

Western Power Distribution Stakeholder Workshop: Milton Keynes 28 January 2015



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1. Introduction

Western Power Distribution (WPD) submitted its draft Business Plan in 2013 as part of Ofgem's most recent price control, R110-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. The company 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 network area in order to get feedback from stakeholders on the two areas identified above. This report details outcomes from the workshop that took place at DoubleTree Hotel in Milton Keynes on 28th January 2015.

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:

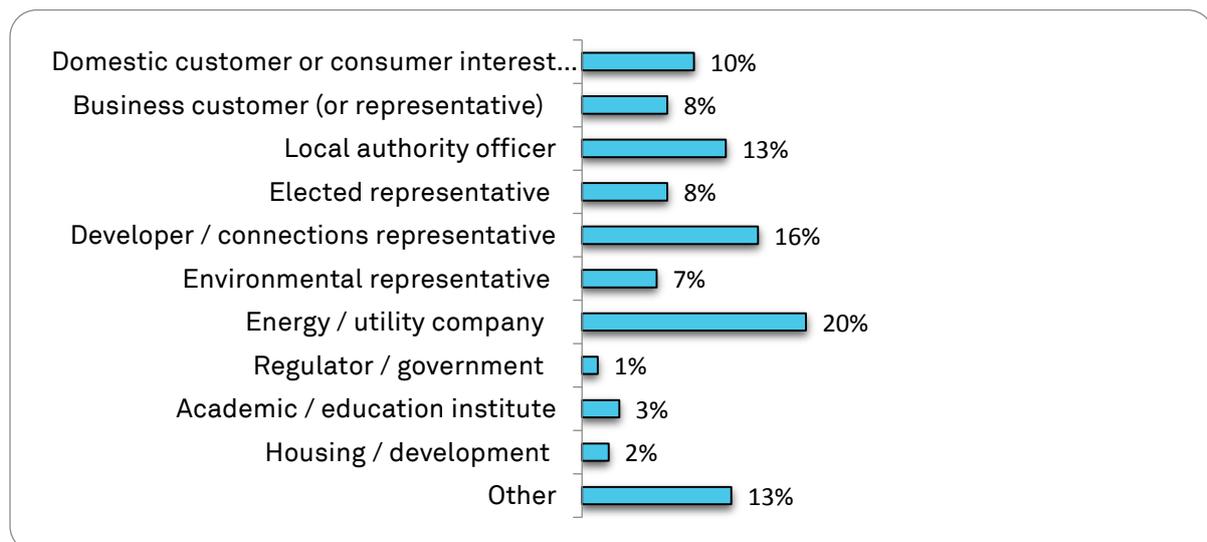
- **Workshop 1: Short-medium term – WPD’s Business Plan & reporting.** The first workshop involved a discussion on WPD’s Business Plan, specifically on which areas interested stakeholders most and how they would like to be kept informed.
- **Workshop 2: Long term – strategic priorities impacting the 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 33 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?



The organisations represented were as follows:

- Anglian Water
- Boston Borough Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Citizens Advice
- Coventry CAB
- Derbyshire County Council
- E.ON Energy Solutions Limited
- Geldards LLP
- JSM Construction
- Kettering Borough Council
- Kiwi Power
- Lightsource Renewable Energy Limited
- Lincolnshire County Council
- Major Energy Users Council
- North Northamptonshire, Joint Planning Unit
- Northampton Borough Council
- Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council
- Qila Energy
- Sentec Ltd
- Siemens Smart Grid
- Siemens Transmission and Distribution Ltd
- Solar Century
- The Open University
- Warm Wales

3. Summary of feedback

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

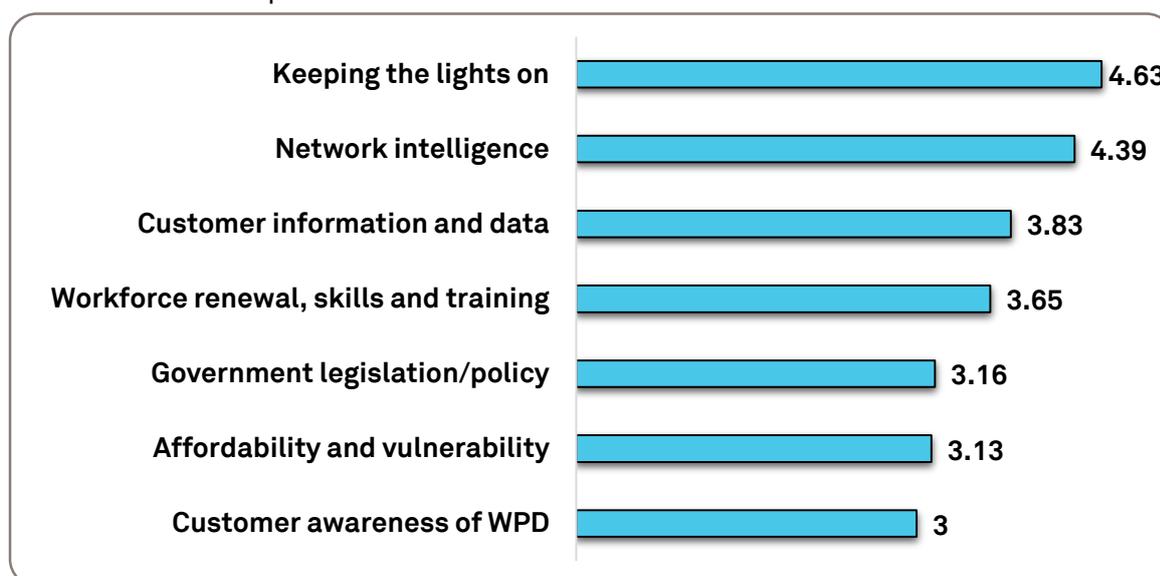
- Although there was a **lack of consensus** regarding which areas of the Business Plan prompted the most interest, a large group of stakeholders commented that **connections** and **reliability** were at the top of their list.
- The importance of the **environment** and **customer satisfaction** was also cited by stakeholders.
- Many stakeholders were interested in a **large amount of detail from WPD** while being kept informed of the progress of the Business Plan. They wanted the information **online** and **easy to access**.
- However, some present did prefer **short summaries**.
- Stakeholders agreed that the average domestic customer would **not be interested** in the **breakdown of their bills**. Despite this, it was agreed that the information should be available **online** if one chooses to access it.

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

- There was a consensus that WPD had identified the **correct priorities**. There were a few comments regarding the mention of the **environment**, however a WPD representative caveated that an environmental impact assessment feeds into all of the priorities.
- **Keeping the lights on** was consistently ranked the **highest priority** in the table discussions closely followed by **network intelligence**.
- **Workforce renewal, skills and training** was frequently cited as important for the future of the network.
- There was also a general consensus that **affordability and vulnerability** should be split into **two different topics**.
- There was **no consensus** during the table discussions as to which was the lowest priority. However, **customer awareness of WPD** was ranked the lowest during the individual voting.



Following the workshop session, stakeholders were asked to vote on the priorities, ranking them in order of 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 **supporting community energy schemes** and **engaging with government to tighten planning regulations**.
- Many stakeholders commented that **smartphone apps and social media** were effective tools for engaging with younger WPD customers.
- The use of **expanded website tools** was also heralded as important for engaging with customers of all ages.
- Despite this, there was a general consensus that **direct mailings and television advertising** were still important to engage with older audiences as well as those who may not have access to the internet.
- **Fridge magnets** were also seen as very important for getting information to those who do not have access to either television or the internet.

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 website tools and leaflet information (distribution via targeted partners)	27
Expanded schools education activities - safety plus wider information	19
More direct mailings	13
Expanded social media presence and smartphone apps	9
More television advertising	3
More local media advertising (radio & newspaper)	2

Electronic Voting Results

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

- The **most popular action** identified was **expanded website tools and leaflet information** with 36% of the vote.
- The **second most popular action** identified was **more direct mailing and expanded schools education activities safety plus wider information**, both with 25% of the vote.
- In a separate question, stakeholders voted **more television advertising** as the **least popular action** identified with 57% of the vote.

Affordability and vulnerability

- A majority of stakeholders felt that the actions identified were **comprehensive**, however alternative suggestions were made. The two most popular alternative suggestions were: **supporting community energy scheme-renewables** and **engaging with government to tighten planning regulations**.
- There was a **consensus** that a **hardship fund** would not be the best way to tackle the problems identified, rather it would be a **short-term** solution to a long-term problem.
- Many stakeholders also felt strongly **about practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience** as an important activity.
- One stakeholder also raised the point of **data sharing** amongst utility companies to ensure those who are **vulnerable** are on the same register.

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	31
Practical support to improve vulnerable customer resilience	13
Improve the data held on our Priority Service Register	13
Identify fuel poverty hotspots and existing initiatives/schemes	9
Establish an 'affordable warmth innovation scheme' - for not-for-profit agencies	7
Fuel poverty referral schemes	4
Establish a "hardship fund" for qualifying domestic customers	3

Electronic Voting Results

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

- The **most popular action** identified was **investigating the feasibility of network solutions** with 33% of the vote.
- The **second most popular action** was **improve the data on our Priority Service Register** with 26% of the vote.

- In a separate question, stakeholders voted: **establish a “hardship fund” for qualifying domestic customers** as the **least popular action** with 68% of the vote.

Summary of written feedback:

- Overall, 63% of those who completed and returned feedback forms on the day thought the event was **very interesting**. The remaining 37% thought it was **interesting**.
- 73% of attendees **strongly agreed** with the statement that they had the opportunity to make their points and ask questions. 27% **agreed** with the comment.
- 70% **agreed** that the right topics were covered on the day, while 26% **strongly agreed**, 4% **disagreed**.

Stakeholders were given the opportunity to leave comments under each question. The comments included *‘good interaction from all parties with various views looked at and discussed,’ ‘very enjoyable and engaging’* and *‘good coverage of main issues.’* One stakeholder felt that it was *‘more focused on individual customers- less on commercial customers.’*

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:

- A local authority officer commented that *‘it’s absolutely connections from our point of view. There are problems about availability of power.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that it was *‘connections for us as well. We obviously want to get our connections in as short a time as possible. However, environment as well, as it is part of our remit.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *‘connections and reliability. We produce high voltage connections, so keeping the power going. Services and maintenance, it’s really important, we’re interested in hearing how the network is performing and WPD reporting back on their expenditure on connections, etc.’*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that (s)he is interested in *‘projects that are coming up and the value of them. I’m also interested in expenditure so we can move our resources around.’*
- An energy/utility representative considered *‘policy on asset replacements and how the expenditure is proportioned and what opportunities there are.’*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative said that *‘connections’* should be the main area of focus for the Business Plan.
- A local authority officer stated that *‘for me, it’s network capacity in particular areas, and their impact on the infrastructure that exists to supply households.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, and commented that (s)he *‘considered environmental issues to be of great importance too.’*

- A business customer/representative contended that his/her respective members were more interested in the *'broader issues'* and in particular *'trying to get a sense of "the madness" of government policy, pricing, and the costs of distribution.'*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility company representative commented that *'one of the things we're interested in is helping WPD improve network reliability, by predicting where faults may be. Of these particular items, reliability is the most interesting.'*
- A developer/connections representative added that (s)he was *'finding it very difficult to get a reasonable connection at the moment.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'we're finding that it's just too costly. We're finding that it's ever changing, but if you're at the back of the queue it's too costly.'*
- A voluntary representative stated *'transparency and accountability. There are two priorities for us. Firstly, transparency – accountability and how finance relates to performance. Secondly, there are elements that don't have a financial aspect. That should be highlighted in the report – notably environment and carbon footprint. That is valuable information.'*
- A local authority officer stated that *'connections is what we're really interested in'.*
- An energy / utility company representative added that *'all the elements are of interest, with connections and reliability being the most important.'*

Table 4:

- An energy/utility representative stated *'mine's connections, as a supplier supporting the embedded generation companies – any generation basically.'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'connectivity, where we can connect distributed generation effectively.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'customer satisfaction, as an advice agency, knowing if clients are satisfied is really key.'*
- A local authority officer commented *'on behalf of the council I'm interested in connections to increase renewable energy, plus social obligations and also in terms of connections on their land.'*
- A law firm representative felt *'connections and customer satisfaction especially in terms of the legal side, making sure things are done quickly and to a high standard.'*

Table 5:

- A local authority officer said *'customer satisfaction is top priority from my point of view. My interaction with WPD is very limited; it only really arises in terms of street lighting, so customer satisfaction is the only thing which really stands out.'*
- A local authority officer said *'connections and reliability are key for me. Connections because we need to understand the significance of jobs and housing growth and we need to understand our strategic aims in terms of power and distribution, and reliability is also important for me if you're trying to attract people into the area.'*
- A representative of a law firm added *'satisfaction and connections are most important. One necessarily leads to the other. If you're slow in connection you end up with an unhappy customer.'*
- A local authority officer commented *'in terms of looking for a planning strategy for growth in the long term, we are concerned to ensure there are no constraints on our strategy. We would be particularly keen to see longer into the future than 2023. We want WPD to be aware of our direction of travel in terms of future opportunities.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'we are a developer of solar schemes, large and small. For us, connections is the key part of the plan and we'd be interested to see how we can work with you to bring down connection times and costs. Reliability is going to be an interesting one considering the age of your assets and the need to bring down costs, and the looming prospects of asset reinforcements.'*

“ My interaction with WPD is very limited; it only really arises in terms of street lighting, so customer satisfaction is the only thing which really stands out. ”

Table 6:

- A business representative commented *'connections timeline decrease would be key for solar development.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'social obligations is my top priority.'*
- A local authority representative commented that the top priorities for them are *'reliability, environment, and connections, social obligations.'*
- An educational representative commented *'reliability and environment– there are factors that contribute to these areas which are of most interest – these will change over the next decade.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'for us it's flood risk. Also, new businesses/existing businesses complaining about supply of electricity.'*
- An educational representative commented *'we need to unpack what reliability is.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'we're interested in developing a better mix in terms of lobbying for investment.'*

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've read all the 800 page plans, and the information that has been disclosed has been superb. However, I would be more than happy to have more information and more details. I would like more information on connections, which would help WPD's business customers. I would also like more information on smart grid technology, what plans WPD have for the future and what are the plans for network strength.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'a short summary is enough level of detail for us.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'it's the same here.'*
- A local authority officer highlighted that *'from our perspective, a short sharp package is what we need it. If we need "x" then if we get a small summary about it, then that would help.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *'electronic suits us, it's the best way, everything is electronic nowadays.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'it suits us as well, we'd agree.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'the information on the website is more than enough. We can download it, print it out, and have all the information we need.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I'd like to be kept informed every quarter.'*

“ I think more high level support is useful. If there's someone you could speak to in order to get more detail – that would make more sense.”

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative highlighted the importance of *'uniformity across reports of electricity distributors generally, in order to facilitate comparisons.'*
- A business customer/representative maintained that given the 76 outputs in the Business Plan, *'a long and very detailed document would be excessive. Instead, a summary which summarised key factors, such as prices, sustainability etc would be much better. Benchmarking some key issues is vital - otherwise the report will become a complete nightmare.'*
- A business customer/representative advocated a *'more interactive, or at least simpler, statement that disaggregated down its different topics, and which ensured that people know how their charges have changed compared to previous years.'*

- A local authority officer favoured a multi-layered report of a similar length (viz., 20-30 pages) that *'delineated between individual network areas.'*

Table 3:

- A local authority officer said *'it's being able to get access to what the landscape looks like. [Customers] need to be able to get to that information very quickly. Whether it's the website or otherwise.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'I think more high level support is useful. If there's someone you could speak to in order to get more detail – that would make more sense.'*
- A local authority officer agreed, stating *'having detailed information, on demand, is important. The accessible version has to be incisive, not a primary school version. This may mean making it comparable to other networks or generally making it easier for consumers to gauge.'*
- A local authority officer made the point that, *'it would be especially useful for members of [his/her] council. Understanding of what the system is would be useful for people who don't really understand.'*

Table 4:

- A local authority officer considered *'real time information is best as it can be online, just so it's there if you need to know.'*
- An energy/utility representative remarked *'you want to know when it's updated too, have a trigger to let you know such as an email being sent that tells you reports have been published. That's how I would like it. The issue is that some people may not have computers or internet, but for me it's emails.'*
- A developer/connections representative raised the point that *'for me an email system would work fine.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'I agree with online, when I advise clients I have the website open but most clients are just starting to find out the difference between a DNO and the supplier, so how do you really interact with the customers and the DNO?'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'a short summary is definitely needed, traffic lights are good to glance through but it's not helpful if you can't delve deep into why those colours are there. You have to be able to get the detail when it's needed.'*

Table 5:

- A local authority officer said *'I really don't like traffic light systems: the difference between green, amber and red is ill-defined. For some motorists, amber means speed up, for others it means slow down. But from my narrow perspective of dealing with WPD reactively, and dealing with E.ON, I'm not the person to ask.'*
- A local authority officer said *'a short summary, a brochure through the post or via email is fine, as long as there's an easy way to get to more information. An annual*

update seems reasonable for a local council, unless there are changes, in which case a summary of the changes.'

- A developer/connections representative said *'we're happy to take frequent updates on small elements if it can have an impact on our work. Small updates on things which are relevant to us. It's a fast-moving industry at the moment. So frequent updates, tailored to our area. Emails are quick and easy these days.'*
- A law firm representative asked *'is there scope to see how much better WPD is doing than other DNOs in terms of getting their Business Plans approved?'*

Table 6:

- A local authority representative said *'it's got to be sharp, short and relevant.'*
- A business representative commented *'email is the best for me.'*
- A local authority representative stated *'it has to be something we can break down and drill down into for further information.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'an important aspect is the ability to create digestible information.'*
- An educational representative commented *'the ability to create a resource element which allows for further dissemination. Perhaps a more detailed explanation.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'case studies would be useful – but we'd need to see where case studies encountered problems too.'*

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 stated *'I believe that four or five years ago people had no clue about their bills. But in the last two years, OFGEM has been strict, but to be honest I cannot be bothered to understand how my bills are broken down. As a domestic customer it doesn't interest me.'*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, highlighting that *'all people want to see is discount. Just give me a discount on the bottom line I'm happy. Send your leaflet out, it goes straight in the bin.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it's quite useful if it was part of the energy bill. It's good to see where it's going.'*
- A local authority officer highlighted *'from a council perspective, it's similar to council tax. A lot of people do not look at how their council tax is broken down so it's similar to the energy bills.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I agree, I need to pay anyway so it doesn't interest me so I don't see where it's going.'*

- A local authority officer commented that *‘some people might be interested in comparisons and forecasting in their area as compared to different areas.’*

Table 2:

- A business customer or representative argued that posted letters would be best since *‘emails are too easy to lose.’*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility company representative commented that (s)he would *‘like to understand the cost of issues of reliability; the nature of faults; how much it costs to repairs certain faults. This enables them to design solutions. Lots of detail – something that you could drill down into would be ideal. At the moment, there is only vague information. More detail would be very useful.’*
- An energy / utility company representative responded that *‘this kind of information is useful, but perhaps not relevant on the customer bill. Seeing where the costs go is particularly valuable – consumers would value that. Top level information is valuable – and information about the drivers behind it.’*

Table 4:

- A voluntary organisation representative raised the point that *‘I think that for customers, it would help them make an informed decision, they can’t choose the DNO but if they know and are aware of them they know who to turn to – but keep it very simple and clear. It depends on your client though, some people want the detail and others want something really simple.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘yes when you get your bills you want to see what you pay and where it goes, particularly if you are in a more difficult financial situation.’*
- An energy/utility representative concurred *‘what people are interested in is what they pay on the bottom line, at the end of the day if they want a lower bill use less electricity! The amount you take is set, so in my view you don’t really have to worry about it! I just pay what I see at the bottom line and don’t worry about it; I’m not concerned with where it goes. I can’t change the amount you charge, so all I’m concerned about is the amount I can change with the amount of energy I use and pay for.’*
- A local authority officer queried *‘so are these amounts fixed annual amounts or can they still change?’*
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘the question is, is there one set for domestic customers and another for the business or government customers?’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘it’s more in terms of you guys; in whether a breakdown will be useful as a domestic user. When you see the bill, if you can’t do anything about the amount WPD takes – why do you care where it goes?’*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *‘yes you only focus on the bits that you can do something about.’*

Table 5:

- A representative from a law firm commented *'it's a bit of an assumption that people will want to know what their money is being spent on: do they really want to know?'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'from my perspective it would be a good thing. When the storms hit, there was talk of how money was being spent on energy bills, and it would give people a bit more comfort that their money isn't being wasted if there was more information. There should be some breakdown. Spending on reinforcement, downtime, repairs. It doesn't have to be detailed, pie chart, percentages. A contrast to what the energy suppliers are putting in as well.'*
- A representative from a law firm added *'I like the OFGEM pie chart, something like that would be useful in my view. And it's good to know that WPD pays their taxes, and investment of course.'*
- A local authority officer said *'I'm not that worried as a consumer, I think it's more relevant for my supplier'*.



Table 6:

- A business representative stated *'it would be difficult to do – it would be interesting to see how it was structured.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'it depends on the cost of energy – we hope to see a downward trend in that.'*
- A business representative commented *'we would be able to see better improvements - would be able to measure performance on delivery on projects.'*

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

Table 3:

- A developers / connections representative felt that *'where charges come from – more detail on this would be useful. WPD is already good at this, but more information would be useful.'*

Table 5:

- A local authority officer said *'if there's a target, I simply want to know whether you've achieved that target'*.

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 follows:

- 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:

- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘the government and legislation and customer information are the ones that are most important to us.’*
- A local authority officer commented that *‘the list is pretty all encompassing, I think the prioritisation is more important.’*

Table 2:

- A local authority officer and a business customer/representative both agreed that the priorities identified were *‘fairly adequate.’*
- A local authority officer however asked, given *‘that there are an awful lot of priorities - how will WPD manage them all?’*

Table 3:

- An energy / utility company representative stated that *‘they’re all valid priorities. From my perspective, keeping the lights on – or resilience – is the key focus. Making the networks flexible, and able to cope with the challenges they’re facing, is key.’*
- An energy / utility company representative queried, *‘will a focus on the overview take away from the day to day running of the network? Do the priorities cover replacement of a network that is, in places, antiquated? This is a focus that may be being overlooked.’*

Table 4:

- A local authority officer remarked *‘I think they’re right, but the thing that hasn’t come out to me is about environment – I don’t know if I missed that.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed *‘yes but other than that everything is there.’*

Table 5:

- A local authority officer said *'there needs to be more regular updates between WPD and other sectors of the energy community about what's happening. There's a Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership, and I don't know whether WPD is linked in with these other bodies that exist.'*
- A local authority officer said *'we received fridge magnets and a little card, which is a good way of getting awareness of who you are to domestic customers'.*
- A local authority officer added *'it's important to make sure that WPD are keyed in and aware of the different priorities for planning, it's all about future growth. Both of us (local authority officers) are indirectly your customers. Other economic partnerships have their own plans. What's missing is WPD going to partners and finding out what their plans and strategies are.'*
- A local authority officer commented *'distributed micro-generation is an issue for us, because you can't strategically plan for where they are going to be. We can't strategically plan energy. We don't have that sort of plan. In terms of government legislation and policy it would be really interesting to know what sort of lobbying WPD is doing, and it would be really good if we could influence that.'*
- A representative from a law firm said *'coming back to the government, this applies to local as well as national'.*
- A local authority officer asked *'are most of your new customers from the east? So why are you called Western Power Distribution? That won't help customer awareness for those in the east.'*

“ We received fridge magnets and a little card, which is a good way of getting awareness of who you are to domestic customers. ”

Table 6:

- A local authority representative stated *'WPD has seemed to picked up everything valid/relevant.'*
- A business representative stated *'should there also be customer service goals – not just domestic customers. Differentiating customer groups e.g. stakeholders (developers, councils).'*
- A local authority representative asked *'who do you buy power from?'*
- An educational representative said *'customer awareness – awareness from other stakeholders that aren't stakeholders – actually WPD needs to make alliances with other players. It's not just customer awareness.'*

5.2 Is there anything missing?

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

Table 2:

- There was a group consensus that *'nothing of note was missing.'*

Table 3:

- An energy/utility company representative stated that *'it's all about short term versus long term. In eight years, there could be a situation in which the metrics are good, but the network has not been updated.'*
- A voluntary representative questioned whether *'there might be a priority on whatever it takes to drive down costs and increase efficiency. It's again a balance between short term and long term – high costs today versus high costs tomorrow. As a new priority, I would call that improving efficiency, if that's not too vague.'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented that during replacement, *'a smaller piece of equipment with more electronics may be of use in terms of saving power or increasing efficiency.'*
- A voluntary representative queried that while *'there is a lot of information on network intelligence, is there scope for development as well?'*
- A local authority officer made the point that *'in terms of what [the council] is trying to do, all these priorities link in. Priorities are network intelligence, keeping the lights on to driving efficiency, through an understanding of what they do better. Customer information and data is the final priority – this links in with network intelligence.'*
- A developer / connections representative stated that *'the reason for being here today is because (s)he wants to connect generators to the grid. There's an element of non-essential assets: air conditioning units and so forth. Network intelligence and affordability – cheaper connections for us – are a priority. That's a long term priority. One short term priority is customer service – it is taking three or four months to go through paperwork, without many other options being given. Some of the paperwork is excessive.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed that there is excessive paperwork. *'I agree with everything just said. I haven't seen in this presentation much coordination on the transmission level. If you have transmission constraints, that stops everything as well. We have had issues with this. Transmission constraints don't just appear on the day – and there must have been some information, although we didn't get that information.'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated that *'the three priorities are network intelligence, keeping the lights on and information.'*

Table 4:

- A local authority officer felt that *'environmental impacts and responsibility is missing. Maybe in terms of broader responsibilities of the DNO and how it's conscious of its environmental responsibilities - although that may be in your long term Business Plan.'*

5.3 Which are most important to you and why?

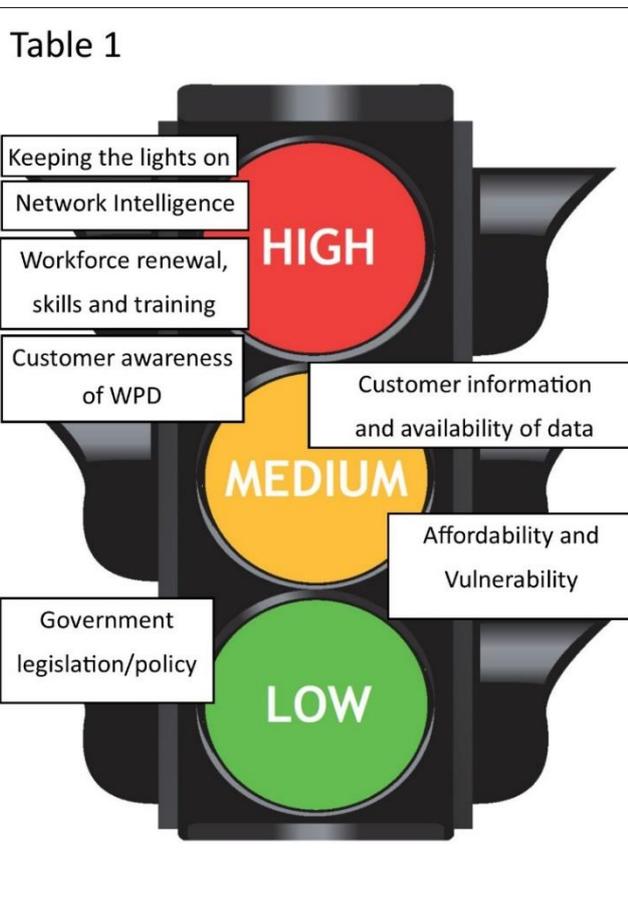
Stakeholders were involved in an interactive session where the long term priorities were ranked in order on a traffic light board. Each stakeholder was able to provide input on where they thought the priority should lie – high, medium, or low. At the end, each stakeholder was able to vote individually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

Table 1:

- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘a priority for me is network intelligence. Having devices installed is important. It will reduce costs and feed into the other priorities more efficiently and effectively.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘from a contractor’s point of view, that’s most important to us. From a WPD point of view it’s probably customer awareness.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued *‘the way to keep the network going is technology. Making it cheaper for the customers and sharing information would help.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted that *‘WPD’s priorities would be customer awareness, keeping the lights on, and customer information and data. That’s the priority for them. As long as the lights are kept on people are happy. Affordability and vulnerability is next. Government legislation is a low priority because you can’t control it - you just have to deal with it. Workforce renewal is also very important for us.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘workforce renewal skills and training is important for us as well, it should be quite high. Most companies in utilities are trying to get more students trying to go down the engineering route.’*
- A local authority officer raised the point that *‘it’s a problem across the board, it’s a recruitment problem in utilities companies and lack of interest in engineering.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘government legislation and policy comes in, but it can change just as quickly. The other priorities can be a constant and you can create initiatives for it. Everything just has to adapt to it.’*
- An energy/utility representative complained that *‘there isn’t a lot that can be done with government legislation and policy. You’d just be forever reacting to the flavour of government.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that (s)he *‘can’t make a valid comment on affordability or vulnerability.’*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out that *‘there are certain lines that need looking into, and they are in the areas of high vulnerability.’*



- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'in Europe, the UK is one of the cheapest places for electricity and you still have OFGEM pressuring DNOs to reduce prices. In other European countries affordability and vulnerability is worse, prices are very high. I think there is enough focus on it at the moment without having to prioritise it.'*
- A local authority officer considered that *'a priority for me would be seeing better linkages in all of those priorities. Instead of affordability and vulnerability and keeping the lights on, could they be one? Do they all fall under the same category? It's not a scientific process, one might lead to the other and the main objective is keeping the lights on.'*
- A local authority officer felt that *'it is debatable about whether customers need to know about WPD. If their lights are on, does it matter to them? WPD needs to know their customers, but do your customers need to know you?'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'the only reason anyone would contact WPD is if they had a power cut. Otherwise, there isn't much need to contact your DNO.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it is important for customers to know who to contact during a power cut, but unless they're particularly interested then I don't see why there needs to be awareness.'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'if there is a power cut, they just need to know. Providing a phone number is all the information the customer needs to know.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'network intelligence should be ranked higher.'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'it's planning what will happen in the future. As high as you can. It's all about innovation – innovative ways of keeping the lights on for the lowest price possible.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'the technical team in WPD would prioritise things differently among the marketing people, there wouldn't be consensus within the company either.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *'as a supplier, supplying assets to WPD, sharing data is important to us and it helps keep the lights on in the long run.'*



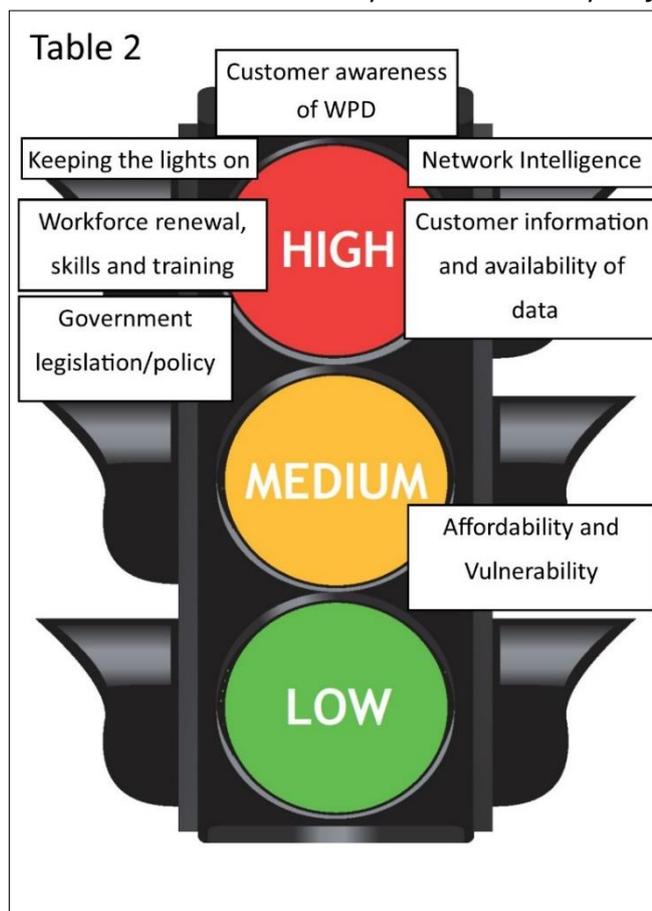
- An energy/utility representative stated *'I agree that network intelligence would be ranked high and smart meters is something we're trying to push. To be honest what people have said so far I would agree with. We've created a good list.'*
- A local authority officer considered *'from a local authority perspective, keeping the lights is most important to us. In terms of network intelligence, if we know what's coming, we know where to target future investment. For a marketing purpose, knowing what's happening is very important and knowing that we have the intelligence, have the infrastructure and capacity to help. Also making sure that the most vulnerable are accounted for is something that is important to us. From a business perspective it's currently correctly ranked, but from a local authority point of view we would probably rank it higher.'*

Table 2:

- A business customer/representative considered *'network intelligence a high, but not top, priority, although it will become even more important in the future with the rolling out of smart meters. You can't operate intelligently without knowing what exactly is going on.'*
- A local authority officer agreed, stating that network intelligence was *'very important, smart metering is only one part of it [the issue] however - network intelligence is a much broader topic.'*
- A business customer/representative concurred despite noting that *'the current government has said that implementation of smart meters is only going to be voluntary.'*
- A business customer/representative underscored the importance of affordability and vulnerability. (S)he contended however that these issues *'should be the suppliers' responsibility, they could also be cut into two because they're completely separate issues.'*
- A local authority officer commented that it is of *'low-to-medium importance.'*
- There was a general group consensus that vulnerability is more important than affordability.
- A business customer/representative argued that keeping the lights on is *'very important, but at what cost? If you tried to go for keeping lights on at 100%, as the absolute priority, then other priorities lose out - it's a curved graph.'*
- A local authority officer queried this, suggesting that as a priority it *'should be higher up.'*
- A business customer or representative commented that *'WPD should invest in 95% keeping the lights on, and still promote other priorities at the same time.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that it *'was important to be more intelligent about when you keep the lights on - timing, rather than reliability itself, is equally important.'*

“ Customer information and data sits up there with intelligence in terms of importance. ”

- An energy/utility representative proposed that *‘customer information and data sits up there with intelligence in terms of importance. Accessing capabilities is crucial. We need to know how much power we can have, we need greater network intelligence in order to have better customer data.’*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *‘understanding how things are happening in our local area is central to what we do. We want to be able to have access to network capacity data, or at least access it through somebody, and to be able to have that dialogue about it which we’re not really able to have at the moment.’*
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘whether WPD even has that sort of data right now?’*
- A business customer/representative commented that *‘the key thing is smart meters – if you had 100% roll out of smart meters, then you would know where electricity was being used - this has to be an objective, and then you can start to plan more intelligently.’*
- An energy/utility representative suggested work renewal, skills and training was *‘between a high and medium priority - essential but not a top priority.’*
- A business customer/representative considered that *‘all the priorities are equally important, but an ageing workforce and the potential decrease in skills is a high priority.’*
- A local authority officer contended that *‘if the other priorities are important, then so is workforce up-skilling.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, arguing that *‘you can’t have network intelligence, keep the lights on, and customer information without the right workforce and engineers in place. It would therefore have to be a very high priority - albeit not at the very top.’*
- A business customer stated that customer awareness *‘must be a top priority - if 50% don’t know you don’t even exist, then there’s not much point of anything else. For me that has to be number one.’*
- A business customer/representative argued that *‘without this everything else falls apart.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, noting that it was *‘inter-related with everything else.’*

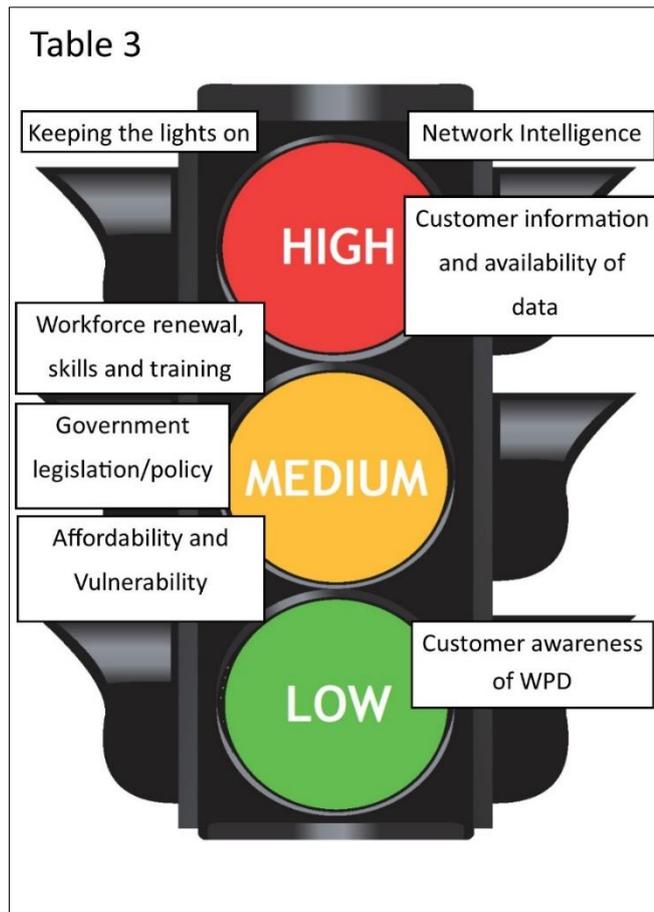


- A local authority officer highlighted that *‘it was often not clear who to contact. People just need a name or a number.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated that *‘government legislation and policy is just something we have to do so why would we talk about prioritising it? It’s not a priority until the other priorities are sorted.’*
- A business customer/representative claimed that *‘WPD, like other distribution companies, is terrified of the involvement of politicians; I would like to see a more intelligent engagement with legislative politicians, since engagement is good news. Meeting your MPs, getting them to look around WPD’s network should be a high priority. Although it’s a high priority, without customer awareness WPD can’t effectively lobby in government.’*

Table 3:

- A voluntary representative asked *‘do customers need to know who their DNO is? Could this lead to more confusion in what is already a complex market? This is possibly a low priority. There would just need to be clear signposting when problems arose in terms of getting in touch with a DNO. They would need to know how to contact their DNO, rather than having a deeper understanding.’*
- A local authority officer replied that *‘it depends who the customer is. A low to medium priority is fair.’*
- An energy/utility company representative felt that *‘it could be a lower priority. If you are in the middle of a city, the chances are, you’ll never need to contact WPD. In rural communities, there is more of a need for information.’*
- Referring to WPD keeping a *‘strong eye on government’*, an energy / utility company representative stated that *‘it doesn’t sound like this is a big cost, keeping an eye on the legislation. If there is a cost, there isn’t anything you can do about it.’*
- A voluntary representative commented that *‘in the long term, it could have quite a negative impact.’*
- A developer/connections representative agreed that *‘it is a relatively high priority. For us, connections aren’t that important – but for WPD’s business, it’s probably relatively high up the list.’*
- An energy/utility company representative commented that *‘while all these things are important, this is a medium focus.’*
- A local authority officer queried *‘from an onlooker’s perspective, why do we really care?’*
- Discussing affordability and vulnerability, a voluntary representative posed the question, *‘what is the appropriate role of the DNO in this?’* (S)he added, *‘on the affordability, there is a role.’*
- An energy / utility company representative noted that *‘[WPD] are only part of the bill. If you didn’t invest, you would be storing up problems for the future. So while it’s important, what can you really do as 16% of the electricity bill?’*
- A voluntary representative responded, *‘there’s a question of what you could do. Is there any way this is going to happen under this pricing period?’*

- On workforce renewal, skills and training, a connections representative said, *‘in particular, more skills would be useful. Sometimes when there is a call for reinforcement, you could see where some of the less trained staff will give random quotes. When prompted for explanation, it can sound like they don’t know their figures. When it’s a million or a different figure, they aren’t sure.’*



- A developer/connections representative agreed, adding *‘there are a lot of people having to consult before giving answers.’*
- An energy/utility company representative added that (s)he *‘suspects that the needs in terms of skills are going to change. It may be a question of thinking of what skills you don’t have now, but*

which will be needed. How value can be added – a lot more data will be available; how can value be extracted from that large pool of data?’

- A local authority officer commented that *‘it sits alongside government legislation, because it’s something you have to do. You will get a lot of data that has to be dealt with. It follows other priorities, and links in with them.’*
- The next topic was customer information and the availability of data. A voluntary representative noted, *‘it will be interesting to see how data protection pans out. It may not be a question of rushing out and acquiring huge amounts of data – it depends on the national debate.’*
- A local authority officer added that, *‘there is more and more data coming out – it is critical. I would say high.’*

Table 4:

- A law firm representative commented *‘I think customer awareness is quite high, the customer needs to know who to contact to get things initiated; I think it’s very important.’*
- A developer/connections representative raised the point that *‘if you are pursuing renewables as part of your policies, network intelligence is crucial, so for me in terms of linking with renewables it’s pretty high.’*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted *‘yes, low voltage is done at a domestic level, but with renewables such as say wind etc. they may be totally different, and you*

just don't know what anything is in terms of capacity. So I'd say it is very important. You could use network intelligence for a whole range of different issues.'

- An energy/utility representative agreed *'yes for example an intelligent network could tell you where the power cuts occur.'*
- A local authority officer pointed out *'it's very difficult to find anything that's medium or low on this list!'*
- An energy/utility representative stated *'at the end of the day if you get network intelligence and keeping the lights on right the customers won't have to bother contacting you!'*
- An energy/utility representative remarked *'in our industry there's not a lot of skill sets coming through. For instance, the government really pushed the IT sector over the past decade and we have a real skills shortage all skills aside from IT! So I'm sure you're exactly the same – there's a real shortage of skills. If you don't have it, you can't do anything else on your list can you!'*
- An energy/utility representative said *'it's difficult because if you don't have the staff you can't keep it going or keep the lights on!'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point *'that's more for the developers. If you have the heat maps and information, say by building those houses - is the capacity there or do you have to get a new substation? At the end of the day you don't want to build a solar farm somewhere and realise you can't connect it to the grid!'*
- An energy/utility representative pointed out *'it depends where people are too; if someone is in a rural area – it's your responsibility to make sure you keep them connected. You should also understand their circumstances and try to keep them connected either in a power cut or even paying bills if they're vulnerable.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *'if you have the lights on and a decent workforce the customers of WPD will be satisfied and the interaction is still going on – this information is already there.'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed *'yes to be fair I already have a lot of information in terms of networks.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative felt that *'the network is working, I'm already a customer and I know of WPD – so if everything is working fine you really don't need to be concerned with the availability of data. You only need the information when things are not working!'*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'I'm a bit biased about affordability and vulnerability, but with our clients it really is crucial and you have to keep it affordable to keep the lights on for people!'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'I would like to see my costs go down so I'm all for affordability!'*
- A voluntary organisation representative argued *'if the lights are on and I can't afford it, then my power will get disconnected – so it can really harm someone's life, why would you put the costs up and provide a service to people if they can't afford it? WPD puts a lot of help out there - I deal with them all the time- but they have to be in a position to help and keep it affordable. I would say it's a high priority.'*

- A law firm representative pointed out *'I suppose the customers can switch suppliers can't they? I think it's the supplier personally and the regulator and the government to an extent that is more responsible.'*
- A local authority officer concurred *'yes there is a limit to what you can control, so you just try your best don't you.'*
- A law firm representative felt that *'surely that is quite high because you have to follow government legislation.'*
- An energy/utility representative disagreed *'well I'd put it low, if you can't do something about it why is it a priority?'*
- An energy/utility representative thought *'you have to make an effort to guide policy and influence the policy. My worry is we've got everything at the top, and you're already doing it – you already influence the legislation at the top, so is it really a high priority?'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'it's not to be forgotten, but it's more a medium activity compared to some of the other priorities.'*

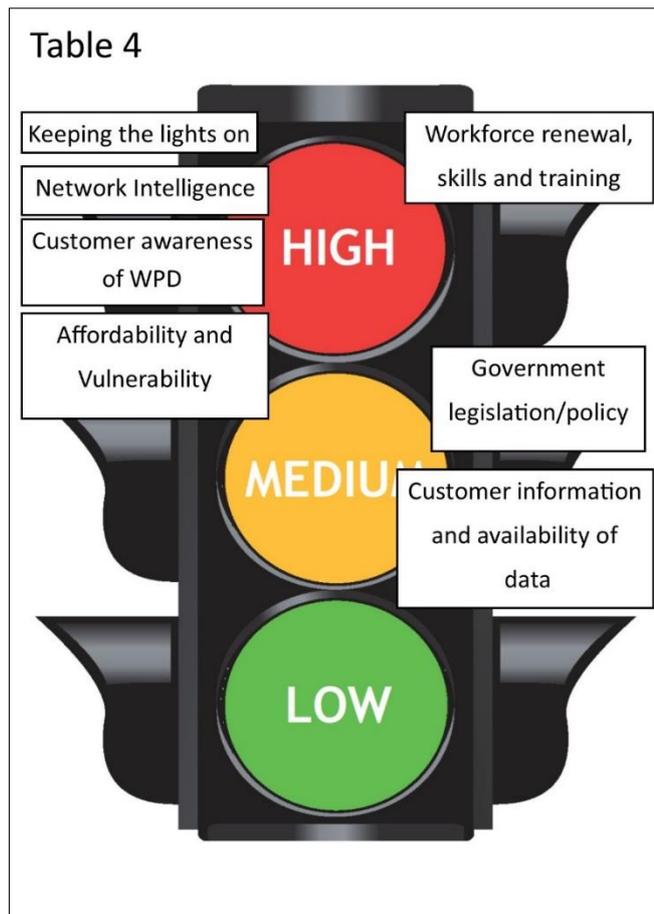


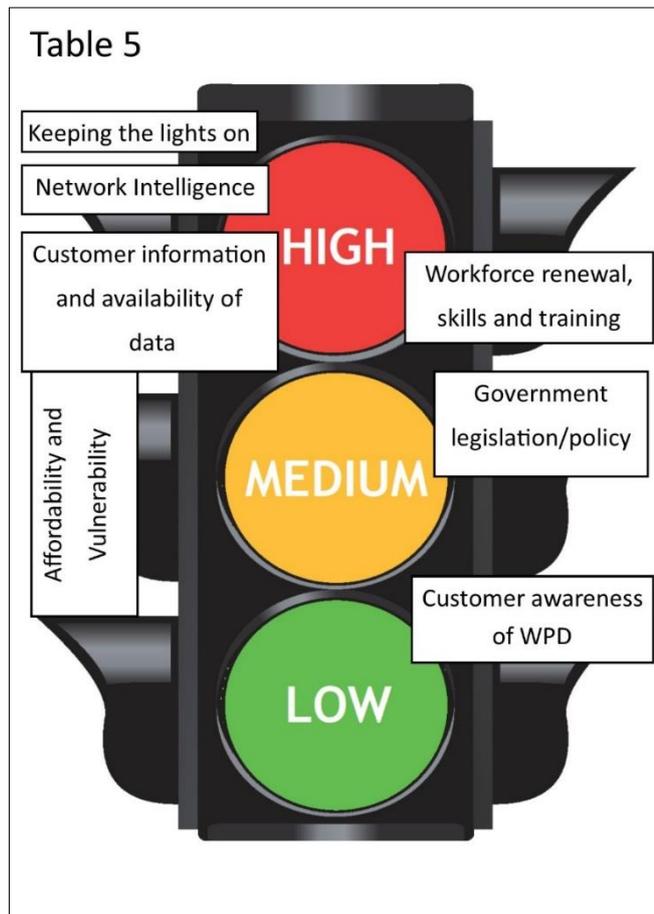
Table 5:

- A local authority officer said *'if I were WPD, customer awareness would be a high priority. From my perspective, I don't worry too much. Keeping the lights on is a high priority, everything else, low.'*
- A representative from a law firm said *'I would suggest customer awareness is very important, but actually that awareness of the customer is important too, data on customers.'*
- A developer/connections representative added *'if you're talking about contact data, it's a low priority, but smart meter data is high. That is linked to keeping the lights on.'*
- A local authority officer said *'as a consumer, I want to know exactly what's going on with the grid'.*
- A local authority officer said *'what's the point of putting in a telemetry system if WPD can't automatically access it?'*
- A local authority officer commented *'network intelligence is one of many strategies. WPD is a demand-led company. You're an engineering company. That's your culture. You need to widen that to other things which will affect your future supply.'*

- A local authority officer said *'network intelligence is high priority. What's it for? It's going to scare the hell out of the consumer. It won't relate to the specific building. So what's the point of spending all that money on the data when it can't be used?'*

- A developer/connections representative said *'this information should be available from other means'.*

- A representative from a law firm said *'government policy: OFGEM calls the shots. If WPD can be encouraged to shape policy rather than be a passive recipient of it, that would be important. You guys know your industry, and you shouldn't just be at the whim of a particular colour government.'*



- A local authority officer asked *'what's the priority for choosing a particular direction for policy? In terms of criteria, you can look at it from value for money, or from other points of view.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'vulnerability is the kind of thing that's useful. If you can put monitoring at the street level that's good. But to use meters for vulnerable people that's a good use.'*
- A local authority officer asked *'who's better placed to deal with fuel poverty: the supplier or you? Is it a recipe for confusion to have both you and E.ON having a conversation with the customer?'*
- A local authority officer said *'there's a role to play for WPD, but I don't think it's the dominant role'.*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I don't see the correlation between vulnerability and fuel poverty'.*
- A local authority officer said *'affordability should be an issue for you, because if your bill goes up then fuel poverty is going to get worse'.*
- There was consensus that vulnerability and affordability should be split.
- A local authority officer commented *'skills have to be a high priority for WPD'.*
- A local authority officer said *'British Steel used to put people through a general engineering apprenticeship, so that the rest of the industry is well-trained, and so that they can choose the best ones. WPD should invest heavily in training.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'I think these days it's going to be more difficult to keep people in one place than it was previously. There's no longer a "job for*

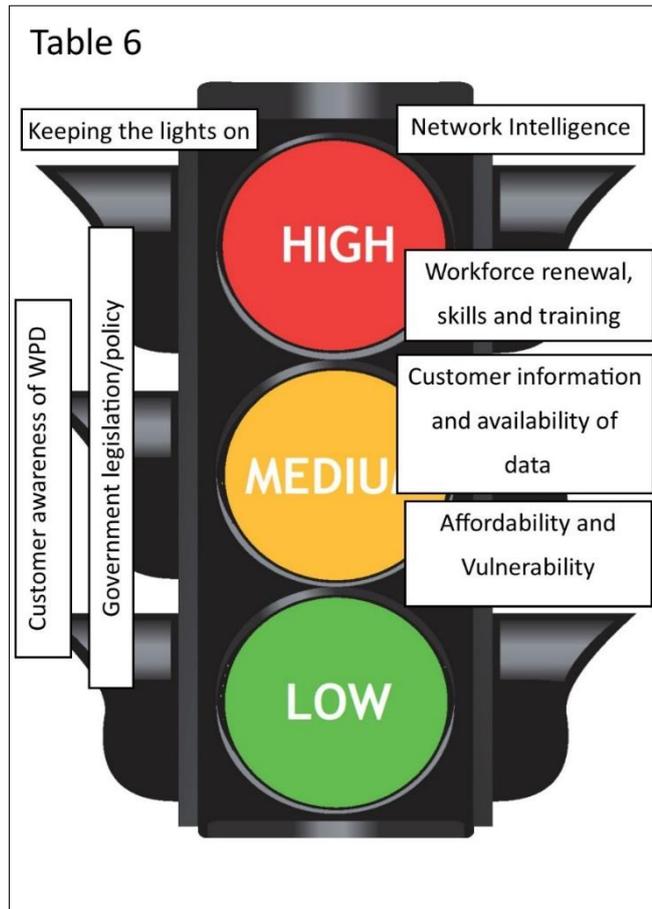
life” mentality. A lot of the people who work with me have no reason to leave the company because the package is so much better than the WPD package. Retention is something you need to think about.’

- A representative from a law firm said *‘data and skills are linked, because you need to plan what sort of workforce you need’.*
- A local authority officer asked *‘WPD would want customer awareness to be higher wouldn’t you?’*
- A local authority officer said *‘it’s clear that customer awareness is important to you, because you sent out 7.8 million magnets. I wonder if this is the only way you do this. I’m forever being mailed with E.ON consultation requests.’*

Table 6:

- A local authority representative said *‘it’s more about resilience, there needs to be guarantee of supply.’*
- A business representative said *‘it’s high – it’s a requirement.’*
- A local authority representative stated *‘we try and influence legislation – but once it’s in place – we can do little.’*
- A business representative stated *‘there can be opportunities to influence it.’*
- An educational representative stated *‘because it’s a business as usual issue, it should be low priority.’*
- A local authority representative commented *‘I imagine you tried to influence manifestos.’*
- A business representative said *‘are customer information and data things like heat maps and areas of fuel poverty?’*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated *‘there is such potential if we share big data.’*
- An educational representative commented *‘it has big implications.’*
- A local authority representative said *‘from our perspective it would be how WPD interacts with that data and whether we could utilise it in things like fuel poverty. How do these priorities measure up to the resources you put in?’*
- An educational representative stated *‘it’s a bit of a bread and butter issue – like government policy. Might be different sorts of skills that may be needed for a transition.’*
- A local authority representative commented *‘all sectors that require civil engineers are struggling to recruit.’*
- An educational representative commented *‘this is a fundamental part of helping to keep the lights on.’*
- A business representative commented *‘it is key for industry development.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *‘affordability and vulnerability – I would naturally put this on quite high.’*

- An educational representative commented *'some of this is governed by regulation – it's an area in which WPD are becoming increasingly involved with.'*
- An educational representative commented *'this links in with other priority areas.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative said *'there are some real cost issues to the NHS and other services – but we need to share data to help us have a knock-on effect.'*
- An educational representative commented *'priority to adapt functions –affordability and vulnerability is not currently a core competency.'*
- A local authority representative asked *'should day to day business even be on a Business Plan?'*



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

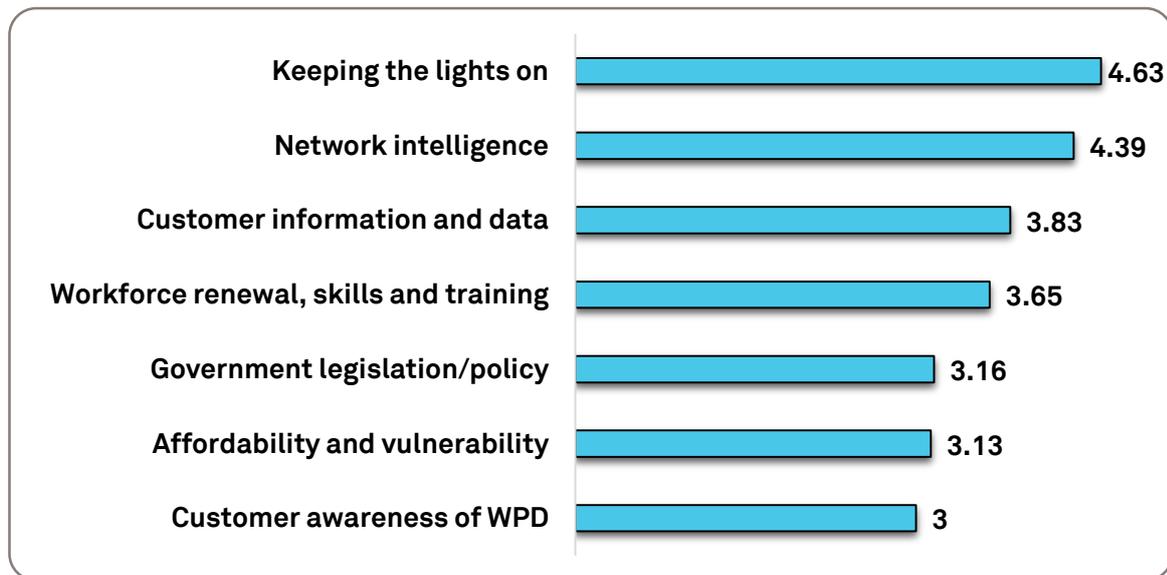
Table 3:

- Two additional priorities – infrastructure investment (transmission constraints reporting) and improving efficiency (on cost and innovation), were generally agreed to be relatively high priority. However, this was not discussed in detail.

5.5 Individual voting results

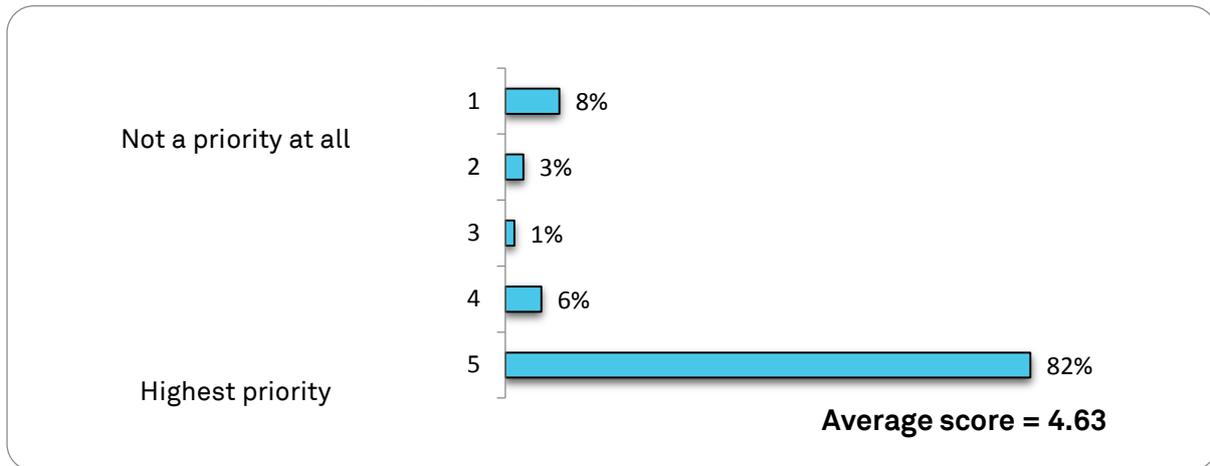
After group discussions, the stakeholders were asked to vote individually on what they considered to be top priorities. Each person was able to cast a vote through an electronic voting system. The results are displayed below.

Overall results:

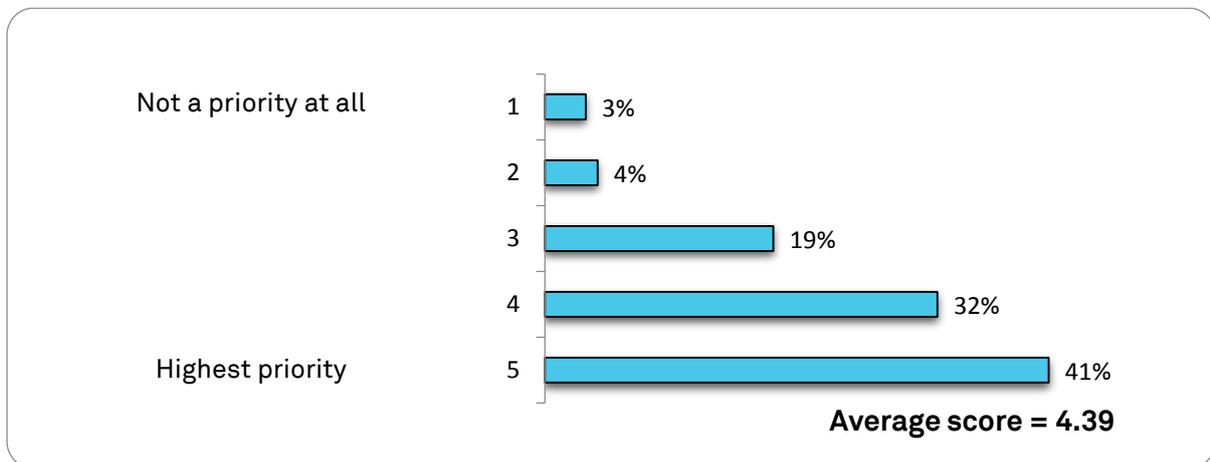


Priority-by-priority results:

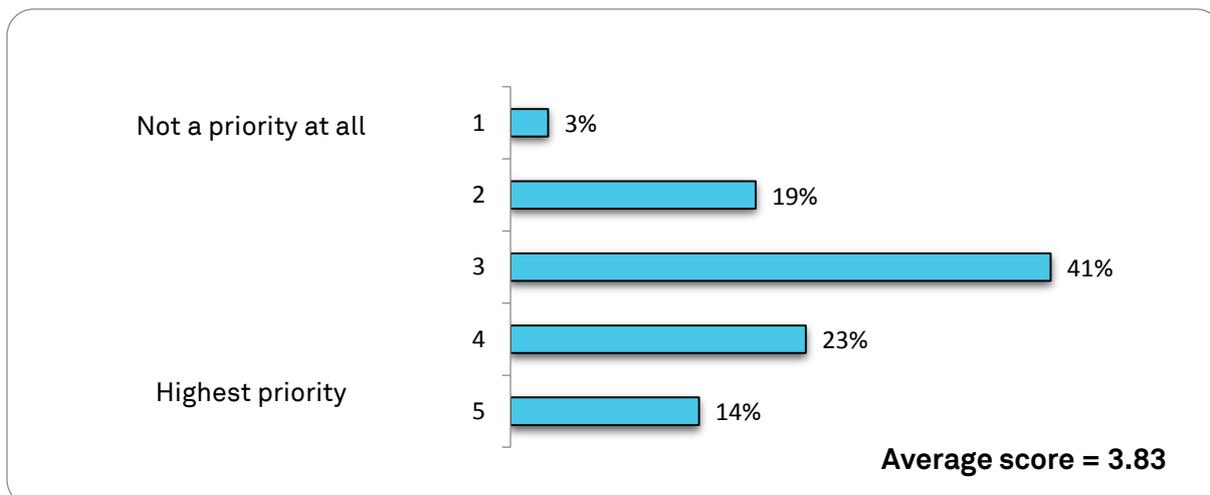
How do you rate **keeping the lights on** as a long-term priority?



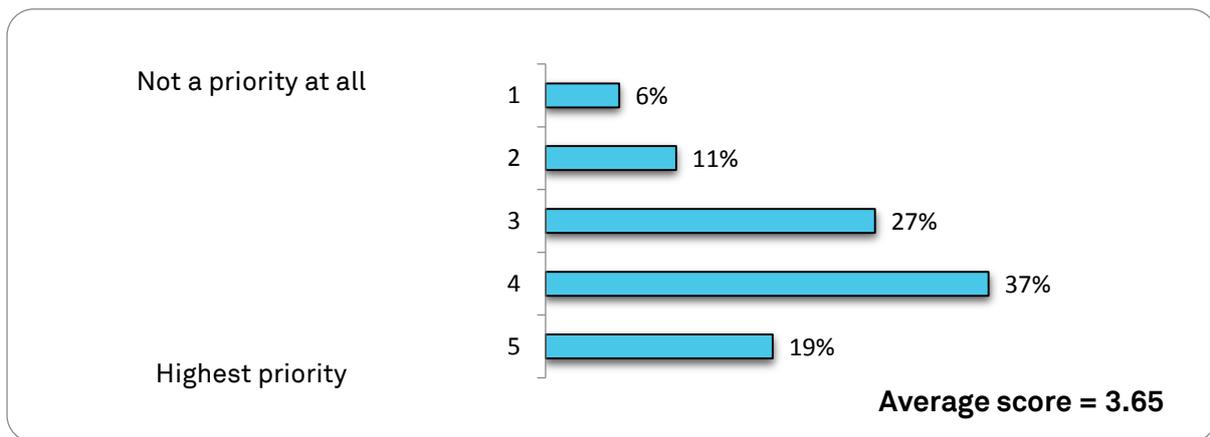
How do you rate **network intelligence** as a long-term priority?



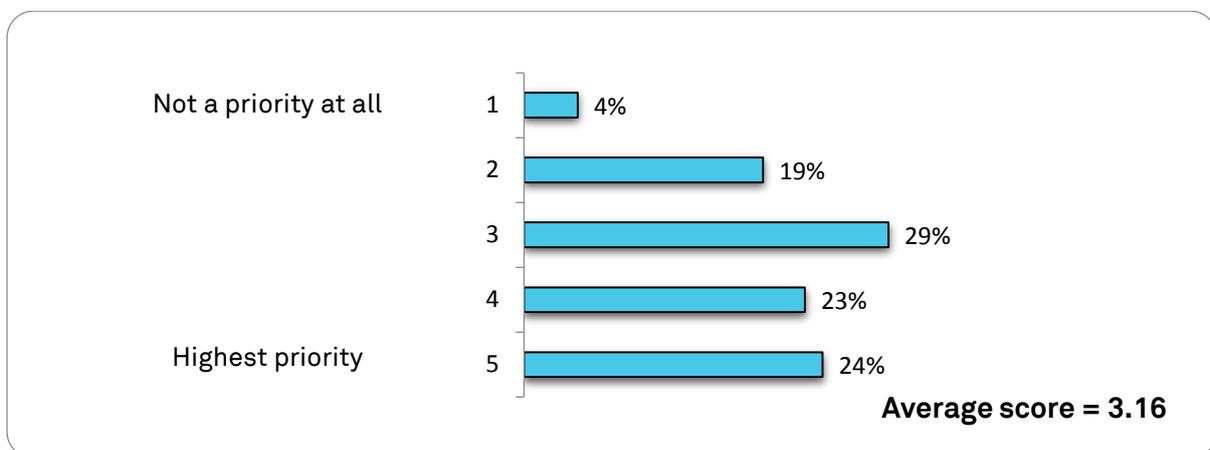
How do you rate **customer information and data** as a long-term priority?



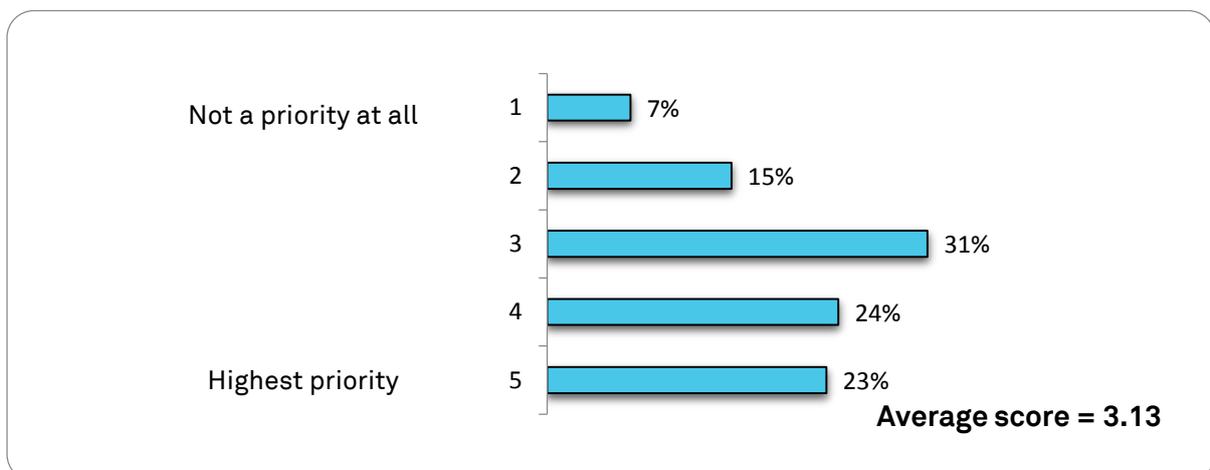
How do you rate **workforce renewal, skills and training** as a long-term priority?



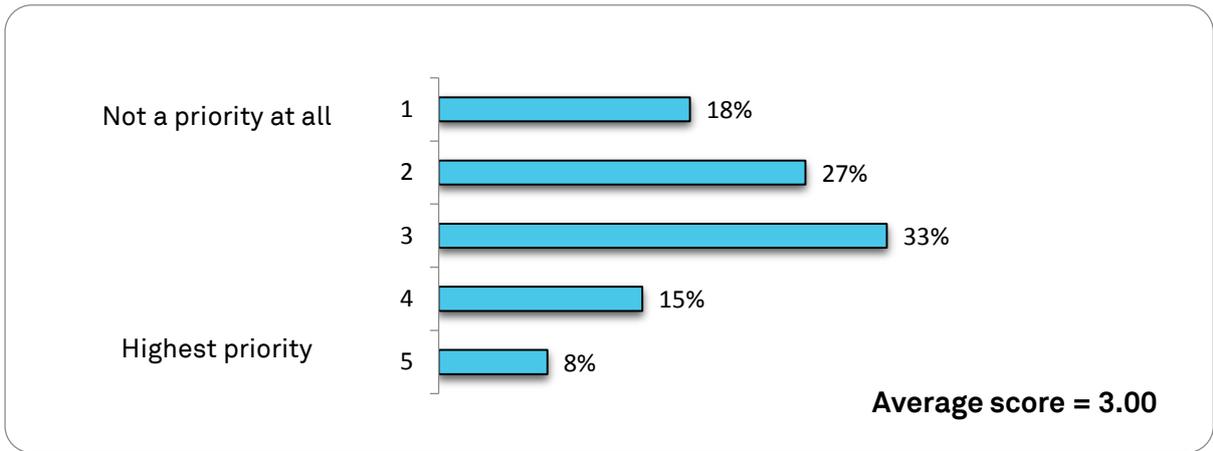
How do you rate **government legislation/policy** as a long-term priority?



How do you rate **affordability and vulnerability** 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 energy/utility representative asked *‘when you say smartphone apps, what do you mean?’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘you won’t be expecting your customers who are older to be using smartphone apps. It’s about communications with your customer base and it’s important to have a range.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I would rather have an app than call a line, but others may prefer it the other way around. I think they’re doing a pretty good job there.’*

Table 2:

- An energy/utility representative wanted to know whether *‘when there’s a power outage for example, does WPD have some kind of instant support team that goes out in a customer support vehicle? And could this be one way for WPD to raise customer awareness? After all, people look for someone to call. This could be a good way of getting its name out there, through some sort of customer support vehicle.’*
- A business customer/representative commented that this idea was *‘perhaps impractical, and perhaps you should be expanding customer databases.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued that engagement with government *‘to tighten planning regulations is important for sustainability.’*
- A business customer or representative disagreed, noting that *‘we already have a series of regulations to make houses sustainable.’*

Table 3:

- A local authority officer simply stated that *'I don't think I have anything to add'*.
- An energy/utility company representative suggested *'sending newsletters around by email.'*
- A voluntary representative suggested *'hypothetically, you could have some information on the bill.'*
- An energy/utility company representative suggested radio advertising, although the point was made that this was already covered within local media advertising. (S)he asked, *'do we have information on which forms of communication are most cost-effective?'*

Table 4:

- A law firm representative suggested *'maybe sponsorship? You recognise big brands like 'E.ON' or 'Power-Gen' because they do sponsorship – so that could be a good route to go down.'*

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 and were encouraged to give reasons for their choices.

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	● ● ●

Table 1



- An energy/utility representative considered *‘going to the website and seeing the number in big letters on the front page, that’s quite important for raising customer awareness. Maybe the energy suppliers should also put on their website that WPD should be contacted if there is a power cut.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘I can’t judge importance of any one of these, so I wouldn’t even be able to add more.’*
- An energy/utility representative added *‘I haven’t got a smartphone; I don’t have any kids in school, not sure where I would put my votes.’*
- A local authority officer raised the point that *‘if you are educating students, then perhaps adding an element of recruitment and skills and what to do in terms of support.’*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *‘the website is a universal access point.’*
- A local authority officer pointed out that *‘the website is where everyone would turn to in the first case. Local media is important for the elder generation and to still engage with all relevant and vulnerable customers. I think direct mailing is a waste of time, however.’*
- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘direct mailing is a good idea. I put two stickers against smartphone apps as that’s where the future is going, but direct mailing accesses everyone regardless of age.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘not much to say about television advertising, but I believe it’s important. A lot of people watch TV.’*

- An energy/utility representative commented that *‘customer awareness for me is a huge topic. If I were a WPD customer, the only time I would contact them is a power cut. The magnet is a great idea. Maybe you should also send glow in the dark cards so people can put them in their wallet.’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘maybe bus banners as well.’*

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>Customer support vehicle</i>	
<i>Expanded customer database</i>	● ● ●

Table 2



- An energy/utility representative proposed that since *‘everything is going online, and because future customers will be more attuned to online information, engaging with people online and moving forward is essential.’*
- A local authority officer contended that expanding website tools was also *‘important vis-à-vis cost efficiency.’*
- A local authority officer agreed, underscoring its importance in terms of improved *‘customer efficiency.’*
- A business customer/representative suggested that local media advertising was *‘a waste of time. Money is better spent elsewhere, and television doesn’t engage people in the same way, people watch television differently these days.’*
- An energy/utility representative agreed, stating that with the *‘limited impact of radio, an expanded social media presence is more important.’*
- A local authority officer reasoned that this increased social media presence was essential as *‘more and more people have smart phones and use their apps.’*

- A business customer/representative acknowledged however that *'we are all overwhelmed by our technology, by our smartphones. It's a problem - people don't respond to their emails.'*
- A business customer or representative thought that more money should be spent on *'fridge magnets, which keep reminding people of WPD's presence.'*
- An energy/utility representative worried that these fridge magnets *'will go straight in the bin.'*
- An energy/utility representative highlighted the importance of providing safety education to children as *'the future generations.'*
- A local authority officer agreed, proposing that whilst it was *'a good first step much more was needed to engage young people.'*
- There was a general consensus that an expanded customer database was important because *'it allows targeting of information to customers.'*

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	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
<i>Local email bulletin</i>	●
<i>Texts</i>	● ●

Table 3



- The first medium to be discussed was expanded website tools and leaflet information. A developer/connections representative reflected that *'the website is already good.'*
- A developer/connections representative added that *'leaflets exist already in doctors' surgeries, so that works.'*
- An energy/utility company representative added, *'lots of things point you back to the website – it is the hub of it all.'*

- A voluntary representative commented that *'this method is quite diffuse – other methods are more targeted.'*
- Regarding television and radio advertising, an energy/utility company representative felt that *'personally, I turn off from radio adverts.'*
- A developer/connections representative added *'it's also quite difficult to tell the effectiveness of media advertising. With a website, it is more measurable.'*
- A developer/connections representative added *'I think television is more impactful. On seeing the presentation, the importance of WPD to life support machines really strikes me.'*
- On social media, an energy/utility company representative commented that *'the statistic on how many Twitter users you have is quite small – probably 1% of your customer base. It's quite small.'*
- An energy/utility company representative added *'I am slow to take this up.'*
- A voluntary representative made the comment that *'you may check the account of a service provider without actually following it.'*
- An energy/utility company representative added, *'having followed the Twitter account of another DNO, I subsequently unfollowed it – it was mostly drivel.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked, *'would it be possible to have a more targeted use of social media – information about your street etc.?'*
- A local authority officer commented that *'on the rare occasions that this app may be useful, there are other ways that the information will get through anyway. There are so many other applications I would download before I would download WPD.'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested that an *'app could have multiple uses.'*
- WPD currently does one direct postal mailing per year. A local authority officer commented that *'although WPD don't issue a bill, it could be worth adding information on WPD to bills. In terms of direct mailings – I would avoid it like the plague.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated that *'from a safety aspect – but also, children knowing from a young age that this industry – DNOs – exist, this is highly useful. It could also help with getting people into the industry.'*
- A local authority officer added that *'if you get people information about what WPD do, they're retaining it more. This made much of the above irrelevant.'*
- An energy/utility company representative added *'I tell my kids about it – but in the schools, there isn't any focus on this.'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented on email bulletins *'if it was local to your network – targeted on what is going on in a reader's network – I would definitely read it. I would compare it to a broadband provider telling an energy / utility company representative what's happening to my service. I would definitely read it.'*
- A voluntary representative asked whether *'there is information on the bill already? I wonder if that's [contact information for WPD] pretty much all you need.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'I see this more as an alert thing. You get annoyed if you start receiving loads of messages.'*
- An energy/utility company representative agreed with this.

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	● ● ●
Sponsorship	● ●

Table 4



- A developer/connections representative remarked ‘*informing the children and expanding the educational activities, if you educate them from an early age it stays with them for the rest of their lives.*’
- A developer/connections representative agreed ‘*yes that really ties in with encouraging people into the power industry.*’
- A law firm representative felt that ‘*I think for most people, particularly those that don’t have internet access, mailing of paper or those fridge magnets is really important. If you don’t have access to the internet or a mobile phone, getting a fridge magnet through your door is really a good idea.*’
- A voluntary organisation representative raised the point that ‘*we get a lot of clients who don’t have internet access at all, or because of their age or lifestyle they don’t trust the internet unless they have someone to come in and help them – so I agree that you need to inform people through the post. If they know that a leaflet comes through the door they will probably open it. You get your bills through the post, so if a leaflet comes with your bill you would look at it and become aware of what WPD does.*’
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted ‘*the younger generation that has access to the internet definitely keep all those updates and information online but for the older generation make sure you keep mailing houses.*’
- A law firm representative suggested ‘*I think sport sponsorship and particularly at the high end, it does get your reputation up. I think sport is a great way to get people*

involved. Sport breaks all the boundaries and people can see what the issues are and what WPD does.'

- A voluntary organisation representative remarked *'I'm going for direct mailings as every customer needs to be aware and I'll go for radio and newspaper advertisements – as most people get into contact with a newspaper or radio. There is more local information on the radio than is on a TV.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative stated that *'you also have to inform and let the new generation learn about the power industry.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'I'd say TV advertising covers a broad range of customers; especially as it targets those people that don't receive the fridge magnets or leaflets through the door.'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out *'I think electricity and the distribution of it or the lack of it really is the future and it'll be the next bottleneck, if you have it it's great and if you don't you have real issues. I like the idea of sponsorship, okay it varies where your activities are but it's still a good initiative to have.'*

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	●
<i>Participation in panels/groups</i>	● ● ● ●

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Table 5

- A local authority officer said *'I tend not to think that schools programs are particularly important'*.
- A local authority officer said *'a lot of the discussion is focused on householders, not businesses. Those businesses that have a large energy requirement cite their new developments on the basis of energy security. There was no mention of this. How do*

you interact with large businesses? That could be another category. There are business groups up and down the country. I get the feeling from talking to the medium sized businesses that energy is becoming increasingly important to them. I get the feeling that they could be more involved. It's also important to have all the details clearly laid out on your website and to link to everything you do on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and anything else that comes forward.'

- *A representative from a law firm said 'there should be an effective and interactive website. Direct mailings do not need to be the blunt weapons they sometimes end up being. They should be targeted to groups you want to interact with. That should include medium and large businesses. TV and radio I'm not keen on.'*
- *A local authority officer questioned whether 'WPD's timing of their mail-out to MPs is ideal, seeing as their attention will be on the election'.*
- *A local authority officer said 'I really think you have to change your name. You need a less geographic name. It should be 'Power for Life'. PFL is a nice acronym.'*
- *A developer/connections representative commented 'if you've had a letter and a magnet, then awareness is not something you need to keep doing. For direct mailings you need to target everything at once.'*
- *A local authority officer said 'for the population at large, social media is important, but I'm happy with email, but for the elderly, direct mailing is important as well. The ageing generation has no exposure to social media or the internet.'*
- *A local authority officer commented 'it's a shame that nobody's voted for education. If the kids don't know about the career path then it's going to impact on skills.'*
- *A local authority officer said 'there is a lot of pressure on teachers to cram ever more curriculum in'.*
- *A local authority officer said 'education could be done through social media'.*
- *A local authority officer replied 'I'm not sure young people would be interested in WPD on social media, unless the power goes off'.*

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	● ●
<i>Corporate community/sponsorship</i>	●
<i>Conference/professional networks</i>	● ● ●

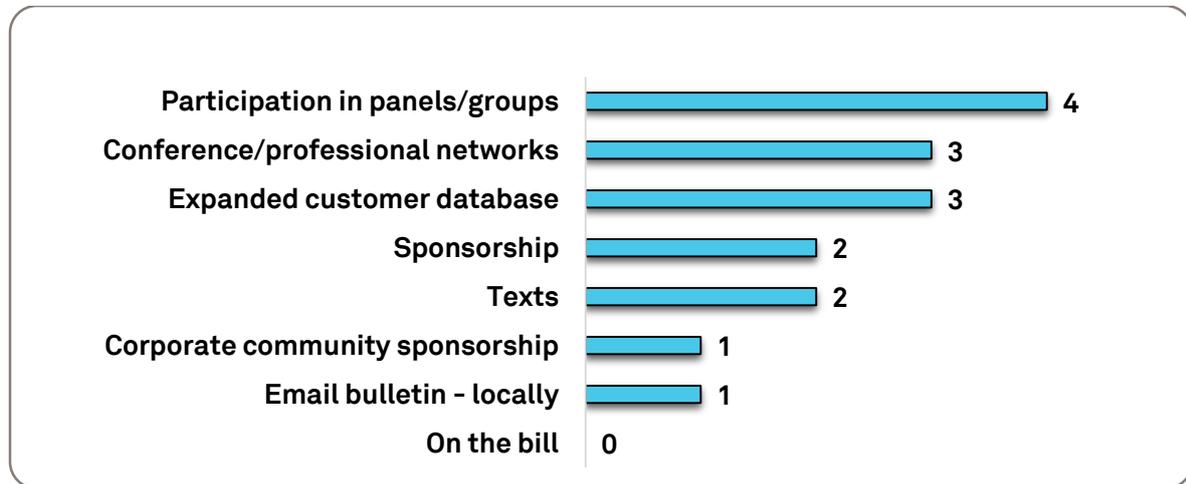


Table 6

- An educational representative commented ‘you’re assuming customers are retail customers – not commercial customers.’
- A local authority representative stated ‘corporate sponsorship? That could create awareness.’
- A business representative commented ‘expanding website tools and leaflet – access to information is what my business would want.’
- A local authority representative stated ‘websites are a vital tool. So is education, the next generation needs to be taught about items of vital importance. Finally corporate sponsorship.’
- A voluntary organisation representative commented ‘I prefer a more direct approach. Fridge magnets are a good place to start. Along with gauging what fuel poverty means to people and consequently raising awareness to stakeholder groups.’
- A local authority representative commented ‘developing cross-overs through networking is an excellent way of raising customer awareness of WPD. I have some degree of cynicism over websites, but having correct interlinkage of data with other organisations would be worthwhile.’
- An educational representative said ‘websites are vital along with professional networks. Leafleting is also very effective for targeting the most vulnerable. Direct mailing needs to be a regular activity.’

6.3 Stakeholder suggested initiatives

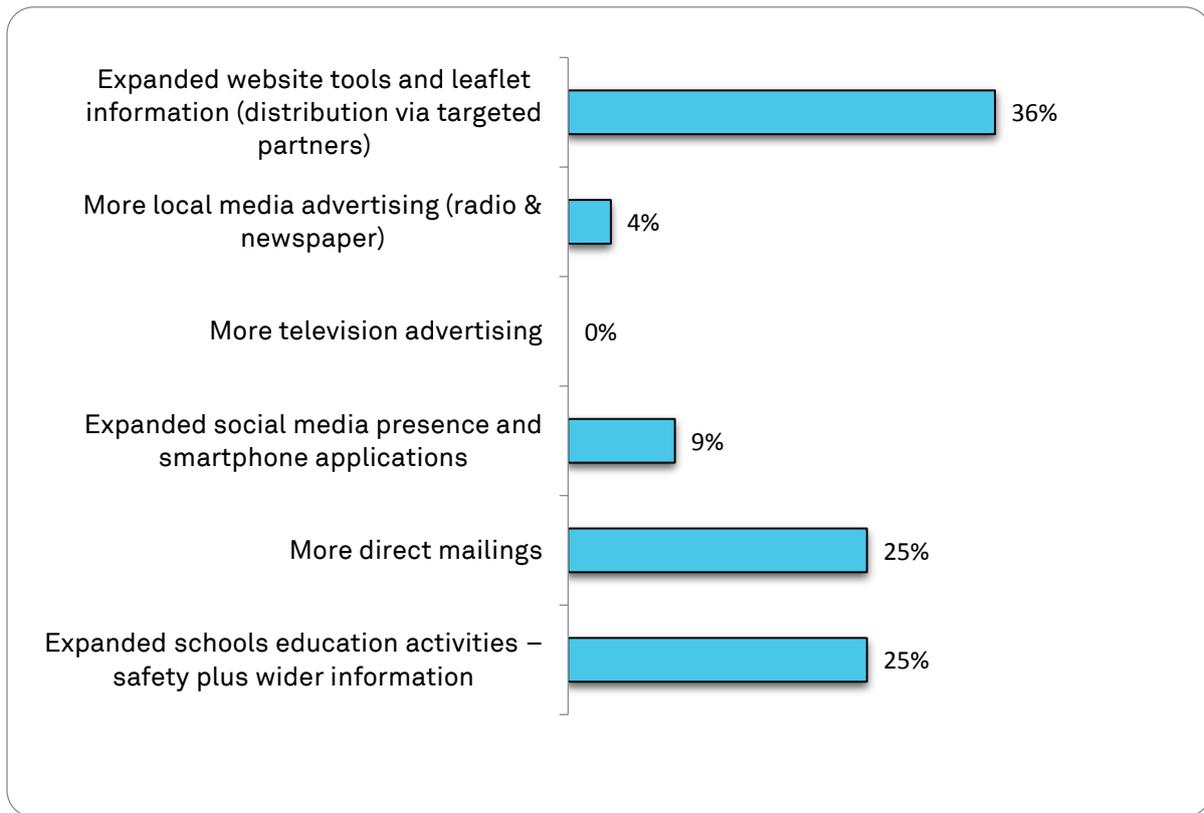
During the workshop, stakeholders suggested additional activities for **customer awareness of WPD** beyond those that WPD had already identified. The graph below presents a summary of those additional activities along with the number of votes they received across all of the workshop tables.



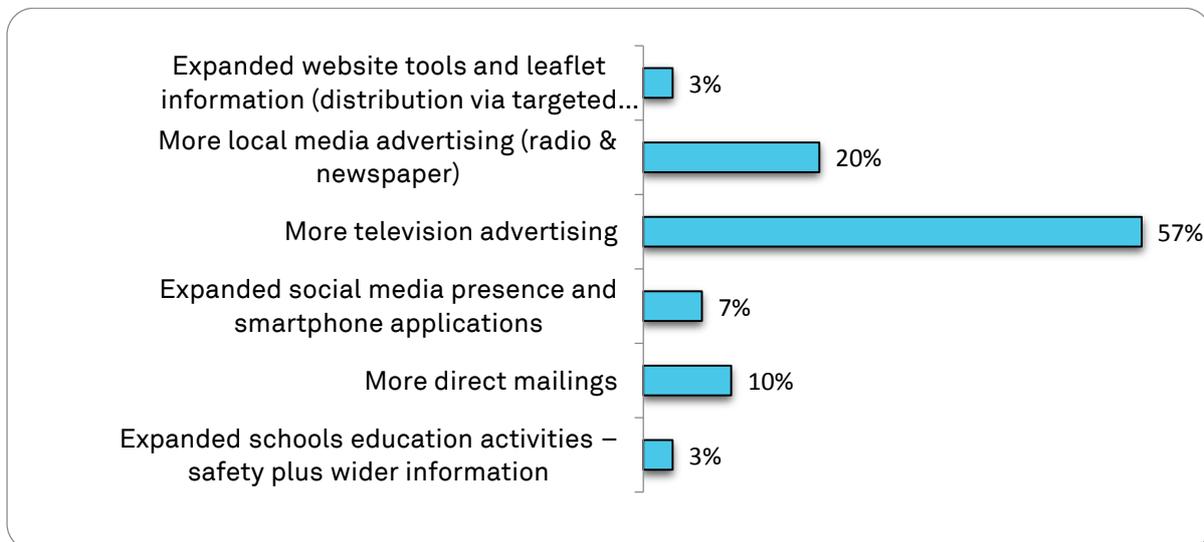
6.4 Individual voting results

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

6.5 Are there actions missing that we ought to be taking?

Table 1:

- A local authority officer commented that *‘short term funding is not a good way to go, people get dependent on things like hardship funds.’*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *‘it’s a hard one to monitor as well.’*
- An energy/utility representative argued *‘investigating the feasibility of network intelligence is a good one for WPD because they’re already working on it. The hardship fund is a difficult one because it’s not really in their remit.’*
- An energy/utility representative asked *‘would a smart meter help with that? The network intelligence?’*
- An energy/utility representative stated *‘it would be handy for us to receive data on the priority service register.’*

6.6 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 and were encouraged to give reasons for their choices.

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	●
<i>Demand-side response—smart meters, changing ways customers use power</i>	●
<i>Sharing data with contractors</i>	● ●

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Table 1

- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'identifying issues so you know where to target initiatives is important with vulnerable customers and sharing data with contractors would be useful as well.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered *'support directly to customers and resilience packs are important.'*
- An energy/utility representative *added 'if you have good data that would help with a lot of the problems so I am going to put my sticker there. Also affordable innovation schemes could help insulate houses and regulate demand.'*
- An energy/utility representative felt that *'hardship funds would just be difficult.'*

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	● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Engaging with government to tighten planning regulations	● ●

Table 2



- A business customer or representative stated that *'practical support was better to do through local NGOs, it's important to engage with local authorities.'*
- A local authority officer suggested that there was *'a case for targeting these hotspots.'*
- A business customer or representative stated asked *'how would a hardship fund be funded? One of the biggest problems with the hardship fund is that it takes away the responsibility from other organisations. A large proportion of those in social housing are in properties belonging to local authorities. It's not WPD's responsibility and the idea of a hardship fund confuses things.'*
- A local authority officer also worried that it would *'not be cost efficient.'*
- A business customer or representative raised the point that it isn't clear *'how the affordable warmth innovation scheme is different from the hardship fund.'*
- A local authority officer asked whether it would involve a *'bidding process?'*
- An energy/utility representative maintained that whilst *'the other issues are tackling individual issues, the question of the feasibility of network solutions relates to and underpins them all.'*

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	● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Table 3



- A voluntary representative enquired to WPD, *'you mentioned people with medical equipment. Is there any scheme for being given information about who has this medical equipment? If they can't give WPD the data, they could at least give the customers information about WPD. It's not part of the discharge procedure, automatically, from hospital.'*
- A voluntary representative and a developer/connections representative agreed that data on vulnerable customers should be improved.
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'it's difficult, because it feels like a lot of this should be government-led, not DNO-led.'*
- A developer/connections representative commented that *'we need to be reducing our carbon footprint anyway – it is win-win.'*
- An energy/utility company representative agreed, saying *'this sounds like a brilliant scheme. It might end up costing you less.'*
- A voluntary representative added the proviso that *'it's practical.'*
- A developer/connections representative asked for clarification on where that funding would come from.
- A local authority officer commented *'connecting up to where innovations exist made more sense than creating new ones.'*
- A voluntary representative agreed *'I think I would go for that as well. The question is where the network would be able to bring something to solving this issue.'*

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	● ● ● ●
Support community energy schemes–	● ●

Table 4



- A voluntary organisation representative remarked *‘I like the idea of the hardship fund, the idea of a hardship fund actively helps people out of fuel poverty – I would suggest the criteria is whoever qualifies and goes through all the advice and intervention like they normally do, but if the bill goes through the door and they can’t pay the bill, and are in debt no amount of advice is going to make that bill go away. The hardship fund will directly allow them to pay the bill and stop them from being cut off!’*
- A voluntary organisation representative felt that *‘the hardship fund allows them to clear the debt, and starts to create an output of people that are able to pay off debts and allow them to get in order and start paying the energy bills again when it arrives the year afterwards.’*
- A law firm representative argued *‘I suppose that would be more of a supplier issue though as they are responsible for the majority of the bill.’*
- A voluntary organisation representative disputed *‘well yes I would say that the supplier has some effect but WPD can still play a role, maybe if there is a big scheme that works across both companies. Of course you don’t just give hand-outs, but if you give the advice and the money and really help them at the same time that will work, it will help to bring them out of fuel poverty.’*
- A developer/connections representative suggested *‘perhaps supporting community energy schemes and not holding back on investment towards that - the basic problem is transportation costs, so if you manage to put local generation and can monitor that*

you will start to have an easier time. Reducing customer's demand and reliance on electricity will help the company.'

- An energy/utility representative commented *'local councils can start putting and rolling out solar panels onto houses in many of the poverty and hardship fund hot spots; it lets the council get something back where the locals pay lower electricity bills.'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'if the landlord offers an incentive to the tenant, such as solar heating or biomass and as a result your bill is lowered that is a good idea – but it depends on how you subsidise it.'*
- An energy/utility representative made the point that *'you've got project plans you're rolling out, it could be a good idea to investigate maybe a way to tackle the poverty bracket but still provide a benefit to the landlord as well. Maybe storage facilities too so that if they don't use the solar facilities at the time, maybe they could store the power and provide it later so that it allows the landlord to get a benefit from it.'*
- A voluntary organisation representative highlighted *'you could either set up your own or contribute to our hardship fund, but to be honest it's either, as long as you have the network set up there.'*
- A law firm representative commented that *'it's more education really, it falls on the leaflets and telling people what to do in certain situations, most people that are vulnerable can get good help from those leaflets.'*
- A law firm representative felt that *'fuel poverty referral is good because if there is a problem you can just pass them on to the relevant department.'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'using the funds to actually try and reduce the amount of energy needed by insulation or whatever rather than spending money on the system itself is a better long term target.'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'I mean I think there will be an energy crisis soon so we need to as much as we can, try not to produce more energy but instead keep making the network more efficient and allow for future planning. You can only grow the network so much and it just makes sense to keep it as it is but try and make it all more efficient.'*
- An energy/utility representative considered that *'I think it's important to improve that practical support, and maybe taking that into the next stage and maybe expanding it to more than just two or three activities – I like the thought of picking a city and choosing the more deprived areas and seeing what you can do there.'*
- An energy/utility representative raised the point that *'network solutions are crucial too. I like the idea of seeing councils putting solar panels on homes to reduce the electricity that customers are using, it's a bit of an intrusion but the benefit is it subsidises the energy that they are getting.'*
- An energy/utility representative commented *'network solutions are good too, to help integrate and invest in the network together with partnership in order to create better solutions.'*

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	● ● ●
<i>Pushback against regulator's requirements to fit reality</i>	●

Table 5



- A developer/connections representative commented *'it's not 100% your responsibility, and perhaps you should be more vocal about that. Maybe you should push back against the regulator's requirements.'*
- A local authority officer said *'we did something similar to WPD's appliances upgrade idea. It did have a good impact and it seems like a good idea.'*
- A local authority officer wondered whether *'a downside would be constraining energy network investment?'*
- A developer/connections representative commented *'it's nice to have boundaries drawn and people are always trying to get out of their obligations. I like the idea of referral schemes, and kudos for having those things in place to send people in the right direction rather than ignoring them. It's also important to make sure that data is available for those who need it.'*
- A local authority officer said *'if there's existing stuff for people to dig into in terms of fuel poverty hotspots that's good. Everyone has a part to play: identifying the issue is one thing, and solving the problem is another.'*
- A local authority officer said *'I'd like to vote against the hardship fund: it's not the answer. It's treating the symptom rather than the cause of the problem. Affordable warmth schemes are good because they target deprived communities and fuel poverty hotspots.'*
- A representative from a law firm said *'WPD could do more about vulnerable customers than affordable bills. Practical support is what it should be all about. You must*

allocate the resource to the most vulnerable. I like the smartness of investing in efficient appliances.'

- A local authority officer said *'practical solutions are important'*.
- A local authority officer said *'it's not so much that I don't think that the hardship fund is a good idea, it's just that other things are more important. A small degree of abuse would be considered to be a massive issue.'*
- A local authority officer said *'I want to be able to choose which charities I support, I don't want other people to decide to use some of my money on my behalf'*.
- A local authority officer said *'the money could be spent reducing costs for everybody'*.
- There was general consensus that WPD should rebrand as 'Wonderful Power Distribution'.

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	● ● ● ● ● ●

WESTERN POWER DISTRIBUTION
Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales

Table 6

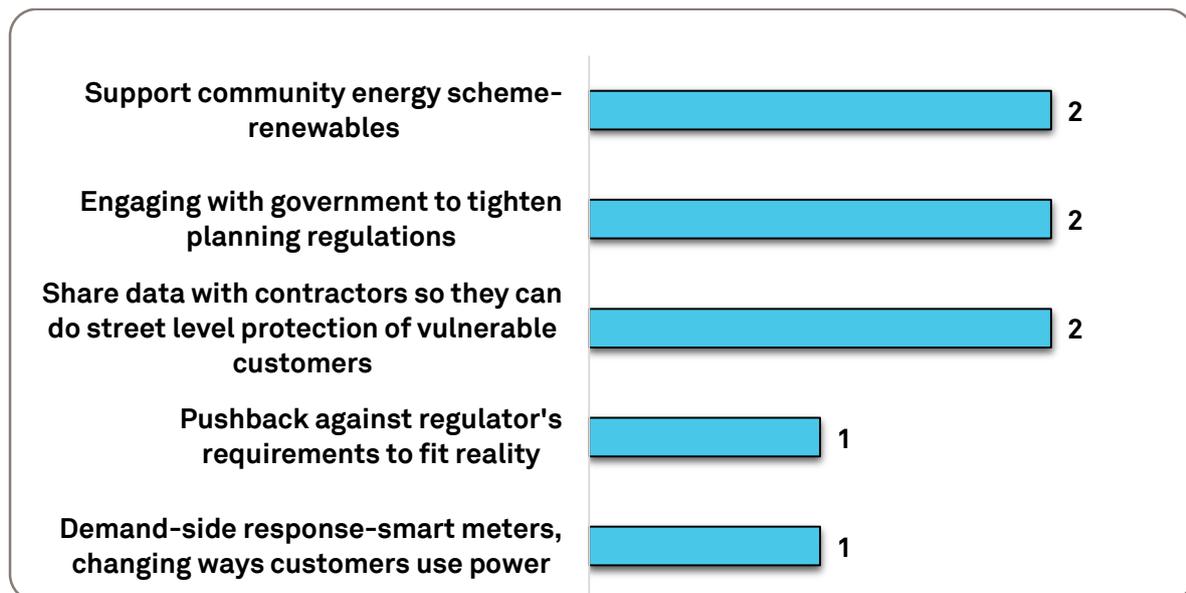
- A voluntary organisation representative commented *'why wouldn't you link up demand management with other expert organisations that specialise in this sector?'*
- An educational representative commented *'you can at least identify said areas.'*
- A local authority representative said *'there is community sponsorship – schemes that WPD could take over the funding of. WPD is taking over a larger amount of such schemes.'*
- A local authority representative commented *'investigating network solutions is an important action. There could be issues with the legal implications of hardship funds,*

as fuel suppliers are more involved in this. WPD would be better off supporting other organisations in such areas and improving vulnerable customer resilience.'

- A voluntary organisation representative said 'individuals would benefit from a hardship fund. However the database of information that WPD has needs to be kept updated. There also needs to be an examining of how best to get data (sharing and tips of best means of contact/quality) as well as regions on there. WPD should be working within existing networks.'
- A local authority representative commented 'WPD should be moving away from reactive systems, towards proactive schemes. Identifying fuel poverty hotspots through local organisations and networks.'

6.7 Stakeholder suggested initiatives

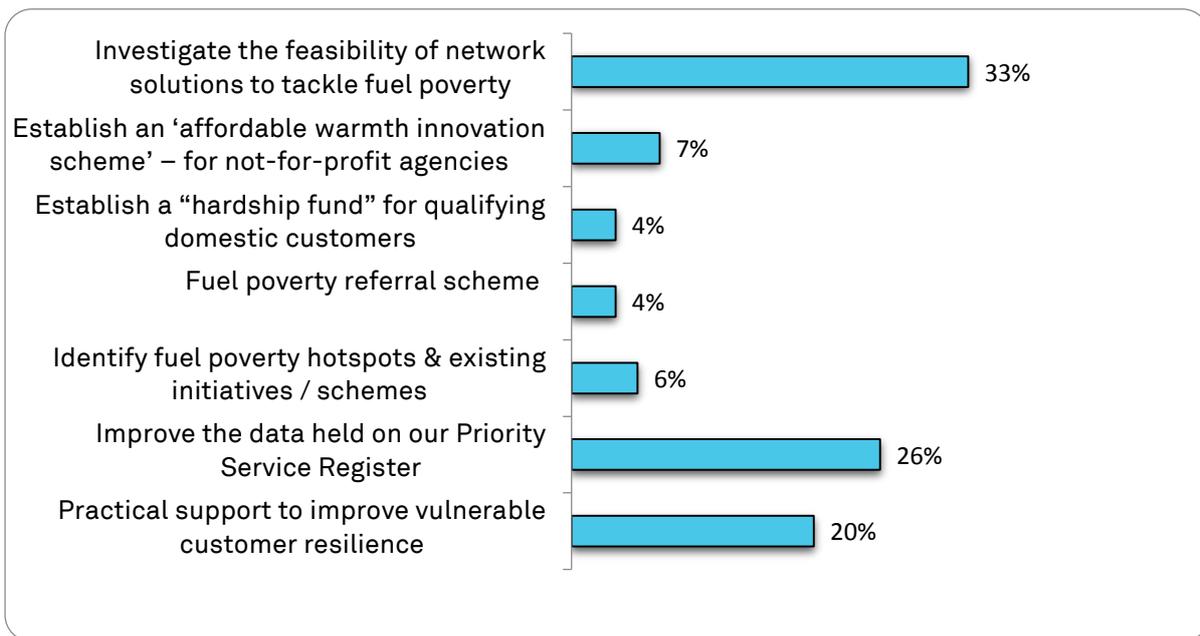
During the workshop, stakeholders suggested additional activities for [affordability and vulnerability](#) beyond those that WPD had already identified. The graph below presents a summary of those additional activities along with the number of votes they received across all of the workshop tables.



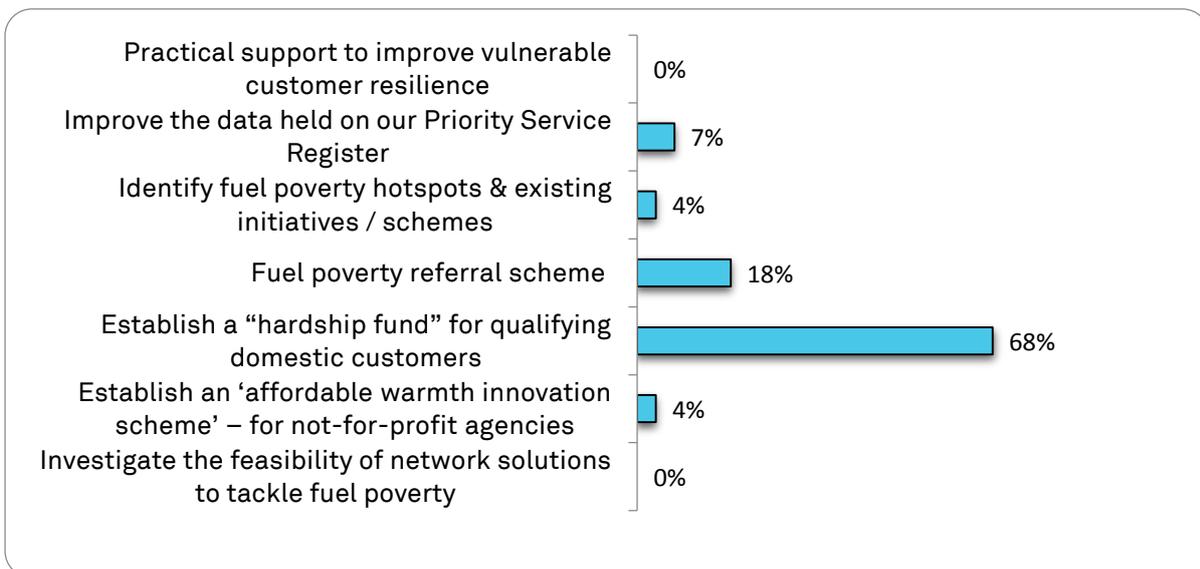
6.8 Individual voting results

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?



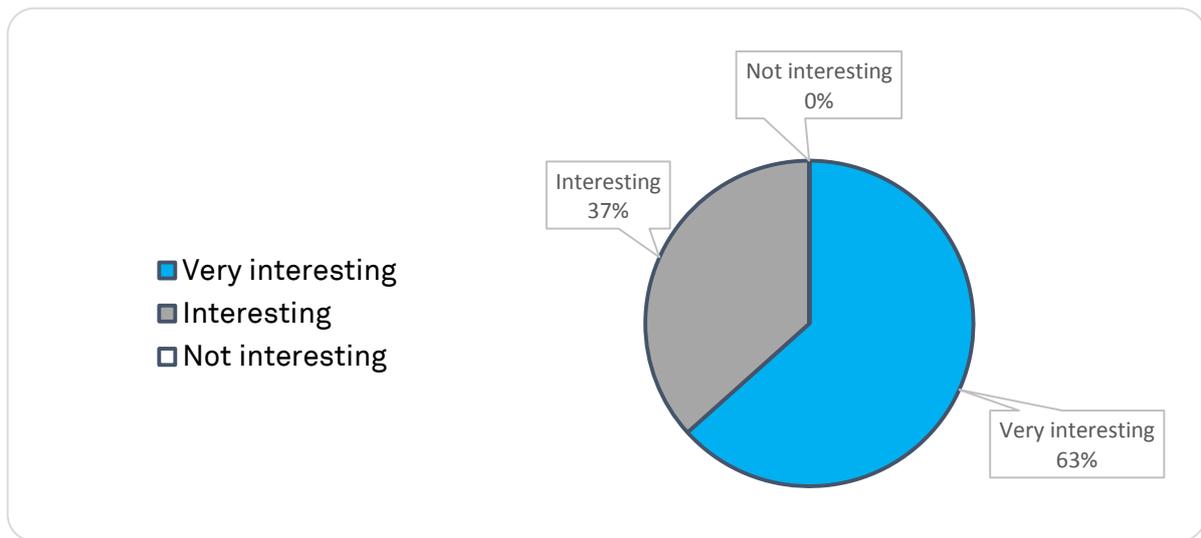
Q2. Of the actions identified which is your lowest priority?



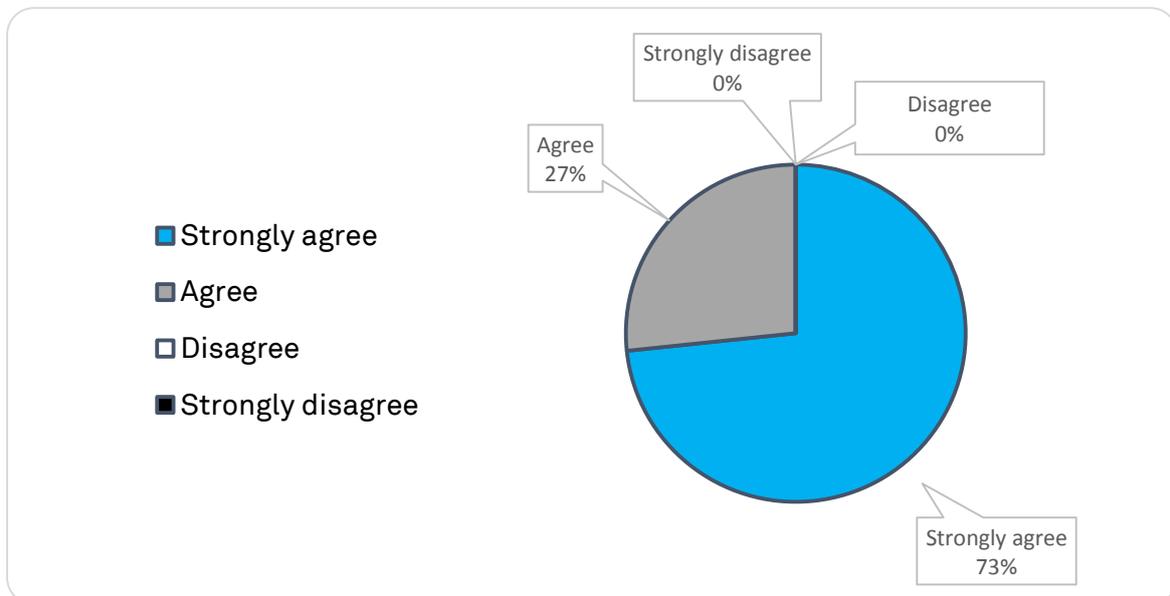
7. Written feedback

Of the 33 attendees who attended the workshop, 30 completed and returned feedback form. Stakeholders were asked a set of seven questions. The responses can be found below:

Q1. Overall, how did you find the workshop?

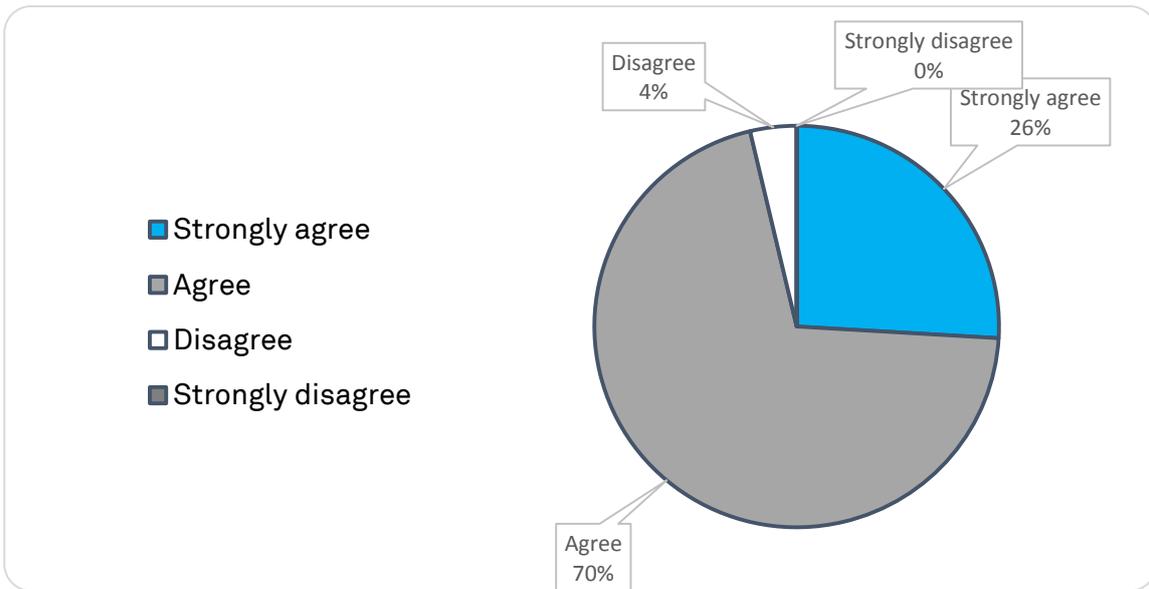


Q2. Did you feel that you had the opportunity to make your points and ask questions?



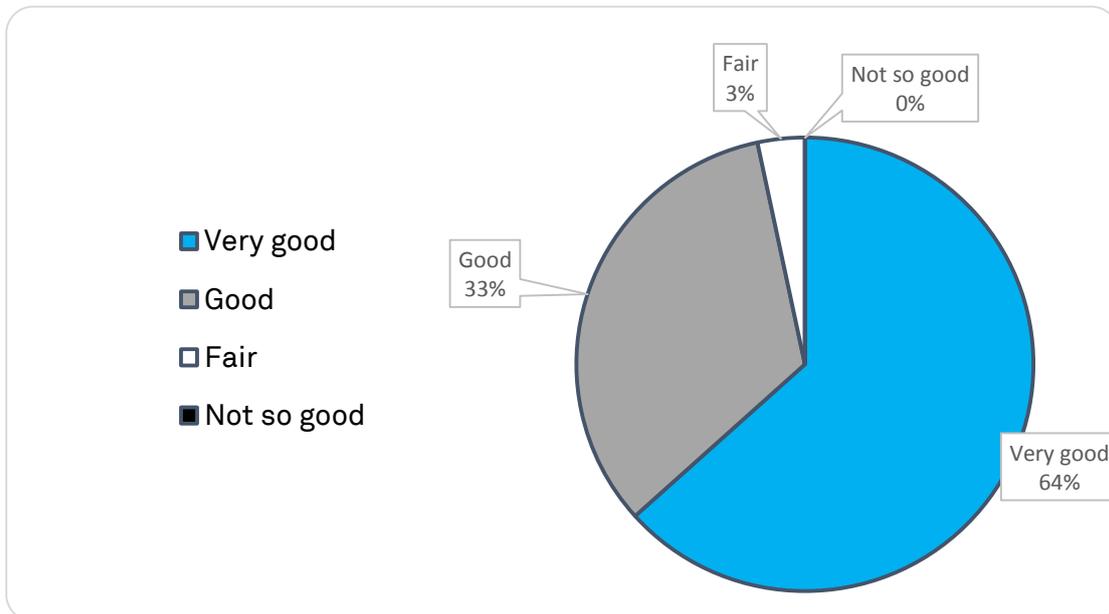
Stakeholder comments on this question included *'good interaction from all parties with various views looked at and discussed'* and *'very enjoyable and engaging.'* However, one stakeholder felt that it was *'more focused on individual customers – less on commercial customers.'*

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



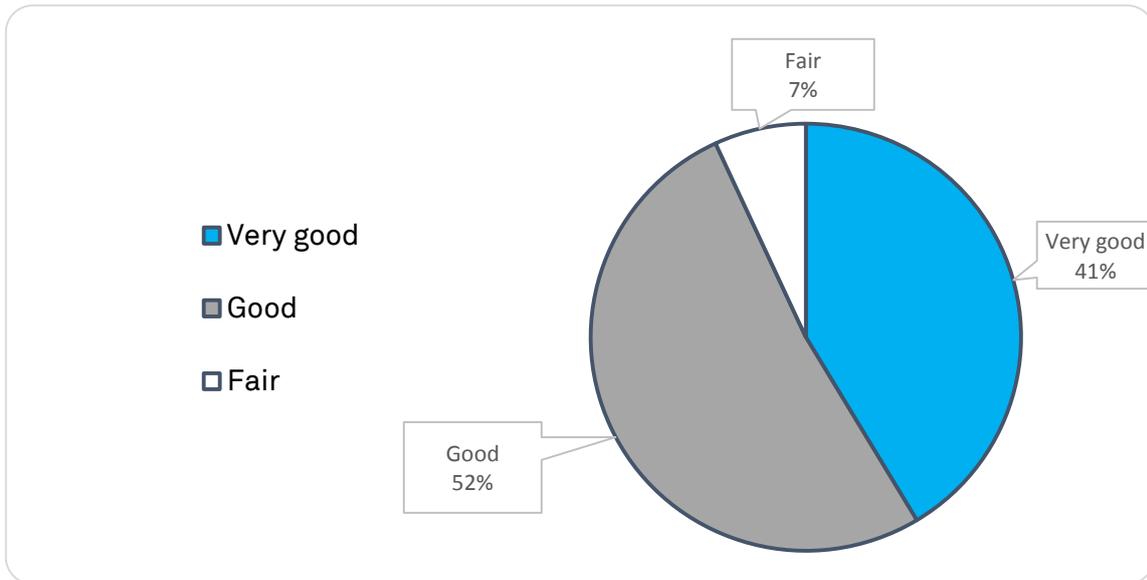
Stakeholder comments on this question included *'good coverage of main issues'* and *'some topics were not relevant for me – but were interesting to hear about on a personal level.'*

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



Stakeholder's comments on this question included *'tables' good size, well supported input* and *'very well organised and professional.'*

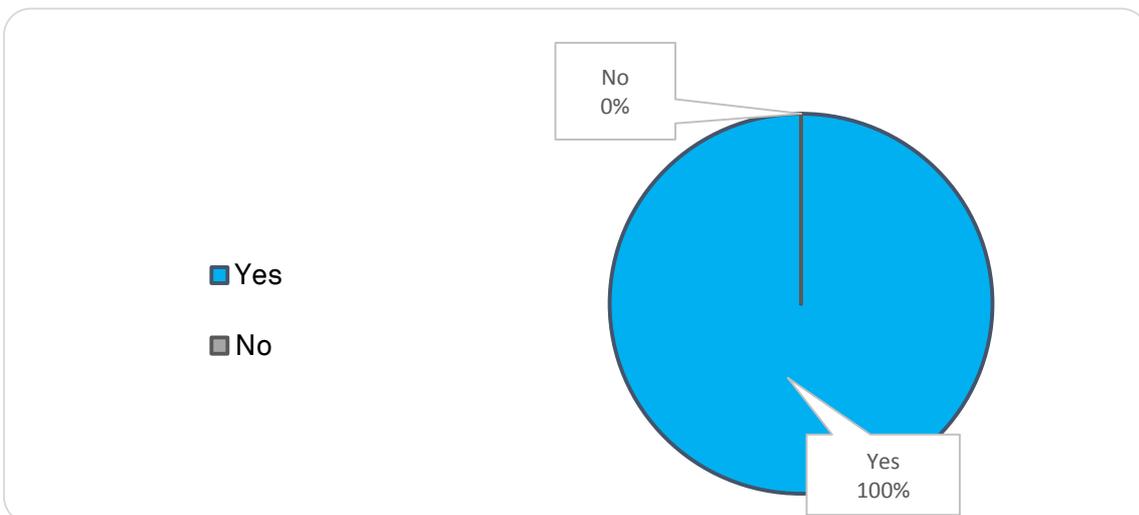
Q5. What did you think of the venue?



Stakeholder comments on this question included *'easy to find, easy to park.'*

However, one stakeholder commented *"rather noisy – could not always hear the conversation on our table.'*

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



Q7. Do you have any other comments?

Stakeholder's additional comments included *'really appreciate the time WPD put into their workshops,' 'useful contacts and well received,'* and *'always interesting and worthwhile.'*

8. Surgeries on specific topics

In the afternoon, WPD held four surgeries on specific topics with stakeholders able to sign up to their preferred session throughout the day. The surgeries including a presentation from a WPD technical expert followed by an open Q&A session. Each surgery lasted roughly one hour.

8.1 Environmental Reporting

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

8.2 Network Losses

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

During the discussion, stakeholders' questions and comments included:

- Stakeholders expressed frustration at customers that try to bypass meters, as well as concern about safety issues around tampering with meters.
- One stakeholder asked how electricity is lost and why so much energy is lost in the transformers.
- Another stakeholder asked 'how high would you go in domestic wire insulation?'
- One stakeholder asked 'how much of your network is and isn't tapered because I know it has changed as a policy over the years'.
- One stakeholder asked whether underground jointed service cables were WPD's policy for new developments.
- There was a discussion about whether or not superconductors will work and whether they'd have major implications for a DNO's cabling cost.
- One stakeholder asked 'what about losses on DC cabling? Is there any chance of increased DC transmission in the UK?'
- One stakeholder asked 'have you looked at how you could use demand shifting to deal better with supply side demand?'
- Another stakeholder commented that 'surely changing domestic customers' energy consumption habits will be very difficult?'

- There was a discussion about home automation and smart appliances using peak / off-peak times through timing systems.
- There was a discussion about improving policy in voltage regulation and on coordination of voltages between substations.
- One stakeholder asked ‘overhead lines were not mentioned in your plan, are they generally ok then?’

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

8.3 Social Obligations (incl. vulnerability and fuel poverty)

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:

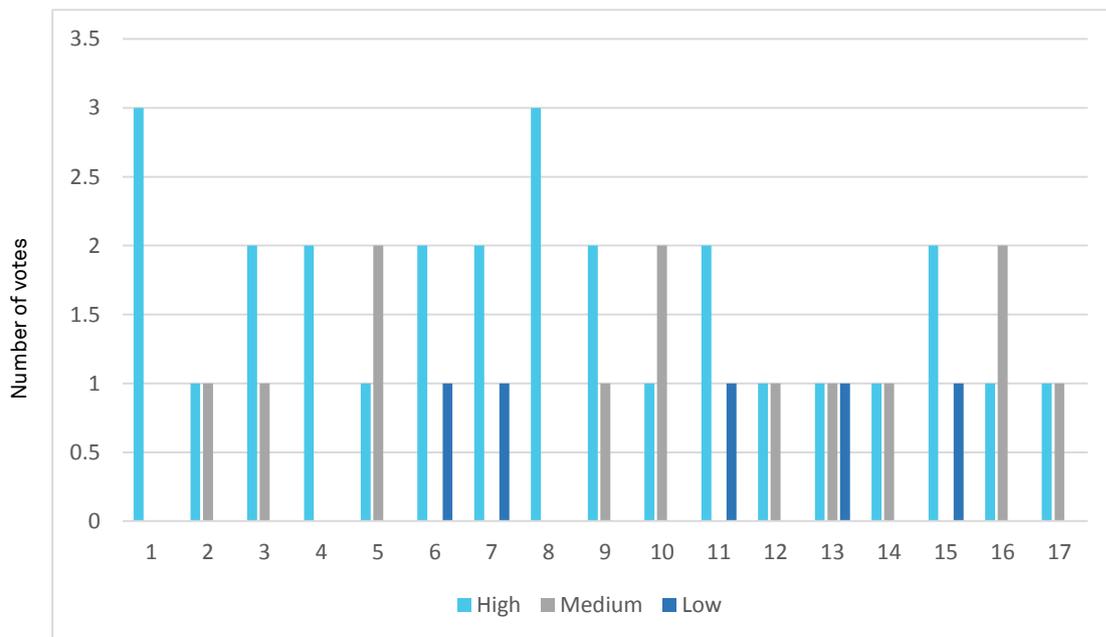
- One stakeholder commented that more should be done to create and define the link between health and fuel poverty so that, for example, ‘use of NHS’ could be an indicator.
- One stakeholder commented that the conversations that WPD has capture lots of case information, for example people really in need of a stair lift. The stakeholder asked how they information could be used for lobbying.
- One stakeholder asked how people join the PSR and what the criteria is to get put on the register.
- One stakeholder asked whether there was any breakdown of chronic conditions because people with cardiac conditions are the most vulnerable to cold.
- One stakeholder asked whether there was any way that health organisations locally could share this kind of data?
- The discussion continued about how significant health was as an indicator with one stakeholder giving the example that a GP recently prescribed a patient a boiler for health reasons.
- A stakeholder suggested that Health and Wellbeing Boards would be a good way of getting into the consciousness of local health services.
- One stakeholder said that posters in GP surgeries was a challenge because there are so many different voices and said that there was room for collaboration to ensure messages are aligned.

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 were as follows:

Objectives:

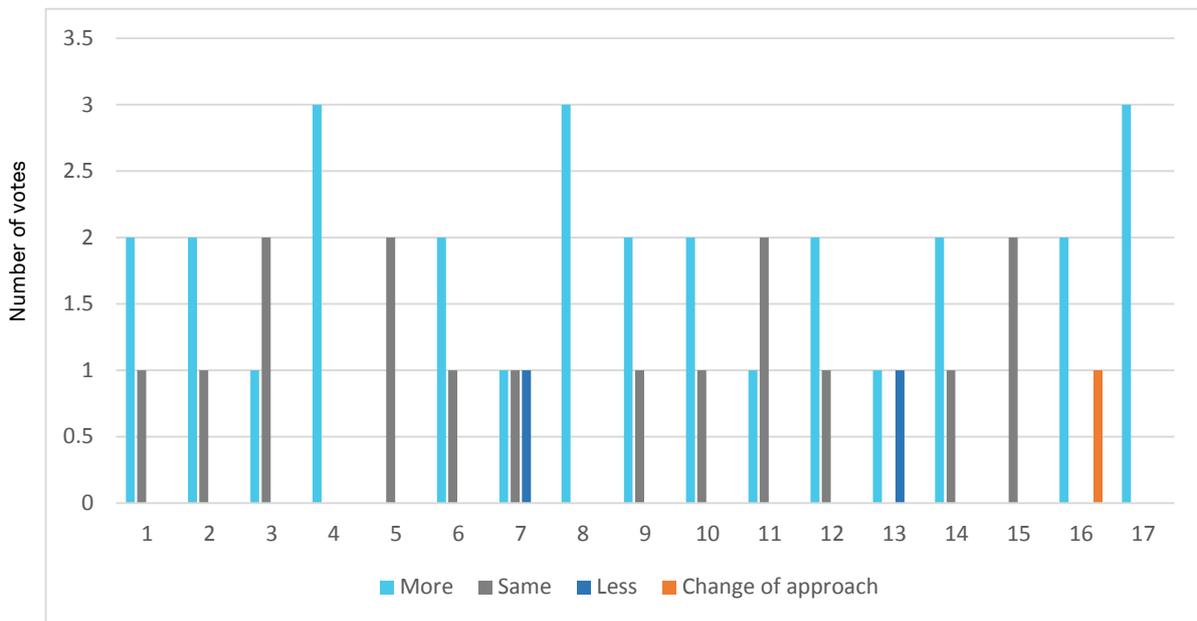
1. Work with expert partners to improve understanding of the needs of vulnerable customers
2. Train staff to recognise the signs of vulnerability
3. Proactively contact vulnerable customers at least once every two years to check the details on the Priority Services Register
4. Improve the quality of 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 a high concentration of vulnerable households

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



- The objectives that were voted the highest priority were ‘work with expert partners to improve understanding of the needs of vulnerable customers’ and ‘contact all medically dependent customers every three hours during power cuts.’
- The objectives that were voted the lowest priority included ‘raise awareness of the Priority Services Register’ and ‘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 objectives that stood out as being the ones that most stakeholders wanted to see more of in future were ‘improve the quality of Priority Services Register data by working with other agencies and sharing information,’ ‘contact all medically dependent customers every three hours during power cuts,’ and ‘use data analysis to help identify localities with high concentration of vulnerable households.’
- Two objectives received votes for doing ‘less’ in future: ‘make 10,000 crisis packs available’ and ‘work with partners to develop links to/from WPD’s website.’
- Stakeholders voted for one objective to receive a change of approach in future. This was ‘provide bespoke training to frontline staff.’ No comments were left.

The full presentation delivered on the day can be downloaded [online 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 the discussion, stakeholder comments and questions included:

- One stakeholder commented that *'the emphasis in the work plan seems to be about new connections, but we're more concerned with the reliability of existing connections.'*
- One stakeholder asked whether ICPs can bid for work.
- One stakeholder suggested that WPD should link up with Major Growth Plans being undertaken by other bodies.
- One stakeholder asked whether tracking could be extended beyond high-volume customers.
- One stakeholder asked whether a live heat map was possible or, if not live, how frequently they could be updated. There was general interest in this, as well as the release date of the Google Earth overlay.
- One stakeholder asked about smart generation quotations and allowing capacity to be allocated for certain times of day.
- Another stakeholder asked about the complaints process for customers who have been put into the interactive queue.
- One stakeholder asked *'what happens if a developer is slow or fails to make use of all of their capacity?'* Another stakeholder followed on by asking whether the year's deadline to make use of full capacity was for permission to be obtained or for the energy generation to go online.
- One stakeholder asked about quotations which have export constraints. They felt that these often lack information about alternative forms of connections and that answers were not forthcoming when they spoke to a WPD representative who was not able to tell them for example whether (s)he could use shortwave parallel.
- One stakeholder said (s)he *'had come up against a brick wall because the Grid had determined that transmission capacity would not be available for 2 to 4 years'*. They asked *'can WPD manage developments more proactively with the National Grid?'*
- One stakeholder commented that the hot-desks help design applications.
- One stakeholder commented that *'the teams (legal, design etc) seem to work in isolation. This can make a minor issue into a major issue. It is also unclear what the escalation channels are, whether they are individual or combined.'*
- Another stakeholder said that other DNOs have account managers and felt that they were useful because they could build relationships. A couple of other stakeholders agreed.
- One stakeholder asked whether the point of contact was the planner or a delivery contact.

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