

2019 Investment Workshops

- In September and October WPD's Distribution Managers hosted a series of stakeholder workshops throughout its region
- 230 stakeholders attended in total, including councillors, council planning officers, developers and others involved in the growth agenda
- The workshops were designed to
 - provide local stakeholders with an update on their local network investment
 - inform stakeholders about our EV strategy
 - obtain feedback on where stakeholders saw capacity challenges as a result of local development, and
 - strengthen working relationships between WPD and local stakeholders
- Actions have been reviewed with the Customer Collaboration Panel and their feedback has led to the following 12 actions WPD will work on.



Investment Workshops – the agenda

- Introducing WPD
 - Who we are/what we do/where we do it
 - Overview of the region
 - The Business Plan process and our regulatory framework
 - Changing energy networks (DSO)
 - Structure of the local team
 - Demand and generation map (whole network)
 - Investment in the local network
- Supporting the growth agenda
 - Reinforcement
 - How capacity is allocated / how connection offers work
 - Network capacity & constraints on your local network
 - Local load/generation challenges
- The Electric Vehicle Charging Network
 - Overview of EV strategy
 - Overview of Electric Nation
 - Challenges re: delivering the charging network
 - The application process

Building actions from Stakeholder feedback

Workshop session:

Investment in the local network

Key feedback:

1. Our connections process was praised but the correct point of contact can be tricky to find
2. Councils are aspiring to become 'carbon free' – can we help with this?
3. We should ensure rural areas don't suffer as we move to a DSO - there's concern rural businesses will be forced to move to urban locations
4. The benefits of connecting three-phase power to new developments should be conveyed to developers and local authorities
5. Some customers experience varying connections service depending on where they operate
6. Aim to be transparent on queue management and processes for lost capacity

Actions

1. Publish (local?) connections contacts online
2. Provide councils with practical ideas online (e.g. documents, web pages)
3. WPD could work with Rural England and potentially join a research panel with other utilities (£5k annual cost with potential to shape research/outputs UK-wide)
4. Engage with trade bodies who can share learning from projects and plans to install three-phase services as a minimum standard
5. Consider new/innovative ways to communicate updated connections policy internally
6. Improve website information in this area

Building actions from Stakeholder feedback

Workshop session:

Supporting the growth agenda

Key feedback:	Actions
7. WPD should play a proactive role in the planning process so there is sufficient network capacity to accommodate growth	7. Continue these workshops and encourage Local Authorities to have early conversations with us about their plans/(inc, HS2?).
8. You could share information about hybrid heating systems and how they provide affordable solutions	8. Publish Project Freedom trial details and the new Heatpump Strategy.
9. There's still a lack of information and detail available on network reinforcement and upgrades	9. Continue with investment map online/use twitter to more widely share it.

Building actions from Stakeholder feedback

Workshop session:

The Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Network

Key feedback:

10. There is a lack of technical expertise and knowledge among LA teams regarding EV charging and costs
11. Stakeholders value meetings with counterparts who have installed EV chargers, for example, so they can share detail on their challenges
12. Some councils think chargers on street furniture would be beneficial but are unaware of related issues

Actions

10. Publish a table of ballpark costs/flowcharts detailing the process/timings etc. to allow stakeholders to plan.
11. At future events consider Q&A sessions/case studies from LAs who have been through the process (eg electric buses in Cardiff).
12. Ensure LAs are aware of issues associated with using street furniture for chargers.