

# Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop: Newport 21<sup>st</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, RIIO-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 over 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 third of these workshops took place at Celtic Manor Resort near Newport on 21<sup>st</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:

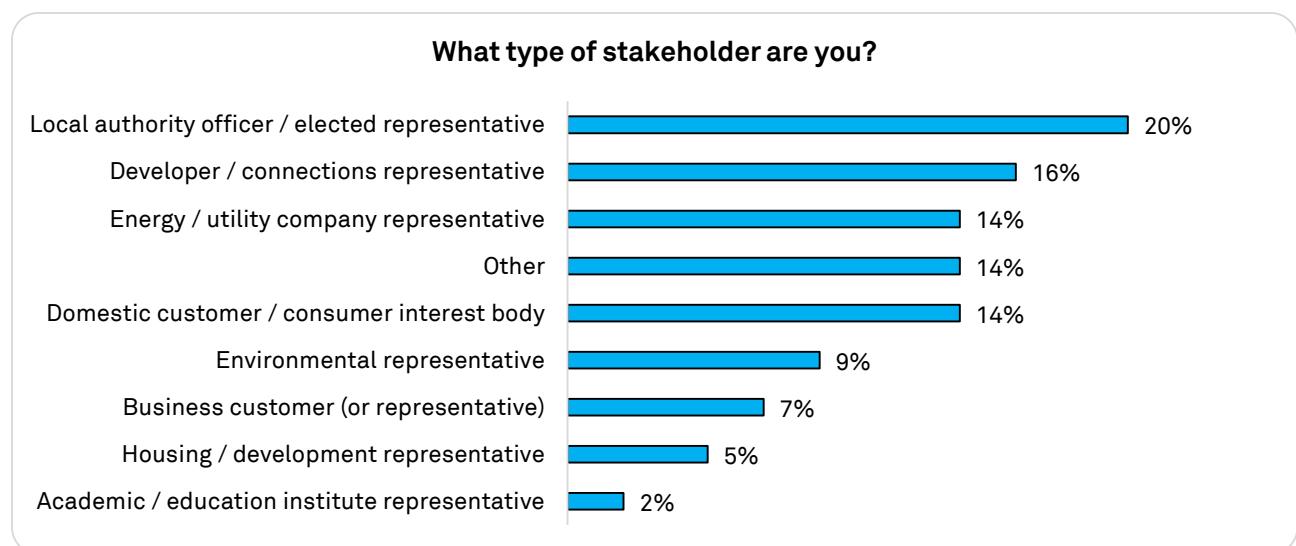
- **Workshop 1: Re-cap of WPD's long-term priorities.** The first workshop involved an update on WPD's long-term priorities in the last year and an interactive session where the groups ranked each of the nine priorities as high, medium or low.
- **Workshop 2: WPD's Business Plan & Current Performance.** 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 47 stakeholders attended the workshop. There were a range of representatives from different backgrounds, including domestic, business, local authority, developer/connections, environmental, energy/utility, academic/education and housing/development 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:



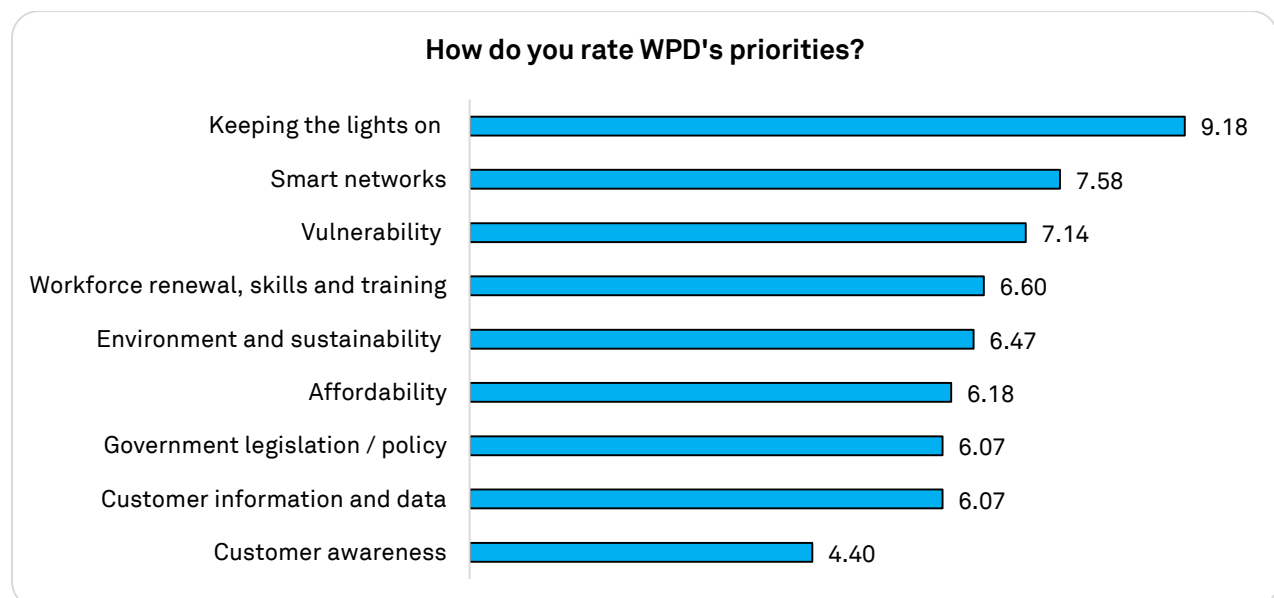
Alongside those attending in a personal or domestic customer capacity, the organisations represented were:

- Associated British Ports
- Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales
- Cenin Renewables Ltd
- Cirencester Town Council
- City and County of Swansea
- Community Housing Cymru
- Deerhurst Parish Council
- DNV GL – Energy
- Earthmill
- Energy Saving Trust
- Frazer-Nash Consultancy
- Geldards LLP
- Gloucestershire County Council
- Good Energy
- IBM
- Jacobs
- Joint Radio Company
- JSM Construction
- National Trust
- National Energy Action
- Newland Parish Council
- OSIsoft Ltd
- Kingstone and Thruxton Parish Council
- Renewable Developments Wales
- Royal Voluntary Service
- S&C Electric Europe
- Schneider Electric
- SE Wales Energy Action
- SMS PLC
- SSE
- Torfaen County Borough Council
- Vale of Glamorgan Council
- Valleys to Coast Housing
- Wye Valley AONB

### 3. Summary of feedback

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

- A key concern of attendees, and often a reason for their attendance, was to find out more about connections and energy storage. This included new connections, innovative technologies and improving network capacity.
- Vulnerable customers and affordability were also highlighted as 'hot topics' by attendees.
- Across all tables "keeping the lights on" and "smart networks" were ranked the highest and second-highest, respectively, in importance among the priorities. "Customer awareness" and "customer information and data" were regularly ranked least important and second-least important.
- "Vulnerability", which was separated from "affordability" following feedback from stakeholders at last year's workshops, scored highly, ranking third overall.
- Stakeholders agreed that "workforce renewal, skills and training" was a central aspect to achieving many of WPD's priorities, particularly "keeping the lights on" and developing "smart networks".



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

The second workshop involved a discussion on how stakeholders would like to see WPD report on performance against their Business Plan, as requested by the regulator Ofgem.

- There was strong support for the 'three levels' of reporting that WPD will be using to report back to stakeholders on their performance against the Business Plan.

- It was suggested that the reports should be comparable against other DNOs.
- The shorter 20 page summary document was well received by the majority of stakeholders who felt the length and balance of text, graphs and images was clear. It was also a good starting point for finding out further information on WPD.
- Suggested improvements to the report included:
  - A more detailed explanation behind some of the key points.
  - An easy read version of the report.
- The longer document was considered difficult to navigate, with several stakeholders suggesting that there should be more signposting in the report. One stakeholder suggested including a glossary.
- Stakeholders generally agreed that all reports should be published on the WPD website along with an option to request a hard copy.

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	71%
	Public safety education	58%
Reliability	Power cut frequency and duration	78%
	Worst served customers	40%
Environment	Facilitating increased volumes of Low Carbon Technologies (e.g. solar PV)	76%
	Reducing the risk of harmful leaks from equipment	36%
Connections	Time taken to provide quotations and completed connections	58%
	Improved communication with connections customers	42%
Customer satisfaction	Improved communication with customers	49%
	Customer satisfaction results	42%
Social obligations	Improving the support services for customers during power cuts	60%
	Data analysis to identify vulnerable customers and to better target services	44%

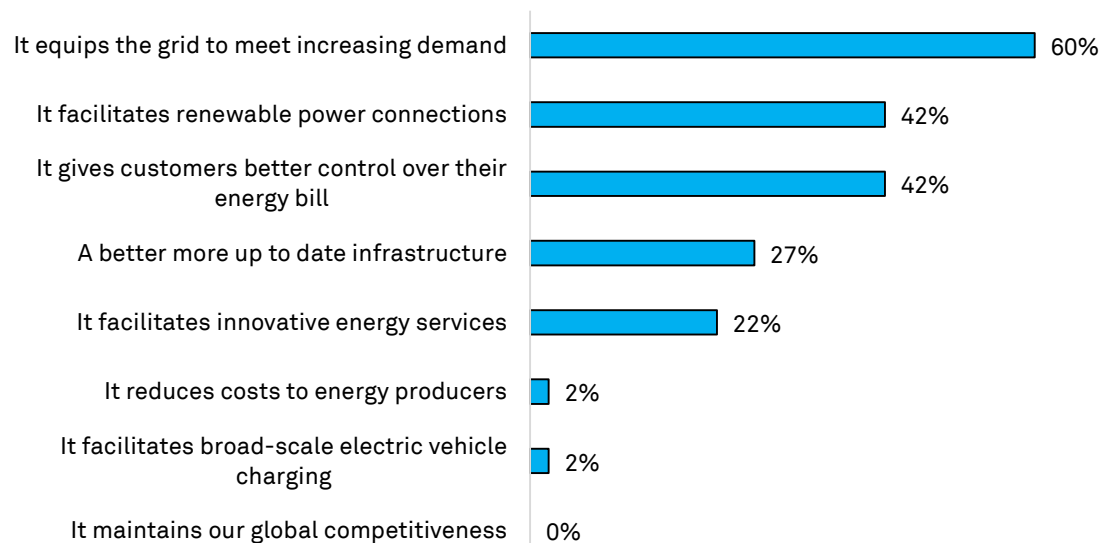


### Workshop 3: Spotlight on two WPD strategic priorities

#### Smart Networks

- The majority of stakeholders had a broad understanding of what a smart network is and felt that the video was accessible to a wide audience.
- Several stakeholders outside of the energy industry had a limited understanding of smart networks and the workshop presentation was the first time they had heard of the term.
- The list of challenges WPD would face in transitioning to a smart network was generally well received, however a large number of stakeholders felt education and public awareness were key challenges not included on the list.
- Other suggestions of issues WPD would face included uncertainty around transitioning to smart networks; outdated infrastructure; and poor communications.
- The strategic areas identified were considered comprehensive. Stakeholders found customer propositions, market integration and equipment particularly important. Other strategic areas suggested by stakeholders included maintenance and new technology.
- An app was also suggested to show the grid balance and capacity.
- Stakeholders felt that customer, stakeholder and government engagement focussing on education and the benefits of smart networks was crucial. Key suggestions of how to do this effectively included frequent stakeholder workshops and keeping all information on the website up to date.

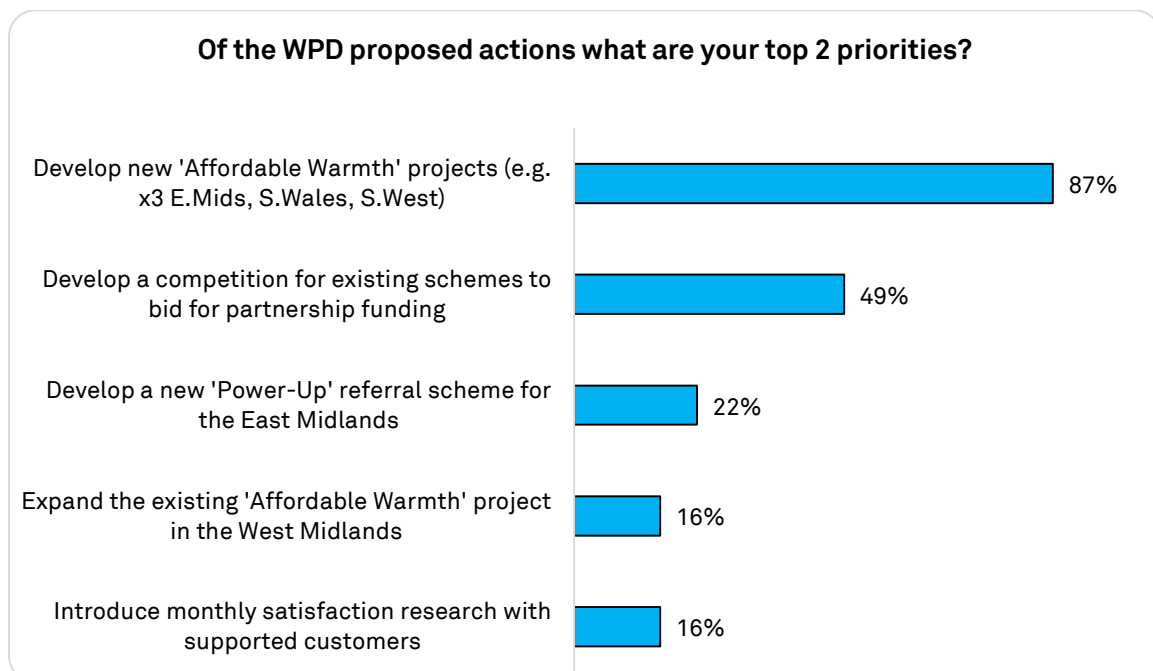
#### What do you think are the top 2 benefits of smart networks?

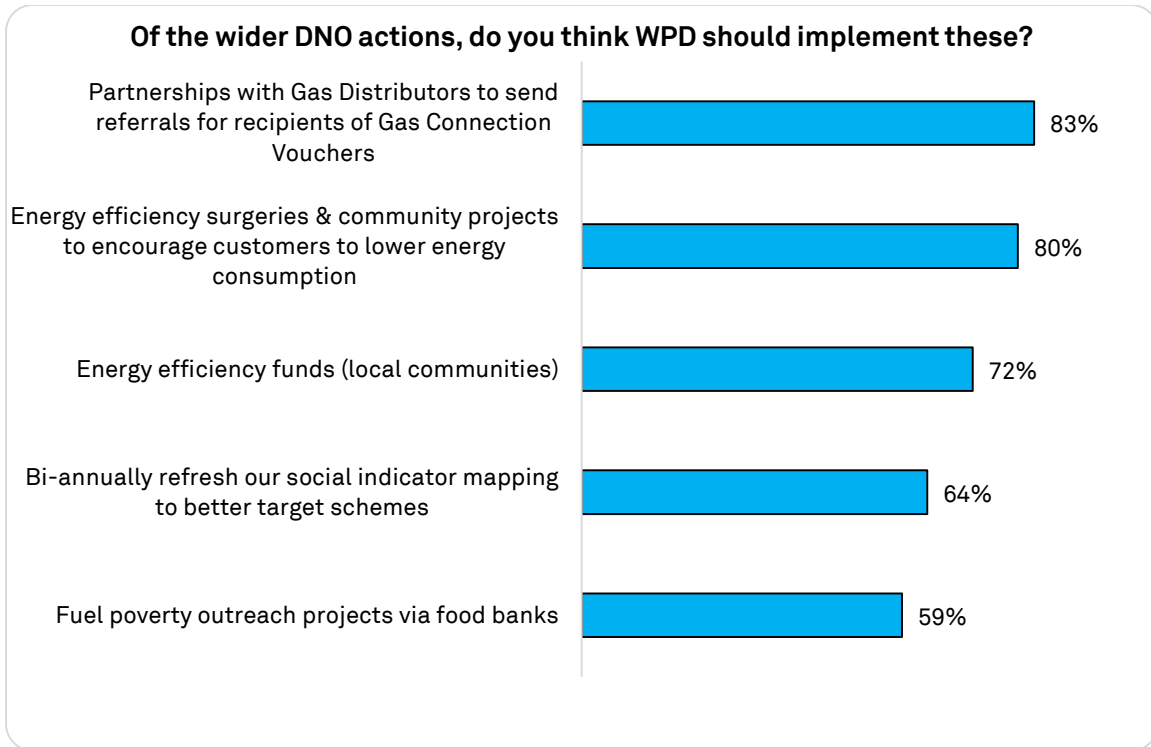




## Affordability

- Stakeholders had mixed opinions on “affordability” with some viewing it as WPD’s responsibility, suggesting DNOs should be doing more, and others viewing it as the role of electricity suppliers.
- ‘Fuel poverty outreach via food banks’ in particular, was highlighted as an area outside of WPD’s remit too far removed from the primary purpose of a DNO.
- Stakeholders suggested that improved relationships between WPD and suppliers would be important when establishing initiatives to avoid duplication and confusion.
- On several occasions it was noted that those in need of support with energy costs are often hard to reach and that identifying groups and individuals in need should be supported by local authorities.
- At the vote following the discussions, ‘develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding’ was ranked the highest of WPD’s planned actions, with ‘introduce monthly satisfaction research with supported customers’ as the lowest.
- At the vote following the discussions, the highest ranking ideas from other DNOs were ‘partnerships with Gas Distributors to send referrals for recipients of Gas Connection Vouchers’ and ‘energy efficiency surgeries and community projects to encourage customers to lower energy consumption’. The lowest ranked ideas were ‘bi-annually refresh our social indicator mapping to better target schemes’ and ‘fuel poverty outreach projects via food banks’.





### Written Feedback

- 81% of attendees found the workshop **very interesting**, while 19% found it interesting.
- 55% of attendees **strongly agreed** with the statement that they had the opportunity to make their points and ask questions, 43 % agreed with it, while 2% disagreed.
- 35% of attendees **strongly agreed** that the right topics had been covered, while 65% agreed.

Stakeholders were also given a chance to make additional comments on the feedback form. These included *'excellent and informative as always. Well done WPD for keeping our lights on', 'a good opportunity to value/share comments and views,'* and *'it's good to see "environment and sustainability" included as a priority – a good opportunity to help prioritise actions.'*

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

The first workshop involved a discussion 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:

- A housing/development representative commented that *'smart networks, fuel poverty and vulnerability are important for us as a housing association. There is also a link between lots of these things.'*
- A business customer representative felt that *'connection agreements and smart grids are a priority for us. It would also be things like renewable generation. My experience so far has been pretty positive in terms of connection agreements and the work that is being done.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I'm here to learn, and to find out if there are any opportunities for initiatives which DNOs can work together on and share knowledge within the industry. Working together on particular topics would let us have a more powerful voice.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'm mainly here to look at your progress and how you are pushing the agenda for global energy. I'm particularly interested in smart networks and network storage as well – just to see what information we can get off of your system to make life easier for our customers.'*
- A local authority officer commented that (s)he was *'just here to listen and find out if there's anything we can take back in terms of our planning and applications. We usually don't think about infrastructure when we're doing applications.'*

Table 2:

- A voluntary organisation representative said *'I'm here to find out more about what WPD do for vulnerable customers.'*
- An elected representative said *'I'm from a small rural parish of about 400 homes. Every year the parish is half covered by water from flooding, which affects how we get about. From a power point of view we have occasional short outages. I'm interested in resilience to severe weather and power cuts.'*

- An energy/utility representative stated *‘my particular interest is on how we transform the energy market to make it affordable, fair and carbon neutral.’*
- An environmental representative pointed out *‘my main concern is environmental issues, the impact of wind farms and solar farms on the rural landscape. I’m also here for general information and knowledge.’*
- A housing/development representative commented *‘I’m interested in WPD from a few angles. Connecting to grids is a big issue, the process of supplying electricity to tenants as well as fuel poverty and affordability for members. I’m very interested in the fuel poverty aspect of the workshop as I work with people who are vulnerable to power cuts. Beyond that, I’d like to find out more about rolling out smart meters, how connections work, smart networks and maybe selling your energy to neighbours.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘I work for a small developer. We have a 20 acre site with an anaerobic digester on site, 50,000 tonnes of food waste and a 1.5 mega watt turbine. We’re currently in the final stage of 10-mega watt battery storage on site and have a large grid connection. Because of the Salsa Project we produce low carbon cement on site and export any excess. We’re keen to look at how we can use the model we have on the generation side and work with community groups for them to use a mix of these too.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said the key was *‘new connections and the conditions that have to be fulfilled to get new connections. WPD should work with regulators on the innovation side, including smart networks and how active network management will affect market participants. So innovation, smart networks, and active network management. I would put “customer information and data” higher than last year.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘it’s important to see how we can work together with WPD to see how we can deliver the best for our customers and to look for areas of common interest and for opportunities for collaboration.’*
- An environmental representative believed *‘the real challenge is for renewable connections from remote locations and improving network capacity. Greater priority should be given to undergrounding and it could be extended to conservation areas, not just Areas of Outstanding National Beauty.’*
- A domestic customer felt that *‘for OAPs, the hot topic is knowing who to contact in case of power outage.’*

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative stated *‘how WPD looks after vulnerable customers and issues of “affordability” are top priorities for me. Secondly, as a customer of WPD, the service I received after a power cut was very poor. I wasn’t offered any help, but simply informed of the causes of the power outage – but this wasn’t my interest. In particular, nobody asked me if I was vulnerable or disabled, or on the Priority Services Register. Particularly for vulnerable and poor people, this power outage would have been serious. There was no talk about compensation either. So “customer awareness” should be a higher priority – many of the stakeholders are local authority staff or business representatives. Who represents the ordinary day-to-day customers? It’s not clear that they’re being represented here.’*
- An environmental representative queried *‘as a customer, as a new WPD customer in particular, what does WPD do to make new customers aware that they’re now automatically WPD customers? Many people would naturally call the supplier, not the distributor if they experience a power cut.’*
- An environmental representative however, argued that *‘although as a customer, customer service is important, more general “customer awareness” may not necessarily be as high.’*
- An elected representative recalled that (s)he had *‘suggested a fridge magnet and introduction pack at a previous workshop with WPD, in addition to a central, national number that anyone could ring as a WPD customer to contact WPD immediately. None of my parishioners received any of this. It’s as though WPD has scaled back on their emphasis on customer service. That being said, none of my parishioners have any complaints. All our experiences with WPD have been absolutely superb. Whenever you call WPD, say for instance to tell them that your power is off, they’re very courteous, they call out people immediately, and ring back to make sure everything is okay.’*
- An elected representative asked *‘should customers who are on WPD’s mailing list have received an introduction pack?’*
- An elected representative commented that s(he) did receive a welcome pack.



Table 5:

- A technology representative was particularly interested in discussions about data.
- An environmental representative was very interested in *‘why WPD uses overhead lines as opposed to underground ones.’*
- An environmental representative wanted to know more about *‘the use of renewable energy as a priority and how much renewable energy is being used.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘it’s very important to think about the blend between solar and wind energy.’*

Table 6:

- A business customer representative said *‘I want to get a collective view on what stakeholders think WPD should be doing, and on the visibility of what WPD are doing. Secondly, I’m interested in innovation areas that are being deployed on the network, and how WPD sees its role in developing those innovations.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘I’m here because of the cost and timeliness of connecting to a generator, and to see how we can work with WPD to become an innovative provider around issues like storage.’*
- A technology representative said *‘I’m here to find out why WPD aren’t working with us at the moment. There are some key issues, such as smart networks, that we’re also interested in.’*
- A local authority officer stated *‘I’m interested in where we may be able to store and produce energy, so that’s a key thing. Most important of all is “keeping the lights on”, because elected members are invariably the first people customers ring when they go off. I think communication is what’s important. And of course vulnerable people in the community.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, adding *‘I’m also interested in the day-to-day connections of new suppliers – sometimes that process can be very confusing. That said, most of the communications we have with WPD are better than those we have with suppliers.’*

“ I’m interested in where we may be able to store and produce energy. ”

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘I think they’re all covered, but my order of priorities would be different.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented *‘we talk to WPD on a regular basis, and we’re reacting to situations with them. The trick is to understand that close*



*relationship. We should also be encouraged by the storage facilities that are being introduced.'*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer highlighted *'I'm interested in issues with connections from solar power.'*
- A local authority officer said *'the environment is quite a special interest for me.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'the problems with connections at the end of last year really hit our business.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'how do we support WPD?'*
- An energy/utility representative said that *'our priority is finding out about new connections and their weaknesses.'*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *'energy storage is very important for our firm.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, and said that *'energy storage is the next elephant in the room.'* (S)he added that they *'have recently acquired a development site for energy storage, and would like to know if that is something that WPD are interested in?'*
- A voluntary organisation representative felt that energy storage *'is more of a transmission issue for the National Grid than the DNOs.'*
- A housing/development representative said his/her priority was *"workforce renewal, skills and training" and how we can support WPD with it. As the industry is changing so fast, we want to help DNOs with the workers and skills they need to help the industry as a whole.'* (S)he continued that *'the whole environment is changing so rapidly, for example even recent Ofgem submissions from a few years ago are now outdated.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted *"affordability" is certainly the main thing for us.'*

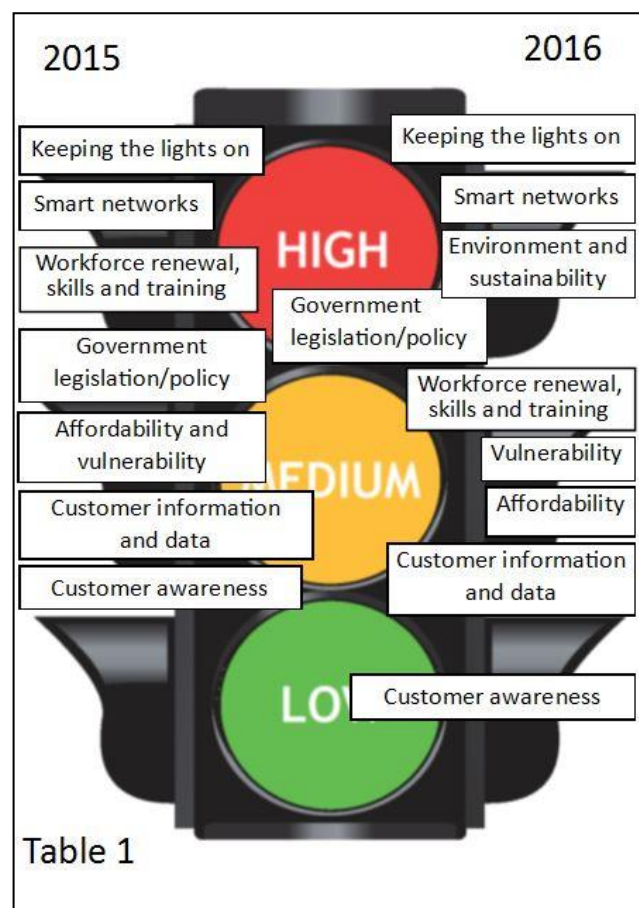




## 4.2 Do you agree with WPD's listed priorities?

Table 1:

- There was general consensus that “keeping the lights on” should remain the highest priority.
- A local authority officer felt that *“keeping the lights on” should stay in the same place.’*
- There was general consensus that “workforce renewal, skills and training” should be a high priority.
- A housing/development representative highlighted that *‘workplace renewal would enable you to do a lot of things. It’s a sector wide thing. It should be around the same.’*
- An energy/utility representative reiterated that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” is really important.’* (S)he also added *‘I don’t know whether I would switch it with “government legislation/policy”’. The Government recently changed its view on the renewable sector, which indicates that it’s a more important one to focus on. We have seen that a very short term switching of policy will have a ripple effect.’*
- There was general consensus that “government legislation/policy” should be a higher priority.
- A local authority officer raised a point that *‘in terms of planning applications, the switch in tariff is affecting a lot of farms in the area because the policies have been changing so quickly. Two years ago, we were getting planning permission for things, now they all get refused.’*
- A housing/development representative considered that *‘those things can change incredibly quickly. The oil price is a third of what it was. The Government doesn’t help because it’s making crazy decisions and long term planning is always a pain. The Government isn’t helping on the engineering shortage either; this has been the case for a long time. They have done nothing about educational policies to encourage more engineers.’*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *‘it always comes down to the Government and whether they decide they want to be at the forefront of things.’*



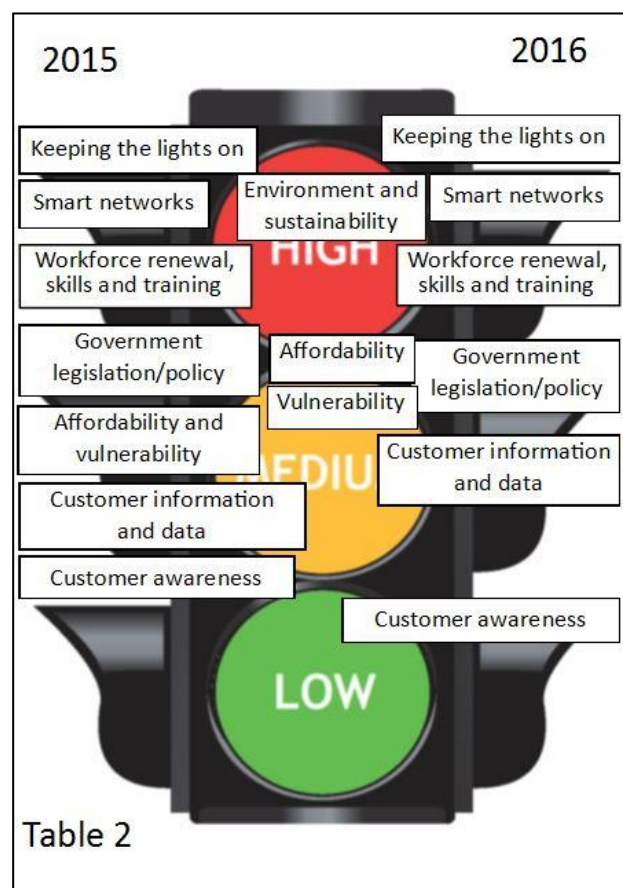
- A housing/development representative felt that *“government legislation/policy” should be higher because it’s related to everything else.*
- There was general consensus that “customer awareness” was a low priority.
- A business customer representative said *‘I would put “customer awareness” at the bottom. It’s a monopoly, but the people who don’t know you will never know you, such as my parents for example. All I have done is to stick your fridge magnet there, and they won’t worry about who you are as long as they know the number to call.’*
- A housing/development representative mentioned that *‘as long as you are dealing with “vulnerability” issues and other essential things, while also sharing information, then I suppose “customer awareness” has been dealt with anyway.’*
- There was general consensus that “affordability” should be a medium priority
- An energy/utility representative raised a point that *‘customers I have spoken to say the tariff for the actual usage is far more important to them than the little bit the DNO puts on the bill.’*
- A housing/development representative emphasised that *“affordability” needs to be balanced out with the need to fight climate change. If you start to invest now, ultimately we can plan ahead to save a much larger amount in the future. It will be expensive now but we’ll reap the benefits later.’*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed and argued that *‘renewable energy is taking stick for the high bills when it’s not causing high bills. As far as renewable energy is concerned, I don’t think it necessarily affects “affordability”. What they’re paying for renewables is nothing close to what they paid to appease China.’*
- A local authority officer agreed that *‘we also have to look at the long term effects and what the fuel costs are going to be. Renewable options have to be promoted if we are being long sighted.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘how much renewables will cost customers is dictated essentially by “government legislation/policy”. They will say that wind farms have to be paid for by the customer.’*
- There was general consensus that “smart networks” should be a high priority.
- An energy/utility representative insisted that *‘personally I think “smart networks” should be at the top of the list.’*
- There was general consensus that “vulnerability” was a medium priority.
- A business customer representative felt that *“vulnerability” should go above “affordability”. My parents are getting older and I’m not caring for them. I’ve already got them a fridge magnet.’*
- There was general consensus that “environment and sustainability” should be a high priority.

**“ We also have to look at the long term effects and what the fuel costs are going to be. Renewable options have to be promoted if we are being long sighted. ”**

- A local authority officer mentioned that *“environment and sustainability” should be somewhere around “government legislation/policy” because I think that’s what we should be promoting. It has implications for everything.*
- There was general consensus that “customer information and data” was a low priority.

Table 2:

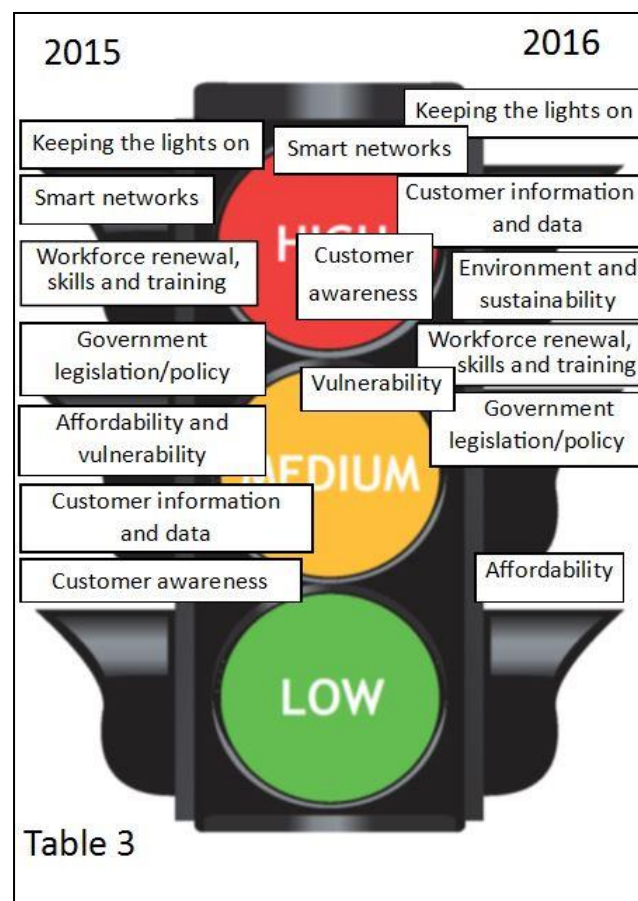
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out that *‘it’s very important to get people trained in the industry; apprenticeships are vital.’*
- An elected representative argued *‘I’d put “workforce renewal, skills and training” high. What sort of skills do you require? Do you need people with hands-on skills to work on the network? What qualifications are you looking at? Are you proactively going to schools and universities?’*
- There was consensus across the table that “smart networks” were a high priority and very important.
- A developer/connections representative made the point that *“customer awareness” should stay where it is. The average customer looks at where the energy is provided not WPD.’*
- An elected representative disagreed pointing out that *‘consumers don’t ring up the provider if there’s a power cut.’*
- An environmental representative asked *‘is it right that we import 20% of our electricity from Europe? So if the Government want to increase or decrease that, you would be affected by that wouldn’t you?’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘based on my priorities, I feel that WPD might need to do some stuff in spite of “government legislation/policy”. The Government need to better understand the industry. They still think things are impossible that are in WPD’s Business Plan.’*
- An elected representative stated *‘if my lights went out I’d contact my energy supplier. I wouldn’t have a clue.’*
- Discussing the fridge magnet containing the power cut number an energy/utility representative commented *‘it’s not as luminescent as it was intended to be.’*



- There was general consensus that “keeping the lights on” was the most important WPD priority.
- An elected representative commented *“environment and sustainability” is a priority, but whether it’s a high priority I’m not sure.*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I’d put the “environment and sustainability” right at the top. You’ve got to cope with the impact of climate change. You’ve got to balance that with the visual side of things.’*
- A housing/development representative highlighted that *“affordability” is becoming increasingly important as budgets get tighter. “Affordability” isn’t just about people living in the home; it’s about people trying to connect systems to the grid.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative argued *‘I’d put “affordability” next to “government legislation/policy”.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *“affordability” is going to be important and is linked to “government legislation/policy”. It could be the next thing that the treasury tries to hit.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘I’d put “vulnerability” slightly above “affordability” to make sure it’s affordable for those that really can’t afford it – rather than cutting the price for those of us who can.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative argued *‘I still think “vulnerability” and “affordability” are connected.’*
- An environmental representative questioned *‘how do WPD sell energy to the various areas? How do you get paid to do it? Who has the bulk of the bill/the money?’*

Table 3:

- A domestic customer agreed that *“keeping the lights on” is the main function of WPD.’*
- There was general consensus that “keeping the lights on” should be the top priority.
- A developer/connections representative said *“smart networks” is complementary to “keeping the lights on” and they should be represented as equal.’*
- An energy/utility representative contested that *“smart networks” is a subset of “keeping the lights on”.*



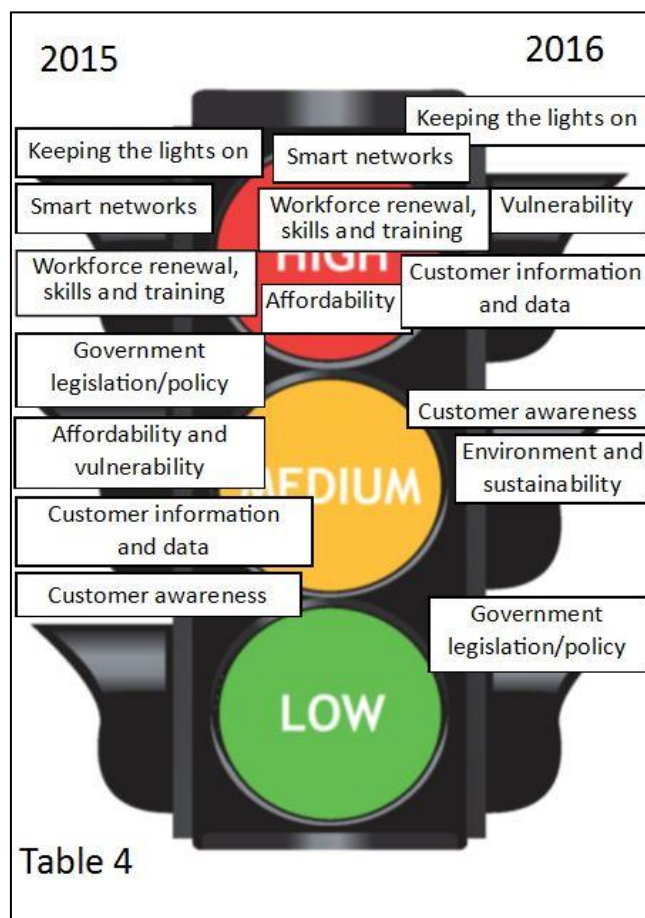


- A domestic customer highlighted that there needs to be *'better weighting for "customer awareness".'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'WPD already has good "customer awareness" – its reports are on the website and it's very easy to contact them – so it's not a high priority.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *"workforce renewal, skills and training is about right where it is. Every industry has similar problems.'*
- A domestic customer raised the point that *'WPD won't be able to keep lights on if they can't fix the network.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'we're seeing more and more reliance by DNOs on consultants when there is a knowledge gap.'*
- An elected representative asked *'how many of WPD's 6,500 employees are craftsmen who are fixing networks and is the number going up?'*
- There were no objections to "government legislation/policy" remaining the same as last year.
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'my feeling is that the responsibilities for consumer "vulnerability" for a DNO are more intense than "affordability", so if the two are split, "vulnerability" should be higher. All of the priorities are interlinked.'*
- A domestic customer raised the point that *'for old consumers, the concept of "affordability" is concentrated with the supplier, not the DNO. They are concerned with the supplier taking care of their needs. "Vulnerability" is higher than "affordability".'*
- There was general consensus on placing "affordability" at the bottom of medium priority on the scale.
- An energy/utility representative said *"customer information and data" should go high and near to "smart networks".'*
- A domestic customer remembered that *'last year, everyone said that it should go high as well.'*
- An elected representative argued that *"environment and sustainability" should be moved up the list.'*
- An environmental representative agreed that *'it should be very high up the list.'*

Table 4:

- There was a general consensus that "keeping the lights on" was the top priority.

- An energy/utility representative and an elected representative both argued that *“customer awareness” should be higher – perhaps even a medium-high priority.*
- There was general agreement that “customer awareness” should be a medium priority.
- An energy/utility representative reasoned that *‘vulnerable customers should be a top priority when things do go wrong – “keeping the lights on” is fine, but when things do go wrong for domestic customers, “vulnerability” is much more than just “customer awareness”.*
- There was general agreement that “vulnerability” should be a high priority and a higher priority than “customer awareness”.
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘what is WPD’s role vis-à-vis the customer Priority Service Register, or customers who face “affordability” issues?’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *“affordability” should be a high priority.*
- An environmental representative pointed out that *‘we welcome WPD’s emphasis on environmental issues, and in national parks the impact of electricity networks as a high visual amenity. Clearly “environment and sustainability” issues are not as important as “keeping the lights on”, “vulnerability” or “affordability,” but it’s really important nonetheless, particularly for those visiting and spending money on these areas of natural beauty.’*
- There was general agreement on this point.
- An elected representative underscored the *‘importance of “smart networks”. You’ve got to provide people with the information they need, so “customer information and data” is a medium-to-high priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative contended that *“government legislation/policy” is what WPD is required to do. I think you can influence it because a lot of what happens to our energy bills and the policies that affect energy bills feeds into other issues too and impacts “government legislation/policy” indirectly.*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘often “government legislation/policy” is just imposed on you. So perhaps influencing it isn’t such a high priority.’*



- An environmental representative stressed that *“smart networks” have an impact on the “environment and sustainability”. The “smart networks” have to be in the right place, they can’t just be anywhere. So they’re really important from an environmental perspective.’*

Table 5:

- A technology representative said that *“affordability” should be towards the top. But also “government legislation/policy” is not changing fast enough to implement the necessary technological changes for “smart networks”. This should be more important.’*
- A local authority officer noted that there could be a *‘significant difference between Welsh Government and UK Government.’*
- An environmental representative said *‘I would not put “environment and sustainability” higher than half way on WPD’s priority list.’*
- A developer/connections representative added that *‘a lot of commercial businesses are trying to adopt more ethical approaches.’*
- A technology representative said *‘if “environment and sustainability” wasn’t on the list we would all say that it should be, especially in order to meet the climate change targets.’*
- An elected representative was concerned about *‘how low down “customer awareness” is on the priority list. Customers cannot engage if they are not aware.’*

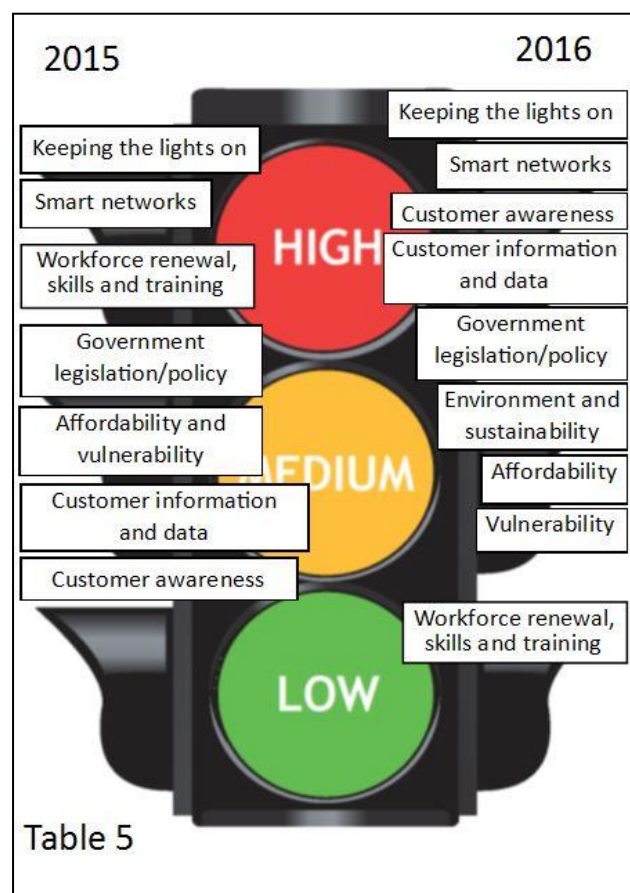
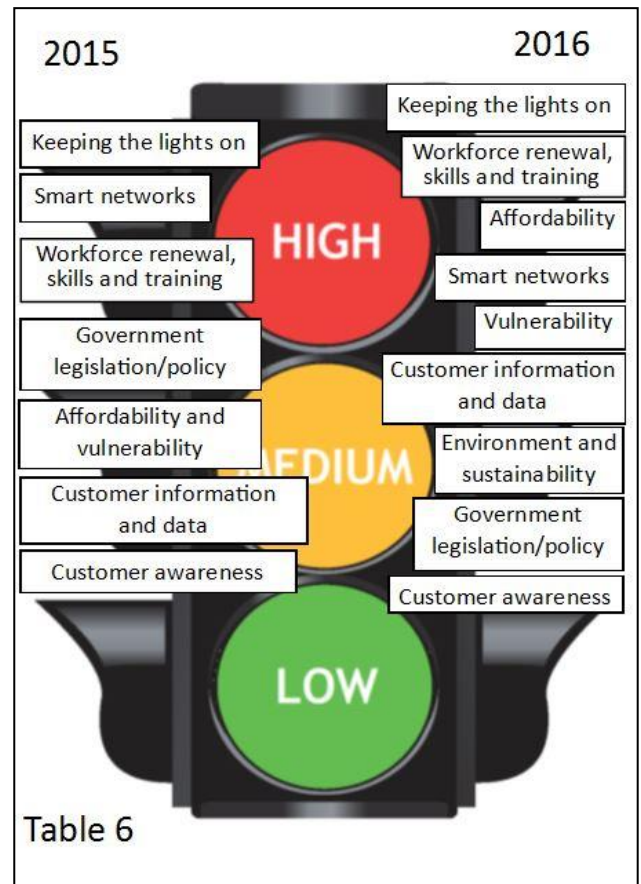


Table 6:

- The table agreed that “keeping the lights on” remained the top priority.
- A technology representative said *‘I’m a bit biased on “smart networks”, and a lot of these are intrinsically linked.’*
- A local authority officer argued *‘I wouldn’t have “smart networks” at the top – more in the middle.’*



- A business customer representative suggested that *“smart networks” allow for innovation and “keeping the lights on” more effectively.*
- A technology representative agreed, adding that *“without “smart networks”, you’re still in the stone ages – it influences all other areas.”*
- A local authority officer replied that *“it depends what you mean by “smart networks”.”*
- A local authority officer said *“you’re not going to be able to “keep the lights on” or develop “smart networks” without good “workforce renewal, skills and training”.”*
- The table agreed that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” should sit near the top.*
- A local authority officer suggested *“the biggest problem is that government officials seem to make it up as they go along. I’d say it’s a medium priority.”*
- A business customer representative argued that *“it depends whether policy is dictated by the Government, or whether the DNO can influence “government legislation/policy”.”*
- A technology representative argued that *“affordability” is a high-to-medium priority.*
- A local authority officer said *“it depends on what proportion of the final bill the charge constitutes, but if people can’t afford it, what’s the point in getting the electricity to them?”*
- A business customer representative argued that *“I personally think “affordability” should be higher, and above “smart networks”.”*
- A technology representative asked *“what does “customer awareness” mean?”*
- A technology representative added that *“if the lights are kept on, nobody really minds about “customer awareness”.”*
- A business customer representative observed that *“with social media and the internet, “customer awareness” is a lot better than it was – information is a lot more accessible and I think “customer information and data” is linked to that.”*
- A local authority officer suggested that *“vulnerability” needs to be higher.”*
- A local authority officer said *“the “environment and sustainability” is obviously important in terms of people’s opposition to pylons in the country.”*
- A technology representative observed that *“we have to think about what we can change in the short term and what’s a longer term project – I mean you can’t put all the pylons underground overnight.”*
- A local authority officer said *“I think “environment and sustainability” is a bit low.”*



- A business customer representative agreed, adding that *‘if you think about the commitment we’ve made to sourcing renewable energy, it would be laughable for energy distribution to undermine that.’*

Table 7:

- A voluntary organisation representative said that *“vulnerability” needs to be placed higher than “affordability”.*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘without “keeping the lights on”, all of the other priorities are irrelevant.’*
- A developer/connections representative suggested that *“environment and sustainability” should definitely go below “affordability”.*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *“smart networks” make everything else work better.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *“customer information and data” should be placed higher. WPD has very little control over “government legislation/policy” so it shouldn’t bother.’*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed, saying *‘as a company, we’re based in the U.S. We worked to bring officials to a networking event in the U.S, and it drove legislative change.’*

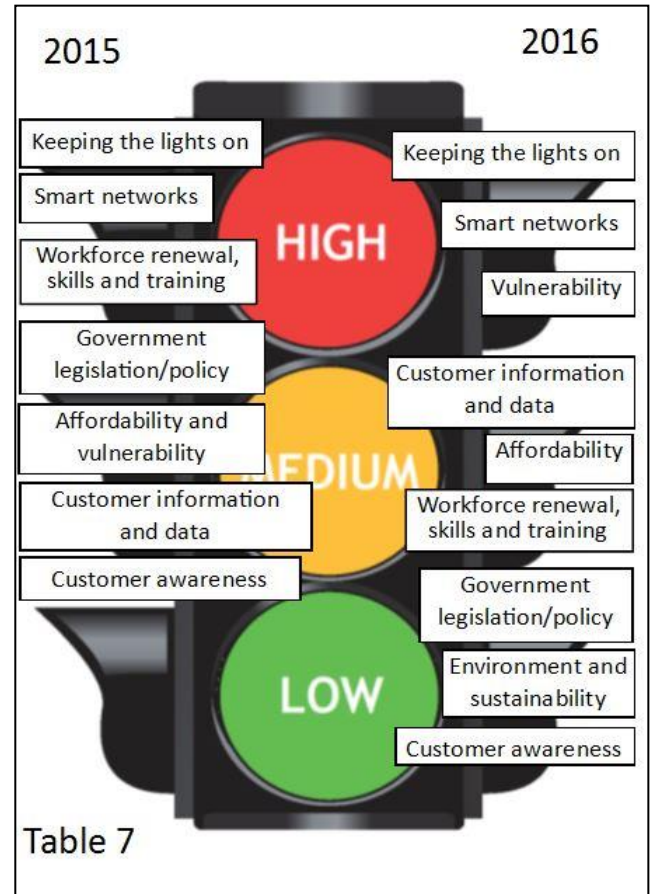


Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative stated that *“keeping the lights on” and “smart networks” are very important.’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed *“keeping the lights on” is the reason the company exists.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *‘if you’re a customer you don’t particularly mind about “government legislation/policy” or “workforce renewal, skills and training”, from their point of view “customer awareness” would be a top priority.’*

- A developer/connections representative made the point that *‘WPD, as a DNO, is probably more invisible than suppliers and I think, that’s why “customer awareness” is lacking for WPD; they are not the people you’re paying your bills to. I would say improving this is a priority.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *““vulnerability” is WPD’s responsibility.’*
- A developer/connections representative raised the issue that *‘WPD need to know who is vulnerable on their network. It should be proactive; when people need help they shouldn’t have to wait for a phone call.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that *‘being purely selfish, “smart networks” is a top priority. It’s hugely important for generation.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented *““smart networks” will be useful for everyone. People need to get used to using power in a different way.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *““environment and sustainability” is still an important priority and there are a lot of resources going into the distribution network. The equipment has a large carbon footprint.’*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *““environment and sustainability” is tied to “government legislation/policy”. Companies tend to work harder on it when it is a governmental priority and the Government’s interest seems to be waning.’*
- A developer/connections representative expressed that *““government legislation/policy” still impacts a lot. We’re having to move to biomass from wind turbines due to recent changes.’*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *““workforce renewal, skills and training” is very important. If you don’t have the workforce there, you can’t react quickly.’*
- A local authority officer said that *‘presumably “customer information and data” is closely linked to “smart networks”?’*

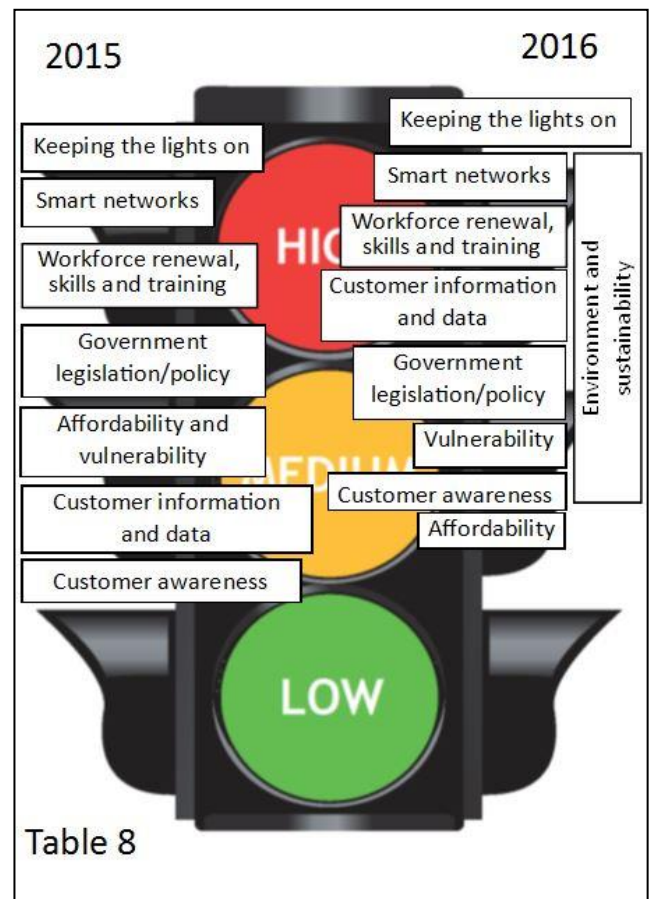
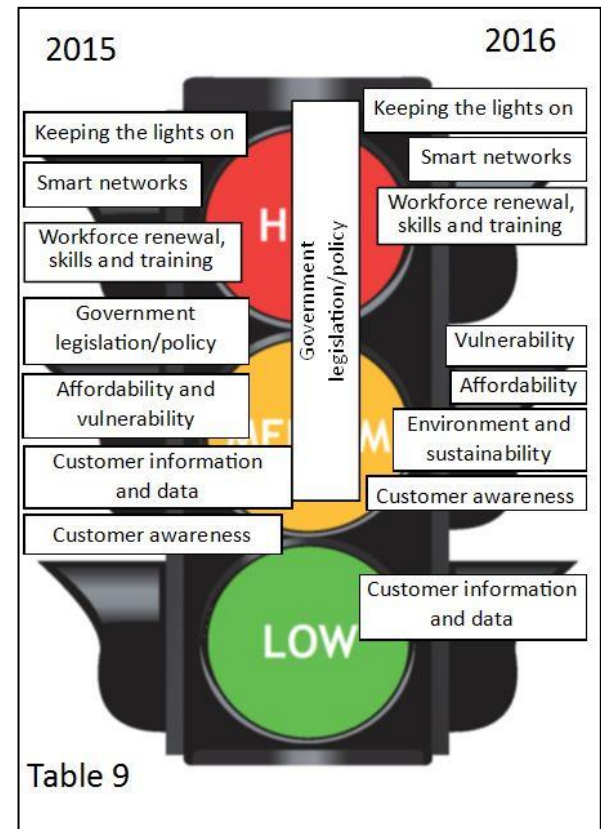


Table 9:

- A developer/connections representative said *‘this list is basically right, and is concise. Overall it’s a pretty good list.’*
- A housing/development representative agreed, but noted that *‘some of these priorities are rapidly becoming the same thing, the lines between them are blurring.’*
- Like all of the other attendees, he agreed that “keeping the lights on” is *‘still the number one priority.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented that “environment and sustainability” issues *‘are not as important as many of the other things. “Keeping the lights on” is the top priority, and how you deliver it affects the “environment and sustainability”.’*
- However, a housing/development representative disagreed, and suggested *‘there are two sides to it, because climate change impacts on both “keeping lights on” and the “environment and sustainability”.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said that *“smart networks” are the key to the future because by better understanding the network you can reduce your need for the investment in the future.’* (S)he then added that *‘if you get it correct at a lower level, you can spend less investing on the higher levels, which affects “affordability”.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out that *“workforce renewal, skills and training” is essential because without the right skills you can’t keep the lights on.’* (S)he pointed out that *‘there will soon be a shortage of skilled people to do the work required.’*
- A housing/development representative suggested that *“government legislation/policy” is an issue that appears to be on the side, but actually underlies many of the other priorities here.’* (S)he continued *‘WPD definitely has a role to play in influencing “government legislation/policy”.’*
- A housing/development representative claimed that *“affordability” and “vulnerability” are essential, but the two words certainly mean different things.’* (S)he then added that *‘WPD is not a social service or a charity, but it still has a social responsibility.’*
- A law firm representative expanded on this point, and stated that *‘WPD should not be subsidising failed government policy, it’s not the DNO’s role.’*





- A developer/connections representative made the point that *“customer information and data” is important to create “smart networks”. You can’t have one without the other.’*
- A law firm representative agreed, and stated that *‘such customer engagement should never be a low priority for WPD.’*

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

Table 1:

- A business customer representative commented that *‘the fridge magnets were a good idea for getting your number out and making yourself known to people who aren’t in the industry.’*

Table 3:

- A domestic customer argued that *‘the people are aware of WPD, but they’re not always aware of who to contact. Only six of 100 are in contact with WPD. They might not realise that there’s an opportunity to be in contact with WPD – they assume it’s only high level contact.’*
- An elected representative raised the point that *“environment and sustainability” is becoming increasingly important. People in the Forest of Dean are becoming acutely aware of it.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed that *‘it does complement the data in the Priority Services Register and helps DNOs better understand customer patterns and inform engagement.’*



Table 5:

- A technology representative mentioned that *‘data privacy and security are separate issues; both are important. While privacy is an issue with smart meters, data security challenges are created when there is a new access point for hackers that did not exist before.’* (S)he continued, *‘whatever data is available to suppliers should also be available to the individual.’*

Table 6:

- A local authority officer said *‘there’s a huge difference between commercial and public organisations trying to connect, which is why public focus on renewables is so far behind the commercial sector. So I think there are issues around working with WPD more sustainably and long-term.’*
- A technology representative suggested *‘WPD could be more proactive on the innovation front, having events such as this where you have organisations who can come and present ideas on things that aren’t really working. It’s time well spent in terms of understanding the industry as a whole. More innovation, transparency and collaboration.’*
- A local authority officer added *‘speaking as a customer, WPD could be coming to us proactively to suggest when I’ve got availability and can reduce my tariff.’*
- A business customer representative said *‘WPD and others seem reluctant to work together for the good of the industry.’*

Table 9:

- A voluntary organisation representative said (s)he would *‘like to be more involved with fuel poverty alongside WPD.’*
- A developer/connections representative made the suggestion that *‘WPD should publish their personnel and contacts more, for example who the policy engineers are. You currently can’t find them on Google, but you should be able to find the names and positions on the internet easily and quickly.’*

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

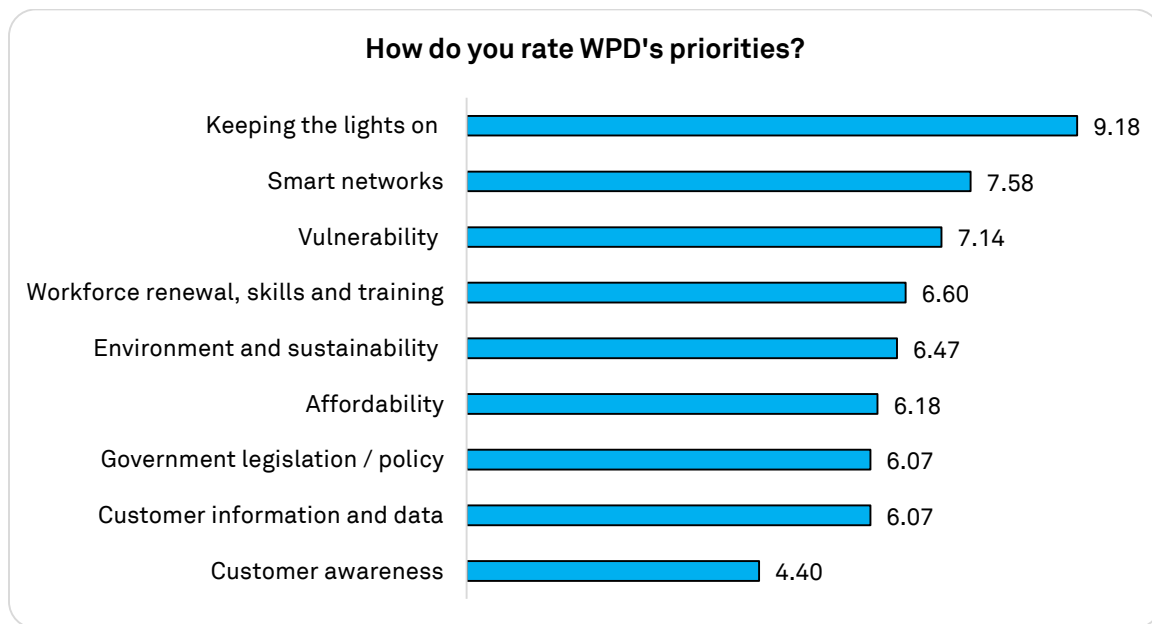
Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative asked whether *‘there is good “customer awareness” of WPD?’*
- A local authority officer asked *‘what can WPD do about “affordability”?’*

## 4.5 Individual voting results

After the group discussions, 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.

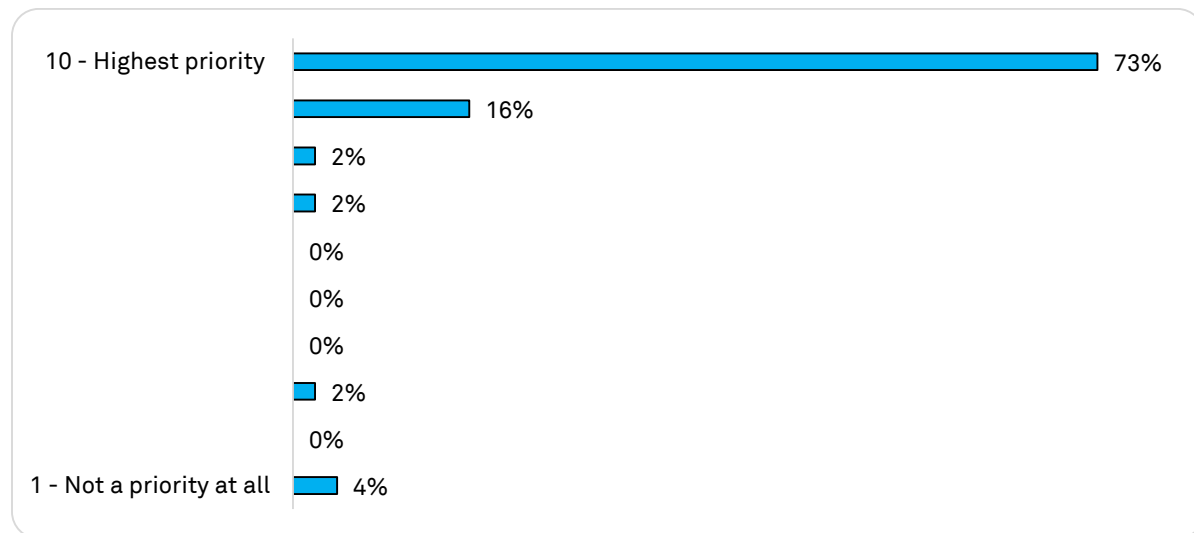
### Overall results:



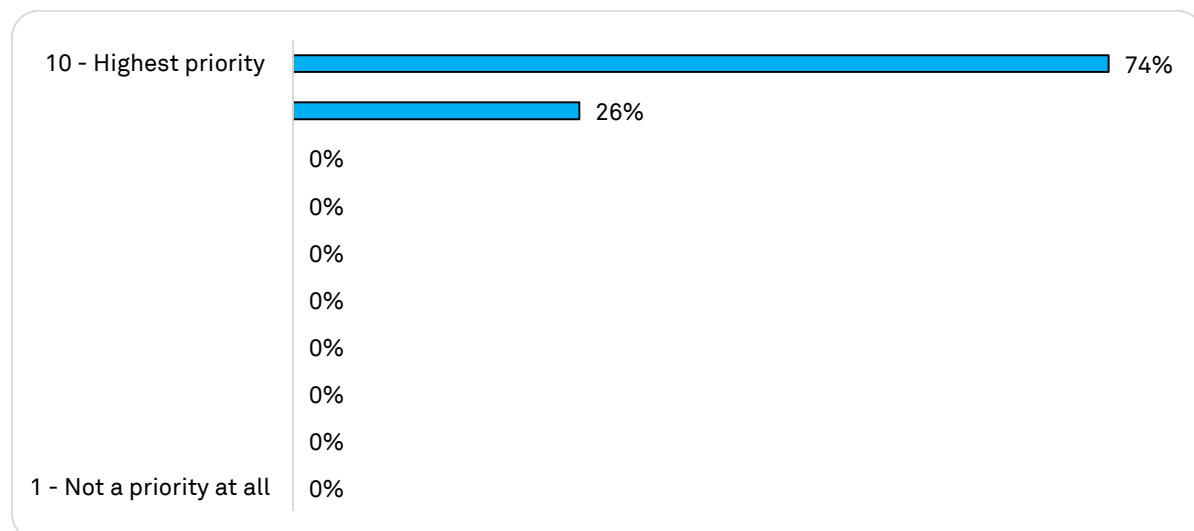


### Priority-by-priority results:

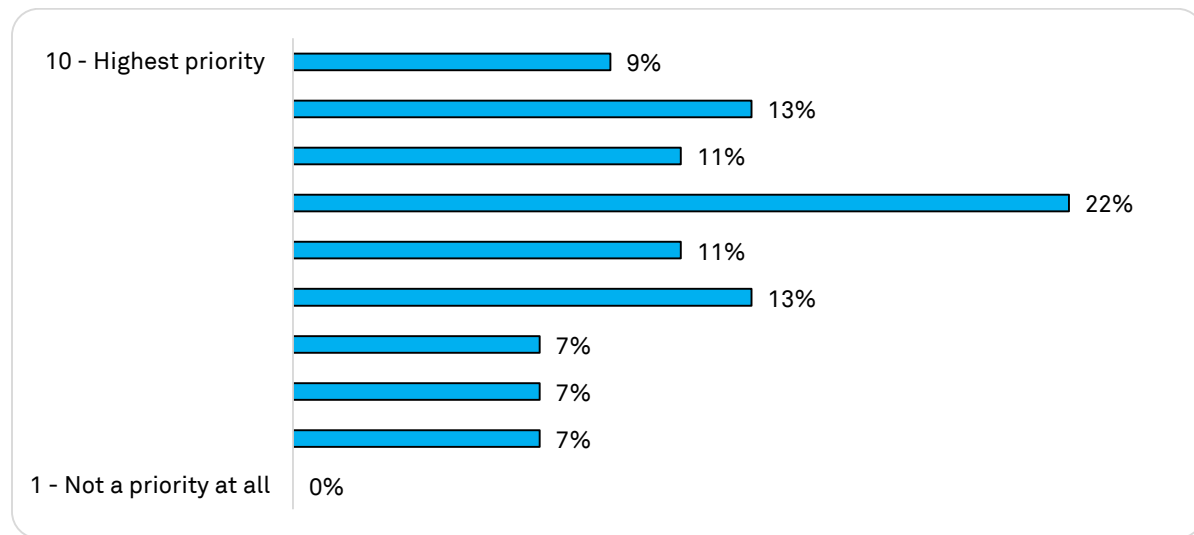
How do you rate “keeping the lights” on as a long-term priority?



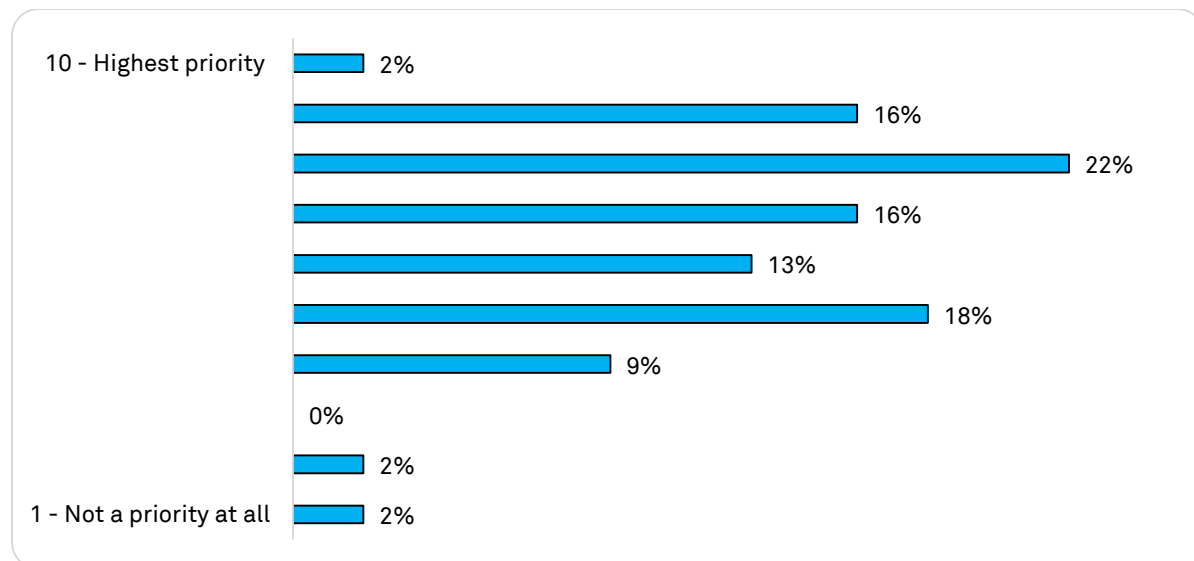
How do you rate “smart networks” as a long-term priority?



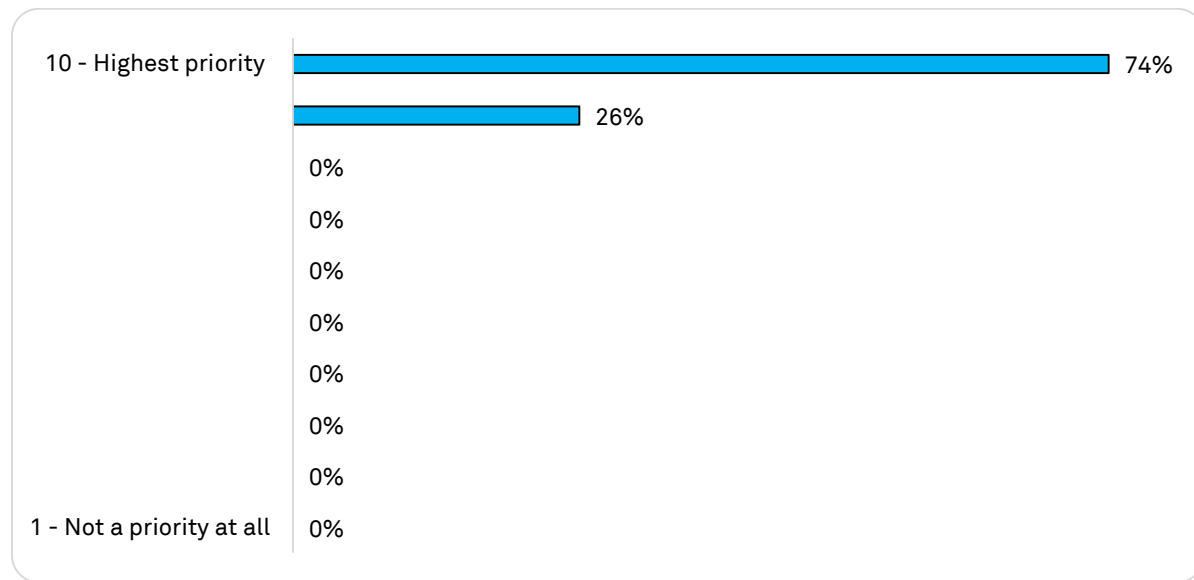
How do you rate “environment and sustainability” as a long-term priority?



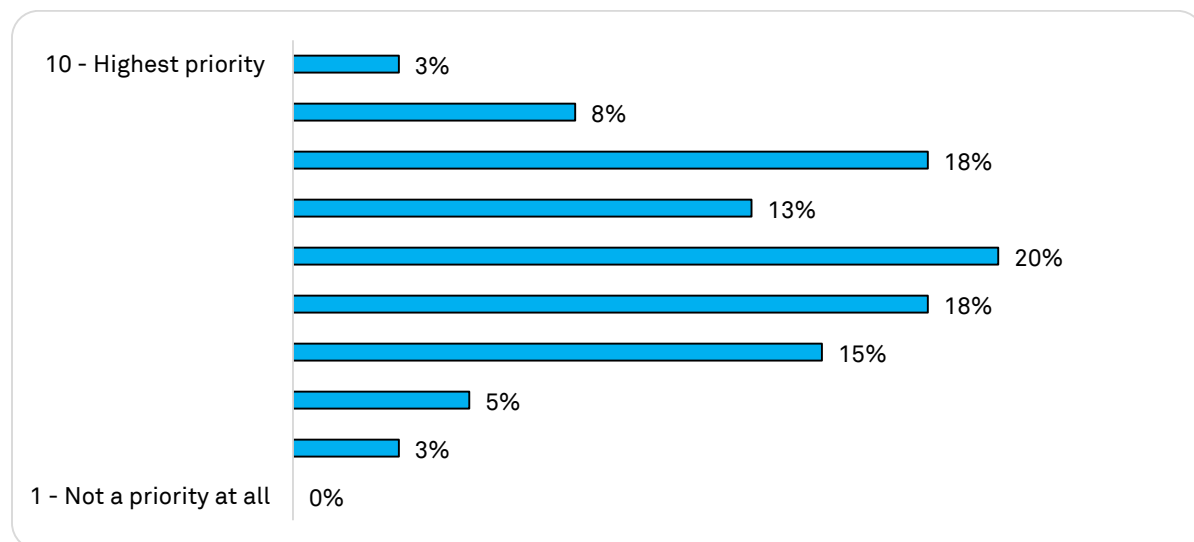
How do you rate “workforce renewal, skills and training” as a long-term priority?



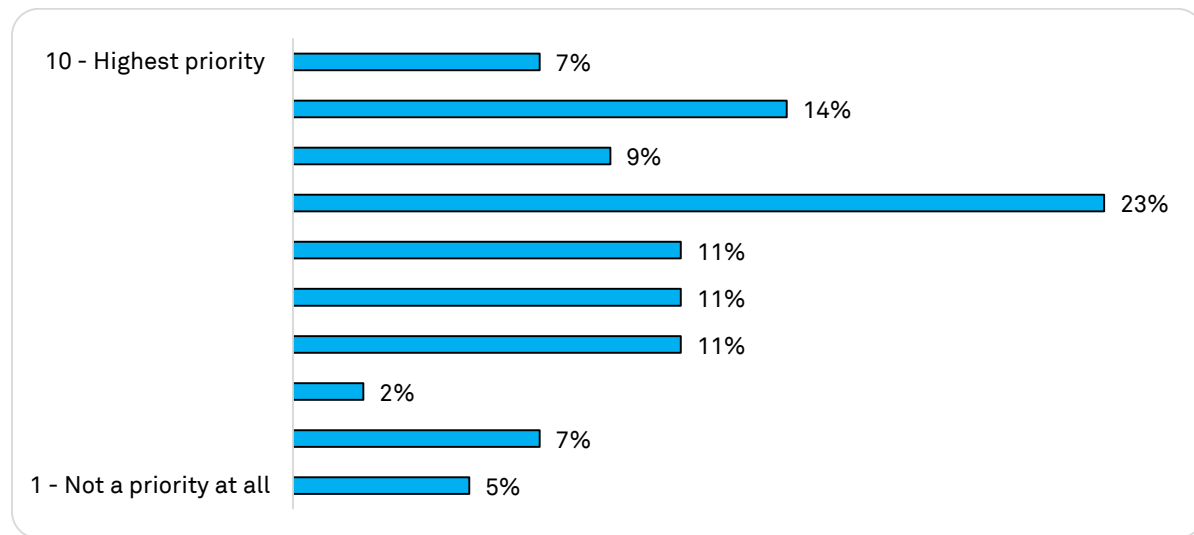
How do you rate “vulnerability” as a long-term priority?



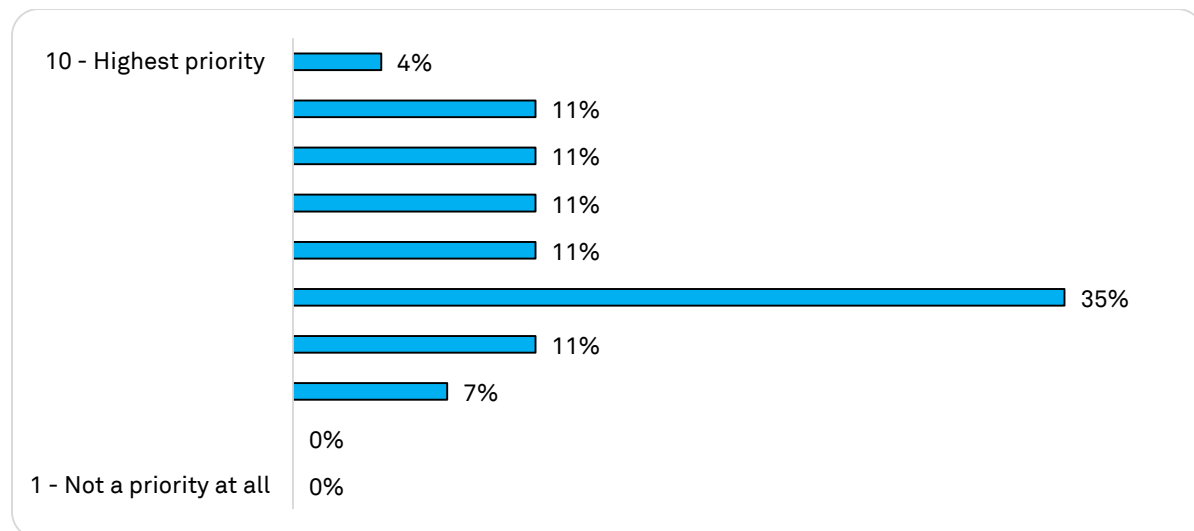
How do you rate “government legislation/policy” as a long-term priority?



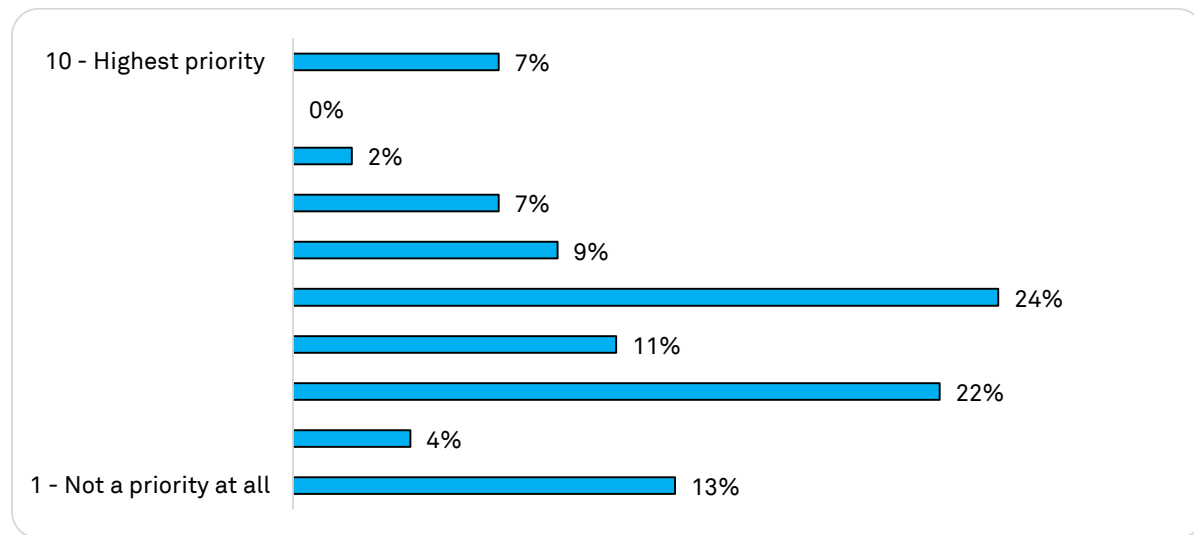
How do you rate “affordability” as a long-term priority?



How do you rate “customer information and data” 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 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 should 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:

- The general consensus was that the proposed approach was still suitable.
- A business customer representative said *'seems good to me.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'it depends on who is reading it really. I'm not a fan of journalists and they are the types who will pick up the juiciest bits of the one page summary and put it out there without looking properly at what has gone in there. That's the only downside of your one page document.'*

Table 2:

- An environmental representative pointed out that *'different people will want different levels of information in reporting.'*

Table 3:

- A domestic customer agreed with the approach and said *'I think it's the best system generally. If people want more detail, they can move into the summary or report. It would be good to be able to find the same information in all of the reports for accessibility.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'I 100% agree with this method. I think it's fantastic – you should be able to dig into the information if it's important to'*

*you, but everyone should be able to access it. Citizens Advice has recommended that the summary should be comparable across DNOs. Comparability across the industry is important.'*

- A domestic customer raised the point that accessibility should be improved and that WPD *'also probably needs an easy-read version. The current system is not an easy-read one.'*

Table 5:

- All participants agreed that the proposed approach was suitable.

Table 6:

- The table agreed that all three tiers were valuable.
- A business customer representative suggested *'some will want a snap shot and some an overview – there's people who will want different things, so the three-level approach is good.'*
- A technology representative said *'the only caveat I would add is that all levels should be published online by default for efficiency and the environment, with options for hard copies for those that require brail or other requests.'*

*“ The only caveat I would add is that all levels should be published online by default for efficiency and the environment. ”*

Table 7:

- A developer/connections representative said *'I think the style is fine.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *'given my position, I just want to see the basics.'*
- A legal representative agreed with this sentiment.

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said *'I personally think it's quite good. I get various reports from DNOs and I find WPD's to be the best.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'competitors' reports are not so clear, there is no quick glance guide.'*



- A developer/connections representative commented that *'the three levels make sense.'*
- An energy/utility representative expressed that *'our CEO would be really interested in the top level report. I'm more interested in the long report. I think the structure is right for this.'*

Table 9:

- A voluntary organisation said that *'customers want a good report, which clearly states WPD's costs.'* (S)he questioned *'do customers really need a newsletter? It might be too expensive, and not widely read.'*
- A law firm representative commented that *'the documents are good and I like the colour charts and the different approaches for different types of people.'*

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

Table 1:

- A local authority officer said *'it's not very clear at the start; something like a cover page would be useful.'*
- A business customer representative stated *'it's good. Everyone likes a good graph.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed and observed that *'it has the right sort of balance with little bits of text.'* S(he) also brought up that *'the bit about flood defences doesn't really pop out when you're flipping through and I think that's a major issue.'*
- A housing/development representative raised a point that *'this report tells us how you have performed in terms of last year, but I think it would be interesting to include something on how you've performed in relation to other DNOs.'*

Table 2:

- An elected representative asked *'who sees these reports? Will this be clear on the website? Has it been redesigned to go on phones too? You need to make sure it looks okay on phones and computers. I live in a rural area with very slow broadband and sometimes it defaults to showing the low-res version of documents - it's very painful. A PDF is definitely needed so you can download this. I could have a printer friendly version too.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *'it's a very clear short document.'*

- An elected representative emphasised *'you've got to be aware of WPD and what's going on. For people that want to go and look at the basics it's entirely appropriate.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented *'the length is just right.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'the majority of us would scan the summary or pick particular areas to read. Newsletters are useful when you can click the headings and go to the area you want. Is there a summary document that you could click through to the area you want?'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *'this is WPD's opportunity to communicate the strategy and say who they are; it could really increase "customer awareness". Could we explain the why behind some of the information in here? It would be good if the section on "environment and sustainability" could link to the landscape side of environment and then to carbon emissions reduction and what you're doing to adapt. If you could show how you balance this with reliability that would be good. These could all be connected.'*
- An environmental representative asked *'are you going to deliver this via post to all of your customers?'*
- An elected representative asked *'are the causes of power cuts noted in here? When I ring up and there's a power cut I ask how many people are out. If it's 400 it's our whole parish. The more I interact the more I understand where the powers coming in and how it's spreading round the village. I want to know why the power cut took place.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'is there an opportunity to find out some metrics around the role of WPD in reducing its carbon foot print and saving energy?'*
- There was consensus on the table that a quick overview which included pictures was a good starting point for most people, then interested parties could delve into the more detailed document.



Table 3:

- An elected representative said *'the report seems competent.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'is this only available online?'*
- A domestic customer suggested, *'although it's generally fine for most people, you should produce an easy-read report with pictures that relate to customer information and used bigger print. You should then ask customers if they want an easy-read copy. This looks good enough for me though.'*

Table 4:

- An elected representative said *'I like the summary document because all the detail is there and it's easier for people to understand and not too laborious. One page is not enough though. My parishioners love the short summary 20 page format.'*
- An elected representative pointed out that *'the traffic light system doesn't give you enough information, but the 20 page short summary is more engaging, and makes good use of photos.'*
- An environmental representative stated *'I like the photos. They're very visual, and are particularly helpful regarding environmental issues.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'the short report is very useful for me, but a link that signposts where to get the deeper, more in-depth information would be good.'*
- An elected representative pointed out that *'for residential customers, the 20 page summary is great, but the one-page traffic light format is too superficial.'*
- An environmental representative contended that *'the 20 page summary is still too long for most people, when it comes through their doors, they're just not going to read it.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'a 20 page summary is best.'*
- An environmental representative maintained that *'the one-page document wouldn't be enough at work. But myself as a customer, rather than an environmental expert, would probably prefer the shorter one-page document.'*

“ The short report is very useful for me, but a link that signposts where to get the deeper, more in-depth information would be good. ”

Table 5:

- A technology representative said *'it's excellent.'*

Table 6:

- A local authority officer said *'it seems unnecessarily high-quality and glossy – for the sake of the environment that isn't necessary.'*
- A local authority officer agreed, adding *'I think this should all be online.'*
- A technology representative and a business customer representative agreed.
- A technology representative added *'the hard copy option could just be added as a question at the end of a phone call.'*
- A technology representative suggested *'this could be condensed into tabular format into a couple of pages. You could even blend the top and middle tiers.'*
- A local authority officer said *'it's very easy to extract information from.'*

- A technology representative observed that *‘the web links are good, but you need to be online to read it anyway, so it doesn’t make sense to print it.’*
- A technology representative suggested *‘I would change all these green lights to ticks – it’s more like a bulleted list.’*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative suggested that *‘WPD need to develop the one-pager more and provide further insight. Even if you could get it down further that would be great, just to get a one-page summary.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘it’s nice and clear.’*

Table 8:

- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I think most people would want to read this level of report.’*

Table 9:

- A developer connections representative stated that (s)he wanted *‘to see the basic figures and then refer to them in more detail in another document easily.’*
- A housing/development representative said *‘the one pager is really useful and the traffic light system is a really good way of communicating with the public.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *‘I like how it’s broken down into each area, so you can see your own area’s statistics easily.’* (S)he added that *‘you don’t want the statistics to be too general across WPD’s different areas.’*
- A law firm representative suggested *‘there should be a contact point for each area, including a name and email address on the document so we know who to get in touch with.’*

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

Table 1:

- A housing/development representative stated *‘you have not said who you are. It’s not very clear.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘it needs a lot more signposting. It’s not as fun to look at as the summary one.’*
- A business customer representative commented that *‘the average person on the street is not really going to read through it.’*

- A housing/development representative complained *'it's not the easiest to navigate.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'that's a really good point about target audience. You need to think about the target audience first and that leads us to how it should be presented.'*
- An energy/utility representative claimed that *'the long one doesn't have enough detail for me. I read things like this for a living. I don't want to keep looking at the references. The abbreviations have not been explained. There is also no structure – I want to be able to look at the contents and know that is the bit I want to read.'*



Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative commented *'as a businessman, I would want forensic detail. A glossary could be useful for laypeople to access.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'there's too much jargon in this.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'there are different audiences for the two documents.'*
- An environmental representative argued that *'the detailed report should just be a downloadable PDF and never be produced as a document.'*
- A developer/connections representative disagreed, stating *'if it's only on the website, you're disenfranchising a certain group of people.'*
- A domestic customer agreed and said *'the odd OAP might well be interested in the topic but might not use a computer. They should be provided with the option to receive a printed copy by post. It's not important for the domestic user, but for the industry.'*

Table 4:

- An elected representative commented that *'the detailed report is too laborious. You need detail, but this is too much.'*

Table 6:



- A local authority officer said *'I would like to access parts of this, so if it was an online document that would make it much easier.'*
- A technology representative agreed, adding *'the benefit of online is that you can filter by words.'*
- A business customer representative said *'from our point of view, providing infrastructure for WPD, there are definitely times when we need to dig into the detail.'*

Table 7:

- A domestic customer said *'a lot of this is surplus to what is required. People don't want that much information.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative agreed, stating *'most just want the high-level stuff.'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested that *'case studies should be saved for the more detailed report.'*
- A domestic customer argued that *'recipients should be profiled and sent adequate information commensurate to their level.'*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative made the point that *'we cannot have too much information. WPD could never underestimate the amount of information that it is useful for us to have.'*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *'the format works and the footnotes are useful as you can use the original source to find more information.'* (S)he also suggested that *'there should be a way of asking questions about the information on the report.'*
- A housing/development representative concurred, and highlighted that *'it's nice to have the details of somebody you can call to ask how they got the figures included in the report and to get more detail. It would be useful to have a little note for who is responsible for putting the report together.'*



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

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative suggested *'all of the other sectors are going through government cuts and that adds on to energy bills, particularly affecting vulnerable customers. So we need to see more about this in the report.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested that *'the reports would benefit from being put into context; for example they should include comparisons with other DNOs.'*

Table 5:

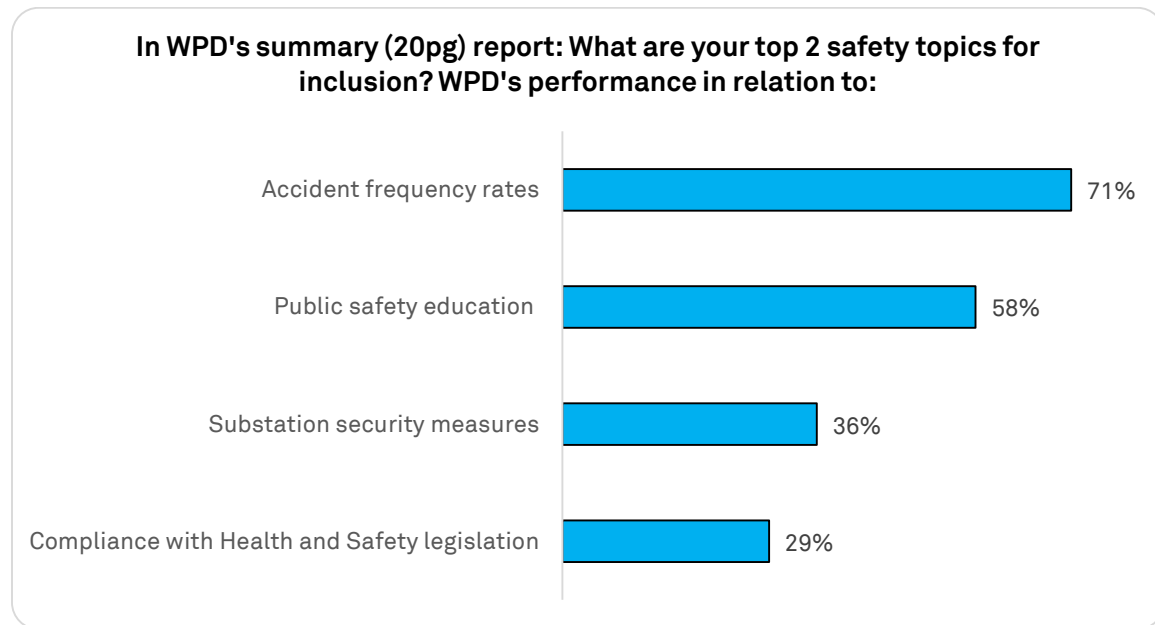
- A technology representative wondered what the proportion of people that look at the short summary document.
- An elected representative said that he had *'not seen the one page document before'*
- A local authority officer asked *'how are the reports distributed?'*
- A technology representative stated *'I don't remember receiving any reports.'*
- A technology representative noted that *'even if there are great infographics and videos online the challenge is to encourage people to look at them.'*
- An elected representative added that *'raising awareness through one pagers is a difficult task.'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'the information received through phone calls is great.'*
- A technology representative added that *'trying to get through to WPD on the phone is very easy.'*
- A technology representative said that he was *'very impressed by WPD's Twitter feed.'*
- An elected representative was very impressed that *'WPD always phone to check if the power is back on after a power cut.'*
- An elected representative stated that *'the WPD customer service is fantastic. They have a very informative and proactive engagement.'*

Table 8:

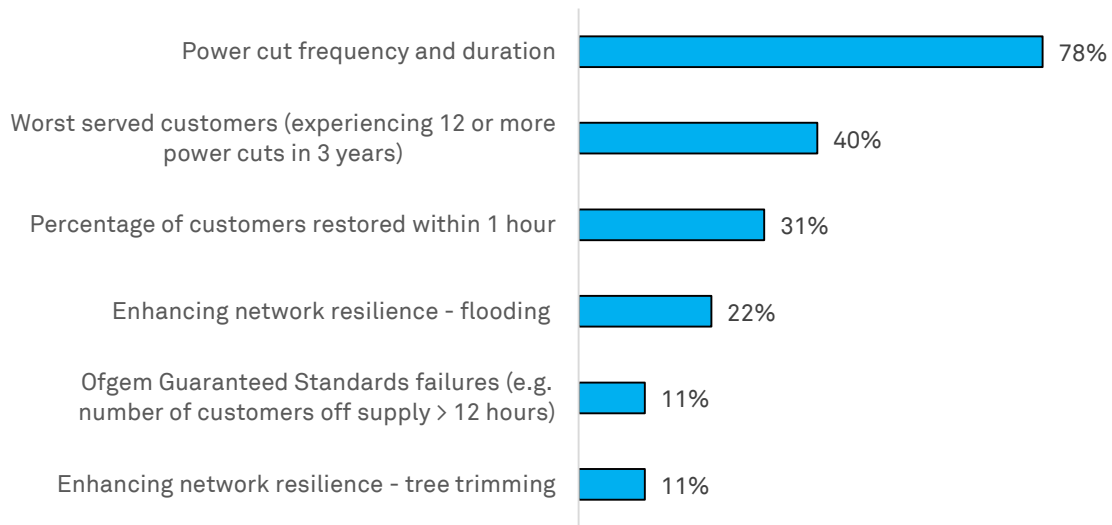
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'competitors' reports are not so clear, there is no quick glance guide.'*
- A developer/connections representative explained that *'a report is generally telling you where you've come from and so it makes sense not to have timescales, including where WPD are headed.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'competitors provide timescales for upgrading their grid supply points so we could build plans around this.'*

## 5.5 Individual voting results

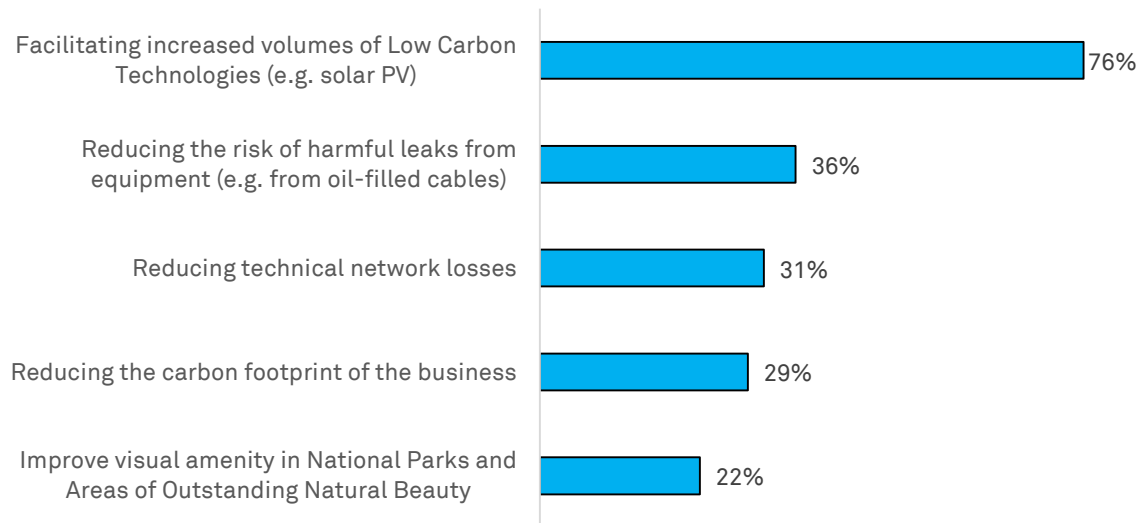
After the group discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote individually on their top two topics to be included in each section of the summary report. The results are displayed below.



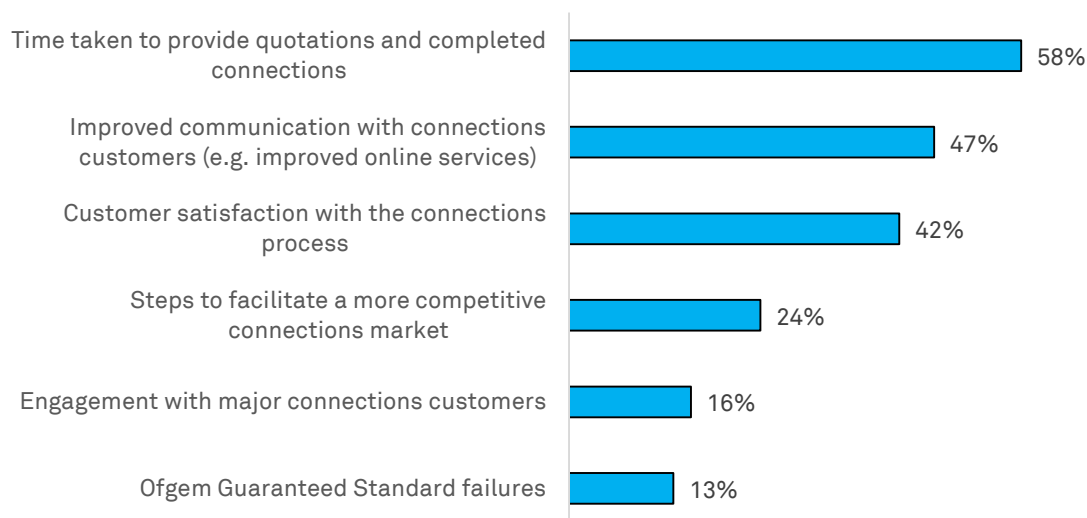
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 reliability topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



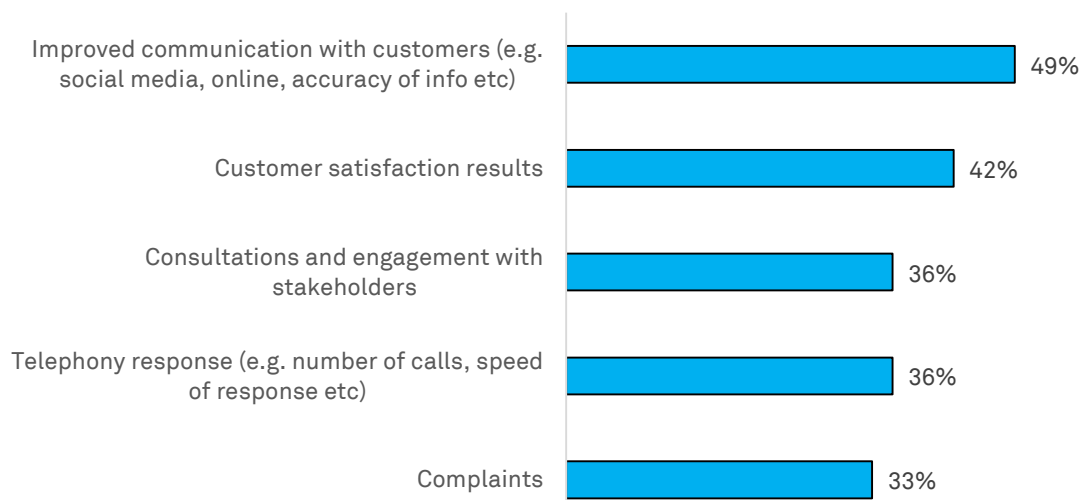
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 environment topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



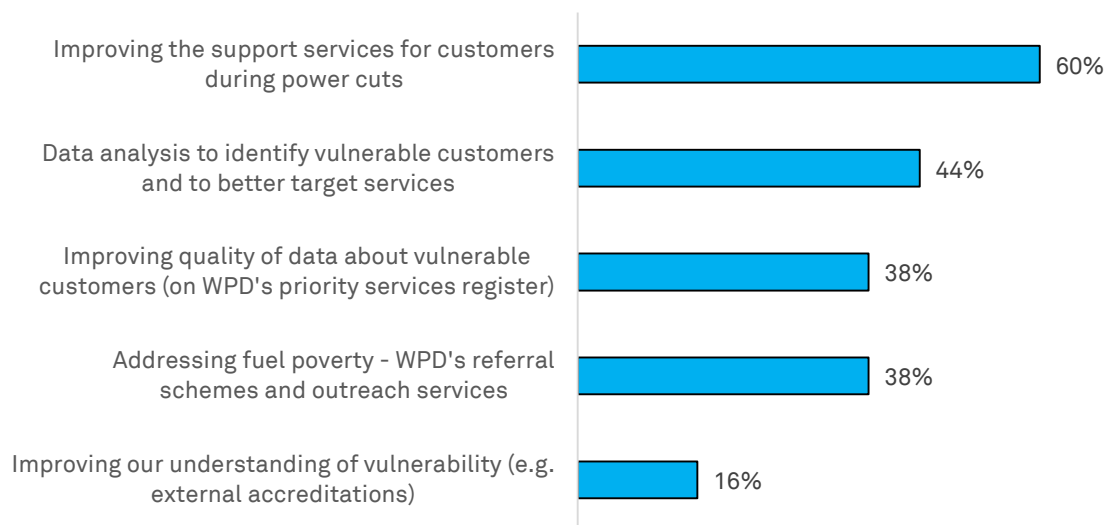
**In WPD's summary (20pg) report: What are your top 2 connections topics for inclusion? WPD's performance in relation to:**



**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:

- There was general consensus on the table that everyone understood what a “smart network” was.

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘I liked the video, the graphics were great. People will likely find it accessible; it could be seen as patronising though. I’d have liked to have seen more about why smart networks are beneficial; for instance, information on them being far more efficient.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative argued *“smart networks” should be about reducing our electricity usage and that wasn’t in the video.’*
- An elected representative stated *‘you need the smallest number of sensors in the network to give you the maximum volume of information. If people start to want electric cars and charging points in their homes, the profile of each domestic house and user will be different.’*
- A housing/development representative commented *‘the video was interesting. The average person would look at it and find it useful.’*
- An elected representative explained *‘the child’s voice is a surprise, but it’s simple and when you tune in you can follow it easily.’*



- A housing/development representative pointed out that *‘the way the narrator presented the air con and washing machine examples might be a bit problematic – people don’t like to be told when to do these things.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘I’m involved in smart network projects and I’m familiar with the technology. In the future energy will no longer be passive, but the flows are going to change, in particular at the far end of networks with the network harvesting energy from wind turbines and photo-voltaics. This means there will be more computers, and more IT engineers needed to manage the network. The use of storage is important. It goes from a straightforward process of one-directional energy and tweaking the voltage, to an active, multi-directional network that needs a lot of work.’*
- An environmental representative made the point that *‘we already have community groups and developers talking about marine power in Wales. Scotland has been proactive and done better. The potential is there, it’s for WPD to reflect that and provide the opportunity for investment. At a Welsh investment conference it was agreed that the grid is a major block for investment.’*
- An elected representative commented that *‘the market research on electric vehicles is interesting – visibly there has been little growth in electric vehicles, so what’s the future of this? What is the effect on the network? The technology isn’t moving quickly enough.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘we work for storage companies – they’re very aware of active network management and the way generators have to work with it.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *‘the EA has published a guide on how to run an active network, but it doesn’t add anything. Trials have been successful, but not wildly successful.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘these projects are generally funded to understand what the impact of technologies will be on networks. The learning from all of these is then shared across the industry. Companies don’t act in isolation. A smart network is not just something you sign up to – it combines so many new technologies.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘we work on the body that advises Ofgem on where funding goes. Ofgem will engage with DNOs to see how the funding is being used and what the results of any projects are.’*
- An environmental representative felt that *‘learning quickly from innovation projects is important.’*

Table 4:

- An environmental representative confessed that *'today is the first time I've heard of "smart networks".'*
- An energy/utility representative reasoned that *'smart networks are important because we can't expand the network so we need to use it more efficiently. With "smart networks" customers can sell back to the grid.'*
- An elected representative argued that *'it's a matter of moving power around the network to the people who need it at that moment in time.'*



Table 5:

- An elected representative said that (s)he *'didn't know what a smart network was before seeing the video.'*

Table 6:

- A local authority officer said *'to me, a smart network is a two-way system that takes account of different needs.'*
- A local authority officer said *'I don't feel the presentation gave me a good understanding of the technologies being used in "smart networks".'*
- A technology representative asked *'are these networks real-time?'*

Table 7:

- A domestic customer said *'I think a smart network is one that produces energy as cheaply as possible.'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked that it is an *'absolutely essential part of ongoing thinking. WPD should be making its customers aware of what a smart network is.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'using lots of different technologies to make the system more efficient, with a better use of assets, is how I understand a smart network to operate. In my opinion, WPD is leading on the development of a smart network in relation to other DNOs. The UK is seen as one of the leading places in*

*embracing smart technology. My company has even put an innovation team into the UK because it's so receptive to new ideas.'*

- A law firm representative made the point that *'it's new infrastructure and technology coming in, which is definitely good to be aware of.'*
- A domestic customer said *'the levels of immigration will not help the capacity of the grid in future years.'*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said that *'the principle is clear but it would be good to know more about how it will work at a detailed level.'*

Table 9:

- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out that for him/her *'it's nothing new, we've been doing it for 20 years. However, previous attempts at installing smart networks were killed off by the regulator, who thought it was about energy efficiency, rather than demand management.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative then commented that *'smart meters are being installed and are already out of date. The technology is changing so quickly; it's moved on a long way in 20 years, which makes things tricky.'*

## 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:

- An energy/utility representative made a point that *'in order to get all of these things in place you're going to need to focus on educating stakeholders.'*
- A local authority officer said *'I'm curious as to how that would affect vulnerable people though.'*

- A housing/development representative emphasised that *‘vulnerable people can’t really afford to make use of the cheaper tariffs – they need to have their electricity on all the time.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘it’s about the “what’s in it for me?” message. It’s trying to articulate the benefits to certain targeted groups.’*
- A housing/development representative raised a point that *‘these advantages are there and they are constrained only by planning decisions. You just can’t plan for these things.’*
- A housing/development representative agreed and added *‘it’s very difficult for you to think whether demand side response for “smart networks” is going to grow, or if we’re going to have legislation implemented which takes it in the opposite direction.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘uncertainty is a big challenge.’*
- An energy/utility representative made a point that *‘a lot of the systems, such as rural substations, don’t have the equipment. Their systems have a very slow response time and are not protected very well and I think it’s going to get worse with solar farms and small turbines.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘if you want to influence customers to have a smart washing machine, you’re not going to do so based on the current way that electricity is sold because it’s a blank tariff. There needs to be legislative change before you can get a variable tariff, which tells you that you have appliances you should use at cheap times to have a cheaper bill.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘WPD needs to think about infrastructure upgrades to handle smart meters as well. For example, in the day time, if areas in Devon and Cornwall are making too much energy, it needs to be taken out. The network needs to be able to manage this.’*
- A housing/development representative said *‘that is an interesting investment related dilemma. The fire brigade invested in smarter technology and gave this out for free. You could give a timing device out to people with “affordability” issues which enable them to benefit from the different tariffs.’*
- A local authority officer affirmed that *‘you need to promote education as to when people should use electricity and how it can help their bill.’*

Table 2:

- An elected representative complained *‘I don’t think the graphic on slide 47 with the summer peak and winter peak bars was very good. System demand must be the bars capacity. It’s too much jargon.’*
- A developer/connections representative explained *‘the total is everyone that’s asked for a connection. All those developers have accepted the connection offer. The blue bit is where the offer has been accepted and the connection has been provided by*

*WPD. 55-60% of acceptants haven't been connected to the grid yet. If I haven't paid yet I'm not putting my generation into the grid.'*

- An elected representative questioned *'so it's generation being added to the existing network? It's not making it clear. If I was writing you a paper on pressure trucks I'd have to adjust my language to meet the audience.'*
- The developer/connections representative pointed out that *'the five key points are definitely there. One thing I'm concerned about is the online heat maps; they're not up to date. If I look at a primary substation it tells me there's a five megawatt connection there, most of the time it's nowhere near 80% of that. It's difficult for WPD, as people put requests in all the time. As the graph shows, things have been accepted but not connected. WPD can't do anything because people haven't accepted. We do realise that. The offer should be available for a time frame, maybe two years. If the developer hasn't got planning permission by then this should be released. The main challenge is people sitting on grid connections and blocking the system.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'it would be useful to communicate around what the mitigation might be where there's a constraint. If the grid is constrained in that area is there a different way to connect by having storage.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'communication around what the constraints are and how you can get around these would be good. I work in community energy and come across lots of issues with constraint on the network. Businesses in the sector talk to each other and the issues could be addressed by talking to trade bodies.'*
- An elected representative asked *'is it obvious where these constraints are?'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I recognise that it's not easy to keep the maps up to date.'*
- An elected representative questioned *'if you apply to connect to the network and get your offer, do you know what your impact on the network will be? Do you know if you're in a good or bad area?'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted *'I could apply for five megawatts and get a letter back saying we can't connect you at a reasonable price. It could cost £2 million, but if I asked for a 3.5 megawatt connection I may have got it onto the network at a reasonable cost.'*
- An elected representative asked *'is that fed back to you when discussing?'*





- A developer/connections representative expressed *‘I’ve got a lot of admiration for WPD. It’s a difficult job and they’re dealing with lots of developers. It’s about finding smarter ways for us to work together and us working smarter with these guys.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘there’s a technical angle, a business angle, and a domestic consumer angle, including data protection.’*
- A domestic customer made the point that *‘having a smart house that switches off systems when you’re not in would go down well with a lot of people.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘a lot of the issues will disappear when storage is finally cracked. As storage comes on – in two or three years – it will be big. The Government regulation to disallow use of gas in powering central heating will be a huge drain on electric networks. Storage will help the smart network manage flow issues.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *‘National Grid is a major challenge.’*

“A lot of the issues will disappear when storage is finally cracked.”

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative highlighted *‘the importance of education, increasing awareness and helping people to understand more about “smart networks”.’*
- There was general agreement on this point.
- An environmental representative argued *‘there needs to be more information about what smart networking is, but also information about how people could adapt to smart networking.’*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *‘WPD needs to stress the possible financial savings associated with smart networking.’*
- An energy/utility representative however, reasoned that *‘if people don’t have the money upfront to buy new smart appliances, it’s difficult to buy these smarter washing machines. In lower-end houses people have old appliances, so people need financial help.’*
- An environmental representative and an energy/utility representative both agreed that *‘education is crucial and should be a top priority.’*
- An elected representative noted that *‘cost isn’t one of WPD’s five strategy areas either. You’ve got to get people on board with this financially.’*
- An elected representative asked *‘is WPD getting funding from the Government to roll out smart networking? Who came up with this idea for “smart networks”? Has WPD been over to other countries, such as Sweden, to learn about this elsewhere?’*



Table 5:

- A technology representative mentioned that *'data seems to be missing and knowledge of the network is lacking. These are key issues.'*
- An elected representative stated that *'it's very important to be able to identify who will be responsible for what.'*
- A technology representative agreed that there needs to be a *'clear interface between the transmission and distribution companies.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'is there a way to optimise what we have in order to manage it better.'*

Table 6:

- A business customer representative observed that *'from our perspective, it's about the challenge of ensuring flexible capacity and increased reliability, as well as the intelligence to ensure both happen. But I think the mechanics to ensure those things happen are WPD's concerns.'*
- A technology representative continued that *"smart networks" need to be intelligent – they need to collect and act upon data in an intelligent way.'*
- A local authority officer observed that *'this is quite a negative portrayal of "smart networks" – the potential benefits aren't listed here.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative stated that *'it's very important to look at the role of peaking plants.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'it's not a static situation, you need to look at how dynamic "smart networks" are. All technology solutions have to be used to make the network as smart as it can be.'*

Table 8:

- An energy/utility representative felt that *'there are too many unanswered questions at the moment. How do you predict the next regulatory spend period when you don't know what's coming?'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'get large energy users and DG connections on board and the rest will trickle down. Once they promote the message "if you use your energy smarter, you save money" then all domestic customers should follow suit.'*

Table 9:

- A developer/connections representative said that *'the benefits of investing in a smart grid are missing; such as the savings you make when upgrading your grid in the future. It can also offset WPD's need for investment in reinforcement.'*
- A law firm representative stated that *'investing in "smart networks" now means you don't have to invest as much in the future.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *'government policy is the problem. For example, solar policy is changing so quickly. It creates a bad investment environment.'*
- A housing/development representative praised Ofgem and said *'it incentivises investment, but the Government often then damages this through unstable policy changes.'*
- A housing/development representative raised the point that *'we all use the same type of equipment on the system. Using a relay time system that can communicate with the transmission network is really important. You need to ensure you are installing equipment that won't be obsolete in a few years' time. The Government needs to set out a long term five year plan to give investment confidence.'*
- A voluntary organisation complained that there *'is a lot of tax in Wales, which is another problem that disincentivises investment.'*

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

The strategy areas WPD identified were:

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

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative said *'customer propositions is the important strategy area for me.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'as long as the systems encompass the hardware you put in for active network management, I would be happy with it. It's an awful lot to do and you haven't got a great number of supply boxes. I think the nearest one is in Swansea.'*

- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'you are moving into an arena where you are no longer just the owner of an asset; you have to operate the asset as well. I think it's important to get all this data back and help those making the connections as well. The network is very constrained as it is.'*

Table 2:

- A developer/connections representative said *'it's difficult to say which of the strategy areas is more important.'*
- An elected representative pointed out that *'you can have a smartness about sensing what's available. Data is vitally important. The distributed network of generation from smaller scale inputs –that's got to be really smart because otherwise you'll have a problem with energy flows.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative suggested *'there should be an additional strategy area on sustainability of the grid covering things like new technology.'*
- An energy/utility representative questioned *'what about the positive impact of doing this intervention, is it going to save energy? Is the customer proposition strategy about the benefit to the customer or commercial arrangements?'*
- A developer/connections representative explained *'in understanding real time energy flows anything over 30 kilowatts is half hourly measured and sent off somewhere. It's domestic level – sourcing more information at a lower voltage is important.'*

**“ You are moving into an arena where you are no longer just the owner of an asset; you have to operate the asset as well. I think it's important to get all of this data back and help those making the connections as well. ”**

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative asked *'does data from smart meters go to the centralised DCC system? Do they take out whatever information you require?'*
- An environmental representative suggested that WPD should have an app similar to National Grid, explaining *'the National Grid app is great – you can see the grid balance and capacity. It can be very useful. It provides ease of access and information for technology and data.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that an app *'falls within the customer propositions and engagement side of issues.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'people care about the service they get, not the externalities that emerge as a result.'*

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative maintained that *‘the WPD presentation was very focused on the technical side of it, but WPD needs to focus more on education as it’s a fundamental part of changing people’s behaviour.’*
- An environmental representative agreed, stating *‘education and the public’s understanding of “smart networks” is missing.’*
- An energy/utility representative contended that *““smart networks” are something we have to take into account. One thing that doesn’t come out of WPD’s presentation about “smart networks” is that if people were to install smart meters, there would be cost-saving advantages, and if you made that sort of thing a bit more prominent, then people might be more likely to engage with it.’*
- An elected representative reasoned *‘if you have a smart network that fails will that leave you without power, and how practical is it going to be? “Smart networks” are a real experiment and have a lot of possible practical problems. Would you really want your smart washing machine running in the middle of the night to save on lower electricity tariffs?’*

Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative noted that *‘storage should be very high up on the priority list, as well as incentivising strategies for local customers and energy producers.’*
- A developer/connections representative mentioned that *‘government legislation seems to be missing.’*
- A technology representative added that *‘the focus seems to be on what you’re allowed to do within the regulatory framework, instead of changing the framework to accommodate the new technology.’*
- A technology representative noted that there *‘needs to be more storage, but this needs to be balanced with generation.’*
- A developer/connections representative noted that *‘the customer proposition is most important.’*
- A technology representative said *‘a little bit more far-sightedness is needed from Ofgem to change policies.’*

Table 6:

- A technology representative said *‘I think it’s undersold. There’s an opportunity for potentially millions of customers to generate some revenue, and that could be music to people’s ears. Maybe they don’t need their spare capacity, but even so they can*

*send it on with smart networks to schools, or hospitals. I think these benefits are being undersold.'*

- A local authority officer asked *'are there issues around regulations here – especially seeing as we could be looking at a UK-wide strategy at some point, rather than just a WPD one?'*
- A technology representative said *'one thing I would add is condition-based maintenance.'*
- A local authority officer asked *'what is the timescale for trying to implement these networks?'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative said *'instead of all the information going into a central system, there needs to be proper communications to all the stakeholders in the energy network.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'the current strategy areas are too reactive, and they need to be more proactive. Market integration is the most important.'*
- A domestic customer suggested that *'IT systems need to be a top priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed, saying *'they're all of equal importance.'*



Table 8:

- An energy/utility representative commented *'WPD is going down the right road, spending a lot of money to ensure suppliers can cope.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'market integration is a hard but important part of the strategy. How do you get national grid to turn up to a meeting?'*

Table 9:

- A housing/development representative pointed out that *'market integration and equipment are very important. WPD must ensure different companies are doing the same thing, and have standardised equipment.'*

- A housing/development representative said that *‘distribution is no longer a demand driven system, so customer propositions should work.’*
- A developer representative said *‘customer propositions should just be called customer engagement.’* (S)he added that *‘WPD need to engage with their customers a lot more; customer engagement is critical. Getting customers engaged is different in different places.’*
- A law firm representative asked *‘do people really want to do this? To put the washing machine on in the night?’* (S)he continued, *‘behaviour won’t change, so what can you do to make the behaviour change.’*
- A housing/development representative agreed, and said that *‘government legislation may be a necessity to change behaviour, and also education.’* (S)he suggested *‘customers should be given a bigger role, and customer propositions is more about customer incentive and education – so perhaps it should be renamed.’*

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

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘these sessions are great. I would love it backed up with all the reports made available as quickly as possible. I don’t want to register or go through any laborious process to access them.’*

Table 2:

- A developer/connections representative stated *‘up to date information on the website is key. Events like this are great. We’re mixing with all the WPD stakeholders and meeting the WPD guys; we’re understanding each other’s issues which is vital.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said *‘you cannot underestimate the complexities of the changes that the industry faces. It goes further than CEO engagement, we need government engagement. DNOs must come together to talk to the Government.’*
- A domestic customer considered that *‘there are certain things domestic users want to know, including how things affect them. With the domestic user they want to know how the network will interact with them. They need videos and infographics.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented *‘you’re relying on consumers to buy smart goods, have the facilities to participate in the smart network and change their habits.’*



Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative underscored the importance of *‘separate workshops on this to get a better understanding of what smart networking entails and how it impacts vulnerable and poor households specifically.’*
- An elected representative said *‘I’d like to understand the cost implications of this. How does it work? WPD needs to work it up a little bit more, perhaps through a trial area.’*
- An energy/utility representative concurred, stating that *‘a trial area scheme is a great idea.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *‘WPD could try telling businesses and customers to generally shift their production to another time and they’ll offer lower tariffs at that time.’*

Table 5:

- A technology representative said *‘at a domestic level we will all need to work as part of a holistic system.’*
- An elected representative stated that *‘public awareness is very important.’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘how will domestic energy production within “smart networks” be incentivised.’*
- A technology representative suggested *‘WPD should take on a real customer engagement approach to “smart networks”, linking it with energy efficiency.’*
- A local authority officer noted *‘people complain that energy bills are too high, but individual changes do not make a huge difference to the cost.’*
- A local authority officer added that *‘energy saving could be addressed on a community level instead of an individual level. The financial benefits for the whole community will be more impactful.’*

“ WPD should take on a real customer engagement approach to smart networks, linking it with energy efficiency. ”

Table 6:

- A technology representative said *‘I’ve mentioned digital formats, and I think WPD should shout about the positives to specific audiences. That will vary, but reliability will be key, as are new revenue schemes. That could create more willingness and openness to work.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, adding *‘local authorities could be in good positions to help engage with communities.’*

- A business customer representative said *'I think transparency of communication is key. All communication mediums are available, so WPD can determine the best way to contact specific customers. "Smart networks" are an example of how WPD understands something from its perspective, but the customer is less clear on what "smart networks" mean for them.'*

Table 7:

- A developer/connections representative said *'WPD should keep talking to stakeholders as they are doing.'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *'UK utility companies should get together once a year to share best practice. There's a conference in Texas which UK DNOs don't go to; this would be very helpful for them.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted *'there needs to be a long-term education process with children, so they understand what a smart network is.'*
- A domestic customer stated that *'stakeholder relations need to be properly targeted.'*
- An energy/utility representative brought up how *'UKPN sent out a call for innovation to all manufacturers, asking them what solutions there could be for its main challenges. This was a great thing for it to do, and it should be repeated.'*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said *'I would like a really easy user guide to what each of these mean. I don't always understand electrical figures, but it's clear that this will be very important. We're all going to need to know more about it than we ever used to.'*

Table 9:

- A law firm representative said *'it's critical to engage with the customer, but there is a range of customer types. Your language needs to be sensitive to each customer, to target individual groups of people.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'WPD do a lot of good work already.'* (S)he brought up the popularity of "smart networks" in Europe, and said that *'rather than reinventing the wheel, we should be looking at how Europeans do it and how they contact customers.'*
- A housing/development representative suggested the use of *'peer to peer engagement, as there are lots of different stakeholders to balance.'*

- A voluntary organisation representative felt that *'the key to customer engagement is to make it simple, give them as little to do as possible, no hassle. Customers need an incentive to change behaviour.'*
- A law firm representative said WPD could *'post a demonstration on what to do and the benefits for them on Youtube.'*

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

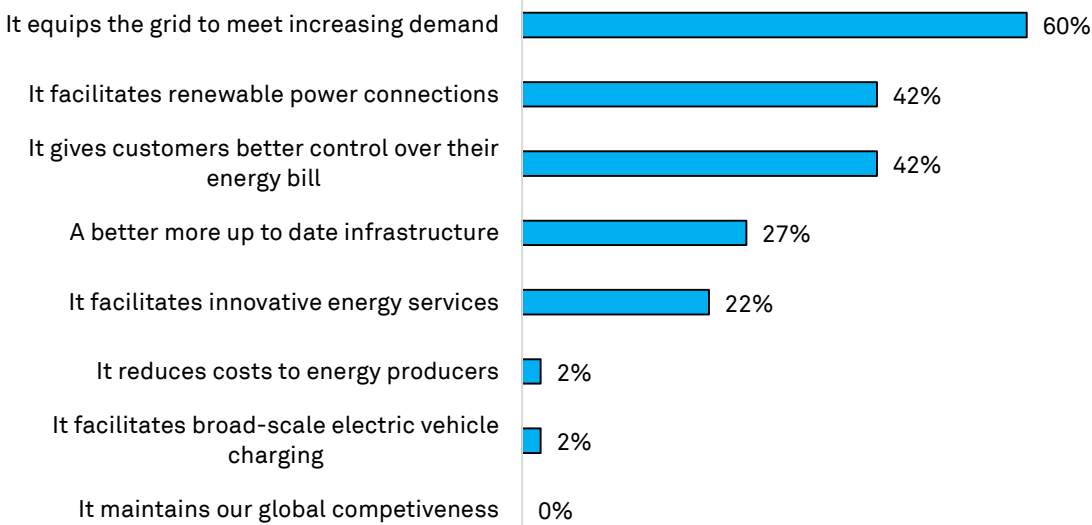
Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said *'the DNO with the smart grid may not be linked to the supplier of electricity.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'I would choose to put my washing on in the night to save money, but what if I needed to do it in the daytime? You don't want to override choice.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered that *'given the predicted increase in demand with electric cars, my concern is that we might end up with a shortfall if we operate with smart usage.'*
- A local authority officer raised the issue that *'we have a tidal lagoon project coming up and locals are anticipating a lot of dependency on that for regional generation, but there are some concerns it will disappear into the National Grid. Solar panels were springing up but have slowed down and there are lots being proposed and then refused. Renewables seem to be getting less attention than before which is a problem.'*
- A developer/connections representative expressed that *'there is a feeling that solar panels are not very efficient. "Smart networks" will improve efficiency and power usage and so renewables could be brought back in this respect as the power generated will be used more efficiently.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'if large energy users can be persuaded to use low power at different times that would be good for establishing smart usage.'*

## 6.6 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:

### What do you think are the top 2 benefits of smart networks?



## 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:

- A housing/development representative highlighted that *'the sharing of information in terms of vulnerability and fuel poverty is pretty essential. However, as you said, it should not be on your own. It's not just your job.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it's really good to tap into the expertise of others rather than trying to be an expert yourself. These schemes are much better delivered by people who have a more granular understanding of these problems than a DNO.'*

- An energy/utility representative raised a point that *'they have a nice broad range. Some of them are financial, some are practical and more relevant to day to day life.'* (S)he added that *'the generalisation of the benefits is a good thing as well. For a lot of people understanding benefits is very complex. It's important for someone to have a holistic approach because people tend to get put off when someone does a purely financial assessment.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *'it's not just people in fuel poverty, everybody could do with a bit of help in terms of learning about energy efficiency.'*

“It's really good to tap into the expertise of others rather than trying to be an expert yourself.”

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative explained *'I have to declare an interest, but of course I think the projects are good.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative argued *'fuel debt is not mentioned and it should be.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'it's how you word it to people to identify them as being in fuel poverty.'*
- An environmental representative argued *'you can't influence how much the meter reading is read. You can't do anything with that. So what steps can you take other than changing the boiler?'*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out *'so many customers go on estimates. It's educating the home owner to actually take readings themselves and report back.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative suggested *'WPD should encourage vulnerable customers to switch suppliers, it's about communication.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out that *'if you're a vulnerable customer you should be reading the meter yourself, they need to know that.'*
- There was consensus that these sorts of initiatives are worthwhile.

Table 3:

- A domestic customer asked *'will the new schemes be regionally wide or will they be city-specific pilot projects? You should really be interacting with vulnerable customers wherever they are; it shouldn't be limited to a particular area. For example, in Wales the three areas with the most people over 60 are all rural. The pilots are fair enough, but if there is an actual scheme in the future of interacting with vulnerable people, you should interact with all of your vulnerable customers. If you've got the*

*scheme, you should open it up to your whole region. Fuel poverty is not specific to big cities or certain regions. Incomes are much lower in rural areas, so there may in fact be more fuel poverty.'*

- An elected representative asked *'what makes up the £120 referral cost.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'does income maximisation include things like benefit checks?'*
- A domestic customer considered *'WPD is not asking these questions, Citizens Advice is, so this is not necessarily WPD overstepping its remit.'*
- There was consensus on a Power Up scheme for every region.
- A domestic customer commented *'if the East Midlands gets it, we should get it too.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'does the satisfaction survey entail interviewing everyone every month?'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'monthly is too frequent; not enough develops in a month.'*
- A domestic customer raised the point that *'because it's a random sample, you could be asking people who were dealt with six months ago.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I wouldn't ask anyone before they've has the service for at least three months.'*
- A domestic customer agreed with the three month suggestion.
- There was a general consensus that surveying monthly is too frequent.
- An energy/utility representative said *'the successes of the programmes depends on the amount of support that you give and the longer term benefit that comes.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'is there a significant difference between Power Up and Affordable Warmth.'*
- A domestic customer called for *'support for projects in South Wales.'*
- An elected representative asked *'how unique is the West Midlands Citizens Advice Bureau contact? Are other CAB offices in contact with WPD? If West Midlands is benefitting, why not the rest? What's the timetable for rolling out schemes?'*
- A developer/connections representative commented *'competition for existing projects to seek funding is a good idea because you are bringing expertise in.'*
- There was general agreement on the added value of a competition.
- An energy/utility representative suggested *'a competitive tender could be better than a competition.'*
- An elected representative asked *'does fuel poverty equate to low income families? Nationally available data*





*would cover low income but not fuel poverty. How do you get this information? I don't know whether you are capturing all of the relevant data.'*

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative contended that *'in terms of saving energy, there have been other schemes where there has been funding to help provide more efficient appliances to lower income households.'* (S)he continued *'the core business of WPD is clearly to keep the lights on. The Government and Ofgem have indicated that WPD needs to play a larger role in tackling fuel poverty. So if WPD wants to be leading out there it has to try other initiatives, including getting out to communities for surgeries. WPD should also provide training for front-line staff, including training in vulnerability and understanding people in fuel poverty.'*
- An energy/utility representative proclaimed that *'innovative projects are great, community engagement and local projects tackling fuel poverty need to be increased.'*
- There was general agreement on this point.
- An environmental representative contended that *'no matter where you are as a WPD customer, although the Power Up scheme is about right at the moment, it should be rolled out.'*
- An elected representative queried *'how much does satisfaction research cost?'*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *'satisfaction research is important, but not that important.'*
- An environmental representative agreed, stating *'it's about right.'*
- An elected representative asked *'what percentage of your customers fill in this information, is the sample too small?'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'if you phoned someone and they are vulnerable, they may not want to answer, or they may have a carer. If vulnerable WPD customers don't get a good service from WPD would they want to respond to these surveys at all?'*
- There was general agreement that satisfaction research was about right.
- An energy/utility representative asked *'is there an Affordable Warmth project in the West Midlands? I'd like to see consistency of this project across all areas so that customers in some areas don't miss out. Don't expand the existing project to areas where they are now, but roll them out to new areas.'*
- There was general accord on this point.

**“ Is there an Affordable Warmth project in the West Midlands? I'd like to see consistency of this project across all areas, so that customers in some areas don't miss out. ”**

- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘people knowing about smart networks and what they are is crucial. I think you could do quite a lot of community engagement on this, building awareness.’*
- An energy/utility representative stressed that *‘schools are also important. Children should learn about electricity; kids know more about computers and IT than their parents and so they go back home and tell their parents about its advantages.’*

Table 5:

- An environmental representative stated *‘more could be done to help community projects and not-for-profit generation.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘WPD need to get the message out to people, explaining what they are able to do for the community.’*
- An elected representative said that *‘it’s quite complex to know how much involvement WPD should have. Energy efficiency surgeries are great, but these may not be for WPD to implement.’*
- An elected representative stated that *‘WPD has a responsibility to refer who is appropriate to help with the vulnerable customers given the issues of data protection.’*
- An elected representative said that *‘WPD needs to assess what is already out there to influence what they should do.’*
- A technology representative asked *‘what can WPD actually do to help with affordability. (S)he added that ‘perhaps there is a more efficient way that WPD can help and give back to the community, by lobbying policy changes for example.’*

Table 6:

- A technology representative suggested *‘advising people on how to spend their money is going too far.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘one of the things that struck me earlier is that you’re not working with Public Health – they have expertise and information. They strike me as an important part, especially because the health authorities are now the social service authorities. It feels to me there might be a more strategic approach in building these relationships.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘there might also be opportunities for cost sharing.’*
- A business customer representative asked *‘are we talking about partnering with health authorities? Is that not moving back towards joining “affordability” and “vulnerability”?’*
- A local authority officer questioned *‘should suppliers not be the ones with the links to health authorities, rather than WPD, who are just making referrals.’*

Table 7:

- A voluntary organisation representative suggested *‘WPD should work with think tanks to broadcast its work more widely to stakeholders, especially on how customers can get the best tariffs.’*

Table 8:

- A developer/connections representative said that (s)he felt *‘the five interventions sound about right. The concern for me are the tariffs, as a lot of people in fuel poverty are on prepaid meters which are the most expensive.’*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *‘the aim of driving the price down is not working for the fuel poor. They have to pre-pay as they are the high risk customers and so they pay more.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented *‘I would never have thought that WPD give advice on tariffs – that’s really interesting.’*
- A developer/connections representative stated *‘these projects are important for looking after customers.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘WPD has a role to play here, but the main objective is to keep electricity supply to every house, they mustn’t deviate.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘current projects are a definite step forward. The mutual referral between charities and WPD is the right thing to do.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented *‘I quite like the idea of the projects and these are good numbers, but I have no idea of the geographic or demographic proportion of those helped for the total area. Are these just local projects for certain areas? Will these projects be rolled out?’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘one question is whether someone else could and should be doing this work.’*
- A developer/connections representative queried *‘who do you ask for this kind of help? You have to go online yourself and there is a lack of information. Poor old WPD is picking this up and it’s not clear that they should have to.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that (s)he felt *‘the more money saved for these people, the less energy is going through the distribution network so there is a fringe benefit.’*

**“ WPD should work with think tanks to broadcast its work more widely to stakeholders, especially on how customers can get the best tariffs. ”**

Table 9:

- A voluntary organisation said *‘WPD is in an awkward position as the Government focuses on energy suppliers, so WPD don’t really have a reason to focus on “affordability”. It would be a bonus, but if WPD spend more money on “affordability” it would mean general costs would go up.’* (s)he added *‘I do see the benefit where there are network constraints. Having the fuel poor bring down their energy usage means that the network doesn’t need to be reinforced as much, which saves money.’*
- A developer/connections representative liked the referrals idea for vulnerable users, but stated *‘WPD doesn’t need to go any further. It’s not a social service, although it is still quite a minimal cost.’*

## 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.

On occasion, stakeholders agreed to add a suggested activity to vote on as a table. In these instances, there are six, seven or eight ‘planned actions’ on the respective tables 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		✓	
Audit of partners	✓		
Partner best practice	✓		
Development fund for new ideas	✓		


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- There was general consensus that what was being done to develop a new Power Up referral scheme for the East Midlands was about right.
- There was general consensus that less should be done in regards to the monthly satisfaction research.
- A housing/development representative made a point that *'it is very hard to contact those people so you will get a biased response – you will always get the more confident and capable people responding.'*
- A housing/development representative suggested that *'having someone do in-depth research in terms of outcomes rather than activities would be more useful.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'we sometimes focus on those who have used our services, rather than someone who has decided not to take them up.'*
- A local authority officer argued that *'monthly is a bit excessive.'*
- A housing/development representative emphasised that *'an independent approach is probably better because a lot of the time companies are very influenced by funding targets.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'it depends how it's done as well. I have a phone which blocks calls from unknown numbers. Then again, if you're being referred and they ask you to reply to a text message, that's usually fine.'*
- The table agreed that an independent audit of partners would be a better course of action.
- The table also agreed that a way of identifying best practices of partners and sharing that information was another potential course of action.
- An energy/utility representative said *'I think these are important if we are looking at expanding the service.'*
- There was general consensus that more should be done on expanding existing Affordable Warmth projects.
- A local authority officer stated *'if it's working for you perhaps they should do that more.'*
- There was also consensus that more should be done to develop new Affordable Warmth projects.
- The table felt that enough was being done in regards to developing a competition for existing schemes.
- A housing/development representative agreed and added that *'if you make it competitive, and have a process to deal with the new ideas, then it would be useful.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'there has to be a framework as to how they would pick one over another. If not, people won't know how to be successful.'*
- The table were in consensus that creating a development fund for new ideas was an avenue WPD should explore further.

- A housing/development representative suggested that *'you can create a full circle of processes there. You need a development fund for new ideas where you can expand the ideas which are working, spread them out and start again.'*

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	✓		

  
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- There was consensus across the table that a new Power Up referral scheme for the East Midlands should be created.
- A voluntary organisation representative suggested that *'monthly satisfaction research is a bit over kill. People will lose interest after a few months.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'what will they do with the information from that research?'*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *'maybe research should be quarterly or annually as there needs to be a balance; you want to do it regularly to keep information up to date, but you don't want to spam people.'*
- There was consensus that more needed to be done and the existing Affordable Warmth project should be expanded.



- An energy/utility representative highlighted *‘a lot of this is about right, but commercially we’d like to do more. You could use the bottom one to think about long term sustainability; to be thinking about how this activity might work alongside demand side response. Local authorities and community groups should work to get people to manage their demand and energy usage.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *‘WPD should look at the British Gas Trust competition. This includes funding for advice for people in fuel poverty.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *‘if the pilots work out, roll out more for sure.’*
- There was consensus that new Affordable Warmth projects should be developed.

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 in areas of network constraint and high fuel poverty	✓		




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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	✓		
Training for staff on fuel poverty and vulnerability linking with engagement with communities on smart networks	✓		
Schools programme	✓		



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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			✓
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	✓		
Help for small businesses	✓		


  
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- A local authority officer proposed that *'perhaps it's better to focus on helping small businesses, as there is already a lot out there for domestic customers.'*
- A technology representative suggested that *'WPD might have to make a necessary investment to deliver energy efficient tools to individuals.'*

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		✓	
Referrals to other vulnerable groups	✓		


  
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- The table agreed that developing a Power Up scheme in the East Midlands was important.
- A technology representative observed that *'monthly survey satisfaction would be very ad hoc, so this will have a narrow support base.'*
- A local authority officer agreed, adding *'you might want some proxies because these vulnerable groups may not want to talk with you.'*
- A technology representative suggested that *'new Affordable Warmth projects can only really be answered internally – do WPD have the resources?'*
- A local authority officer replied stating *'I'd say South Wales needs it, so if WPD have the resources, then yes.'*
- A technology representative said *'competition is always important, but identifying the competition could take time and resources; does WPD have the capacity to handle that?'*
- A local authority officer added that *'competition needs to have staying power to be effective.'*

- A local authority officer asked *'how are you going to follow up on the satisfaction surveys?'*
- A business customer representative added *'this is where ownership of the customer is important.'*
- A technology representative suggested *'the boundaries of social responsibility need further definition.'*

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	✓		




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- A voluntary organisation representative said *'it's a good idea to extend the Affordable Warmth project.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, stating that *'it would be more cost effective to reach people with the Affordable Warmth project than through the other schemes.'*
- An energy/utility representative took a different approach, saying *'as a customer of WPD, I want the DNO to benefit from the innovative ideas that manufacturers have in the market.'*

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		✓	
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 that *'the Power Up scheme for the East Midlands is a good idea.'*
- A local authority officer made the point that *'they could do more than monthly satisfaction research. The more done, the better the business and the better for everyone.'*
- A developer/connections representative expressed *'I'm a bit sceptical about the competitions for partnership bids as you might go away from the core issue of what is needed. You might look more at an area rather than individuals.'*



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		✓	✓
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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- Not much interest was expressed in the East Midlands Power Up scheme due to the location of the event.
- When discussing the monthly satisfaction research, a law firm representative stated that *'you've always got to have it so it's probably about right.'*
- A housing/development representative added that it is important because *'often the people most in need of the services are the hardest to reach and identify.'*
- There was a general consensus this was a positive development.
- Many people agreed that more competition was important.
- However a housing/development representative warned that *'it depends on the level of funding given to it, as the bidding process can be an expensive waste of money. So long as it is in proportion, it is a good thing. But competition processes can be expensive and needless.'*


## 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.

On occasion, stakeholders agreed to add a suggested activity to vote on as a table. In these instances, there are six or seven ‘ideas from other DNOs’ on the respective tables 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)		✓	
Monitor current affairs – targeted approach	✓		




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- There was general consensus that partnerships with Gas Distributors should be adopted.
- An energy/utility representative mentioned that *‘collaborating with gas is such an easy one to do and would also be really effective.’*
- There was overall consensus that fuel poverty outreach projects should not be adopted.

- A housing/development representative complained that *'they are quite wide but they tend to be a bit too focused. They target short term vulnerability and there is also a bias against rural areas.'*
- A housing/development representative agreed and added *'it's a short term relationship for people in crisis. It's not really opening a dialogue because the crisis has already happened.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I think it's about working out the opportunity cost. In my view, the other ways seem to be more effective in using resources than this one.'*
- The table did not agree with bi-annually refreshing WPD's social indicator mapping.
- A housing/development representative raised a point that *'when you get down to individuals, you might not get a lot of accuracy. They're also changing the definitions of who is eligible all the time, so it gets really hard to keep up with these things.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I don't think the demographic of a community or region changes that quickly.'*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed and pointed out *'how significant even a small change can be.'*
- An energy/utility representative made a point that *'if you want to be more targeted than that it would be better to just look at the news, review what's happening and identify target areas from that. I think that's a better use of time.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I agree that it's more useful to look at the wider world for changes.'*
- The table was in consensus that monitoring current affairs to identify target areas was a potential idea.
- There was overall agreement that energy efficiency surgeries were a good option.
- A housing/development representative commented that *'it works for everyone. If you raise the awareness for everyone, they will know how to work with each other and help each other out.'*
- The table did not agree that energy efficiency funds were a good idea.
- A housing/development representative pointed out that *'it is hard for you to make sure that it goes in the right place.'*

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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- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted *‘working with Wales & West Utilities is a very good idea.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *‘there’s a scheme for fuel poverty with eon, and an Npower project – they’re paying for gas and electricity vouchers in food banks. This is definitely something worth looking at.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out *‘the fact that people are in severe food poverty can be caused by not having electricity or gas.’*
- There was consensus that outreach projects via food banks should be done.
- An environmental representative pointed out that *‘a lot of groups do energy efficiency surgeries anyway.’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘if they’re doing this I’d like to have a chat, we ran an innovation specific initiative to deliver carbon savings. Energy Saving Trust could potentially work with WPD.’*
- There was consensus that WPD should run more energy efficiency surgeries and community projects.

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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- There was consensus on partnerships with Gas Distributors.
- There was consensus against partnerships with food banks as this was deemed too far removed from WPD's remit.
- There was consensus on social indicator mapping.
- There was broad agreement on energy efficiency surgeries, but some stakeholders also felt this was too far from WPD's remit.
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'you can have district heating, but if people have windows open then you have a problem.'*
- Stakeholders could not come to an agreement on energy efficiency funds.

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)			✓
Sponsoring conferences	✓		
Customer awareness of these schemes	✓		




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- An energy/utility representative stated *‘WPD needs to talk to people in desperate need, so fuel poverty is very important.’*
- An elected representative argued that *‘energy efficiency surgeries are really important.’*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that *‘energy efficiency funds are vital, people out there don’t have the money for this.’*
- An environmental representative suggested that *‘a lot of thought would have to go into energy efficiency funds.’*



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)	✓		


  
**WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION**
  
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- A developer/connections representative suggested *‘a link with Gas Distributors might be helpful.’*
- An elected representative agreed that *‘a partnership with Gas Distributors could be quite easy to deliver.’*
- An environmental representative asked *‘does WPD have a corporate social responsibility department and does it work with any charities?’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘how will WPD engage with customers given that it’s usually the supplier they communicate with.’* (S)he added *‘perhaps there needs to be a relationship between WPD and the supplier when developing these initiatives. There are so many different organisations doing different things which may be confusing.’*
- An elected representative said *‘there seems to be an information overload. Some people may know who WPD are and others may just know the supplier, so it will be difficult to influence them.’*

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)	✓		

  
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- A technology representative suggested *‘partnerships with Gas Distributors goes back to the point about boilers. Here partnerships become important.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, stating *‘customers should be connected to gas networks if it’s appropriate.’*
- A technology representative said *‘I fear fuel poverty outreach via foodbanks is taking the focus away from what the DNO is supposed to do.’*
- A local authority officer disagreed, saying *‘my interpretation of that is it’s a very good way to get information from people who are in fuel poverty.’*
- A local authority officer replied *‘I think this is a job for partners – not DNOs.’*
- A technology representative said *‘yes, I see this as more of a communication thing.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘if this is about using food bank customers as a referral source, I’d definitely say yes.’*
- A technology representative said *‘yes, keep your user information updated to keep track of who’s won the lottery.’*
- There was some confusion on the table about what refreshing social indicators entailed.
- There was agreement on the table that surgeries and community projects are about education.

- A local authority officer added that *'this needs to be done through reliable brokers though.'*
- A local authority officer said *'the local authority would love to have access to efficiency funds, so I'd say yes.'*
- A local authority officer suggested *'something to facilitate more local generation, like a primary fund.'*
- A local authority officer said *'there might be a way of incentivising people to use their energy efficiently.'*

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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- An energy/utility representative said *'working with Gas Distributors would help WPD save time, and prevent them from duplicating efforts made elsewhere.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *'I don't think there's any harm in using food banks to reach out.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, explaining *'it's good to target resources with data on where people are most fuel poor. This will enable WPD to get the most use out of resources.'*

- An energy/utility representative said *‘energy efficiency services should be used in targeted areas where they will have the most effect.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *‘a lot of installations and things like that will see the whole community benefit, and it’s the role of DNO to implement these changes.’*

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 developer/connections representative felt that *‘partnerships with Gas Distributors for connection vouchers is a big yes, but I’m not sure how that would work with data protection.’*
- A developer/connections representative said *‘I don’t think the food bank link is going too far, it sounds a bit esoteric but it is really just pinpointing those who need help.’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘could they not get social indicator mapping information from the Government rather than wasting money on it themselves?’*
- A local authority officer made the point that *‘by holding surgeries you educate further and reduce energy usage, which feeds back to the DNO, whilst also helping customers.’*

- An energy/utility stated that *'I don't think energy efficiency surgeries are the DNOs' responsibility.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I don't think that there are any real schemes in place now by the Government to help people reduce their bill, but it's their responsibility.'*

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 developer connections representative asked *'what are the criteria to decide who gets funding and who doesn't, that's unclear.'*
- Fuel poverty outreach projects were questioned by many representatives and there was a consensus that these were outside of WPD's remit.
- A law firm representative asked *'what is WPD going to offer people at food banks? It can refer customers to other organisations, but it shouldn't reach out beyond its line of business.'*
- Both a voluntary organisation and a law firm representative agreed that social indicator mapping was positive, but pointed out that *'the information in an area can change very quickly, so it would need to be regularly updated.'*
- On surgeries, a law firm representative said that *'I like the idea of surgeries, but I'm not sure that they work.'*

- A voluntary organisation representative said *‘we often organise surgeries, but turnout is very low. It’s often a complete waste of time.’*
- Discussing energy funds a voluntary organisation representative explained *‘we would love to see that.’*

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

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative observed that *‘Wales & West Utilities sponsor the Wales Poverty Conference which brings together people to talk about fuel poverty. It’s an important way of engaging wider stakeholders beyond the sorts of stakeholders that would typically attend these sorts of events.’*

Table 5:

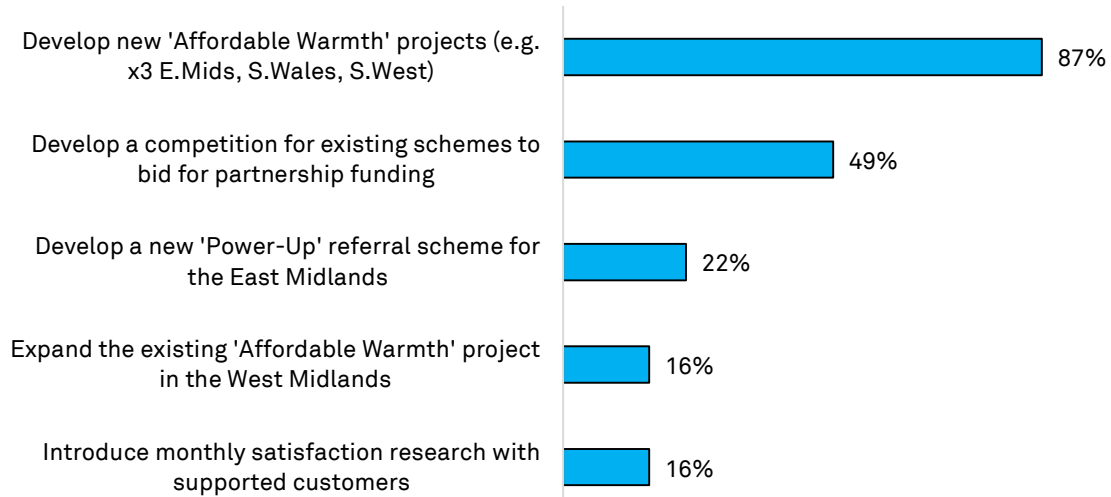
- A developer/connections representative mentioned that *‘WPD needs to be careful to provide a consistent approach.’*

## 6.10 Individual voting results

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

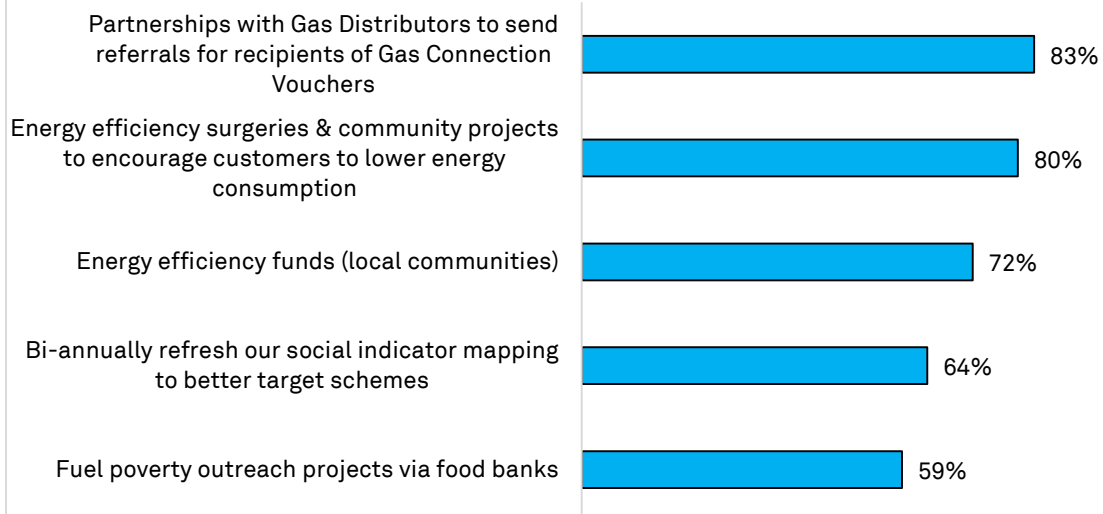
Firstly, of WPD’s proposed actions, stakeholders were asked to vote for their top two priorities. The results are shown below:

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



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:

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





## 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:

- A stakeholder pointed out that the difficulty he has with projects is that he often isn't aware a statement of works is needed at the time. The stakeholder explained that (s)he goes ahead and makes plans and then subsequently finds out (s)he's subject to a statement of works, which comes as a shock. This has a big effect on cash flow and the ability to deliver for the shareholder/landowner.
- A stakeholder felt that the implication of delayed connections is that (s)he is losing market opportunity. The stakeholder explained (s)he can't go ahead with projects because of the time delay.
- A stakeholder highlighted that they have a client who made the connection agreement and procured generators before being told by WPD that (s)he needed to operate generators within 0.95 lead-in. The stakeholder continued to explain that the client's complaint was that they weren't told about this at the start of the project. If they had been told, they would have procured the appropriate technology.
- A stakeholder welcomed the plan for capacity queue management.
- A stakeholder asked what prior approvals you need to self-approve.
- A stakeholder suggested adding statement of works to the issues list on slide five, as well as flexibility on the negotiated offer approach.
- Stakeholders felt DG forecasting, capacity queue management and connections in general were priority areas.

### 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

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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>

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.

#### General feedback

Key points stakeholders raised were:

- Whether or not WPD is aware of how referral numbers divide across the network areas, and whether it is higher in Wales than in other areas.
- Whether WPD can register multiple individuals as well as the property.
- The importance of the gas distribution networks having their own register.
- What is included in the customer savings – whether they are estimated rather than actual, and over what time period.

#### Expand and scale up successful fuel poverty schemes towards 'business as usual'

Key points stakeholders raised were:

- Agreement on the link between fuel poverty and mental health, and the need to add health as one of the interventions.
- The importance of education and behaviour change as part of developing a smart network.
- The opportunity to engage with schools so that children can help their parents to understand some of these issues.
- The need to be responsive, for example, the movement around vulnerability at the moment because of the spare room tax.

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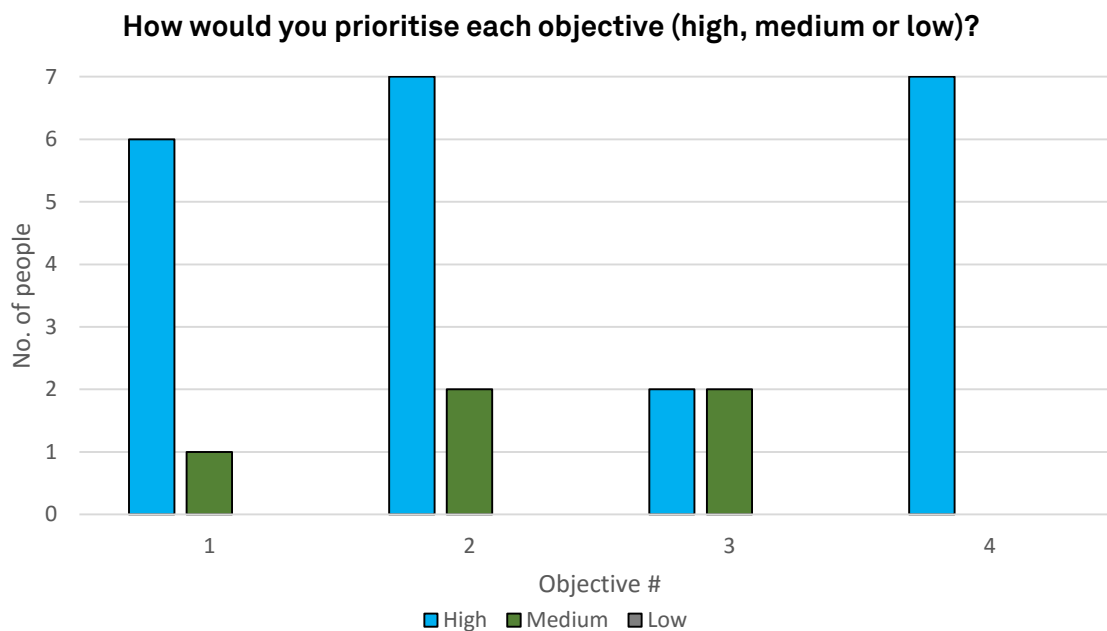
<sup>3</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Stakeholder-Workshop-January-2016-Social-obligatio.aspx>

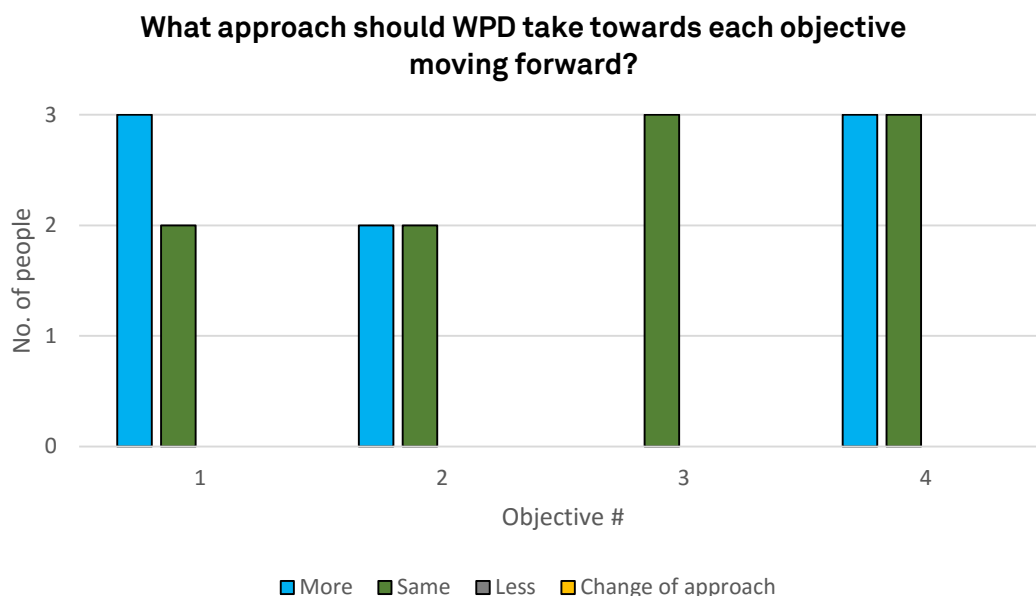
### Voting form

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives of the 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'	2.86	2.40
2	Renew and expand existing 'Power Up' fuel poverty schemes (with Citizens Advice, Energy Savings Trust & Centre for Sustainable Energy)	<b>3.00</b>	2.50
3	Set up a 4th 'Power Up' fuel poverty scheme in East Midlands (ensure one per licence)	2.50	2.00
4	Trial 'Affordable Warmth' fuel poverty projects with local authorities and other existing schemes (incl. receiving referrals onto WPD's PSR)	<b>3.00</b>	<b>2.60</b>

Detailed scores are in the graphs below:





### PSR referral networks

Key points stakeholders raised were:

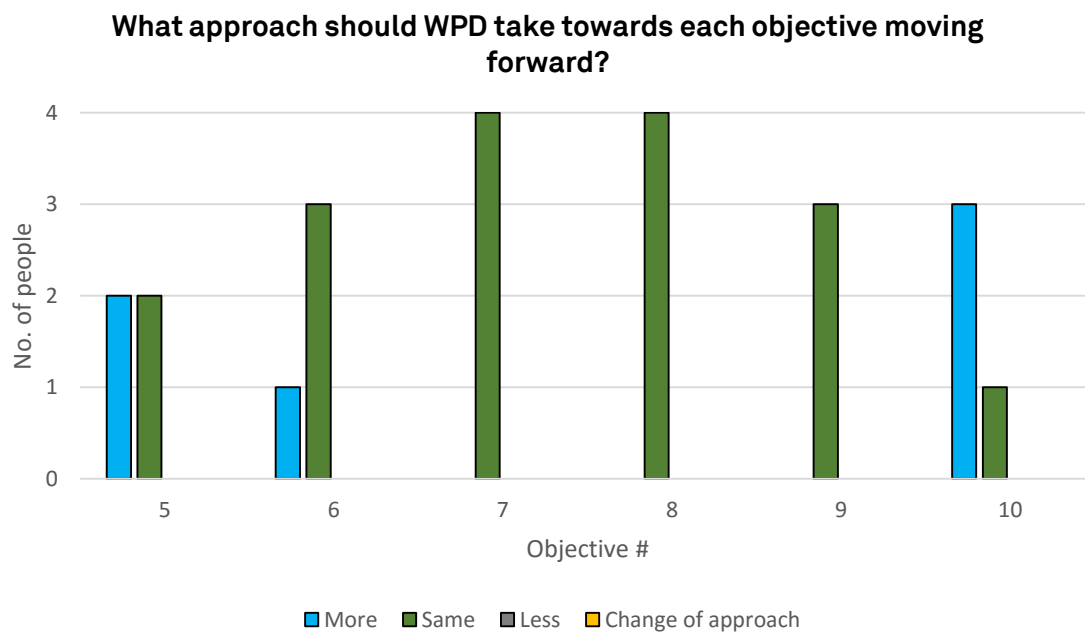
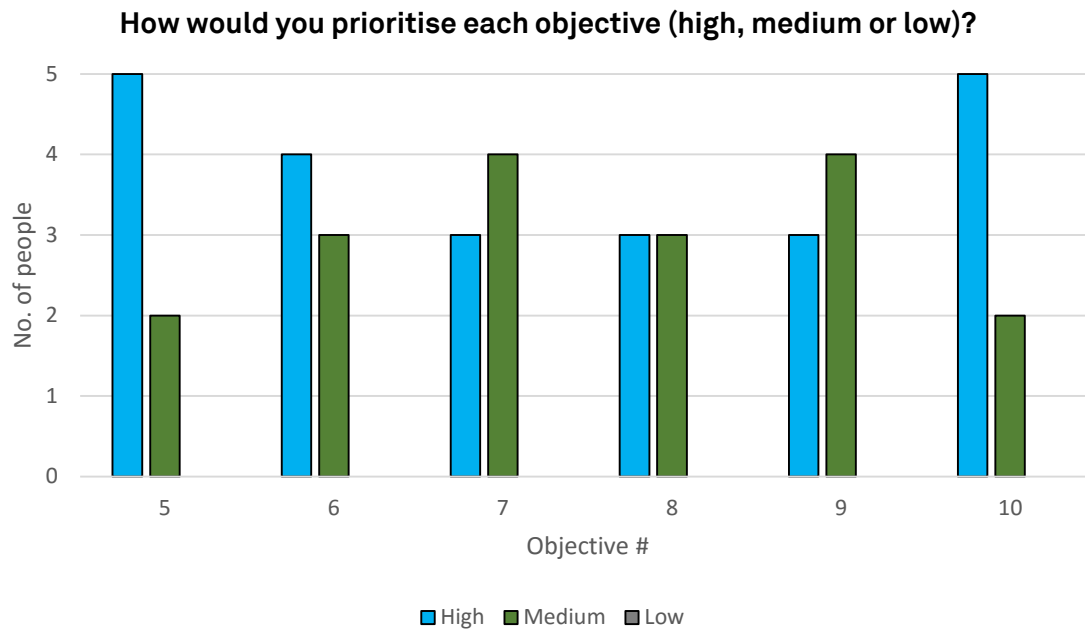
- Whether or not the fire service was relevant.
- The need to talk to housing associations, as they have direct engagement with their tenants every day. Stakeholders recognised that a third of all homes in Wales are in poverty and that this is not just limited to social housing.

### *Voting forms*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives of the 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))	<b>2.71</b>	2.50
6	Develop links between key relevant services – e.g. Fire Service home fire safety checks	2.57	2.25
7	Count and report the number of customers we have informed consent from to share data	2.43	2.00
8	Expand WPD's PSR data cleansing teams to ensure contact with c.500,000 PSR customers annually	2.50	2.00
9	Lead industry changes to PSR (e.g. common needs codes, 2-way data flows between suppliers & DNOs)	2.43	2.00
10	Initiate PSR data sharing trials with other industry members (e.g. suppliers, gas networks, water)	<b>2.71</b>	<b>2.75</b>

Detailed scores are in the graphs below:



## Establish area-wide 'Affordable Warmth' services that expand existing pilots

Key points stakeholders raised were:

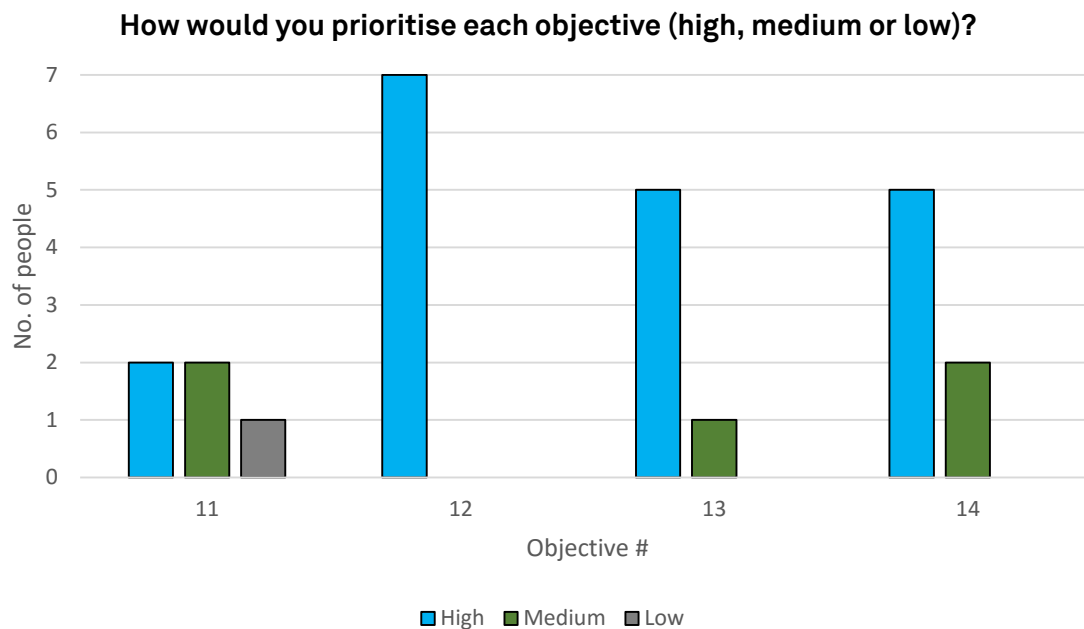
- The challenges of automatic devices; stakeholders questioned whether there would be problems relying on the phone network.
- What the definition of a worst-served customer is and how they are prioritised for having new systems put in place.

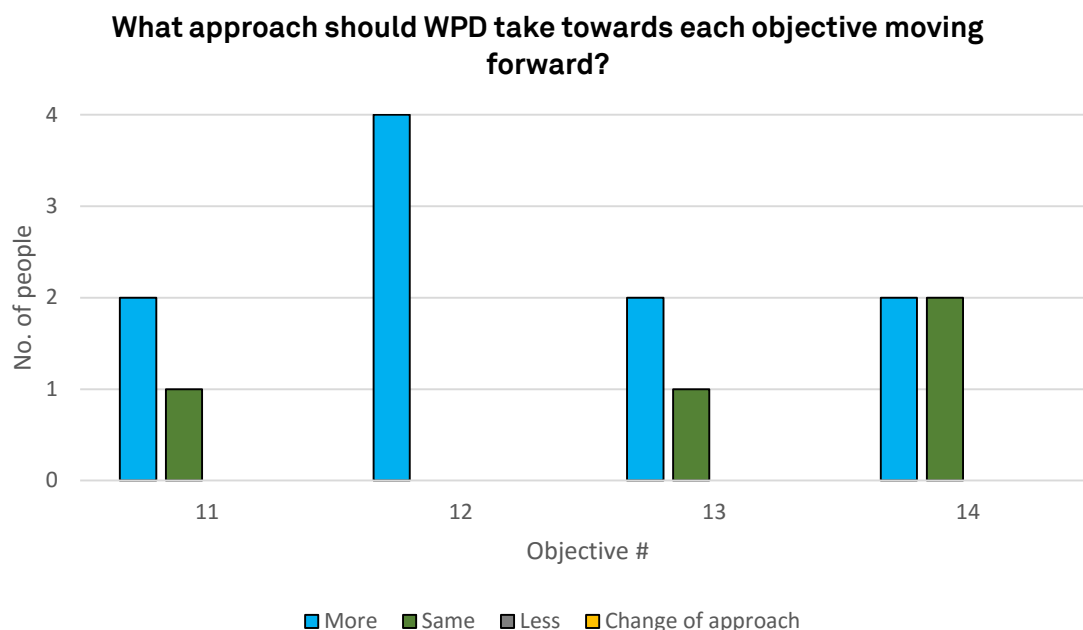
### *Voting forms*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives of the '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	2.20	2.67
12	Develop new 'Affordable Warmth' projects (e.g. x3 E.Mids, S.Wales, S.West)	<b>3.00</b>	<b>3.00</b>
13	Develop a competition for existing schemes to bid for partnership funding	2.83	2.67
14	Install devices to automatically notify WPD of power cuts in potentially vulnerable/fuel poor households, in areas of above average power cut levels	2.71	2.50

Detailed scores are in the graphs below:





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

Key points raised by stakeholders were:

- Agreement that training front-line staff was an excellent idea.

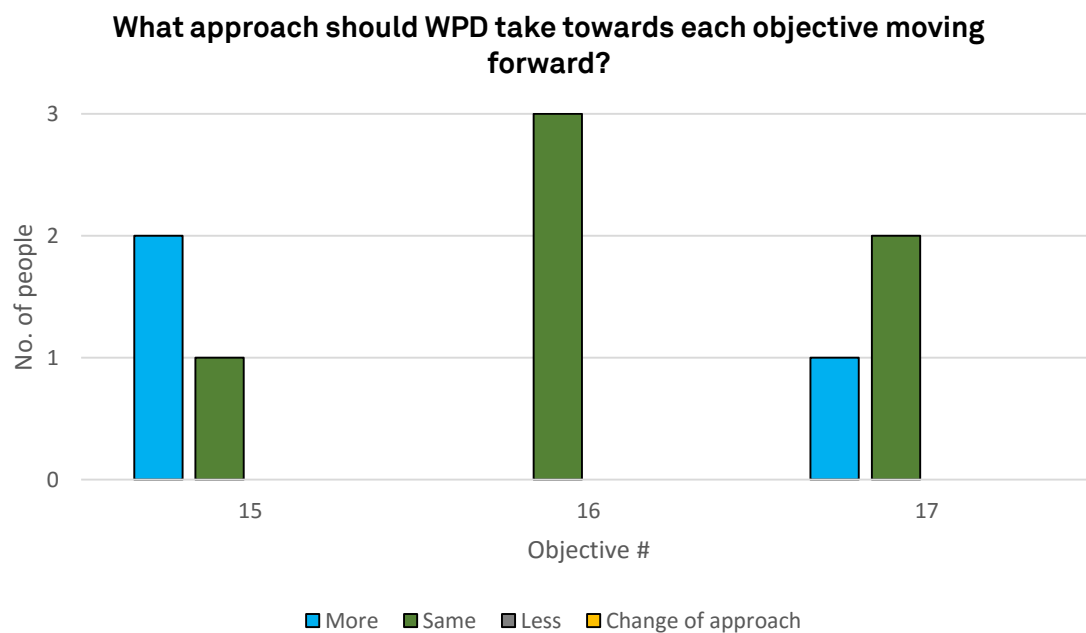
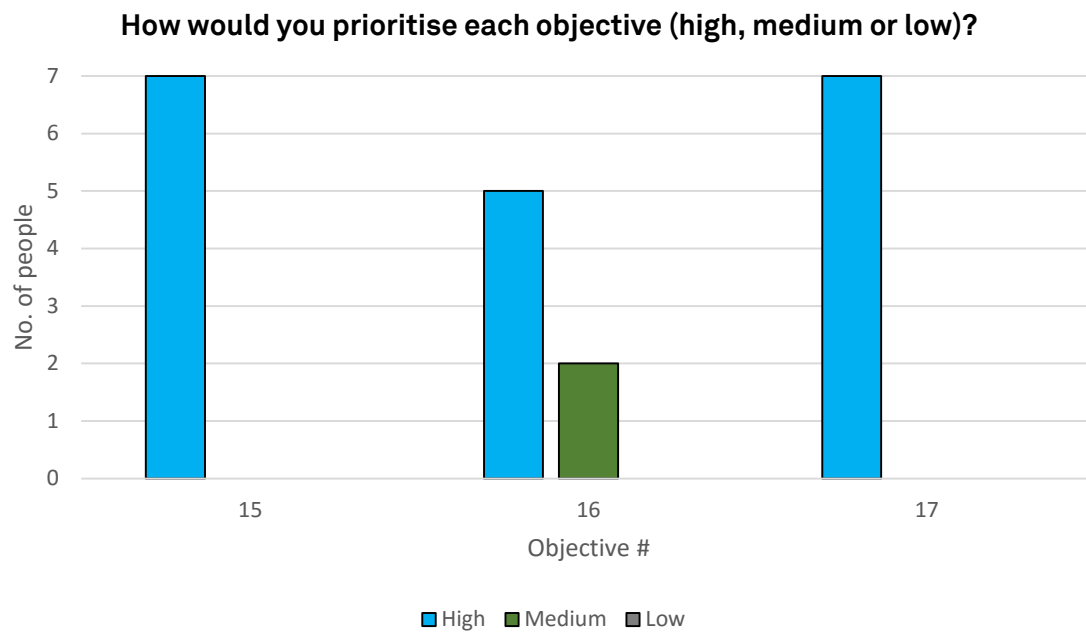
#### *Voting forms*

The table below summarises the voting results for the objectives for training all 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>3.00</b>	<b>2.67</b>
16	Monitor 12 hour faults impacting vulnerable customers specifically	2.71	2.00
17	Introduce a WPD standard to ensure no vulnerable customer is off supply >12 hours (in normal weather)	<b>3.00</b>	2.33



Detailed scores are in the graphs below:



### 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 side 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:

- A stakeholder asked about what lessons can be learnt from looking at how commercial premises (warehouses) store energy that can be used in the domestic market.
- A stakeholder asked what the impact of the evolution of electric vehicles would be.
- A question was asked about why the take up of PV in the commercial market was so slow.
- It was asked if WPD were engaged in any Virtual Power Plant scenarios.
- Another stakeholder urged WPD to research energy storage options as a matter of urgency.
- A point was made that batteries can be charged and put back in the load. A question was asked if these matters could be dealt with separately.
- A stakeholder asked when the results of the REZ trial will be known.

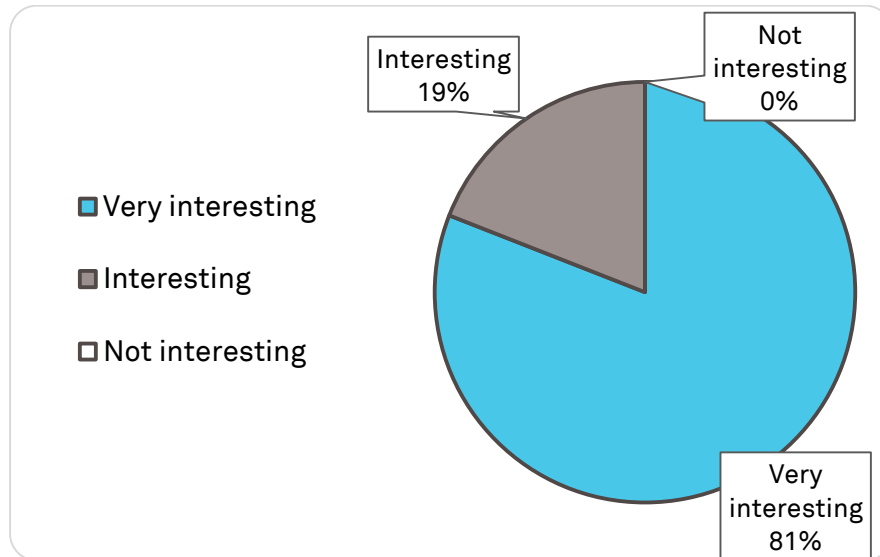
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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.westernpower.co.uk/docs/About-us/Stakeholder-information/January-2016-Workshops/Stakeholder-Workshop-January-2016-The-Role-of-a-DS.aspx>

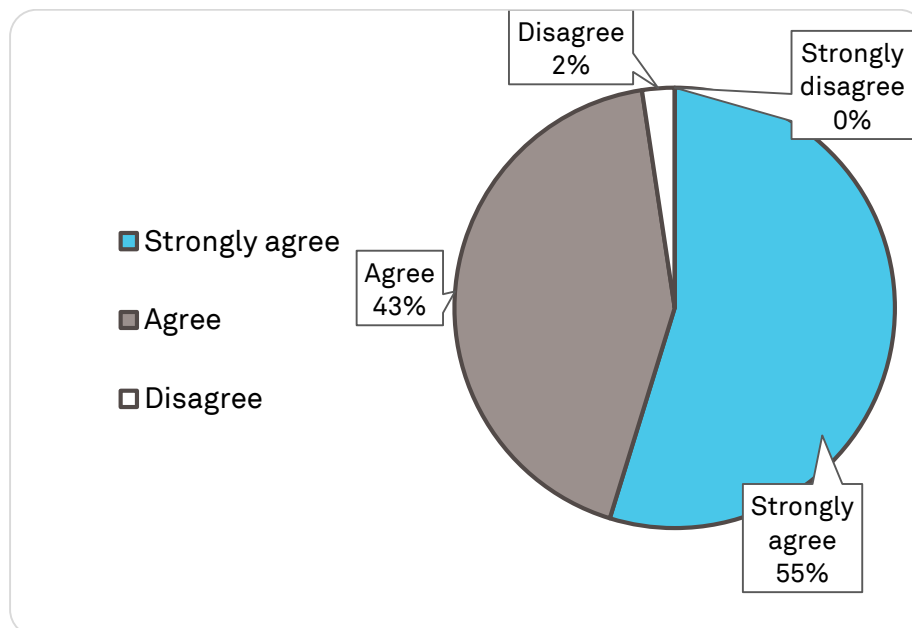
## 8. Written feedback

Of the 47 attendees who came to the workshop, 43 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?



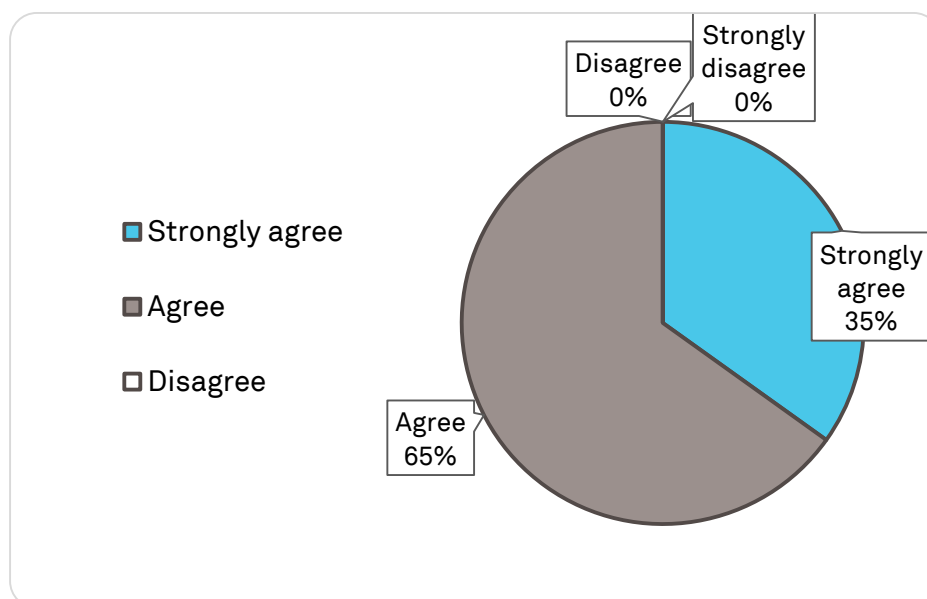
### Q2. Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?



Stakeholders made the following comments:

- *'Excellent facilitation on the table, but there were lots of topics covered and a relatively short length of time spent on each.'*
- *'Well facilitated and a good range of delegates.'*
- *'It was focused more on obtaining feedback without enough opportunity to ask questions.'*
- *'Well structured. I liked the spiral bound slide presentation, facilitator board and voting.'*
- *'I liked the presentation then discussion format.'*

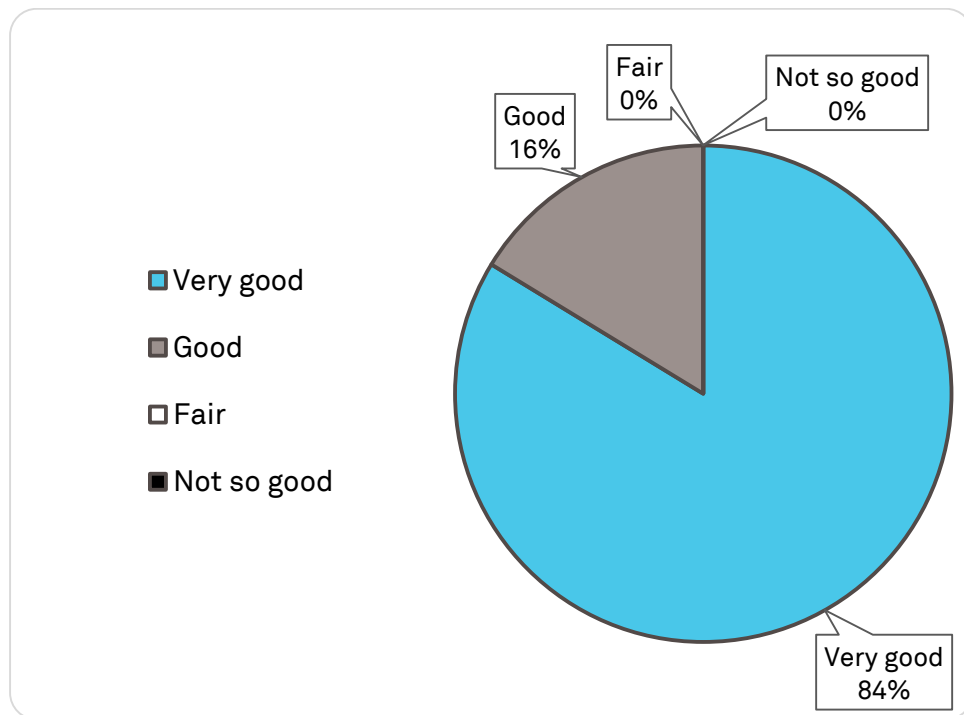
**Q3. Did we cover the right topics for you on the day?**



Stakeholders made the following comments on question three:

- *'Good to see "environment and sustainability" included as a priority. A good opportunity to help prioritise actions.'*
- *'I liked the focus on the future and the growing inequality in energy. It's a basic quality of life factor.'*

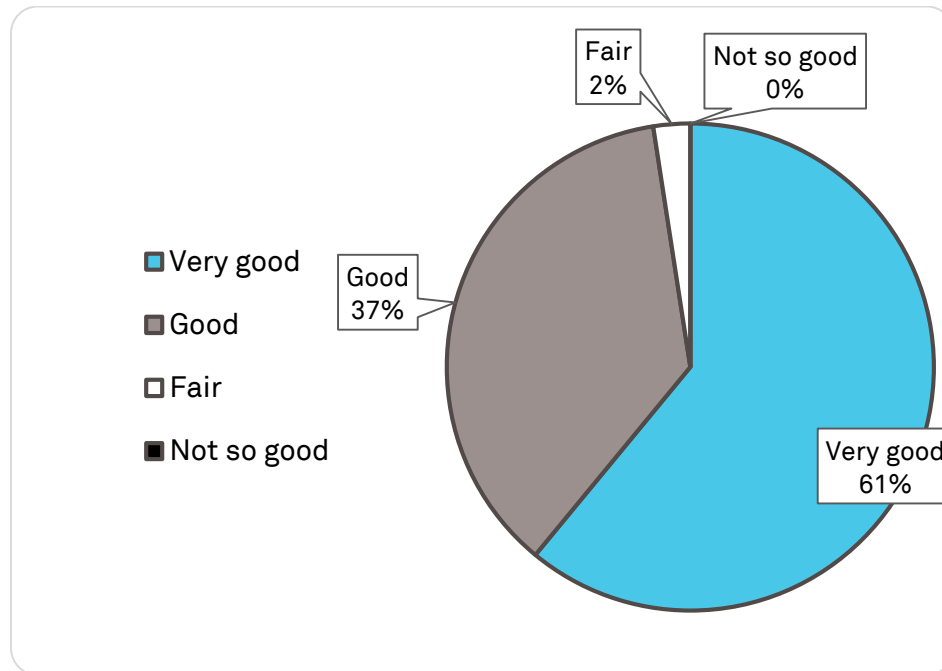
**Q4. What did you think of the way the workshop had been facilitated?**



Stakeholders made the following comments:

- *'Excellent organisation and facilitation.'*
- *'It was good to be able to put your view across.'*
- *'Very impressed with WPD and the workshops.'*
- *'This year it was very noisy as the tables were too near. It was difficult to hear responses.'*

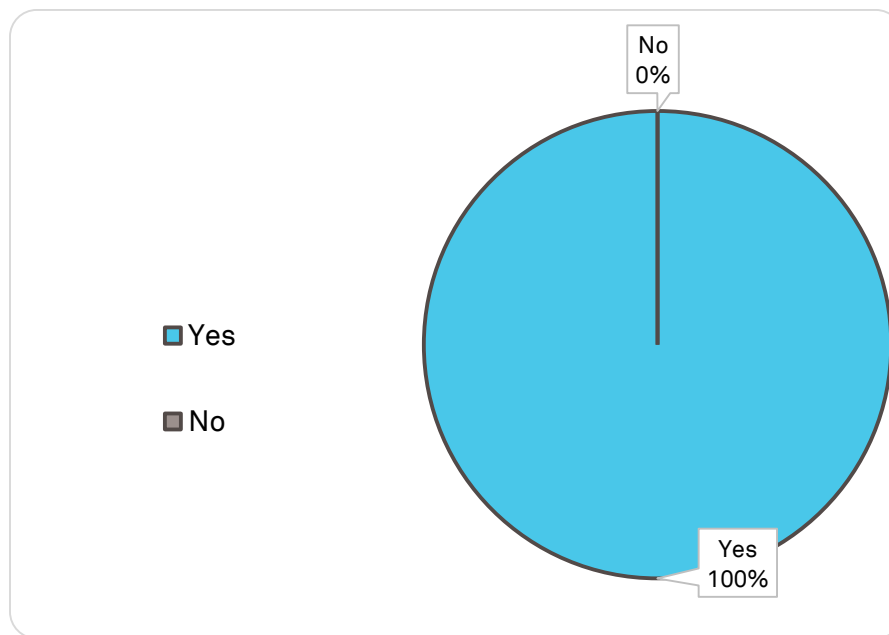
**Q5. What did you think of the venue?**



Stakeholders made the following comments in relation to the venue:

- *'It wasn't easy to find our way from parking areas.'*
- *'The venue seems expensive.'*

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



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

Stakeholders made the following comments:

- *'Excellent and informative as always. Well done WPD for keeping our lights on.'*
- *'A very enjoyable and informative day.'*
- *'Thank you for inviting SSEPD to this event – it is good to share our learning.'*