *'if the Power Up scheme works, keep implementing it.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'customer satisfaction research is a good thing but surely there will come a point where more research is no longer needed!'*
- A business customer representative felt that *'monthly is about the right frequency for customer satisfaction surveys.'*
- A business customer representative enquired *'isn't it worth investigating the other regions - not just the West Midlands? The other parts of your regions should benefit from schemes too. Making sure the funding is spread fairly and consistently through the network should be a priority, so that everyone gets a fair share.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'there are a lot of schemes in place, so you should evaluate them individually first to see how efficient they are before you invest in one.'*



Table 4:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers		✓	
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓	✓	
Working in collaboration with health services – particularly discharge and social care	✓		




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- An elective representative said that *'Power Up schemes are a really good idea.'*

Table 5:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers – quarterly			✓
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		

  
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- There was consensus that less should be done on developing a new Power Up referral scheme for the East Midlands.
- An elected representative raised a point that *'it can also be extremely expensive. I can think of better things WPD can do.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'given that people will make their own contacts if they are not happy, I'd agree.'*
- The table agreed that more should be done in terms of expanding existing Affordable Warmth projects and developing new ones.
- A domestic customer insisted that *'it's the Affordable Warmth projects which have the most impact without any hesitation.'*
- There was consensus that enough was being done with developing a competition for existing schemes.
- A local authority officer representative made a point that *'if there is funding available, it is tricky to determine how to distribute it.'*

- A local authority officer representative voiced that *‘competition is maybe the wrong word. Perhaps some sort of tender or bidding process could be better.’*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned that *‘it is a good fundamental question as to whether WPD should actually be delivering these activities since these seem to be more the kind of activities the Government should do.’*
- A local authority officer representative commented that *‘the problem is that government is shrinking so I am quite happy for WPD to take the mantle.’*
- A business customer representative emphasised that *‘we need to help people bid for the money as well because the people with the best ideas might not always have the necessary resources to take it further. The money always goes to the place where the voice is loudest rather than to the person with the greatest need.’*

Table 6:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new ‘Power Up’ referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers		✓	
Expand the existing ‘Affordable Warmth’ project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new ‘Affordable Warmth’ projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		


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- An energy/utility representative underlined the importance of WPD connecting with *‘senior citizens’ charities.’*

- An energy/utility representative maintained that *‘where people have trouble paying their housing rent, they are probably having trouble paying bills as well.’*
- An energy/utility representative stressed that *‘the Government has got rid of affordable housing. So now housing associations play a really big role. WPD should be talking to these housing associations.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted the *‘oxygen scheme. People who need oxygen for health reasons, they need to work with oxygen companies, and in turn those companies need to be able to directly refer back to power companies.’*

Table 7:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new ‘Power Up’ referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers			✓
Expand the existing ‘Affordable Warmth’ project in West Midlands		✓	
Develop new ‘Affordable Warmth’ projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)		✓	
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty			✓
Identify reliable partners to reduce risk	✓		




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- Whilst discussing WPD’s current projects, all representatives were in support of a new Power Up referral scheme in the East Midlands.
- A housing/development representative asked *‘why not?’* when talking about monthly satisfaction research. (S)he also pointed out that gathering such data could be *‘crucial, as smart networks become more important.’*

- A business customer representative asked *'are Affordable Warmth projects really WPD's area of concern?'*
- Others thought they were a nice addition, but the majority of stakeholders on the table voiced similar concerns about WPD overstepping its remit.
- However, a housing/development representative argued that expanding Affordable Warmth projects elsewhere was *'important, although the current projects are about right.'*

Table 8:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers – quarterly			✓
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands	✓		
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty		✓	
Engage with local government and utility companies	✓		




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- A voluntary organisation representative said that *'engaging with local government is important.'*
- A local authority officer representative agreed that *'they might need more time to assess the service.'*
- An energy/utility representative questioned *'what the competitions for partner funding would be based on.'*

Table 9:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands		✓	
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers – plus for the intermediary organisations	✓		
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands	✓		
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		
Finding community/energy networks to tackle fuel poverty			

  
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- The table agreed that developing a Power Up scheme in the East Midlands is important.
- An energy/utility representative stated that *'adding any lessons from the previous schemes is important here.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *'more assistance for those working with supported customers – not just the customers themselves – is important. Satisfaction is one thing, but satisfaction from people who know what might be done is vital.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'how are referrals monitored?'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested that *'more depth could be achieved with the customer satisfaction work.'*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *'everybody needs to be even, so new Affordable Warmth work in the West Midlands is required.'* An elected representative agreed.
- An elected representative suggested that *'more Affordable Warmth projects are required.'* A developer/connections representative agreed.



- An energy/utility representative wondered *'are these not the obligations of suppliers, instead of DNOs?'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'innovation is always a positive, so developing competition for existing schemes is important.'* A law firm representative agreed.
- A law firm representative said *'I'd love to see more competition around existing schemes.'*
- A law firm representative suggested that *'one other thing that could be done is working with local energy networks and groups, and providing them with more funding to support customers in their area – they have the networks already.'* An energy/utility representative strongly agreed.
- An energy/utility representative added *'there's also the education aspects of local networks, so there's quite a nice spectrum of benefits to working with these local networks.'*

Table 10:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
WPD Planned Actions			
ACTIVITY	MORE	ABOUT RIGHT	LESS
Develop a new 'Power Up' referral scheme for the East Midlands	✓		
Introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers – quarterly		✓	
Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands	✓		
Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	✓✓✓		
Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding – e.g. innovative projects (smart network projects) in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		

  
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- A housing/development representative made the point that *'the link between areas with food banks and high fuel poverty caught my eye. Fuel bank and food bank links are helpful for referral to various services. Should we be rolling this out more? It is great for identifying vulnerable customers.'*
- A housing/development representative raised the point that *'there about 5,000 vulnerable and only 1,000 identified – how do you encourage the rest to identify themselves as in need of help.'*
- A developer/connections representative replied by asking *'is there still a stigma attached to this?'*
- A housing/development representative responded that *'the war generation can be quite tricky to get to come forward and ask for help, but these people are frequently the most vulnerable.'*
- An environmental representative made the point that *'there is not the money in the charity sector to facilitate actions based on going out on the frontline and identifying these people. It would be very helpful if WPD could help to fund this.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'if they are doing the Power Up referral scheme everywhere else then they should be doing it here.'*


- A developer/connections representative thought that *'monthly satisfaction research with supported customers seems about right.'*
- A housing/development representative said *'Affordable Warmth – yes please, we should be placing a priority on developing new projects.'*
- An environmental representative pointed out that *'when communicating with customers it must be made clear that WPD is a facilitator and not a deliverer of these schemes.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'do WPD actually physically contribute to that part of the economy?'* concerning bidding for partnership funding.
- An environmental representative raised the issue that *'charities cannot initiate their own projects, as they must go where the funding is which is out of their control.'*

## 6.8 What do you think of ideas from other DNOs?

Stakeholders were asked to refer to the list of ideas from other DNOs around “affordability” and identify any that may be missing. The list can be seen in the table below.

Table 1:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks			✓
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes			✓
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption		✓	✓
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)			✓




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- An academic/education institute representative commented that *‘a partnership with gas distributors to send referrals for recipients of gas connection vouchers seems like a good idea.’*
- There was general consensus amongst the group for this idea.
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that *‘regarding fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks, the majority of food banks are run by churches who have much better contact with more deprived members of society than other charities.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *‘I think these ideas are beyond the remit of WPD, deviating away from license obligations.’*
- An academic/education institute representative stated that *‘I think it is another communication channel.’*
- A business customer representative highlighted that *‘it is a good way of identifying people that need help.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘professional organisations and government bodies already create social indicator mapping; is it in the remit of a DNO?’*
- An academic/education institute representative said *‘I would agree with that.’*

- An energy/utility representative added that *'keeping information relevant and up to date is important and things do change. However, we don't know the cost; it may detract from the service WPD already provides.'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'efficiency surgeries are a good idea.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *'a lot of that happens anyway.'*
- A business customer representative added that *'they are good as long as you are not duplicating things.'*
- An academic/education institute representative raised the point that *'you do not need WPD people to do that.'*
- A business customer representative argued that *'WPD are best placed to pass the relevant knowledge on.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'with regards to energy efficiency funds I think anyone involved in energy should contribute towards assistance but on the other hand if you have a finite pot of resources, you could be spreading it too thinly by having too many issues to deal with.'*
- There was no consensus amongst the group for energy efficiency funds.
- A business customer representative highlighted that *'it is good as a social obligation to make a contribution, the same as charities contribute.'*

Table 2:


Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks		✓	
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes		✓	
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption			✓
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)		✓	

  
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- There was consensus on the table that WPD should work with gas distributors.
- An elected representative was against using food banks, pointing out *‘they’re separate things. People slip into food banks, pick up a box and slip out; they don’t want to linger or be seen. If they are in need of advice on turning the lights out they’re probably getting it some other way. Food banks are not the best way.’*
- A local authority officer representative agreed stating *‘the two don’t really go together. Fuel poverty is wider than just electricity.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘it’s hard for us to be sure which one will work best as we don’t know enough about the area or the projects.’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘what is social indicating mapping?’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘WPD need to make sure you’re not talking down to people in community projects, but educating them.’*
- An elected representative was against community projects complaining *‘no, we already have community obesity and non-smoking initiatives and I don’t think we should add to it, it’s too much. You’re talking down to people all the time “you use too much energy, you smoke”.’*
- A local authority officer representative highlighted that *‘fuel poverty is an incredibly complicated project, I’m sceptical about fuel poverty being part of your remit.’*

Table 3:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes		✓	
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption		✓	
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)			✓

  
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- An energy/utility representative stated *'I would say yes, definitely work with gas distributors as it doesn't cost any money and it provides benefits for you and us.'*
- An energy/utility representative remarked *'it's another route in to provide a service for customers but you should make sure it's realistic – is it the best way to spend the money that you have? If it worked it'd be great as it ties in with your customer awareness angle too. It allows people that may be very vulnerable to be added to your register and even lets people know who to contact if their power goes off.'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested *'you could look at refugee centres too although you will have to translate your leaflets into the relevant languages.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'you should connect to the groups and communities that are already doing it. If there's a more efficient group already doing things just work with them instead of just trying to set up your own independent scheme!'*

Table 4:



### Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability


#### Ideas from other DNOs

ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓		
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)			✓

- An energy/utility representative highlighted how *'Npower have a fuel bank project, doing energy advice. This should be replicated. It is a really good way of reaching really vulnerable people.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative agreed, saying *'you're targeting exactly that vulnerable market, it should be encouraged.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'DNOs should not use DECC's sub-regional indicator. It isn't accurate – be very careful about the data.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'the best way to keep people out of energy poverty is by lowering their energy costs.'*

Table 5:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers			✓
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks		✓	
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes		✓	
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)	✓		
Further outreach attempts	✓		



  
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- The table was not sure whether or not partnerships with gas distributors to send referrals should be adopted.
- A local authority officer representative mentioned that *‘it is a big idea in areas where they are expanding the gas network.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised a point that *‘it seems like quite an efficient way to find vulnerable people so maybe you should do more of that. Someone has done the work already.’*
- The table was in consensus that fuel poverty outreach projects were not a good idea.
- A domestic customer pointed out that *‘people who go to food banks don’t go continually though. Those who are eligible go once or twice and then there is a gap. They have to be referred by various organisations. So I don’t think that is an efficient place.’*
- An elected representative agreed and said *‘it is just catching people by chance isn’t it.’*
- A local authority officer representative disagreed and commented that *‘there are a lot of people who do use it.’*

- A domestic customer insisted that *'you can't just turn up at the food bank. You have to be referred there.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *'the food bank is the wrong place to do it because it is already too late. Maybe one of the charities or whoever is referring them should be the one in charge.'*
- The table agreed that WPD should not bi-annually refresh their social indicator mapping.
- A business customer representative stated *'I don't think that's doable. I do a lot of monitoring work as part of my job and the stuff that is valid is done on more of an annual basis or less. It would be very difficult to do it more often because it gets out of date very quickly as well.'*
- There was general consensus that energy efficiency surgeries were a good idea.
- A domestic customer insisted that *'it should be the first point of call because that will reduce the demand on the network as well.'*
- There was also consensus that more should be done in terms of energy efficiency funds.
- An elected representative felt that *'parish councils won't have the technical knowledge to manage the funds. The best thing they do is for general communication. They won't be in a position to be selective with the people they can address.'*
- A local authority officer representative said *'I agree with funding going into energy efficiency funds at a council level. They are better positioned to do this and this is already one of their target areas.'*

Table 6:


Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓		
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)			✓
Heat pumps instead of gas vouchers	✓		



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Table 7:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers		✓	
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓		
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)		✓	

  
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- A number of representatives were confused by the proposals for partnerships with gas distributors. An energy/utility representative asked *‘what has it got to do with a DNO like WPD?’*
- However, another energy/utility representative supported such efforts, and said *‘we already cooperate with gas companies, so it would be nice to see WPD make similar efforts.’*
- Another suggestion made by an energy utility representative was that WPD work with suppliers to help improve hot water storage.
- Whilst discussing outreach projects via food banks, a business customer representative questioned the utility of such projects. (S)he commented that *‘this is more for a Citizen’s Advice Bureau than a DNO.’*
- (S)he also questioned whether food banks would be a *‘particularly effective place to find people who are in fuel poverty.’*
- An energy utility representative said that refreshing stakeholder indicator mapping *‘makes sense.’*
- Many representatives were initially supportive of the idea of energy efficiency surgeries. However, an energy utility representative asked *‘how much money are we talking here? Will other customers be, in effect, subsidising this?’*

- The idea of local community energy efficiency funds was not popular. An energy utility representative said that it *'only confuses things further.'* (S)he added that WPD should be *'tackling fuel poverty issues more generally.'*
- A business customer representative commented that *'this is all on the very edge of WPD's responsibilities. It is other customers who will have to pay for it, who may complain.'*

Table 8:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks		✓	
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓		
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption			✓
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)		✓	

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- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted that *'giving energy vouchers to people at food banks is a step too far.'*
- An energy/utility representative added that *'customers at food banks may not know who WPD are.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative noted that *'if there is a fundamental change in the cost of energy, the social indicator mapping needs to be refreshed, but this does not need to be done on a bi-annual basis.'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'WPD should help fund energy efficiency surveys.'*

- A voluntary organisation representative noted that *'energy efficiency funds are not necessarily the best way to encourage energy efficiency. A knowledge sharing scheme would be better.'*

Table 9:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers	✓		✓
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓	✓	
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)	✓		


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- A housing/development representative said *'if forging links with gas distributors to open referrals for recipients of gas connection vouchers will increase awareness of health issues, why not?'*
- An elected representative said *'all the ideas from other DNOs have benefits.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'anything that's an indicator of fuel poverty is a benefit.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'working with food banks will result in people benefitting who don't need it, so I'm not sure where I sit.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *'anything that improves efficiency of consumption is a good thing, no matter who benefits.'*



Table 10:

Workshop Three – Strategic Priorities: Affordability			
Ideas from other DNOs			
ACTIVITY	YES	NO	NOT SURE
Partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers			✓
Fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks	✓		
Bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping – to better target schemes	✓		
Energy efficiency surgeries & community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption	✓		
Energy efficiency funds (local communities)			✓



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- A developer/connections representative said that *‘WPD giving referrals for gas connection vouchers: this has got to be a good thing.’*
- A housing representative pointed out in response that *‘it could be a data protection issue.’*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *‘food bank leafleting could be a less invasive referral technique for fuel poverty outreach’*
- A housing representative said that *‘energy efficiency funds is a tricky one. You are attacking the symptoms but not the cause.’*
- A developer/connections representative queried *‘would the energy efficiency surgeries and community projects actually be run by WPD? Is that a DNO’s job? If others are doing it then it has got to be considered.’*

## 6.9 Are there any other points you would like to make?

Table 5:

- A domestic customer pointed out that *'the group of pensioners is a good one to target to increase outreach and for WPD to liaise and conduct further outreach work. It might not be everywhere in the region but it is a possible linkage.'*

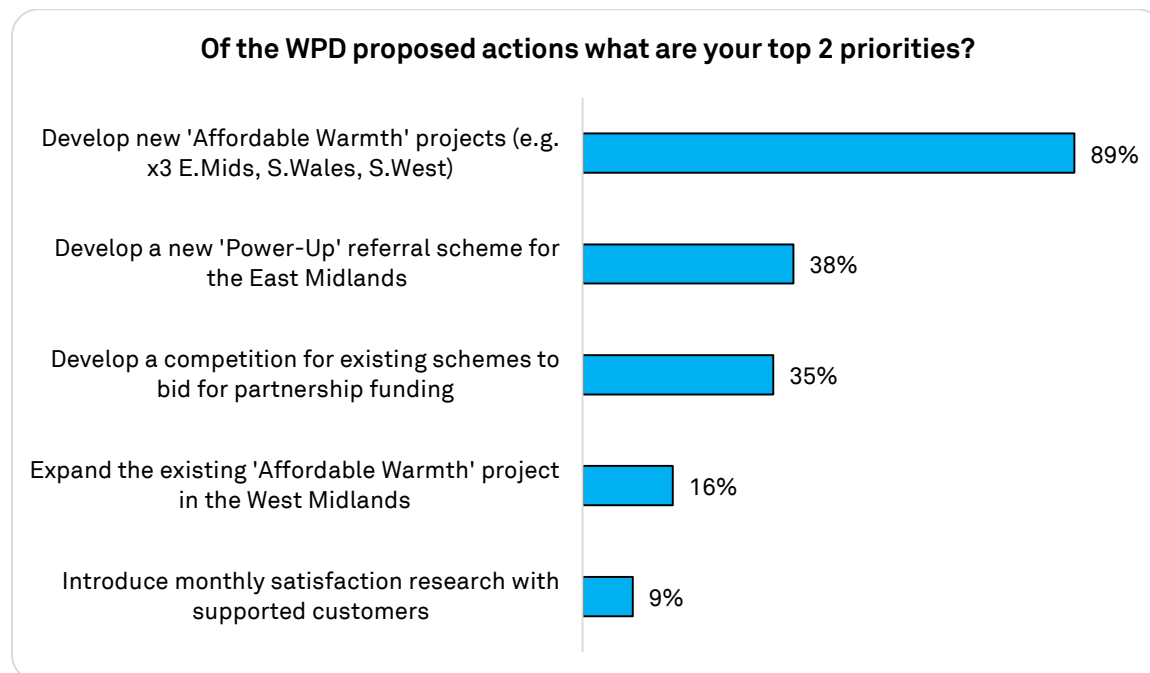
Table 10:

- With regard to vulnerable people in private housing, a developer/connections representative said that *'actually finding those people in the private sector is very difficult to do.'*

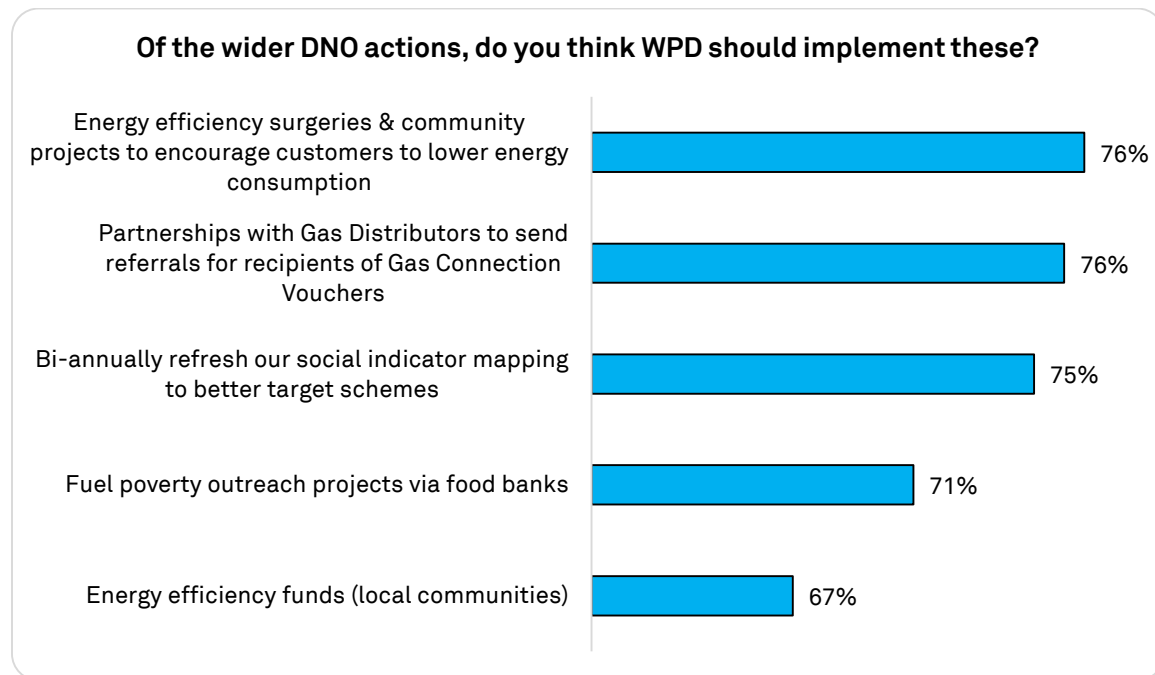
## 6.10 Individual voting results

After the group discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote again.

Firstly, of WPD's proposed actions, stakeholders were asked to vote for their top two priorities. The results are shown:



In the second vote in this workshop, stakeholders were asked to vote individually on which of the DNO actions WPD should implement. The results are displayed below:



## 7. Surgeries on specific topics

Following the workshops, WPD held three afternoon surgeries on specific topics with stakeholders able to sign up to their preferred session throughout the day. The surgeries included a presentation from a WPD technical expert, followed by an open Q&A session. The sessions lasted approximately one hour.

### 7.1 Connections Improvement Plan

Summary: This surgery included a presentation on WPD's Incentive on Connections Engagement (ICE) plan: what the ICE plan is, a summary of WPD's ICE workplan and the priorities for 2016.

A link to the presentation given on the day can be found [here](#)<sup>2</sup>.

Key points stakeholders raised were:

- While WPD is providing much more information than other DNOs (e.g. geographic information system (GIS) data), the detail on 11kV is currently lacking. It was recognised that this was a big ask, but that a good example would be looking at SSE's southern region data, which is much more accessible.
- WPD should look at the 'Quote+' system, where an application gets a connection date and is in the queue while WPD go through the feasibility study. Not only will this make process easier for applicants, it should also reduce WPD's workload.
- National Grid have not been following the statement of works (SoW) process and WPD have not been communicating this back to the applicant. It was explained that WPD are looking to address this now and have a new team to manage the SoW process to improve communications and manage expectations. It was suggested that a quick phone call early in the process to tell the applicant that a SoW is required would allow them to drop the idea if needed.
- An online portal with status and information about applications was suggested and as being especially helpful if you have multiple applications.

Other points discussed included:

- While everyone else at WPD is really helpful, the connections team were not helpful or responsive. It was suggested that they could help better prepare applications and by extension develop the best solutions.
- Speeding up connections isn't necessarily a priority for developers. They want a connection on a fixed date and have multiple other factors to get in line.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Stakeholder-Workshop-January-2016-Connections-Impr.aspx>

## 7.2 Social Obligations (vulnerability & fuel poverty)

Summary: Following the morning session on “affordability”, this surgery looked at social obligations as a whole including both “affordability” and “vulnerability”. The presentation started with a recap of WPD’s social obligations strategy, summarised the key developments in 2015 and provided an overview of how WPD is scoring on social obligations against other DNOs. However, the focus of the presentation and the discussion was around the priorities WPD has identified for 2016. There were four identified priorities for 2016:

- Expand and scale-up successful fuel poverty schemes towards ‘business as usual’
- PSR referral networks
- Establish area-wide ‘affordable warmth’ services that expand existing pilots
- Train all front-line staff on vulnerability and support services WPD can provide

Stakeholders were also asked to rank a series of objectives for each priority. Stakeholders were given forms to vote on what level of priority they thought each objective should be (high = 3 points, low = 1 point), as well as whether WPD should do more, the same or less on the objective in future (more = 3 points, less = 1 point).

A link to the presentation given on the day can be found [here](#)<sup>3</sup>. The summary of the discussion and the voting has been divided by each priority below.

### Expand and scale- up successful fuel poverty schemes towards ‘business as usual’

Key points stakeholders raised were:-

- That the referral saving is presumably annual so there is even more benefit than is set out in the presentation.
- That customers who used to have a warm homes discount will need to apply again.
- That being WPD, and not the energy supplier, really helps with the whole trust thing.

### *Voting form*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives for fuel poverty referral schemes. The average scores are set out below and the highest averages are in bold.

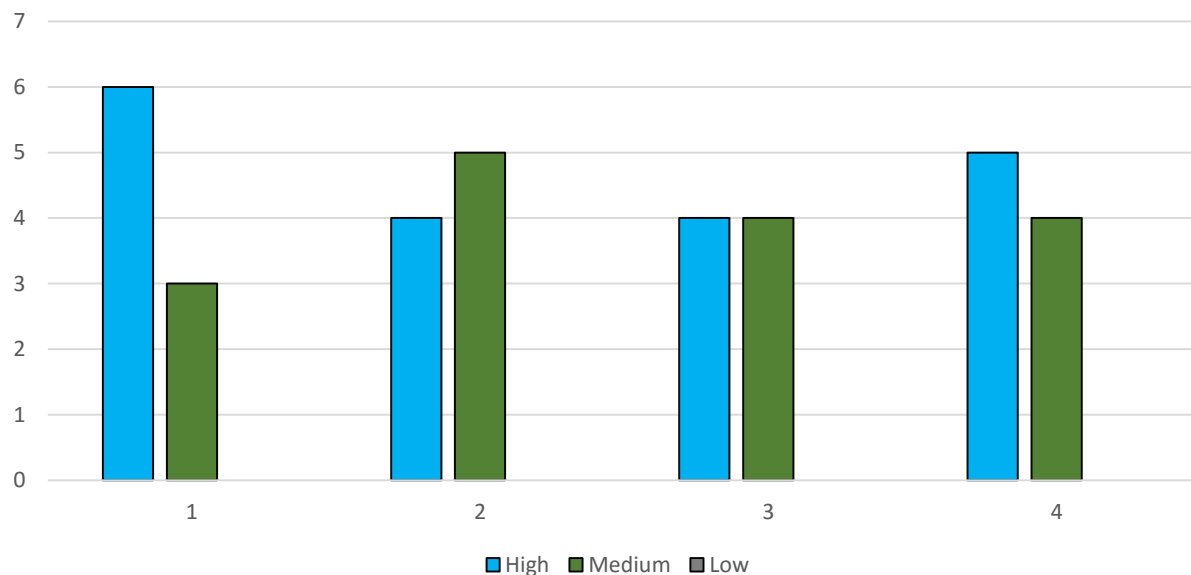
Objective #	Objective	Priority average	Future actions average
1	Expand referral project capabilities to include interventions relating to ‘Health & Wellbeing’	<b>2.67</b>	<b>2.25</b>
2	Renew and expand existing ‘Power Up’ fuel poverty schemes (with Citizens Advice, Energy Savings Trust & Centre for Sustainable Energy)	2.44	<b>2.25</b>
3	Set up a 4th ‘Power Up’ fuel poverty scheme in East Midlands (ensure one per licence)	2.50	2.00

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Stakeholder-Workshop-January-2016-Social-obligatio.aspx>

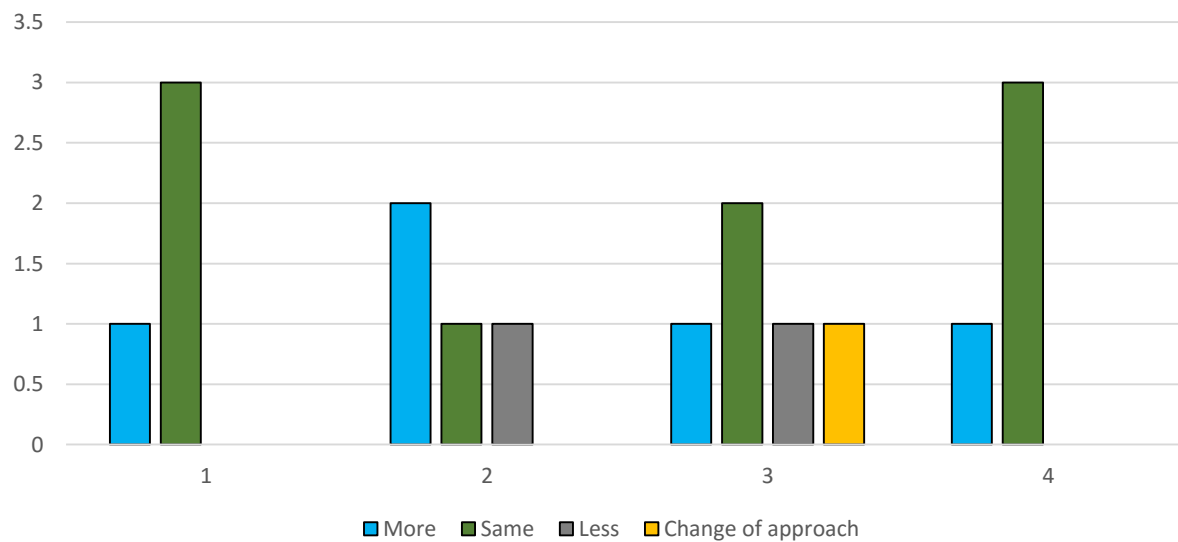
4	Trial 'Affordable Warmth' fuel poverty projects with local authorities and other existing schemes (incl. receiving referrals onto WPD's PSR)	2.56	2.25
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Detailed scores are in the below tables:

#### How would you prioritise each objective (high, medium or low)?



#### What approach should WPD take towards each objective moving forward?



## PSR referral networks

Key points stakeholders raised were:-

- Support for WPD to engage agencies to gain ‘informed consent’ to directly sign-up customers via their relevant front-line services.
- There is a difference between England Wales in terms of affordable housing. In Wales, the associations rather than the councils often own all affordable housing and WPD should engage with them as they will know a lot about their tenants.
- WPD should produce a one-pager that can be circulated to interested agencies who want to know how to refer people to the PSR.
- Food banks were a good way of identifying customers who wouldn’t normally proactively reach out to WPD, but that they were very short-term with people whose circumstances changes quickly.

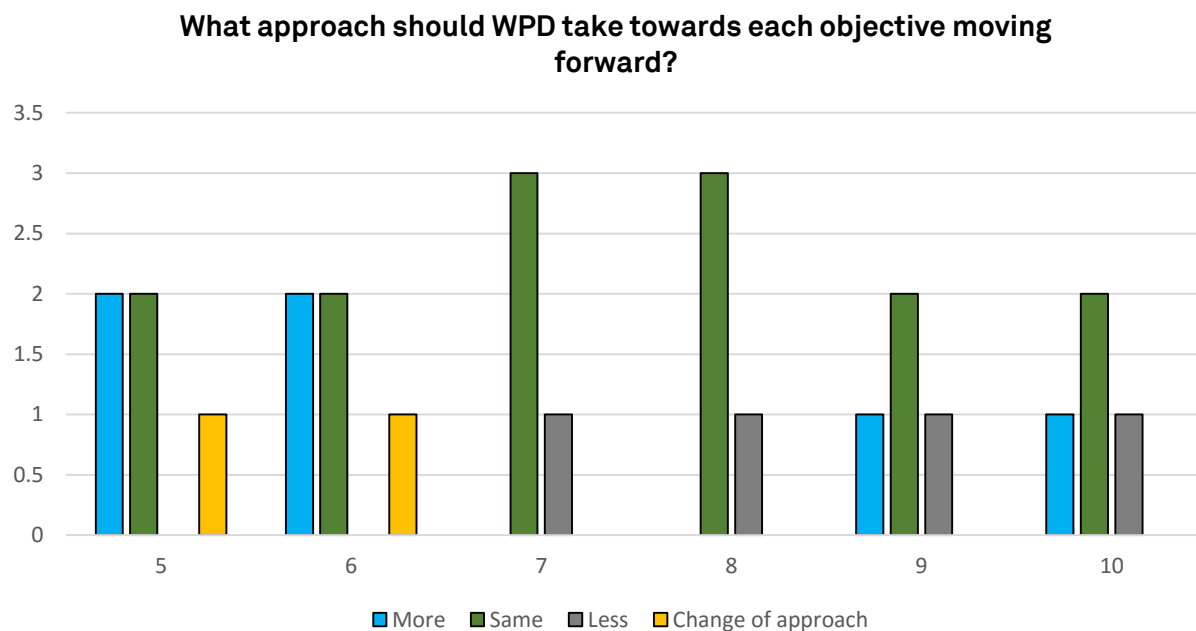
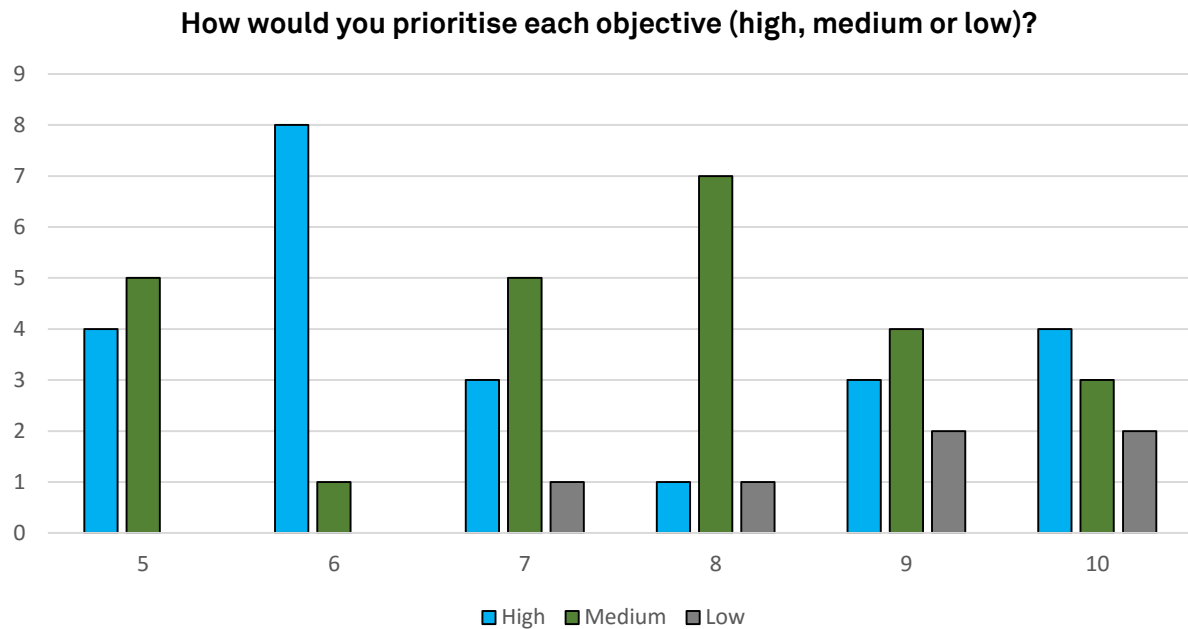
### *Voting form*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives for PSR referral networks. The average scores are set out below and the highest averages are in bold.

Objective #	Objective	Priority average	Future actions average
5	Create PSR referral partnerships where partners sign-up customers to the PSR directly via their front-line services (initially 1 per licence area, per partner (4 in total))	2.44	<b>2.50</b>
6	Develop links between key relevant services – e.g. Fire Service home fire safety checks	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.50</b>
7	Count and report the number of customers we have informed consent from to share data	2.22	1.75
8	Expand WPD’s PSR data cleansing teams to ensure contact with c.500,000 PSR customers annually	2.00	1.75
9	Lead industry changes to PSR (e.g. common needs codes, 2-way data flows between suppliers & DNOs)	2.11	2.00
10	Initiate PSR data sharing trials with other industry members (e.g. suppliers, gas networks, water)	2.22	2.00



Detailed scores are in the below tables:



Additional comments included:

- Enhance existing and capture more (in relation to objective 5).
- Pilot within existing then expand on basis (in relation to objective 6).

### Establish area-wide 'affordable warmth' services that expand existing pilots

Key points stakeholders raised were:-

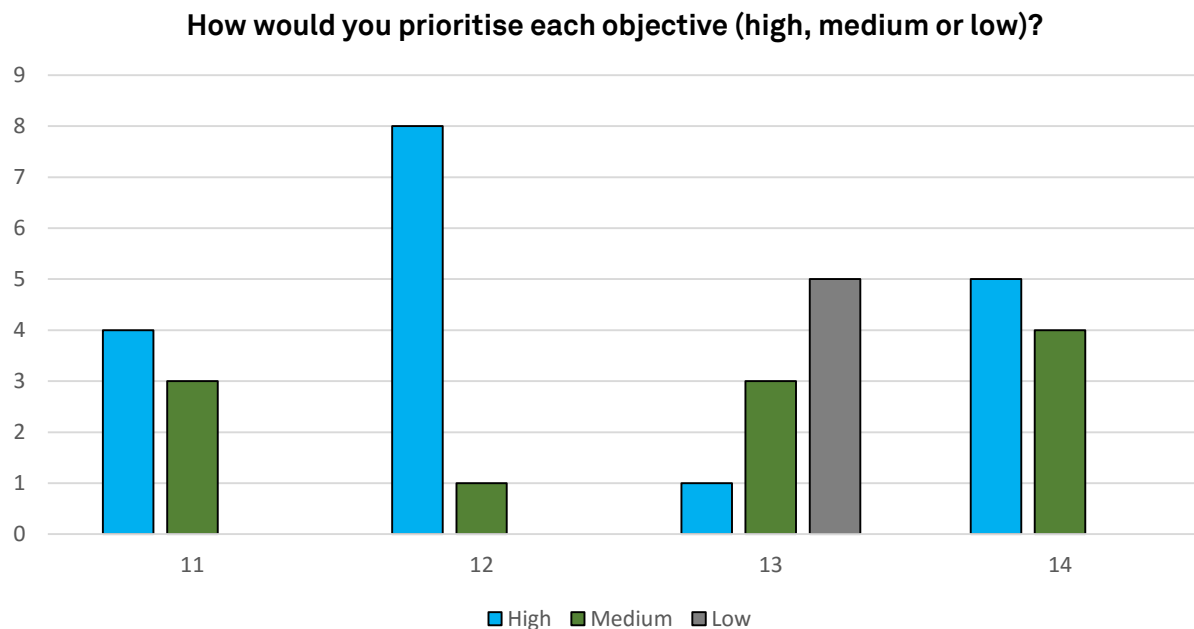
- The automatic devices were a good idea.

#### *Voting form*

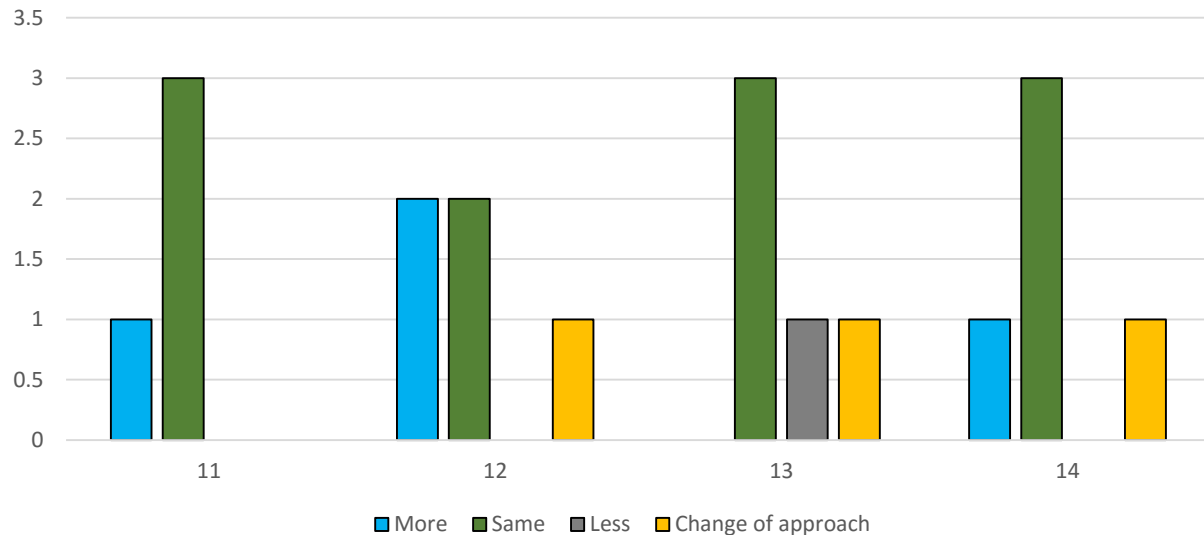
The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives for area-wide 'affordable warmth' services. The average scores are set out below and the highest averages are in bold.

Objective #	Objective	Priority average	Future actions average
11	Expand the existing 'Affordable Warmth' project in West Midlands	2.57	2.25
12	Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	<b>2.89</b>	<b>2.50</b>
13	Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding	1.56	1.75
14	Install devices to automatically notify WPD of power cuts in potentially vulnerable/fuel poor households, in areas of above average power cut levels	2.56	2.25

Detailed scores are in the below tables:



### What approach should WPD take towards each objective moving forward?



### Train all front-line staff on vulnerability and support services WPD can provide

Key points stakeholders raised were:-

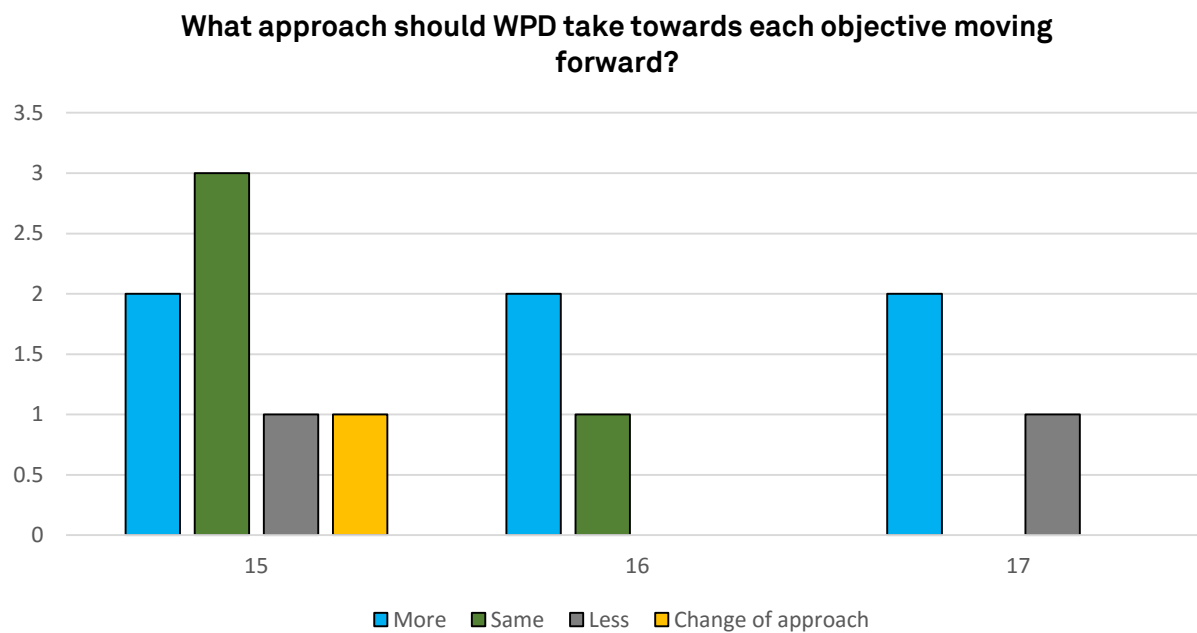
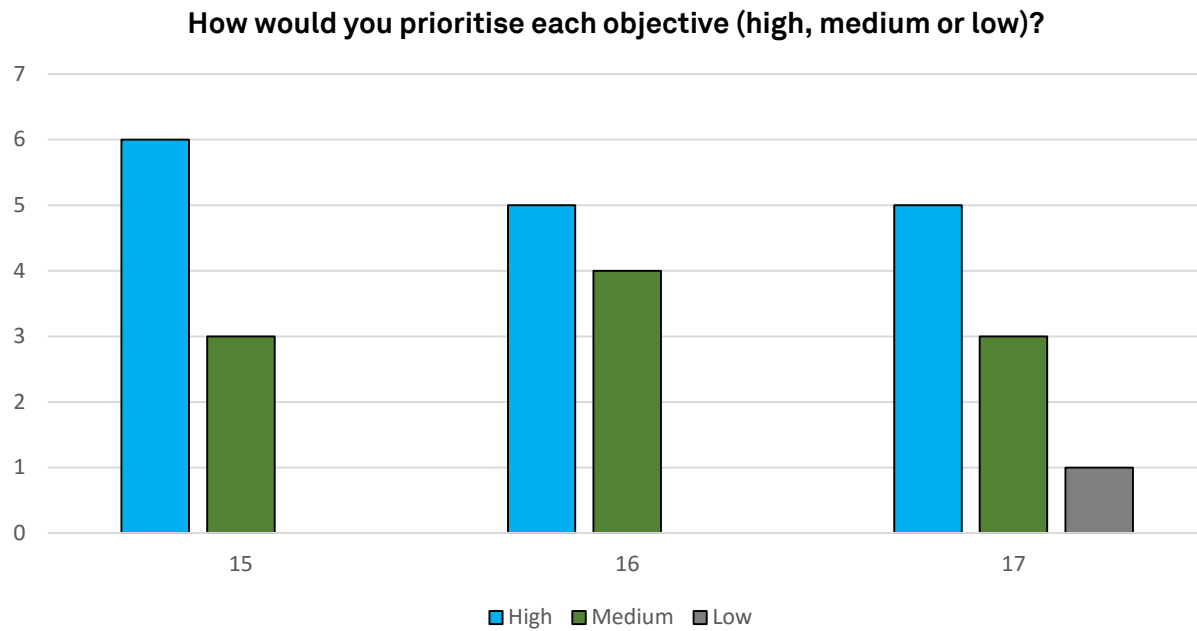
- How they could request the packs, as they would be able to pass them onto the relevant people.
- That it would be good if front-line staff had a means of registering customers on the PSR network on the spot.

### *Voting form*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives for training front-line staff. The average scores are set out below and the highest averages are in bold.

Objective #	Objective	Priority average	Future actions average
15	Vulnerable customer training to field staff. Enable staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrange for customers to be signed-up to the PSR</li> <li>• Call-out welfare support (catering or British Red Cross)</li> <li>• Distribute Crisis Packs</li> </ul>	<b>2.67</b>	1.75
16	Monitor 12 hour faults impacting vulnerable customers specifically	2.56	<b>2.67</b>
17	Introduce a WPD standard to ensure no vulnerable customer is off supply >12 hours (in normal weather)	2.44	2.33

Detailed scores are in the below tables:



### 7.3 The role of a Distribution System Operator (smart networks)

Summary: With new developments in the market, DNOs are in transition to also becoming a DSO. The presentation looked at the need for DSO functions, the capabilities required of a DSO and WPD's readiness to be a DSO. Discussions revolved around data integrity, market integration technologies being considered and other issues around demand supply response, including the need for coordination between DNOs, NGET and Ofgem/DECC.

A link to the presentation given on the day can be found here<sup>4</sup>.

Key points stakeholders raised were:

- Whether there would be a special connection agreement for over 5MW connections or whether it can be done under a licence. It was clarified that this is still being worked on by DECC and Ofgem.
- Whether any discussions had taken place between National Grid and DNOs to tender for a DSO.
- If WPD's telecommunications network is not seen as a priority in the radio spectrum, this is a problem and should be addressed as soon as possible.
- The system operational framework is continually changing because of developing technology.
- The need to develop a scenario plan for storage capacity.
- The prohibitive cost for some developers of connecting to the grid.
- Whether electric cars would become mainstream and the impact this would have on the grid.
- Demand side response should be delivered by commercial operators, such as suppliers or aggregators.
- Along with telecommunications and data integrity, anonymising data was another challenge that WPD faced.

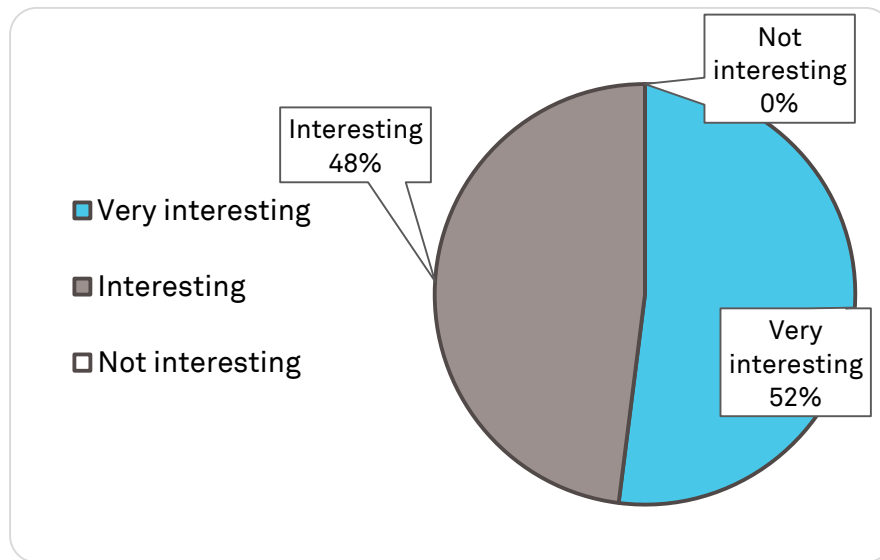
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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Stakeholder-Workshop-January-2016-The-Role-of-a-DS.aspx>

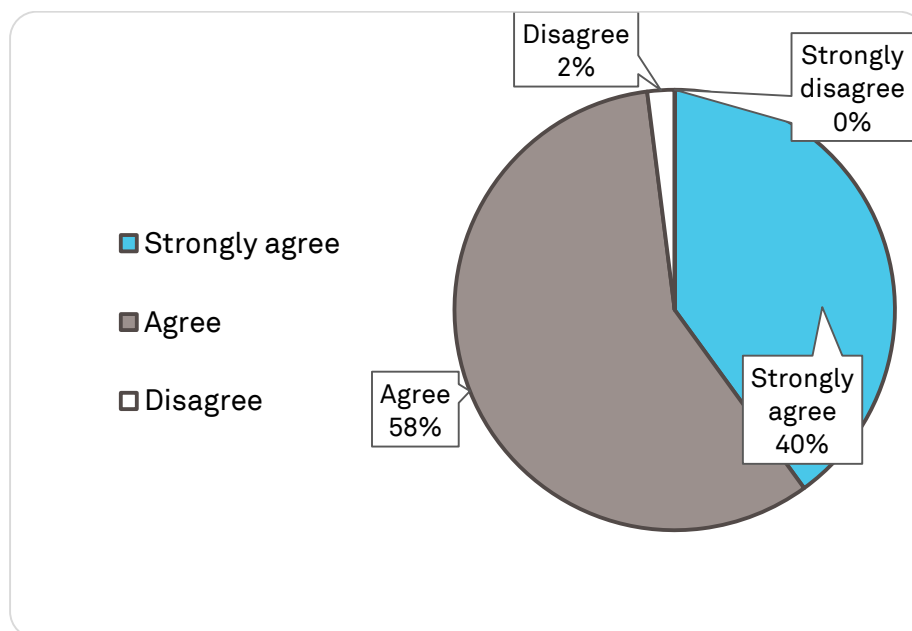
## 8. Written feedback

Of the 50 attendees who came to the workshop, 50 completed and returned feedback forms on the day's event. Stakeholders were asked a set of seven questions. The responses can be found below:

### Q1. Overall, how did you find the workshop?



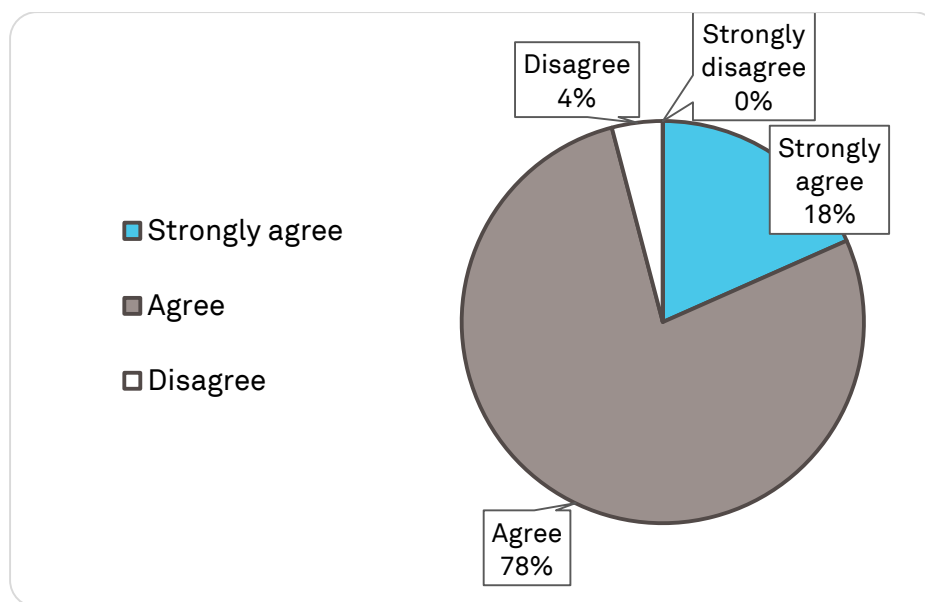
### Q2. Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?



Stakeholder comments on this question included:

- *Can't really comment until after afternoon surgery.*
- *Longer sessions would be appreciated. Some questions around a degree of knowledge that did not necessarily exist.*
- *Having the ability to question the speakers directly would be better.*
- *Felt there was opportunity but facilitation did not bring out those quieter members on the table to give a fully inclusive feedback.*
- *It makes a pleasant change for all to be asked/encouraged for feedback.*
- *Lot of interesting discussion that could lead to more intensive workshops.*
- *Allocate more time to questions and according to nature of questions.*
- *Good facilitation - everyone on table allowed space to speak.*

### Q3. Did we cover the right topics for you on the day?

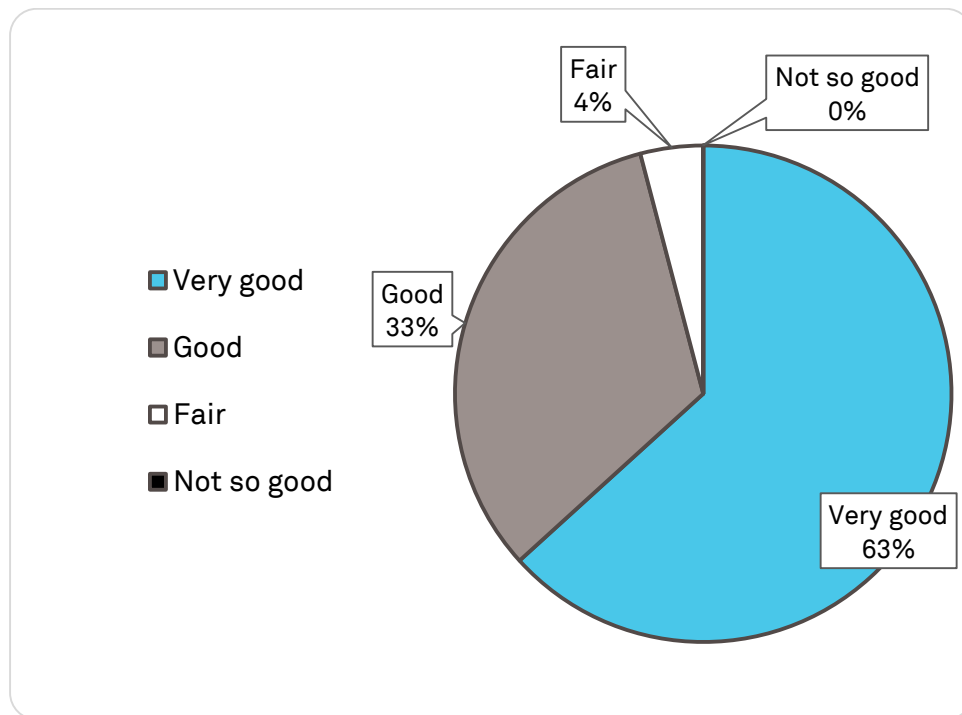


Stakeholder comments on this question included:

- *Bit more on connection issues and challenges for me. I realise not for all.*
- *Right topics, too little detail.*
- *Filled in before afternoon session.*
- *Network status.*
- *Too much emphasis for my liking on affordability and vulnerability which, whilst a license condition, is not a core business activity for WPD.*
- *Somewhat less interested in vulnerability issues although it is an important topic.*



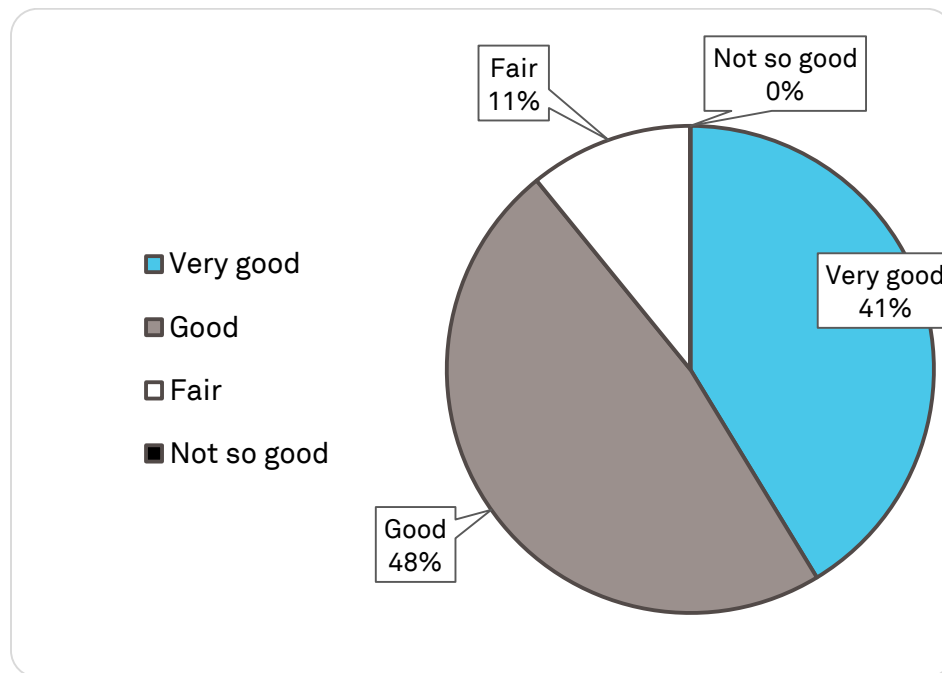
**Q4. What did you think of the way the workshop had been facilitated?**



Stakeholder comments on this question included:

- *Bit too much covered in too short a time*
- *Excellently organised*
- *Excellent.*
- *Good electronic voting*
- *Excellent use of electronic voting and discussion*
- *I didn't really see the point of trying to get the table to agree on issues we then voted on. Also the voting questions were not as good as they could have been - often far too specific.*
- *Some questions were technical and facilitators weren't always knowledgeable enough to provide clarity*

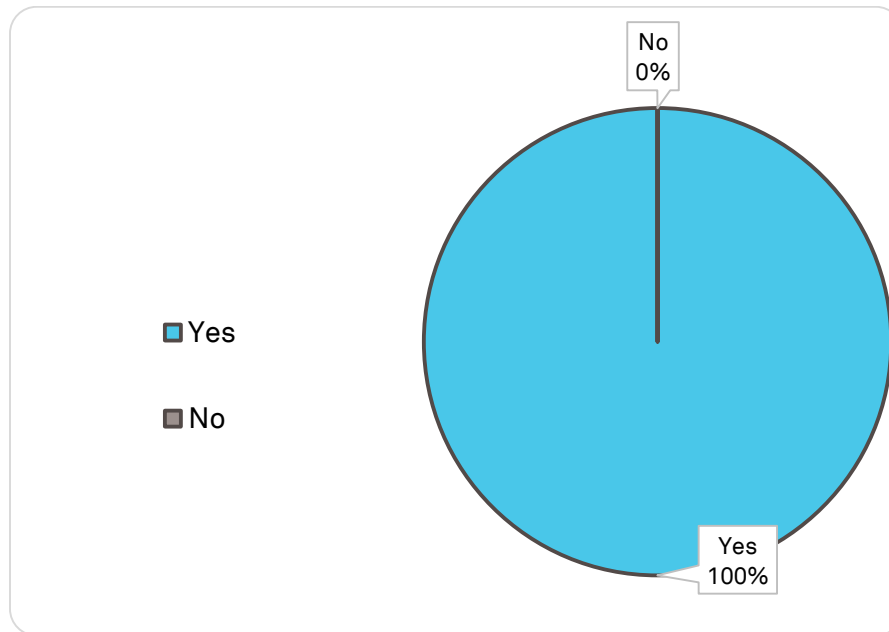
**Q5. What did you think of the venue?**



Stakeholder comments on this question included:

- *Excellent, however too far for me. Try Taunton next time!*
- *Screens too low - so blocked by heads of others.*
- *Not great for public transport links.*
- *Not very easy to get to. Should be either close to station or motorway - this one neither.*
- *Access - particularly parking - was difficult (works in progress in car park).*
- *Parking problems, especially disabled signing could have been better. Bit too much covered in too short a time.*

**Q6. Would you be interested in attending future workshops on this subject?**



**Q7. Do you have any other comments?**

Stakeholder comments included:

- *Smart networks.*
- *Depends on client needs.*
- *Very well done. Would like a more business level discussion another time as opposed to general public GCSE level.*
- *More info on what you do and successes to counties.*
- *Difficult to balance number of topics with depth of coverage. It didn't feel quite right.*