

# Stakeholder workshop report: Exeter

13<sup>th</sup> November 2012



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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Date and location

The stakeholder workshop took place on 13th November 2012 at: Sandy Park Conference & Banqueting Centre, Sandy Park Way, Exeter EX2 7NN

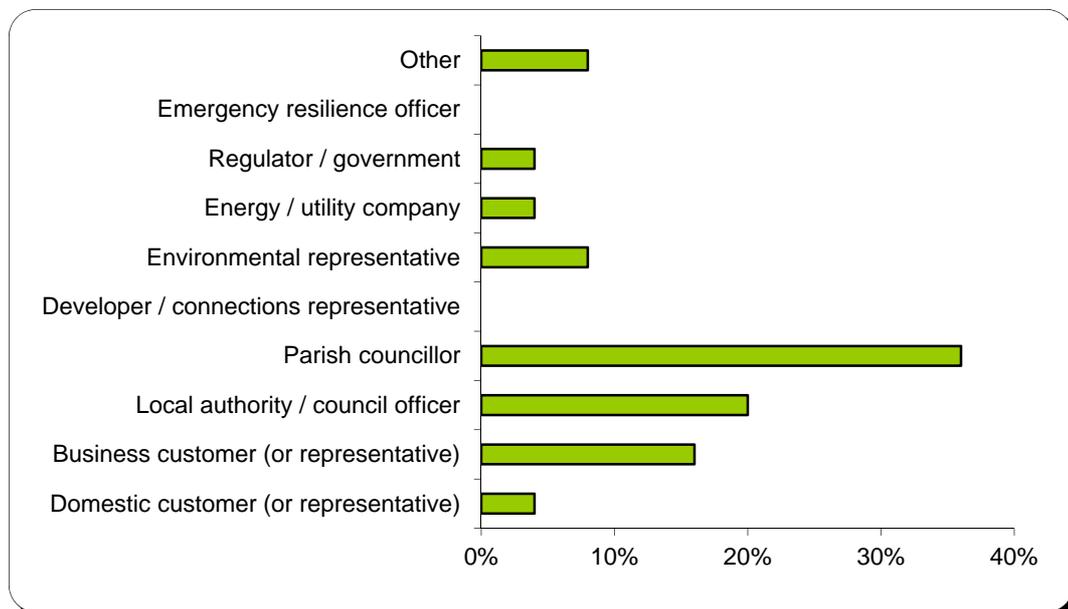
### 2.2. Attendees:

29 stakeholders attended the Cheltenham workshop. The details of all attendees are shown below:

- Mrs A Down - Clerk, Talaton Parish Council
- Mr Andrew Burgess - Key Account Manager, Schneider Electric
- Mr James Yate - Managing Surveyor, May Gerney
- Cllr Brian Fraser-Smith - Councillor, Burrington Parish Council
- Mr Chris Woodruff - Manager, East Devon AONB Partnership Manager
- Claire Gibson - General Manger, Wave Hub Ltd
- Mr Colin Rundle - Ops Manager, May Gerney
- Mr David Skelton - Councillor, South Hill Parish Council
- Elisia Bott - Convergence Policy Officer (Low Carbon), Cornwall Council
- Emma Dennis - Conservation Advisor Landscape(Exmoor National Park), Exmoor National Park Authority
- Cllr Frank Letch - Town Mayor, Crediton Town Council
- Cllr Fuad Al-Tawil – Councillor, Haccombe-with-Combe Parish Council
- Mr Graham Facks-Martin – Councillor Launceston Town Council
- Mr Graham Ford - Utilities Business Manager, Met Office
- Mr James Paxman - Chief Executive, Dartmoor Preservation Association
- Cllr John Harris - Councillor, Launceston Town Council
- Cllr John Hassall – Councillor, Cotford St Luke Parish Council
- Lucy Thomas - Food and Farming Advisor, NFU

- Mr Michael Short - Parish Councillor, Fiddington Parish Council
- Mr Michael Vickery - E.I Vickery and Son
- Mr Mike Kirby – Chairman, Kennerleigh Parish Meeting
- Cllr Pauline Bloomfield - Town Mayor, Dawlish Town Council
- Mr Pete Ashton - Policy Chairman, Federation Small Business
- Cllr Rachel Sutton - Councillor, Exeter City Council
- Mr Robert McConnell - Electrical Engineer, Wave Hub Ltd
- Sarah Thorneycroft - Infrastructure Planner/Senior Development Officer, Cornwall Council
- Mr Steven Ford - Green Cornwall Programme Manager, Cornwall Council
- Mrs Vickery - E.I Vickery and Son
- Mrs Harris - Launceston Town Council

The split of stakeholders according to the type of organisation they were representing on the day is shown below:



### Western Power Distribution

- Alison Sleightholm - Regulation and Government Affairs Manager
- Nigel Turvey
- Bob Parker
- Natasha Richardson

- Alex Wilkes - Stakeholder Engagement Regulatory & Government Affairs
- Paul Jewell
- Keith Ferguson
- Paul Elsen
- Peter Jenkins

### **Green Issues Communiqué**

- James Garland - Director (workshop facilitator)
- Nick Bohane - Executive Director (workshop facilitator)
- Emma Webster - Associate Director (workshop facilitator)
- Siobhan Lavelle -Consultant (workshop facilitator)
- Mike Townend -Consultant (workshop facilitator)
- Alice James - Account Manager (scribe)
- Laura Edwards - Account Executive (scribe)
- Alex Coleman - Account Executive (scribe)
- Farah Pasha - Account Executive (scribe)
- Rob De Angeli - Account Executive (scribe)

## 3. Executive summary

### 3.1. Feedback from participants

- Every stakeholder who left feedback after the event stated that they had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their views
- All stakeholders who attended the workshop and submitted their comments told us that they found the event to be 'useful' or 'very useful'. None of the stakeholders who left comments said that they had found the event to be 'not useful'
- All of the stakeholders polled told us that the venue was conveniently located for the

#### 3.1.1. Topics for discussion

- Power cuts
- Severe weather / emergency resilience
- Flooding
- Oil and gas leaks
- Worst served customers
- Undergrounding in national parks and AONB's
- New connections – process speed
- Innovative customer communications
- Low carbon investment

### 3.2. Feedback summary

- Opinion was split on the topic of power cuts. Although over half of the stakeholders present were of the view that reducing the number and average duration was a high priority for WPD, almost a third disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. The majority of stakeholders (56%) believe that WPD's proposals to reduce the average frequency to 7.75 per 10 years and the average duration to 52 minutes are appropriate although almost a third were of the view that WPD should actually do less than planned
- With regard to severe weather resilience, the point was made that it was likely that severe weather would be more of a problem in the future. Over two thirds of stakeholders believed that a tree trimming programme should be a high priority for WPD and, while 62% of stakeholders polled told us that WPD's proposals are appropriate, the remainder were of the view that the company should accelerate its tree trimming programme

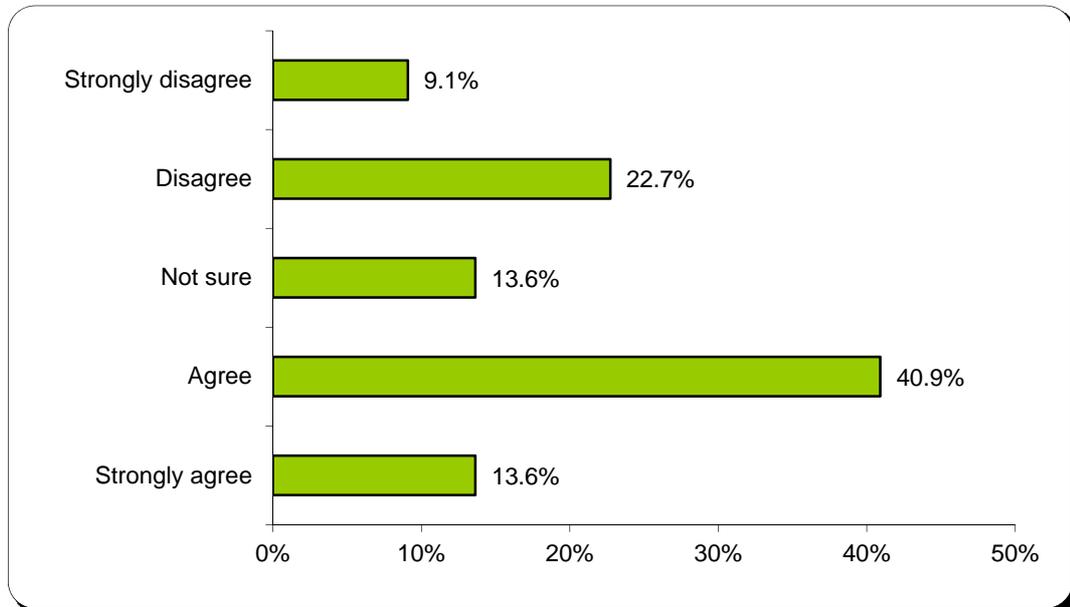
- For some of the attendees, flooding was clearly a big issue and it was commented that this issue was likely to get worse in the future. Almost 90% of those in attendance stated that they either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that protecting substations against flooding should be a high priority for WPD. The point was made that WPD should adopt a strategic approach to dealing with this issue and there was also some support for customers, as a whole, (including those who were not directly affected) paying for improvements. Just under half of stakeholder agreed with WPD's proposals to remove the worst affected 100 substations from risk with well over a third stating that the company should go even further
- Opinion was split on the issue of oil leaks from fluid-filled cables and SF6 gas leaks from equipment. Less than two thirds of stakeholders saw this as a high priority for WPD, with almost a third stating that they are not sure. There is clearly a lack of knowledge among stakeholders with regard to this issue. The comment was made that other activities undertaken by WPD have a greater impact on the company's overall carbon footprint. Half of stakeholders polled agreed with WPD's proposals to replace the worst 1% of equipment with the highest leakage rate, although one third were of the view that WPD should go further
- Opinion was divided on the issues of improving levels of service to worst served customers. Some stakeholders were of the view that customers in remote areas should accept lower levels of service. However, it was noted that for vulnerable customers and businesses in rural communities, including farmers, this was a serious issue. When polled, over 40% of stakeholders agreed with WPD's proposals to reduce the number of 'worst served' customers from 10k to 6k. Although almost 20% believed WPD should go further, almost one third were of the view that the company should actually do less
- Of all the issues discussed at the workshops, opinion was the most split on the topic of replacing overhead lines with underground cables in national parks and AONB's. For many, this was a non-issue. Although almost 50% of stakeholders were of the view that WPD's proposals to underground 70k of overhead lines was the most appropriate approach, a similar proportion voted that WPD should do less
- It was broadly agreed that the current process speed for new connections was appropriate and that this level of service should remain as it is. It was the view of almost 90% of stakeholders that new connections should be paid for by new connections customers only rather than WPD's customers as a whole
- There was considerable support for the view that WPD should innovate the methods by which WPD communicates with its customers. A significant proportion of stakeholders would like to see the inclusion of online tracking for new connections and many told us they would support real time information on WPD's website regarding power cuts. Although several stakeholders held the view that social media was becoming increasingly important, none of those polled told us they would like to see high levels of investment in order to improve this method of communication
- A number of stakeholders commented that WPD's view that certain low carbon technology, including PV and electric vehicles, would not increase in take-up at the rate WPD was expecting, although this opinion certainly wasn't shared by everyone. It was

noted that the Government ought to take a lead to encourage take-up of low carbon technology as it had in the past through incentivisation and subsidisation

- There was general agreement that smart meters would help to alter customers' behaviour with regard to energy consumption, however it was widely commented that financial incentives or penalties would be needed to see meaningful differences. Stakeholders were broadly of the view that levels of service should not slip as a result of the introduction of smart grid technologies

## 4. Issue 1. Power cuts

### 4.1. Q1. Reducing the number and average duration of power cuts should be one of WPD's highest priorities



### 4.2. Comments

Table 1

- A parish councillor stated that their service has improved. S/he stated *'we used to suffer from cuts but not so much anymore'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'businesses suffer in terms of profit due to power cuts'* and wanted to know about *'the possibility for compensation to businesses'*
- A local authority/council officer said this wasn't a big problem anymore as s/he *'used to have power cuts but we now have a very good service'*
- A business customer representative said that the power cuts are not the problem but the *'biggest concern is that there are very few plans to sustain the availability of power in the future'*
- A local authority/council officer reasoned that power cuts in her/his area are caused by trees. S/he commented *'a lot of people live in the rural areas and areas of national beauty and the disruption from falling trees is significant.'* S/he said that *'undergrounding is probably the more financially sound idea for rural areas'*

**Table 2**

- A parish councillor stated that s/he did not see a significant difference between the reductions proposed. S/he added that an additional cost of £2.20 on domestic bills a year was *'not too much to worry about for me personally but it might be for people on lower income levels'*
- Another parish councillor posed the question, *'what are WPD doing about looking at faults in worst served areas?'*
- An environmental representative queried whether the figures were based on domestic or commercial outages. S/he also asked whether *'WPD was able to identify the percentage of vulnerable customers within the figures?'*
- A parish councillor added that *'vulnerable customers were particularly at risk by outages due to health reasons'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'I live in a rural area and we don't get power cuts. I would rather be spending my money on more important things; other areas might be more at risk in the future, as things age it will become more of a problem'*
- Another local authority/council officer was of the view that *'frequency doesn't offer much difference either'*
- A parish councillor concluded that *'my personal feeling is to leave things as they are, but if that's what the majority of customers say then something needs to be done'*

**Table 3**

- A business customer representative said that s/he has experienced power cuts as s/he *'is in a rural area'*. The service they have received has been very good though, stating that they have had a power cut *'probably one every 2 or 3 years'*
- A local authority/council officer informed the table that his / her town experienced a power cut in *'recent years because of an accident with a JCB'*
- A parish councillor pointed out that his / her parish is very rural but *'has seen a massive improvement in recent years'*
- A local authority/council officer commented that of those that *'live in the country many people have back-up plans'*. S/he had a camping stove in his / her property so that his / her family were able to cook during power cuts
- The table agreed that option one was adequate

**Table 4**

- A stakeholder stated from a domestic customer perspective s/he *'has not experienced particularly bad experience with power cuts, when it does happen it has minimal impact'*. S/he does not consider increasing investment in reducing power cuts in frequency and duration as a major issue

- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he would support option 1. S/he added that *'they do experience very short power cuts, and these are very frustrating as you then have to re-programme electrical appliances'*
- A business customer representative stated that as a business s/he does get power cuts but they do not last for very long, therefore they do not consider reducing power cuts and their duration as a high priority. S/he asked *'is the reduction in time worth the cost, and the number of people it would benefit?'*
- A business customer representative questioned whether WPD are required to reduce power cuts and their duration further than they already do
- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he is *'aware that a number of commercial companies invest in electricity generator back-ups, for example a diesel generator on a farm'*. S/he stated *'investing in a back-up generator is a large cost for companies'* and suggested that *'reducing power cuts is more of a priority for WPD's commercial customers'*
- A business customer representative questioned whether it is likely *'a domestic customer would notice a reduction in the frequency and duration of power cuts in the figures that are being discussed'*
- An environmental representative added in 2008 s/he was a worst served customer, since then s/he *'has noticed an improvement in the service and is experiencing fewer outages'*
- An environmental representative noted that *'WPD does not count outages of less than 3 minutes (short interruptions) in the power cut and duration averages'*. S/he suggested that *'these should not be discounted as they are just as disruptive and irritating for a customer'*

#### Table 5

- A parish councillor stated that power cuts *'are a problem'*
- Another parish councillor was of the view that small to medium towns do not experience problems with power cuts. S/he commented *'it would however be a problem in large rural inner land areas'*
- A parish councillor described a new development of 950 dwellings and the levels of different phasing planned. S/he commented on a 4 hour power cut s/he experienced one evening/night. S/he stated the problem that arose was *'the engineer did not know where the power cables lay and therefore had to travel miles to get a map to end the power outage'*
- A business customer representative stated s/he *'lived in a rural area where water pumping is used on the land'*. S/he pointed out *'due to the water pumps being powered by electricity it is a problem when there is a power outage'*
- A parish councillor said due to receiving no comments from his / her villagers s/he cannot give any feedback or comments but as far s/he is aware there are *'no problems'*

S/he commented that *'having a power cut over a long period of time is a problem in relation to fridges and freezers'*

- Overall the table agreed it is a high priority
- A parish councillor pointed out that *'power cuts are a problem in business as the interruption of power affects computers which is a problem due to the amount of work being lost and it is difficult to deal with'*
- Another parish councillor was of the opinion that those customers whose income will be affected by power cuts will suffer in the long run as they will have *'less money available to pay for the increases to the bill'*
- A parish councillor commented on the Government's idea that there are uninterrupted power supplies due to back-up systems being in place on each household. S/he asked *'can this happen?'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that a *'good quality and continuity of power should be business as normal'*
- Another parish councillor commented on option 1 and asked if the average duration *'52-60 minutes was over a 1 or 8 year period?'*
- A parish councillor also commented on option 1 and was of the opinion the cost range of £39 million up to £310 million was a big increase and therefore *'strange'*
- A parish councillor asked if there are any other parts of the country that have *'more worst served than WPD and how do the figures compare?'* S/he stated if WPD compares well to other distributors WPD then *'should carry on as normal and does not need to make changes'*
- The table agreed that option 1 is the best

#### 4.3. **Q2. Power cuts: Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?**

**Option 1:** Reduce the average frequency to 7.75 per 10 years and the average duration to 52 minutes at a total cost of £39m over the 8 year period (40p on each domestic bill per annum)

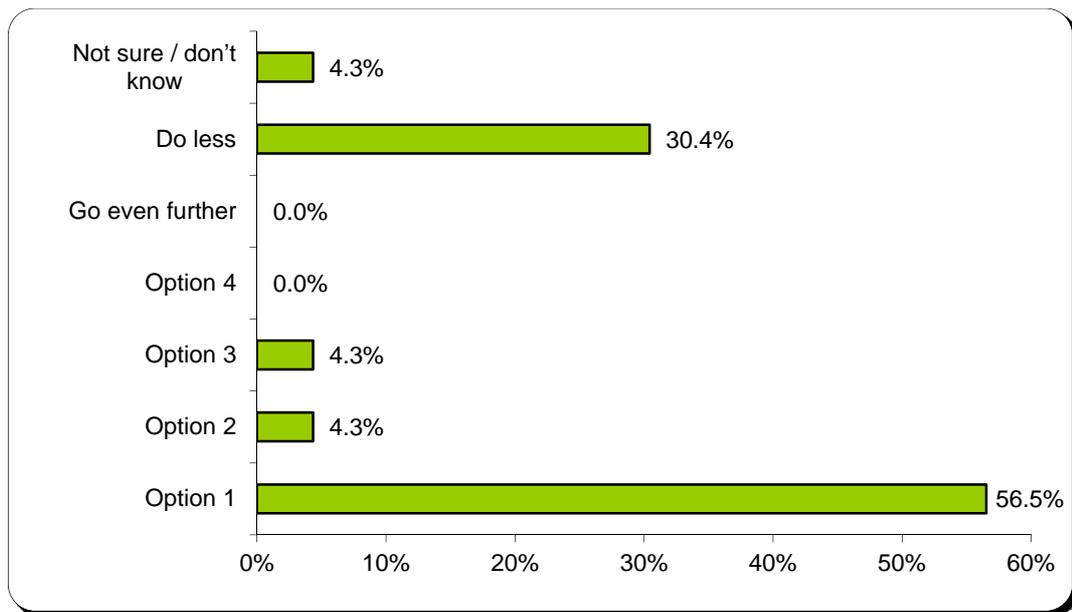
**Option 2:** Reduce the average frequency to 7.5 per 10 years and the average duration to 51 minutes at a total cost of £59m over the 8 year period (55p on each domestic bill per annum)

**Option 3:** Reduce the average frequency to 7 per 10 years and the average duration to 48 minutes at a total cost of £130m over the 8 year period (£1 on each domestic bill per annum)

**Option 4:** Reduce the average frequency to 6 per 10 years and the average duration to 41 minutes at a total cost of £310m over the 8 year period (£2.20 on each domestic bill per annum)

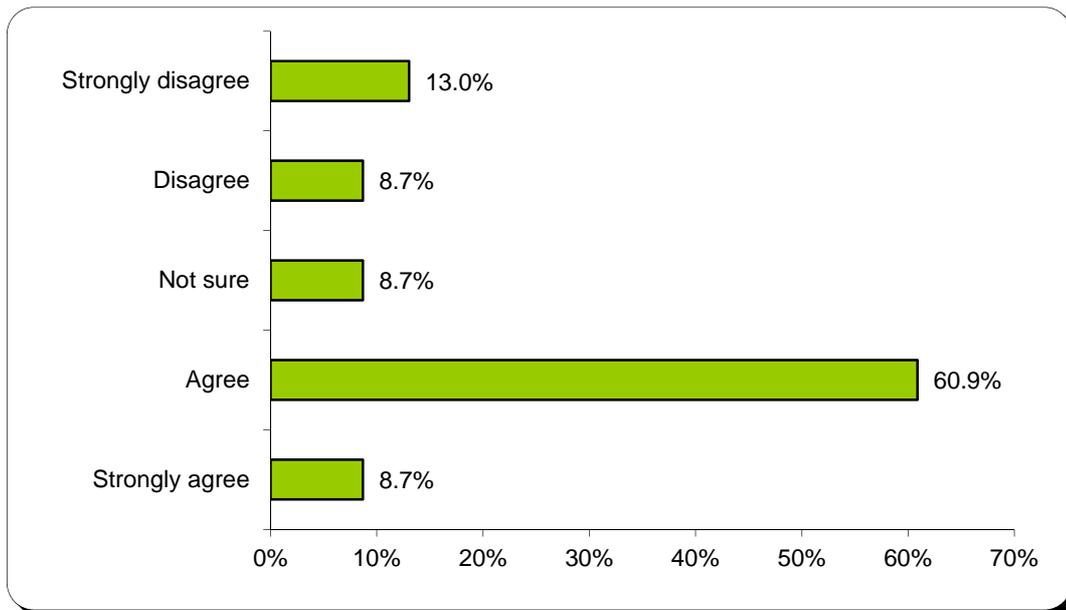
**Option 5:** Go even further

**Option 6:** Do less

**Option 7: Go even further**

## 5. Issue 2. Severe weather / emergency resilience

### 5.1. Q3. A tree trimming programme to reduce the risk of power cuts during storms should be a high priority for WPD



### 5.2. Comments

Table 1

- A local authority/council officer said that *'because of the weather this year the council have struggled to cut many of the trees down'*. S/he questioned whether home owners have a responsibility to cut down trees on their land
- A business customer representative, however, disagreed stating *'the property owner didn't ask for the power cables and it's not their responsibility to deal with issues that arise from having them there'*
- A business customer representative said that the infrastructure is older and when they were in place the trees were smaller
- A parish councillor said that *'WPD has improved tremendously in terms of reliability, but I think the biggest challenge is reconfiguring the network for new energy supply'*
- Another parish councillor didn't think that tree cutting was a big issue and asked *'are we not tinkering with the little bits instead of the larger challenges'*

- A parish councillor questioned the need to increase spending or go further than WPD's current plan by stating *'what's the point of increasing spending if the service is already getting better?'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'I can say on behalf of my members, they would rather have money invested in power sustainability'*

## Table 2

- An environmental representative asked the WPD representative *'to define a strategically important overhead line'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that *'emergency resilience was worth an increase in investment as incidents of severe weather are more likely to occur in the future and that these are the root cause of major outages regardless'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed with this remark. S/he added *'you don't have a great network anyway so you need to protect as much of it as possible'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that WPD should be cautious with tree cutting as s/he felt that *'many people did not want to see this happening'*
- An environmental representative said *'there is a need to be careful with significant trees, but there is potential for long-term gain from strategic tree cutting. It's unlikely that we'll have significant regrowth of veteran trees, but many other trees can be replaced with significant replacement planting that's appropriate for the loss'*
- A parish councillor asked about resilience tree protection orders
- Another parish councillor and council officer agreed that Option 3 was best
- An environmental representative stated that Option 2 would be *'less radical to natural environments'*
- The rest of the table selected option 2

## Table 3

- An environmental representative articulated that *'this is not an issue'* in his / her area. However, s/he was pleased to hear each tree cut down is replaced but enquired *'does it have to be one?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'whether or not the recent problems with ash trees was going to be an issue?'*
- An environmental representative was of the opinion that the replacement of the trees being cut down should be *'more widely communicated'*
- A local authority/council officer pondered *'whether or not WPD would have to go through the same planning permission process to cut down a tree as his residents do?'*

- A business customer representative was of the view that the current programme was good. *'Trees do not grow that fast, so WPD do not really need to accelerate'*
- A parish councillor declared that s/he would probably go for option 2, stating it *'wouldn't hurt, but would sort one or two of the problems. Especially as the cost is minimal'*
- A parish councillor made the point that *'very few people realise the size of the proportion of the amount of the bill that goes to maintaining the lines'*
- A parish councillor divulged that his / her parish chairman asked *'what do WPD do and how much does it cost?'* S/he was pleased to now know
- A local authority/council officer pointed out that the problem is that *'WPD do not have a public image'*

#### Table 4

- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he would favour investment Option 2. S/he explained that *'the extra cost of 14p is not a considerable increase considering it would result in bringing the programme forward by 5 years'*
- A business customer representative asked *'whether WPD takes in external environmental studies when deciding on the company's investment priorities?'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'WPD should be taking into account studies which predict the weather impact is going to worsen'*. S/he added *'this should encourage WPD to change its view and accelerate the tree felling programme'*. S/he added that *'it may be the case that tree felling is not the best option to mitigate the impact and it is hard to suggest an alternative without being an expert'*
- A local authority/council officer felt that *'tree felling is a particularly important issue in rural areas'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'tree felling is a temporary solution'* and asked *'shouldn't WPD be looking at long-term solutions such as undergrounding the line?'*

#### Table 5

- A local authority/council officer pointed out the current situation needs to be taken into consideration by WPD if they were to look at *'removing trees as the problem of ash trees dying is back.'* S/he was of the view that *'tree cutting is a hot potato and if the ash die-back situation was to become more severe the dynamics of the question will be changed'*
- The table all agreed option 1 was the best

### 5.3. Q4. Severe weather resilience: Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (WPD's current view). A resilience tree trimming programme of 20 years at no additional cost

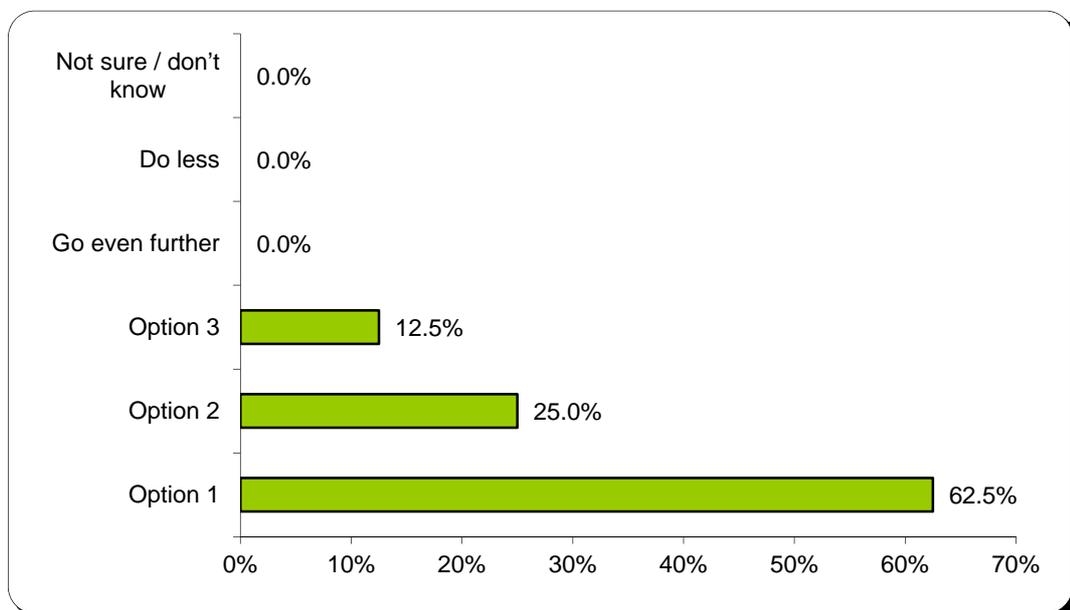
**Option 2:** The duration of the tree trimming programme accelerated to 20 years at an additional cost of £14.7 (14p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 3:** The duration of the tree trimming programme accelerated to 15 years at an additional cost of £45.7 (45p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 4:** Go even further

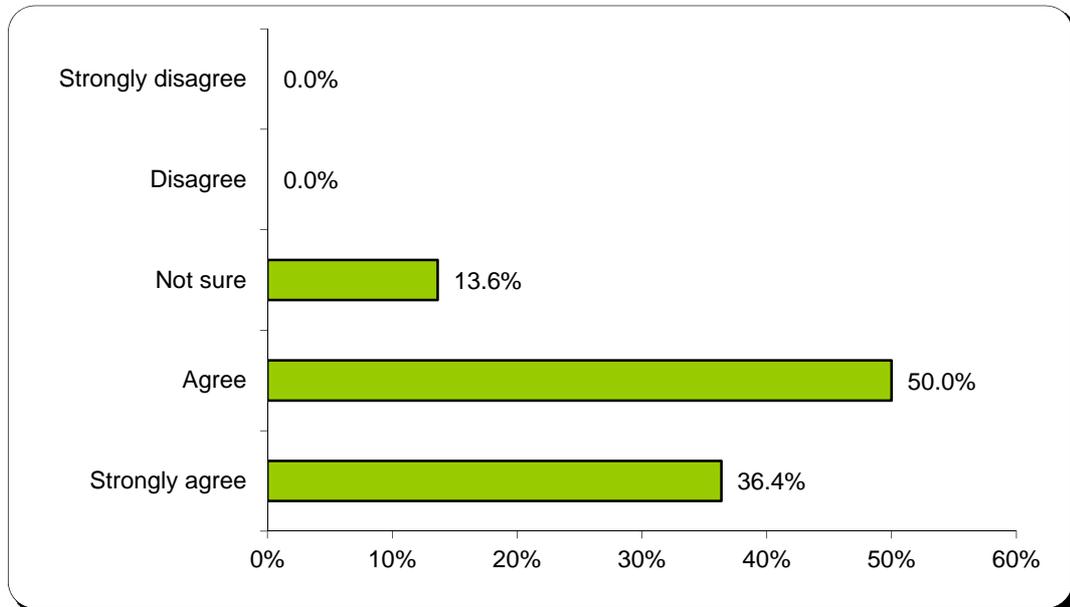
**Option 5:** Do less

**Option 6:** Not sure / don't know



## 6. Issue 3. Flooding:

### 6.1. Q5: Protecting substations against the risk of flooding should be a high priority for WPD:



### 6.2. Comments

Table 1

- A parish councillor said that flooding *'is a key issue'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed saying *'absolutely! a key issue'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'we have had flooding for the first time in our town and it is now a huge issue and worry for the council'*. S/he wanted improvements to flood defences in general not just WPD resources
- A parish councillor agreed and wanted a more strategic plan to deal with flooding from all stakeholders in communities rather than WPD and other organisations individual dealing with issues
- A local authority/council officer pointed out that *'it isn't just about the domestic customers and if businesses suffer then the community suffer economically'*
- A local authority/council officer said that *'we need WPD and all of the stakeholders involved in the community to get together to address the issue of flooding.'* S/he believed that there is a possibility for working together with other organisations

- A parish councillor agreed but stated that *'strategic planning is needed to deal with many of the issues not just flooding, and this should be done with other power organisations as well'*
- A local authority/council officer wanted to know *'do you not get involved with local authorities to deal with installing solar panels.'* A WPD answered this question
- A parish councillor expressed his / her worry about WPD being reactive to green technology stating *'it is frightening to me'*. S/he would prefer WPD to be leading the way rather than simply reacting

## Table 2

- A stakeholder said *'I think WPD has got it right at the moment'*
- A parish councillor stated that *'I think that the cost benefit isn't that great, I would stick with what WPD is doing at the moment'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed that WPD's current approach *'was appropriate'*. S/he was of the view that *'it should keep an eye on where flooding is likely to occur and invest accordingly'*

## Table 3

- A local authority/council officer remarked that his / her town has experienced flooding. It was, however, out of the town and not long term. *'The main group affected was Tesco but they had their own generator and continued trading'*
- A business customer representative stated that s/he believes the issue of flooding *'was down to planners'*
- An environmental representative questioned *'whether or not the most recent Environment Agency data had been used to rank the substations danger of flooding'*
- A local authority/council officer said that the table must be careful of an *'I'm all right Jack'* attitude. S/he went on to say that *'as a councillor you don't just represent those on the hill, but also those by the river. Asking places like Birmingham to subsidise places like Cornwall seems fair to me'*
- A parish councillor agreed, saying, *'you have got to look at it collectively and you should look at it generously'*

## Table 4

- An environmental representative suggested that *'it is hard for WPD to predict where flooding will hit and where to focus flood mitigation investment'*. S/he suggested that *'choosing certain locations to focus investment won't help resilience if the area doesn't turn out to be an area affected by flooding in the future'*
- A stakeholder stated that *'flooding hasn't had an impact on him / her but recognises that flooding is a major issue for all DNOs'*

- A local authority/council officer stated *'if forecasts are right and sea levels are going to rise, flooding will become an increasing problem in low-lying areas of the UK'*
- Another local authority/council officer asked *'what the impact, where recent flooding had taken place, had been on WPD?'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that *'it seems sensible to have substations that are raised up to make sure that more are protected in the future'*
- A stakeholder added *'as switchgear manufacturers the company is being told to install equipment at a higher level'*
- A business customer representative questioned *'whether WPD knows how many customers are at risk out of the 7.7 million customers WPD serve'. S/he suggested that 'option 1 may protect 1 million customers but stakeholders need to know how many more are still at risk after the 1 million'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed that *'this is an important point; how many more are prone to flooding out of the 7.7 million customers?'*
- A local authority/council officer added that s/he would *'expect WPD to know how many of the 7.7 million customers are at risk'. S/he explained that 'it is hard to choose an option without this information'*

#### Table 5

- A domestic customer representative said s/he *'does not suffer from flooding'*
- A local authority/council officer stated it is *a 'big issue in Somerset and the situation needs improving'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out there is an increase of flooding every year and therefore *'more investment from WPD is needed'*
- A parish councillor agreed with the above point
- A parish councillor felt option 3 was the best as it is *'best to be on the safe side'. S/he explained how the village where s/he lived has 'expanded and has suffered from lots of flooding'*
- A parish councillor commented that it appears *'floodplains are being ignored'. S/he asked how big a problem is it and 'is global warming having an effect?'*
- A parish councillor disagreed and pointed out Gloucester has always flooded and asked *'what's new?'*
- A parish councillor said the main problem flooding causes is it *'knocks out' the electricity supply*
- A local authority/council officer questioned option 1 helping one million customers by asking *'how many vulnerable households are there?'* S/he asked if all customers will

experience flooding. S/he went to ask *'how many substations are vulnerable and at risk?'*

### 6.3. Q6. Protection against flooding: Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (WPD's current view) to protect the 100 most at risk substations at a total cost of £34m but at no additional cost to customers over the 8 year period

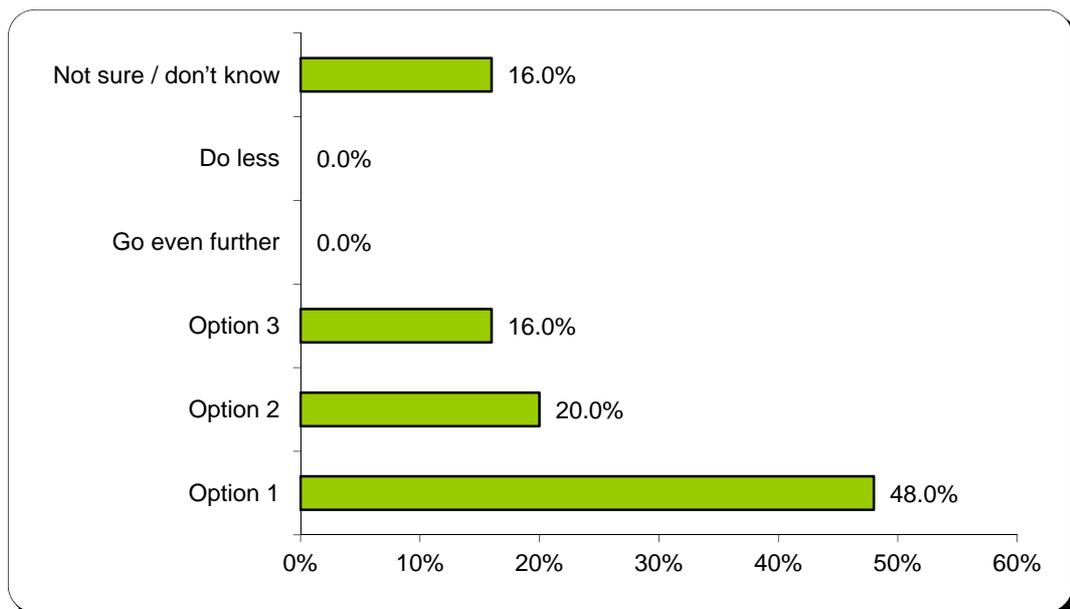
**Option 2:** To protect the 150 most at risk substations at a total cost of £50m (20p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 3:** To protect the 200 most at risk substations at a total cost of £67m (50p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 4:** Go even further

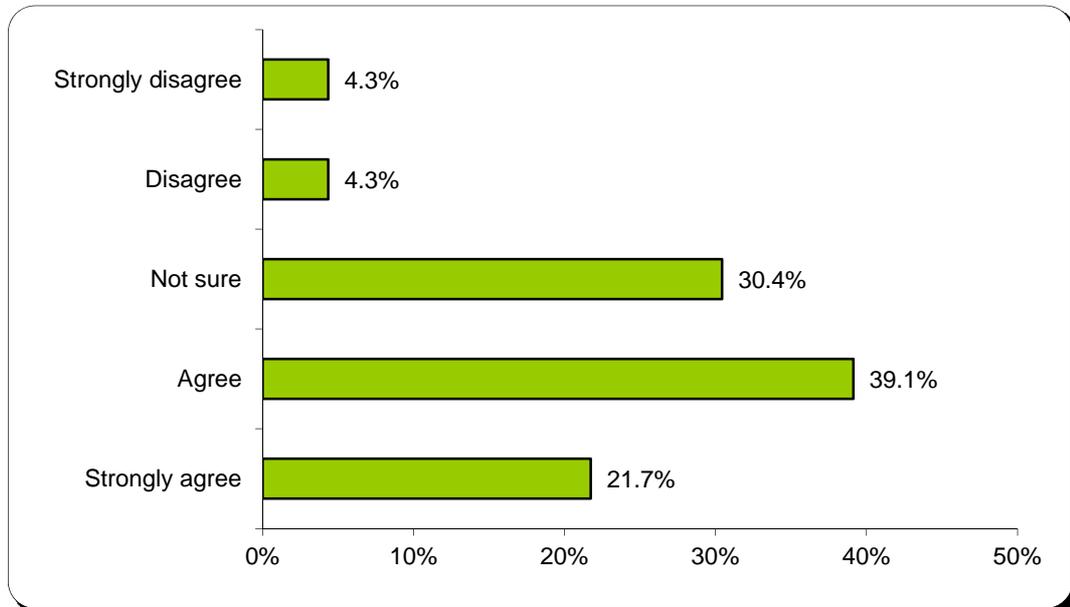
**Option 5:** Do less

**Option 6:** Don't know / not sure



## 7. Issue 4. Oil and gas leaks

### 7.1. Q7. Acting to reduce the risk of oil leaks from fluid-filled cables and SF6 gas leaks from equipment, should be a high priority for WPD?



### 7.2. Comments

Table 1

- A parish councillor questioned the focus of these options saying, *'shouldn't WPD be looking at the bigger impacts in terms of office and car emissions, rather than the smaller issue of gas leaks'*. S/he believed a larger than 1% improvement could be made by doing this at no extra cost
- A parish councillor felt that WPD *'should be going beyond the requirements put in place to them in terms of emissions'*
- A local authority/council officer questioned *'whether the replacement of older equipment during usual maintenance would solve the issue as these bits of equipment would be replaced and the leaks become less prevalent, therefore making any further charges null and void'*

Table 2

- A parish councillor stated that oil and gas leaks were a *'fairly big issue'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'does WPD have to reduce emissions as part of its efforts to lower its carbon footprint? Is the reduction of oil and gas leaks included as part of that so you're obliged to do it anyway?'*

- Another local authority/council officer asked whether any additives to the oil were damaging to the environment
- A parish councillor commented, *'so the change to the oil is not really the issue then?'*
- A stakeholder said, *'so you're currently replacing leaky switches? I would support this programme for utilities, it's revenue for us'*
- An environmental representative was of the view that Option 2 seemed to have environmental benefits and provided value, therefore s/he felt that this would be the best option
- A local authority/council officer felt that either option 1 or 2 would be appropriate
- A parish councillor stated that s/he did not think that option 3 was very expensive and that *'most people are willing to pay for environmental benefits'*
- Another parish councillor countered that *'squeeze customers too hard and they're going to be un-environmentally friendly in other ways'*

### Table 3

- The table agreed that this was an issue that was new to them all
- A parish councillor said that s/he was aware of substations as there is one on his / her farm. However, the issues with cables *'was new to him / her'*
- A business customer representative was of the opinion that option 2 was appropriate as s/he wished to *'step it up a bit'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed with this sentiment, *'as long as it's not too expensive'*
- A business customer representative enquired what the additive in the oil was: *'nothing obnoxious, I hope'*

### Table 4

- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he wasn't aware of this issue before the workshop
- A business customer representative wanted to know if this is this a problem that is only affecting *'big cables'*
- A business customer representative queried *'the percentage of WPD cables that are filled with gas'*
- A business customer representative asked *'whether the reason the switchgear equipment in leaking is due to it being out of date'*

**Table 5**

- A local authority/council officer commented s/he was *'unaware'* SF6 was many more thousands of times more damaging than CO2. S/he stated it is a worry that these materials are used and asked *'are there any alternatives?'*

### 7.3. Q8. Reducing oil and gas leaks: Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan

**Option 1:** Replace the worst 1% of equipment with the highest leakage rate at a total cost of £14m (10p per domestic customer, per annum)

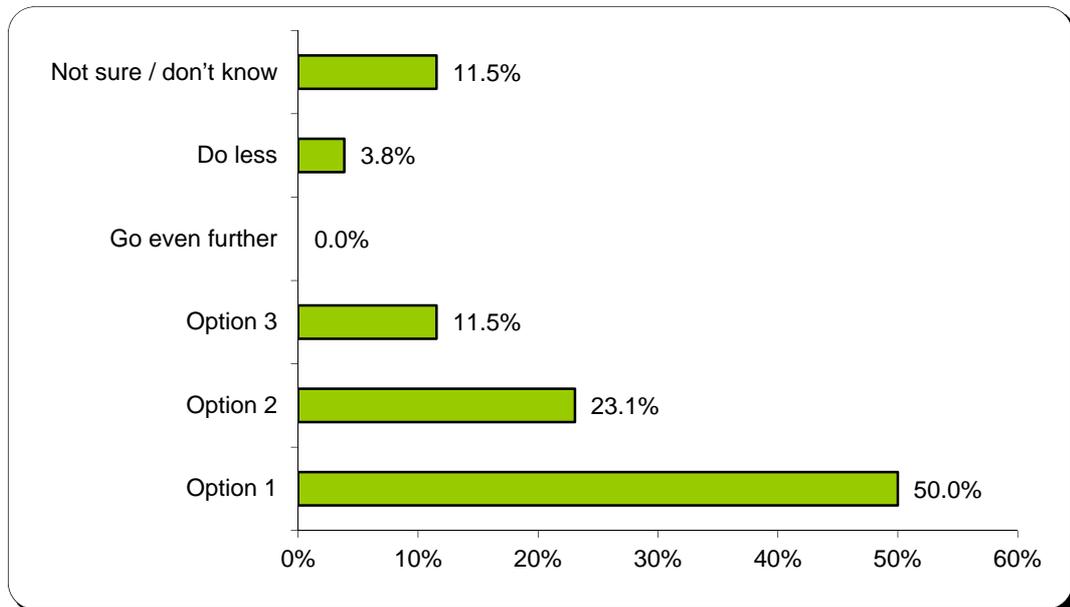
**Option 2:** Replace the worst 5% of equipment with the highest leakage rate at a total cost of £65m (50p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 3:** Replace the worst 10% of equipment with the highest leakage rate at a total cost of £132m (£1 per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 4:** Go even further

**Option 5:** Do less

**Option 6:** Don't know / not sure



### 7.4. Additional comments

**Table 1**

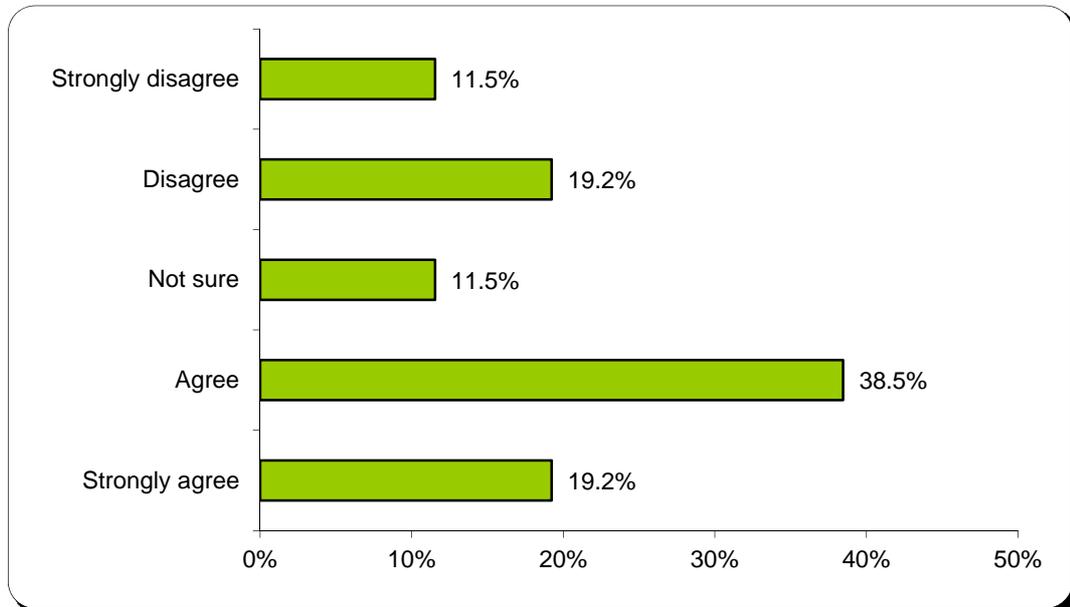
- A business customer representative wanted to know *'how many customers are affected by flooding?'* S/he stated *'it was difficult to decide which action to take without having a good idea of how many people would be unprotected or suffer as a consequence of each option'*

**Table 2**

- A parish councillor asked *'whether there were any other risks that damage the resilience of network'*
- The table agreed that the average figures given by WPD about power cuts were *'meaningless'* and that these need to account for the type of customer
- The consensus was that there were *'big wins'* to be gained from tree cutting
- The table concluded that WPD's programme to mitigate flooding was *'adequate'*. The overall agreement was that SF6 gas was an important issue but *'difficult to call'*

## 8. Issue 5. Worst served customers

**Q9. Improving service for our worst served customers should be one of WPD's high priorities:**



### 8.1. Comments

**Table 1**

- A business customer representative pointed out that *'previously there has been funding for broadband to remote areas and is there any possibility of finding funding from the EU for remote areas as this is an infrastructure issue?'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that *'in the south west we have a lot of older people, the electricity bill is one of the biggest bills and it's important not to put too much pressure on them'*
- A local authority/council officer made the point that *'there are some people who live in these remote areas that don't need to, so if it was a problem for them they have the ability to relocate'*
- A business customer representative stated that if he lived in one of these areas *'I would buy a generator'. S/he also wondered 'whether it was possible for a generator to be supplied by WPD' and if 'this would be a more cost effective way of dealing with the problems with supply'*
- A parish councillor asked *'what the failure rate was for the most hard to reach and where do they live?'*

- A business customer representative stated that remote customers *'pay the same and therefore deserve the same service'*
- A local authority/council officer reasoned that *'if you are living in one of these areas it is not a shock to them as they know the issues'*
- A parish councillor stated that *'remote customers are more likely to have renewable sources of energy and therefore the costs could come from a different budget'*

## Table 2

- A local authority/council officer stated *'option 3 sounds most sensible'*
- A parish councillor said *'they're lucky they have any connections at all. If this was the 50s or 60s they wouldn't have had any power!'*
- A stakeholder commented *'why should anyone else have to pay for their poor connections?'*
- A local authority/council officer stated *'I don't agree, quite often worst served customers can include vulnerable or even remote communities'*
- Another parish councillor said *'I disagree, it was a great historical event when farms were connected to power lines, we should maintain this service to them, they need support, they're part of the countryside too'*
- A local authority/council officer queried the definition of *'worst served'*
- An environmental representative was of the view that *'undergrounding could help increase service resilience'*. S/he added that *'option 3 would be the best choice'*
- Everyone agreed that somewhere between option 2 and 3 would be the optimum

## Table 3

- A business customer representative said that s/he would *'imagine many farmers would suffer from power cuts so would be relevant to his / her organisation'*
- A parish councillor agreed that it is *'an issue from a farming point of view'*
- A parish councillor said that while s/he understood it was a small number of people affected, s/he *'would back spending a little more money'*
- A business customer representative thought that farmers are not just without a TV during a power cut, it has a major impact on business. *'If they cannot milk their cows they cannot sell it'*
- A local authority/council officer enquired as to whether the reduction of 10,000 to 4,000 would be over the 8 years
- A parish councillor declared that *'the cost again is so minimal, get on with it and go for option four'*

- A business customer representative stated that s/he would agree that option four is the best option *'because it is very important to the group I represent'*

#### Table 4

- An environmental representative stated s/he experiences 3 outages in a year, which doesn't *'quite make me a worst served customer'*
- An environmental representative stated that s/he would endorse WPD's rationale that *'there is an acceptance among residents in a rural area that power cuts will happen more'*. S/he thought the service is improving
- A local authority/council officer explained that s/he would *'like to see that properties that are not currently connected are connected'*. S/he recognised *'it isn't practical to serve everybody but someone should be able to choose to connect and WPD should be able to subsidise that connection'*
- A business customer representative wanted to know *'how much of the current bill (£100) goes towards improving worst served customers?'*
- A business customer representative felt that *'there is a social obligation to help those who are worst served, but wasn't sure if 15p is the right amount'*
- A business customer representative added *'the question then becomes how much of an obligation WPD should have and should WPD fund that obligation?'*
- A business customer representative queried *'whether WPD's profits could go towards funding its social obligations?'*

#### Table 5

- A parish councillor commented s/he and his / her village feel *'they fit into that category'*
- A domestic customer representative agreed
- A parish councillor pointed out conditions and service have improved over time. S/he commented that in winter s/he experiences *'a power cut once every 2-3 weeks lasting 2 or 10 minutes which is a vast improvement in the last 6 months'*. S/he felt that new communities and remote ones *'will suffer the most'*. S/he said s/he would like WPD to do more and option 4 is the best option
- A parish councillor stated the breaks in power they endure *'are annoying rather than damaging as items such as fridges are not affected'*. S/he felt *'there has been a great improvement over the last few years'* and that option 3 should be in place now and then in the future WPD should move onto option 4
- A local authority/council officer said s/he used to live in a remote area and experienced lots of outages most winters. S/he compared this to his / her experience of living in a town where s/he has experienced the occasional outage which *'is annoying but doesn't last long'*

- A local authority/council officer commented *'it is difficult to increase bills in cities and option 2 or 3 is best'*
- A business customer representative disagreed and stated *'5p is not too much to ask'*
- A business customer representative agreed an *'extra charge is fair and added power cuts in severe weather are just irritating and are not a problem'*
- A parish councillor pointed out *'businesses are under pressure'*
- A local authority/council officer put in context that *'charging 5 million customers extra to subsidise 10k is a big ask'*
- A local authority/council officer stated customers need to know how many additions to the bill there will be. S/he stated *'5p here and 10p there soon adds up'*

## 8.2. Q10. Service to remote customers: Which of the following investment options would you support?

**Option 1:** (Now) Keep the number of 'worst served' customers at 10k, at no extra cost to customers

**Option 2:** Reduce the number of 'worst served' customers from 10k to 8k at a total cost of £1.2m (2p per domestic customer, per annum)

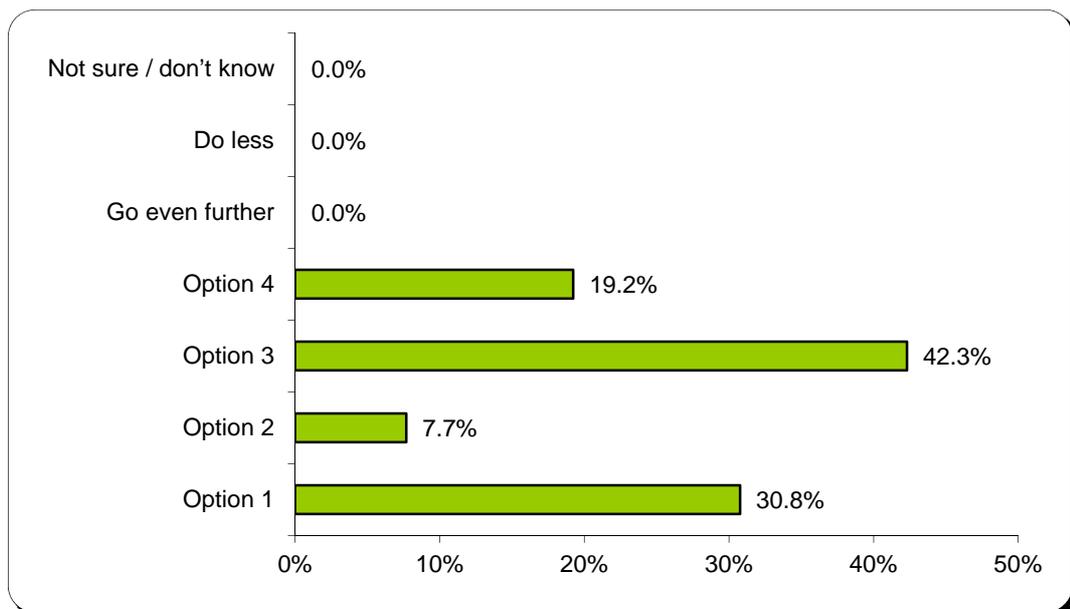
**Option 3:** (WPD's current view) Reduce the number of 'worst served' customers from 10k to 6k at a total cost of £3.6m (5p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 4:** (WPD's current view) Reduce the number of 'worst served' customers from 10k to 4k at a total cost of £8.1m (15p per domestic customer, per annum)

Option 5: Go even further

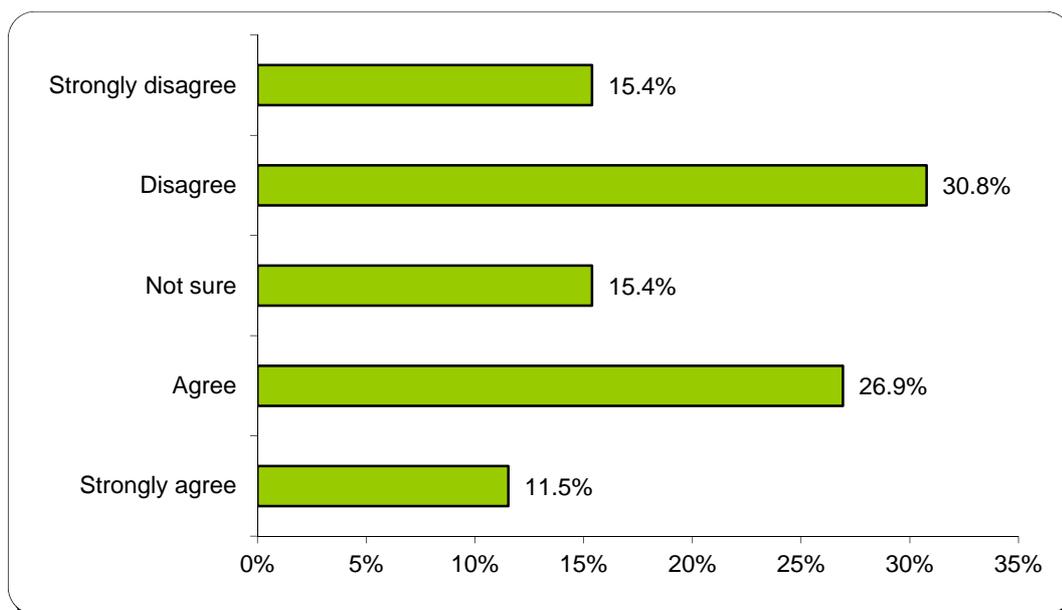
Option 6: Do less

Option 7: Don't know / not sure



## 9. Issue 6. Undergrounding in national parks and AONBs

### 9.1. Q11. Replacing overhead lines with underground cables in National parks should be a high priority for WPD (no supply reliability or carbon reduction benefits)



### 9.2. Comments

**Table 1**

- A local authority/council officer said *'I don't think it spoils the view'*
- A business customer representative said *'you don't notice them as they have been there a long time'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'I don't think it needs to be addressed'*
- A parish councillor clarified his view, saying *'only new lines need to be undergrounded but the existing ones are fine until they need replacement'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative stated that *'overhead lines detract from AONBs and that WPD needs to ensure more undergrounding is added to AONBs'*. S/he also pointed out that *'undergrounding costs were substantially higher than those for overheads'*. S/he added that *'WPD also needs to supply properties that are off-grid and that these should be targeted for basic services as these are in severe need of a power supply'*

- A parish councillor was of the view that *'any additions of wind farm would nullify any advantages of WPD's undergrounding programme'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he *'was more interested in the deliverability of WPD's undergrounding programme'*. S/he pointed out that this was not an easy issue in AONBs
- An environmental representative felt that this programme needs to be *'manageable, smaller, better quality and deliverable at a feasible rate'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that Options 1 or 2 would be best alongside *'doing less more carefully'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'overhead lines can actually enhance the habitat, there are also environmental gains to be had from these'*

### Table 3

- An environmental representative stated that *'a stakeholder steering group was set up in the South West of the UK to discuss what has worked in other parts of the country: The group has set up a list of iconic locations'*
- An environmental representative was of the opinion that *'there was some merit in WPD's statement that other programmes by other organisations have been over-ambitious'*, stating that *'it can be incredibly complicated'*
- An environmental representative thought that undergrounding would be welcomed by National Parks and AONBs and that they would *'look to encourage it in the next period'*
- A business customer representative pointed out that *'we are talking about the South West. WPD stretches all the way into the Midlands and into Wales'*
- An environmental representative emphasised that *'there is a gap in AONBs in the Midlands'*
- A local authority/council officer stressed the point that *'it goes back to people subsidising areas like the South West's AONBs'*. S/he still believes that this is necessary
- A business customer representative queried whether or not option four would be achievable
- An environmental representative responded, saying that it would be *'very hard to achieve'*. S/he did concede, however, that option two or three would be achievable

### Table 4

- A business customer representative suggested that *'undergrounding depends on the age of the cables that are already there and if they need replacing'*
- An environmental representative wanted to know *'if this is a requirement from Ofgem'*

- A local authority/council officer questioned *'whether it is easier to cure a fault in an overhead cable than an underground cable'*. S/he asked, *'does undergrounding cause a negative impact on some customers?'*
- A business customer representative queried *'how many kilometres of cable is over ground in the designated areas?'*
- A business customer representative wanted to know *'if WPD has funding already available to carry out undergrounding'*
- A business customer representative queried *'whether the environmental impacts of undergrounding outweigh the visual impact?'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'40km in an 8 year period, in the context, is not much'*
- A business customer representative felt that *'it is difficult to choose between all the different options' it would be useful see the options next to each other, almost a shopping list of what do I want to buy'*
- An environmental representative added that s/he is *'really unsure of what the right level of investment is with undergrounding'* but was *'pleased that there is a contrast from 2008; in 2008 you were the only DNO not carrying out practice'*. S/he said that some national parks in the area will benefit from undergrounding, *'it is a high cost but is a genuine benefit to a national park by investing in the national park as a national asset'*
- A business customer representative asked in a national park and asset replacement *'would you replace "like for like" rather than choosing undergrounding if you had to commit to do more?'*
- An environmental representative felt *'it seems to be about identifying opportunities where undergrounding is a feasible solution, it is very expensive, it needs to be on a case by case basis, look for where you get best value for money'*

#### Table 5

- A local authority/council officer said it was of *'no concern to them'*
- A parish councillor agreed and explained s/he lives close to an AONB but feels the topic is *'no longer relevant'* to them and compared his / her experience to when s/he lived near an AONB. S/he was of the opinion that *'only local people will have a strong opinion and the argument will be a "cosmetic" one'*
- A parish councillor pointed out it is not just parks and AONB looking to remove overhead cables. S/he said towns are *'also looking into taking down cables'* and for those that had *'it had a big impact on the architecture'*. S/he went on to state that *'pylons are an eyesore'*. S/he said that *'from a tourist view towns and AONB should implement some changes'*
- A local authority/council officer disagreed and pointed out *'people need to understand if they want the electricity then you have to put up with the bad points'*. S/he said if the

undergrounding of cables is do-able and feasible and the resources are there then it should be done *'but if it is a stretch too far then it shouldn't be done'*

- A parish councillor questioned the *'health risk aspect of having pylons and cables in residential areas and asked if undergrounding the cables will be a health benefit?'*

### 9.3. Q12. Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (Now) Underground 40k of overhead lines in national parks and AONB's at a cost of £6m (9p per customer, per annum)

**Option 2:** (WPD's current view) Underground 70k of overhead lines in national parks and AONB's at a cost of £10.5m (16p per customer, per annum)

**Option 3:** (Now) Underground 120k of overhead lines in national parks and AONB's at a cost of £18m (28p per customer, per annum)

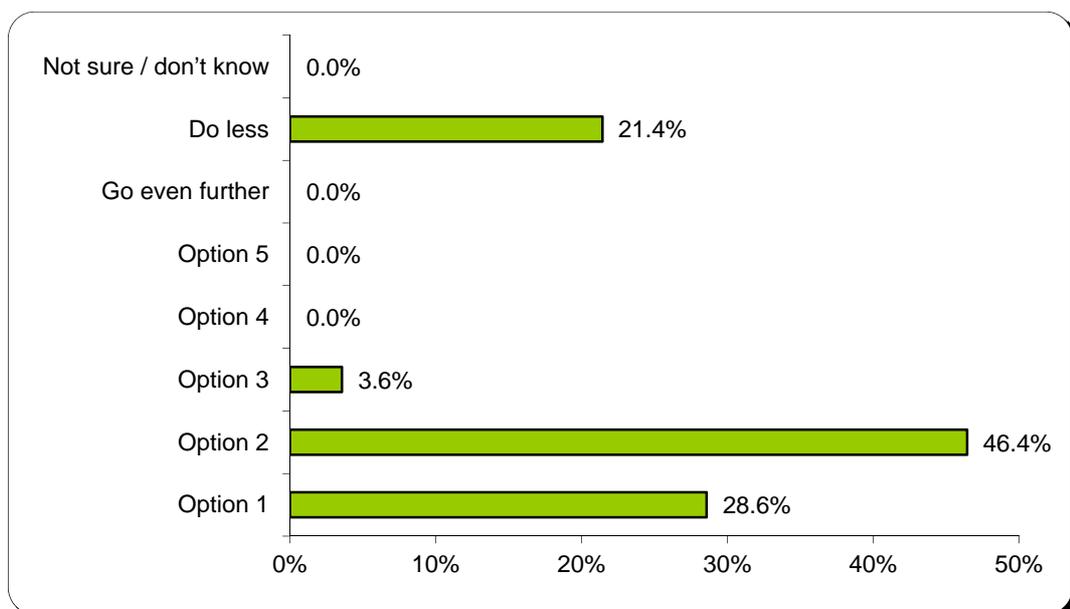
**Option 4:** Underground 240k of overhead lines in national parks and AONB's at a cost of £36m (56p per customer, per annum)

**Option 5:** Underground 480k of overhead lines in national parks and AONB's at a cost of £72m (£1.12 per customer, per annum)

**Option 6:** Go even further

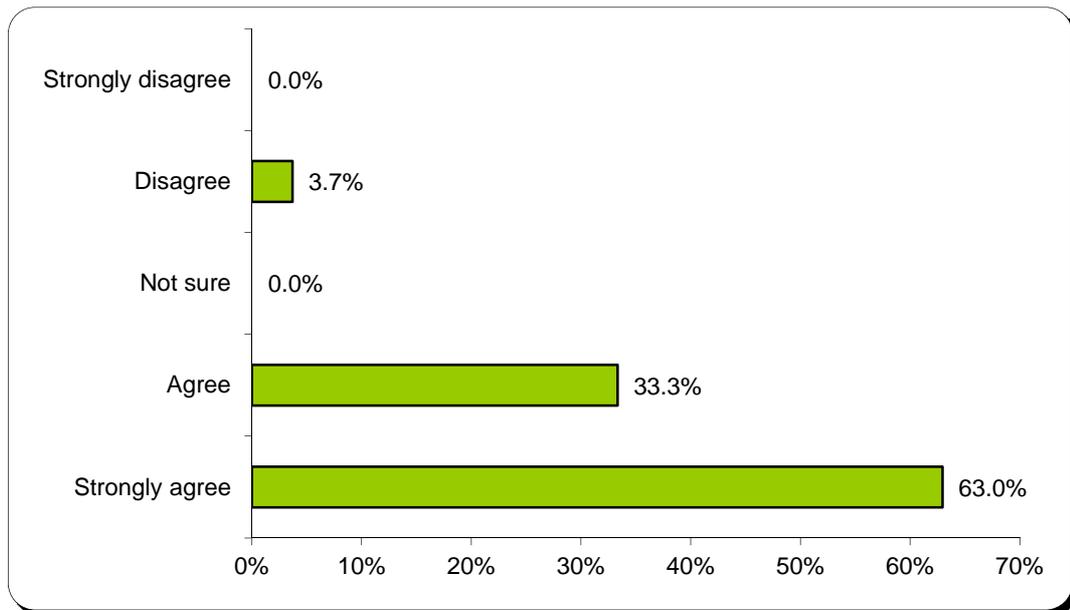
**Option 7:** Do less

**Option 8:** Don't know / Not sure



## 10. Issue 7. New connections – process speed

### 10.1. Q13. The current time taken from first contact to completed connection is acceptable



### 10.2. Comments

Table 1

- A business customer representative said s/he couldn't see it as a problem as *'companies who are building factories or houses have long-term plans and therefore the time-limit should be no problem as it can be factored in to plans'*
- A local authority/council officer responded that *'it seems fair enough to have to wait 90 days'*
- A local authority/council officer was not sure about the current view as s/he felt that *'it should be made more efficient.'* S/he also held the view that WPD must *'make sure that these targets are actually made'*
- A business customer representative reasoned that in terms of charging business for new connections there is little issue for them, stating *'as a company you can control this by pricing'*
- A business customer representative proffered the view *'if I wanted to have an accelerated process I should have an option for express service'*
- A parish councillor stated *'the customer should be paying, not us!'*

- A parish councillor told of a positive experience s/he had with WPD. *'I had a fantastic experience with WPD, it took time to get hold of an individual but when I did they were fantastic'*
- A business customer representative expressed the view that that s/he didn't care about having one point of contact; instead s/he wanted *'an intelligent system where anybody you speak to has and understands your case history'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed, stating *'the person you are talking to needs to have your personal history so that it doesn't matter who is there, as long as they understand your issues the process becomes more efficient'*
- A local authority/council officer said that *'the local council is delivering courses on Facebook and Twitter, it is the future'*
- A business customer representative believes WPD *'have to be flexible'*
- A parish councillor stated *'the whole system needs to be electronic and more efficient'*

## Table 2

- A local authority/council officer felt that the amount of time it takes applications to get through planning process (30-90 period) was *'sufficient'*
- A parish councillor supported this view. S/he added *'you have to be a useless project manager to be unable to fit around these timescales'*
- Another parish councillor commented that different applications have different needs. S/he added that *'planning a new car factory takes a long time as it needs a huge supply'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that it takes almost 2-3 years to get similar applications through the planning process
- The majority of the table was sympathetic to WPD's current approach. Most agreed that it was up to a project manager to align timescales as appropriate and that these costs should not be passed on to the customer
- An environmental representative disagreed with the majority view that 90 days was a sufficient amount of time for new connections. S/he was of the view that *'more time was needed to be taken into account for undergrounding'*
- A stakeholder said *'this is not something I'd put a sensible view forward on'*
- A parish councillor stated this/her surprise at *'how this topic had been discussed from the angle who should the cost fall on - developers or customers'*
- An environmental representative commented *'to play devil's advocate, housing in a rural location will add to the cost of the build. This might be a considerable amount of money, maybe the developer shouldn't pay if it means that this will bring down the overall cost of housing'*

- A local authority/council officer stated that *'there's not much room left for housing associations to build affordable housing, the provision has largely fallen on developers'*
- Another local authority/council officer was of the view that most people that want a new connection are used to this system, *'it appears to work ok as it is and therefore'* could not see the need to improve it
- A stakeholder concluded that *'if it's not broken, leave it alone!'*

### Table 3

- The table was open about the fact that they had no exposure to this issue prior to the workshop
- A parish councillor informed the table that his / her son had some experience with the process after getting a connection for his PV system and it *'went like a dream'*
- A business customer representative expressed the view that *'30 days in three years of development would be nothing'*
- A business customer representative conveyed that s/he would hope that when s/he called WPD *'the person on the other end knew something about it'*
- A business customer representative stated that s/he would not like to be *'put on hold for hours on end'*
- A business customer representative was of the opinion that all of the options available are *'really important'*
- An environmental representative remarked that *'the last thing you want to be doing is scrolling through telephone menus. You want a direct number!'*
- A business customer representative articulated that although it would be relevant if s/he was in the position where she needed it, *'the 35p for an account manager is expensive'* to him / her now

### Table 4

- A local authority/council officer wanted an explanation of the difference between WPD's definition of a small and large customer. S/he presumed that *'most connection enquiries come from large customers'*
- A local authority/council officer explained that s/he has had experience of new connections as a council member
- A business customer representative wanted to know *'at what point would someone from WPD come and talk to someone wanting a connection?'* and *'when would the 30 days start'* from. S/he added that *in the context of the planning process 30 days doesn't seem very long'*
- A local authority/council officer felt that *'practical issues must have an impact on WPD's delivery times'*

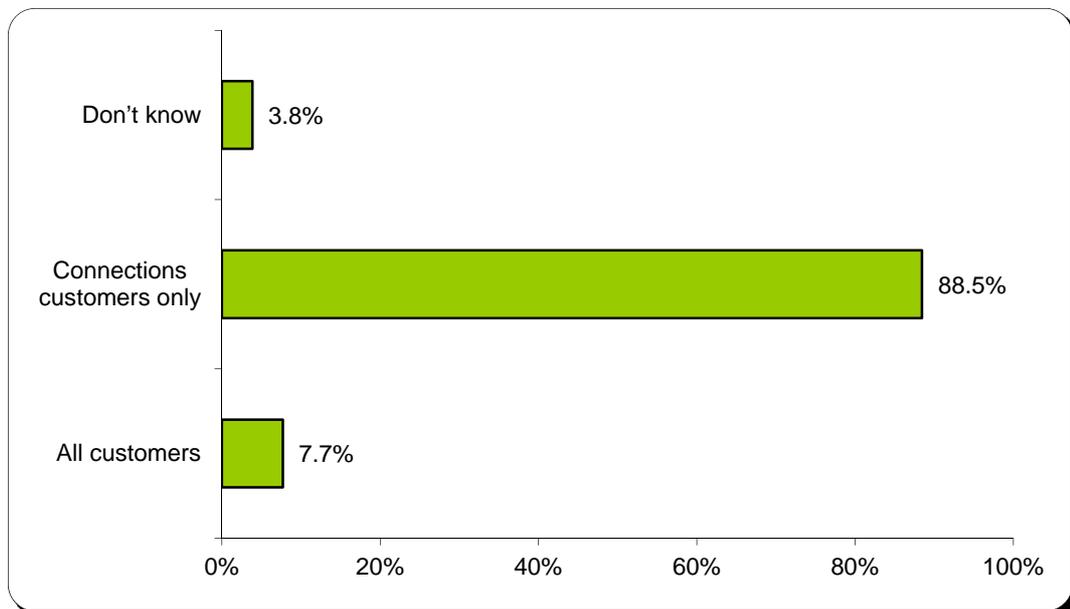
- A local authority/council officer queried whether *'the reason a connection doesn't occur is because a connection is unable to happen or be delivered or WPD doesn't get the business'*
- A local authority/council officer stated *'if developers want connections they should pay for them, as they are making large margins from development'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out *'if customers want WPD to improve their connections service, WPD has to improve their infrastructure in the first place'*. S/he pointed out *'there is an upfront cost to enable WPD carry out this work, which is why WPD need to charge customers in the first place'*
- A local authority/council officer wanted to know *'if WPD are quoting in a competitive environment for new connections'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'this is again an argument of should the developer pay or should all customers pay'*
- A local authority/council officer felt *'developers should pay for this priority'*
- A business customer representative suggested *'improved new connection customer communication should be normal business investment for WPD; shouldn't WPD do this anyway to ensure it keeps up with the rest of the world?'*
- An environmental representative stated *'WPD should be striving to provide the best service as possible; an account manager would be useful but is very expensive'*. S/he pointed out that *'customers do not currently have the option to pay extra for an improved service'*

**Table 5**

- A business customer representative commented on his / her experience of having lots of new connections in place. S/he stated *'no problems were encountered and the overall service was very good'*. S/he pointed out *'it is only a problem the first time' you go through the process for a new connection as you don't know the process and what forms need to be completed but second time round it is easy'*
- A business customer representative was of the view that the *'first point of contact needs to be improved'* but was unsure how this could be achieved. S/he said his / her experience *'was only through a business connection rather than domestic'*
- A parish councillor commented on his / her partners experience of getting a new connection set up. S/he was told to speak to his / her provider and once the first point of contact had been made contact all information was given. S/he thought only the first point of contact for who to call was a *'confusing problem'*
- A parish councillor pointed out s/he has *'never been directly contacted by WPD so therefore was unaware of the services they provide'*. S/he stated *'the obvious first point of call is the bill provider'*
- The table agreed there was no place for option 2 & 3 to be used

- A local authority/council officer commented that *'30 days' notice for a new connection is calculated into plans'* and therefore is *'acceptable'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the opinion *'developers should pay for new connections'* but pointed out it will *'add an extra cost to the house price when being sold'*. S/he therefore felt the best option would be to add an extra cost to the house bill and this cost *'should be spread across all customers'*
- A business customer representative disagreed and said *'if the connection is for a commercial factor then the developer should pay'*

### 10.3. Q13a. Who do you think should pay for new connections improvements?



## 10.4. Q14: Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (WPD's current view) The average time from first contact to completion at 30 days for a small scheme and 90 days for a large scheme at no extra cost

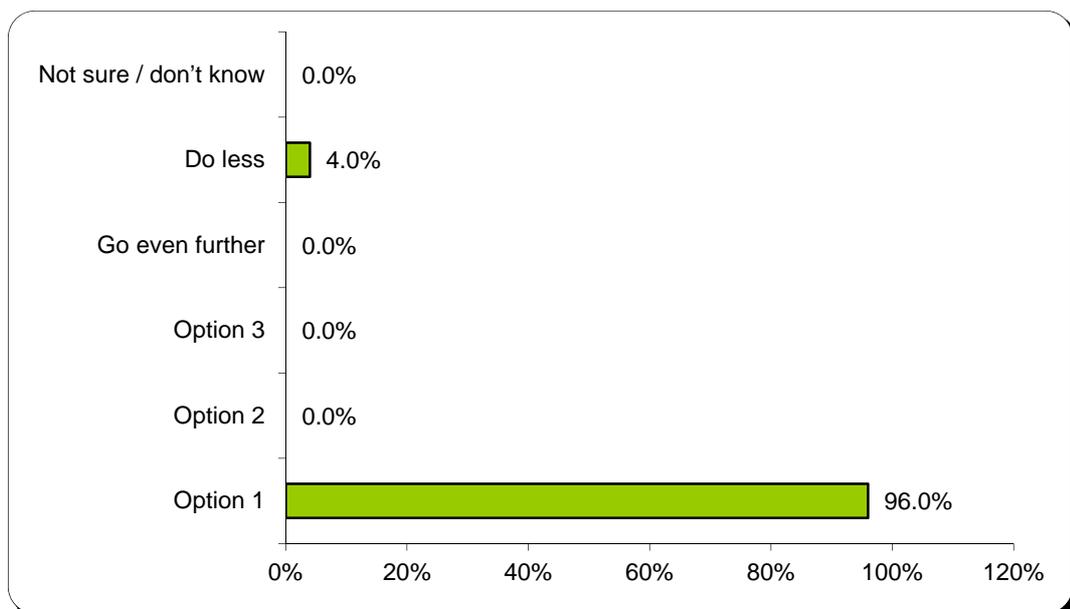
**Option 2:** The average time from first contact to completion reduced to 20 days for a small scheme and 60 days for a large scheme at a cost of £28.3m (22p per domestic customer per annum)

**Option 3:** The average time from first contact to completion reduced to 10 days for a small scheme and 30 days for a large scheme at a cost of £56.6m (44p per domestic customer per annum)

**Option 4:** Go even further

**Option 5:** Do less

**Option 6:** Don't know / not sure



# 11. Issue 8. Innovative customer communications

## 11.1. Q15. Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (Now) A separate point of contact at each stage: enquiry, application, wayleaves / consents, on-site works/construction at no extra cost

**Option 2:** Now plus a dedicated contact number (with better expertise at first contact) at a cost of £3.2m (3p per domestic customer, per annum)

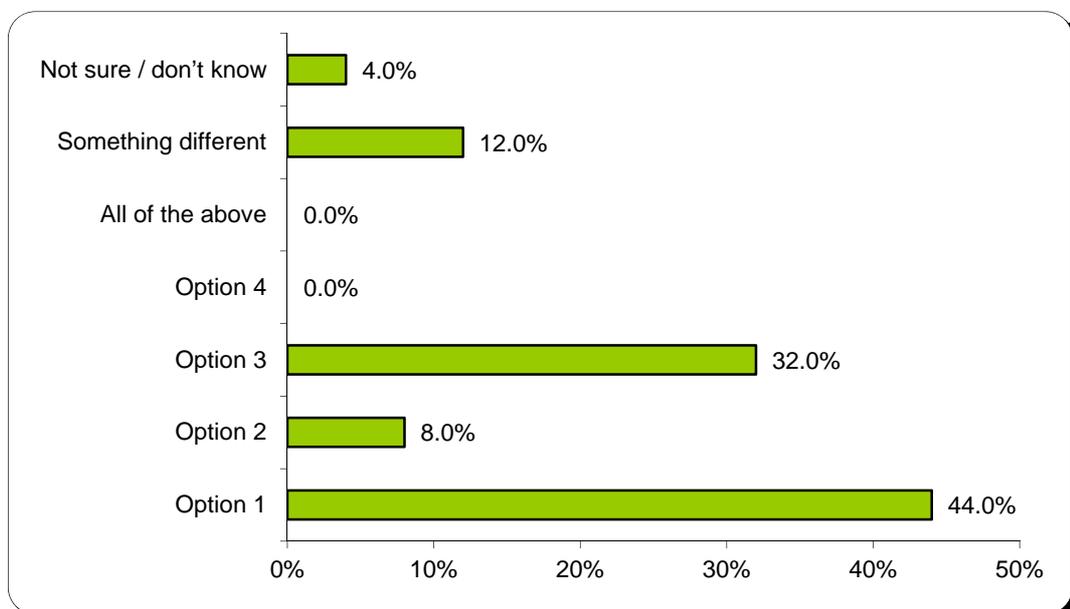
**Option 3:** Now plus applications, payments, job tracking etc. online at a cost of £2m (1p per domestic customer, per annum)

**Option 4:** Now plus a single account manager at a cost of £50m (35p per domestic customer, per annum)

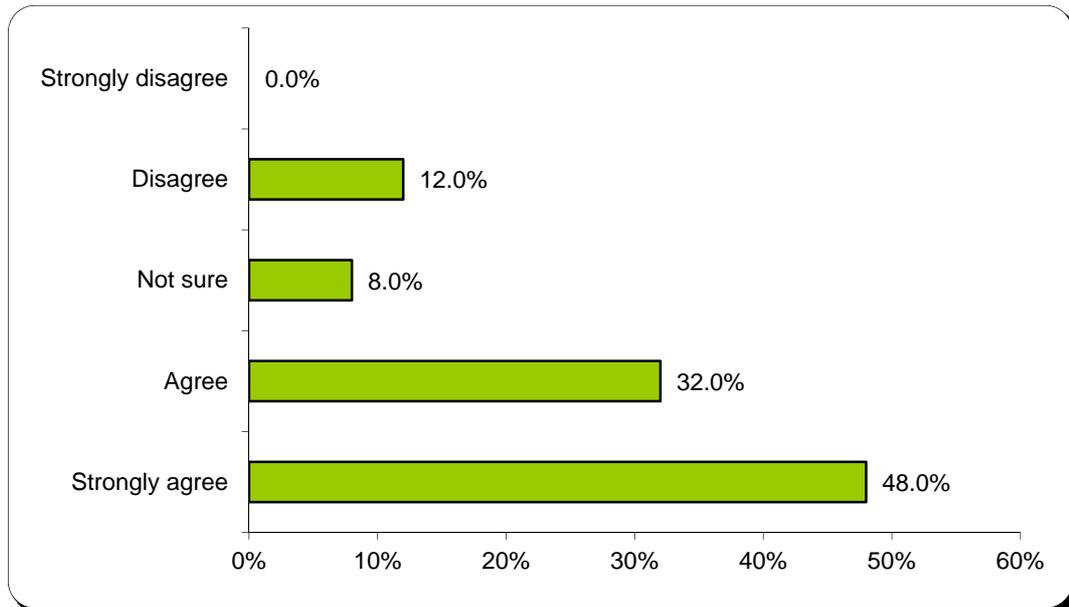
**Option 5:** All of the above

**Option 6:** Something different

**Option 7:** Don't know / not sure



## 11.2. Q16. Innovating the methods by which customers can communicate with us should be a medium priority for WPD



## 11.3. Comments

Table 1

- A parish councillor said *'I am embracing technology but within limits'*. S/he also said that s/he was unsure people would be interested with constant information from WPD
- A local authority/council officer said *'social media works well for the young people'*
- A local authority/council officer argued that it has many uses other than just informing people of power cuts. *'It can be used for bad weather and it can help for the warning of possible issues with the network'*
- A parish councillor queried the cost of the proposals, saying *'I can't put the two together, in terms of the cost of putting these things in place and what you are actually doing'*
- A parish councillor said *'I can't agree to this level of investment when I look at the other issues in this workshop'*
- A local authority/council officer said that *'having real time information empowers the customer when issues arise'*
- A business customer representative held the view *'this should be business as usual and WPD should be upgrading and making themselves more efficient so that they can use social media without forcing costs on customers'*
- A parish councillor argued *'I don't think 7.7 million people will join a text network and therefore the benefits are limited to cost'*

**Table 2**

- A parish councillor asked *'do costs reflect phone lines not being overwhelmed?'*
- An environmental representative was of the view that *'WPD should account for the fact that not all rural places have good access to mobile phones and internet'*
- A local authority/council officer added that *'once there is a power outage people will not be able to access the internet'*
- An environmental representative was of the view that Option 1 was the best available. S/he felt that *'people are able to communicate and used to communicating in this way anyway'*. S/he asked whether WPD favours option 1?
- A local authority/council officer stated that *'it would be more helpful to WPD to use landlines to communicate with customers so that WPD could identify customers' locations'*
- A parish councillor added that *'when smart meters are rolled out you'll know who's off supply anyway. So, are we trying to solve a problem that's going to be resolved anyway?'*
- Another parish councillor felt that Option 4 would be better value than the others
- An environmental representative agreed with this; s/he stated that *'the internet is becoming an integral part of daily life and more and more accessible to people'*
- In response to this comment a parish councillor stated *'I'm a Luddite'*
- A stakeholder commented that s/he supported option 4
- An environmental representative stated that *'service operators needed to work together to make improvements'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that some of the information sent out to customers initially could be clearer. S/he felt that at present it *'gives people the impression that they can dig the trench and do it themselves'*

**Table 3**

- A parish councillor and a council representative stated that their councils have a website but do not have Twitter
- A parish councillor said *'websites and social media are part of everyday life for younger people and we need to embrace it'*
- A parish councillor stated that looking on a website *'can be a lot quicker than being on the phone'*
- A business customer representative raised the point that by 2023 the way we communicate could have changed. *'Ten years ago what was Twitter and Facebook?'*

- An environmental representative agreed with the business customer representative and would like to know how WPD plan to adapt
- An environmental representative suggested there was a big difference between option two and options three and four because the latter two require electricity. However, s/he went on to say *'while option two may not need electricity, it does need a phone signal. In rural areas the signal is bad'*
- An environmental representative put forward the view that it is important for *'WPD to give technological choices to allow communication with all its customers'*
- An environmental representative argued that WPD should *'not tie it down'* as far as they have, as they *'need to be able to adapt to what comes through in the future'*
- The table was in agreement that they would currently use the internet if they wanted to find information about WPD
- A local authority/council officer pointed out that *'today's 8-year-old will be a householder by the end of the period we are talking about so WPD need to think about them as well''*
- An environmental representative discussed the fact that people are now expecting higher levels of customer services. For example, *'they want an instant answer'*
- A local authority/council officer said that in a power cut s/he would contact Scottish Power and WPD because in his / her mind they supply him / her
- A business customer representative pondered as to how WPD is going to advertise these services to ensure they are used. S/he would *'not go on to the website like s/he would BBC News to see what WPD is up to'*. Furthermore, as s/he no longer has a paper bill how is s/he *'going to be told that s/he can text WPD during a power cut?'*
- A business customer representative stated that *'WPD need to promote the services otherwise no point investing money in to it'*

#### Table 4

- This question was not discussed

#### Table 5

- A local authority/council officer commented that s/he would like to see the *'general link between the distributor and provider publicised more'*
- A local authority/council officer was surprised to learn s/he could only contact the distributor and not the supplier when discussing/reporting a power cut
- A parish councillor felt that WPD was *'asking the wrong generation'* and was of the view that the phone number which has always been available should remain. S/he said *'if it works and isn't broke, don't fix it'*

- A local authority/council officer stated s/he would *'like to go on WPD's website to see what problems are in times of outages'*
- A business customer representative commented on the New York mobile network going down after the recent storm and pointed out *'masts have generators'*
- A parish councillor felt that in the Sevenoaks storm in 1986 there were no problems in learning what the problem was and they were kept up to date. S/he said *'Radio Kent worked well and it came into its own'*
- A domestic customer representative agreed with the above point
- A business customer representative was supportive of new technology and said s/he was *'a smartphone user'*
- A local authority/council officer asked when WPD is sending texts *'where do the mobile numbers come from? Is there an extra cost involved?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked if WPD could request customer mobile numbers from the provider? *'What foundation work will need to be done?'*
- A parish councillor was of the view *'there is no rush but it will come'*

## 11.4. Q17. Which of the following options would you like to see in WPD's plan?

**Option 1:** (Now) Telephone operators and automated messages to respond to calls at no extra cost

**Option 2:** Now plus 2-way text messaging (report a problem & receive information) at a cost of £3m (2p per customer per annum)

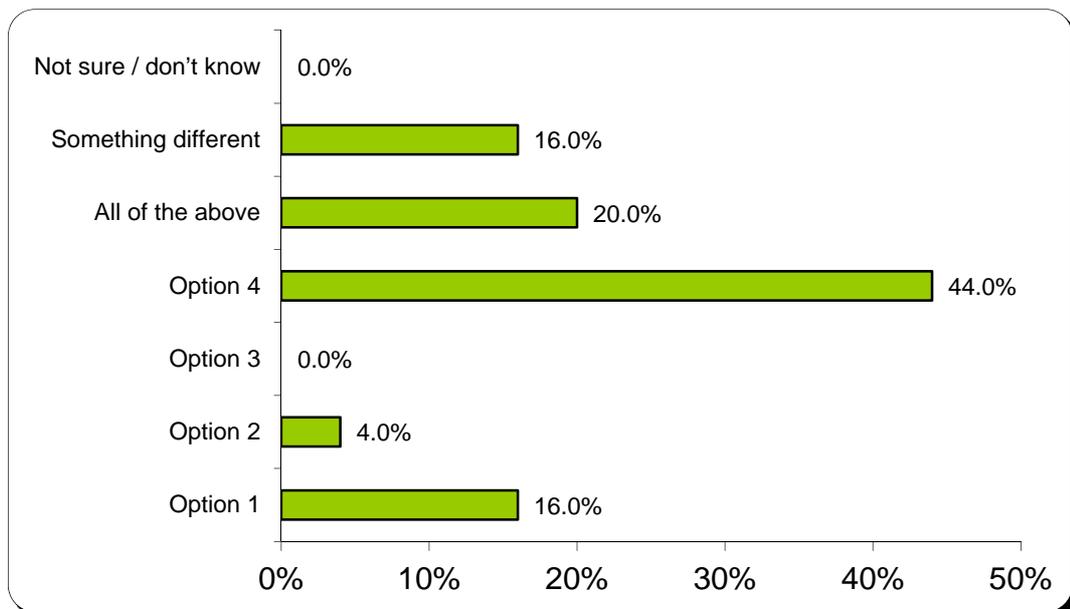
**Option 3:** Now plus social media channels at a cost of £3m (2p per customer per annum)

**Option 4:** Now plus real-time outage info on the website at a cost of £2m (1.5p per customer per annum)

**Option 5:** All of the above

**Option 6:** Something different

**Option 7:** Don't know / not sure



## 12. Low carbon investment

### 12.1. Issue 1. Are our assumptions reasonable for a 'best view' scenario?

**Table 1**

- A local authority/council officer said *'I was surprised by the small amount of solar panels at the moment'*
- A business customer representative made the point that *'PV is a discussion the government haven't had, they haven't decided whether land should be used for food or energy'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that *'solar technology is not the way to go as it is the most expensive for benefits'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out that *'insulation hasn't been done on many houses and this is a major issue'*
- A parish councillor agreed, saying *'locally we have the worst figures for wastage of energy due to heating as we have many solid walls'*
- A business customer representative also agreed, stating that *'houses are still being built without double glazing and this needs to be a government plan'*
- A business customer representative doesn't think electric cars are the way and instead believes *'hydrogen cars are the future'*
- A parish councillor agreed saying, *'electric cars are old technology and will never be good enough'*
- A parish councillor didn't agree with the idea of heat pumps, pointing out that *'only 50% of energy is saved and they are not the answer' that and 'heat pumps are only useful to new homes with underfloor heating and therefore will not be taken up'*
- A local authority/council officer made the point that *'public transport is another option for WPD to consider'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative stated that *'an increase in uptake of new technologies could be achieved if the Government adopts a "carrot and stick" approach'. S/he commented that if the Government provides incentives for making the 'right choices', the uptake will be quicker. S/he cited the 'renewables rush' was a good example of this technique, although s/he concluded that the situation was overall 'hard to judge'*
- A local authority/council officer felt that *'low carbon technology was an urban issue from a viability perspective'*

- A parish councillor was of the view that *'low carbon technology would be adopted more quickly if there was an increase in new builds'*
- A stakeholder commented that it was a *'crystal ball issue'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that *'you'll need lots of incentive to try to meet these targets'*
- Another local authority/council officer pointed out the level of preparation needed to meet transport targets, in particular, s/he aired *'concerns about the number of plug-in points needed for electric vehicles'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that *'high levels of insulation was something that WPD could realistically achieve it works and it's low cost'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'the Government was no longer funding free extra insulation'*
- A parish councillor countered that the Government *'off-loaded'* this on to energy companies
- The table agreed that customers should pay for low carbon technologies but that there also needs to be an incentive in order to encourage take-up
- A parish councillor stated that *'the Government could help people by giving out low-interest loans to enable them to install new technologies'*
- A local authority/council officer highlighted that *'the context of recession was not the best climate for people to take out loans'*. S/he felt that *'less people were confident about taking up these type of schemes'*
- Another parish councillor stated that *'people that can afford to do it save money through these schemes, those that are struggling to pay bills can't afford these technologies even with subsidies. So any subsidy given will end up saving money for those who can afford it anyway'*
- An environmental representative added that *'if people qualify for an incentive, they need to ensure that they have taken other basic steps such as installing insulation first before adding new technology'*
- The table agreed that it was imperative to trial a mixture of new technologies
- A parish councillor said *'I can't see where the energy's going to come from to feed electric cars, unless you build more power stations you won't be able to satisfy demand'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the view that *'people were generally steering away from electric cars and more environmentally friendly smaller cars and towards driving 4x4s'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that in terms of seeing the difference between options 1,2, and 3 achievability-wise, s/he felt that *'insulation was easier to achieve than the rest'* and that the cladding target was more *'realistic'*

- A parish councillor pointed out that *'there was no option for low level of fuel efficiency, low carbon heat and high solid wall insulation'*

### Table 3

- A parish councillor queried whether *'the efficiency gained from electric cars is a real efficiency'*
- Another parish councillor added *'you need to make the electricity from somewhere. Probably from nuclear or fossil fuels. One million electric cars is a great idea but you have to burn carbon to power them still'*
- A parish councillor was of the opinion that *'it will be more difficult to encourage electric vehicles in rural areas'*
- A local authority/council officer commented that *'commuting distances is an important issue. 130 miles commute in West Country is nothing. In Birmingham, 20 miles is a long way'*
- A parish councillor aired his / her view that there is *'a huge way to go to get to option 1. We need to make better use of what we use already'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that many properties in his / her area have already been insulated using government grants
- A local authority/council officer added the point that the Government will *'probably only be able to encourage insulation on new builds'*
- An environmental representative was of the view that *'you have to go for the easy wins'* and that *'insulation is probably something we should aim for'*
- A local authority/council officer observed that *'insulation is a requirement already for new build'*

### Table 4

- A business customer representative wanted WPD to clarify whether its 'Best View Scenario' includes offshore energy. S/he felt that *'the targets for wave and tidal generation, which Cornwall and Devon will provide, needs to be included in WPD's predictions'*
- A local authority/council officer discussed his / her experience of driving an electric vehicle. S/he *'had found the car very quiet and smooth which could present a problem for pedestrians'*
- A local authority/council officer explained that *'Cornwall Council uses about 6 electric vehicles as pool cars'*
- A local authority/council officer felt that *'electric vehicles need to become better and cheaper before there is any rise in uptake'*

- A local authority/council officer agreed with this point and added that *'electric vehicles are becoming better'*
- A local authority/council officer suggested *'electric vehicle usage depends on what people want them for, for example, surveys in North West indicated most journeys are less than 25 miles; electric vehicles would not be suitable for long distance journeys'*. S/he felt that *'you would need to be a second car household if you used an electric vehicle'*. S/he also stated that *'electric vehicle ownership would not increase until they become more affordable'*
- A business customer representative felt *'hybrids would definitely take off in the coming years as more and more car companies develop them'*
- A local authority/council officer asked: *'so the assumption is that this will create demands on the network but it could be offset by customers using time restrictions on their energy usage?'*
- A stakeholder suggested *'the uptake of electric vehicle will come down to price and practically, charging points for the cars will have a major impact on the WPD network'*
- A stakeholder suggested that *'as WPD covers a diverse geographical spread there needs to a wide range of scenarios for the different regions'*
- An environmental representative stated s/he thought *'the first three scenarios are very optimistic'*; unless UK government *'changes the goal posts'*
- A local authority/council officer queried *'to what extent is the private building industry introducing low carbon technology in its new developments'*
- A business customer representative questioned *'why the Government has given WPD four options, why isn't the Government giving one set target for WPD to plan towards?'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed and asked *'why is the Government giving WPD an option like option 4, why would WPD plan for such a negative option?'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out that *'there are differing views in Government'* and s/he was of the view *'George Osborne is pessimistic and DECC is being optimistic'*
- A business customer representative queried *'whether Ofgem take all of the plans from the different DNOs and which scenarios have been selected, and then agree which scenario will be achieved'*
- A local authority/council officer added *'it might be necessary for WPD to have sub-regional views as well as high-level national scenarios, for example, Cornwall is currently pushing for renewable energy in the South West'*
- An environmental representative felt *'some of the scenarios are not relevant to WPD, for example solid wall insulation, how does that have an impact on WPD's network?'*
- An environmental representative queried whether *'any thought is being given to using electric vehicles as storage?'*

- A stakeholder also asked *'if there would be a move towards and more focus on energy storage?'*
- A local authority/council officer considered that *'there are constraints with photo voltaic as you need south-facing roofs to install PVs on your house'*
- A stakeholder added that *'car manufacturers are now trying to introduce better engines'*

**Table 5**

- A local authority/council officer commented that Cornwall Council have signed up to a scheme to promote sustainable energy for the future. S/he stated *'Cornwall Council is aiming to cut their carbon emissions'* and asked if WPD are/can be involved
- A parish councillor stated there is a problem when WPD are trying to set and meet targets as *'the current Government cannot guarantee successive ones will not set/change targets'*
- Another parish councillor felt that electric vehicles are *'a good move into the future'* and is hopeful they will come into their own. S/he commented that *'it only seems to be windmills rather than wave energy in use'*. S/he was surprised at the lack of technology that is being used as the *'Victorians produced more energy in many different ways'* and felt Victorian technology needs to be revisited. S/he suggested farmers *'could generate their own power systems and past experiences should be used in future plans'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that scenario 1 is the best option
- A business customer representative agreed with the above point

## 12.2. Issue 2. If you had greater visibility of your energy use (e.g. smart meters), what impact do you think it would have on your behaviour?

**Table 1**

- A local authority/council officer stated he believed he would get *'more mean on myself'*
- A local authority/council officer commented that *'I recently got a new kitchen and realised the amount of energy used by old technology was massive'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that *'there should be a greater difference in price compared to use and time of day electricity is used'*
- Another parish councillor added that *'information is very important, customers need to be informed properly'*
- A parish councillor revealed that s/he thought *'smart meters work'*
- A local authority/council officer suggested that *'the system of payment is wrong as the cost should be higher for more usage rather than the opposite'*

- A local authority/council officer believed that WPD need to use *'smarter thinking in terms of working with businesses'*

## Table 2

- A local authority/council officer stated that s/he *'already has a smart meter at home'*. S/he said *'it doesn't make much difference, hasn't had much of an impact, it's nothing sophisticated'*
- A parish councillor explained *'the difference between an energy monitor and a smart meter'*. S/he stated that *'an electricity provider installs a smart meter to read meters remotely and that the two technologies were quite separate but both aim to reduce consumption'*
- Another parish councillor was of the view that smart meters would change behaviour if they were *'put in monetary terms'*
- An environmental representative suggested that *'pound coin meters could be a hard-hitting way to raise awareness of the cost of energy usage'*
- A parish councillor was of the view that *'as a society, the use of technology needs to be scaled back in order to save energy'* and therefore *'we've got to take a few steps back in some respects'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'attitudes to the smart meter depends on households'*; s/he added that *'this was likely to affect user groups most that were unable to pay'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'there will always a be a portion of society that doesn't care one way or the other'*
- A parish councillor stated that *'smart meters will be introduced come what may, purely for economic reasons because suppliers want to save money. The debate is about educating people more to ensure that they use energy in the most effective way'*
- An environmental representative stated that *'we need to be sure that the smart meter doesn't change the economics of the country'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'individual households should be given an energy quote and if they use excess energy they should be penalised'*
- A parish councillor countered that *'the pricing system is opposed to that because energy becomes cheaper the more it is used'*. S/he was of the view that *'it should be the other way around'*
- A parish councillor stated that *'customers, DNOs and suppliers need to work together in order to achieve optimum results when it comes to saving energy'*
- An environmental representative commented that *'a cultural shift in expectations towards energy reliability was needed'*

**Table 3**

- None of the stakeholders around the table had a smart meter in their home and they did not know how they worked
- A parish councillor stated that *'it is difficult to use smart meters to lower energy consumption if you are in a factory or a home'*, commenting *'In a factory you are committed to a certain amount of electricity to work. At home, is the housewife going to look at it? I don't think it will make a huge difference, but may be one of the small things we could do'*
- A local authority/council officer said if s/he had a smart meter his / her *'marriage would end in divorce in three weeks'*. S/he stated his / her Russian spouse has not *'realised that electricity in the UK is not for peanuts'*
- An environmental representative said that it *'would depend on the individual. If shown their usage, some will make changes, others will not'*

**Table 4**

- An environmental representative wanted to know *'what a smart meter tells you, for example, does it tell you the tariff level?'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that *'a smart meter would change my behaviour, and there has already been a reduction in my energy bills through changing my behaviour'*

**Table 5**

- A local authority/council officer stated that *'there would be change in attitudes if smart meters were in place from a domestic point of view'*
- A parish councillor disagreed claiming *'it won't change attitudes'*

### 12.3. Issue 3. Do you agree that customers should not see an increase in power cuts as a result of introducing smart grid technologies??

**Table 1**

- A local authority/council officer insisted that *'levels of service should never go down'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the view that *'WPD should be looking for bigger cables if amount of usage is an issue'*
- A parish councillor suggested that *'technology is moving very quickly and we need to be moving with it'*, adding that WPD need to invest in technology

**Table 2**

- A parish councillor stated that *'I think the opposite is likely, DNOs can control our usage to avoid the system collapsing and the smart meter should help achieve this'*

- A local authority/council officer said *'a cynical person might think that the smart meter was a tool used by Big Brother to monitor households'*. S/he added that a lot of people would not tolerate worsening levels of service
- An environmental representative asked whether WPD was able to influence power generation

### Table 3

- An environmental representative said the amount of power cuts should not increase, adding *'people would question why is it "smart" if it's giving us more power cuts?'*
- An environmental representative stated that it *'should be a help, not a hindrance'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the opinion that it is *'a core service'*

### Table 4

- This question was not discussed

### Table 5

- A parish councillor was of the opinion that in the past people would have been *'susceptible but now attitudes have changed'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out in the Cornwall Council offices, *'officers have a small fleet of electric cars and have charging points'*
- A parish councillor was of the opinion *'electric cars are the future'*
- A business customer representative commented that there are four power plants in the UK that are being developed and the by-product is hydrogen which *'can be used in battery cells for energy which is better than electricity and heat pumps'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out *'hydrogen is explosive'*
- A local authority/council officer also stated *'most energy in power stations is coming from nuclear energy'*
- A business customer representative felt that already large manufacturers have energy appointers and WPD's plans are a *'modern extension of what is already there'*
- A parish councillor said *'the plans won't translate through to domestic customers'*
- A parish councillor commented that *'levels of electricity use are to go down but if we have electric cars the level will instead increase'*
- A local authority/council officer pointed out the situation with fossil fuels running low and was of the opinion *'electric/hydrogen vehicles are going to be used as it has got to happen'* and this is a very important point for *'haulage companies'*

- A local authority/council officer agreed and was of the opinion in the *'near future fossil fuel will soon be too valuable to burn'*
- Another local authority/council officer said s/he was happy with option 1
- A local authority/council officer stated WPD have a *'small network but a lot of technology'*

## 12.4. Any other comments?

### Table 1

- A parish councillor said that s/he would *'definitely be willing to pay more for WPD trialling ideas that could be of benefit to the world in the future'*
- Another parish councillor noted that *'WPD should be more ambitious in terms of energy from waste in their plan'*
- A parish councillor suggested that *'incentivising renewable energy generation would be a very good idea'*

### Table 2

- Overall, there were degrees of scepticism as to whether the best view scenario could be achieved
- The consensus was that people needed more educating about energy use and that once they develop a clear awareness of the trade-offs customers will welcome new technologies and smart meters

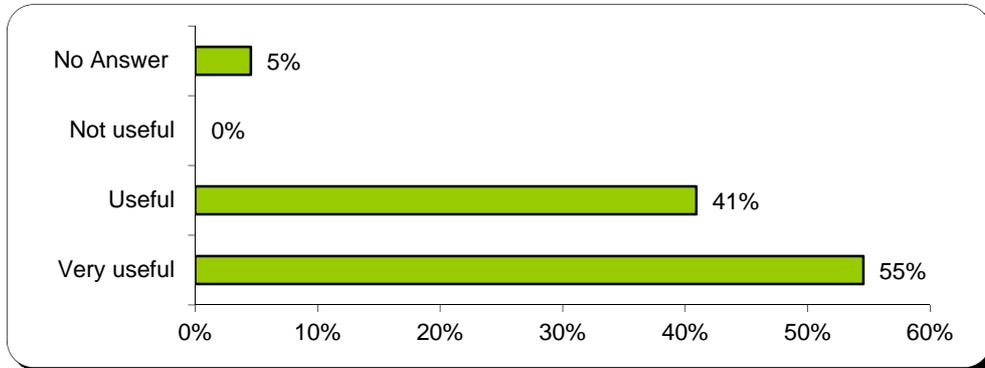
### Table 3

- An environmental representative stated *'if you look at what is in the home these days, everything is plugged in. We are being more efficient, but our usage is going up'*
- A local authority/council officer stated that he is a communist and believes that *'we shouldn't be split up in to little groups and all electricity should come from one central group'*
- A parish councillor said *'every now and again someone comes up with a "magic bullet" but what we are looking at here is lots of small differences and together they will make a big difference. Up until the mid-90s you were able make some big jumps in progress but since then it's continuing to hammer away at lots of small things'*
- A business customer representative made the point that *'farmers consume what they need to consume for their businesses, they are aware of the issue of reducing their bills and they are looking at ways to reduce their consumption and their costs'*
- A business customer representative was of the view that solar panels *'make sense to farmers as they have the land and need the energy'*

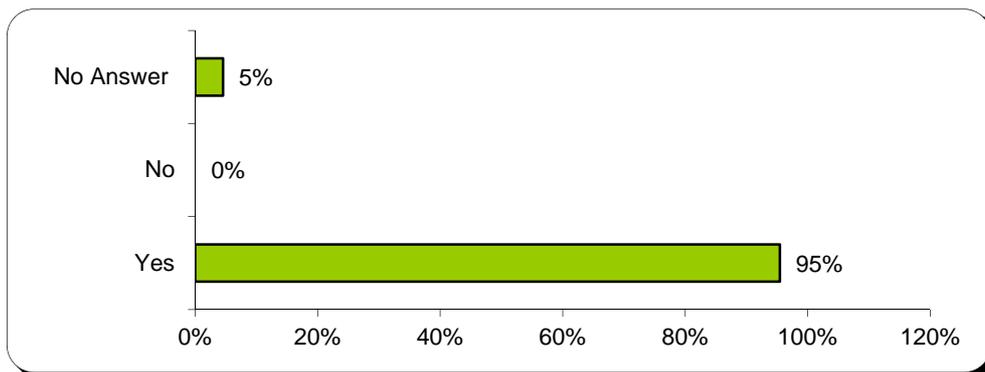
- A business customer representative asserted *'most farmers can either invest in the business or invest in diversification'*. They often cannot afford to do both
- A local authority/council officer commented that a council in Devon gives a subsidy for PV on council houses. S/he commented *'if they can do it for them, they can do it for the individual'*

## 13. Stakeholder feedback

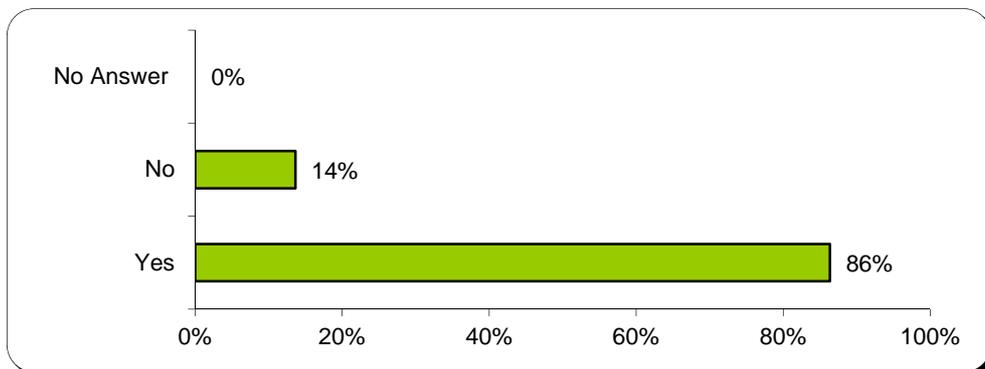
### 13.1. Q1. Did you find the workshops useful?



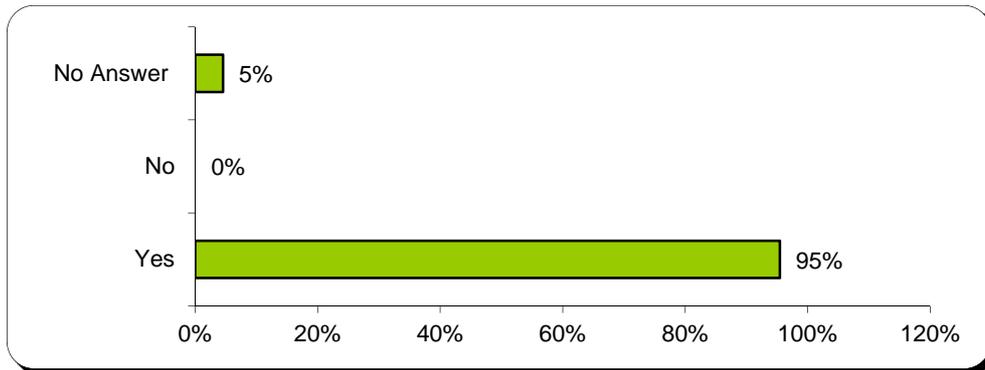
### 13.2. Was the venue conveniently located for you?



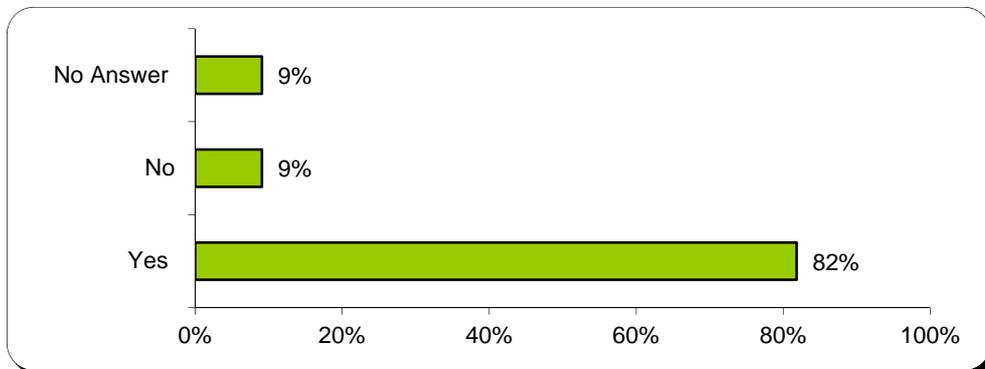
### 13.3. Did we provide enough information at the workshop?



### 13.4. Did you feel you had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss your views today?



### 13.5. Did you feel we covered the right topics?



### 13.6. Written feedback

A number of stakeholders left written comments on their feedback forms. A selection of these comments is shown below:

- *"Well-presented and structured and managed"*
- *"The presentations were concise and informative and discussions. Very well facilitated and everyone had the opportunity to input their views! Thank you"*
- *"I believe WPD are working hard and on the right direction for the future"*
- *"But would have liked more strategic discussions"*
- *"Very comprehensive"*
- *"I think the table I was on was excellent with many varied views served"*
- *"A very useful session and really helps customer engagement"*
- *"Excellent venue, convenient and pleasant"*
- *"Very clear presentation and well facilitated"*

- *“Electronic voting very interesting”*
- *“Information provided was relevant and useful; however there was a need for clarification and extra information provided by WPD staff”*
- *“Excellent”*
- *“On whole well presented. Perhaps a bit slow”*
- *“Our facilitator was excellent and we all had the opportunity to contribute. The table was a good mix”*
- *“Would have liked further info on how WPD plan to re-enforce network with regard to renewable energy systems”*