

# Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop: Birmingham 27 January 2015



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## 1. Introduction

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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 sustained engagement with stakeholders and was fast-tracked by the regulator in 2014.

WPD is committed to continued engagement with its stakeholders over key decisions. They identified two areas of focus for engagement going forward:

1. The delivery of WPD's plans and improvements to their services
2. Key, long-term priorities that will change the way WPD operate in the future

In January 2015, WPD hosted six workshops across its distribution area in order to get feedback from stakeholders on the two areas identified. This report details outcomes from the workshop that took place at Villa Park in Birmingham on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

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 featured 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](#).

## 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:

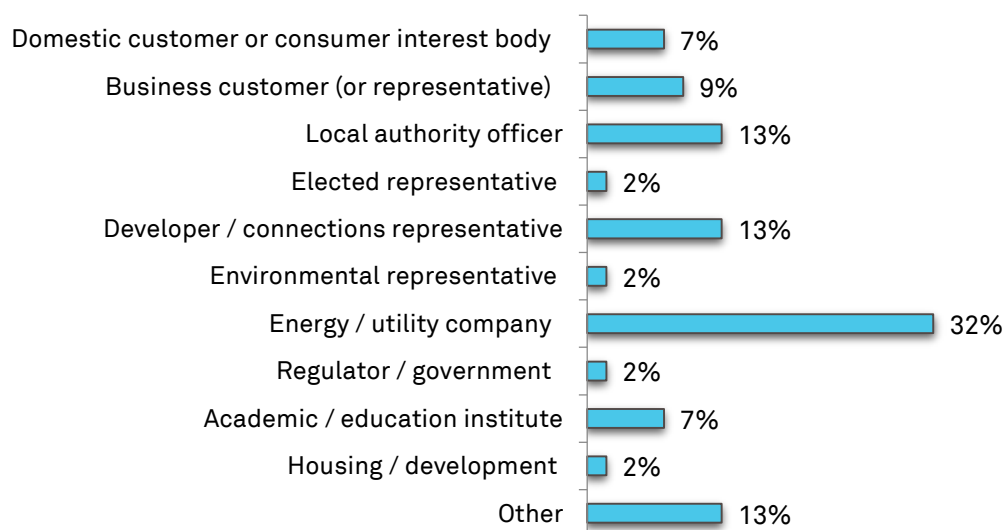
- **Workshop 1: Short-medium term – WPD’s Business Plan & reporting.** The first workshop involved a discussion on WPD’s Business Plan, specifically on which areas interested stakeholders most and how they would like to be kept informed.
- **Workshop 2: Long term – strategic priorities impacting the future of electricity networks.** The second workshop involved a discussion on the strategic priorities that impact the future of electricity networks. This included an interactive session where the group ranked the priorities as high, medium or low.
- **Workshop 3: Long term – starting to address these priorities.** The third workshop involved a more detailed look into two specific long-term priorities: *Customer Awareness of WPD* and *Affordability and Vulnerability*. Stakeholders were able to vote individually on what they believed to be the best actions in these areas.

### Attendees

A total of 57 stakeholders attended the workshop. There were a range of representatives from different backgrounds, including the domestic, business, local authority, developer/connections, environmental, energy/utility, regulatory/government, academic/education, housing/development, and voluntary 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:

### What type of stakeholder are you?



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

- Alstom Grid
- Ashfield District Council
- Babcock International
- Birmingham City Council
- British Gas
- British Red Cross
- Cannock Chase District Council
- Castle Bromwich Parish Council
- Coventry Consumer Network
- Cofely GDF Suez
- Coventry & Solihull Waste Disposal Co Ltd
- Coventry University
- E.ON Energy Solutions
- EA Technology Ltd
- Electricity Solutions Ltd
- Energy and Utilities
- Energy Technologies Institute
- Federation Of Small Businesses
- Geldards Llp
- Haven Power
- Health & Safety Executive
- Landis+Gyr AG
- Lark Energy
- Linbrooke
- Lucy Electric
- Morrison Utility Services
- Northern Ireland Electricity
- Power On Connections
- RWE npower
- S&C Electric Europe
- Sainsbury's
- Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
- Severn Trent Water
- Staffordshire Council
- Sterling Power
- University of Birmingham
- University Of Nottingham
- Utilities Connections Management Limited
- Utility Resource Services Ltd.
- West Mercia Housing Group
- Wyre Forest District Council

### 3. Summary of feedback

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#### Workshop 1. Short-medium term – WPD's Business Plan and reporting

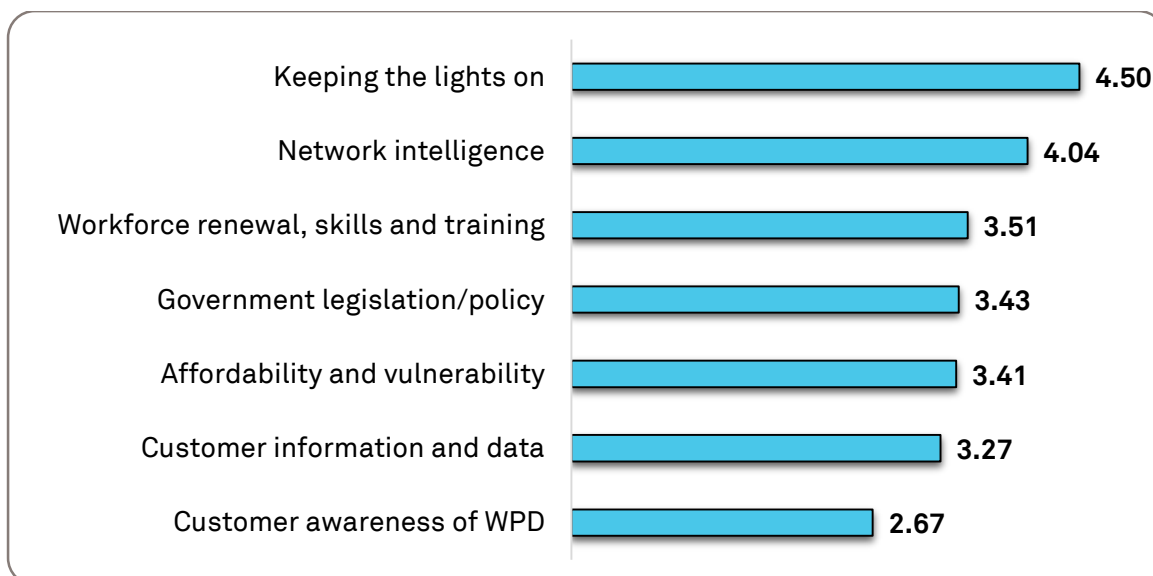
- The areas of the Business Plan that prompted most interest from stakeholders from all sectors were **reliability** and **connections**.
- There was a lack of enthusiasm for making **customer satisfaction** a priority, as it could take the focus away from the key priorities.
- The '**traffic lights**' version of the report was the most popular method of updating stakeholders on WPD's progress on the Business Plan. There was, however, a clear desire for more detailed information to be accessible, that stakeholders could 'drill down' into if there was something of particular interest.
- While **online updates** were the most popular option for updating stakeholders, a number of attendees suggested finding a way to include information on the Business Plan on **bills**.
- Stakeholders questioned how interested domestic customers would be in updates concerning the impact of the delivery of the Business Plan on their bills. It was added that there is already a lot of **customer confusion** about the role of suppliers and distributors.
- Those who did feel customers would be interested considered **online updates** the most relevant way to inform them. However, these should not exceed biannual updates, with annual updates being preferable.

#### Workshop 2. Long term – strategic priorities impacting the future of electricity networks

- **Keeping the lights** on consistently proved the most important priority for stakeholders.
- **Network intelligence**, often linked with keeping the lights on, was classified as a high priority on eight of the ten tables.
- **Customer awareness** was the lowest priority in most groups, sometimes equally with **customer information and data**.
- During discussions, some stakeholders felt there should be a strong push for substantially **more undergrounding** of pylons. Despite the larger initial cost, it was felt that maintenance and materials would be significantly cheaper.

Following the workshop session, stakeholders were asked to vote on the priorities, ranking them in order of importance, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being highest importance.





### Workshop 3. Long term - Starting to address these priorities

#### Customer awareness of WPD

- A number of stakeholders made suggestions for alternative activities that were not included as part of WPD's plan for raising customer awareness. The most popular suggestions included [using innovative PR activities](#) and [sponsored local events](#).
- During table discussions, the most popular initiative proved to be [expanded schools education activities](#), which often went beyond safety information to discussing wider issues such as poverty or encouraging children to discuss the issues they learn at school with their parents.
- More [traditional advertising, particularly through local media](#), was met with very little enthusiasm by stakeholders.

Stakeholders were asked to cast a vote by placing a sticker next to their preferred initiative. The outcomes of this are shown below.

Initiative	Votes
Expanded schools education activities - safety plus wider information	44
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	32
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	29
More direct mailings	20
More television advertising	17
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	6

#### *Electronic voting results*

Following the workshop discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote using their electronic keypads.

- The most popular action identified was [expanded schools education](#) with 31% of the vote.

- The second most popular action was [expanded website tools and leaflet information](#) with 19% of the vote.
- In a separate question, stakeholders voted [more television advertising](#) as the least popular action with 38% of the vote.

## Affordability and Vulnerability

- There were only three suggested initiatives identified by stakeholders in the affordability and vulnerability section (as opposed to 13 for customer awareness of WPD). Of these, the most popular was [offering advice and support to small businesses](#) with a particular focus on those that engage with vulnerable people.
- During table discussions, the most popular initiatives proved to be [investigating the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty](#) and [improving the data held on the Priority Service Register](#).
- [Establishing a “hardship fund”](#) proved to be the least popular option, with many attendees concerned that it would just defer the problem, or that it adds little value to an already saturated market.

Stakeholders were asked to cast a vote by placing a sticker next to their preferred initiative. The outcomes of this are shown below.

Initiative	Votes
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	38
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	33
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	32
Fuel poverty referral schemes	28
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' - for not-for-profit agencies	23
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives/schemes	7
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	6

## Electronic voting results

Following the workshop discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote using their electronic keypads.

- The most popular action identified was delivering [practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience](#) with 28% of the vote.
- The second most popular action was [improving the data held on the Priority Service Register](#) with 22% of the vote.
- In a separate question, stakeholders overwhelmingly voted [establishing a “hardship fund”](#) as the least popular action with 58% of the vote.

## Written Feedback

- 61% of attendees found the workshop [very interesting](#) while 39% found it interesting.



- 55% of attendees **strongly agreed** with the statement that they had the opportunity to make their points and ask questions. 45% agreed with it.
- 16% of attendees **strongly agreed** that the right topics had been covered, while 80% agreed and only 4% disagreed.

Stakeholders were also given a chance to make additional comments on the feedback form, these included *'interesting to understand what WPD believes are their top priorities', 'I liked the third party, neutral facilitator and mix of verbal debate and voting actions', 'definitely would attend more' and 'not good from a transport/road perspective.'*

## 4. Workshop 1: Short-medium term – WPD’s Business Plan & Reporting

The first workshop involved a discussion on WPD’s Business Plan, specifically on which areas interest stakeholders most and how they would like to be kept informed.

### 4.1 Which Business Plan areas interest you the most (for reporting)?

This question referred to the key areas of focus for WPD’s Business Plan. The following areas were discussed:

- Safety
- Reliability
- Environment
- Connections
- Customer Satisfaction
- Social Obligations

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative stated *‘connections and reliability are the most important for me. We have to generate for ourselves, we have to reduce our carbon footprint and we need to understand how to do that. Right now the network doesn’t support that in the middle of Coventry.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, stating *‘connections again, we look at existing connections but also look at new connections and that costs my company millions of pounds.’*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that s(he) *‘agrees, we’re looking on how to reduce down time, and always looking at how to reduce power cuts and we work with WPD.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘from my point of view, it would be customer satisfaction. It would have an impact on overall costs, so that’s particularly important for me.’*
- A business customer/representative raised the point that *‘from a practical background, safety stuff is very important to me. I come from a safety conscious industry and company.’*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'reliability is the most important. I am expecting a continuous supply throughout the year and it's important how they facilitate that.'*
- (S)he added *'I expect WPD to be environmental anyway in whatever they are delivering.'*
- A housing/development representative commented that (s)he was *'more interested in the environmental and social obligations side of things. I feel like reliability is already covered and these seem to be some new issues.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'connections is the most important one. Other factors could be safety, reliability and environment as well because all of these affect our production line.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed that *'connections is obviously number one.'*
- (S)he added however, that *'an increase in terrorism presents new problems for WPD. There should be a stage of high alert amidst the DNOs about what should be covered in this Business Plan during security threats. I would like to know what is in your plan to make that less of a risk.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'the most important thing for businesses is the reliability of the network. If there is any weakness in the network, we get affected.'*
- A business customer/representative considered that *'it is the most important thing, but I would not say the only thing.'*

“ The most important thing for businesses is the reliability of the network.”

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative commented that *'as well as social obligations, I would say customer satisfaction and reliability are of interest. WPD customers will often be a customer of my company as well, so their satisfaction is important. If our customers don't have reliability or are not satisfied with WPD then they may contact us.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'76 outcomes is too many to communicate.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I recognise the importance of each category and think they are right. The one I am most concerned about is connections.'*

Table 4:

- A developer/connections representative affirmed that *'from a work point of view, reliability is the most important. We provide equipment to improve WPD's reliability.'*

*From a customer point of view, customer satisfaction is obviously the most important.'*

- A business customer/representative stated that *'customer satisfaction and reliability are the two that interest me personally.'*
- A local authority officer made the point that *'environment and connections are the most important from a planning point of view. The latter especially, when it comes to building houses. Environment comes more in to play on the policy side.'*
- A domestic customer/representative commented that *'social obligations is the most relevant for me.'*
- An academic/education institute representative said that *'reliability is the most important, in terms of research – this includes information around substations, holes, towers. I want to find out how reliable the network is.'*
- A domestic customer/representative asserted that *'reliability is the most important for me. I'm interested in any innovation projects and innovative solutions to get the most out of the network.'*
- A local authority officer commented that *'reliability is important. I'm not interested in customer satisfaction, as I already know I'm very satisfied with WPD's work. WPD have helped me, where Npower haven't. Social obligations is also something I admire about WPD's work, as it's hidden and not seen.'*

Table 5:

- When discussing customer satisfaction, an elected representative felt that *'consumers are becoming more aware.'*
- A domestic customer/representative commented that *'reliability is very important.'*
- An academic/education institute representative remarked that *'the link between customer satisfaction, as part of the Business Plan, and finding out why the customer is satisfied is important.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'improved connecting is making it easier to bolster communications between customer and business. For example customers can now apply online and have immediate access to company notifications.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'there are also opportunities to improve around innovation.'*
- A domestic customer/representative said *'underlying all this is communication. It's easy to communicate with commercial business but the general customer knows very little about how WPD works.'*

Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'reliability is the most important, since every power failure has a consequence - such as my water pumps failing and not supplying water!'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'it's a social obligation to provide power to those vulnerable customers, although it's not just one point, there are many links between the different areas.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'reliability is very important, especially in more rural areas. From a business perspective the more reliable it is, the more work I get, and can give to WPD as a result.'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'connections is the most important for us. Work has been done to allow businesses like us to exist, but more can be done such as allowing competitors to assist DNOs, and WPD particularly, to reinforce and overlay work. Thus getting the network to a satisfactory level quickly.'*
- A domestic customer/representative said *'the most important issues are safety, reliability and social obligations. Given the areas that WPD supply, they know if there's a power failure somewhere in a vulnerable area and get out there and fix it as soon as possible, which is very good.'*

Table 7:

- A local authority officer stated *'reliability is a high priority because we need to respond to any emergencies.'*
- A business customer/representative added *'we do a lot of reliability monitoring so that is important for us.'*
- A domestic customer/representative commented *'connections is the key area that we're interested in.'*
- A representative from a law firm stated *'I'd agree with connections as well. The 20% figure is something we're trying to factor in.'*
- A domestic customer/representative added *'safety is something we're very interested in as well.'*
- An elected representative stated *'cost is a priority for us.'*

Table 8:

- A business customer/representative stressed the *'importance of both the speed of connection and the robustness of that connection'* as the most important areas of the Business Plan.
- An environmental representative thought that the *'future development of WPD's Business Plan is extremely important.'*

- An academic/education institute representative agreed, but also underscored the importance of *'reliability as one of the key factors'*, and highlighted that *'connections are a particularly hot topic at the moment in terms of reducing the time it takes to make improvements.'*
- A local authority officer brought up the importance of renewables, asking *'what can WPD do to educate people?'*
- A business customer/representative remarked that *'safety had to be WPD's top priority.'*



- An environmental representative agreed, adding that *'the more WPD spends time reporting on safety, the more it means that it's managing the business correctly.'*
- A business customer/representative reasoned that *'the issue of robustness isn't just about outages'*, which affect people only a couple of times a year. Rather, much shorter *'blips lasting for half a second occur much more regularly and can disrupt electronics and machine operation. Businesses don't always understand these blips, but they are often more significant cumulatively than major outages.'*
- An environmental representative argued that as a customer (s)he was *'interested in the bill, and was not as interested in sustainability.'* After clarification (s)he maintained that the (s)he wanted to be kept informed about *'what WPD is doing in innovation, and more importantly, what it is doing with the money.'*
- An academic/education institute representative agreed, noting that (s)he *'would like to see where the money is going rather than where it's coming from.'*
- A business customer/representative commented that small businesses want to know how much it's going to cost next year. *'The price is really essential'*(s)he concluded.
- An environmental representative stressed the importance of future investments in order *'to make the future robust.'*
- A business customer/representative claimed that *'small businesses need investment information from WPD'*, but always in terms of prices.

Table 9:

- A regulatory/government representative stated *'safety is the priority.'*
- A local authority representative however, disagreed, adding *'the environment is the priority for us.'*
- A business representative stated *'connections to the network have got to be the top priority.'*
- Another business representative highlighted *'environment and connections'* as the most important areas of the Plan.



- A regulatory/government representative commented *‘health and safety is vital for us. Health and safety must improve over the next 4 years. Investment into safety and the copying of best practice.’*

Table 10:

- A voluntary organisation representative felt that *‘as someone speaking on behalf of the voluntary sector, our primary interests concern the social obligations. Fortunately I sit on the customer panel which helps.’*
- A business customer/representative stated that *‘connections is the biggest issue for me. At the end of the day it’s a business and we’re interested in knowing what the programme is.’*
- A business customer/representative agreed *‘yes, we’re based on a strategy for connections so we want to know what investment will be made to enable more connections.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘I would like to know how business upgrades would affect customers.’*
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘how will this will be done and therefore how reliable is the plan?’*
- A developer/connections representative also agreed *‘yes, my interest would be in connections for the same reason. We do, however, work with local schools and charities and so, even though connections would be the main area of focus, I would still want to know what WPD does in terms of social obligations.’*

**“Even though connections would be the main area of focus, I would still want to know what WPD does in terms of social obligations.”**

## 4.2 How would you like to be kept informed of the progress of the Business Plan?

The stakeholders were asked how they would like to be kept informed. Specifically, what level of detail they would like, how frequent the communication should be, and how the information should be relayed.

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I think these stakeholder meetings are really good because they really focus you and give you an update on the progress that WPD is making during the Business Plan period. It also helps you build relationships for any issues you may have.’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, adding *‘face-to-face interaction is important. Timing is also important, it should not be too frequent but enough to keep us updated.’*

- An energy/utility representative argued that (s)he *'would definitely go for the most detailed version. I understand how networks perform and the incentives and it gives me an insight into the distribution charges. I need that level of detail for my work. It might not be for everyone but it needs to be available.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that (s)he *'prefers a short summary. Not necessarily a one page summary, as it does not have enough meat and bones, but a shorter summary will be able to help me get into it.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that s(he) *'agreed, short summary with links to more details if you need it. I might need some more details, I just need to know where to find it.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'detailed reports on things like network downtime and what area of the network you're talking about is what we want. Detailed information in an easy to understand format.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'd like a link to a web page – keep it simple, not clogging up my inbox with a PDF attachment.'*

*“I think these stakeholder meetings are really good because they really focus you and give you an update on the progress that WPD is making during the Business Plan period.”*

Table 2:

- A housing/development representative asked *'what I didn't quite understand is where it's being reported to – do stakeholders get the same report as Ofgem?'*
- A housing/development representative said *'I guess it is useful to highlight that it will be on the website at a particular time.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I prefer the traffic lights with the option of going into more detail on the website if you want to.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed, adding *'no one is going to look at 150 pages. Using traffic lights is the easiest way to see where things are going well.'* (S)he felt that *'paper reports being sent out to customers are pointless.'*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'our end customers would want to see high level detail.'*
- A local authority officer commented that *'I'm a great believer in the traffic light system because people really don't have much time.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *'the only thing I would be careful of is setting yourself up as an easy target for just doing traffic lights, especially if you have nothing to back them up.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I would try to have electronic copies that could be downloaded so you can read it on the train.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'the Business Plan should be online, but with more detail available if you want it.'*

- A local authority officer commented that *'we are all going down the online route. A significant number of people who will be interested will not have online access.'*
- An energy/utility representative added *'I'd suggest there needs to be variable amounts of detail for people. In terms of frequency, annual is not enough, perhaps quarterly reports with annual workshops.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'if you are doing something annually, the danger is you are reflecting on data that is already 12 months old.'*

Table 4:

- A business customer/representative argued that *'I have quite strong views on this. I don't like 150-page documents to read. As a resident, it would go straight into the junk. Even a 20-page brief is pushing it. For me, the traffic light system seems sensible. The only question I've got is what if one isn't green? By exception, where something is red, what is underpinning the action to convert that the red to green.'*
- A connections representative pointed out that *'WPD need to provide it in all formats. It just depends what level you pitch in at. If I'm going back to my boss, I need a one-pager. If something is red, however, I'll need to drill down into more detail.'*
- A business customer/representative stated that *'if it's always been green and there's stats that prove it is green, then that's fine. But if there's a particular challenge, then I'm interested in understanding how WPD is going to convert it to green.'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'WPD needs to give people choices in terms of depth and format. There are a lot of people in my area that haven't got decent broadband and decent internet access. Sometimes old-fashioned paper is best.'*
- A local authority officer highlighted that *'I would like a summary and then some more detailed documents.'*



Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative said that *'the traffic light system worked well.'*
- All representatives agreed that the traffic light system was useful.
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'with the traffic light system you immediately notice what is not green and therefore what needs improving on.'*
- An academic/education institute representative followed on by saying, *'you could go deeper with the traffic light system, for example be able to see more information about areas in red not working so well, and what specifically wasn't working.'*

- A domestic customer/consumer interest body representative remarked that the traffic light system showed *'a sense of honesty, it shows a willingness to admit when things aren't going right. It shows they are more willing to admit their faults and that makes the customer more willing to accept that things can go wrong.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'it's difficult to expect everyone to have a computer/get online easily and that's the most difficult area to satisfy. So the question is how to reach those people?'*
- A domestic customer/consumer interest body representative commented that *'putting that information in paper bills is useful for those unaccustomed to using computers or accessing the information online.'*
- An elected representative agreed with the point, adding that *'putting the info in bills is a bit like the information you get with credit card bills.'*
- However a developer/connections representative highlighted that, *'the problem is that the bill comes from the energy supplier, not the distributor.'*
- A domestic customer/representative responded by saying that (s)he liked the idea of putting more information on bills and that transparency is very important – *'customer bills are a way to communicate with more vulnerable customers.'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'how do you identify the more vulnerable people? Presumably you'd have to send the information to everybody rather than just those vulnerable, as it would be difficult to isolate them.'*
- A developer/connections representative responded by saying *'DNOs have a register of priority services.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that the information would have to match up with that of the suppliers and suggested sending out a leaflet. (S)he added that *'the fuel/electricity supplier has a register of vulnerable people and a register of those reliant on medical services which would need aid in the case of a power outage.'* (S)he suggested *'linking up those on the priority service register with the fuel supplier as there are almost a million on that register.'*
- An academic/education institute representative felt *the leaflet was a good opportunity to show people what WPD do.'*
- A developer/connections representative said the danger of posting information online, and receiving it that way, is that, *'it becomes generic, and emails are considered irritating.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'there is a link on the email to the WPD website.'*
- A developer/connections representative made the point that *'it's very important for customers to receive information.'*

**“ The leaflet was a good opportunity to show people what WPD do. ”**

Table 6:

- A business customer/representative considered *'from my perspective it would be digitally, we want a fully detailed document.'*

- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'yes, we want full understanding and detail, we want the full report and some of the documentation is very useful too. Most people may not want that but we want to see the fully detailed report as it's very important to us.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'I think broken down to our needs, so from a company perspective maybe specific stats in our area. For example we cover the West Midlands and want stats on that area, but I don't care about somewhere like Wales.'*
- A local authority officer highlighted *'the workshops themselves are the best idea to keep us up to date. I've been to 3 workshops and quite frankly I don't have the time or inclination to read your whole Business Plan but these workshops are great to have a rough idea of what it's about.'*
- A domestic customer/representative felt that *'annually is best, any more than annually is an information overload. Preferably in a concise and easy to understand format too - that would be great.'*
- A developer/connections representative mentioned *'a traffic light summary every 6 months, to show what WPD is achieving would be useful, then an annual detailed statement.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed *'once a year is fine, but slight re-alignment updates would be ideal.'*
- A domestic customer/representative raised the point that *'for domestic customers, keep sending an A4 piece of paper through the letterbox.'*
- A developer/connections representative affirmed that *'I agree with that for domestic customers, but in terms of our needs, sending an email saying "the following has been revised" is very good, then you can see what documents have changed which is really useful.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'I quite like the traffic light approach, it lets you get an overall feel for whether you are on plan and whether you are meeting your objectives. On top of that, there should be a more in depth workshop event for us to engage with.'*
- A domestic customer/representative added *'I'd agree. A traffic light level on top and then more in depth documentation.'*
- A business customer/representative stated *'I would like a link to more online data.'*
- An elected representative added *'WPD should consider doing a bill breakdown, like the Government is doing for income tax.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt *'an online publication would be the easiest way to access this.'*
- A domestic customer/representative added *'an email notification that it has gone online would be good too.'*
- There was general agreement that notifications should be sent when reports are uploaded.



Table 8:

- An academic/education institute representative stated *'I wouldn't want a 150 page report, but would like it to be available on request, a combination of a summary and a traffic light approach.'* (S)he clarified this point by proposing *'an executive summary - ideally in interactive or webpage or email-based format.'*
- An environmental representative commented that (s)he *'would prefer to receive a summary report on a rolling 6 monthly basis electronically, but then be able to further drill down into it in greater detail should they wish.'*
- A business customer/representative contended that *'since 99% of businesses have no more than 50 employees and so don't have time to read a long business report in detail, an overall summary would be most useful.'*
- (S)he also pointed out that the averages stated in previous Business Plan reports *'don't mean much to the average small business - it's what it means to them that is the key issue, the majority of small businesses put business reports in the bin.'*

***“I wouldn't want a 150 page report, but would like it to be available on request.”***

Table 9:

- A local authority representative commented that *'electronic would be better – much more palatable given the paperless future aim. Allows for digging down into the data. Emails with links would be preferable.'*
- A business representative stated *'if the Business Plan reporting is nicely itemised, then it should improve the efficiency of reading it.'*
- A regulatory/government representative stated *'being able to access the key facts is crucial.'*
- A local authority representative said *'is it overkill to report quarterly? Ideally we want to see relevant information transmitted.'*
- A business representative commented *'I can access many documents from their website – it's a very transparent company.'*
- A business representative stated *'annual reporting is good.'*

Table 10:

- A business customer/representative highlighted *'shorter summaries would be terrific. The traffic light arrangements are great but they need more detail. I don't want to be going through 150 pages.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed *'yes, that would be much more effective.'*
- A business customer/representative felt that *'you just don't have time to go through that many pages.'*



### 4.3 How would you like to be kept informed of the impact of the delivery of the Business Plan on customer bills?

Stakeholders were asked to discuss what level of detail they would like to see on their domestic customer bills, what method of communication is most effective, and whether WPD should be responsible for the breakdown of this information.

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative asked *'are we talking about updating domestic customers?'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'll be quite honest, I don't look at my bills!'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented *'at a domestic level, I look at the bottom line.'*
- An energy/utility representative, highlighting their own research said that *'there is no appetite to look at bills.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'for the ordinary customer, the jargon is too heavy.'*
- An academic/education institute representative asked *'do you need to know as a domestic customer?'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'from the research we've done, customers find it too complicated and it's not simplified.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'online debit stuff is quite easy, but if a letter that comes through all I read is the price then throw it away.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *'it's like buying a product. You might care what country it's manufactured in, but mainly you're buying it for material reasons. We can't choose WPD, it's not important for people who their DNO is.'*
- A business customer/representative highlighted that *'customers like comparisons. You should provide comparisons against other companies, like other distributors and utilities, just to gain that sense of perspective.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'd be interested in how to reduce my electricity, that's something customers are interested in.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I love the leaflets you send to the domestic customers, the A4 ones. I love them, I think they're great, and your adverts!'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'as a customer it's not something I'm so interested in, but for my work I am.'*
- An energy/utility representative said (s)he *'gets asked every week about a breakdown with figures at work, sometimes more than once a week.'*

Table 2:

- A business customer/representative made clear that she *'would like a high level summary of the impact again, preferably in traffic light style.'*

- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘a link in email would be good.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘once a year would be ideal.’*
- Another energy/utility representative agreed and said *‘anymore would be excessive.’*
- A housing/development representative pointed out that *‘customers tend to relate to their suppliers rather than their distributors. Since you are not actually in competition with other distributor networks, you don’t really have to create awareness.’*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *‘people don’t really know who their distribution operator is.’*

Table 4:

- A domestic customer/representative made the point that *‘WPD should use other channels like social media. You need to help people understand where bills come from and how they’re made up. You need transparency to inform customers and clients.’*
- A business customer/representative said that *‘as someone who’s worked in utilities for a number of years, I can’t understand the need for it. People are becoming aware that energy prices are going up and know who to point the finger at. But I don’t believe they actually want it.’*

Table 5:

- All representatives concurred that they would like to receive updates maximum of twice a year and any significant changes updates in the case of a problem/malfunction in power distribution.
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *‘if everything is fine we don’t need to know, only need alerts if something is not working.’*
- All representatives agreed that the best method was the traffic light system with greater depth and availability of information.
- An academic/education institute representative pointed that methods with the minimum effort are the best, *‘I don’t want to have to trawl through info.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that at the moment customers have access to a wide territory since the network covers four license areas, so, *‘would people like to see regional info rather than the broader perspective?’*

Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative remarked *‘I think the average customer wouldn’t understand that Ofgem video at the start unless they work in the industry. It would be useful to inform the customer that £100 on their bill actually facilitates the power network which keeps the TV on in their house.’*

Table 7:

- An elected representative stated *‘the customer would be very interested to know about the planned reductions of cost in your Business Plan. If I knew that WPD have lowered their bills, but my bills haven’t gone down, then I’d want to know why.’*

- A representative from a law firm added *'if WPD's bills were really transparent on their website that would allow consumers to see that information.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'if WPD communicate their savings, they need to make it clear that their part of the bill is just an isolated part which gets rolled together with other factors.'*
- A business customer/representative asked *'do you not send separate bills?'*
- A local authority officer commented *'I would have thought it would be good communications to advertise your savings.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated that *'ideally the information should be available on a breakdown of a customer bill but that doesn't sound easy so there should be another way.'*

Table 8:

- A local authority officer considered that *'the breakdown of how much of your money is going to WPD, and then a separate leaflet from the energy bill would be best.'*(S)he stressed that *'the breakdown must not be too long.'*
- There was general agreement on this.
- An environmental representative added that it is *'crucial to be able to access information when you need it.'*

Table 9:

- A business representative stated *'it isn't relevant to us.'*
- A business representative commented *'as a customer I'm interested in the overall bill. Not interested in 16% of it.'*
- A regulatory/government representative argued *'people don't know the difference between suppliers and distributors.'*
- A business representative made the point that *'it would be more worthwhile sending out the pricing of other household bills – am I worried about £100 a year? Probably not.'*

Table 10:

- A business customer/representative stated that *'I want to be informed when it is changed.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative however, argued that *'change is going on all the time so it's difficult. I can see changes because I'm on the customer panel but it's difficult to say when it's changed because change is constantly ongoing. I can't comment on connections but I can on my area.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'there should be something which is always available and updated with changes but something should also perhaps be sent officially on a monthly basis. So a monthly reminder that this is what is happening and how they're delivering to the Business Plan. However, but there should also be a portal which shows ongoing change which you can view whenever you would like to.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'for me, a 6 monthly email is ok, but I would also want an update on technical changes.'*

- A business customer/representative stated that *'we don't want any more hard copies.'*

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

Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative commented that, *'it's really important to deliver this information so that customers can understand their bills better and pull up problem areas.'*
- However an elected representative responded with, *'domestic users won't appreciate the limit of WPD's little impact on bills.'*

Table 10:

- A business customer/representative highlighted *'we do want to know what's going on, as a customer.'*
- A business customer/representative stated that *'WPD is publicly accountable.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'as a non-customer I'm still interested in how it compares against other DNOs in the UK. Because of low carbon technology I want to see how it evolves over time.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out that *'what this Business Plan has done is publicise WPD. 70% of people didn't know of WPD, so the more direct communication the better.'*
- A developer/connections representative made the point that *'I want to know about the areas and specifics of connections, as well as the investments going on. I am left wanting to know the ongoing knowledge of the network.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *'for my side the categories are confusing. It is not clear whether certain things fall under the same category. So there's no detail on that level in the Business Plan.'*
- A business customer/representative commented that *'apprenticeships and training are very interesting because we haven't seen that recently.'*
- A business customer/representative added that *'yes, it's also a very small skill set.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'the skills of the workers change, it's an ageing workforce so it's very important.'*



- A developer/connections representative felt that *'certain things could be targeted to a specific stakeholder.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out *'the technology of it all is your department. For me things like people sitting in a call centre, potential vulnerable customers- these are areas they are addressing and are relevant to me.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'for us it's important to understand what is happening when or where.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'for me, more targeted information to different stakeholders and more detailed information is important.'*

## 5. Workshop 2: Long term – strategic priorities impacting the future of electricity networks

The second workshop involved a discussion on the strategic priorities that impact the future of electricity networks.

### 5.1 Do you agree with the priorities identified?

The long-term priorities identified were as followed:

- Customer awareness of WPD
- Network intelligence
- Government legislation/policy
- Affordability and vulnerability
- Keeping the lights on
- Workforce renewal, skills and training
- Customer information and data

Table 1:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 2:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 3:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 4:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 5:

- An academic/education institute representative said, *'it's hard to disagree with anything.'*
- A domestic customer/representative highlighted that, *'essentially this is the bit the company have to decide, how they prioritise, but from a personal point of view I wouldn't know enough about how the company operates to know what the priorities are.'*
- An elected representative commented that, *'you have to rely on WPD knowing their business. There's an element of trust.'*

***“ You have to rely on WPD knowing their business. There's an element of trust.”***



Table 6:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 7:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 8:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 9:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.

Table 10:

- The table came to a general consensus that the priorities identified were correct.



## 5.2 Is there anything missing?

The stakeholders were asked if they thought anything was missing from the priorities identified.

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'it would be interesting to see how WPD interact with their competitors in other areas. Do they see themselves as ring-fenced or are they sharing their knowledge with other DNOs?'*

Table 2:

- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'efficiency of the network seems to be absent. It is an issue in terms of system reliability. If we are wasting energy through the inefficiencies of the distribution network that should be something WPD should be looking at.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'security of supply is not listed anywhere. I think it needs to be part of keeping the lights on.'*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative said *'I'm really surprised there is nothing specifically on environment.'*

- An energy/utility representative added *'we are under such pressure right now I would think it (the environment) would be its own priority.'*
- An academic/education institute representative made the point that *'in terms of environment, it's about emissions issues. Also, we would love more access to specific data sets and it would be nice to know what is available.'*

Table 4:

- A local authority officer made the point that *'priorities should include the existence of the company being safe, in terms of your licence being revoked.'*

Table 5:

- A developer/connections said that, *'if fuel suppliers provide the smart meters and therefore the data leaving consumers' homes goes directly back to the supplier rather than the distributor, the distributor might have to pay to get access to the data which is something to consider.'*

Table 6:

- A business customer/representative stated *'I think network intelligence; maybe something to do with cyber security is missing, particularly as we've heard recently in the news with say Facebook or Twitter. Maybe if the network went off for an hour or so, it would affect your smart network data.'*
- A domestic customer/representative made the point that *'WPD and relevant software firms would have to work very hard to achieve that.'*
- A local authority officer considered that *'cyber security is important, but also the information side is, as it is actually the energy company that can turn the power off for a customer when they have not paid their bill, not WPD. You should let them know it's not your fault, some customers will see smart meters – or more vulnerable customers may be confused if the power goes off that it's gone off because they've not paid, when in reality it's a network problem.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'also on smart networks, when power fails it comes to our central control network and we can easily relay that back to your network and let you know the power is off and maybe not keep it so internally focused at the moment.'*
- A domestic customer/representative suggested *'trying to persuade people to use less electricity.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'it's linking to the smart networks for me, understanding the information and how it relates to customers, seeing where you can improve the efficiencies in those areas of need, so smart data is crucial.'*

Table 7:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'the thing that's missing for me is cost certainty. What's important for me is that we are accurately pricing customers for those distribution costs. It makes up the cost stack for commercial customers. Cost*

*certainty is really important because we want to make sure that we can convey that to our customers. Perhaps this could come under customer information and data. When tariff changes occur, tariff year to tariff year, there will be fine-tuning that will occur, and from my perspective I want to be able to claim for it for my brand.'*

Table 8:

- An environmental representative suggested that *'the issue of innovation appeared to be missing initially, and that there were aspects of it that haven't been fully explored.'* Yet (s)he did note that *'it feels as though innovation is embedded within the Business Plan.'*
- A business customer/representative stated that *'the indicators were good, but in representing small businesses I would like to see how much of WPD's business is contracted out to small businesses, and how quickly it pays those small businesses.'*
- A business customer/representative reasoned that many small businesses *'would like WPD as a customer, perhaps WPD could involve more companies and thus more small businesses. WPD could perhaps ensure that, when contractors go out to sub-contractors, they use more local businesses.'*

**“It feels as though innovation is embedded within the Business Plan.”**

Table 10:

- A business customer/representative stated *'for me there isn't anything missing, because that information isn't for us. WPD have been very proactive about what their programme is. So we know which transformer needs to be replaced.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'they said in the beginning that those are the priorities but underlying all of that is security.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'cyber security will also be more important but maybe that would go under network intelligence.'*

### 5.3 Which are most important to you and why?

Stakeholders were involved in an interactive session where the long term priorities were ranked in order on a traffic light board. Each stakeholder was able to provide input on where they thought the priority should lie – high, medium, or low. Following the session, each stakeholder was able to cast an electronic vote individually to ensure everyone's opinions were accounted for.

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'workforce and skills underpin everything you're trying to do.'*

- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it's related, it's a medium priority as it feeds into keeping the lights on.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'keeping the lights on goes hand in hand with affordability and vulnerability.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'm not clear as to how a DNO can help with affordability and vulnerability. A supplier would be more suitable, in my opinion.'*
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that *'affordability is more to do with your supplier than the DNO.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'the proportion of the bill for the DNO is increasing, so that's why affordability is important to me.'*
- An academic/education institute representative stated *'I wouldn't put affordability and vulnerability in the same category, I think they ought to be separated.'*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *'if you're talking about the vulnerability of the network, that's paramount. But if you're talking about vulnerability of customers, I don't think it's very important and not something a DNO can do anything about.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'would the customer see the bill as WPD's responsibility or the supplier's?'*
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that *'if you identify vulnerable areas, then it would be quite easy for WPD to help the supplier.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'surely the more you try to influence government policy, the more hurdles they throw at you! I think that it's high because of the transparency that's required.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'the priority is to keep the lights on, then workforce renewal because I'll be happy to speak to an engineer when I speak to WPD.'*
- An academic/education institute representative asked *'I think customer data is useful but not sure how necessary it is? Is it something that should be a high priority for WPD?'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'it's down to timescales, right now it's not a high priority but in the future it might be.'*
- An academic/education institute representative argued that *'informing customers about when the lights are back on via text is important, so that falls into customer data.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted the importance of *'customer awareness in a power cut.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I understand the importance of customer awareness, so I think it's very high.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'for a business customer, I think customer awareness is important but not sure it's about domestic customers. I think it should be high, though. Considering it's a monopoly, people should know you're there.'*

“Workforce and skills underpin everything you're trying to do.”

- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'network intelligence is important as a long term priority, in my opinion.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'the technology is not quite there yet for it to be addressed now.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *'the level of network intelligence that WPD is providing is very important for a business customer, so it's important for us. There are limits to how much we can generate and where we can generate. That lack of knowledge is making us delay what we're doing so from our point of view it's very important.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'I'd probably put network intelligence ahead of customer intelligence.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, adding *'if you're really thinking about the long term, workforce skills renewal and training is very important as well.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'if this is a prioritisation then network intelligence will improve customer information and data so they should be closer together.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'for me particularly keeping the lights on and network intelligence are very important. It directly impacts what we're doing. An example of that is that EU legislation is saying there needs to be a change in switchgear. It directly affects us. Intelligence as well, we're always looking to improve and if WPD shares information then that would help.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that the *'one that sticks out for me is workforce renewal, skills, and training. It underpins everything. I understand the ageing workforce results in losing so much expertise.'*

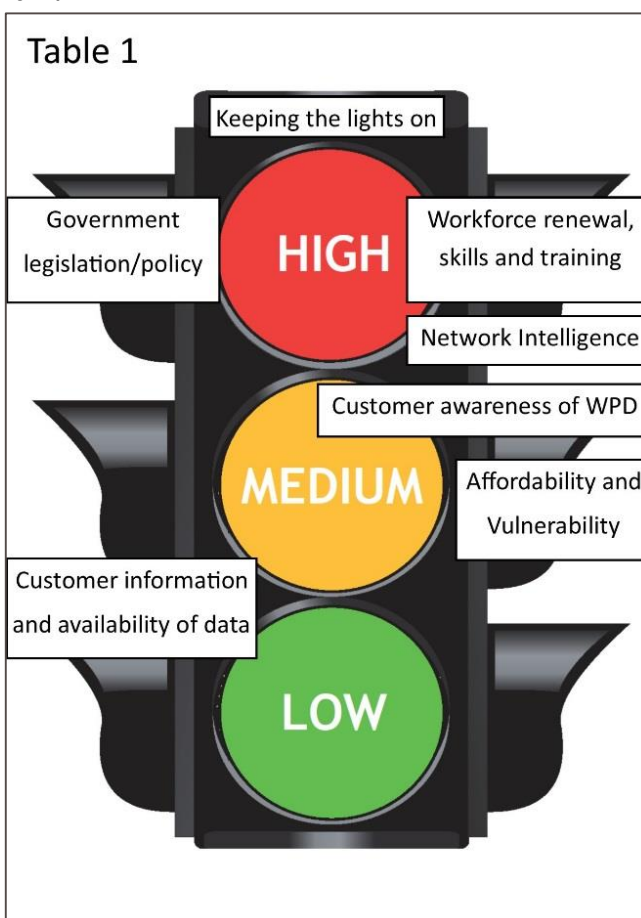


Table 2:

- A housing/development representative considered that *'customer awareness links with affordability and vulnerability so it's useful for customers to have that awareness – hence I will think it should be a high priority.'*



- A developer/connections representative raised the point that *'if you have an emergency call number, it's not about who is behind the line. It is only about what number you have to ring.'*
- A business customer/representative said *'I ranked them all and customer awareness came last.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt customer information and data could be problematic, stating *'the access by non-WPD customers is likely to cause a lot of disruption to the network.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'customer information covers a broad area, so for me that would be a high priority.'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'from an energy efficiency point of view, with the amount of data, you would need a lot of servers and energy to process and run the data. Unless you are using it in a productive way, it is a significant waste.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'if WPD calls their customers to tell them not to use power or electricity during a certain period, a lot of people would not follow the specific instructions.'*
- A housing/development representative highlighted that *'Government legislation has got to be a high priority, otherwise you would be in hot water.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'for me it's like complying with the speed limit, but we don't all do that do we? Even though we say we do.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'it's the rules. It has got to be done whether you like it or not.'*
- A developer/connections representative considered that *'given that WPD is only 16% of the bill, I don't think affordability and vulnerability is really important. The cost of fuel depends on a lot of other factors which cannot be controlled by WPD.'*
- A housing/development representative disagreed and commented that *'affordability covers a lot more areas such as fuel poverty.'*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *'the money that I pay for my electricity bills should not go into WPD being a social carer. It is a social benefit, but I don't personally think that is WPD's prerogative.'*
- (S)he added *'the Government could give the money to another organisation rather than a distribution company to suit that same purpose. I don't think WPD should be referring people to CAB. That is other people's roles.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'WPD can do more than they are capable of and that is what makes a company awesome.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'workforce renewal, skills and training is something which should be done anyway in a business.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'the problem is the workforce trend is getting older. I think there was a break in the Business Plan where they did not bring*

**“ Government legislation has got to be because a high priority, otherwise you would be in hot water. ”**



*apprentices in all the time and now there's a big gap between people who are leaving and people who do not have enough experience.'*

- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'network intelligence affects the whole business. If you are making the network more intelligent, it means more business for us.'*
- A housing/development representative commented *'you have to keep the lights on. I don't think it needs to be the top because it has always been focused on anyway.'*
- A developer/connections representative argued that *'there is a cost implication with reliability. As customers, how much are we willing to pay for a constant supply?'*
- A housing/development representative considered *'perhaps in that case network intelligence needs to be a higher priority.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'it makes me laugh when people who live in rural areas lose their power. There is a cost to maintain reliance and not everyone is ready to pay for that.'*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned that *'when the power goes off, we need to get in generators to keep things going. So I am being selfish when I say I expect the power to always be on.'*
- A business customer/representative felt that *'you need to balance that with everything else you do but I still think it comes as a top priority.'*

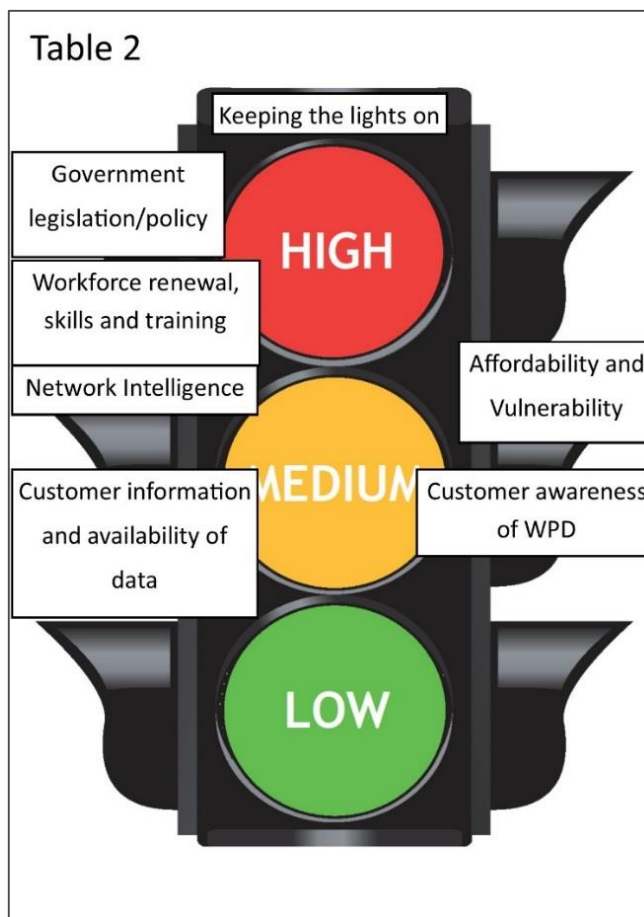


Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'at the end of the day if the lights are on, there is no reason to contact WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'the service we provide is in the interest of public health and if the electricity is on it means our equipment is working. We care about keeping water pumping.'*

- An academic/education institute representative considered *'this term keeping the lights on is meaningless without some context. Is it about keeping it from going off for minutes, hours or days?'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'making people aware of what is needed to keep their lights on is a high priority, however publicising WPD for self-serving reasons is not.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'in terms of knowing who WPD is as a company I would not rank it as a high priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued *'by knowing about supply interruptions, you can react quicker, which will allow WPD to be a better company.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *'we would love to have more network intelligence data, so we would rank it as a medium high priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'the more information on the network that we have the better.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'having more information will allow for a more efficient network that works through demands and constraints.'*
- An academic/education institute representative asked *'are smart meters smart for the customer or the company? I don't think the customers really know what smart meters can do for them, so at the moment it is mostly benefiting the companies.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'I think that WPD should naturally be doing government legislation and policy as part of their business.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'we are all bound by the same legislation and policy so it is a high priority.'*
- An academic/education institute representative made the point that *'there are some of the issues around feed-in-tariffs having a negative impact on fuel poverty because of the way it is disseminated. That policy could be altered.'*
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that *'it is incredibly important that we know what policy and legislation impacts us. I would suggest it is a high priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'WPD has limited ability to impact the bill, but there may be some things that they can do to support the vulnerable.'*
- An academic/education institute representative stated *'for us, it (affordability and vulnerability) is important because we monitor how effective policy on vulnerability is.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'there has been a lack of training over the last 20 years with few apprenticeships in the DNO industry.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued *'workforce renewal and skills training is all part of keeping the lights on. You can't keep the lights on without people to make it happen.'*
- An academic/education institute representative highlighted that *'we are working to provide training for a variety of industries and many industries are not seen as sexy*

**“ There has been a lack of training over the last 20 years with few apprenticeships in the DNO industry.”**

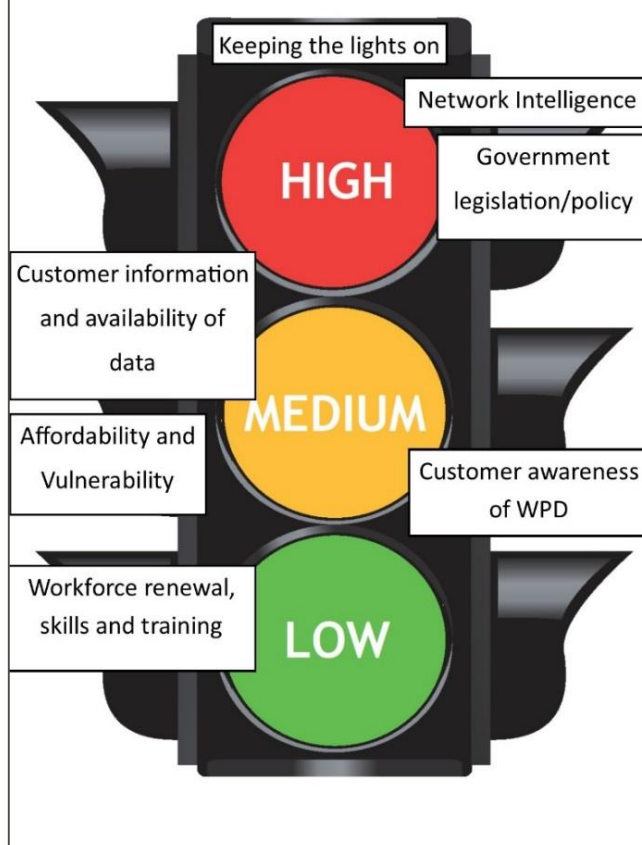
*subjects. With a lot of people retiring you need to bring in new people. The reality is that these are really interesting subjects.'*

- An energy/utility representative argued *'it is a low priority for me. I should not feel it, it should not impact me.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'customer information and availability of data should be a high priority. I want to know where I can distribute, where it is going.'*
- An academic/education institute representative considered *'without the granularity of data, it's difficult to diagnose the problem.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it is about the quality of the data and sometimes you can just have too much data. I rank it as a medium priority.'*
- An academic/education institute representative added *'if it is not important why are we rolling out smart meters?'*

Table 4:

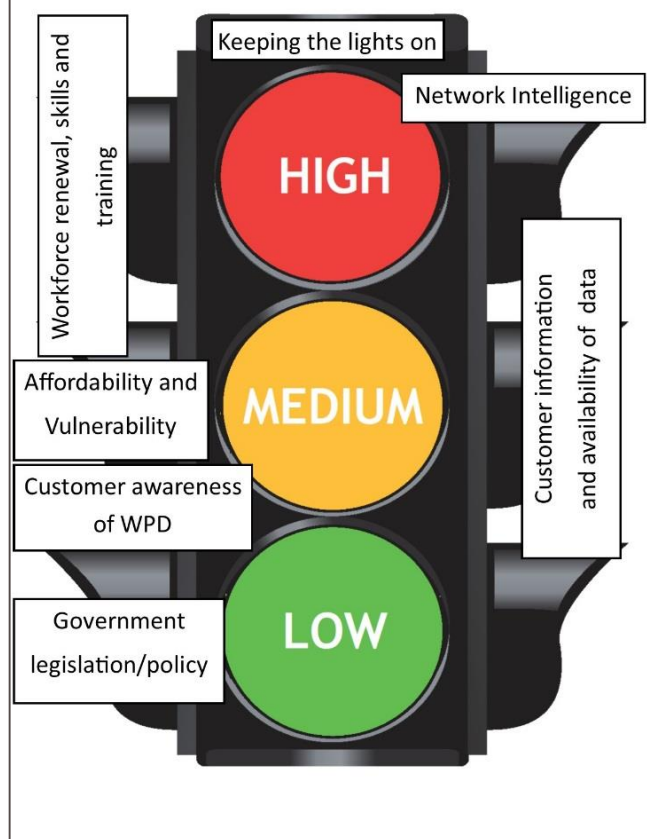
- An academic/education institute representative argued that *'keeping the lights on is a high priority. That's the principle function of a distribution network. It's got to be top priority. For my interest in particular, the resilience of the network to a wide array of threats is important.'*
- A domestic customer/representative asserted that *'keeping the lights on is the most challenging area moving forward. Looking at the old network and as demand evolves, there's going to be added pressure on keeping the lights on. The added pressure of time and government targets means WPD will have to address some high degrees of innovation.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *'you're paid to keep the lights on as a company.'*
- A business customer/representative felt that *'customer awareness is a low priority. Your telephone number is all people need to know. They don't need to know the ins and outs of who you are and what you do.'*
- A local authority officer agreed that *'customer awareness is a low priority.'*

Table 3



- A domestic customer/representative pointed out that *‘with vulnerable customers, customer awareness is a bit more of a priority.’*
- A domestic customer/representative commented that *‘network intelligence is a high priority. You can’t keep the lights on without high levels of network intelligence.’*
- An academic/education institute representative felt that *‘big data and smart meters are interesting. Monitoring them, the condition of network, as well as households that have lost power can all help you in targeting your responses. Network intelligence is a high priority.’*
- A developer/connections representative affirmed that *‘resources are finite, so network intelligence becomes a higher priority.’*
- A local authority officer said *‘the workforce is important. I’d say it’s of medium importance. Most of my sector are fairly old.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘in the electrical industry, there is a big gap in age and skills. We need people coming through in skills and training. There’s a high retirement rate.’*
- A domestic customer/representative argued that *‘there is a trade-off between skill sets and where head count sits. Going forward, internal sourcing will become a challenge,’*
- A domestic customer/representative claimed that *‘affordability is quite a high priority. If people can’t afford to pay their bills, they won’t get any energy. That’s especially the case with your vulnerable customers. It’s all about being proactive, in terms of tackling your core problems.’*
- A developer/connections representative asserted that *‘there shouldn’t be anybody who misses out on electricity and gas in this country.’*
- A local authority officer said that *‘WPD has a main part to play in the security of supply for vulnerable people.’*
- A business customer/representative commented that *‘government legislation is between medium and low priority, as you have to do it anyway.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘government legislation is a necessity.’*

Table 4



- A business customer/representative argued that *'government legislation is something that the Energy Networks Association need to engage with as a DNO community in general. Business plans can't be built in isolation, especially with new EU regulation coming in. As a supplier of equipment and services, government legislation sets the budget for our organisation, so if the government suddenly decides 'x', this impacts upon us and you. From a pure business perspective, this is at least a medium priority.'*
- A local authority officer commented that *'government legislation is one of the highest priorities. If you don't go along with regulation, it could mean the end of your company.'*
- A domestic customer/representative argued that *'customer information and data correlates with vulnerability, so this is a medium priority. You can tighten up resources if you do concentrate on it, and achieve significant cost savings.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'it's not so much the collection of data that's important, it's what you're going to do with it and whether it's for the good of customers and the network.'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'data collection is useful, but not as high a priority as the others.'*
- An academic/education institute representative claimed that *'data for research is important. Data for extreme weather impact analysis and different types of renewable information assessments. WPD are actually the only ones that provide any data.'*
- A domestic customer/representative pointed out that *'it's impossible to keep the lights on without innovation and investment. There's an interesting point around data, because WPD could exchange data between different DNOs and with universities. This could be detrimental to keeping the lights on.'*
- It was agreed by the group that keeping the lights on was most important.

Table 5:

- A domestic customer/consumer interest body representative said that *'the bottom line is keeping the lights on.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that *'because WPD are good at customer service, they can divert some of their attention towards other priorities such as vulnerability and affordability and network intelligence.'*
- A developer/connections representative thought that *'customer information and availability of data is not as high, perhaps sliding to medium.'*
- A developer/connections representative believed it was a *'low priority because they're not collecting all the data needed. If they were to include the data of commercial users it would be much better.'*
- A domestic customer/representative responded with *'if they're not collecting that data then it becomes less important, maybe a medium priority.'*
- A developer/connections representative added that the information they have on customer data is *'very broad and difficult to prioritise. Also concerning smart meters,*



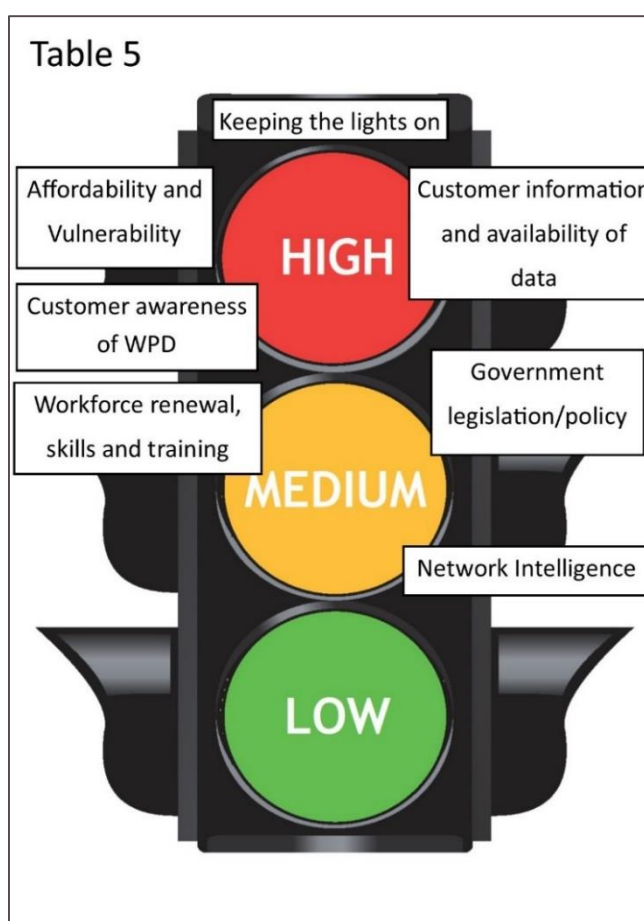
*DNOs aren't at the stage of having to provide that data and therefore it might take some time to roll out.'*

- A developer/connections representative commented that *'it's often only useful when there's a power outage.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that it was a bottom priority, *'everything else has an impact on me as a commercial and domestic user whereas knowing who distributes electricity isn't necessary to know as long as it stays there.'*
- An elected representative believed that this was a high priority *'as a country becoming deskilled, if we don't have the skills we can't keep the lights on.'*
- An academic/education institute representative thought that it benefited the company a lot and is *'good as a method of outreach'* and therefore a medium priority.
- An elected representative remarked that *'if this was replicated across industry in general, WPD would have greater impact.'*
- A developer/connections representative responded by saying *'to recruit people, you need to have a wider understanding of the industry so it's of medium to high importance'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented *'it's important that there's an increase in skills to match the ever-changing world/energy trends.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'one of the good things about the Business Plan being an eight year plan is that it gives WPD the time to tailor their work and plan ahead.'*
- All representatives agreed that affordability and vulnerability was a high priority.
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'it affects everybody and they can tell you about what appliances cost to use.'*
- An academic/education institute representative added that *'it's a moral obligation; one can't not cater for those who are vulnerable.'*
- A developer/connections representative followed with *'other people may question why they have to help provide for those who are vulnerable so it's good for the company to be transparent about what they're doing.'*
- An academic/education institute representative highlighted that it was *'important for WPD to be at the forefront of network intelligence.'*
- A domestic customer/ representative added that *'customer information and availability of data impacts on network intelligence.'*
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that *'depending on which kind of data is available, it could be anywhere on the priority spectrum.'*

**“It's impossible to keep the lights on without innovation and investment.”**



- All representatives, however, concluded that customer information and availability of data was a high priority.
- An elected representative added that it also *‘encourages us to be more fuel efficient.’*
- A developer/connections representative responded by saying that the concept of the smart meter was great, however, *‘often if you phone up your electricity company and talk about smart meters they don’t have adequate information about the service and are therefore unhelpful.’*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘it’s going to be a high priority for WPD because it affects what they do, but from the representative’s point of view it’s a lower priority because WPD can’t do anything about it.’*



- An academic/education institution representative said that if *‘WPD was however able to influence government policy then it becomes a higher priority.’*

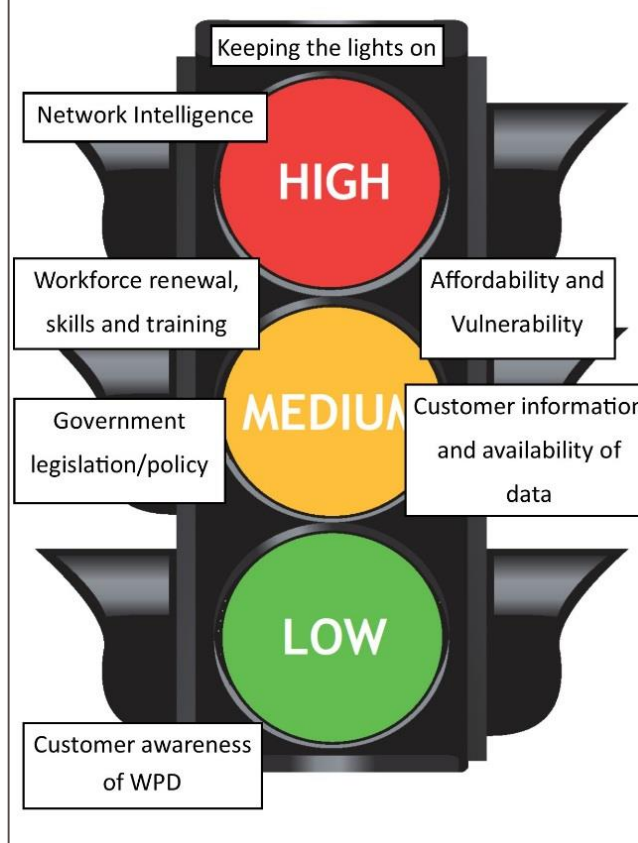
Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I think customer awareness is important, if your power fails who do you call? Maybe more middle than high though.’*
- A local authority officer agreed *‘yes I’d rather they spent time and money keeping the lights on than letting people find out about WPD. If you keep the lights on there’s no reason people need to contact you.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘network intelligence is crucial, it keeps it efficient and helps you keep the lights on and stay ahead of future government legislation.’*
- A developer/connections representative concurred *‘yes they’ve started with eco-transformers, washing machines etcetera so it can really help you keep ahead of the game.’*
- A domestic customer/representative remarked *‘good network intelligence should aid long term planning.’*

**“Affordability and vulnerability is not as important as it’s not a WPD concern.”**

- A local authority officer made the point that *'network intelligence is done to you, so you have to abide by it, you can influence it slightly but it's more routine work rather than a priority.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out *'in your Business Plan you have to deliver government policy, but you should let the trade body do the lobbying and influencing of the legislation.'*
- A local authority officer argued *'affordability and vulnerability is more of a medium priority, because if you keep the lights on and have the information of the smart network, you are supporting the vulnerable I think it should be up there but not at the top.'*
- A domestic customer/representative complained that *'affordability and vulnerability is not as important as it's not a WPD concern.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *'customer awareness is not as important and should move down.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'affordability is achieved by improving the network and reliability, which allows you to drive costs down.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *'if you get the rest right, affordability and vulnerability will follow – it doesn't work the other way round.'*
- A local authority officer raised the point that *'vulnerability ties in with sharing of information and resilience.'*
- A domestic customer/representative said *'regarding vulnerability, in each area that WPD has there are some vulnerable and at risk customers and some commercial and government customers too - it's not going to be the same across the patch.'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'yes it's more about the individual care; someone with a dialysis machine is clearly more vulnerable than someone else.'*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned *'I think any good company should renew staff and skills anyway; it's not a long term priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'the industry has a lagging workforce and there's not enough renewal, so strategically it is critical to get and train new people in electricity distribution.'*

Table 6

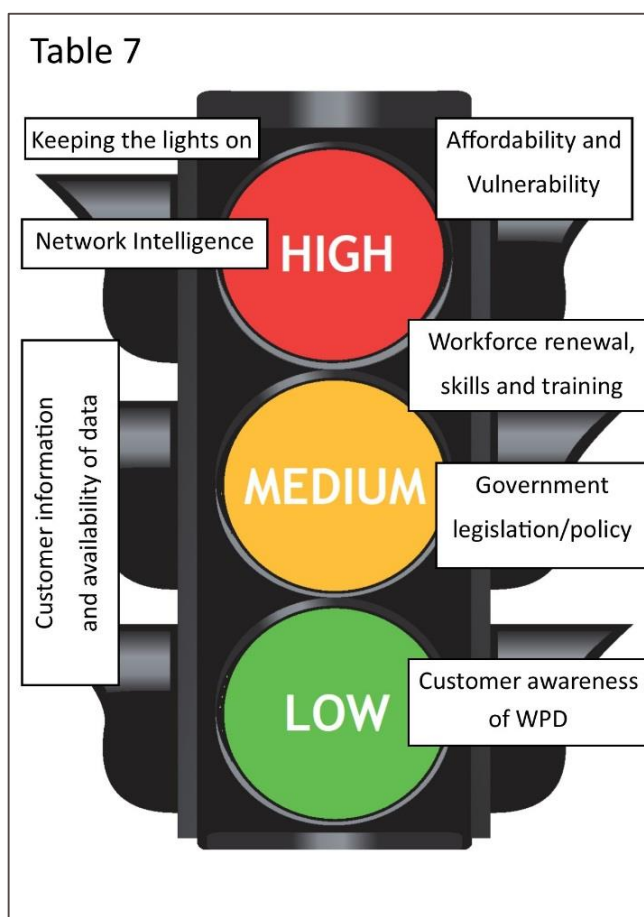


- An energy/utility representative argued *'I would disagree, it's not strategic, and it's not a long term goal is it?'*
- A developer/connections representative responded, saying *'yes actually it is a long term strategic goal! It takes decades to train the right people and engineers in this industry.'*
- A local authority officer argued *'it ties in again! If you know in your plan you will replace part of the network at this point in time, you balance out in your Business Plan exactly where the people are coming in.'*
- A business customer/representative remarked *'certain sectors, such as protection engineers, have a serious shortage - there are probably 5 in the UK in total at the moment! So it will take decades to get the right work and employees trained and in the company.'*
- A domestic customer/representative raised the point that *'it's important to me being a student. I know that in the 1950s the central electricity board devoted lots of advertising to get young people into the industry, and WPD should do the same and attract the right people.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'to me it's not as important as keeping the lights on in the long term.'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'but you won't keep the lights on if you don't have the right plan!'*
- An energy/utility representative considered *'yes but that can be organised in a 6 month plan and is a small scale priority.'*
- An energy/utility representative replied that *'it is still regarded as important though.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'customer information and availability of data is vital.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'from our point of view you, providing us with information on how to build your network is key, and letting us know means you won't spend time building networks when other people can do it for you.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'without the relevant smart networks you won't be able to get any of this data so I don't think it's as important.'*
- A local authority officer argued *'it works both ways. As a domestic customer it is not important but for people that connect to the grid it is vital, it is really a general point that interlinks with everything.'*
- A local authority officer remarked *'all the priorities are interlinked and there are interrelationships between all of them.'*
- A domestic customer/representative queried *'I wondered with the data you get from smart meters which would be very useful, perhaps not just in the way of seeing how to save energy but maybe even detecting things such as detecting cannabis farms?'*



Table 7:

- An academic/education institute representative commented that it was *'good to use data to make the network more intelligent and WPD should make sure they coordinate what they do with other institutions in their area.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'if they're going to roll out smart metering they need to roll it out for both domestic and commercial users otherwise it's not going to work because the information will be distorted.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'network intelligence is a high priority. It would allow more connections to take place on an existing network, which would in turn reduce costs for new customers. The same goes for access to data. These are important for allowing the customers to get the cheapest connection to the network.'*
- A local authority officer added *'it's useful to have more information on the network so that we can see where any problems are. It would be useful to have it.'*
- An elected representative highlighted that *'network intelligence is important for WPD, I can understand that, but from the perspective of the customer it's low. I would expect any company to operate as smartly as possible.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'because of the implications that government policy can have, we are quite keen to keep abreast of it. I see that as medium to high importance.'*
- A local authority officer commented *'government policy has to be categorised as of high importance because you're going to get penalised if you don't meet them.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'vulnerability is very important. It's something we're constantly dealing with, looking at who is vulnerable and who we need to help.'*
- An elected representative added *'if someone has a medical reason for needing constant power supply, there's not necessarily anything WPD can do to keep the power on.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'keeping the lights on has to be top priority. If you don't do that everything else falls down.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued that *'people are paying for a level of service they expect, so keeping the lights on is high priority.'*





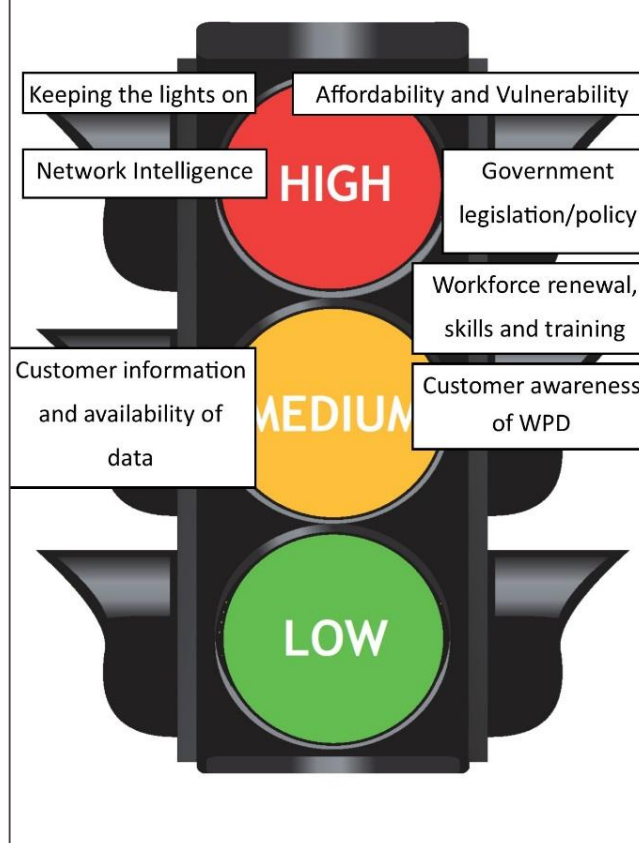
- A local authority officer felt that *'skills and workforce renewal must be a high priority. If you don't keep up the skills you can't keep up the standards.'*
- A representative from a law firm added *'I can see in my own area of work that there's a skills gap because of the recession. If you were to let training lapse for 3 or 4 years there'd be a serious problem.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'when a big event makes the public aware of these sort of jobs, it has to have a big impact in terms of making people aware of the skills requirements.'*
- A domestic customer/representative added *'availability of data is important for us.'*
- An academic/education institute and domestic customer/consumer interest body representative agreed that *'customer information is a high priority.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, adding *'for example if there's a big footie match on TV then consumption goes up, but if you want to tweak the whole system, then the more data you have the more you can match demand; the process needs to be refined.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted the *'response times, concerning availability of data, are really important. If a customer has an issue, it's really important that they have a direct point of contact that they can go to, to resolve things.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'it's linked to a lot of the other points. If you don't have the information you can't help with a lot of other points.'*
- A domestic customer/representative felt that *'I would have network intelligence top priority because that's most important to us, but I understand that everyone has their own set of priorities. Keeping the lights on is WPD's priority, not ours. Everybody sees this from a different point of view.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'there's an expectation as an end customer that the lights stay on. It's also important for our reputation with customers.'*
- A representative from a law firm raised the point that *'everything feeds from keeping the lights on.'*
- An elected representative commented *'I doubt whether anyone on my street knows who WPD is. I think that's important information they should be aware of, especially since WPD take 16% of the bill.'*

Table 8:

- There was a general consensus that customer awareness was a medium to medium-high priority.
- A business customer/representative also urged WPD *'not to just tell people who you are, and what you do, but also why small businesses need to know you.'*
- An environmental representative thought that *'network intelligence is extremely important because there are many opportunities in there for reducing costs, and so too future costs, and the securing of lower rates.'*

- A business customer/representative agreed with the environmental representative's comments, underscoring the *'high importance of network intelligence.'*
- An environmental representative saw the challenge as showing that *'WPD can turn big data into small data.'*
- An academic/education institute representative stated that network intelligence has a lower priority because his/her institution *'already has smart networks within the campuses.'* However (s)he understood its *'importance for customer's costs insofar as it would pass on efficiency further along the line.'*
- A local authority officer thought that government legislation and policy *'must be a high priority by default.'*
- An environmental representative thought that government legislation and policy was *'a high priority because meeting targets doesn't only mean you have to do those things, but there are also opportunities there if you stay on top of things. Besides, we need to better understand what the system will look like for the next few years.'*
- A business customer/representative considered it a medium-high priority, stating that (s)he considers *'the relationship with government policy as a partnership role and thus crucial.'*
- There was a general consensus that it was a medium to medium-high priority, albeit less pressing than network intelligence.
- An energy/utility representative argued that keeping the lights on was *'an absolute top priority.'*
- There was a general consensus on this point.
- An environmental representative proposed however, that whilst important, *'we can't keep the lights on without the other issues being met too.'*
- A local authority officer stated that *'there's no point in keeping the lights on if people can't afford it. Affordability and vulnerability are more important than keeping the lights on.'*
- A business customer/representative strongly agreed, as did a local authority officer.
- A business customer/representative reasoned that *'it's not just a matter of individuals, but also small businesses too, a vulnerable customer can include some small businesses.'*

Table 8





- An environmental representative argued that affordability and vulnerability were less important, contending that it's not *'a top three priority because WPD can only respond to the issue of affordability by meeting other issues.'*
- A business customer/representative concurred, but suggested that *'keeping the lights on, along with affordability, must be the top priorities.'*
- A local authority officer felt that whilst *'from WPD's point of view, workforce renewal and training may be important, it's not a massive priority from my own perspective.'*
- A business customer/representative wanted *'increased affordability as the top priority, but workforce renewal is important to achieve this.'*
- A local authority officer maintained that workforce renewal *'was less important than other issues.'*
- An environmental representative considered customer information and availability of data *'a lower priority than network intelligence, albeit closely linked.'*
- An academic/education institute representative thought that it was *'more of a medium priority.'*

Table 9:

- A local authority representative stated *'keeping the lights on is fundamental, you only need awareness of WPD when there is a power outage.'*
- A business customer/representative commented *'customer focus is not necessarily the long term priority.'*
- A business representative thought that *'in terms of skills training, most households are not interested in it or focused on it. Keeping the lights on is the only focus for most people.'*
- A local authority representative said *'there's now an understanding that there is going to be a huge skills gap in the next decade, whereby many companies will be trying to take on a limited supply of apprentices.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'as a customer, making workforce renewal a high priority is reassuring, whereas influencing policy can only be done at the ballot box.'*
- A business representative explained *'electric car infrastructure needs to be considered.'*
- A business representative commented *'government policy has got to be a high priority.'*
- A business representative commented *'technological development in this age has to be a must. The electricity industry has not caught up to speed. Tweeting could work. There is an education issue too in terms of cordless phones.'*
- A business representative commented *'network intelligence should be high level.'*

- A business representative said *'from a customer's perspective you would want to know how long it would take to restore power.'*
- A business representative thought it was *'astounding that Western Power Distribution have so much in the way of customer data, seeing as there is so little in the way of direct contact.'*
- A business representative commented *'social responsibility is important, imagine if you can't keep the heating on and its -5°C outside.'*
- A regulatory/government representative pointed out *'keeping the lights on takes on a different meaning here – we need to try to ensure people can afford to keep the lights on too.'*
- A business representative commented *'it's good PR work for WPD to be involved in this, along with it just being right.'*
- A regulatory/government representative said *'there's a question here again in terms of the provision of data.'*
- A business representative added *'keeping the lights on is crucial, obviously it makes a big difference, but WPD can't influence all that much on a vulnerability perspective, given their chunk of the bill.'*

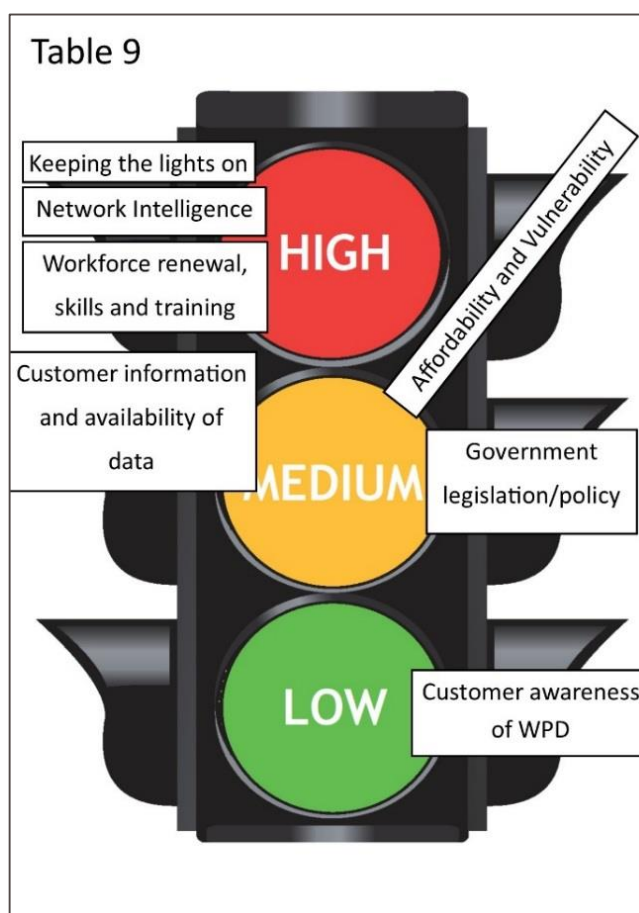


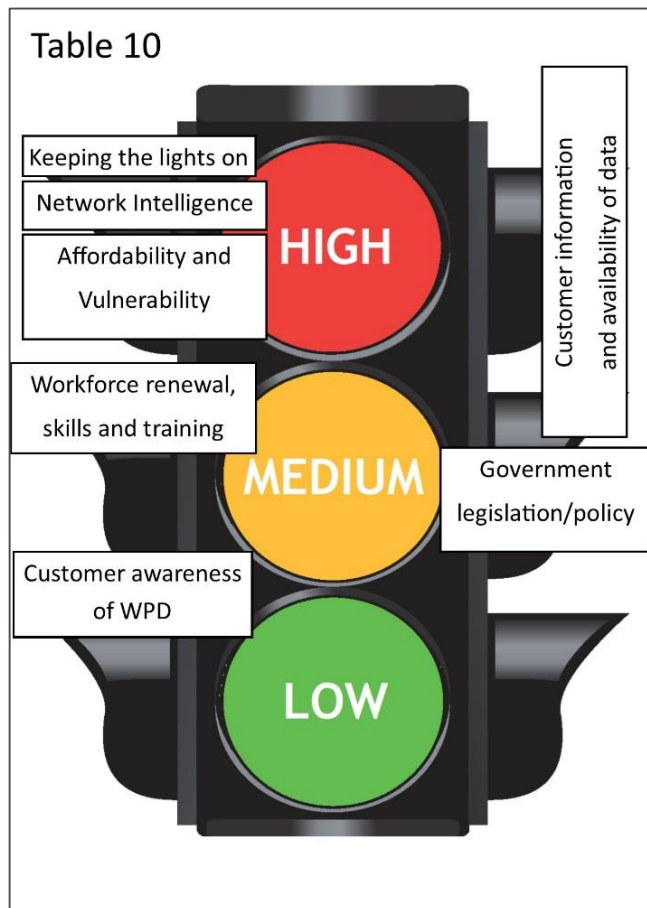
Table 10:

- Everyone agreed *'keeping the lights on is very important.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'customer vulnerability is very high for me, but if the lights are on then customers become less vulnerable. So for me it does still have to be high up there especially when you consider things like people with stair lifts and those on dialysis. I realise when the lights are on the vulnerability decreases but I still don't feel it's enough to say it's a medium priority. So that would be at least a third down in the high area for me.'*

**“Social responsibility is important, imagine if you can't keep the heating on and its -5°C outside.”**

- A business customer/representative agreed *'because keeping the lights on costs money.'*
- An energy/utility representative discussed that *'at the level of European regulators there is a lot of debate as to whether or not aspects relating to social obligation still need to be a consideration of a DNO. At the very least it is quite a debate.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative felt *'although there is a debate, in my opinion it's been recognised as an issue which WPD has addressed. Indeed WPD are the ones to address it. The social obligation has been passed onto voluntary associations but they can't do it alone and I think WPD can be the leader in this sector now. I think medical vulnerability is a priority. Affordability is also a massive issue but that is also dependent on lifestyle.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed with an energy/utility representative that *'the EU is questioning this issue now. The question is whether it is the responsibility of an enterprise to take customer vulnerability as a high priority in their day to day business. Is it somebody else's responsibility?'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'in a situation where a customer has nowhere else to go to, WPD should take that on board.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'there's a difference between connectivity and live-in electricity. WPD is US-owned. It should be local institutions whose mission should be to make sure the vulnerable are addressed and that if they have issues with connectivity or electricity delivery then they can get what they need.'*
- A business customer/representative questioned *'where do E.ON, SSE and the retailers fit into affordability and vulnerability? WPD have an obligation to distribute and that's what they do. There are a lot of other aspects inbetween which affect affordability and vulnerability. If WPD are doing their job properly, the vulnerability bit disappears and affordability goes somewhere else.'*
- An voluntary organisation representative complained *'suppliers haven't been addressing this too well. The vulnerable are seen as those over 30, which is crazy! I consider it's almost becoming a selling aid, we'll make you feel special because you're "vulnerable".'*
- A business customer/representative commented *'I would definitely be putting network intelligence next. This is essential to keep the lights on.'*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned *'I have been comparing approaches and WPD is the most traditional one with the least network intelligence. WPD basically just invests in transformers. From a total expenditure perspective, I would like WPD to have a closer look at that.'*
- A business customer/representative felt that *'regarding workforce skills, in the whole scheme of things it would come third, although the first two can't happen without the third so it is a bit tricky.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative agreed *'customer awareness is most definitely an asset, but to be honest I wouldn't consider it a massive priority.'*

- A business customer/representative commented *'I am amazed the percentage is 47%, that's quite shocking to be honest.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted *'the thing about customer awareness is this: if the lights goes off, do people know who to call?'*
- A developer/connections representative believed *'if WPD got the rest right, then this should be ok.'*
- A business customer/representative felt *'there is a lot of work being implemented in the next 8 years and people need to know who is replacing lines and knocking down trees, but its priority level is still medium.'*
- A business customer/representative highlighted



- 'government legislation is very important to me as it could put my entire industry out of business overnight. It has a direct knock on effect on the amount of generation expectation on the network. So it does have a huge effect on me but not on WPD. If there is a dramatic change in policy, then there will be less people connecting to the network.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *'30% of carbon dioxide is created by the energy sector. The only way to truly turn this around is by electrification and that can only be done by going to renewable sources. So those two elements require WPD to prepare its network to be able to move to that change. That's why it's important.'*
- A business customer/representative mentioned *'as a customer I'm funding those changes. Whereas if you take me out of the equation then there's no capital being brought into the system which is why I'm interested if there's a breakdown in the costs.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'I would put it higher than workforce because it is a societal need to go to low carbon technologies. We need new efficiency policies and reduction of carbon. It's something we have to do otherwise we will see the impact on the environment. WPD must make its contribution to this.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed but questioned *'is it more important than a workforce which is keeping the lights on?'*

**“The thing about customer awareness is this: if the lights goes off, do people know who to call?”**



- A voluntary organisation representative felt *'I don't think the vast majority are too interested in customer information. What they want to know is the cost of supply, whether the lights will stay on, and who to contact if the lights go off.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'I realise that if they have a lot more mobile phone numbers WPD could be more active, but I would always be hesitant with my number and I must wonder what the public really want?'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'from our point of view it's quite important because we look at the network and prospective customers and need to be able to advise them on things like electric or gas heating. This is really important as a business.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt *'the more access we have to WPD information the better for us.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed *'it is not critical to us because we're a bit removed from customers since we work in asset replacement. So yes it is very targeted.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'it is critical to us because we need to know where capacity is on the network is so we can make sensible applications.'*
- A developer/connections representative mentioned *'this all ties into network intelligence so it's difficult to rank them.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'it changes the way people consume electricity.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'it is key because there would be more options for the customer so the customer will be much more educated.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative agreed *'yes, because at the moment the only information is from the retailer.'*



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

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'sometimes in rural areas, DNOs rely only on phone calls to find out where there has been a power cut.'*

Table 2:

- A developer/connections representative said that (s)he *'would like a breakdown of the 47% of people aware of WPD according to region and I suspect that the higher percentage would be in South Wales and the Midlands.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed and added *'I think it is probably less than that.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated that (s)he *'would also like to see the split between customers such as how many are business customers and how many are domestic customers.'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that *'the other thing we have not picked up on is that if you live in brand new houses, your network is probably not owned by WPD but by an independent network provider.'*

Table 6:

- A business customer/representative reinforced *'the first one is right, the whole driving point is keeping those lights on, and it's what Ofgem judges you on most.'*

Table 7:

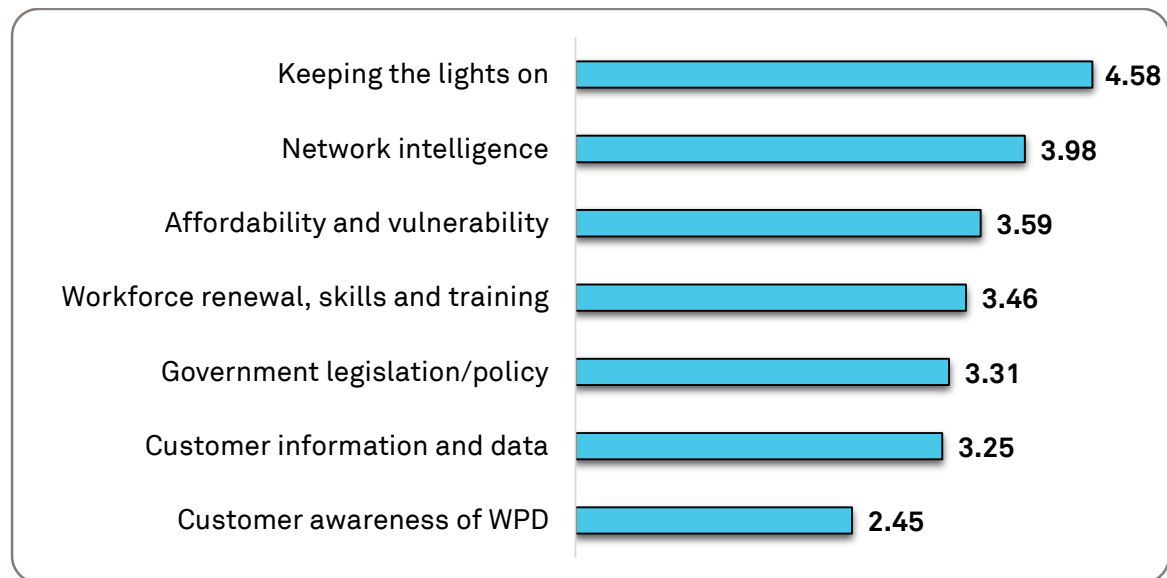
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'I would like to see a focus on new connections as well. I think that alone would be beneficial for us.'*
- An elected representative added *'I didn't know WPD existed. If I had a problem I'd look in the telephone book. I think you should raise awareness through the suppliers' bill.'*
- A representative from a law firm asked if WPD *'needed something to make people aware that you are the successor to the electricity board.'*
- A business customer/representative added *'having WPD on my bill isn't so important for me but that's because I already know about WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'if someone were to just go into a search engine I wonder how quickly they would find you?'*

## 5.5 Individual voting results

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

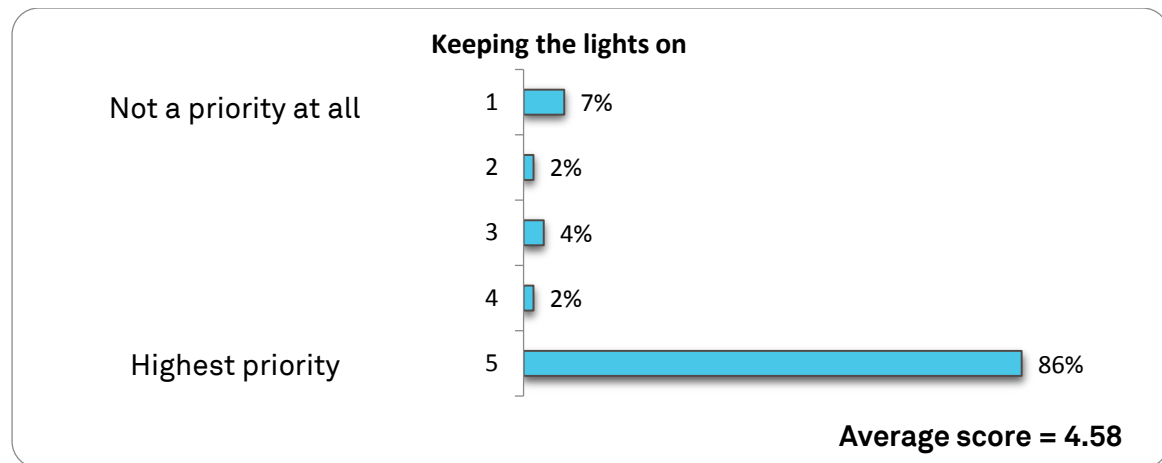


**Overall results:**

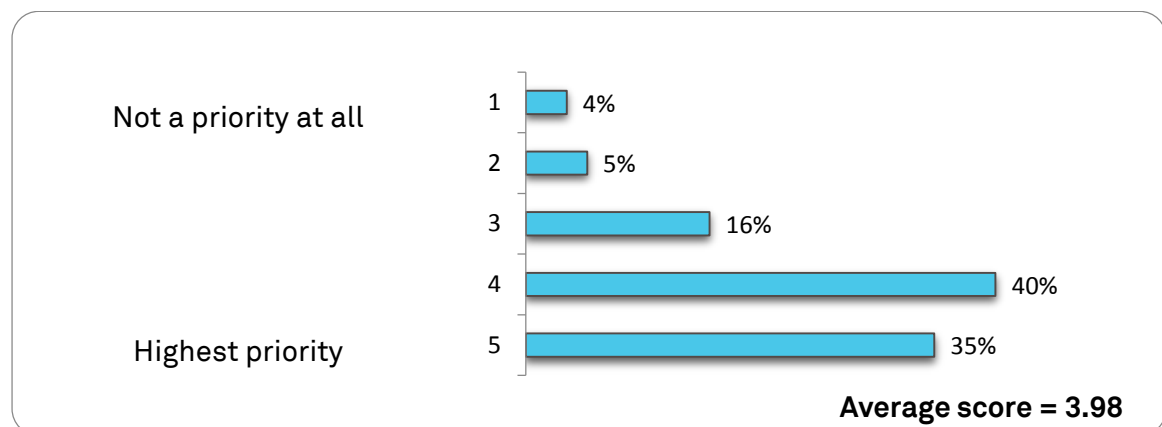


### Priority-by-priority results:

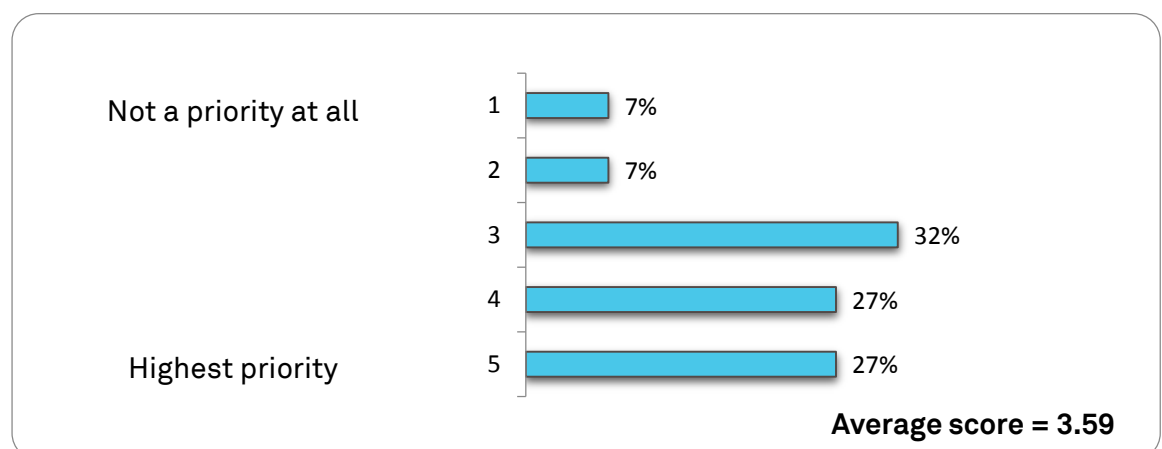
How do you rate **keeping the lights on** as a long-term priority?



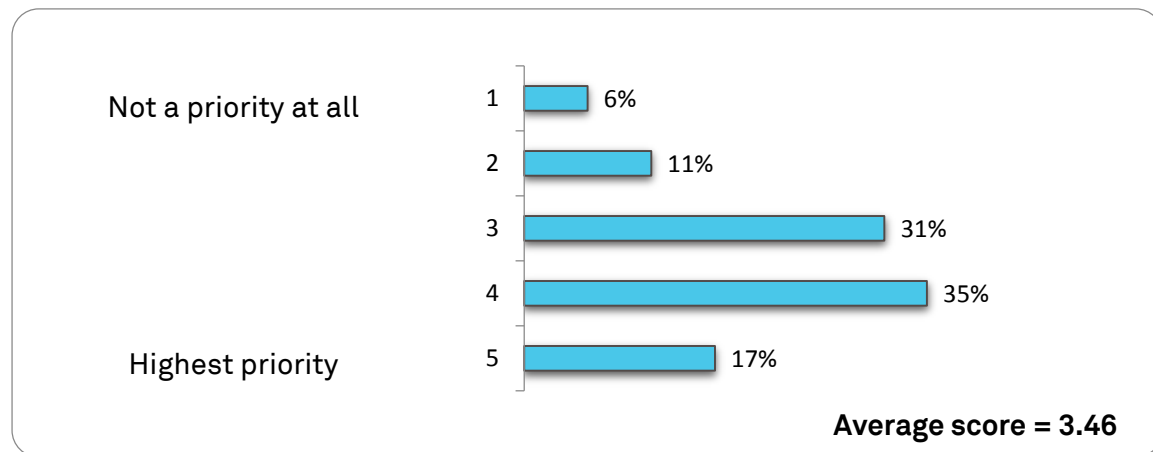
How do you rate **network intelligence** as a long-term priority?



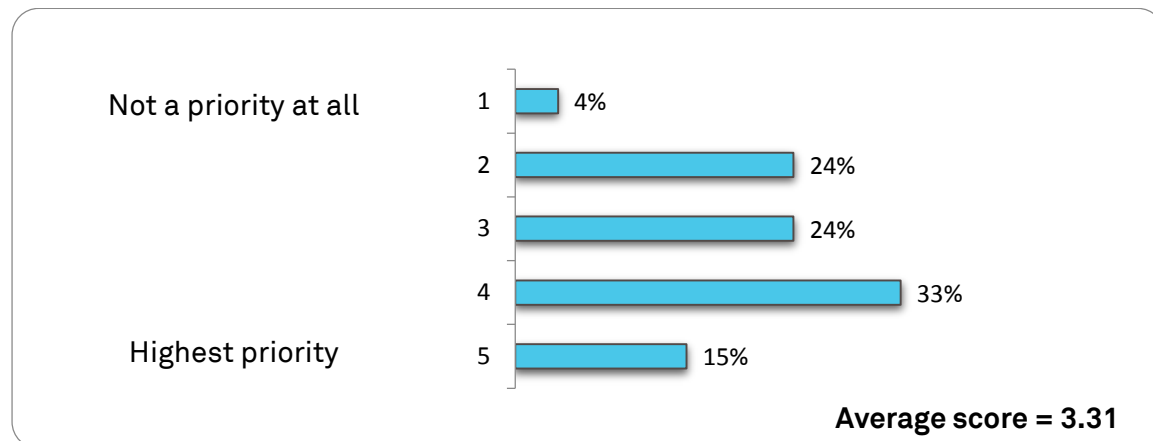
How do you rate **affordability and vulnerability** as a long-term priority?



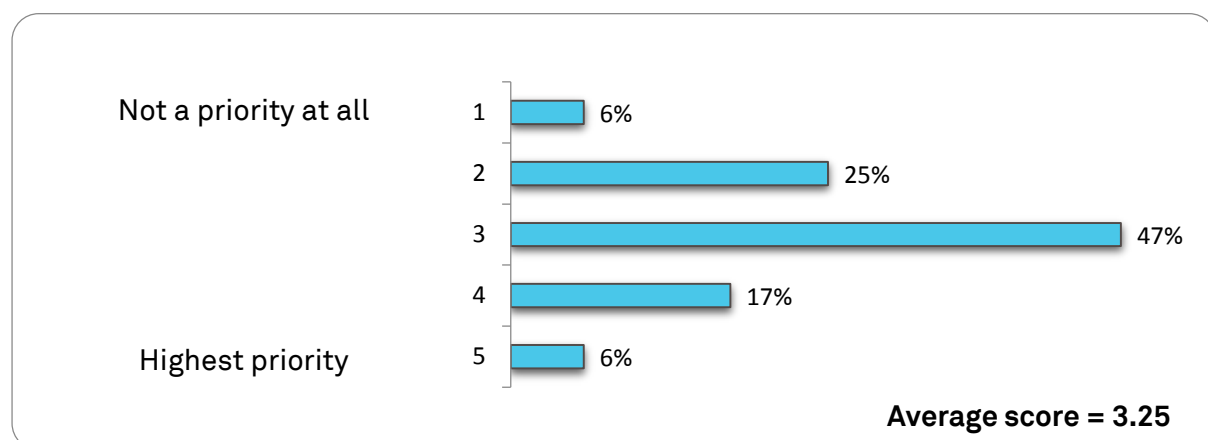
How do you rate **workforce renewal, skills and training** as a long-term priority?



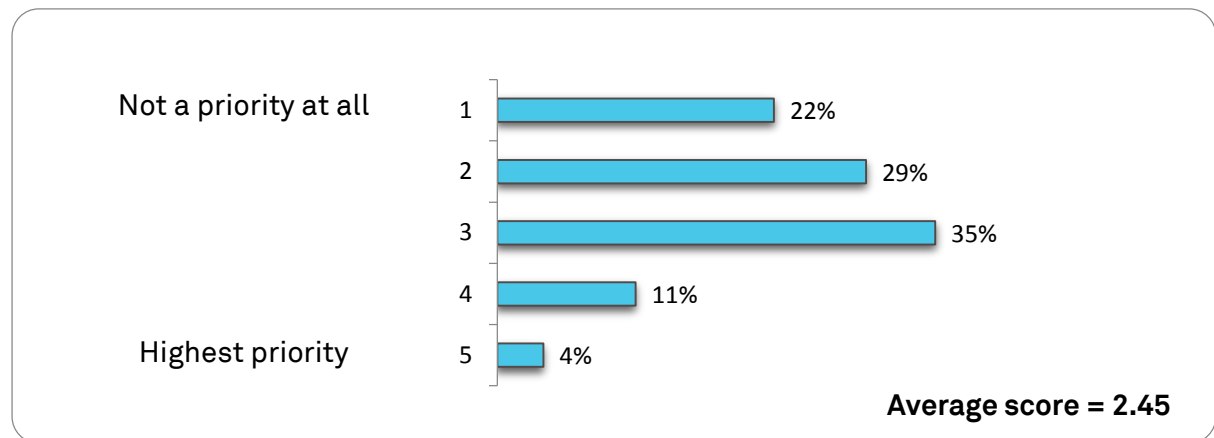
How do you rate **government legislation/policy** as a long-term priority?



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



How do you rate **customer awareness of WPD** as a long-term priority?



## 6. Workshop 3: Long term - Starting to address these priorities

The third workshop involved a more detailed look into two specific long-term priorities:

- Customer Awareness of WPD
- Affordability and Vulnerability

### Customer Awareness of WPD

Stakeholders were asked to refer to the list of customer awareness activities in the presentation and discuss any actions that may be missing. The actions are as follows:

- Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)
- More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)
- More television advertising
- Expanded social media presence and smartphone applications
- More direct mailings (A, to every customer; B, targeted groups only; C free items – e.g. fridge magnets)
- Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information

#### 6.1 Are there actions missing that we ought to be taking?

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative asked *'how do you engage with your graduate market? They are a good stakeholder for customer awareness.'*
- An energy/utility representative added *'I've found all of our graduates want to be in renewables.'*
- An academic/education institute representative pointed out that (s)he *'believes there should be a link with higher education and educating the graduate community.'*
- An energy/utility representative asked *'what about sponsorship? Such as WPD on Aston Villa gear!'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'it doesn't have to be football, it can be any sport, such as lady's netball.'*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'we are talking about the older population. There is no mention where electricity is being advertised. WPD needs to make it clear that it's an electricity distributor. You need to advertise what you do in your name or strapline.'*

- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *‘one thing we can do is a sticker with the WPD logo and the emergency contact number and when the meter guys go to check the power they can stick it on the meter box.’*
- (S)he said *‘the first thing people do when the power goes out is to check the fuse and when they see the sticker on the meter, it makes it convenient for them to call.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility representative considered *‘perhaps something about direct community engagement, like community talks.’*

Table 4:

- A business customer/representative felt that *‘WPD should sponsor the weather. It was the cornerstone of Ed Wallace’s strategy. You don’t have anything to sell, so television advertising isn’t so important. Sponsoring is different from advertising and should be a new category.’*
  - An academic/education institute representative highlighted that *‘WPD should promote their presence in local supermarkets with information stalls and posters, so people don’t have to go out of their way to find out about you.’*
  - A local authority officer pointed out that *‘WPD could also put these posters up at targeted outlets, like GPs.’*
- “What about sponsoring events, like a festival to disseminate information to family and children?”**

Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative stated that it would be *‘good to expand website tools and leaflet info. Also does WPD’s information sharing/coordination extend to parish councils and other sources?’*
- A developer/connections responded by giving the example of WPD’s coordination with the Red Cross.
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘what about sponsoring events, like a festival to disseminate information to family and children?’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, suggesting *‘walks around the countryside, e.g. Dudley trail, to encourage families and kids.’*
- A domestic customer/representative commented that one problem is *‘knowing when leaflets or direct mailings have arrived. It doesn’t always arrive in the right door so there is a problem with distribution.’*
- A developer/connections representative retorted that *‘WPD now has vans which are much more identifiable and have the WPD number on them which has greater impact than delivering that information in other ways.’*
- A developer/connections representative said that the number one goal is to *‘have one number across the whole of the country, like 999.’*



Table 6:

- An energy/utility representative agreed *'a poster campaign maybe at the job centre or CAB.'*
- A local authority officer said *'a lot of leaflets may get confusing, perhaps a PR stunt of maybe bus adverts that show the different types of light bulb you can get – innovative PR activities can help to get your awareness up.'*
- A domestic customer/representative highlighted *'more information on the side of vans and WPD vehicles, maybe different messages on different vans.'*
- A developer/connections representative concurred *'yes maybe something relating to the theft of copper too, getting the message out for people to be aware of it.'*
- A local authority officer suggested *'targeted poster campaigns, perhaps targeting children, telling them not to break into a substation and don't mess around with power lines.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I think billboards are very effective.'*

Table 7:

- A representative from a law firm stated *'how about the company's own branding, I'm thinking particularly about the West and East Midlands, I think I would have just thought about E.ON. I think the customer's own branding could be improved.'*
- An elected representative stated *'am I right in saying that WPD have been operating in this area since 2011? I haven't seen a newspaper, radio or TV advert.'*

Table 8:

- An environmental representative suggested *'increasing brand awareness through sponsorship at a community level, such as local county shows. Do WPD sponsor local communities?'*
- A local authority officer also commented on the importance of increased partnership working, *'and the issue of how to do it - not necessarily by just engaging with customers directly, but rather with those who know those customers.'*



Table 9:

- A business representative commented *'is there an advert on TV?'*
- A business representative said *'retro video ads would stick in the mind, particularly on YouTube or something.'*

- A business representative said *'presumably, safety ads would have to be agreed at a national level.'*
- A regulatory/government representative, however, argued that *'kids don't watch TV these days.'*
- A business representative commented *'the issue is how to target both the younger and older generations.'*

Table 10:

- A developer/connections representative felt *'it is important to know the demographic of the people who know about WPD.'*

## 6.2 How important are the actions relative to one another?

Stakeholders were given three “votes” for each priority. They were first asked to cast their votes for customer awareness of WPD, indicating which priority they believe will be the most effective. They were then asked to do the same for affordability and vulnerability. The three votes per stakeholder could be used as block votes or spread out between the priorities. Stakeholders could also add votes to their own priorities.

Table 1:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	● ●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ● ● ●
More direct mailings	● ●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ● ● ●
Get into universities/higher education	● ●
Sponsorship	● ●
Information on company vehicles	

**Table 1**

**WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION**  
Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales

- A developer/connections representative commented that *‘expanded website interaction would be good but I’m not sure it’d reach the vulnerable customers, especially old people.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘using vehicles and vans is a good way to raise awareness. It’s tangible.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested *‘more local media advertising, vans aren’t under that are they?’*
- An academic/education institute representative stated *‘I think social media is the way forward. It’s how we communicate with our students.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *‘it’s the way the generation is going, isn’t it?’*
- An energy/utility representative said *‘I didn’t get a fridge magnet so I think I’ll go for more direct mailings!’*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out that (s)he doesn’t see young people *‘going on Twitter and reading tweets from WPD, I think direct mailings will reach people who are interested better.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘schools are the future, it’s the next generation. It’s about getting in there early. It does have an impact.’*
- Another energy/utility representative added *‘could they do something about the environment? Could they link it into climate change? Young children could be pulled in.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I think that children will not really understand topics like fuel poverty – safety will be a better topic as well as the environment.’*
- An academic/education institute representative argued that *‘starting communication in higher education is important as well.’*

**“Using vehicles and vans is a good way to raise awareness. It’s tangible.”**

Table 2:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	● ●
More television advertising	●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	●
More direct mailings	● ● ●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ●
<i>Include 'electricity provider' in name or strapline</i>	● ●
<i>Include contact number as a sticker on meter</i>	● ●

Table 2

- A housing/development representative voted for practical support and raised the point that *'it is through targeted partners and will reach people who will not ordinarily get the message.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I think direct mailing works best. It focuses on the target customers and 90% of people actually read what they get in the post rather than just throwing it in the bin.'*(S)he added *'the cost would also be much lower than the fridge magnet.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed and stated *'I remember receiving the fridge magnet. It is recognisable. Things you can physically do something with, such as freebies, are better than just leaflets.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed with the stickers and stated *'it is visible and it is practical. Perhaps the sticker should glow in the dark.'*
- An energy/utility representative supported more local media advertising and commented *'I am thinking of my 86 year old mother-in-law who uses the radio all the time.'*
- A business customer/representative felt television advertising would be more worthwhile as *'it covers a lot of people. It is possible that people might be immune to it but it still might be worth it.'*
- A developer/connections representative disagreed and pointed out that *'it is very expensive given that I have never seen a WPD advert.'*

- A developer/connections representative felt that *‘mobile apps are a very good option because you can check about a power cut or notify WPD with the app and it is also useful to spread awareness.’*
- A developer/connections representative considered that *‘with the fridge magnet, you are relying on the customer to go and put it on the fridge. With a sticker on the meter, you can rely on the meter guy to stick it on the meter for you.’*
- An energy/utility representative voted for expanded schools education activities and made the point that *‘with the amount of people entering substations and the dangers associated, the place to start is educating people.’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed and pointed out that *‘it would be useful in getting more engineers and apprentices.’*
- A developer/connections representative argued that (s)he didn’t like *‘the word provider because I feel like people might think it’s a supplier. I do think the word electricity should be there though, although it would cost a fortune to rebrand.’*

**“With the amount of people entering substations and the dangers associated, the place to start is educating people.”**

Table 3:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ● ● ● ● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	●
More television advertising	
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	
More direct mailings	● ● ●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ●
Direct community engagement/workshops/talks	● ●

Table 3

- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘as a business, we are already aware of WPD, so I would suggest the website is the most important place to get all the information I need.’*



- An energy/utility representative argued that *'traditional marketing media reaches your standard people. Social media is a buzz area, but might miss the vulnerable, so direct engagement is still important. Television tends to be very expensive. If you have an issue you tend to turn to the internet through your mobile to find out what to do.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'I have really enjoyed receiving my direct mailing and so would vote for that.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'in my industry the website works. We find real time information available on the website helpful. Local media is great for helping people know what's going on and schools are also important. Most people have access to the internet but not Twitter. However an app might be good as long as it is kept up to date.'*
- An academic/education institute representative felt that *'what tool you use depends on the goals. So what are the goals?'*

Table 4:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ●
More direct mailings	
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ● ● ● ●
Poster campaigns (e.g. GP surgeries) including billboards	● ●
Innovative PR activities - leaflet hand-outs	● ● ● ● ●
More information on WPD vehicles	●

Table 4

- A local authority officer commented that *'direct mailing is important, given that it's a direct blanket message to all of your customers.'*
- A developer/connections representative responded, saying *'I haven't seen the magnets though.'*
- A domestic customer/representative highlighted that *'social media is important and it's free to promote.'*
- A developer/connections representative asserted that *'safety apps around safety of WPD infrastructure for kids is a fun and useful way of communicating your message.'*



- A business customer/representative felt that *‘sponsoring the weather should be the most valuable priority for WPD.’*
- A local authority officer argued that *‘website tools are good and can allow you to target issues and audiences better.’*
- A local authority officer affirmed that *‘television and radio are good for awareness of name, but I won’t sit down and write down details about what I hear or see. That’s why website and mailings are important.’*
- A domestic customer/representative asserted that *‘local radio and newspapers are a bit more costly and aren’t necessarily worth it.’*
- A domestic customer/representative made the point that *‘schools should be a target, but not just in terms of information around safety. You need to broaden your message to include information around poverty.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, adding that *‘WPD should carry out a more targeted approach at schools around various issues.’*

Table 5:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	● ● ●
More television advertising	● ● ● ● ●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ●
More direct mailings	● ● ● ● ●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ● ● ●
<b>Strong branding</b>	● ●

Table 5

- An elected representative said that *‘WPD should connect with the community, for example publicise through the council newsletter and work with partners such as the parish council. Essentially if they can integrate existing methods of communication it will be cost effective.’*
- A domestic customer/representative said that, *‘one way is to target schools, that way you’re not only getting through to kids but their parents also, so you can target multiple age groups, and it’s more cost effective because things are already in place.’*

- A developer/connections representative commented that, *'a lot of us want to know why we've had a power outage, so essentially it's knowing why, and why there are more power outages in certain areas of the country than others.'*
- (S)he added that *'within the electronic information WPD offers, a facility to collect information rather than be given it would be useful. For example if there's a live Twitter feed on the website with up to date information, then you can know if power is off in a certain substation.'*
- A developer/connections representative thought *'expanded social media is a strong point, for example using Twitter to deliver information immediately.'*
- An elected representative agreed stating that, *'if the power is out your phone still works.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'you can target more vulnerable customers through direct mailing. For example, you can use braille for this method. Plus, if you decide where your gaps are in customer awareness, you can target them more specifically.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'WPD can also use data to contact customers before and after a delivery of information, and therefore have more of a targeted approach.'*
- A domestic customer/representative suggested *'more local sponsored events which are also cost effective and will get WPD's name out, 'they'll at least know the name even if they don't know the number.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed suggesting local events *'could also be a platform to distribute fridge magnets.'*
- A developer/connections representative concurred and said, *'it gives a lot of publicity whilst also representing an opportunity to develop links with targeted partners, like parish Councils.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I didn't realise WPD did TV advertising, Scottish and Southern Energy are all over TV but I rarely see WPD, also I don't understand why it is necessary for them since they only distribute rather than supply.'*

Table 6:







Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	
More direct mailings	
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	
Information stalls/posters at local supermarkets	

Table 6

- A local authority officer felt that *'leaflets are good, but leaflets for me go with innovative activities like stalls and posters!'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I didn't know there was any TV advertising!'*
- A domestic customer/representative felt that *'a WPD advert right when people are watching the TV the most might be best.'*
- A local authority officer disagreed, asking *'where's the value in a TV advert? Yes it tells you about WPD, but then what do people do with that information.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, *'yes and are they really watching the advert? You watch many adverts and at the end realise you didn't really pay attention to what you've just seen! So I think it's a bit of a waste of money.'*
- A local authority officer asked *'does WPD have a text messaging service?'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'Twitter is a bit of a waste of time, I don't use it.'*
- A domestic customer/representative proposed *'email addresses and mobile numbers may be useful to inform people of power cuts.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'expanded schools activity really is crucial for your awareness from a safety perspective.'*
- A domestic customer/representative agreed *'yes most of these points tend to link with each other exactly like before.'*

Table 7:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	●
More direct mailings	● ● ● ●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	●
Sponsored local events	● ● ● ●

Table 7

- A domestic customer/representative stated *'you'd need an awareness of WPD to be on the website in the first place, so customer awareness is important. For someone that doesn't have an awareness of WPD, the advertising needs to go to them.'*
- A representative from a law firm added *'a combination would be good: expanded website tools and direct mailing.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *'if you get something through the door that you don't recognise, you don't read it.'*
- A domestic customer/representative agreed, *'but it changes depending on who receives the mail. Younger people tend to throw it away.'*
- An elected representative felt *'it should be possible to come to some arrangement to put this information on the bill. People actually read bills. Even if it's an online PDF, it's what people are actually going to read.'*
- A domestic customer/representative added *'I think TV advertising seems to be getting less effective, with people skipping through adverts.'*
- A representative from a law firm however, argued *'perhaps with the number of older customers it will still be beneficial.'*
- A business customer/representative added *'newspapers would be most suitable for a lot of people.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'TV adverts could spark people's interests.'*

- A local authority officer supported *'engaging with schools, if done in the right way, where kids tell the information to their parents.'*
- A business customer/ representative stated *'it's also about teaching the new generation.'*
- A local authority officer, commenting on advertising campaigns that have worked elsewhere suggested *'little van toys for kids.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'it is effective to have a letter coming through your door for some people, but for other people other things are more effective.'*
- An elected representative suggested *'it would be good to have "important information for if your electricity goes off" on the envelopes.'*



Table 8:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ● ●
More direct mailings	●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Brand awareness through sponsorship at a community level	●

Table 8

- An environmental representative proposed that the issue of *'increasing brand awareness is crucial. You could do it through sponsorship at a community level, such as local council shows.'*



- An environmental representative thought it that was *'very important in the case of power outages.'*
- A local authority officer stated that *'the online chat facility is very important, but not helpful when your power is off and you can't go on the internet!'*
- An academic/education institute representative proposed that *'the website is a great location for picking up useful information.'*
- A local authority officer felt that WPD *'raises awareness to a certain extent, but isn't so helpful when the power is off.'*
- There was a general consensus that television advertising was not a particularly important issue.
- An academic/education institution representative stated that (s)he thought expanded social media presence was important *'because of its role in getting the information out there to a vast amount of people.'*
- A local authority officer also agreed, underscoring the *'importance of communicating to customers about where WPD is spending its money.'*
- An environmental representative reasoned that *'if you don't have a signal or power locally then it's useful, but otherwise you can just google it!'*
- A local authority officer commented that *'there is a risk that pamphlets and hand-outs are just easily thrown away. It is quite hard to make WPD's communications stand out. Having said that, not everyone can access technology, and probably do rely on direct mailings.'*
- An energy/utility representative also noted that *'the fridge magnet was effective.'*
- A local authority officer proposed that *'it is important to get kids educated in school from an early age, and they will probably remember it better than parents and educate them.'*
- A local authority officer also highlighted the *'importance of teaching kids about new technologies and saving or not wasting power, and if you can get that across at an early age it will stay with them.'*

**“ The website is a great location for picking up useful information. ”**



Table 9:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ● ● ● ●
More direct mailings	
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ●

Table 9

- A local authority representative supported ‘*expanding levels of educational engagement at schools. Children don’t see the dangers associated. Anything that could be done to increase awareness should be done.*’

Table 10:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities	
Customer Awareness of WPD	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Expanded website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	● ● ● ● ●
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	
More television advertising	● ● ● ●
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	● ● ● ● ●
More direct mailings	●
Expanded schools education activities – safety plus wider information	● ● ●

Table 10

- A voluntary organisation representative suggested *‘more television adverts, it’s just an easy way of reaching a wide audience.’*
- A business representative retorted *‘I wouldn’t spend money on TV advertising, it needs to be a long campaign to educate young people, like an expanded schools educational initiative.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt *‘an expanded social media presence and smart phone apps would be good because of the modern age of technology. It won’t reach everyone but I think an awful lot of people use social media in some shape or form.’*
- A developer/connections representative felt *‘WPD needs to be able to reach as many people as possible at the least possible cost.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative felt *‘partners like Red Cross are important. If people come in for a wheelchair, Red Cross could give them some information. You can use their service to filter it down.’*
- An energy/utility representative added *‘if you want to increase branding, the better the network is, the faster you build the brand, therefore for the longer term, social media is the way to go. Short term it’s television advertising.’*
- A regulatory/government representative commented *‘schools and social media are key as they get the messages to kids. Partnerships with local authorities are also important.’*

- A voluntary organisation representative pointed out *‘we live in a multicultural society and some communities are more difficult to reach. Some of the eldest won’t speak the language but the children will.’*
- A developer/connections representative mentioned *‘children are the homeowners of the future.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt *‘viral marketing could be useful, with social media you would get others to do the marketing for you.’*
- A business customer/representative agreed *‘yes like the John Lewis Christmas advert.’*
- A local authority representative stated *‘schools are important, along with targeting partners. I’m unsure on advertising. Social media would be a good means of targeting.’*
- A local authority representative commented *‘we aim towards targeting the younger generations and get children to pass on messages to their parents, which also helps to raise awareness.’*

**“ We live in a multicultural society. Some communities are more difficult to reach. Adults may not speak the language, but children will.”**

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

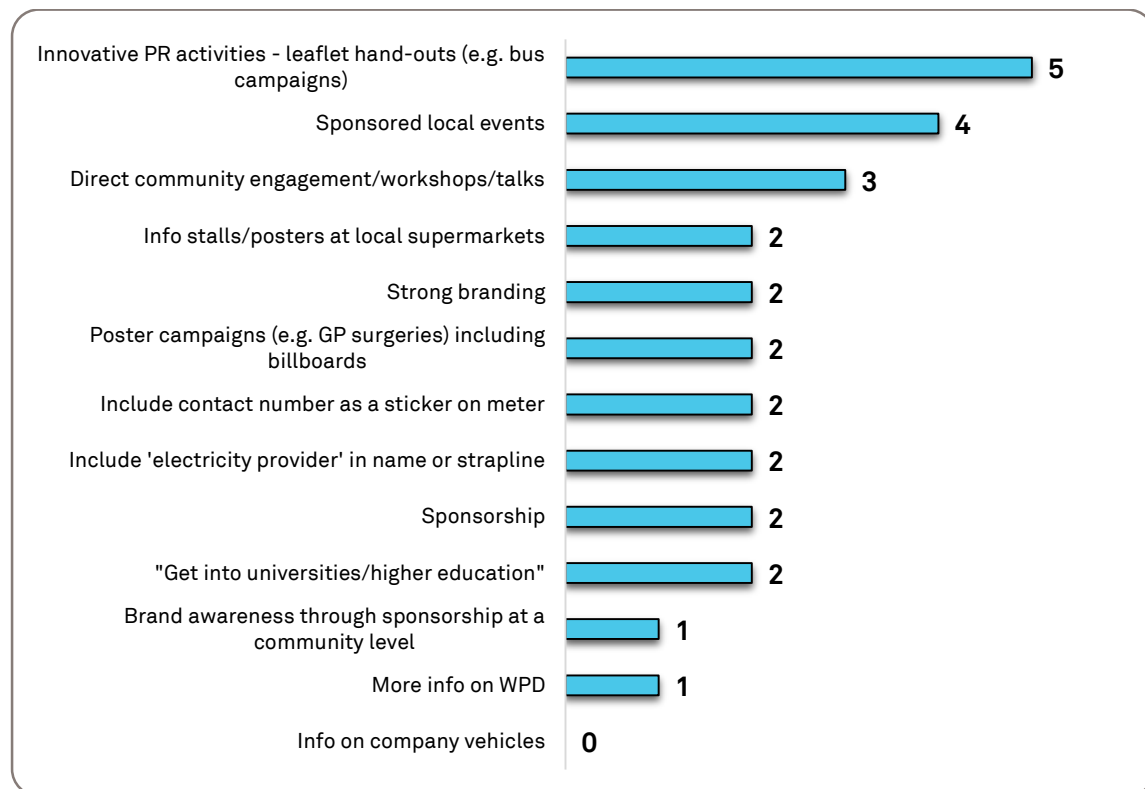
Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative asked *‘do you think Western Power Distribution is an appropriate name for the area you cover?’*

Table 6:

- A domestic customer/representative made the point that *‘it’s most important that the information on it is as accurate as possible. Because if they forget and it gets out of date, it causes problems if the customer has an older leaflet they don’t know is actually in need of being updated. You should always make sure any contact numbers on it are up to date.’*

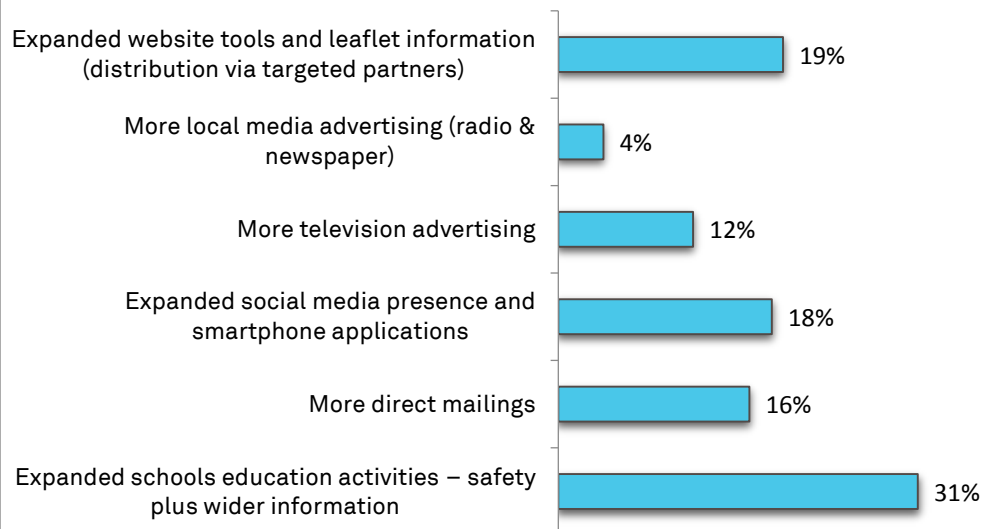
## 6.4 Stakeholder suggested initiatives



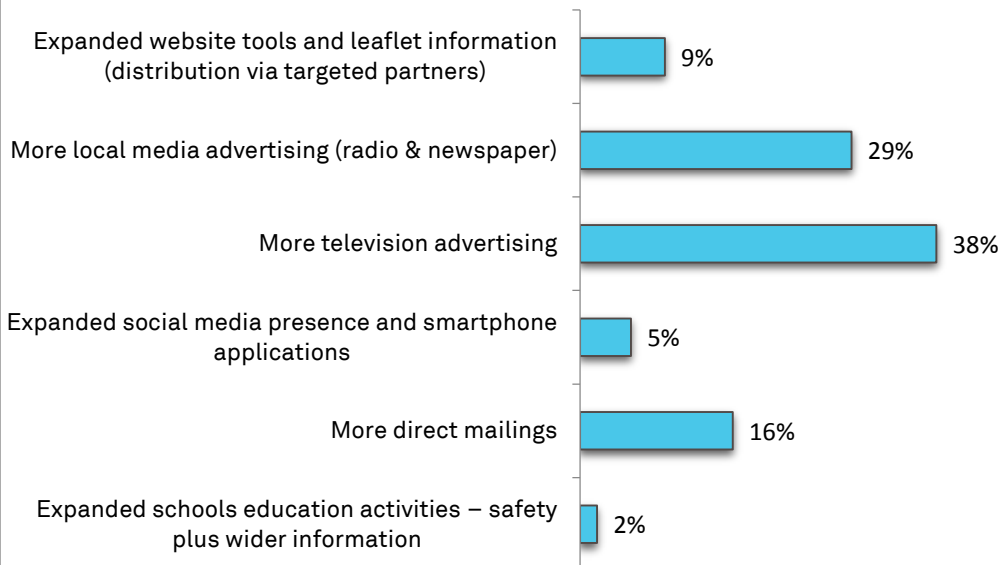
## 6.5 Individual voting results

After the group discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote again. Each stakeholder, through electronic voting, ranked their highest and lowest activities. The results are shown below.

**Q1. Of the actions identified which are your **top two** priorities?**



**Q2. Of the actions identified which is your **lowest** priority?**



## Affordability and Vulnerability

Stakeholders were asked to refer to the list of affordability and vulnerability activities in the presentation and discuss any actions that may be missing. The actions are as follows:

- Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience
- Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register
- Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes
- Fuel poverty referral schemes
- Establish a “hardship fund” for qualifying domestic customers
- Establish an “affordable warmth innovation scheme” – for not-for-profit agencies
- Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty

### 6.6 Are there actions missing that we ought to be taking?

Table 1:

- An academic/education institute representative stated *‘I think there could be methods to limit the vulnerability. A lot of people are comfortable with the electricity being on all the time. I think small businesses need further education. Particularly with more vulnerable people like care homes.’*
- A business customer/representative highlighted that *‘it’s up to the supplier though, not a DNO.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘it needs to be linked to groups like AgeUK and Saga.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘the only other thing is adding information on the bill of vulnerable customers.’*

Table 2:

- The table came to a general consensus that the actions identified were sufficient.

Table 3

- An energy/utility representative asked *‘do you do drop-ins? I like a room where you can go in and look people in the eye. It is also helpful for people to come in and use computers. It would help you meet your affordability and vulnerability aims.’*

Table 4:

- A local authority officer asked *‘do you work with partners, with money advice centres or CABs, to tackle fuel poverty? I knew a lady that had mental health issues and couldn’t handle cash – she needed a person to help use her cash. Some people simply don’t have the ability or discipline.’*



Table 5:

- A developer/connections representative stated that *‘fuel suppliers have got obligations; they set carbon targets, what that translates to is to help people in fuel poverty.’*
- An elected representative responded with *‘so it’s more appropriate to the supplier rather than the distributor.’*
- A developer/connections representative responded by saying *‘WPD has information others don’t have so they should use that information to aid social responsibilities since they are a responsible company.’*

Table 6:

- A local authority officer remarked that *‘data should be kept across different vulnerability registers. I know that’s more to do with legislation and data protection along with everything else – but for me that’s really crucial.’*
- A domestic customer/representative asked whether *‘WPD is responsible for making the criteria on the register publically available?’*

**“Data should be kept across different vulnerability registers.”**

Table 7:

- The table came to a general consensus that the actions identified were sufficient.

Table 8:

- The table came to a general consensus that the actions identified were sufficient.

Table 9:

- The table came to a general consensus that the actions identified were sufficient.

Table 10:

- The table came to a general consensus that the actions identified were sufficient.

## 6.7 How important are the actions relative to one another?

Table 1:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Advice/support to small businesses (particularly) with vulnerable people	● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Table 1

- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'improving data is important for me, it's good to know if the right people are on the list.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *'fuel poverty referral schemes are important because people would feel more comfortable talking to a charity than an electricity company. That's why I put two dots on that one.'*
- A developer/connections representative felt that *'reaching out to small businesses is important.'*
- An academic/education institute representative stated *'I agree, there's potential to make an impact.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'a hardship fund is a minefield.'*
- An academic/education institute representative argued that *'there are lots of other charities that should be doing that rather than WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I think the hardship fund would just defer the problem without trying to find the root cause.'*
- An academic/education institute representative highlighted *'that WPD could spend its remit on trying to identify vulnerable customers and help with the problem, rather than provide hardship funds.'*

Table 2:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ● ● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ●

Table 2

- A developer/connections representative felt that *'it is not that any of these actions should be done, but they should not necessarily be done by WPD. They are taking the money away from the core activity.'*
- A housing/development representative highlighted that *'fuel poverty should be touched upon but I am unsure of what category that should fall into because I think identifying fuel poverty hotspots and fuel poverty referral schemes are similar.'*
- A business customer/representative pointed out that *'the aspect of sharing information with other companies would make referral schemes more convenient for WPD.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed and added that *'it should not just be WPD acting for fuel poverty referral schemes. I think it should be a multi-organisational effort.'*
- A housing/development representative disagreed with hardship funds and stated *'there are already too many funds out there. I think it would saturate the market.'*
- (S)he added *'technical solutions would have more of a practical effect than giving people money to temporarily get out of hot water.'*
- A housing/development representative felt that *'hardship funds are open to abuse as well, whereas the technical solutions obviously aren't.'*

- A housing/development representative commented that *'innovation schemes are covered by many other funding opportunities already.'*
- A business customer/representative said *'I thought finding network solutions was the role of the supplier.'*
- A developer/connections representative highlighted that *'there is a greener aspect to network solutions as well. You are reducing the carbon emissions.'*
- A housing/development representative felt that *'there is a cheaper, easier and quicker way to go. With network solutions, WPD has to deliver. Whereas with the other ones, they use more of the existing sources and agencies available.'*
- A business customer/representative supported this and added *'with technical solutions, it might end up that you might not be able to do anything in reality. The other ones have more tangible benefits.'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'I think for WPD to give good service, it needs to know where that service is required. For that, the data on the Priority Service Register is important.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'if somebody lives in a rural area which is not as well connected to the network, they definitely need more support.'*



Table 3:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ●
Drop-ins	

Table 3

- An energy/utility representative stated *'the problem with affordability and vulnerability is you can do too much, where people just don't know what to do.'*
- An academic/education institute representative commented that the most valuable priority is *'the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty. Fundamentally, it deals with demand and generation management. I also think affordable warmth innovation schemes are useful.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'customer resilience is important, if you don't have power do you know what to do? Improving the data is an issue for all utilities as it will save money.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that the priority services list was a priority pointing out *'it is a bit of a beast in terms of bringing everyone's energy together and most people have not told us they should be on the register. The referral schemes link works well with finding the people who should be on the priority services list.'*
- An energy/utility representative argued *'in my mind the way to solve this is to build the network to be as efficient as possible. If I have an issue with affordability, I'm not sure a DNO is in a place to solve it.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'I like the idea of investigating feasibility because it hits the root cause.'*



Table 4:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ● ● ● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	●
Fuel poverty referral schemes	
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	● ● ● ● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ● ● ●

Table 4

- A domestic customer/representative affirmed that *'referral schemes are important, because otherwise you have a danger of losing a set of people to engage with.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *'poverty referral schemes are really important, but hotspots are also a vital.'*
- A developer/connections representative asserted that *'investigating network solutions is important, because it's a bit untapped. There are certain technologies that can be better utilised and partnered up with other technologies. Practical support around vulnerable resilience and monitoring daily usage are also useful.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated that *'WPD should use technology to take problems away from vulnerable people. Maybe you could look at partnerships with phone companies.'*
- A domestic customer/representative pointed out that *'so many people don't even know about the register or don't know that they're even on it.'*
- An academic/education institute representative affirmed that *'improving data on your register is important, in finding out who these people are, what category they belong to and what priority they are. Practical support is also important – providing people with information about what they should do when their power fails.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated that *'information at schools is useful.'*
- A local authority officer made the point that *'children can get taught at school and then end up educating their parents on the issues.'*
- A domestic customer/representative argued that *'if you have fuel poverty schemes set up, practical support will improve.'*



Table 5:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ● ● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ● ● ● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	● ● ●
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ● ● ●

Table 5

- An elected representative said *'the important thing is prevention and preparing people before problems occur.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, stating *'it has been useful – for example, the GP surgery leaflets which gave customers information that can help them sign up to the Priority Services Register.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'work needs to be done on the fuel poverty scheme.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated that *'there's a duty to update records every year. Plus, if we know who the most vulnerable people are we can target them immediately.'*
- A domestic customer/representative said *'I would link the fuel poverty referral scheme with not-for-profit agencies and establish links with existing organisations, which is also more cost effective.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed, calling it *'absolutely the best approach.'*
- A developer/connections representative said that *'when you've got the right data, you can target the right people, and can't be accused of doing anything silly, so you can pick the scheme which is most appropriate.'*

**“ The important thing is prevention and preparing people before problems occur. ”**

- A developer/connections representative responded by saying *‘everyone wants to work with them, so WPD tries to work out who is doing what, where, so they’re better informed about fuel referral schemes.’*
- A developer/connections representative asked *‘how possible is it to investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty?’*
- A developer/connections representative responded, arguing that *‘efficiency reduces fuel bills, and data can be shared with grant giving institutions.’*
- An elected representative suggested identifying *‘the root cause of the problem because it could be that certain systems in place are inefficient and therefore it could be about replacing out-dated systems and reinforcing the networks for optimum functioning.’*

Table 6:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	● ● ● ●
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ● ● ● ● ●
Establish a “hardship fund” for qualifying domestic customers	● ●
Establish an ‘affordable warmth innovation scheme’ – for not-for-profit agencies	● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ●

Table 6

- A local authority officer said *‘I feel people need to stop being reliant on the nanny state, people have to take responsibility for themselves and the more they can be informed of the help they could get the better.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point *‘it’s got to be practical stuff, things that will actually happen, more than just referring people on.’*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *‘lots of people say they have lots of human rights but I want them to have social responsibilities too.’*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *‘we have a register, and I worry its poor and out of date, so if we can do it jointly that would be very helpful indeed.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘sharing data between utilities is really a good idea, maybe a utilities master register for vulnerable people?’*

- An energy/utility representative agreed *'yes that truly would be a great innovation!'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'for me you have those three action plans, and I feel those three are fairly similar, so I don't have enough stickers to place one on each! They are all important.'*
- A domestic customer/representative pointed out *'I think a hardship fund needs more thought. You want to watch for people that work the system, and you need to catch people that work the system and claim every last bit – well there are people that do that!'*
- A local authority officer argued *'yes but I don't think that's WPD's role!'*
- A local authority officer complained *'to me the feasibility of network solutions is a supplier's role not yours.'*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed however, saying *'not necessarily. In water we have a duty to make water more efficient. So we're integrated vertically where you're not. It's worth looking at and needs to be done jointly. Individually, just WPD doing it, it won't work - but together with the supplier it could be done.'*

Table 7:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ● ● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	● ● ●
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ●

Table 7

- A representative from a law firm stated *'I am very interested in WPD using the skills they have to improve fuel efficiency in the home.'*
- An elected representative stated *'I have got no choice on where I buy my water from.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'I think electricity providers have more of a responsibility for this.'*

- An elected representative stated *'when I was part of the CAB for a number of years, it was really important to reduce customers' utility bills. If people are in financial trouble, we can help them and compare the best tariffs. So a hardship fund would make a big difference.'*
- A representative from a law firm added *'it's important to research to get information about where energy is being used inefficiently and where WPD could help.'*
- A business customer/representative stated *'I think perhaps people haven't voted for practical support because its meaning is slightly vague.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'identifying fuel hotspots isn't something you can do without doing the others, so I think that should be done, even though no votes have been cast for it.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'I think identifying fuel hotspots are a follow-up to knowing the data.'*
- A local authority officer stated *'it's also very important to share the data with your partners.'*
- An elected representative stated *'fuel poverty hotspots identify themselves, because they can't afford their bills. So it's really important to get them on the straight and narrow by clearing one of their bills.'*
- A domestic customer/representative stated *'I think it's very important to tackle gaps in knowledge about power efficiency. Not enough people are aware of how much different types of light bulbs can save them.'*
- There was agreement that it would be very useful for people to know how much they could save by using different appliances.



Table 8:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
Fuel poverty referral schemes	● ●
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	● ● ● ● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ● ● ● ●
Partnership working	● ● ● ●

Table 8

- An environmental officer commented that *'assuming the regulator allows WPD to do it, solutions to tackle poverty is the best option, because they help to solve problem more generally whilst helping the network.'*
- A local authority officer stated that *'it is important to address poverty, making electricity distribution as cheap as possible ensures that people feel they can afford electricity.'*
- An environmental officer considered this *'important, since funding in these areas is very limited, and money is getting tighter.'*
- A local authority officer wasn't clear on *'how WPD would resolve hardships through this fund.'*
- A local authority officer thought that *'being able to send someone to a CAB and explaining why they can't pay the bill is surely a better option.'*



Table 9:

Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	● ● ●
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	● ●
Fuel poverty referral schemes	
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	●
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' – for not-for-profit agencies	● ● ● ●
Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	● ●

Table 9

- A regulatory/government representative said *'recycling profit into improving heating systems in vulnerable houses should be a social priority. It's also the right thing for the business to do.'*
- A business representative suggested *'support to improve customer resilience – local support. You'd also want to identify and combat fuel poverty hotspots.'*
- A regulatory/government representative supported affordable warmth, adding that *'business should assist agencies who give practical support to those in need.'*
- A business representative said *'there are too many issues for WPD to be tackling. It needs to be a more holistic approach.'*
- A business representative agreed on the need for a more holistic approach.
- A business representative commented *'fuel poverty is associated with other measures of poverty and social exclusion.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'I'm just wondering how you can make a difference to someone else's use of electricity. If you set up a hardship fund... what would you pay for?'*
- A local authority representative felt *'there is a danger it creates a culture of dependency.'*

**“ Recycling profit into improving heating systems in vulnerable houses should be a social priority. It's also the right thing for the business to do.”**



Table 10:





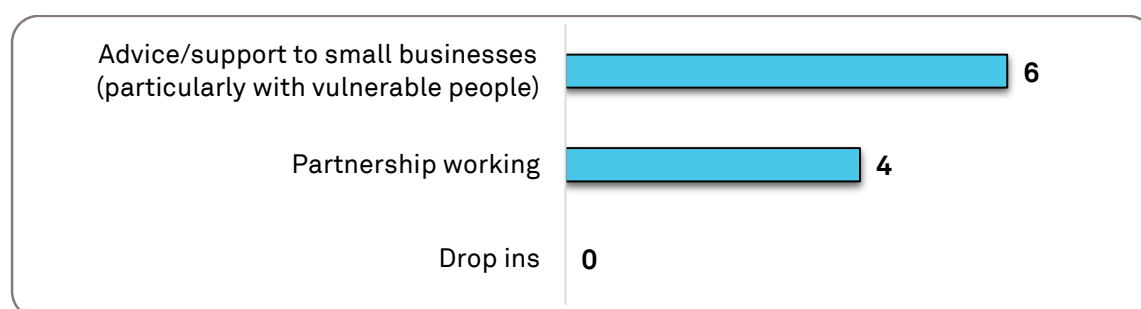
Workshop Three - Beginning to address these long-term priorities Affordability & Vulnerability	
ACTIVITY	RATING
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives / schemes	
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Investigate the feasibility of network solutions to tackle fuel poverty	

Table 10

- A developer/connections representative mentioned that *'for me improving the data is a cornerstone because without that you'll struggle with other things.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'right now the data is ridiculously large. They tell me I'm a poor old lady who lives alone therefore you must be vulnerable and you're on the register. The criteria need to be refined.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *'the word "vulnerable" itself makes it tricky. Vulnerability can be both long term and short term.'*
- A business customer/representative commented *'I would prefer the phrase "energy dependent".'*
- A voluntary organisation representative raised the point of *'resilience. I think within this programme WPD is getting people to help themselves. It's easy to do things for people but it's a programme of education as well. There are so many things out there that people aren't aware of. WPD can say to the lady that you probably aren't getting that benefit etc.'*
- An energy/utility representative mentioned *'I myself rent my apartment to someone who couldn't afford electricity. Some options provide temporary solutions but don't solve the root cause of the problem. Therefore I am more inclined to look at how to address the root cause. The advice part is appealing to me.'*
- A business customer/representative commented *'network solutions are important because people can be directly helped there.'*

- A developer/connections representative felt *'it comes down to trying to help other people out which enables existing agencies to help people where it's not necessarily WPD's responsibility.'*
- A business customer/representative highlighted *'it is important to get to the root of the issue hence providing more support for customer resilience and coping with mobility issues. I know some people think there is a network solution to tackle some areas, I'm not sure what that is but there must be information.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed *'I think alternative solutions are important.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'the downside of these schemes is that if you have this scheme and get it sorted, people become complacent. So we need to build in a resilience programme aimed at people's mindsets, because they may not be able to pay the bill but will have the best iPhone.'*
- A business customer/representative agreed *'yes its prioritisation, it's about having a gadget which tells you how much money or electricity you're using.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'I have seen evidence of it helping sort out situations and making people more stringent and self aware.'*

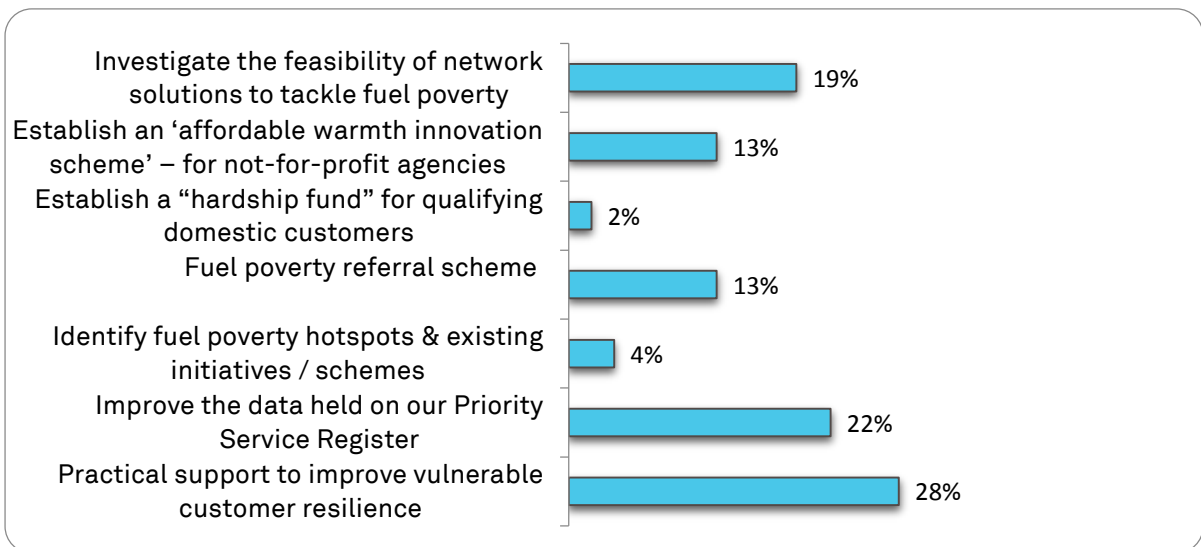
## 6.8 Stakeholder suggested initiatives



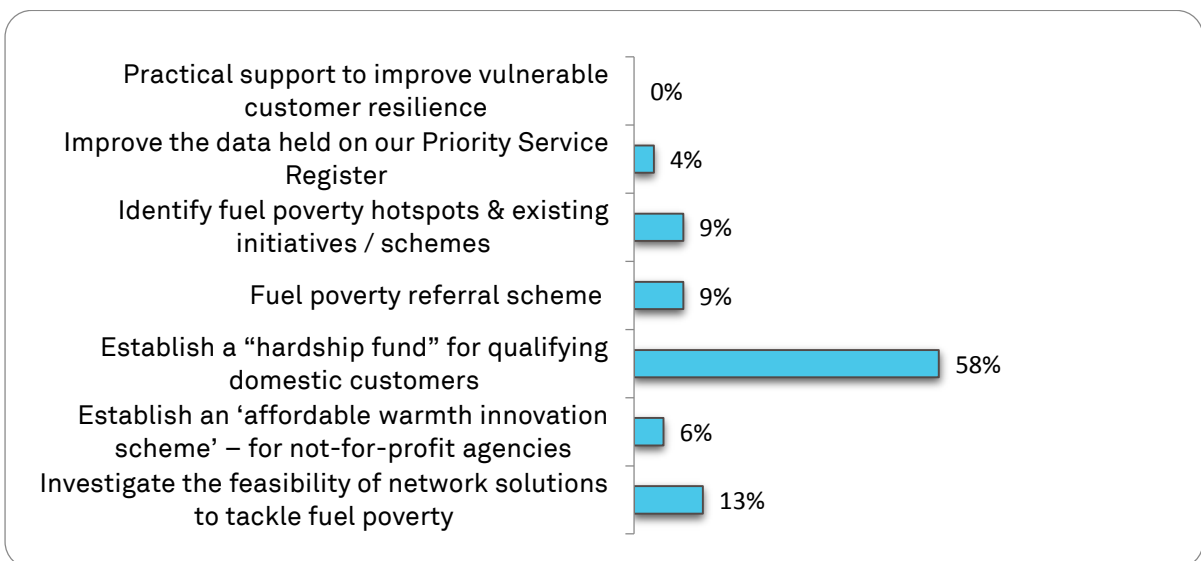
## 6.9 Individual voting results

After the group discussions, stakeholders were asked to vote again. Each stakeholder, through electronic voting, ranked their highest and lowest activities. The results are shown below.

**Q1. Of the actions identified which are your **top two** priorities?**



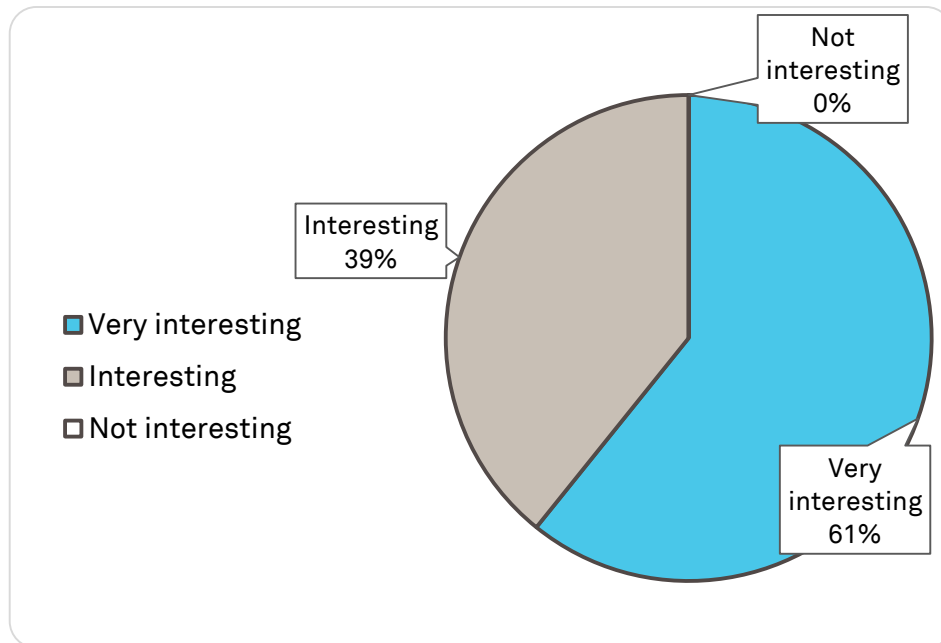
**Q2. Of the actions identified which is your **lowest** priority?**



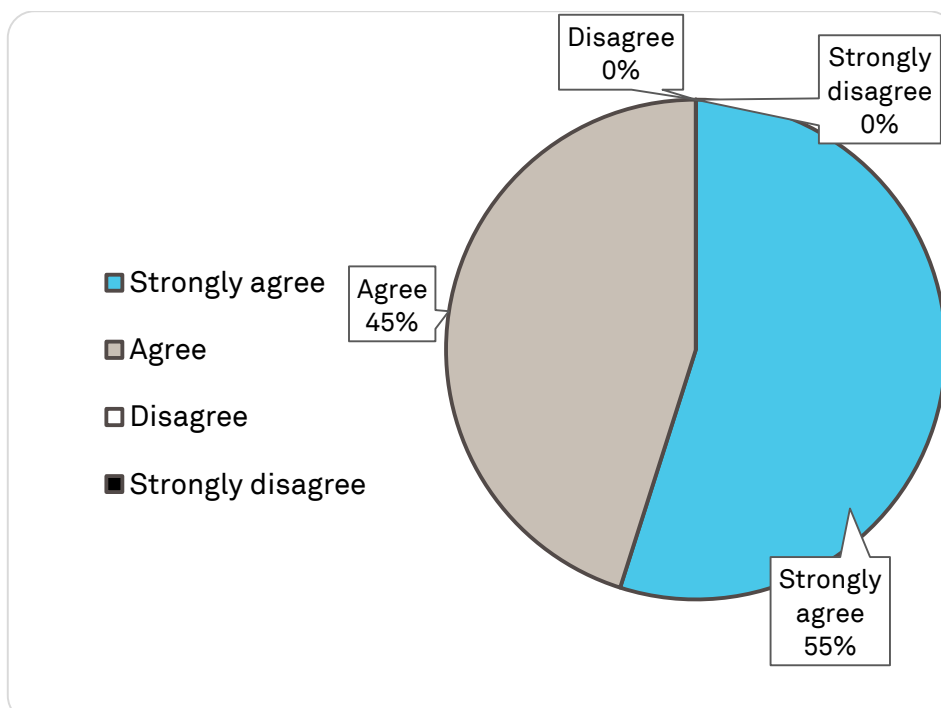
## 7. Written feedback

Of the 57 attendees who attended the workshop, 50 completed and returned feedback forms on the day's event. Stakeholders were asked a set of seven questions. The responses can be found below:

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

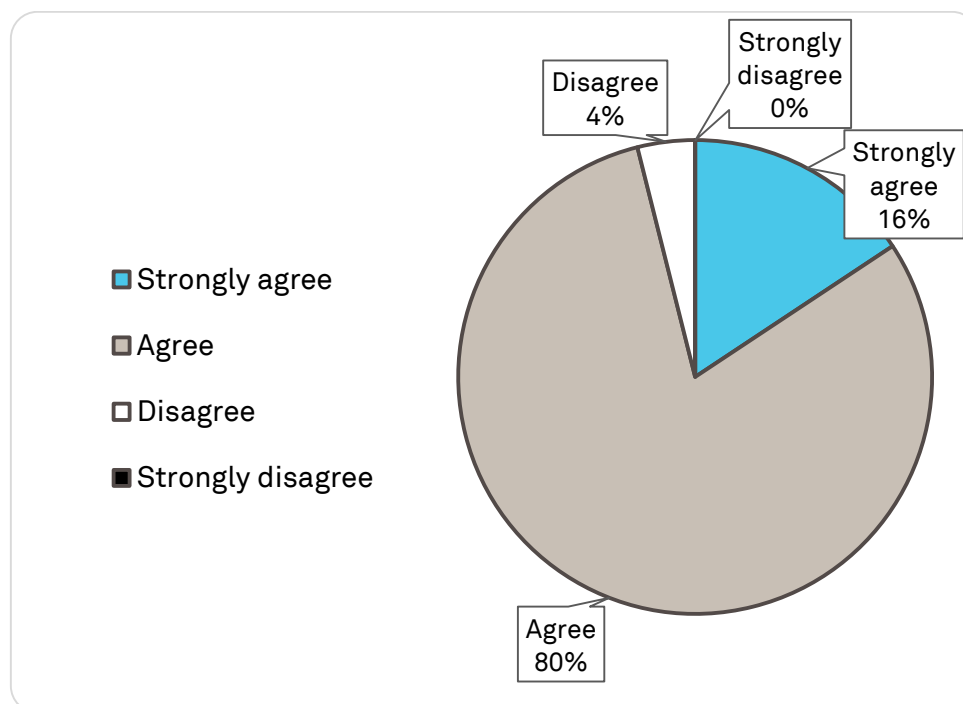


### Q.2 Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?



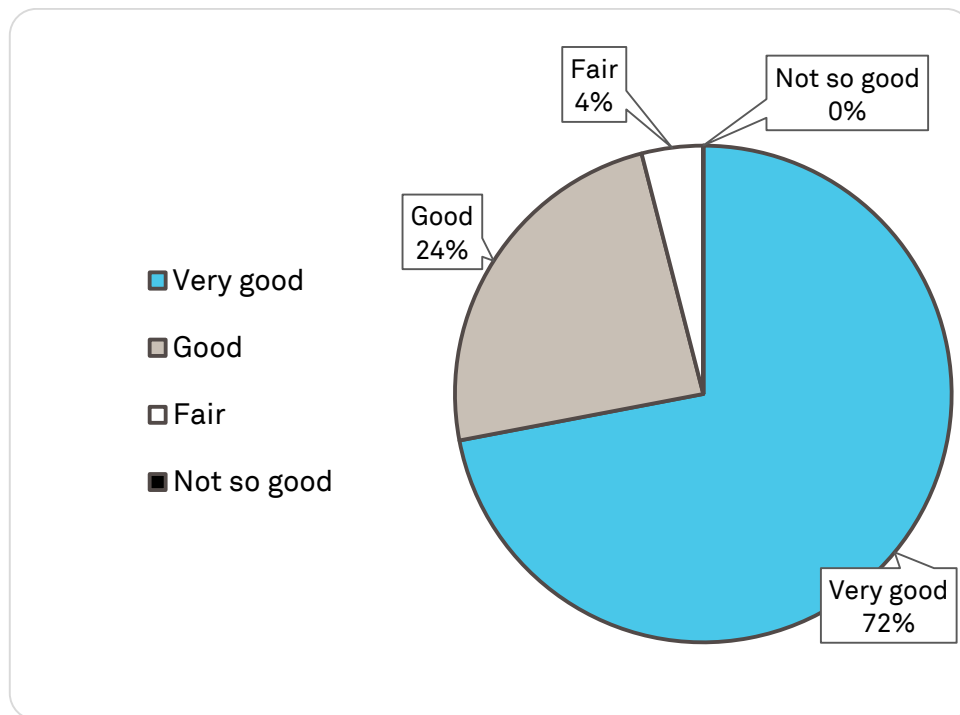
Stakeholder comments on this question included *‘really well facilitated’, ‘good facilitation by Westbourne Team on the day, good interaction around the table and diverse audience’* and *‘interesting to understand what WPD believes are their top priorities.’*

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



Stakeholder comments on this question included *‘the facilitator was open to suggestions and active debate’, ‘a focused, relevant agenda’* and *‘highlighting historical achievements in the third workshop may not have been necessary in order to establish future plan.’*

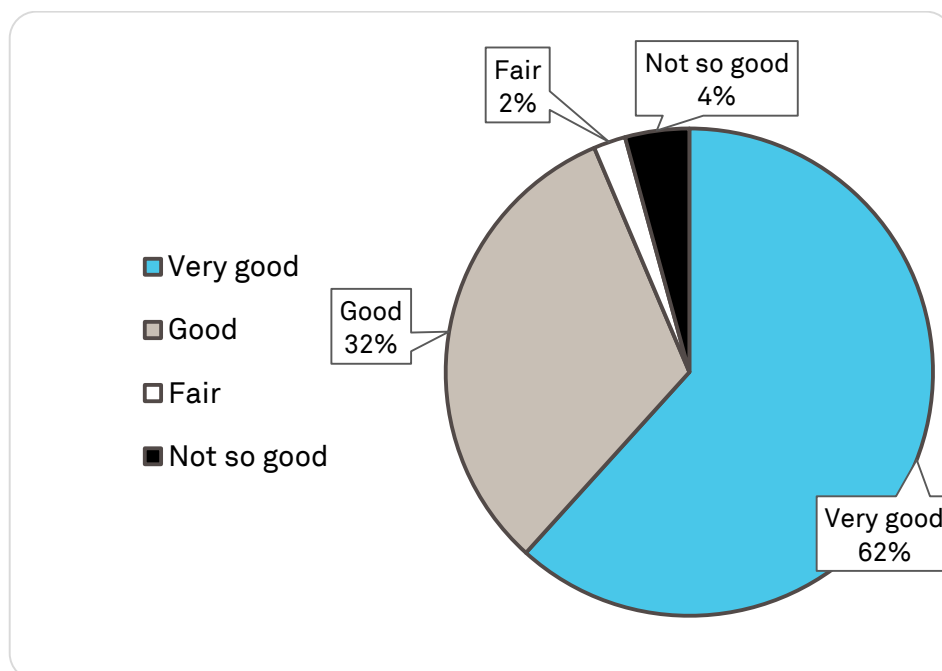
#### Q4. What did you think of the way the workshop had been facilitated?



Stakeholder comments on this question included *'liked the third party, neutral facilitator and mix of verbal debate and voting actions'*, *'again well-constructed sessions led by Westbourne team today'*, *'excellent facilitation and good to use of expert facilitators and scribes rather than nominating people from the group!'* and *'Excellent. Very impressive.'*

However, one stakeholder commented that it was *'a little cramped.'*

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

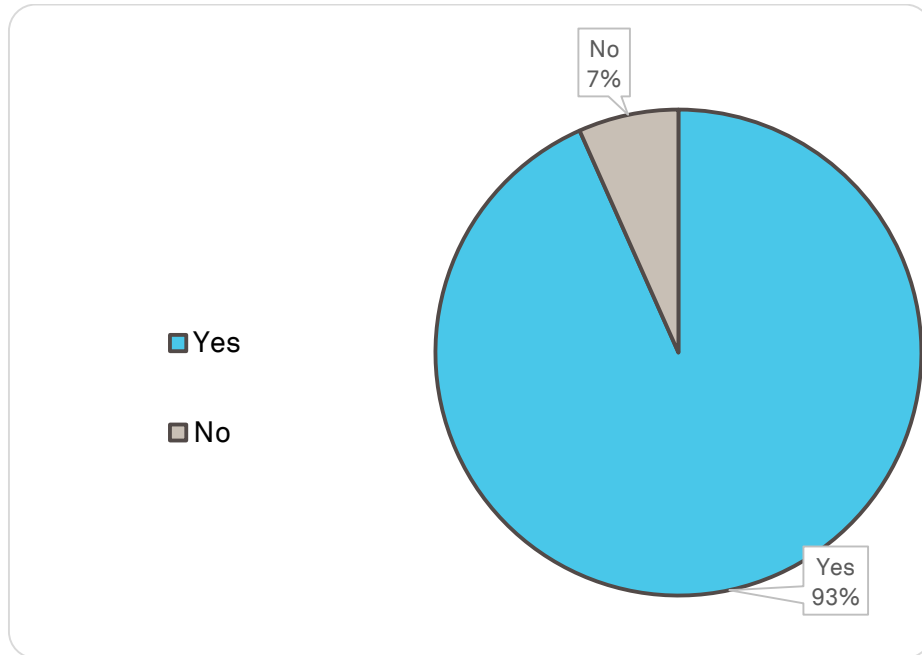




Stakeholder comments on this question included *'good location and excellent staff and catering'* and *'came by train, very easy to get to!'*

However, there were concerns regarding the traffic outside the venue including *'road access not the easiest'* and *'not good from a transport/road perspective.'*

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



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

Additional comments from stakeholders included *'interested in discussing data sharing more'*, *'definitely would attend more'* and *'informative and collaborative.'*

One stakeholder however, felt that *'it would have been useful to have an overview of workshop content circulated with the invite or on arrival to inform participants on which to attend.'*

## 8. Surgeries on specific topics

### 8.1 Environmental Reporting

Stakeholders did not sign-up for this surgery session in Birmingham so the surgery was closed down.

### 8.2 Network Losses Strategy

A WPD representative gave a presentation on WPD's losses strategy. The presentation outlined how WPD's losses strategy aims to ensure that losses from the Distribution System are as low as reasonably practicable and set out the objectives that the strategy would like to achieve by 2023.

The presentation covered what parts of the strategy had been revised as part of the final Business Plan. This included:

- Transformers
- Cables
- Design rules
- Power quality and voltage regulation
- Revenue protection

Stakeholders' questions and comments included:

- It would make economic sense to proactively replace old transistors, rather than wait for them to get to the end of their life.
- The threat of energy theft and fraudulent usage.
- The changing nature of energy efficiency regulations. The government should allow for pre-planning by businesses.
- WPD's policy of 'next size up', which increases efficiency and capacity without causing a problem to the grid, was well-received.

The network losses strategy presentation can be read [here](#).

### 8.3 Social Obligations

A WPD representative delivered a presentation on WPD's social obligations programme. This covered the following areas:

- Objectives, strategy and process
- The social obligations commitments in the RIIO-ED1 Business Plan
- Significant developments in 2014
- The Priority Service Register
- The 'Power Up' referral partnership

- The 'Affordable Warmth' scheme

During the discussion, stakeholder questions and comments included:

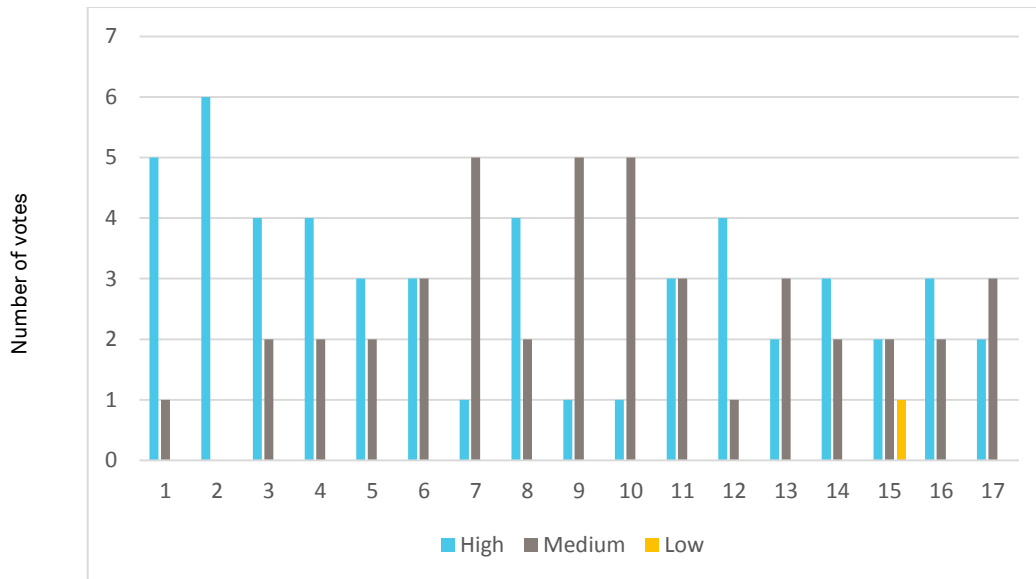
- Concerns over the quality and accuracy of the data WPD receive.
- There is a lack of clarity over the term 'vulnerable' with different companies defining it in different ways.
- Concerns over the level of security in identifying those in need, particularly when partnering with other organisations.
- Whether WPD will be expanding its partnerships, as it could be a 'win-win' for charities (who receive additional funds and work) and large organisations (who can fulfil their corporate social responsibility commitments)

Stakeholders were then provided with a table of objectives and asked for their individual views on what to prioritise and what approach they should take moving forward. The objectives were numbered as below and the results are shown in the following graphs:

Objectives:

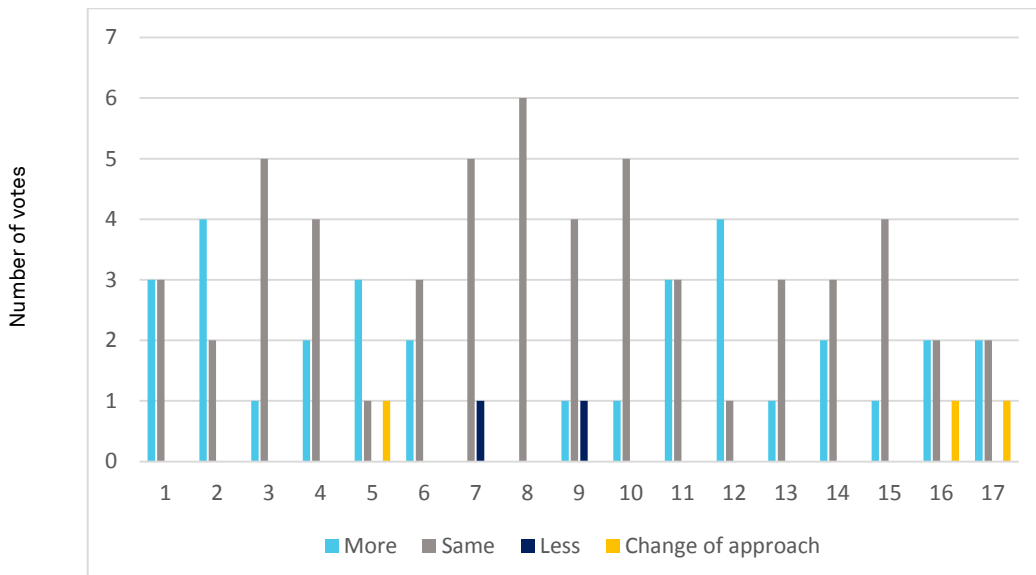
1. Work with expert partners to improve understanding of the needs of vulnerable customers.
2. Train staff to recognise the signs of vulnerability.
3. Proactively contact vulnerable customers at least once every two years to check the details on the Priority Services Register.
4. Improve the quality of Priority Services Register data by working with other agencies and sharing information.
5. Coordinate meetings with suppliers to agree criteria for vulnerability.
6. Raise awareness of the Priority Services Register.
7. Make 10,000 crisis packs available.
8. Contact all medically dependent customers every three hours during power cuts.
9. Continue to provide practical support via the Royal Voluntary Service and British Red Cross.
10. Seek feedback from vulnerable customers to improve service.
11. Develop mechanisms for sharing information with local resilience forums.
12. Build a database of regional agencies we can refer customers to for assistance.
13. Work with partners to develop links to/from WPD's website.
14. Develop joined information, awareness campaigns and coordinate assistance with partners.
15. Engage Parish Councils to assist with their Emergency Resilience planning.
16. Provide bespoke training to frontline staff.
17. Use data analysis to help identify localities with high concentration of vulnerable households.

**Q1. How would you prioritise each objective (high, medium or low)?**



- The objective that was voted the highest priority was ‘train staff to recognise the signs of vulnerability.’
- The lowest priority was ‘engage Parish Councils to assist with their Emergency Resilience planning.’

**Q2. What approach should WPD take towards each objective moving forward (more, same, less or change of approach)?**



- The two objectives that stakeholders wanted to see more of in future were ‘train staff to recognise the signs of vulnerability’ and ‘build a database of regional agencies we can refer customers to for assistance.’
- The two objectives they wanted to see less of in future, were ‘make 10,000 crisis packs available’ and ‘continue to provide practical support via the Royal Voluntary Service and British Red Cross.’

- The three objectives they wanted to see less of in future, were ‘coordinate meetings with suppliers to agree criteria for vulnerability’, ‘provide bespoke training to frontline staff’ and ‘use data analysis to help identify localities with high concentration of vulnerable households.’

The full presentation delivered on the day can be downloaded [here](#).

#### **8.4 Connections and Distributed Generation**

A WPD representative talked stakeholders through table summaries of the activities involved in each of the work streams that form WPD’s connections workplan. The workstreams are as follows:

- Information and Application
- Quotations and Agreements
- Construction and Connections

During discussions, stakeholders’ questions and comments included:

- The impact of WPD missing the targets set out in their Business Plan.
- Questions over the accuracy of the heat map.
- How far contestability will be extended and how WPD will manage queues as a result.
- Clarification over the process of obtaining quotes for connections.
- The need for WPD to communicate and update customers better when an offer expires, as opposed to just refunding money.

The connections work plan tables can be found [online here](#) (pp.5-11).