

WPD

Stakeholder workshop reports

February 2012

Nottingham stakeholder workshop

23rd February 2012

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3. Introduction

3.1. Date and location

The Nottingham workshop took place at The Albert Hall Conference Centre, North Circus Street Nottingham NG1 5AA

3.2. Attendees:

34 stakeholders attended the Nottingham workshop. Their details are shown below

- Cllr Evans - Newland Parish Council
- Cllr Rob McCorkell - Mayor, Tetbury Town Council
- Cllr Peter Robinson - Deputy Leader, Lincolnshire County Council
- Andrew Evans - General Manager, Lucy Switchgear
- Hayden Scott-Dye - Project Development Engineer, Good Energy Ltd
- Joseph Hayden - Director, HAYSYS Ltd
- Peter James Gough - Chairman, Longford Parish Council
- Cllr Stephen Hemmings - Minchinhampton Parish Council
- Ashley Thomas - NAAONB
- Chris Wittal - Taynton Parish Council
- Beril Wittal - Taynton Parish Council
- Councillor Keith Sullivan - Oldbury on Severn Parish Council
- Adrian Grilli- Managing Director- JRC Ltd
- Robin Drake- Senior Planner- Gloucestershire County Council
- Danielle Royce - Stakeholder Engagement Officer- Wales and West Utilities
- Cllr Peter Lightfoot - Bishops Cleeve Council
- Cllr Bob Brookes - Droitwich Spa Council
- Cllr Jim Pollard - Deerhurst Parish Council
- Charles Carey - Head of R and D, SSE

- Jane Reeves- Senior Planner- Herefordshire Council
- Paul Beck – VP Advanced Projects – Finmeccanica Ltd
- Julian Brown – Managing Director – Nortech
- Gillian Ellis-King – Strategic Project Manager – South Gloucester Council
- M Highton – Clerk – Gorsley and Kilcot Council
- Jonathan Hopkins – Regional Manager – Lucy Switchgear
- Tony Parker – FLI Structures
- Cllr Judy Pearce – Deputy Leader – Wychavon District Council
- Cllr Fred Wood – Gretton Parish Council
- Mr C Pemberton James - Parish Clerk, Frocester Parish Council.
- Vince Pioli - Marketing Manager - Lucy Switchgear
- Stephen McDonnell - Environmental Co-ordinator, Gloucester City Council
- Trevor Burden - Fli Structure and Hadsley and Tresham Parish Council
- Chris Hill - Eastington Parish Council
- Graham Clark - Regional Surveyor - Country Land and Business Association

Western Power Distribution

- Alison Sleightholm - Regulation and Government Affairs Manager
- Nigel Turvey
- Bob Parker
- Natasha Richardson
- Alex Wilkes - Stakeholder Engagement Regulatory & Government Affairs
- Paul Jewell
- Phil Swift
- Lee Wallace
- Neil James
- Dave Park-Davies

Green Issues Communiqué

- James Garland - Director (workshop facilitator)
- Emma Webster - Associate Director (workshop facilitator)
- Harry Hudson - Associate Director (workshop facilitator)
- Ben Johnson - Account Manager (workshop facilitator)
- Ed Grieve – Senior Account Manager (scribe)
- Alice James - Account Executive (scribe)
- Laura Edwards - Account Executive (scribe)
- Farah Pasha - Account Executive (scribe)

4. Workshop 1: Customer Service and Networks of the Future

4.1. Issue 1. New / innovative methods of communication

Table 1

- The stakeholders stated that 'new and innovative methods of communication' should be a priority but *'not the highest priority'*. Therefore, the stakeholders listed the priority at medium / low to medium, with the additional comment that focus should remain on the telephone as the main means of contact
- A local authority planning officer stated that WPD have to look at new mediums of communication but the telephone should remain as the key communication method
- A local emergency service representative agreed with this point
- There was group consensus that it should be a priority for WPD to investigate new methods of communication but to maintain the telephone as the main means of contact
- A local authority planning officer stated that methods of communication depend on who WPD are talking about. The stakeholder queried whether WPD were discussing residential customer communication
- A representative of a major user wanted to know what the current method of communication is if a customer loses power. The stakeholder suggested, as a resident, Twitter and text message would be useful means of contact when out of the house and there is a problem
- An energy group representative felt that it depends on WPD's relationship with the customer. The stakeholder stated that as (s)he has a good connection (s)he is not going to worry about having an 'app' available to inform them about loss of connection. However, this stakeholder suggested that worst-served customers might find new and innovative methods of communication useful
- A representative of a major user wanted to know if WPD are responsible for tariff communication
- WPD asked stakeholders if they would mind WPD having their mobile numbers as a means of contact
- An energy group representative wanted to know if the mobile phone network is more robust than the domestic phone network when the electricity goes down
- An energy group representative stated that the use of smart phones is becoming more prevalent. The stakeholder felt that WPD need to keep up with current core

communication methods. It was suggested that this priority is about pace of communication development, and WPD do not want to go too fast and far but do not want to be left behind

- Another stakeholder added that WPD should maintain core communication methods but continue to develop new methods
- An energy group representative wanted to know what the mass communication method is
- Another energy group representative stated that WPD has to start laying down the infrastructure for new technologies, and asked *'who does a customer talk to about a problem with solar panels'*

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this Issue should be a low priority
- A local authority officer began the conversation by stating that power cut levels were noticeably improving
- A community group representative stated that *'a lot of older people simply don't have IT'* so innovative methods of communication wouldn't help
- An environmental group member made the point that, in rural areas, broadband doesn't exist
- A local authority officer said that *'if there is a power cut it would be good to know that WPD knows about it and how long it would take WPD to fix it'*. (S)he added that realistic targets were important and that WPD should not promise what it can't deliver
- A WPD representative stated that some people would much rather check on line, whereas others like to speak to someone. WPD needs to cater for individual preference
- A local authority officer said that existing methods of communication are more than adequate

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- An energy representative stated that it would be convenient if there was real time data *'available on a website'* rather than having to phone up
- A community group representative commented that although the *'majority of the elderly are competent'* not all can use the computer so a phone option should remain
- An elected representative said (s)he agreed that a website is not suitable for all but it should exist as it could be used to cut down phone calls. (S)he stated another

factor that should be taken into consideration is that no one communicates unless there is a problem, which means when a problem does occur no one knows who to contact

- An energy group representative suggested there should be an automatic text message system available from power companies. (S)he commented that it would be a proactive system for when problems occur as the customer may not be aware of the problem if they are not at home. (S)he thinks the scheme should be an opt in one
- A WPD representative explained that a text messaging system is being tested
- A community group representative asked if *'everybody receives a bill so why can't information of potential and previous problems, and who to contact when there is a problem, be on there?'*
- An energy group representative suggested there should be potential select groups who can go on a priority list. (S)he said the list would include the customers in the worst-served areas and the elderly. (S)he stated customers on the list should receive information first and quickly, the result would be cost effective for the whole area
- An energy group representative stated when power outages occur it is dealt with quickly as there is *'someone'* on the job. (S)he commented that an engineer would need to report back to the network company so users can be quickly updated of the problem and time expected until the problem is sorted
- An energy group representative said power cuts in the future will happen more frequently. (S)he thinks now is the time to deal with them to prevent future problems as this is *'much better rather than relying on money in the future to fix problems'*
- An energy group representative said the equipment should be monitored closely by the suppliers to WPD. (S)he commented that money should be spent on reinforcement and monitoring of the equipment rather than spending money when faults occur. (S)he stated it is accepted that problems will occur but thinks that customers should be informed quickly and told when the problem will be fixed
- A local authority officer asked if *'arrangements can be made if a problem caused by flooding or terrorism occurs there can be precautions in place to prevent them from happening.'* If it does happen how can we work with WPD to cope? (S)he commented there needs to be a strategic long term plan in place

Table 4

- The stakeholders agreed that this Issue was a high (top three) priority for WPD

4.2. Issue 2. Improving service for new connections

Table 1

- Priority: Medium / high
- A local authority planning officer stated that 'improving service for new connections' is a high priority. The rest of the stakeholders felt that it was a medium to high priority
- An energy group representative wanted to know how WPD '*bench mark*' against other DNO's in this priority
- An energy group representative wanted to know if WPD are operating in a competitive environment
- A local authority planning officer stated that it is a high priority from a planning perspective
- Another local authority planning officer stated that the development industry hate risk, and therefore, would like connections as soon as possible
- An energy group representative queried whether there is a link between 'improving service for new connections' and new technologies

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high (top three) priority
- A developer made the point that (s)he works for a house builder and stated that '*points for connection are readily available and work well.*' (S)he added that standardisation of the connection cost is required for '*the man on the street*', but that all costs should be viewed up front and made explicitly clear for the development industries
- A local authority officer made the following two points: '*It's hard to get in touch with WPD*' and '*It takes time and you need to know costs*'. (S)he added '*A lot of people are complaining about connections*'
- A local authority officer stated '*we just need more certainty on things like timescales. We need an outline of the process*'
- A developer made the point that it helps if you know the right people to speak to and that WPD should make this more clear
- An energy group representative stated that since the change of networks there has been a drop in the quality of communication. He added that WPD had lost sight of this
- An elected representative made the point that 'improving service for new connections' is important in Staffordshire

- An environmental group member asked WPD to take account of all opportunities for renewables or all other sources is important

Table 3

- Priority: High (top three)
- An energy group representative stated the process of new connections varies and differences occur between bills. (S)he said there needs to be streamlining of all forms and use of different technologies
- An elected representative said (s)he has not experienced any problems when getting new connections
- An energy group representative said on a large scale there are concerns with the new connection processes but it is getting better. (S)he commented that uncertainty has occurred when working with house builders, and the past needs to be looked at to move forward and make changes
- A representative of a major user asked when *'applying for a new connection by filling out forms you need to give a lot of information, is it all needed/relevant?'*
- A local authority officer said WPD needs to plan ahead for the increased demand in the employment and housing sector. (S)he asked *'how are WPD going to react?'*

Table 4

- The stakeholders agreed that 'improving services for new connections' should be a high ('top three') priority

4.3. Issue 3. Being prepared for major emergencies

Table 1

- Priority: Medium / low
- A major user representative commented that this Issue comes down to cost / benefit analysis
- An energy group representative stated that it is a priority but it has to be *'bean counted'*. The stakeholder felt that the priority should be about risk versus investment and proportionate to risk. It was added that the customer doesn't want to see a huge additional cost on their bill for something that may or may not happen
- Another energy group representative stated that WPD cannot always be ready for every risk
- An energy group representative questioned whether the regulator would have an influence on what priority level is appropriate for 'being prepared for major emergencies'

- A major user representative stated that stakeholders cannot say no to maintaining the status quo
- A local authority planning officer added that by *'going further than WPD is at present would be very expensive'*. It was suggested that WPD should work with local authority planners and developers to reduce risks such as flooding. It is more of a planning issue than WPD being more prepared

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a medium to high priority
- An energy group representative stated that *'there's being prepared and then there is being prepared. I would be concerned if your level of preparedness is above industry standard. You should not go beyond industry standard'*
- A representative of an environmental group highlighted that WPD should be feeding into flood plans, adding *'as long as WPD fulfils its obligations on this, it's ok'*
- A local authority officer stated *'what amazes me is that modern houses lose heating, water supply and phones when there is an emergency, so I think it's a priority'*

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- An elected representative said the possible outcomes of what could happen in an emergency need to be considered. (S)he stated a balance of making future plans and having an allowance for flexibility needs to be found in the uncertain environment we live in
- A local authority officer stated WPD needs to prepare an infrastructure plan. (S)he wants WPD to take into account Government and local plans so that they can offer users certainty and direct contact
- An energy group representative said we are *'entering a different world'* and *'compromises need to be made.'* (S)he stated in a 15-20 year period there will be unknown changes and WPD needs to make investments to prepare everyone for the *'new world'*.

Table 4

- Priority: High (top three)
- A business representative felt that deciding whether *'being prepared for major emergencies'* should be a priority or not should not be up for debate, and that it should be a priority regardless
- The other stakeholders felt that this should be a high (top three) priority

4.4. Issue 4. Improving reliability for worst-served customers

Table 1

- Priority: Medium / low
- An energy group representative stated that 'improving reliability for worst-served customers' should be a medium to low priority, but it should also be about innovative technology solutions rather than doing the same thing over again. The stakeholder felt that this would reduce it from being a long term problem
- An energy group representative queried whether the majority of customers should be paying for '*worst-served customers*' to live where they want to live. The stakeholder suggested that they should be paying a premium. The stakeholder stated that it should be a medium to low priority
- A local emergency services representative stated that '*worst-served customers*' have to pay the same price as everyone else so deserve the same quality of service
- A local authority representative disagreed. This stakeholder felt that customers should not have to face an increase in prices for the small percentage of '*worst-served customers*'
- A local emergency services representative suggested that WPD could tell their '*worst-served customers*' about the expected poor service when they move into the area so they can be prepared. The stakeholder reiterated that regardless of where WPD customers live they have to pay the same price and should receive the same service

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this Issue should be a medium priority
- It was agreed that this topic was linked to asset replacement
- An energy group representative stated that response was one thing, but prevention was another

Table 3

- Priority: Low
- A local authority officer said customers want to see a new, improved service but realises with the current budgets it cannot be realistically achieved
- An energy group representative commented that the network is ageing and the demand is increasing significantly. (S)he stated WPD needs to work on the network and '*massive investment is needed*'

Table 4

- Stakeholders ranked this as a medium / low priority

- A major user believed that improving reliability for worst-served customers was a *'double-edged sword'* because those who did not live in high risk areas would be reluctant to pay for those that do
- A business representative agreed that this would not be a priority for someone unaffected
- The stakeholders felt that this was important for select individuals rather than a universal priority

4.5. Issue 5. Asset replacement to maintain business as usual

Table 1

- There was a group consensus that 'asset replacement to maintain business as usual' should be a low priority
- There was a group consensus that Issue 5 should not be a priority, whilst Issue 6 [future proofing] should be a high priority
- An energy group representative stated that (s)he disagrees with Issue 5. If WPD has to replace assets then they should be future proofed

Table 2

- It was agreed that this Issue is linked to metal theft and therefore a high priority
- A local authority officer asked if WPD hoped that attendees would say *'no'*
- A local authority officer said *'you can't say we will replace assets and maintain business as usual. Sometimes there will be demand for something that's better than business as usual'*
- A developer stated that WPD has to update its assets and reinvest
- A local authority officer made the point that, at the end of the day, it will be paid for by the users

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- An energy group representative said the infrastructure is old and it needs replacing or updating
- An elected representative stated that it depends on the amount of money the business is prepared to risk and spend on new assets
- A local authority officer said WPD needs to keep preparing and updating for the future. (S)he stated the number of changes and updates made are down to WPD. (S)he asked *'what infrastructure will be invested in and how can customers benefit?'*

- An energy group representative stated that there are 2 separate issues concerning smart activities and asked '*can there be refurbishment like for like?*'
- An energy group representative asked '*will there be different kinds of equipment in the future?*'
- An energy group representative said smart grids have a lot of information to give. (S)he commented that current grids cannot provide the information that we want to know

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium to high priority
- A major user commented that (s)he would '*not support paying more for something that will make a difference in 30 years time*'. The stakeholder added that (s)he would like to see '*payback*' within 3 to 4 years
- An energy group representative stated that 70% of the network is old and the network will become problematic if it is not addressed soon enough
- An elected representative asked a question about how much it would cost to set up a substation. The stakeholder felt that networks would be more dynamic if more of these were setup and could save on costs
- An elected representative stated that they were surprised Ofgem had not instructed WPD to do this as a rule

4.6. Issue 6. Future proofing asset replacement

Table 1

- There was a group consensus that '*future proofing asset replacement*' should be a high (top three) priority
- Another energy group representative added that monitoring assets is important
- A major user representative questioned how stakeholders and WPD would explain to customers why '*future proofing asset replacement*' should be a high priority. The Issue needs articulation as to why it is a priority from a customer's point of view

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a high (top three) priority
- A local authority officer stated that '*this is a naughty question as you're the business; you know the figures and what's coming forward. Presumably copper is best at the moment, but what new cabling technology is coming forwards?*'
- A local authority officer made the point that, in the future, more people will be working from home in rural areas. If there is an aspiration for super-fast broadband

in rural areas, rural areas will have a big demand and would be a good market for WPD

- An energy group representative made the point that a minimalistic approach is led by Ofgem and that this is storing problems for the future. If future proofing is not begun now it will cost twice as much in the future. Ofgem only allows for minimal expenditure, which is dangerous
- An energy group representative stated that technology needs to be proven before Ofgem allows its use. (S)he believes that distribution is only part of the wider energy challenge. Generation, supply/ smart etc are also parts and there is only so much money available to WPD. (S)he added that Government needs to work out where best to spend its money. If WPD rolls out smart networks now, it's meaningless. (S)he believes that future proofing must be done in the right areas with proven technologies
- An energy group representative stated that *'the Distribution Network Operating Companies (DNOs) are too constrained by Ofgem'*
- An energy group representative asked *'at what point does expenditure stop'*
- A member of a local authority stated that *'it's a bigger strategic issue. We get brown outs and black outs due to lack of power. Surely WPD has some sort of resource to get power from A to B. WPD needs to decide what future proofing is needed'*
- An energy group representative and a local authority officer agreed that the country has a big challenge over the next 20 years as future proofing will be expensive and needs to be looked at strategically
- A local authority representative stated that future proofing should be done once and done right

Table 3

- Priority: High (top three)
- All stakeholders agreed future proofing is an important area to progress and move forward in
- A community group representative said there needs to be a contribution made to reduce future costs. (S)he stated a change in Government taxes and Government policy is needed. (S)he commented that climate change and nature will play a small part in what changes are made. The stakeholder added although technology advances will continue, *'man cannot control everything'*. Other methods need to be found in the future, and power and energy costs will determine WPD's future
- An elected representative explained that Government policies are set out by the European Union. (S)he felt that the policies are damaging and need changing but Britain does not have the power to make these changes

Table 4

- The stakeholders could not reach agreement on this Issue. For some, this was deemed medium priority. However, others saw this as being a 'top three' priority and asked for this to be noted by the scribe
- The stakeholders felt that this was tricky because it is impossible to predict the future

4.7. **Issue 7. Real time data exchanges and control to enable scheduling of data and storage**

Table 1

- Priority: High (top three)
- The group reached a consensus that Issues 6, 7 and an additional Issue (smart network installation) should be grouped together
- An energy group representative stated that demand in London is too high for the network to cope. This stakeholder felt that communication is important to help the issue

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium priority
- A local authority officer made the point that most of WPD's data isn't real time and that it was collected once a day. (S)he stated that *'investment must go into real time measurement'*
- A local authority officer said *'sometimes I feel we're into the nanny state bit. Is this a problem? Do people actually ring WPD to tell you the power is down?'*
- A local authority officer asked why customers would spend more money to tell WPD the power's off when they do it by phone anyway
- A local authority officer asked if the cost to make the system would be less than the cost of putting in more cabling
- A local authority officer said *'I think this is important if it's going to include the network, but it cannot be at any cost. It needs to be done in a sensible and balanced way and weighed up against other issues (costs)'*

Table 3

- Priority: High (top three)
- An elected representative felt it was difficult to comment on real time data and asked *'will the data improve the efficiency of the system and will it be cost effective?'*

- An energy group representative said *'in principle real time will be good'*
- An energy group representative stated that an important aspect of real time is that it will allow *'the board'* to charge different rates at different times of the day. (S)he added *'the board will have more control of prices'*
- A representative of a major user said (s)he will find it useful having a smart grid when being connected to a sub station
- An energy group representative felt it was most important that the distribution of the network needs to be intelligent
- A local authority officer believed more information will give WPD and customers more power

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority
- A WPD representative stated that substations allow WPD to have greater insight into the network and it could be possible to install control monitoring in these, however, it would be costly
- A major user stated that a one hour interruption every 2 years was not a substantial amount of disruption and does not warrant a huge investment into *'fixing'* this Issue

4.8. Issue 8. Metal theft prevention / response

Table 1

- Priority: High (top three)
- A local emergency service representative stated that this should be a high priority as it will impinge on the other priorities. The stakeholder wanted to know what the consequence of the metal theft is to the customer
- An energy group representative felt that it should be a *'high priority right now'*
- A local authority representative stated that this Issue is the one that WPD can least control as it is outside of WPD's remit. This stakeholder, however, felt that prevention is something that WPD can control
- A major user representative stated that 'metal theft prevention / response' has to be a high priority
- A local emergency service representative felt that if WPD does not look at metal theft prevention now it will be a huge problem in the future. The stakeholder suggested that WPD needs to make its cable easily identifiable and so the identification cannot be burnt off

- An energy group representative wanted to know if there was something that WPD could do to improve the situation but wouldn't have a high cost output
- An energy group representative questioned what percentage increase there has been in the problem
- Another energy group representative suggested that if the Government delivers on banning cash transactions at scrap yards then that would help the problem
- A local authority planning officer stated that it is a *'no brainer'* that it should be a priority
- A local emergency service representative stated that WPD cannot do anything

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this Issue as a high (top three) priority
- It was agreed by the group that this was a high priority, but for the Government, rather than WPD
- A representative of an environmental group made the point that the blackout problem in rural areas is due to metal theft. (S)he gave the following example; *'we had 3km of metal cabling stolen recently, which knocked out isolated properties and villages. The villages were reconnected, but the isolated properties weren't because WPD didn't look at the isolated properties'*
- The group agreed that metal theft is a massive problem in rural areas
- An energy group representative made the point that farms and rural businesses do everything online. (S)he stated that a lot of people don't get paid on time etc when metal theft knocks out power. It has a massive knock on effect
- An energy group representative stated that special measures won't stop evolving methods of theft
- A representative of a developer made the point that if there is no market, people won't steal metal
- A representative of an environmental group said *'it's the knock on effect of metal theft. Despite the prevention measures, it still goes missing'*
- An energy group representative said that metal theft has improved, but the problem is that the network is extremely old. (S)he made the point that the worst-served areas will improve through asset replacement. (S)he believes that, relatively speaking, this is not a big priority
- An energy group representative stated that this is more of a problem in the South West than in the Midlands
- An energy group representative stated that metal theft is a national issue and asked how could WPD stimulate a reaction at national level from its business plan

- A local authority officer made the point that it's difficult to secure cabling and that this is a policing issue
- An energy group representative made the point that a lot of revenue must come from taxation and that this is a policing issue
- A representative of an environmental group said that WPD would never be able to prevent metal theft and added that WPD needed to make sure it knew where its network began and ended
- A representative of a community group stated that (s)he was bothered by metal theft a lot. (S)he asked if there was another material that could be used instead of copper to prevent theft
- An energy group representative made the point that this was a community issue
- An energy group representative made the point that there was no way to completely prevent metal theft

Table 3

- Priority: Low
- An elected representative said this Issue is a high priority if it happens daily. A representative of a major user, however, felt it was a medium priority
- A local authority officer said there is a cost for WPD and customers will be affected soon
- An energy group representative said it is a bigger issue than just limiting it to an internal issue

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a low priority
- A WPD representative explained that metal theft has been one of the biggest issues that they have encountered so far in the Midlands
- Most of the stakeholders were aware that metal theft has caused fatalities in recent years and that people attempting to steal overhead cables in the East Midlands had also caused a lot of problems for WPD
- The stakeholders felt that this was a tricky problem to solve. The stakeholders felt that it was best to either find a substitute for copper otherwise it should be a '*problem for the law*' and it was up to the authorities to tackle this Issue

4.9. Additional comments

Table 1

- The stakeholders suggested that Smart network installation should be included as an additional priority and that this should be grouped with Issue 6 (Future proofing asset replacement) and 7 (Real time data exchanges and control to enable scheduling of data and storage)
- An energy group representative suggested that if listing *'smart network installation'* as a priority will increase customers' bills then WPD may take the gamble of not increasing investment in *'smart network installation'*
- A local authority planning officer questioned whether metal theft would still be an issue in 2023. *'The Business Plan is long term and metal theft is an immediate priority'* (s)he commented. The stakeholder suggested that WPD should review the priority throughout the business plan
- An energy group representative questioned what would happen if metal theft decreases in importance
- The group suggested reducing power cuts as being an important priority for WPD

Table 2

- The stakeholders suggested *'reducing power cuts'*; *'renewable connections'*; *'smart networks'* and *'data quality'* as additional priorities
- An energy group representative stated that the company's priorities often differ from those of their customers

Table 3

- The main concern for the group was how the network would look in the future
- Reducing power cuts was put forward as an additional priority, as was the *'smart network'*

Table 4

- Some members of the group believed that there were problems associated with businesses using the same communication channels as consumers
- This group also suggested reducing power cuts as being an additional priority

5. Prioritisation

5.1. Improving customer service and the network

Stakeholders were first asked if they considered that each of the Issues should be a priority for WPD.

Priority	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3	Table 4
New/innovative methods of communication	Y	Y/N	Y	Y
Improving service for new connections	Y	Y	Y	Y
Being prepared for major emergencies	Y	Y	Y	Y
Improving reliability for worst served-customers	Y	Y/N	N	N
Asset replacement to maintain business as usual	N	Y/N	Y	N
Future proofing asset replacement	Y	Y	Y	Y
Real time data exchanges and control to enable scheduling of data and storage	Y	Y	Y	Y
Metal theft prevention / response	Y	Y	N	N
Smart network installation	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Reducing power cuts	Y	Y	Y	Y
Renewable connections	Y	Y	Y/N	N/A
Data quality	N/A	N/A	Y	N/A

6. Workshop 2: Innovation and the Environment

6.1. Issue 1. Use innovation to support existing network and operate it more effectively

Table 1

- The stakeholders agreed that 'use innovation to support existing network and operate it more effectively' is a high priority
- An energy group representative discussed low carbon networks and knowledge sharing. This stakeholder stated that, from a vendor's perspective, if there is a demonstration of a technology in another area, can WPD learn from it and accelerate it being implemented. The stakeholder questioned whether knowledge sharing could form part of WPD's research
- An energy group representative stated that, if the Government is going to spend £8 billion on smart metering, then WPD and its customers should be getting the most out of this
- A local authority planning officer wanted to know if there is a country that WPD 'looks to for inspiration' concerning smart metering
- A local authority planning officer stated that (s)he struggles to get hold of the relevant person in energy companies such as WPD when planning for future local authority development

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority and said this was the *'right approach'*
- An energy group representative stated that (s)he thinks innovation is right, but there shouldn't be innovation for innovations' sake. Innovation should be used to support the existing network and the approach *'should be incremental'*
- An energy group representative made the point that resource should go into research and development
- An energy group representative said that it was a priority to stay ahead of the game
- An energy group representative stated that *'you can't have smart technology without innovation'*

Table 3

- A representative of a major user stated that the security of fuel and energy should be focused on
- A community group representative stated the cost and return on windfarms needs to be clearer. This stakeholder commented 'we can't always use them and we are putting suppliers into a situation where they can't get things right'
- An energy group representative began discussing the network and real time. This stakeholder stated that real time information will enable WPD to prevent problems. It was added that the *'technology is there to make real time a reality'*. If it's developed on mass scale the cost will come down. In Australia their air conditioning is always being closely monitored so the network does not overload

Table 4

- A business representative expressed concerns over the number of windfarms that might need to replace current carbon technology
- A representative of a major user disagreed by stating '*wind farms have to go somewhere*' and added that '*residents in Yorkshire are probably not happy about having so many coal stations!*'

6.2. Issue 2. Develop technologies to accommodate increases in electricity demand

Table 1

- There was a group consensus that 'develop technologies to accommodate increases in electricity demand' should be a high priority

Table 2

- An energy group representative made the point that this is a broad category. (S)he stated that there is going to be a fundamental change in the way people fuel their houses
- A representative of a developer commented that, since the economy has retracted, the emphasis has been taken off this *as 'money drives everything'*
- A representative of an environment group stated that instead of reading '*increases*' in electricity demand it should read '*changes*' as the fuels used will change
- An energy group representative stated that WPD has to be ahead of the game in design and development
- An energy group representative said that one of the main reasons it should read '*change*' is because the demand has been falling in recent years
- An energy group representative stated that the maximum demand has not really changed over the last 10/ 15 years

Table 3

- This Issue was seen as a high priority for WPD
- An energy group representative said customers will have to sign up to different rates at different times
- A community group representative believes the above will work with a tariff
- An energy group representative stated wind or solar power could be offered at a cheaper rate
- A community group representative said due to changes in the system it is no longer possible to have your washing machines working off hot water. This means it can cost more than double in the amount of power used

Table 4

- The stakeholders were of this view that this was a high priority Issue

6.3. Issue 3. Trial technology and innovation to facilitate low carbon networks

Table 1

- It was felt that this Issue should be a high priority and that it *'goes hand in hand with Issue 2'*

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority and felt that this Issue should be discussed along with Issues 1,2 and 4

Table 3

- The group felt that Issue 3 is linked with Issue 4
- An energy group representative said *'having trials is cheap but lessons should always be learnt from the trials'*

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority
- The facilitator explained that this question was about taking an idea and working out whether customers and the network want it
- A WPD representative continued this train of thought by explaining that WPD was currently trialling new technology with businesses via projects to help test the possibilities around low carbon network. (S)he continued that WPD is investing a lot into *'spreading this new found knowledge'* and reporting results to the wider electricity sector experts for feedback
- The stakeholders agreed that this was a high priority

6.4. Issue 4. Turn successful trials into business as usual techniques / products

Table 1

- An energy group representative stated that there is *'no point'* in doing the trials if WPD does not implement them. Therefore, it should be a high priority
- There was group consensus that 'turn successful trials into business as usual techniques / products' should be a priority

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority
- An energy group representative stated that it was about turning successful trials into cost effective businesses and products

Table 3

- A local authority officer stated that there is no point spending money on trials if lessons are not being learnt
- An energy group representative said new technology is important to consumers. The stakeholder felt that wind turbine trials showed they did not work. The trial should have been done before they came onto the market and consumers spent money
- An energy group representative stated that WPD should use their experience of what they know and what they have learnt
- An energy group representative stated deployment comes out of trials and helps to find cost effective methods

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this Issue should be a high priority
- A WPD representative stated that, after trials, WPD would try to construct their findings into products or techniques that can work within existing networks rather than coming up with a new system that will require uprooting the current system
- A representative of a major user stated that any business should have to trial new techniques and felt that it should be a given and not a high priority
- Despite the conflict in opinions, the stakeholders agreed that this was in fact a high priority

6.5. Issue 5. Making better use of the current system capacity – e.g. Substation monitoring and Dynamic asset rating (allow us to use existing lines and cables more efficiently)

Table 1

- Priority: High (top three)
- An energy group representative suggested that the priority ranking will come down to cost. The stakeholder added that Issue 1 will help WPD achieve Issue 5
- There was a group consensus that *'making better use of the current system capacity'* should be a priority
- A local authority planning officer suggested that WPD would be better off spending money on new technology rather than maintaining the old infrastructure
- An energy group representative stated that with good monitoring WPD can better utilise the existing infrastructure

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high (top three) priority
- A representative of an environmental group suggested that this is the highest priority. The stakeholders agreed with this sentiment

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- An energy group representative stated WPD should focus on new and innovative technology, adding that WPD could refresh the current technology it has

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this Issue should be a high (top three) priority

6.6. Issue 6. Smart technology and telecommunications – new installation of network that allows remote data monitoring and operation of assets

Table 1

- There was a group consensus that this is a high priority Issue

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority
- The group consensus was that changes should be made incrementally

Table 3

- A local authority officer said this was discussed in the last session and so the discussion moved on to the next Issue
- It was, however, quickly agreed that this should be a high (top three) priority

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a high priority
- A representative of a major user stated that, if WPD was to invest lots of money into this area, there is a danger that it might not develop

6.7. Issue 7. Facilitating the connection of local renewable energy – e.g. impact of solar panels and 2-way flows to network

Table 1

- Stakeholders felt that 'facilitating the connection of local renewable energy' should be part of Issue 3 and should be considered a high priority
- There was a group consensus that 'facilitating the connection of local renewable energy' should be a priority

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high (top three) priority
- An energy group representative asked if, given the financial state of the world, renewable targets should be top down or bottom up. (S)he stated that it all goes back to the state of the economy and referred to solar panels and amounts of domestic customers. (S)he believes that it's about going back to a strategic approach
- A representative of an environmental group said that renewable energies are not constant when they are imported or exported into the Grid
- A representative of an environmental group stated that the impact of renewable energy needs to be fully understood

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- A representative of a major user stated that generating as much power on-site as possible is better than relying on the network. This stakeholder suggested that it will enable there to be a two way system which will allow users to feed back into the grid

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium to low priority
- An elected representative asked whether PV systems overstretch the network
- A WPD representative stated that they do overstretch the network and that most PV installations are 4KW and the demand for the average customer is 1KW
- An elected representative stated that one of their neighbouring councils decided to have solar panels at the top of the swimming pool/pumping stations but (s)he is not convinced by them
- A few stakeholders disagreed with this as they felt that solar panels were cost effective

6.8. Issue 8. Facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Table 1

- Priority: High
- An energy group representative suggested that *'facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure'* is part of Issue 3 and this will be a specific element of Issue 8
- An energy group representative stated that WPD should be *'more worried'* about EV than PV, which could escalate dramatically
- The stakeholder stated that it is a priority to keep the network robust for new low carbon technologies
- An energy group representative wanted to know if the discussion was about public charging posts or accommodating charging at home. The stakeholder felt that it should be a higher priority to enable charging at home
- A local authority planning officer wanted to know if a pilot project is something that WPD could pursue
- A major user representative wanted to know what WPD meant by facilitating. The stakeholder suggested that if *'facilitating'* meant pre-empting then that would require capital
- An energy group representative stated that (s)he would be upset if their electricity goes down if their neighbours are charging their electric vehicles
- A major user representative stated that the scheme would be dependent on Government backing of electric vehicles
- An energy group representative wanted to know if this is about how quickly WPD could respond to the issue. The stakeholder questioned whether WPD would be asking for a restriction on people owning electric vehicles

- A local emergency service representative felt that 'facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure' should not be a priority
- A major user representative stated that 'facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure' depends on how strong WPD's steer is on take up or whether that is down to the Government or the market. The stakeholder suggested that it may take a lot of money and we are still unsure if electric vehicles are the way forward
- An energy group representative felt that this Issue would accelerate as a priority when the UK is not meeting carbon emission targets. Therefore, it would be wrong to not list it as a priority
- Another energy group representative stated that the carbon emissions target will have an impact on take-up and the targets time frame is within the Business Plan
- A local authority planning officer suggested that WPD should look at the Community Infrastructure Levy to help fund electric vehicles. And WPD should work with the different authorities

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt this should be a low priority
- A representative of a community group made the point that this could lose WPD a lot of money
- An energy group representative said that there has not been as big an uptake in electric vehicles as was predicted
- An energy group representative stated that development rather than implementation should be the focus
- A representative of an environmental group said that this should be a watching brief rather than a priority
- A local authority officer made the point that WPD doesn't know what is around the corner

Table 3

- A representative of a major user said it is a difficult topic to rate, although the group as a whole felt that this was a low priority
- An energy group representative believed popularity and use of electric vehicles (EV) will come later and will be supplied in volume. The stakeholder felt that this could be the case in 10 years as opposed to 5 yrs. It was added that ways to extend the charge on the battery are needed, and so far only intermediate solutions have been put forward
- An energy group representative stated that the battery will reduce in size and the load on the system will be a lot lower in the future. The stakeholder suggested that in a period of 5-10 years something may be available

- An energy group representative stated that WPD should not wait to see what will happen in the future, but instead should prepare for the future now
- A community group representative stated that problems with the future supply of oil will influence the use and growth of electric vehicles
- An energy group representative stated that fossil fuels cannot be used in dense environments, electricity will have to be used
- An energy group representative stated that in future planning there will be benefits to using electric vehicles
- A local authority officer agreed that EV is something to think about. The stakeholder stated that a decision needs to be made as to when and where in the future
- A community group representative stated they would like guidance from the treasury, what will happen to the revenue from a normal car user?

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium / high priority
- An elected representative felt that this area presented a '*chicken and egg situation*' and felt that car manufacturers had not done much to convince the public to purchase electric vehicles
- A WPD representative mentioned that the Government is spearheading this agenda with subsidies and that WPD is also trying to plan for a lower carbon environment
- A business representative felt that this area is becoming much more attractive due to the Government scheme which incentivises its usage and from a business perspective demand is increasing
- An elected representative felt that Government schemes had been challenged and the success of the early stimulus was questionable
- An energy group representative stated that it was very difficult to second guess and that (s)he could not imagine themselves buying an electric vehicle for a long time. The stakeholder felt that in general it was not practical for lower scale areas- although it could work in London (Low)

6.9. Issue 9. Minimising leaks from fluid filled cables and gas filled switchgear

Table 1

- Priority: Medium / high
- A major user representative wanted to know how many kilogrammes of SF6 leaks. The stakeholder suggested that this could be an easy win for WPD if they improve this. The stakeholder felt that it should be a medium to high priority

- Stakeholders stated that there is no point WPD tackling CO2 if they do not tackle SF6. So, it should be a priority

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium priority
- An energy group representative stated that there is no current alternative
- An energy group representative pointed out that the original plan was to get rid of most oil filled cables by 2005
- The group consensus was that an incremental approach is eminently sensible
- A local authority officer asked about the built-in pumping thresholds
- A representative of an environmental group reiterated that it should be business as usual

Table 3

- A local authority officer stated they don't know a lot about the topic but felt there is a safety risk
- An energy group representative stated that prioritisation is *'tricky'* but it was felt by the group that this was a low priority Issue
- An energy group representative felt that leaks will continue to contaminate the environment and therefore isn't a priority but a duty. It was added that it will become a priority if the problem becomes worse
- An energy group representative stated that if there is a problem there is no choice but to fix it
- An energy group representative stated that if this is an increasing trend then it will have to be looked at and become a priority

Table 4

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium priority
- However, some stakeholders felt that, just like asset replacement, this should be *'a given'*

6.10. Issue 10. Continuing undergrounding schemes in National Parks / AONBs

Table 1

- Priority: Low
- A local authority planning officer stated that if it was purely about cost then *'continuing undergrounding schemes in National Parks and AONBs'* would be a low priority. However, aesthetics makes it important
- The local authority planning officer added that (s)he would be happy for it be low in the priority rankings as long as Issue 11 is above it

- A local authority planning officer felt that this could be a real issue among the public. However, once people understand the *'bigger picture'* then it will be a low priority. The stakeholder felt that it should be a priority but a low priority in comparison
- A local authority planning officer stated that, although it is an expensive priority, this is a high priority from a planning perspective. It was added that the countryside voice is loud. The stakeholder suggested that the design of the pylons could be considered
- An energy group representative felt that this Issue should be a low priority due to cost, and suggested that park users should pay for undergrounding
- From a local authority planning officer's perspective it is a high priority. However, the rest of the group did not share this view

Table 2

- A representative of an environmental group stated that *'this is something we have been doing with WDP for the past one-and-a-half price reviews periods. We liaise between operators and local communities in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We balance concerns with costs and we hope the underground systems continue, but there has been problems with this in the past in rural areas as WPD is replacing the infrastructure, but this was offset by what Ofgem said'*
- An energy group representative stated that the priority is undergrounding, but that the process is expensive
- A representative of an environmental group made the point that the costs forced them to only underground cables in villages that wanted them and not in all villages
- An energy group representative said that undergrounding must be pragmatic and looked at on case-by-case bases. In those specific areas, where it has an impact, it should be used
- A representative of an environmental group asked that animal species be taken into account when WPD undergrounds cables
- A local authority officer referred to occurrences in Wales where residents have asked for the landscape to be protected from pylons
- A representative of an environmental group stated that to transport energy from offshore wind farms, you need to go across the land. (S)he added that *'it's getting the new cables to go around the AONB or if they have to be undergrounded'*
- A representative of an environmental group stated that this can sometimes be an external issue
- A local authority officer made the point that the operators are getting cheap transmission of electricity
- An energy group representative stated that developers can't underground cables

- A local authority officer asked if the National Grid causes problems because it has to be fed
- An energy group representative said that there are massive developments offshore to transport power nationwide
- A local authority officer asked if someone was thinking of a better way of transporting power
- A representative of an environmental group stated that they recognise issues like old infrastructure and that this is not as high a priority for everyone

Table 3

- Priority: Low
- The stakeholders agreed that this Issue it is a priority but also depends on the location
- An energy group representative wanted to know how much more expensive it is to put in underground cables compared to overhead cables
- A local authority officer stated that there needs to be a balance between Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the cost of undergrounding. The stakeholder agrees that there is no blanket approach

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a low priority
- The stakeholders agreed that this was important but it was not necessarily a priority

6.11. Issue 11. Protecting habitats and species

Table 1

- Priority: Low
- A local authority planning officer stated that it is not about the cost issue but an operative issue for WPD
- An energy group representative stated that there is a cost involved in educating the work force
- A major user representative felt that 'protecting habitats and species' has to be a high priority as once a habitat is damaged it will not be easily returned. The stakeholder added that it is a low cost for a big impact
- A stakeholder queried whether there is a regulatory minimum that WPD have to adhere to

- An energy group representative stated that WPD shouldn't be going above and beyond the legal requirement
- A local authority planning officer stated that there is a legal duty to protect environment and biodiversity.
- A local authority planning officer added that it shouldn't be too expensive to protect the environment through WPD workers education and equipment
- The local authority planning officer suggested that this is an area that WPD can *'score brownie points'*

Table 2

- The stakeholders felt that this should be a medium priority

Table 3

- Priority: Medium
- A local authority officer stated that this priority is similar to the landscape issue. The stakeholder suggested that there should be greater protection for those who need it
- An energy group representative stated that there are internal and external standards. The stakeholder stated that protection of habitats and species should be business as normal, not a priority
- An energy group representative wanted to know if things are changing in the next 8 years, giving the example of housing plans. It was suggested that there needs to be a new focus to address new, future requirements

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a low priority
- A local authority officer felt it was important for WPD to ensure that it does not impact local species
- A representative of a major user stated that WPD should follow this protocol anyway
- A WPD representative explained the sort of impact on local species can be fairly substantial when repairing faults
- The stakeholders agreed that although this was important it was even more of a priority to ensure that the faults were repaired and there was no real choice in the matter

6.12. Issue 12. Flood and climate change mitigation

Table 1

- Priority: Low
- A major user representative stated that it comes down to cost and risk again. How certain are WPD about risk prediction, and how certain can WPD be about localised predictions
- A local authority planning officer added that (s)he would not spend money on an uncertainty that may not happen
- A local authority planning officer wanted to know if WPD work with the Environment Agency. The stakeholder queried whether WPD prioritise flood risk areas with a high population
- An energy group representative added that this should be a priority but it is only looking at an 8 year period
- A major user representative stated that *'flood and climate change mitigation'* has to be looked at but it is about a proportional response

Table 2

- The stakeholders ranked this as a medium priority as this is expected from WPD as a responsible business
- A representative of an environmental group referred to the '2007' flood event and stated that you can identify which substations are at risk
- An energy group representative stated that substations at risk are currently being replaced
- A representative of a developer put forward their belief that this is not very important because WPD don't know how far to go
- A local authority officer asked if WPD could raise the substations
- A representative of an environmental group stated that stations were flooded in 2007 and asked what mitigation work had taken place since then
- A local authority officer asked if you could put a high wall around substations to keep out thieves and water
- A local authority officer stated this was another case of business as usual. It must be considered at the appropriate time, but WPD should keep going as it currently is

Table 3

- The stakeholders agreed that this should be a medium priority

- A community group representative stated that, despite adding to the cost of services, there does not seem to be any agreement between the agencies concerning flooding
- A representative of a major user stated *'if it is likely to be a problem, it should be a priority'*

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked this as a high priority Issue
- The stakeholders felt that flood mitigation was a high priority for the sake of the general public

6.13. Additional comments

Table 1

- The facilitation of smart metering was suggested as one Issue that should be ranked highly
- An energy group representative stated that Issue 1 and 3 are the top priorities as they *'bring the rest of the priorities together'*
- An energy group representative stated that the other priorities are low but Issue 3 encapsulates the others
- It was added by an energy representative that it is important that WPD is using new technologies to support the existing network
- It was decided that Issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 amalgamated and all given high priority status

Table 2

- A representative of an environmental group made the point that everything has to be sustainable in the end
- A local authority officer said that whatever is done must be linked into a national and international strategy

Table 3

- Stakeholders on table 3 had no further comments to make

Table 4

- The stakeholders ranked innovation as the highest priority and said that a *'piecemeal'* approach to upgrading the network made *'good sense'*

7. Prioritisation and conclusions

7.1. Innovation and the Environment

Stakeholders were first asked if they considered that each of the Issues should be a priority for WPD.

Priority	Table 1	Table 2	Table 3	Table 4
Use innovation to support existing network and operate it more effectively	Y	Y	Y	Y
Develop technologies to accommodate increases in electricity demand	Y	Y	Y	Y
Trial technology and innovation to facilitate low carbon networks	Y	Y	Y	Y
Turn successful trials into business as usual techniques / products	Y	Y	Y	Y
Making better use of the current system capacity	Y	Y	Y	Y
Smart technology and telecommunications	Y	Y	Y	Y
Facilitating the connection of local renewable energy	Y	Y	Y	Y
Facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure	Y	Y/N	N	N
Minimising leaks from fluid filled cables and gas filled switchgear	Y	Y/N	N	Y
Continuing undergrounding schemes in National Parks / AONBs	Y/N	Y	N	N/A
Protecting habitats and species	Y	Y	N	N/A
Flood and climate change mitigation	Y	Y	Y	N/A
Facilitation of smart metering	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A

Table 1

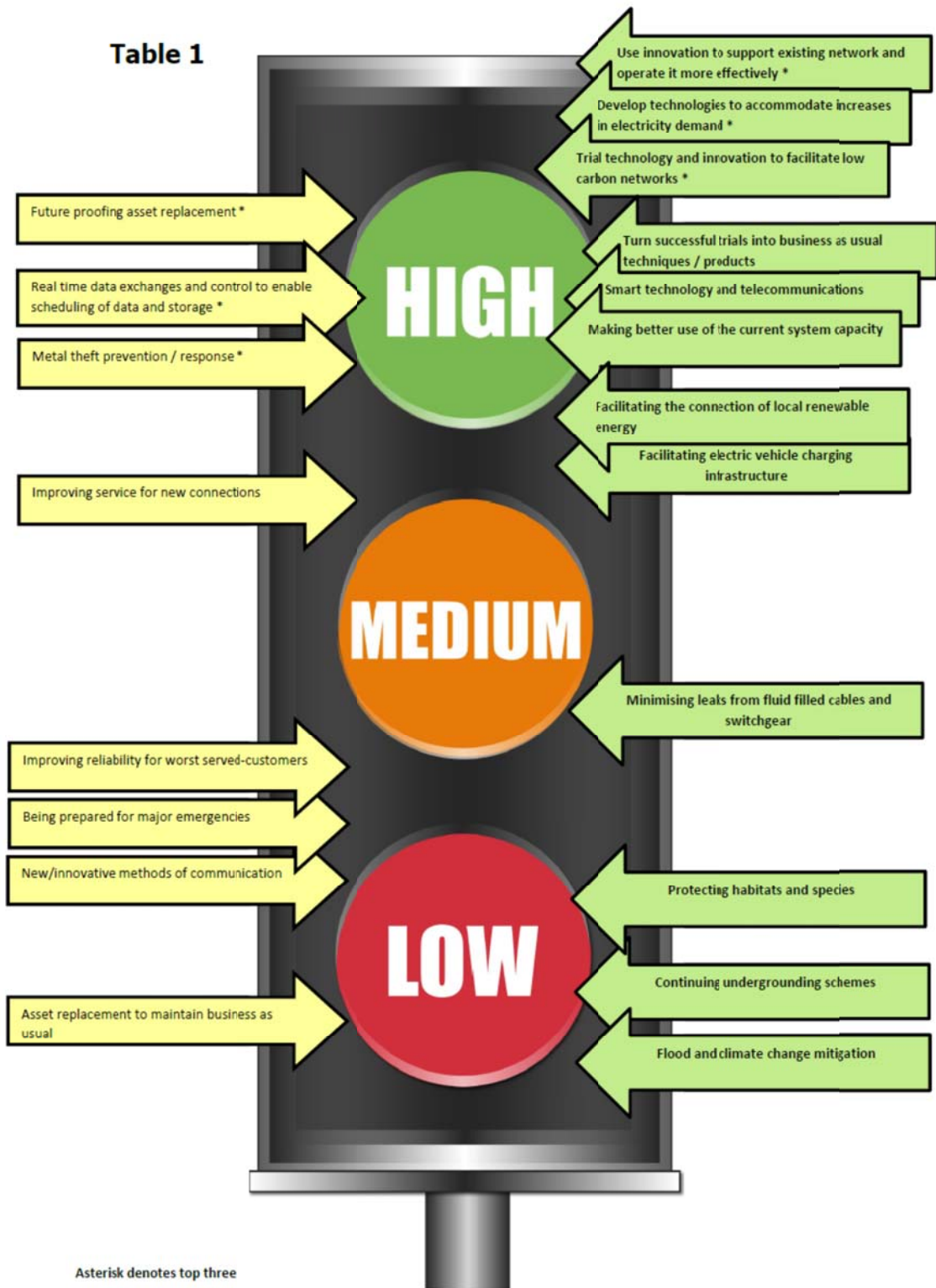


Table 2

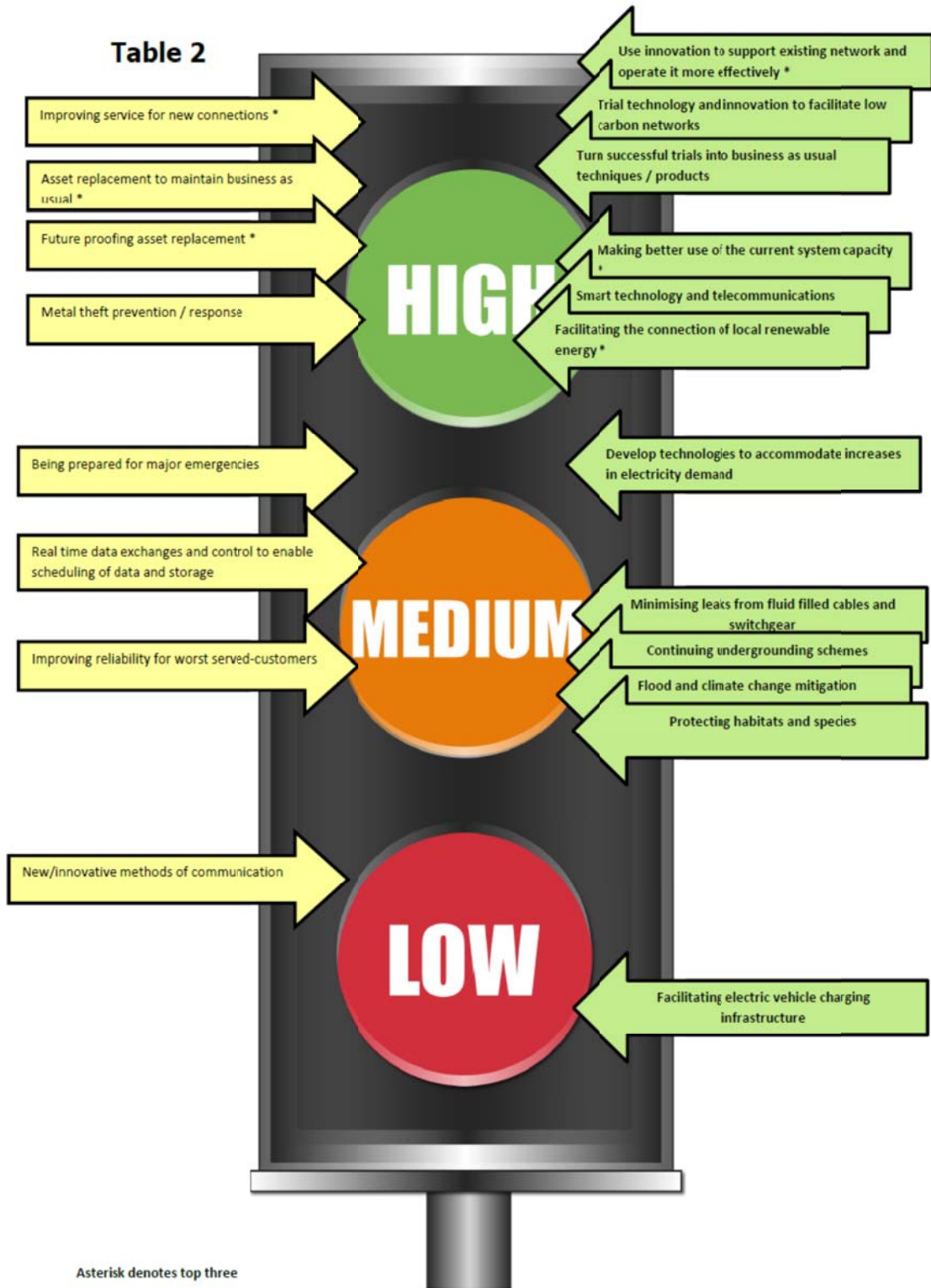


Table 3

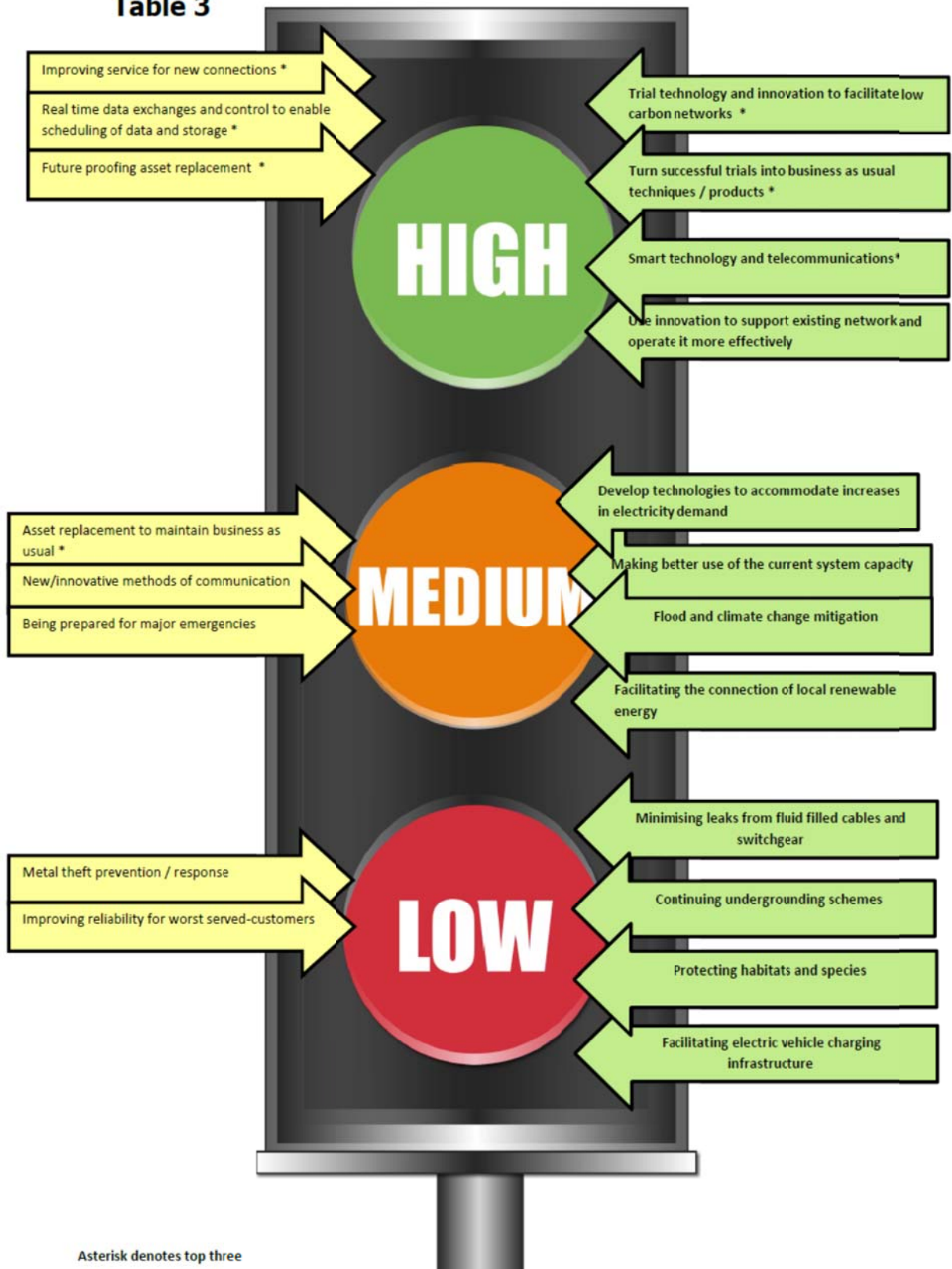
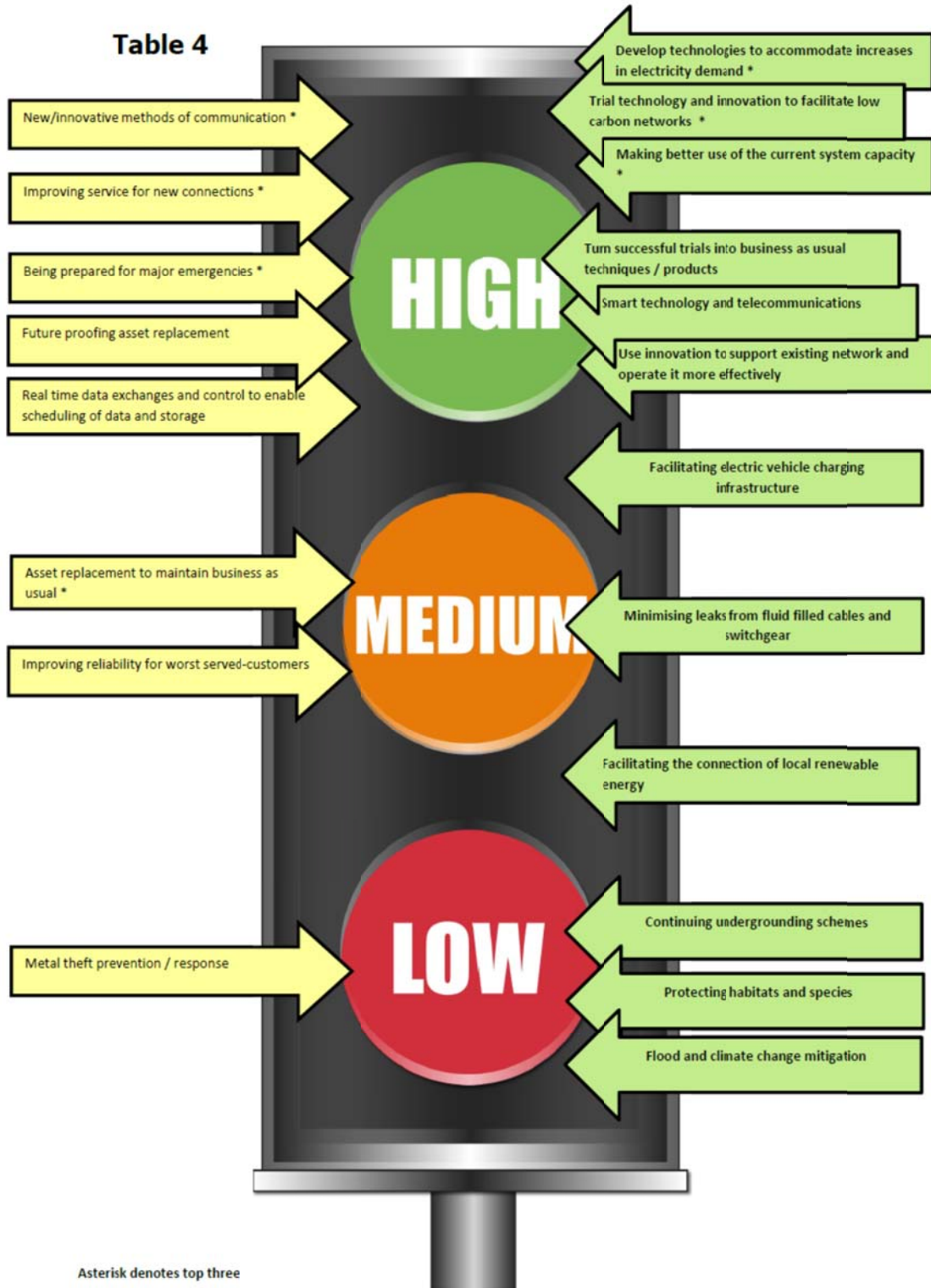


Table 4



7.2. Overall conclusions

- 34 stakeholders attended the workshop in Nottingham and 22 filled out feedback forms after the event. Of these, 9 stated that they found the event to be 'very useful' and 13 found it to be 'useful'. This is very encouraging
- When stakeholders were initially asked which Issues relating to Customer Service and Networks of the Future should be a priority, the vast majority of stakeholders agreed with all of them
- Although one stakeholder group felt that the Issue of 'new / innovative methods of communication' was a high, 'top three' priority for WPD, most viewed this as being less important. Although stakeholders felt that WPD should look to utilise new technology, the point was made that WPD should not lose sight of the fact that the telephone was the most important method of communication for most customers and that vulnerable and elderly customers needed to be considered
- Most stakeholders were of the view that 'improving the service for new connections' was a very high priority for WPD. Local authority representatives and stakeholders representing developers, especially, felt that this service could be improved through greater transparency, streamlining and the removal of certain layers of bureaucracy
- Although one stakeholder group felt that 'being prepared for major emergencies' was among WPDs highest priorities, the general view was that this was a medium level priority, with most feeling that WPD should not increase investment significantly in this area
- 'Improving reliability for worst served customers' was not seen as being a high priority for WPD. Many felt that those living in rural areas had chosen to do so, so should expect a worse service
- Stakeholders broadly viewed 'asset replacement to maintain business as usual' as being a medium level priority. While some felt that this should be a business as usual decision, others were of the view that the network should be upgraded whenever possible
- Across the group, 'future proofing asset replacement' was ranked as the highest priority for WPD. Three of the four tables saw this as being a 'top three' priority, as did a number of stakeholders on the fourth table. Some stakeholders were of the view that investment in future proofing would reduce costs in the long term. It was also commented that it was imperative to make sure that the right decisions are made on what needs to be done. The point was also made that it is important that WPDs strategy on this Issue is clearly explained to its customers, especially if this will impact costs
- Stakeholders broadly felt that 'real time data exchanges and control to enable scheduling of data and storage' was an important priority. However, many felt that, although this information would be useful, it did not warrant huge expenditure
- Opinion was very much divided on the Issue of 'metal theft prevention / response'. Two of the groups saw this as being among WPDs most important priorities, while

the other two groups ranked this as low priority. Those who had had experience of this Issue, were more likely to give it a higher priority. It was, however, commented that the Government should play a greater role in dealing with this Issue and that, perhaps, WPD should do more to make this case

- All stakeholders were of the view that 'using innovation to support the existing network and operate it more effectively' was a high priority for WPD. Stakeholders generally supported an incremental approach to this Issue
- Most of the groups saw the Issues: 'develop technologies to accommodate increases in electricity demand'; 'trial technology and innovation to facilitate low carbon networks'; and 'turn successful trials into business as usual techniques / products' as being related and there was a considerable amount of support for all of these
- 'Turning successful trials into business as usual techniques / products' was seen as being a 'top three' priority for all the stakeholder groups and the point was made that WPD should always strive to learn from these trials
- 'Making better use of the current system capacity' was viewed as being one of the most important of all WPDs Innovation priorities by most stakeholders in attendance and for some it was the most important Issue. It was commented that this Issue links closely with Issue 1
- All stakeholder groups viewed 'smart technology and telecommunications' as being a high priority and this was seen as one of the most important Issues for WPD to consider by many
- Opinion was split on the Issue of facilitating the connection of local renewable energy. For some it was a very high priority but for others, this was not seen as being one of the most pressing Issues for WPD. In some groups, there were differences of opinion on the desirability / viability of certain types of renewable energy and this shaped stakeholders' views on this Issue
- Across the four groups, the view was that 'facilitating electric vehicle charging infrastructure' was a medium to low priority. This Issue engendered a good deal of discussion. It was widely felt that WPD ought to follow, rather than pre-empt, the uptake of electric vehicles; although a number of stakeholders felt that demand would increase in the future
- 'Minimising leaks from fluid filled cables and gas filled switchgear' was considered by the group as a whole to be a medium level priority. Some stakeholders felt that WPD had a duty to replace these assets quickly but others were of the view that there is no real alternative and that an incremental approach to the replacement of these assets was the best way of dealing with this Issue
- Most stakeholders were of the view that 'continuing undergrounding in AONBs' and National Parks was a low priority. Most saw this Issue as being a good thing but the cost of doing this was cited as being an important factor

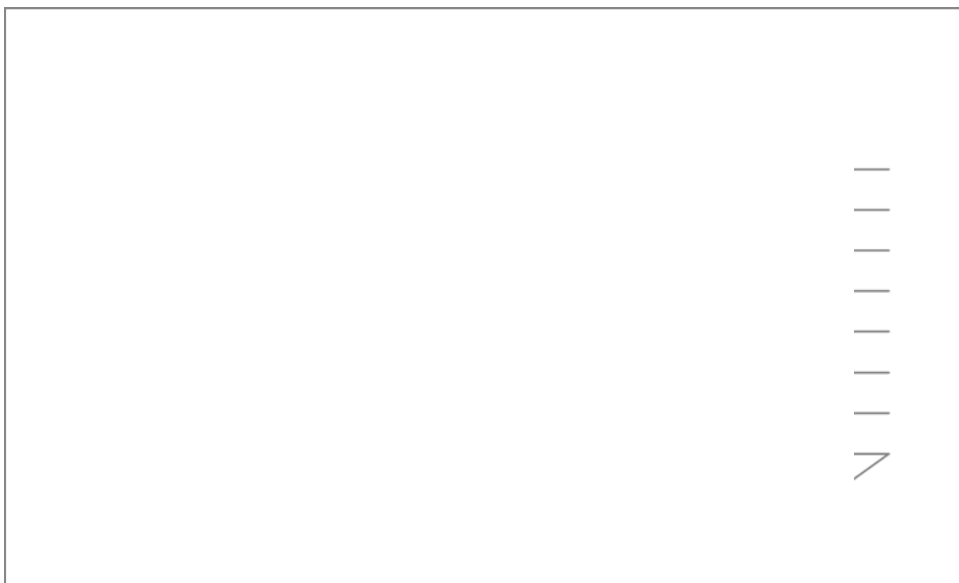
- The general view was that protecting habitats and species was a low priority for WPD. Stakeholders generally felt that WPD should adhere to legal requirements but that this Issue, when put into context, was not a high priority
- Although 'flood and climate change mitigation' was a high priority Issue for one group, the general consensus was that this is a medium to low priority for WPD. The floods of 2007 were cited but many felt that WPD should not devote significant extra expenditure to dealing with this Issue
- Issues relating to Innovation generally took precedence over Issues relating to the Environment. Although stakeholders felt that WPD should strive to include new technologies in its network, most stakeholders were of the view that these changes need to be balanced against other considerations including, primarily, cost

8. Stakeholder feedback

Stakeholders were asked to fill out a comment form following the Nottingham workshop. The comments we received are shown below:

8.1. Q1. Did you find the workshops useful?

None of the attendees were of the view that the workshop was *'not useful'* and 9 of the 22 comment forms received stated it was *'very useful.'*



8.2. Q2. Was the venue conveniently located for you?

The venue was conveniently located for 95% of attendees. Only one attendee found it inconvenient.

8.3. Did we provide enough information at the workshop

96% of stakeholders who attended stated that WPD provided enough information.

8.4. Do you want to be kept informed of WPD's plans in the future?

96% of the stakeholders who attended want to be kept informed of WPD's future plans.

8.5. Do you have any other comments on the workshop or the venue?

Thirteen stakeholders had additional comments.

A selection of comments received is shown below:

- *'Well managed and organised. Well done.'*
- *'Useful workshop from planning perspective and would recommend continuing such events.'*
- *'Venue was easy to find, therefore would recommend continued use of venue.'*
- *'Well run workshops etc.'*
- *'Very well facilitated and scribed.'*
- *'Perhaps outline the expectation of the day in a little more detail. Great event.'*