

# Stakeholder workshop report: Cheltenham

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013



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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Date and location

The stakeholder workshop took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2013 at Cheltenham Racecourse, Cheltenham GL50 4SH

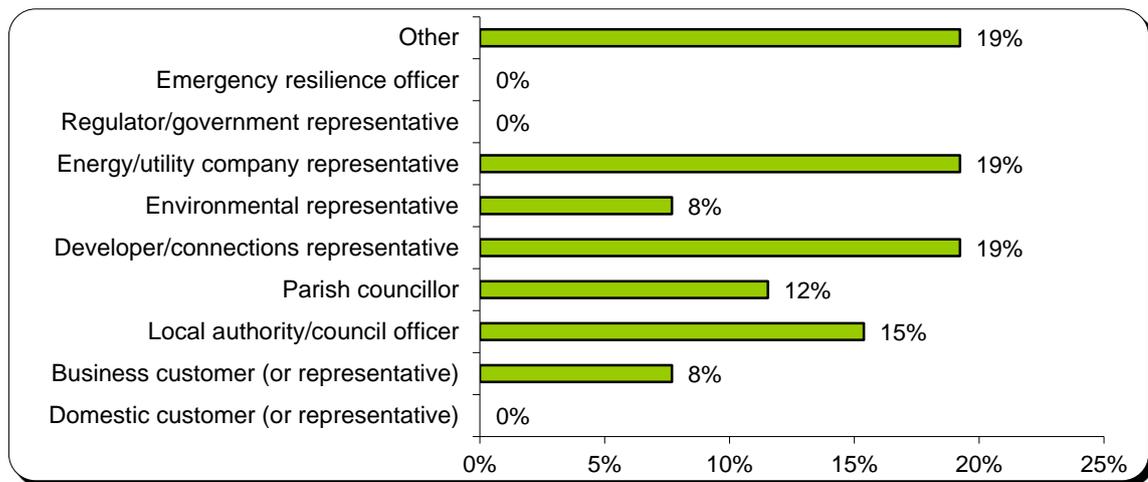
### 2.2. Attendees:

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

- Anne Walker - Assistant AONB Officer, Cannock Chase AONB
- Barry Wyatt - Strategic Head of Development Services Stroud District Council
- Ben Horovitz - Principal Planner (Sustainable Development), Worcestershire County Council
- Bob Stamp - Director AloGen Limited
- Chris Welby - Policy & Regulatory Affairs Director, Good Energy Ltd
- David S Darwin - Retired Engineer
- Fred Wood - Parish Councillor, Gretton Parish Council
- Helen Ewing - Energy Support Advisor, Severn Trent Water
- Jenny Brosnan - Section Manager, Toyota UK
- John Outram - Outram Research Limited
- John Morgan - Principal Planning Officer, Cannock Chase District Council
- Julian Brown - Managing Director, Nortech Management Ltd
- Karl Maryon - Non-Energy Cost Analyst, Haven Power Ltd
- Kate Edwards - Business Development, Outram Research Limited
- Ken Taylor - Business Development Manager, EA Technology LTD
- Kevin Bergin – Director, Electricity Solutions
- Malcolm Watt - Planning Officer, Cotswold Conservation Board
- Mark Boyce - Managing Director, Utility Customer Service Management Ltd

- Matthew Rhodes - Managing Director, Encraft
- Nigel Shaw - Chairman, Pitchcombe Parish Council
- Oliver Burstall - Managing Director Europe, Milbank
- Paul Gregson - Toyota UK
- Cllr Peter Lightfoot - Chair of Council, Bishops Cleeve Parish Council
- Mr R C Bowley - Chairman, Kempsey Parish Council
- Rodney Brook - Director, Sohn Associates Ltd
- Stephen McDonnell - Environmental Co-Ordinator, Gloucester City Council
- Steve Holmes - Director, Midland Power Networks
- Tom Brinicombe - Director, Gunsko
- Valerie Outram - Sales & Marketing, Outram Research Limited

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 - Design & Development Manager
- Alex Wilkes - Stakeholder Engagement Regulatory & Government Affairs
- Paul Jewell - Design Policy Manager
- Phil Bale - Innovation & Low Carbon Networks Engineer
- Ben Godfrey - Innovation & Low Carbon Networks Engineer

- Lee Wallace – Distribution Manager
- Neil James - Distribution Manager, Gloucester
- Dave Park-Davies - Distribution Manager, Birmingham

### **Green Issues Communiqué**

- James Garland - Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Nick Bohane - Executive Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Richard Sutcliffe-Smith - Executive Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Emma Webster - Associate Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Harry Hudson - Associate Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Kelly Edwards - Executive Director (scribe)
- Laura Edwards - Account Executive (scribe)
- Alex Coleman - Account Executive (scribe)
- Mike Townend - Senior Consultant (scribe)
- Chris Brown – Senior Consultant (scribe)

## 3. Executive summary

### 3.1. Feedback from participants

- All stakeholders who attended the event said that they found the workshop to be *'useful'* or *'very useful'*
- 28 of the 29 attendees said that enough information had been provided on the day and that they had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their views

### 3.2. Topics for discussion

- Network Reliability
- Innovation and Environment
- Customer Satisfaction & Social Obligations
- Connections

### 3.3. Summary of outcomes

- It was commented that more detailed information on network reliability would be helpful, including a geographic breakdown of figures
- Almost 90% of stakeholders were of the view that the overall package proposed to improve network performance was appropriate and a similar proportion of stakeholders were supportive of WPD's proposals to enhance resilience to severe weather
- It was commented that information on the likely duration of power cuts would be of benefit to business customers and that duration of power cuts was more detrimental to businesses than frequency
- Around a quarter of stakeholders identified applying flood defences to major substations as the resilience output where WPD should go further than proposed in its business plan
- Over half of the stakeholders in attendance agreed with WPD's proposals to reduce the number of power cuts experienced by worst served customers by 20%. One fifth were of the view that WPD should do less than proposed with a similar proportion stating that WPD should do more
- Over three quarters of stakeholders agreed with WPD's approach to facilitate increased volumes of low carbon technologies. A similar proportion were supportive of WPD's approach to reduce its network environmental impact

- There was overwhelming support for WPD's proposals to reduce its business carbon footprint, although over 40% of stakeholders were of the view that one area where the company should go further is with regard to reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill
- Opinion was split on the issue of undergrounding overhead lines in areas of outstanding natural beauty, with around one third of stakeholders stating that WPD should do more than proposed and a similar proportion stating that the company should do less
- It was commented that there are certain locations (such as rural villages) which are not classified as AONB's but would benefit from the undergrounding of overhead power lines
- There was considerable support (over 85%) for all of WPD's proposals with regard to customer satisfaction, dealing with complaints and communicating with customers
- It was commented that WPD should focus on reducing the number of complaints rather than addressing them within a certain length of time
- It was noted that WPD should host workshops on specific topics as well as more general workshops which cover a broad range of issues
- There was considerable endorsement of WPD's proposals to provide a faster and more efficient connections service and to improve connections communications. It was, however, commented that more could always be done to improve processes, including with regard to enhancing online connections processing
- It was noted that information on timings for connections was as important as speeding up the process as this allows businesses to plan ahead with certainty
- Although some stakeholders were of the view that WPD could do more to facilitate a competitive connections market, it was commented that this was not necessarily WPD's responsibility

## 4. Network Reliability

### 4.1. Q1. Does the amount of information given allow you to sufficiently understand their plans and do you understand the outputs?

#### Table 1

- An energy/utility company representative questioned the definition of 'a worst served customer' commenting that the term was somewhat 'broad'

#### Table 2

- A developer/connections representative said *'all this information is very useful. This is the third stakeholder session I have been to, it is nice to see WPD's commitment on the business plan'*
- A parish councillor made the point *'it would be helpful to understand the costing involved for tree clearance so I can make a judgement on whether it is right or not'*
- A local authority/council officer mentioned *'I regularly ride my bike through the Cotswolds AONB and have seen a large number of trees being felled'. S/he went on to ask 'if this was part of WPD's tree clearance programme, what effort would WPD take to mitigate the carbon costing of tree clearance?'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'is there a risk profile for each overhead line and what damage they may face from trees?'*

#### Table 3

- A business customer representative raised the point *'in some cases the figures weren't always clear, with some annualised and some final targets'*
- A local authority representative commented *'sometimes there are very broad definitions used in the information given. I would like to see how these changes are made and how realistic the targets are'*
- A stakeholder mentioned *'overall it seems very positive and was generally explained well'*
- A parish councillor said *'the targets are presented very clearly and are very helpful''*
- A business customer representative raised the point *'I struggle to understand the whole power cut average figures. As a domestic customer who lives in an area with frequent power cuts, to me the average figure is meaningless'*
- A business customer representative added *'customers are so varied and diverse you couldn't really break the figures down in a sensible way with any ease'*

- A business customer representative suggested *'a geographic breakdown of the power cut figures may well be helpful'*
- A parish councillor asked *'in relation to the worst served customers can WPD improve the situation for themselves?'*
- An environmental representative asked about the figure of *'195 substations'* used and how does *'this relate to the total number of substations?'*
- A business customer representative raised the issue *'regardless of what figure goes in to the plan what happens if the targets are not achieved?'*
- A business customer representative asked *'whether customers would get anything back?'*

#### **Table 4**

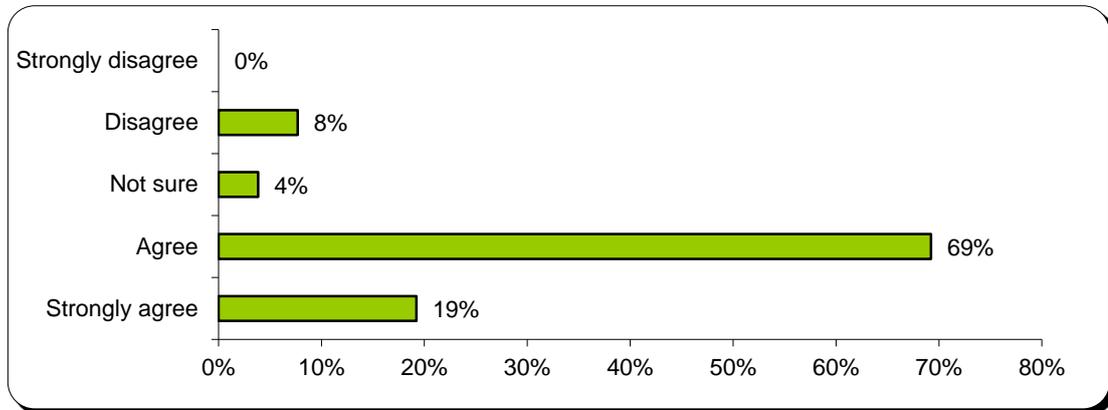
- A developer/connections representative said *'my company was involved from the start of the consultation and so far is pleased with what we have seen'*
- A stakeholder asked *'how will WPD achieve the outputs? What are WPD planning to physically do?'*
- A parish councillor asked *'is tree clearance a local problem in local areas?'* S/he commented on severe storms that have occurred in the past which resulted in loss of power
- A stakeholder asked *'how far do WPD have to clear the trees from the lines?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'in relation to flooding how many substations are at risk? What happens when they are identified?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'how do WPD physically deliver a substation that is protected from flooding?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'how the wider flood resilience plan was made?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'what are the resources given from the Environment Agency?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'if new assets are being defended systematically?'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'what has driven the three-day resilience target?'*

#### **Table 5**

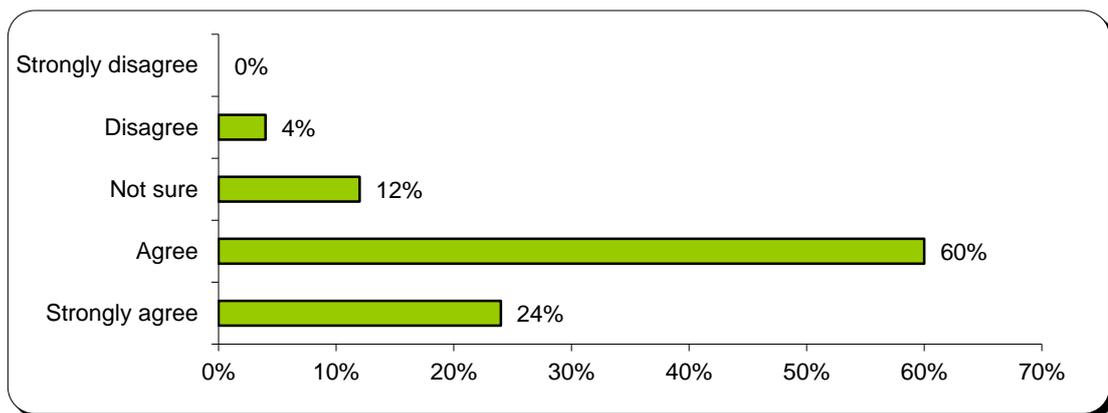
- No comments were made

## 4.2. Q2. Do you agree with WPD’s approach? Do you agree with their proposed outputs?

### WPD’s overall package to improve network performance seems appropriate?



### WPD’s overall package to enhance resilience to severe weather seems appropriate



**Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative pointed out *'I am not concerned about the actual number of power cuts; it's the duration that's the problem'. S/he felt 'it was possible to cope with a larger number of short cuts'*
- A stakeholder commented *'for a business the problem is do you send people home in case the power cut is a long one or do you keep people at work?'*

**Table 2**

- A developer/connections representative said *'as a domestic customer if you are off for tens of minutes it does not have much of an impact. However, if you are a business customer you are making decisions such as do I send people home for the day or not'. S/he went on to say 'I am more interested in the number of power cuts in ten years than the number of minutes'*
- An environmental representative said *'it is long-term trends of power cuts that is important to me'*

- An environmental representative made the point in regard to worst served customers, *'it depends on who the worst served is'*. S/he added, *'if it includes business users it is probably worth investing in improving the situation. But if it is a very small number of people who are small users it is different'*
- An environmental representative asked *'how does WPD identify and prioritise the customers who are classified as being the worst served?'*
- A developer/connections representative was of the view *'working to improve the service for the worst served customers is a battle WPD cannot win. There will always be worst served customers and the question of how many do we tackle a year and how much does everyone pay? 20% is fine'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'defending the 75 major substations from flooding will affect everything else. There will be more challenges of flooding and weather and events'*
- A local authority/council officer commented *'potentially WPD are buying time as you cannot protect against the one in one thousand risk of flooding unless you build a 40ft high fence'*. S/he went on to question if WPD are *'protecting what is fundamentally a wrong site when WPD need to move the substation to high ground?'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated *'in my organisation we are spending a lot of money on flood alleviation on substations and it is a high priority of ours'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'my organisation has had a site lose power for 38 minutes recently because of a tree branch coming off. The tree programme is very important'*

### Table 3

- A developer/connections representative asked *'is there a way in which customers could be told how long the power cut is going to last?'*
- An energy/utility company representative felt *'the seventh point, on substation battery resilience, seemed out of context with the rest of the targets'*
- An environmental representative commented *'power cuts are not really an issue in our area, though ideally you would want no power cuts at all. I acknowledge WPD are trying to improve this aspect and at the November workshops the differences discussed were quite small, but it could make quite a big difference to certain customers'*
- An environmental representative added *'the improvements are quite small because you have fewer power cuts now anyway'*

### Table 4

- A stakeholder said *'I am impressed with the plan'*
- A developer/connections representative commented on the target to have power restored within an hour. She said *'it only includes HV, but what about LV?'*

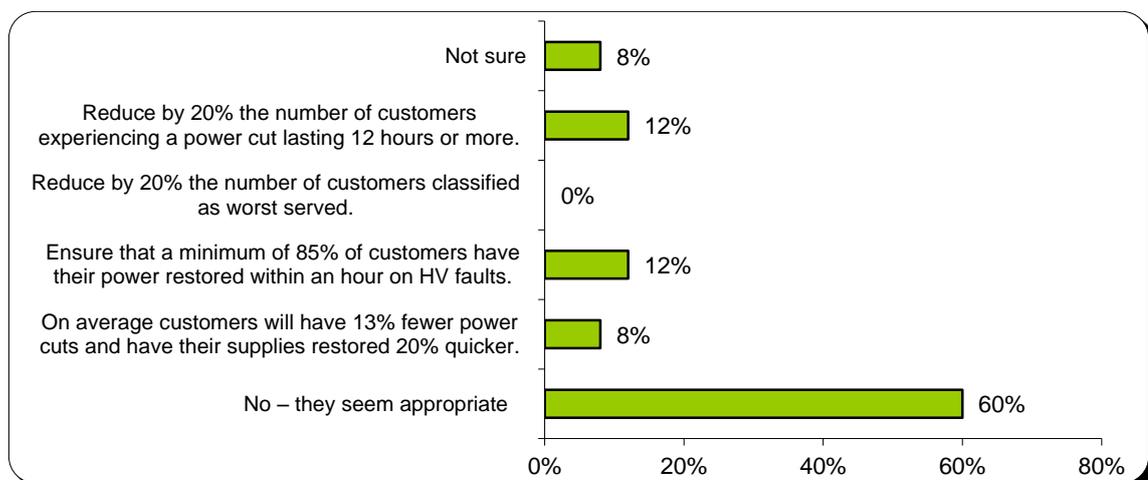
- A parish councillor asked *'if there are no volts being stored will the power turn off and stay off in times of a power cut?'*

**Table 5**

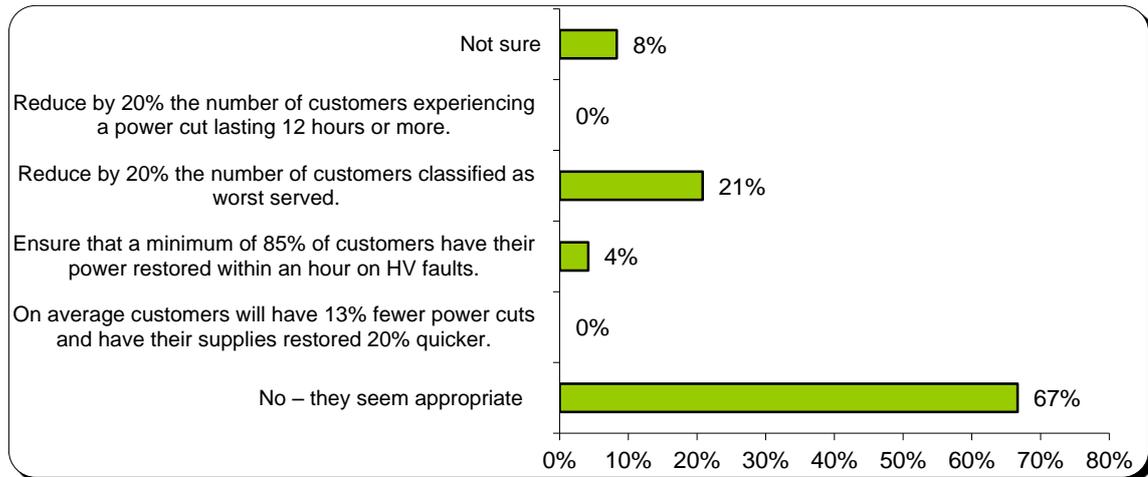
- A parish councillor was of the opinion *'the fewer problems with network performance the better. However, I am disappointed not to see a recognition for power cuts being a major hassle'*
- A domestic customer representative said *'if there are any costs involved, then I do not want them. As a customer I would expect the company to be improving its performance continuously through better knowledge and technology. It should not be asking us, WPD should be just doing it!'*
- A local authority/council officer stated *'from a council's point of view, resilience of service and protecting the infrastructure is key'. S/he went on to say 'WPD have been able to make huge savings. Could these savings be used to keep prices low?'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the opinion people *'would expect the environmental changes, in particular the flood defences in light of the recent flooding'. S/he continued 'if this is not done and it floods again, there will be some serious questions to answer. Our council is happy to support WPD's work here'*
- A parish councillor said *'I remember at previous workshops people saying they are not happy to pay lots and lots for small increases'*
- A parish councillor commented *'whatever WPD do, it will be viewed as wrong by half of its customers. However, it is critical people have power and this should be its focus'*

### 4.3. Q3. Are there any areas where you want WPD to go further or do less?

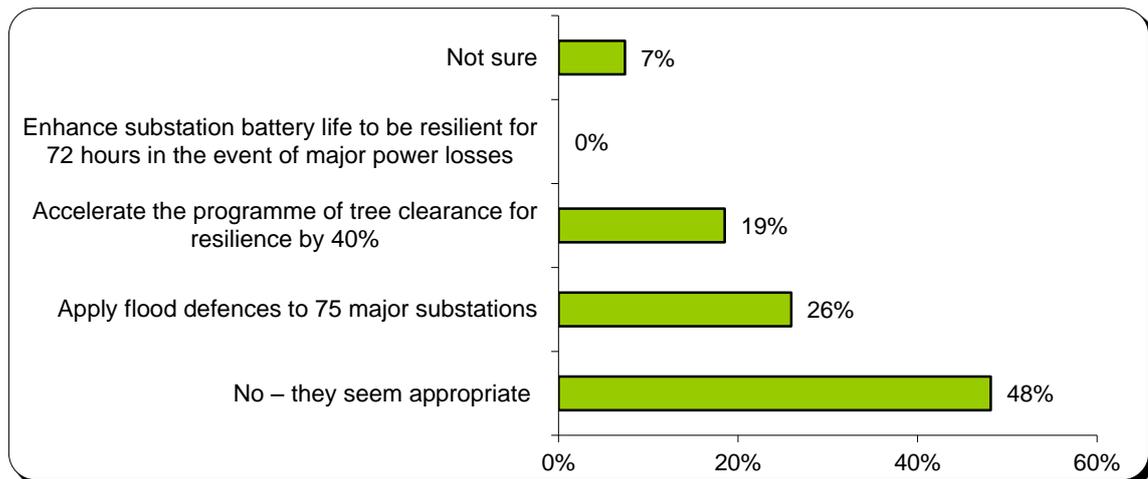
#### Improving network performance: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?



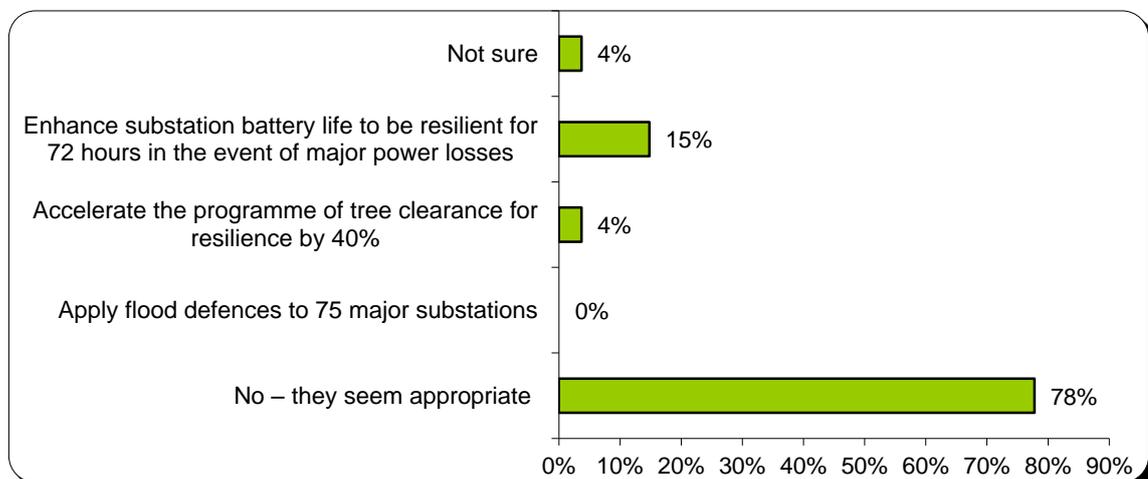
**Improving network performance: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Enhancing resilience to severe weather: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



**Enhancing resilience to severe weather: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative stated *'flooding seems to be the main focus but it is just one problem caused by severe weather'*. S/he pointed out *'in Canada cables don't go across fields, they go along the side of roads/buildings'*

**Table 2**

- A local authority / council officer said *'the mitigation plan for wildlife needs to be spelt out in detail in the business plan'*
- A parish councillor commented *'WPD's worst served target seems a fairly modest one'*

**Table 3**

- No comments were made

**Table 4**

- No comments were made

**Table 5**

- A domestic customer representative made the suggestion it might be *'cheaper to give worst served customers an emergency generator'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the opinion it is *'surely better to spend the money set for AONBs on serving the worst served better? The AONB improvements are purely visual. Once we have sorted everyone out, we can then do the pretty things'*

**4.4. Any other comments?****Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative stated *'for worst served customers, I feel short power interruptions are not a problem and customers would just have to reset a few electrical appliances'*
- A stakeholder asked *'what is the correlation between the money spent on worst served customers and the improvement made as a result; was the progress linear?'*
- An energy/utility company representative pointed out *'customers expect there to be inbuilt resilience in the electricity supply'*

**Table 3**

- A stakeholder queried whether the flooding is actually a more significant issue rather than being a *'hot topic'* of the moment

**Table 4**

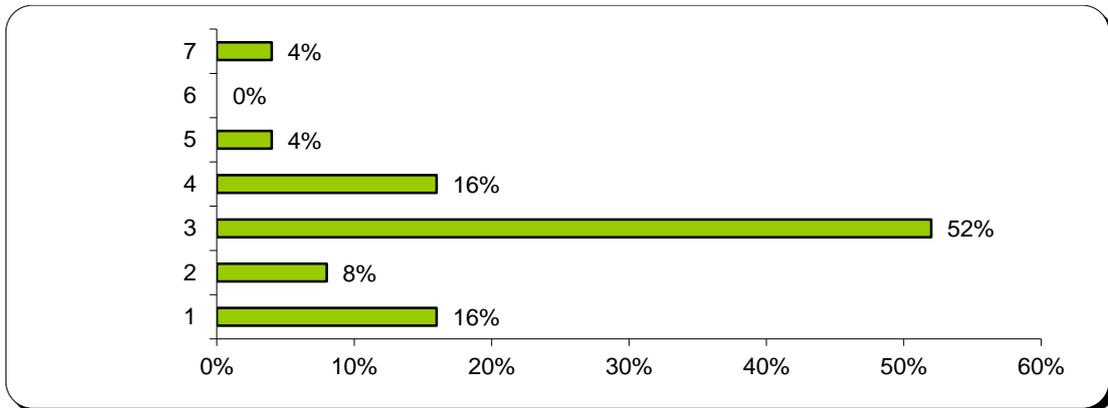
- A parish councillor commented on *'the good work WPD have been doing'* and gave an example of where cables were tidied up
- A stakeholder commented it was his / her first workshop and was *'very intrigued in what stakeholders can offer WPD'*

**Table 5**

- A domestic customer representative said *'my interest today is as a retired person, who wants to see the cheapest price possible for the energy coming in to my home'*
- A parish councillor stated *'I have come along today as I have an interest in the cost of power'. S/he went on to say 'I also have an interest in the security of energy in the future'*
- A local authority/council officer declared *'in terms of power cuts we do not see them very often in our area. Possibly because we are pretty close to the generator'*
- A parish councillor made the point *'everyone here today has an interest in cost and reliability as time goes on, the WPD experience improves and this should aid in the improvement of service without extra cost'*
- A parish councillor pointed out a concern in his / her parish: *'we used to have a lot of flooding from the River Severn. The Environment Agency did install a bund but we have to pump the water away using electric pumps. The parish has some concerns about a loss of power and the effects on the pumps. Can WPD give a guesstimate as to whether or not the electricity will fail when they most need it'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'this brings up the issue of how WPD interface with other organisations such as the Environment Agency'*

### 4.5. Of the options to improve service for 4,000 Worst Served Customers, which do you support?

Option	% Reduction in Number of Power Cuts Experienced by Benefitting Worst Served Customers	Maximum Expenditure per Benefitting Customer	Aggregate Expenditure	Maximum Impact on Domestic Customers' Annual Bills By 2022/23
1	10%	£550	£2.2m	3.0p
2	15%	£650	£2.6m	3.5p
<b>3</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>£800</b>	<b>£3.2m</b>	<b>4.2p</b>
4	25%	£1,000	£4.0m	5.3p
5	30%	£1,200	£4.8m	6.5p
6	Do more			
7	Don't know			



## 5. Innovation and Environment

### 5.1. Q1. Does the amount of information given allow you to sufficiently understand their plans and do you understand the outputs?

#### Table 1

- A developer/connections representative asked *'how is the reduction in SF6 gas going to be achieved?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'are there any alternatives methods and is SF6 in certain items of equipment?'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'is SF36 included?'*

#### Table 2

- A stakeholder raised the point *'other utilities are doing a lot in terms of trials around low carbon technologies, what are WPD doing in terms of trials?'*

#### Table 3

- A stakeholder commented *'it is very hard at this stage and the trial information is needed first'. S/he added 'I wouldn't expect anything more'*
- An energy/utility company representative was concerned *'there are aspirations being created by the media and others are putting a burden on the network operators, for instance around using solar PV'. S/he said 'in practical terms the network can't cope with this, so I have a lot of sympathy with the network operators on this area'*

#### Table 4

- A developer/connections representative asked *'are there other DNO's doing similar procedures to WPD?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'how have WPD identified and anticipated the low carbon areas? Where has this information come from? Is it available to customers?'*
- A stakeholder pointed out *'no targets are mentioned in environment-package 1'. S/he asked 'when will they be issued?'*

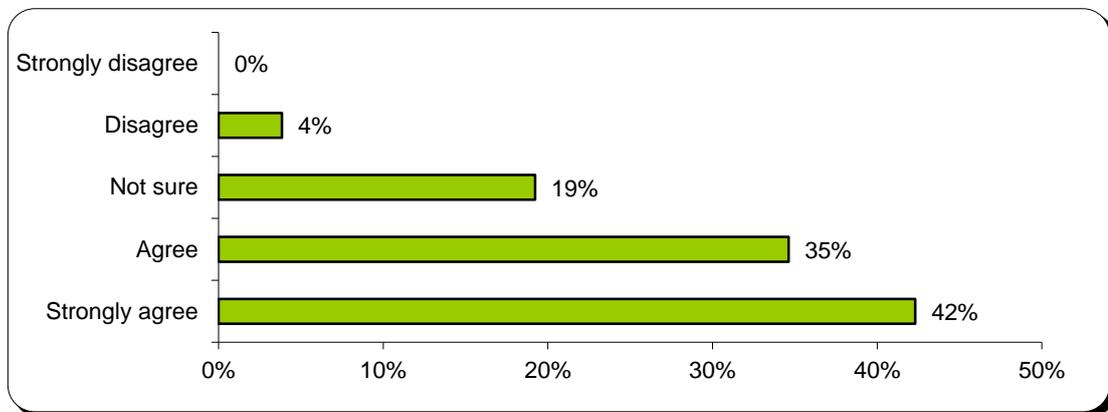
#### Table 5

- A domestic customer representative asked *'are heat pumps economic?'*
- A parish councillor asked *'do WPD have any estimation on how much energy is wasted through lights left on, televisions on standby?'* S/he added this wastage is *'a lot to do with your upbringing. I turn lights off but my wife leaves them on'*

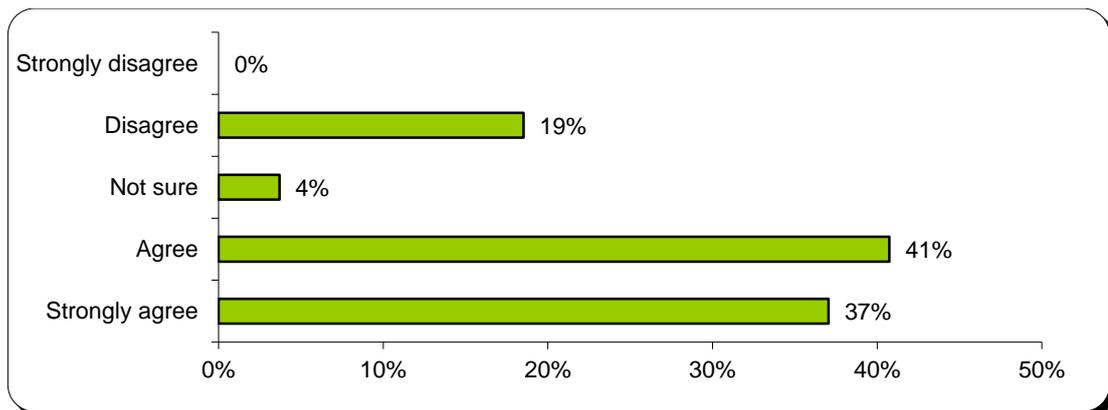
- A local authority/council officer asked *'what is WPD's overall target for recycling its own waste?'*
- A parish councillor enquired as to how the cables can leak oil. S/he added *'this could be a useful tool when combating those who want to underground in AONBs'*
- An energy/utility company representative said it was *'interesting to see low carbon technologies are almost limited to three particular strains. Have WPD thought about how it will handle other technologies coming forward?'*

**5.2. Q2. Do you agree with WPD's approach? Do you agree with their proposed outputs?**

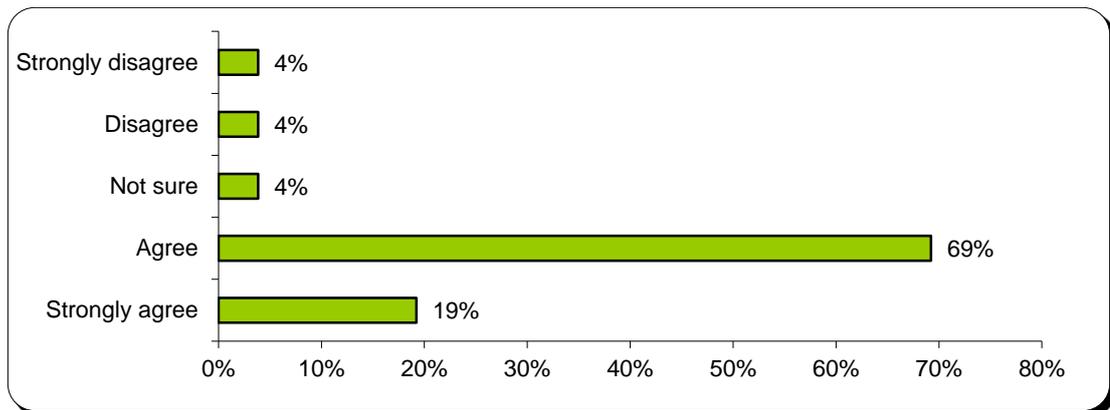
**WPD's overall package to facilitate increased volumes of LCTs seems appropriate**



**WPD's overall package to reduce the network environmental impact seems appropriate**



## WPD's overall package to reduce their business carbon footprint seems appropriate



**Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative asked *'what has WPD done in order to learn from other DNOs? LCT projects do not simply work in isolation'*. S/he said *'WPD should apply practical learning to the network'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated *'I have a lot of customers who are connected to LCT. They do not want to be charged the earth just to do a feasibility study and a timely response was needed from DNOs so money/time was not wasted'*
- An energy/utility company representative suggested *'it is really about the balance of cost against impact on climate change.'* S/he asked if a SF6 replacement represented *'a better bang for the buck than, for example, replacing current vehicles with new ones offering lower emissions?'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'people would complain about anything being built on an AONB but at the end of the day they do want/need the electricity supply'*
- An energy/utility company representative suggested *'putting cables underground probably involves a reduced need for planning permission'*
- A stakeholder said *'I would be happy to pay more on my bill to improve the reliability of the power supply'*
- A developer/connections representative suggested *'keep the price to the customer the same as it is now and then use the difference for additional investment'*. S/he felt *'a reduction in price was not necessary'*

**Table 2**

- A local authority/council officer said *'I do not know how you identify the LCT "hot spots"'*

- A local authority/council officer commented *'there is a lot of talk regarding photovoltaic generation but what about gas powered CHPs? These can produce hot water to new properties being built'*

### Table 3

- No comments were made

### Table 4

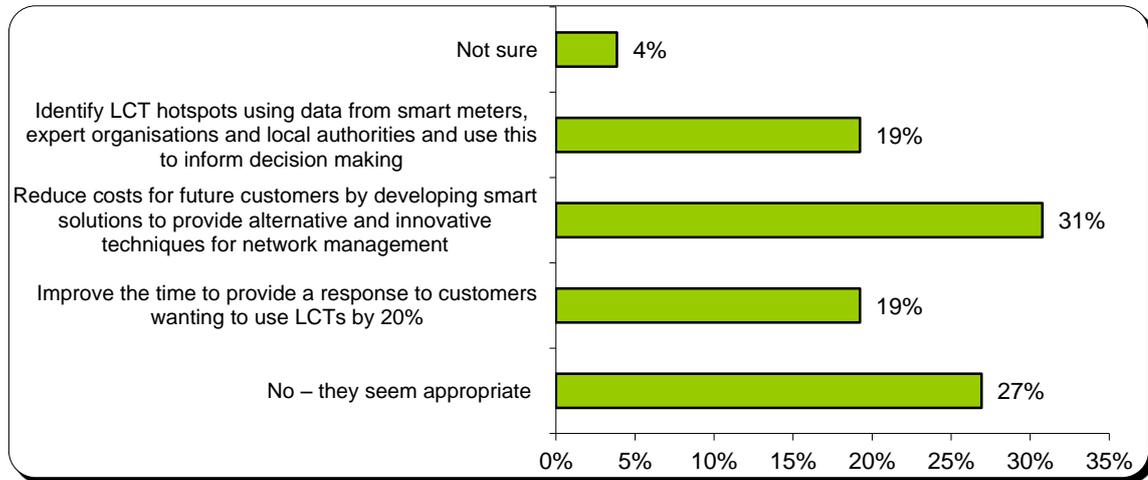
- A stakeholder was of the view *'WPD are doing a good thing and from experience WPD should be careful when deciding next steps'*
- A stakeholder commented *'it is interesting to see what is happening in the UK in terms of heat pumps and other technologies'. S/he stated 'lots of technological advances can go a long way without impacting WPD's business. S/he questioned 'to what extent do we allow this to roll out and to what density?'*
- A business customer representative stated *'SF6 needs to be handled at a local level'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'are WPD a sole model or is there a subtle split within partnerships?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'what are the reasons why people are against it? Do WPD think it is a waste of money?'*
- A stakeholder stated *'all views and other factors need to be taken into account'*
- A stakeholder was of the opinion *'WPD have come to a natural end of the consultation and I think it is all good stuff'*

### Table 5

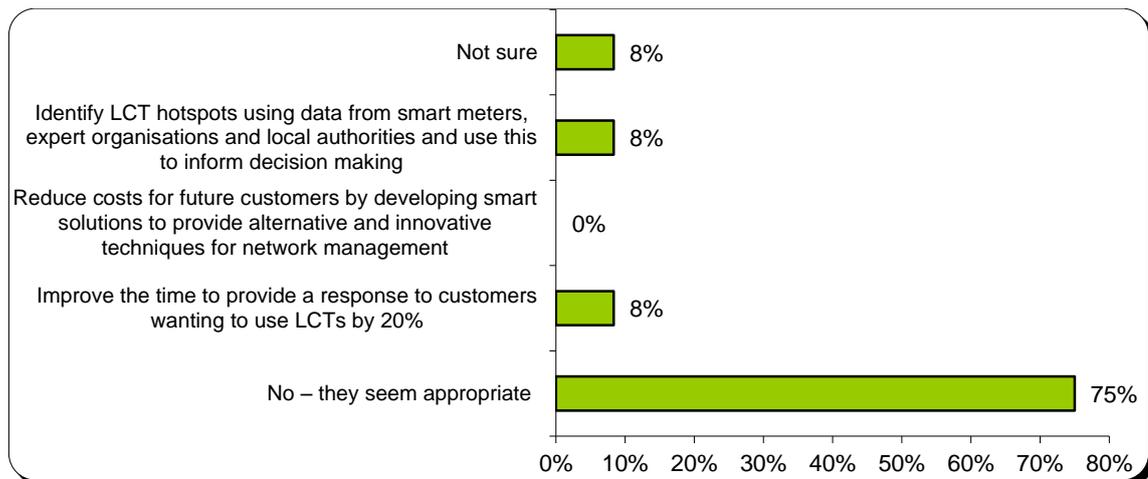
- A local authority/council officer said *'I would certainly support items four, five and six in package two. These are our core interests and those areas need to be improved continuously'*

### 5.3. Q3. Are there any areas where you want WPD to go further or do less?

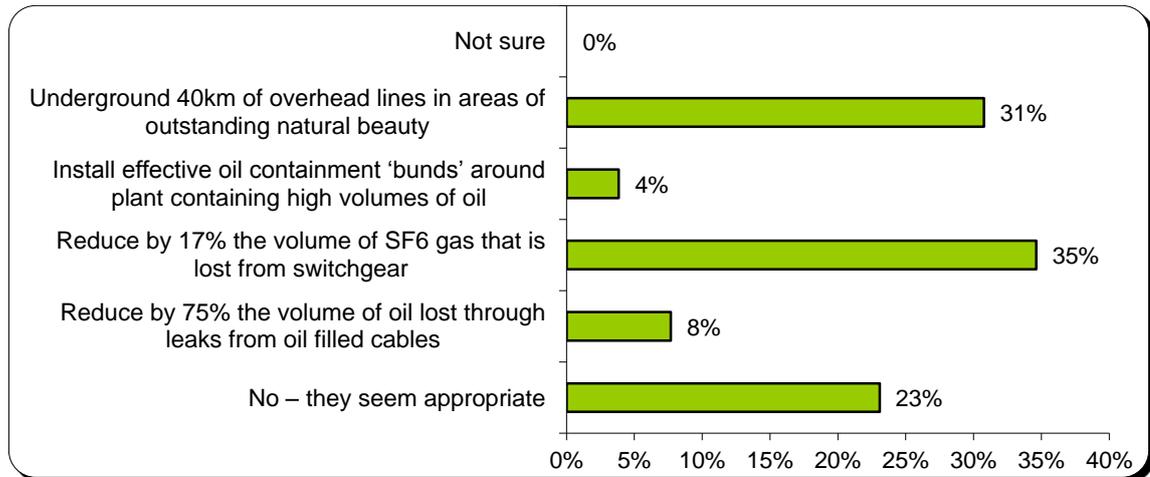
**Facilitating increased volumes of LCTs: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



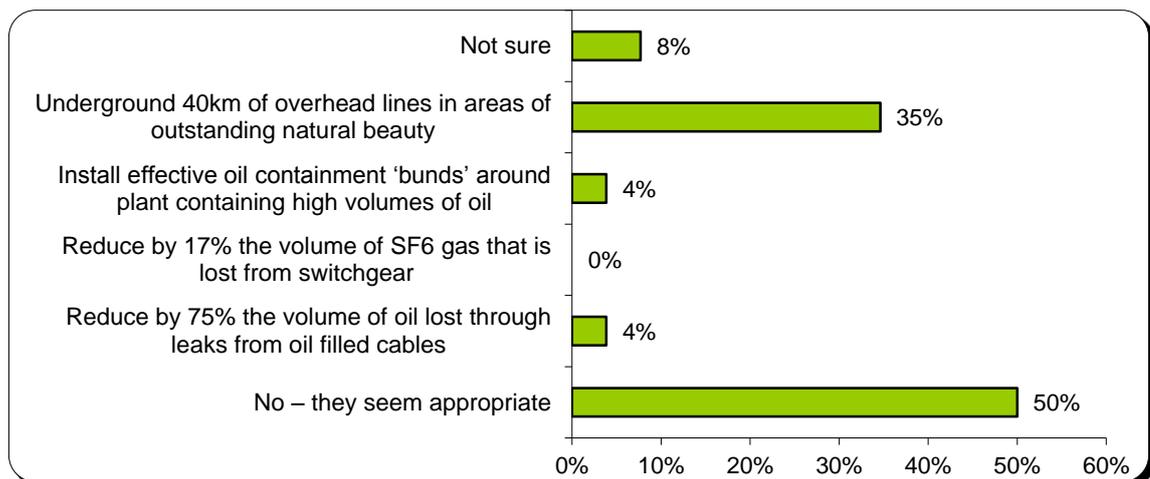
**Facilitating increased volumes of LCTs: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



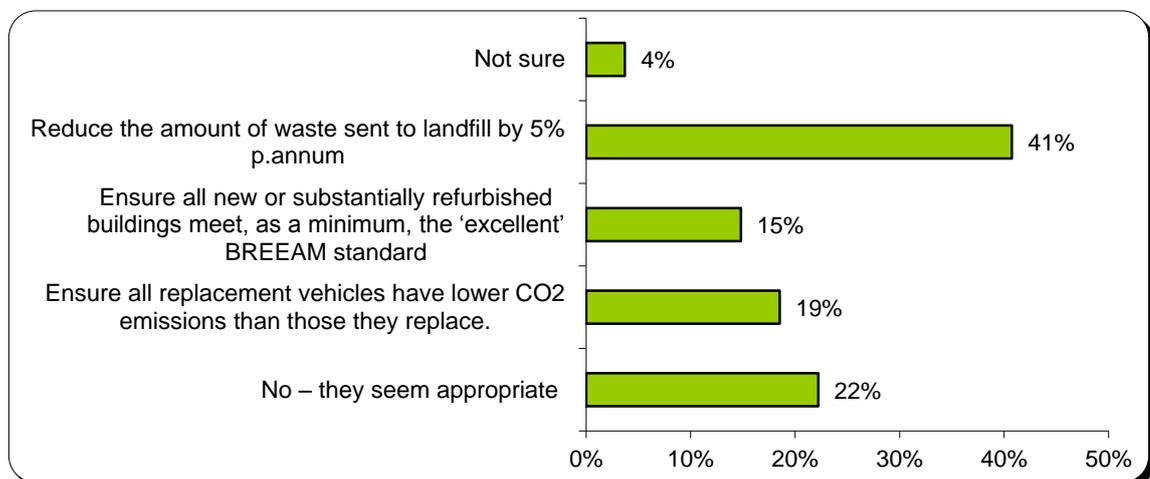
**Reducing network environmental impact: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



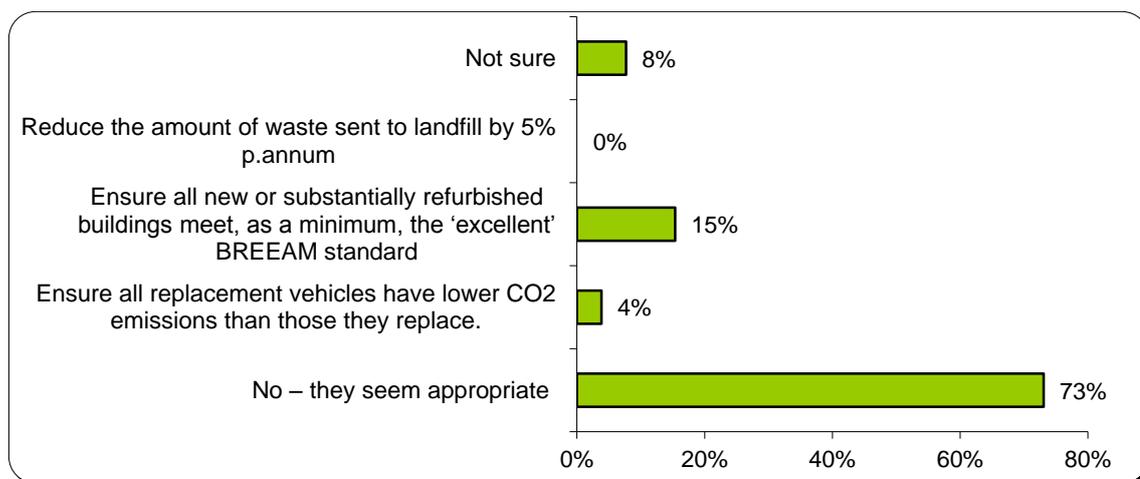
**Reducing network environmental impact: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Reducing business carbon footprint: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



## Reducing business carbon footprint: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?



**Table 1**

- A developer/connections representative was of the view *'poles and cables could be disguised, as they do in Canada'*. S/he suggested *'the cables could be painted pink which makes them harder to see and branches could be put on the poles'*
- An energy/utility company representative pointed out *'Eurostar, for example, is aiming for carbon neutrality and suggested WPD should have a more holistic approach with a total WPD environmental target'*. S/he said *'WPD currently seems to have a piecemeal approach to reducing its carbon footprint'*

**Table 2**

- A parish councillor was of the view *'in the long term, WPD may have to think more about getting ahead of the game on low carbon issues'*
- An environmental representative said *'many AONBs are in fairly exposed locations so there is a resilience issue to take into account before undergrounding. It is not just about the "look" of an area. There are now more AONBs in WPD's new wider network than in any other distribution network. My plea is 5km is a low baseline to start with considering the number of areas impacted. I just hope in some ways undergrounding is not being lost to pay for one or two other issues in the business plan. Keep in mind this is resilience as well as a visual amenity issue and WPD is starting at a low base'*
- A parish councillor commented *'the big metal pylons cause the most impact and these are the hardest to underground'*
- A local authority/council officer suggested WPD should concentrate on undergrounding in conservation areas. S/he added, *'more people would benefit by undergrounding in conservation areas rather than AONBs as conservation areas have more residents'*
- An environmental representative said *'I think WPD could get to a higher level of undergrounding'*

- A developer/connections representative was of the opinion *'undergrounding should be about resilience rather than visual impact'*
- A developer/connections representative made the point *'I do not want to be held responsible for leaks. It is WPD's responsibility for leaking gas to stop at SF6, but should also be the case for all gases'*
- A parish councillor discussed the issue of cable theft and stated *'I feel this is an issue WPD should tackle'*
- A local authority/council officer suggested *'WPD reword the section in package three, regarding landfill. It is not about how WPD are treating residual, it is about reducing the residual you create in the first place'*
- A parish councillor commented *'I wonder if WPD can do better on landfill. Perhaps try to achieve a substantial chunk of landfill reduction in the early years'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'my organisation has to produce a statement in its tender documents about what it is doing to reduce waste. In my opinion it should be about thinking of a better way of dealing with it than actually spending more money. Better planning will reduce waste'*
- A local authority/council officer was of the view *'WPD could find out more about future demands by talking to local authorities. For example, it could map future users geographically as we know where new developments for the next 15 years are going to go'*

### Table 3

- An environmental representative commented from a protected landscape point of view, especially around AONBs, *'we have to commend WPD on the proactive way they are working with us in this period.'* S/he stated *'I am a little disappointed the outcome seems to be to do less on the undergrounding of overhead cables.'* S/he added *'the environment aspect seems to have been lower down people's priorities when prices were put against the options'*
- An environmental representative added *'there is a pragmatic approach to take in terms of the impact undergrounding has on the landscape.'* S/he continued *'if you are in a protected landscape it is the view of cables that is the main issue, and this is led by the local community'*
- An environmental representative suggested *'you can't get rid of the big pylons, but it is the smaller village landscapes you want to make the improvements to.'* S/he added *'people do actually value the landscape when they visit AONB areas'*
- An environmental representative also felt *'it was a shame the telecoms industry are not playing ball and taking part in this too'*
- A stakeholder asked *'are WPD are working with the telecoms providers on removing overhead cables?'*

- A parish councillor believes overhead cables are quite a big issue in his / her area, commenting *'it concerns me it is being cut back as it is a small proportion of the overall amount of spending'*. S/he said *'some people have commented it would be wonderful if more cables could be put underground'*
- A parish councillor mentioned *'it is not just a case of where you live, it is also where you travel and go on holiday and it is a big problem in some areas'*. S/he added *'BT are not totally immovable on supporting the undergrounding of lines'*
- A parish councillor felt strongly about undergrounding of overhead cables. S/he said as an elected representative she *'wants the level of undergrounding to be increased from the present plan'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented *'I understand the frustrations of working with telecoms providers but there is support available to do this'*

#### **Table 4**

- A stakeholder asked *'can WPD have a look at the use of the building in a lifetime use?'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'it would be good if WPD could buy British vans'*
- A business customer representative felt *'WPD should look into building low carbon vehicles but not vans'*

#### **Table 5**

- A parish councillor asked *'why do we not have legislation that requires all new builds to be dealt with using low carbon technologies?'*
- A local authority/council officer responded saying *'legislation has been proposed but not implemented. In fact they are watering it down thanks to house builders lobbying the government'*
- An energy/utility company representative suggested WPD should *'possibly look at DECC scores rather than a BREEAM standard'*
- A local authority/council officer agreed, and stated *'WPD needs BREEAM excellent and an A rating from DECC. It would make WPD look very good in terms of its public interface'*
- An energy/utility company representative made the point there *'has been some exemplar education programme in schools based around low carbon principles. Is this something WPD would like to help and aid the change in energy efficiency?'*

## 5.4. Any other comments?

### Table 1

- An energy/utility company representative asked *'are there any overall targets for CO2 emissions for WPD as a business? How much energy does WPD use?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'to what extent is WPD's parent company involved in promoting these workshops?'*

### Table 5

- A parish councillor enquired whether it was *'more efficient to stick a big hole in the ground rather than the "Slinky"?' S/he went on to say 'if I was building a home I would be very tempted to install a ground sourced heat pump'*
- A parish councillor said *'I have been writing to the relevant ministry trying to find information on the benefits of wind energy. I have no faith in it and I think it is uneconomical because you do not know when you are getting power'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'the local authority I work for has the country's largest anaerobic digester. However, there has been lot of complaints about odour issues and residents are currently trying to get it closed down until this issue is resolved'*
- A parish councillor said *'I have heard how it is possible to neutralise the odour from a landfill. Whether that is economically viable is another question'*

## 6. Customer Satisfaction & Social Obligations

### 6.1. Q1. Does the amount of information given allow you to sufficiently understand their plans and do you understand the outputs?

#### Table 1

- No comments were made

#### Table 2

- A developer/connections representative asked for more detail about the customer survey and *'which company is at the bottom of the list?'*
- A local authority/council officer asked for more detail about the resolving of 65% of complaints

#### Table 3

- An environmental representative asked *'whether there is an industry standard such as 65% on the number of complaints resolved in a day?'*
- A stakeholder asked *'why is there no indication as to the funding needed to make these various proposals happen and why were not the relative costs set out?'*

#### Table 4

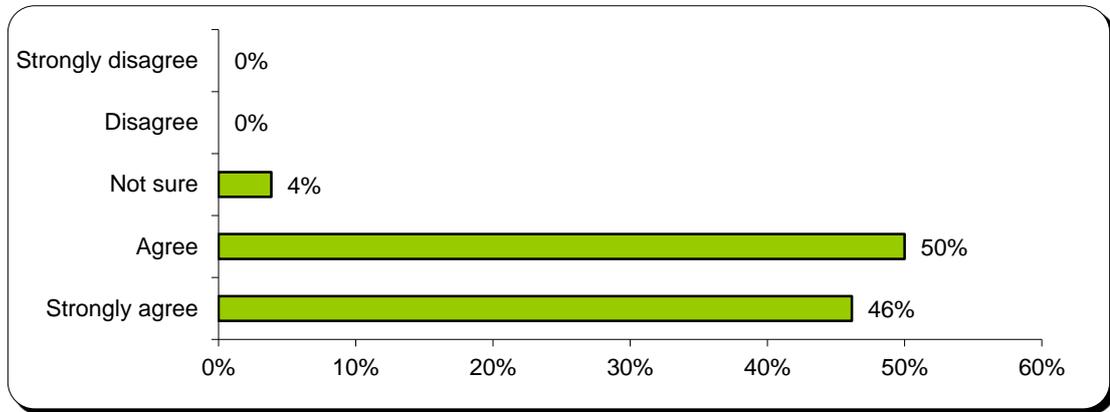
- A stakeholder asked *'is the target for new substations remaining at 40%?'*
- All agreed the plans are easy to understand

#### Table 5

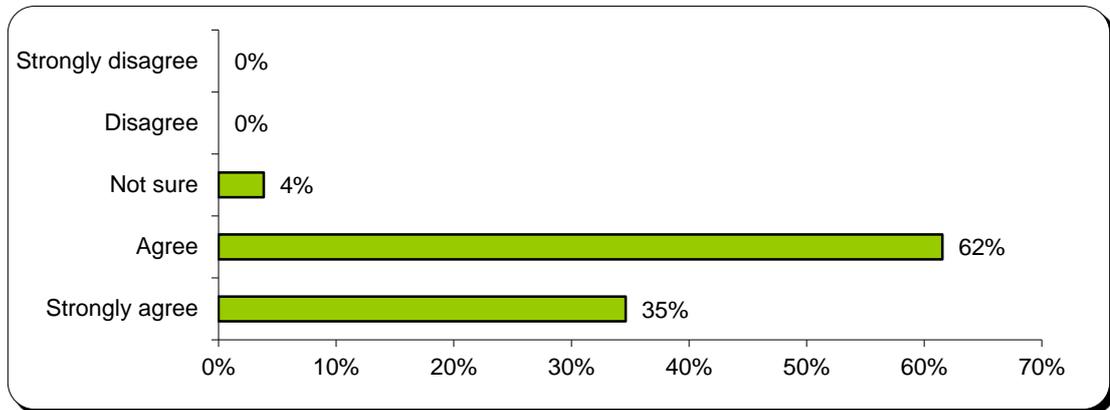
- A parish councillor said *'I am interested in the type of complaints WPD get. I cannot think of any other complaint other than where has my power gone?'*
- A parish councillor discussed the *point 'if WPD's average telephone response time is low, there will possibly be some longer response times, but the average is kept down by the rest of them'*

6.2. Q2. Do you agree with WPD’s approach? Do you agree with their proposed outputs?

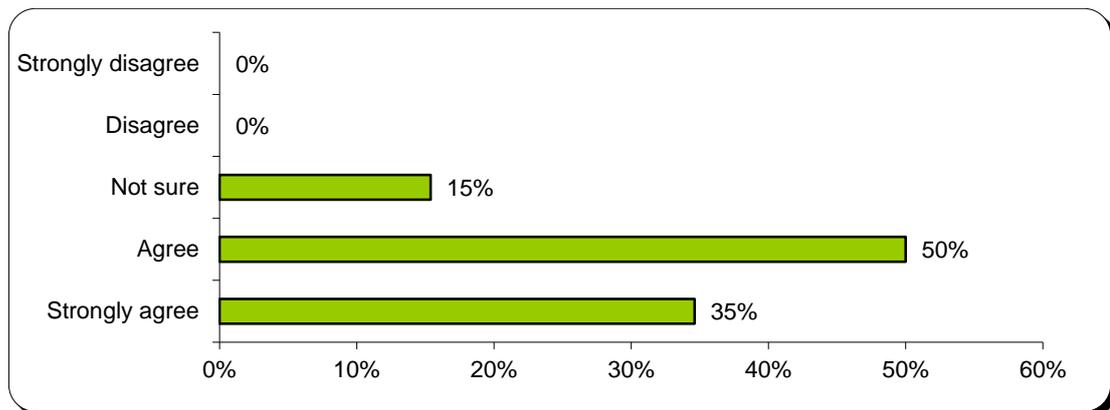
**WPD’s overall package for customer service & complaints seems appropriate**



**WPD’s overall package for customer communication seems appropriate**



**WPD’s overall package for stakeholder engagement seems appropriate**



**Table 1**

- No comments were made

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative raised a concern, *'for sending text messages, most people would not want to register their mobile number with a company as they would be concerned about the risk of getting lots of other text messages'*
- A parish councillor said *'I like the idea WPD wants to resolve complaints quickly'*
- A local authority/council officer commented *'dealing with calls is an expensive business. Dealing with enquiries via email or the web is cheaper and as an authority we are focussing more on these methods'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated *'a few weeks ago we were given an estimated completion time which proved to be inaccurate. This severely compromised us as accuracy is vitally important. You do not want the customer to think they are in such a safe place they do not take any contingency action'*
- An energy/utility representative company said *'with regard to communication during power cuts, WPD is in a no win situation'. S/he added 'as a business, if we think the cut is going to be three hours or more, we can hire a generator and get the power back on early'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'it is important to receive a call back when you have reported a fault'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out *'calling someone back when they have reported a fault must be more important to business customers than to domestic customers'*
- A developer/connections representative commented *'customer contact matters a lot when the service level is depreciating'*
- A parish councillor said *'I really appreciated a phone call after a recent power cut and it helped me to realise whether or not the outage was a one off'*
- An energy/utility company representative added the solution to power cuts is *'about working together. We have done a lot with WPD about how we can work together for improved supply'*

**Table 3**

- A stakeholder asked *'if a customer experiences a power cut but does report it to WPD will the customer receive a notification of the problem and the steps being taken to resolve it?'*
- A business customer representative pointed out *'I am so used to power outages, I do not often don't make a call and others probably do the same'*
- An environmental representative felt *'most people assume someone else will have reported a power cut'*

- An energy/utility company representative commented *'the stakeholder engagement and meetings between the CEO and customers is a key reason as to why WPD are a good organisation. They have listened'*

#### Table 4

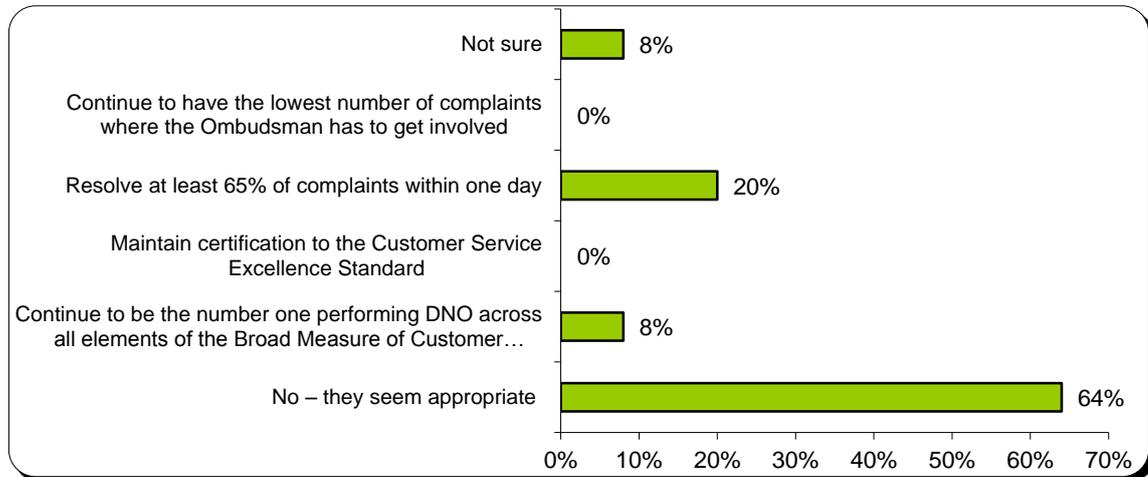
- A parish councillor commented *'I always go through my supplier when I have a problem or complaint'*
- A stakeholder asked *'is it a24/7 service?'*
- A business customer representative commented s/he *'has rung WPD directly and has never experienced any problems as a business and domestic customer'*
- A business customer representative stated *'from a business view WPD are very forthcoming in giving out information'*
- All stakeholders were happy with the outputs
- A stakeholder commented s/he was *'amazed and delighted by what I have seen today'*
- A stakeholder asked *'how can WPD supply enough operators to ensure a call is answered within 2 seconds?'*
- A stakeholder commented *'the company's attitude appears to be wanting to delight the customer'*
- A parish councillor commented it was his / her third time at the workshops and was *'happy'* at what s/he has seen
- A local authority/council officer felt *'WPD introducing a Twitter page seems to be a popular idea'*
- A stakeholder agreed and said *'Twitter and social media is the way forward as the generations grow up'*
- A local authority/council officer asked *'can social media include junk tweeting?'*

#### Table 5

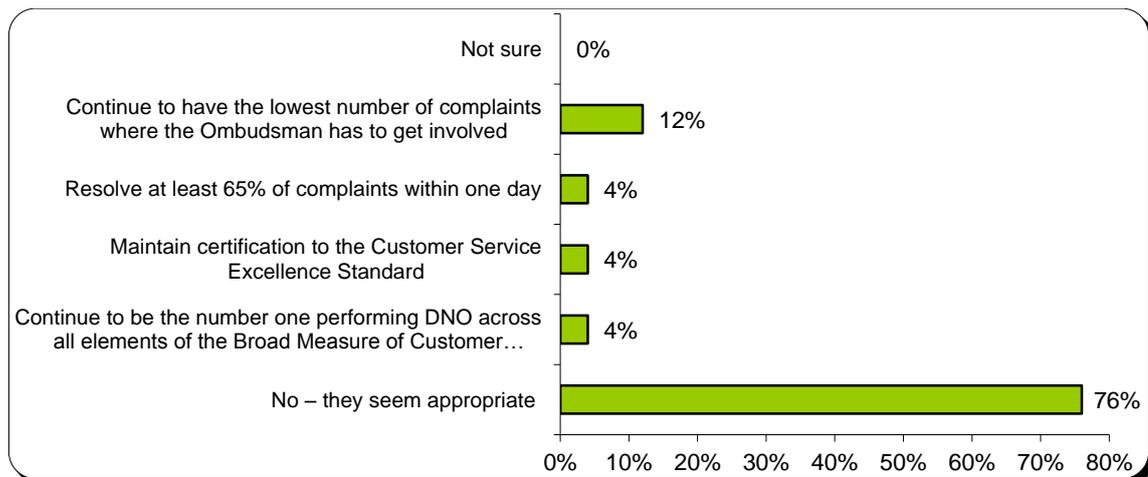
- A parish councillor declared *'personally, I do not have any problems with the package two. I do like to talk to someone though. I do not have a problem with an automatic message stating there is a power outage and stating when it is going to be back on'*
- A local authority/council officer said *'I support all the points in the packages and WPD need to continue with its own high standards'. S/he was of the opinion 'WPD should avoid cutting costs at its call centres with a whizzy phone system with menus etc. People will lose the will to live before reaching an actual person. This is important stuff as they do not want to be sent round the houses'*
- A parish councillor stated *'I find the stakeholder engagement events interesting'*

### 6.3. Q3. Are there any areas where you want WPD to go further or do less?

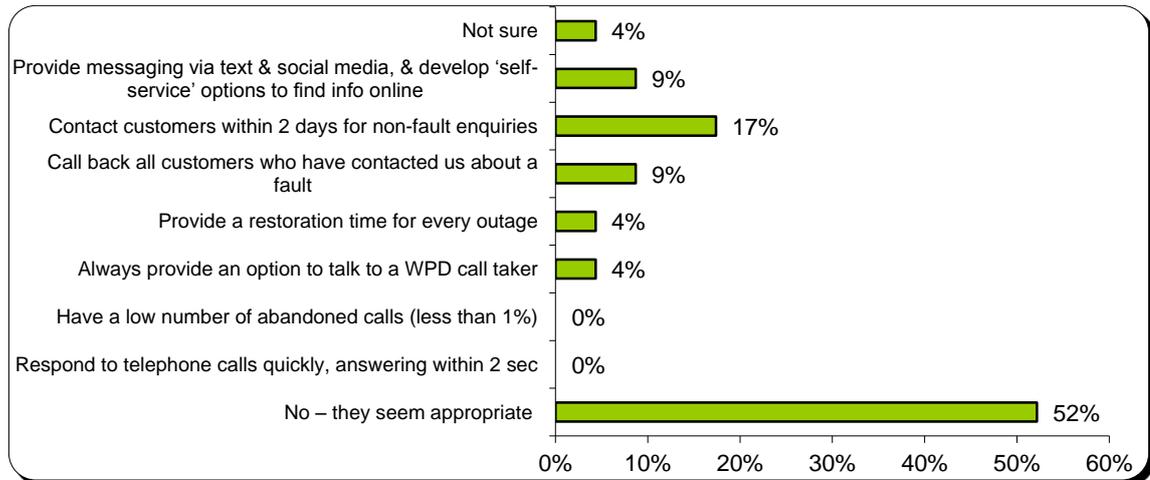
**Customer service & complaints: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



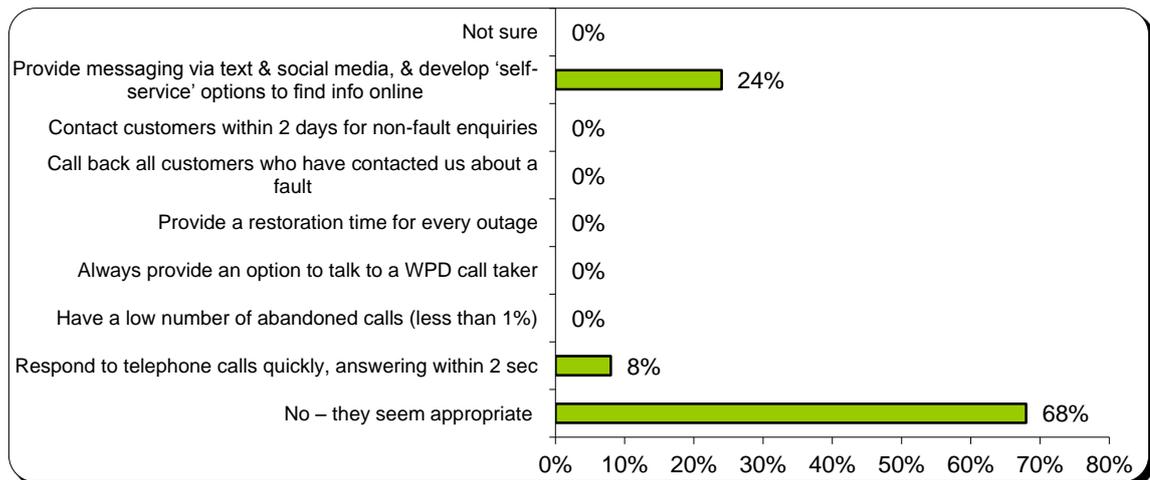
**Customer service & complaints: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



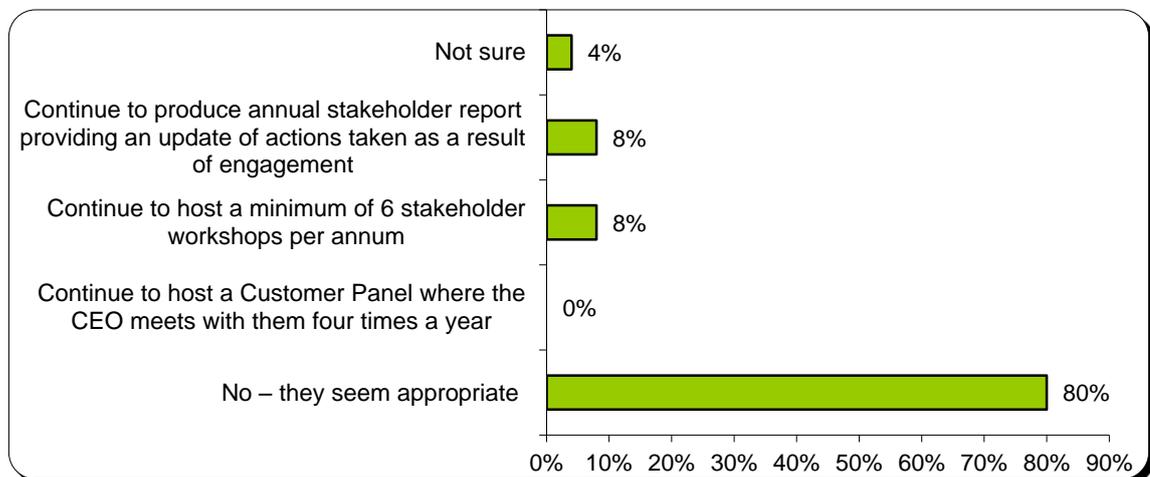
**Communication: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



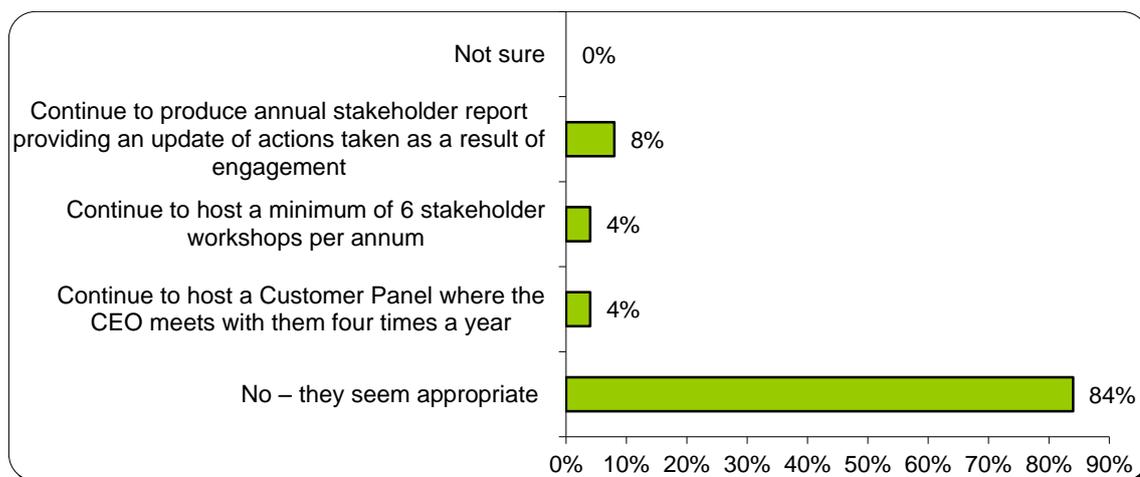
**Communication: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Stakeholder engagement: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



## Stakeholder engagement: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?



**Table 1**

- A stakeholder questioned the target percentage for resolving complaints and suggested *'this should really depend on the type/nature of complaint'*.
- An energy/utility company representative pointed out *'the regulators definition of a complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction and suggested a better measure would be the number of complaints resolved in one day rather than the percentage'*
- A developer/connections representative remarked *'there was no mention of a target of reducing the overall level of complaints'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'understanding why a complaint is being made is important to help achieve an improvement in the resolution rate or indeed reducing the number of complaints made'*
- A stakeholder commented *'talking to a real person on the phone is very important when making contact with WPD'*
- A developer/connections representative made the point *'effective online information is useful but I am not sure if Twitter or Facebook is an appropriate contact method'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'having a method of messaging such as SMS text means you can keep an eye on elderly relatives if you knew of a problem with power could be affecting them'*
- An energy/utility company representative suggested *'social media communication could be important in an area where there is a poor mobile phone signal'*
- A stakeholder said *'the workshops are a good idea'*
- An energy/utility company representative asked *'is WPD is holding workshops just because it's in a price control review period?'*

**Table 2**

- A local authority/council officer was of the view 'resolving 65% of complaints in one day is WPD's responsibility.' S/he went on to question '*should the output not be reducing the total number of complaints received? If WPD can track complaints and see when the peak complaints are at certain times of year are can WPD prepare in advance to tackle these issues before they happen? WPD do not want anyone to phone it up unless they are requesting a "value" service*'
- An energy/utility company representative observed '*power cuts and complaints are all about the quality of WPD's assets. If they are in good order, then there will be fewer issues. Hence protecting assets is of importance*'

**Table 3**

- An environmental representative suggested '*there should be regular updates of how WPD are performing against the various targets have been set*'
- A business customer representative suggested '*WPD should produce a sticker or something similar with the contact number on for consumers*'

**Table 4**

- A local authority/council officer suggested '*it may be useful for WPD to have workshops on specific topics as not all topics at workshops are relevant to all*'

**Table 5**

- A parish councillor said '*social media is not something I have interest in, but that's just me*'
- A parish councillor made the point '*WPD should not be spending money on lowering the time it takes to answer the telephone*'. S/he added '*two seconds is phenomenal. In fact it is almost totally unnecessary. It is incredible, but how much is it costing to be this efficient?*'
- A local authority/council officer said '*the council I work for takes many calls, on just about anything. I was wondering if WPD had considered sending out information to councils so they are able to signpost the caller to WPD*'

**6.4. Any other comments?****Table 3**

- A stakeholder pointed out there is an overriding view of WPD they are '*actually very effective*'
- A business customer representative said '*as a customer of two DNOs, WPD's contact is more proactive and the customer relationship is better*'

- An energy/utility company representative felt *'generally speaking WPD are very responsive regarding complaints and they are better than other utilities in the area. There is always the appetite to improve things.'*
- An environmental representative expressed concern *'as a domestic customer I recently came home to a power cut but found it difficult to find the number to call and afterwards there wasn't a follow up to say what had been done'*

**Table 4**

- A parish councillor asked *'aren't all telephones analogue?'* S/he was of the view *'the word analogue does not make sense and instead the phrases used should be digital or non-digital'*
- A parish councillor pointed out *'people use cable TV channels to buy a phone line'*
- A stakeholder pointed out s/he *'was attending the workshop in the capacity as a supplier rather than a user'*. S/he commented *'it was interesting to come one workshop but may not again unless there is a specific area being discussed'*

**Table 5**

- A domestic customer representative stated *'all I can say is I have had a power cut recently. I picked up the phone and someone was talking to me before I had the phone by the ear. Tremendous response and could not fault it. Very good'*

## 7. Connections

### 7.1. Q1. Does the amount of information given allow you to sufficiently understand their plans and do you understand the outputs?

#### Table 1

- No comments were made

#### Table 2

- No comments were made

#### Table 3

- An environmental representative expressed confusion about the third party connection providers section, as s/he wasn't *'aware of other providers and distributors'*
- A stakeholder also knew little about this and asked *'how the other companies know about how to do the connection work when it is not their network?'*

#### Table 4

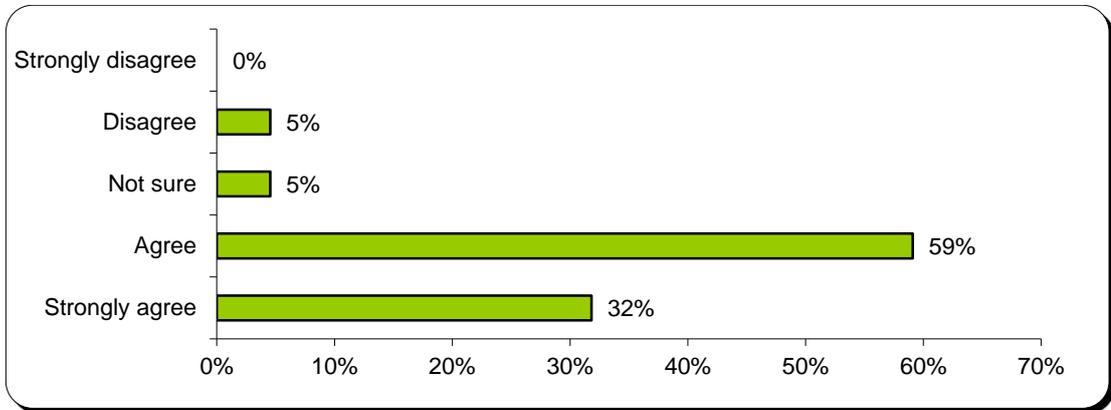
- A business customer representative asked *'what is the 90 day planning period for?'*
- A stakeholder was of the opinion *'more distinctions need to be made but improvements have been made'*

#### Table 5

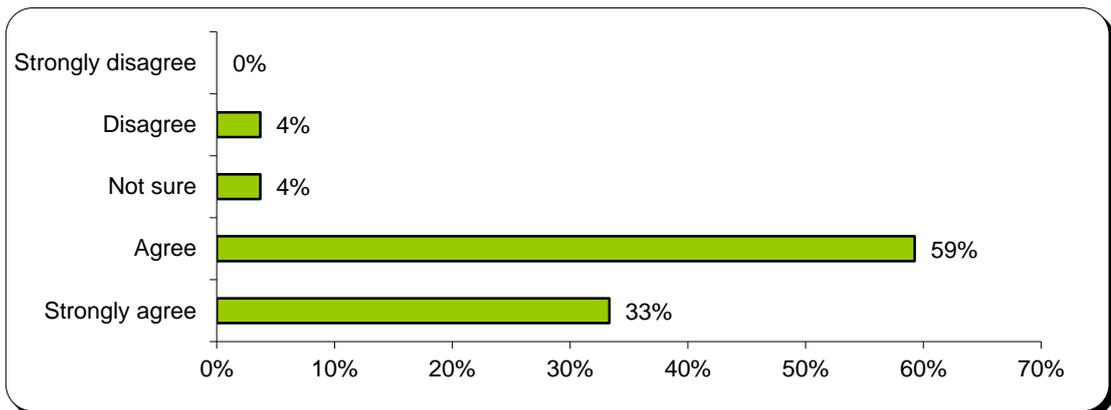
- A domestic customer representative asked *'why do connections take so long?'*
- A local authority/council officer declared s/he *'was looking for a deeper explanation on the third party connection providers'*

7.2. Q2. Do you agree with WPD’s approach? Do you agree with their proposed outputs?

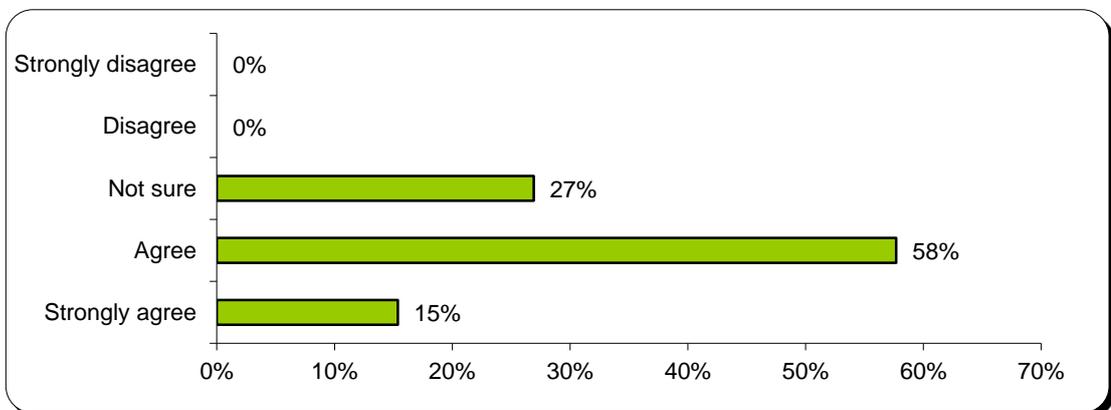
**WPD’s overall package for a faster more efficient connections service seems appropriate**



**WPD’s overall package for improving connections communications seems appropriate**



**WPD’s overall package to facilitate a competitive connections market seems appropriate**



**Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative pointed out '*customer communication and related business processes could always be improved.*' In his / her view it is getting the connection is the '*important thing*'

**Table 2**

- A utility/energy company said '*I am asked by staff why have we not got a WPD account manager?*'

**Table 3**

- No comments were made

**Table 4**

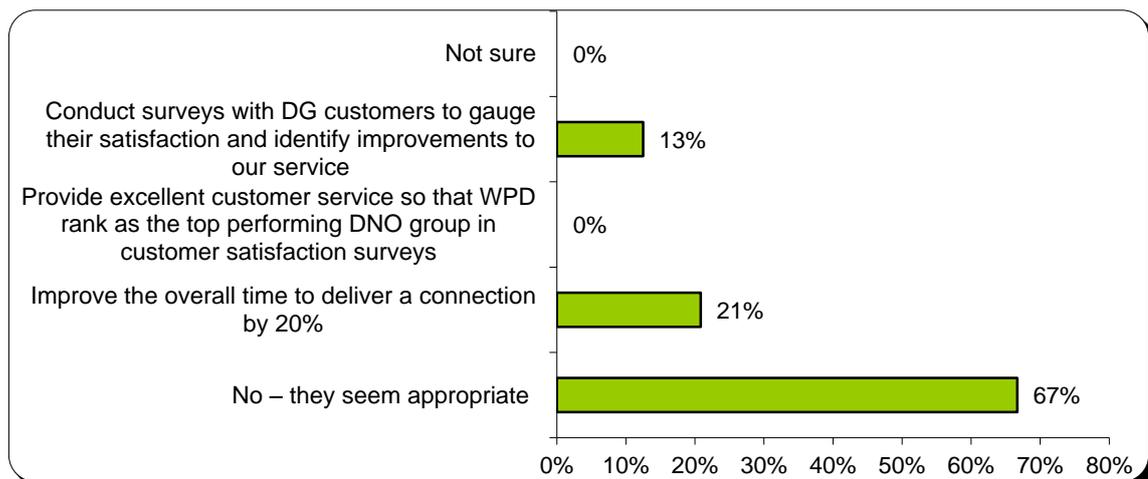
- A developer/connections representative stated '*53.5 days does not seem long enough.*' S/he asked '*are they working days? Does the customer have to plan ahead when building? When does the clock start?*'

**Table 5**

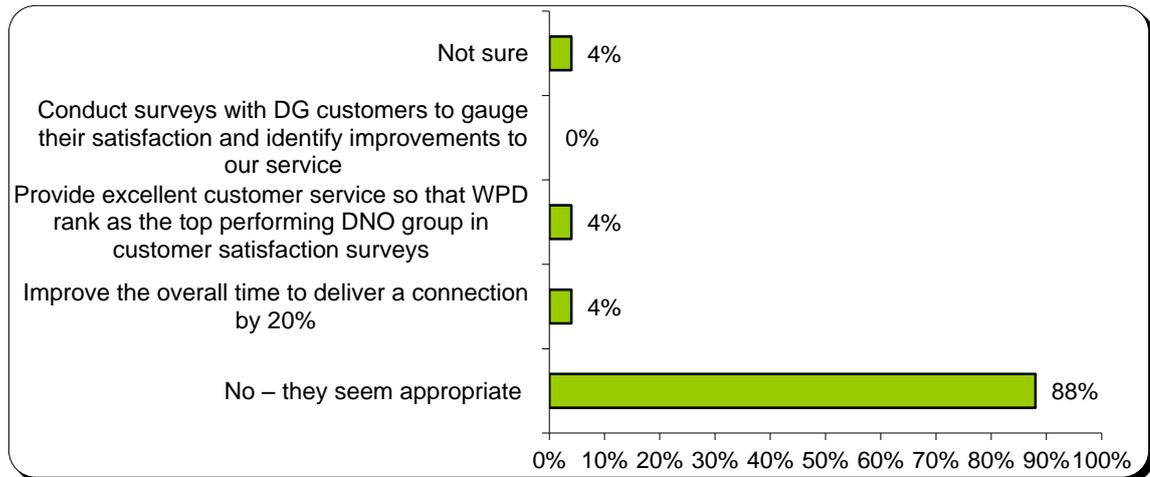
- An energy/utility company representative said '*from a domestic viewpoint online tracking is not really relevant, but a commercial customer would probably find it useful to see where they are in the process*'

**7.3. Q3. Are there any areas where you want WPD to go further or do less?**

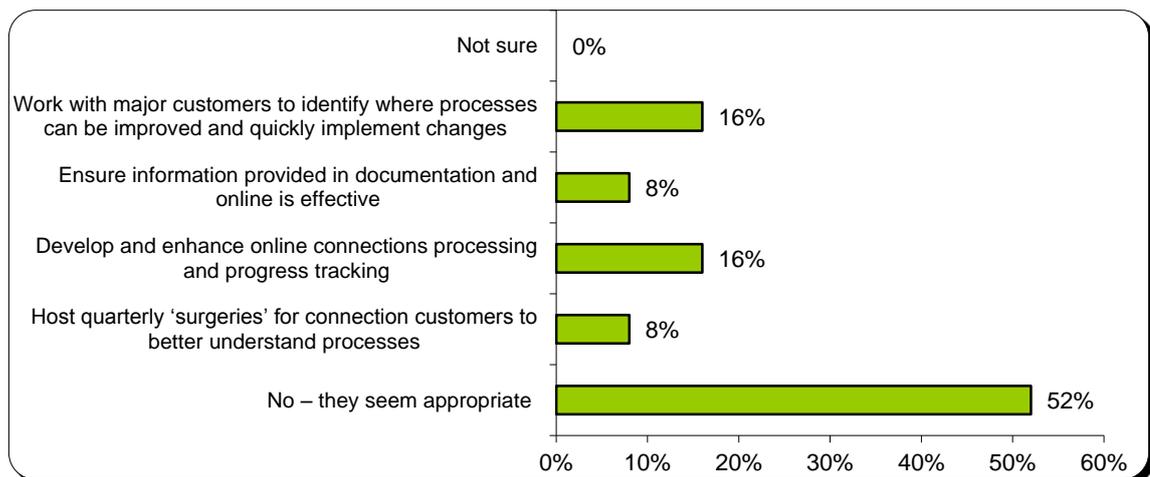
**Fast & more efficient connections service: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



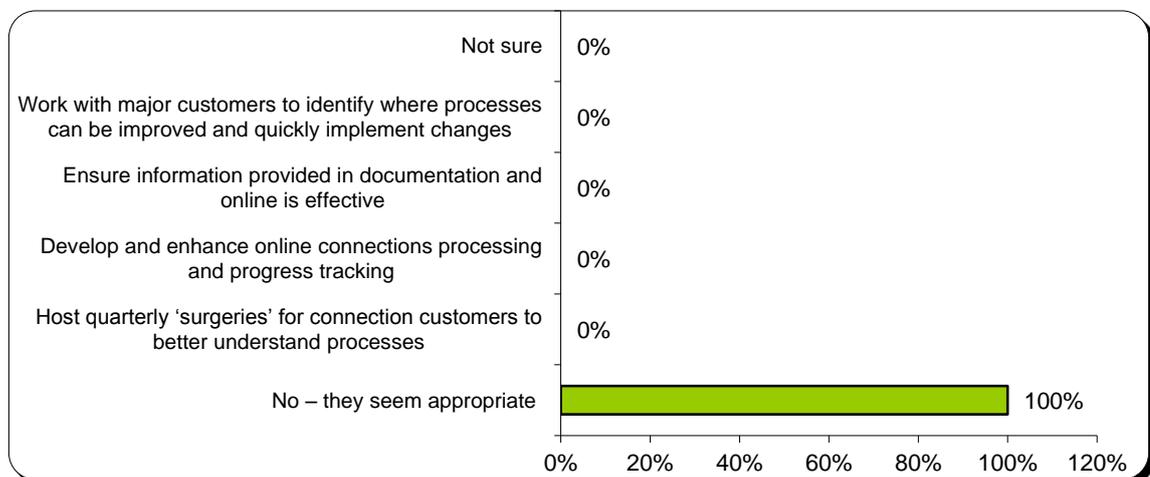
**Fast & more efficient connections service: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



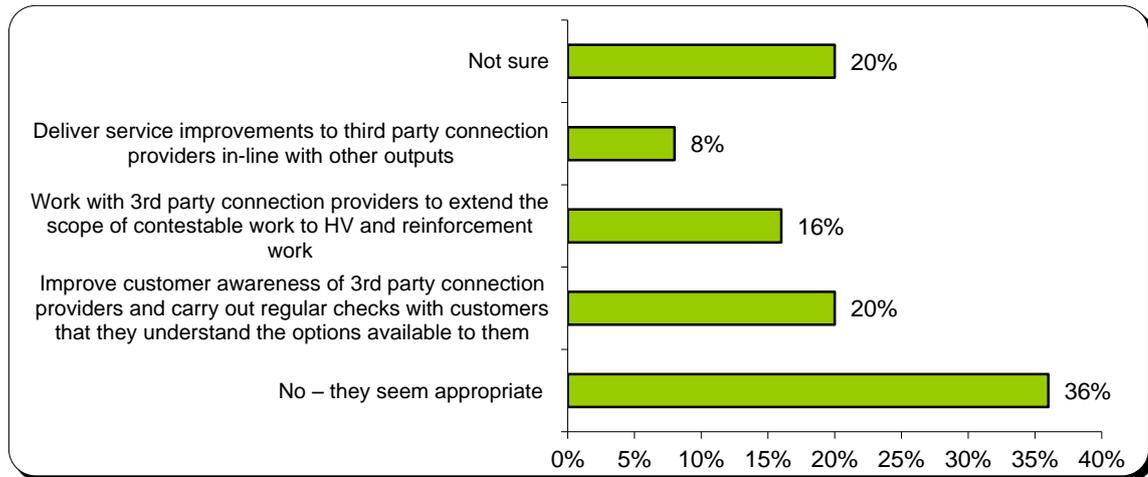
**Connections communications: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



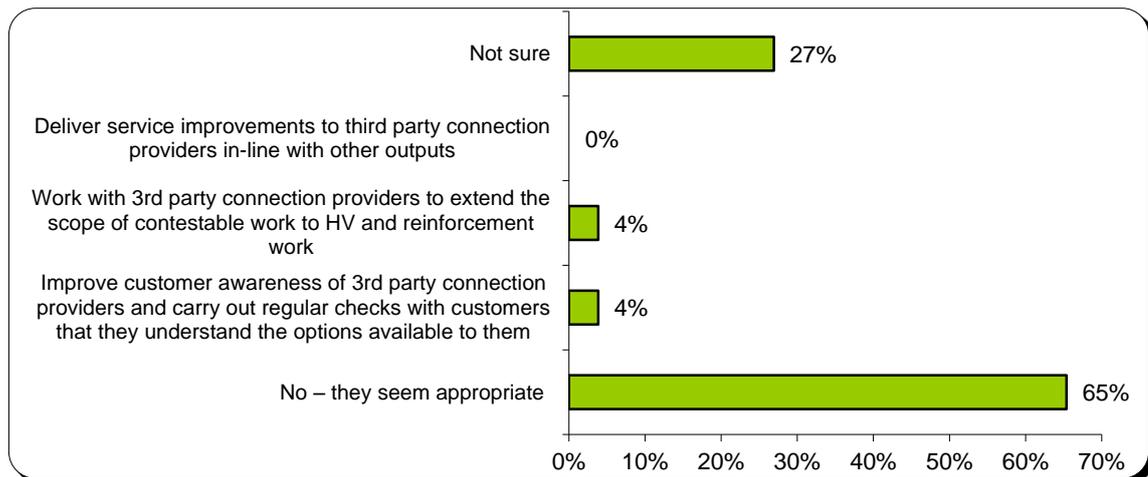
**Connections communications: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Facilitating a competitive connections market: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



**Facilitating a competitive connections market: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative said *'I feel it is important for WPD to get connections timescales right'. S/he commented they don't want delays and went on to say 'WPD is usually very helpful'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'the world of business has moved on and went on to say businesses expect more and a better service as time goes by, and DNO's can't really do enough in this area of the business – they need a can-do culture'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'WPD should be doing more to promote other companies that can provide connections'. S/he said 'alternatives were not promoted prominently enough on WPD website'*

- A developer/connections representative said *'information on specifications and standards should be more readily available from WPD'*
- A developer/connections representative asked: *'why can't connections be put in place with reinforcement to follow? In other words, have the physical connection there before the power supply needs to be activated'*
- A developer/connections representative commented in his / her experience of WPD has been *'quite positive to date and WPD just need them to make the information available and easier to find'*

## Table 2

- A developer/connections representative said s/he was surprised to learn current average connection time was 69.2 days. S/he added *'certainty is what is most important to them rather than timescales. Getting certainty on the outage window you are working on is important for a project'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'as a big customer, an account manager would be helpful. We used to have an account manager at Central Networks'*
- A developer/connections representative agreed an account manager would be helpful

## Table 3

- A stakeholder raised a concern about *'the risk other providers could take away the most profitable parts of this business from WPD and how much of a risk this was to WPD'*

## Table 4

- A business customer representative stated s/he *'does not find it easy to get a new connection but clearly stated it is not due to the relationship I have with WPD'. S/he stated 'it is due to the understanding of requirements which needed to be met and the manual I refer to does not always have the right information in it'*
- A stakeholder commented *'connections have got better and better and it has the potential to become a consumer product'. S/he went on to point out currently s/he 'has a good relationship with WPD in a business capacity as they know the staff well'. S/he also felt 'the connection process needs to be simplified as I feel I have to relearn the process all the time'*
- A stakeholder suggested *'communication to customers could be improved'. S/he was of the view 'the grid can't cope in the area I live in and customers purchasing new properties should be made aware of these things before they start to build'*
- A stakeholder was of the opinion *'the customer and business market needs to be separated'*
- A developer/connections representative asked *'why does WPD have to facilitate a competitive market? Should it not be Ofgem?'*

**Table 5**

- A parish councillor said *'purely personally I am not bothered how WPD rank. I am just bothered about the service I get'*

**7.4. Any other comments?****Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'a DNO can be a bottleneck to getting connected'*
- An energy/utility company representative added *'connection delays can have an impact on the economic development and prosperity of a region/area'*

**Table 3**

- An energy/utility company representative explained *'I feel WPD are competitive in the marketplace for new connections'*
- An energy/utility company representative raised two issues of concern regarding WPD, the first being with *'small connections'* s/he said *'WPD don't state who the connection quoter is'*. Secondly s/he felt *'the legal agreements for laying cables take longer with WPD than with other utilities and generally speaking WPD are slower in this respect'*

**Table 4**

- An energy/utility company representative commented s/he has *'no issues with new connections or WPD'*

**Table 5**

- An energy/utility company representative commented it *'quite pleasing to see WPD are the number one DNO and it feels good to be under its charge'*
- A local authority/council officer made the point the *'competitive market is more for the larger developments and less about individual houses'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented s/he *'would imagine third party connections have grown since the increase in generation and it is more about the speed of connection rather than the cost'*

## 8. Surgeries on Specific Topics

A summary of the surgeries is shown below. Anonymous comments from stakeholders and the questions asked of the WPD experts are shown in italics.

### 8.1. Q1. Use of system charges

- The WPD expert explained that prices are affected by the method of setting tariffs
- The WPD expert showed the information on longer term prices and explained that WPD plan to circulate this information to its large customers if the energy/utility company representative thought it would be helpful
- *'I was interested in this data as we have to negotiate with our supplier'*
- *'My organisation have a few sites in South Wales where costs are higher than anywhere else'*
- The WPD expert explained that this is based on pattern of demand. S/he then asked if the energy/utility company representative's organisation has internal contacts at WPD and offered to give her the number to call to discuss prices
- *'Bills are always two months behind although prices are available three months in advance'*
- *'Pricing is really complex as my organisation has so many sites and so many tariffs'*
- *'It is very helpful to understand what is coming up and get as much notice of changes to prices as possible'*

### 8.2. Q2. Connections/DG

- The WPD expert made clear that if there were any other topics attendees wished to cover to please let her know, likewise if they'd like to move onto a different part of the discussion
- WPD asked: *'has anyone got any ideas/people we should speak to, to improve our generation forecast?'* There were no suggestions
- *'Was the high score re connections in March due to the South West?'*
- *'What might be the reason that you can't connect?'*
- *'If a company cannot afford to put another wind farm on the network as the network capacity is full is that down to WPD, can you say it is network capacity so not your fault?'*
- *'It is interesting that you cannot say no to connect people if the network is full'*

- WPD mentioned a form of R&D to prepare for high volumes of DG connections to do something different e.g. balance out solar and wind needs as they don't tend to operate at the same time - table attendees appeared to welcome and agree with this
- WPD spoke of the identification of all customers wishing to make larger connections and that it could put in place a forum for talking to these customers on issues such as areas of process that they think could be improved on. This would then feed into a plan to the regulator by WPD. WPD explained they felt that connections should be a specialist piece of on-going stakeholder engagement
- *'Is this for large customers only and what constitutes a large customer?'*
- *'Where do the feasibility studies sit, are there timescales for feasibility studies?'*
- *'I have taken a difficult route with several DNOs. They are set up for an application for a 1 MW generation but when they want to enter into a dialogue regarding it with me it moves into a territory that is unregulated and I am at a whim regarding the response I get back. An example is that I entered into a dialogue with WPD who encouraged dialogue, I enter dialogue then all of a sudden a time delay kicks in, I wonder was I invited to enter dialogue to create a time delay?'*
- *'It is about making the connection between connections and innovation and how things are improving, it is very hard to decide 8 years in advance'*

### 8.3. Q3. Low Carbon innovation scenarios (and innovative connection agreements)

- *'Which areas of innovation are going to have the biggest impact?'*
- WPD answered the two big areas are low voltage vehicles and high voltage points were discussed
- *'What are the advantages of HV verses LV?'* This was explained by WPD
- *'Is there an issue surrounding storage and is there future technology being developed?'*
- *'Enabling solutions and working with the new changes in building regulations to invest in renewable energy could create pots of money from a business From a household level WPD won't be able to sustain it. One result could be retro fitting and the use of the gas CHP. Would that pose network problems?'*
- *'Has district heating been taken into account for forecasting?'*
- *'With regard to LCNF activity with DNO's is there an active take up from WPD?'*
- *'What sort of things are you looking at in terms of improvement?'*
- *'Are WPD working the same process of other DNO's?'*
- *'Are WPD behind the others as other reports came out in November or are you ahead?'*

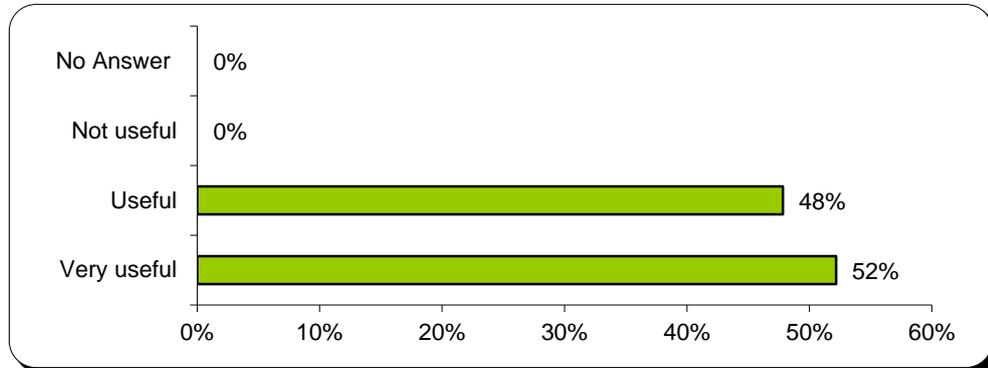
- WPD explained their timescales
- *'Will others now be under the same obligation from Ofgem?'*
- WPD explained what Ofgem required
- *'Would WPD like to be fast tracked to get money?'*
- WPD explained the options available to them
- *'Is the biggest driver for WPD demand?'*

#### 8.4. Q4. Social Obligations

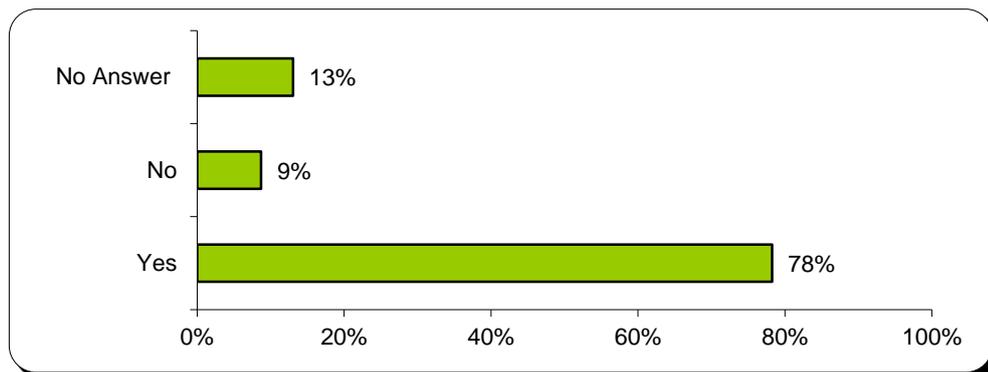
- *'In terms of offering the right service during a power cut, is it correct that often additional help isn't needed?'*
- *'Will WPD work with Doctor's surgeries to get accurate information?'*
- WPD explained they do put information in to surgeries and some Health Care Trusts have provided information, doctor's surgeries do not provide information
- *'Is there is a legal obligation of care on WPD regarding this, but it was explained that the list of vulnerable customers is not a mandatory list, so there is no legal obligation of care?'*
- *'Is there a risk of duplication of resources, when other people should be providing these services to those at risk of fuel poverty, so any activity needs to be done with care? WPD should be careful not to duplicate services and not to go too far beyond their core service'*
- *'What are WPDs obligation to hospitals, etc., and ensuring their critical supply of electricity?'*
- WPD explained they ensure that hospitals are never at a single source risk, having multiple network connections, and WPD also work with them to ensure they have resilience plans in place

## 9. Stakeholder feedback

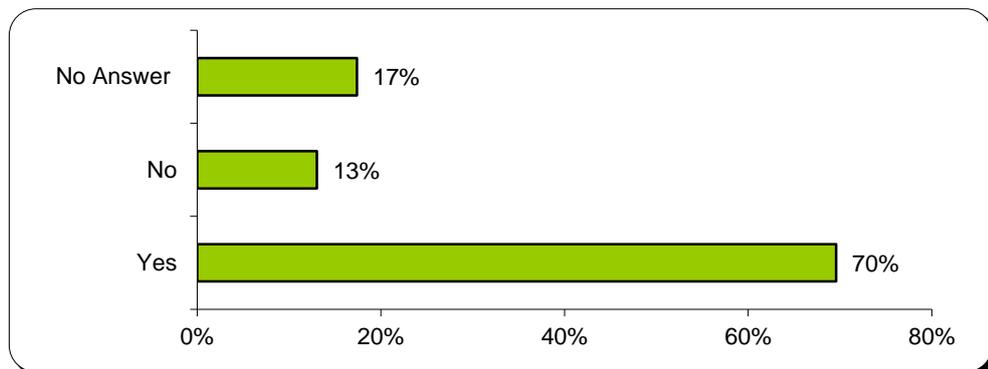
### 9.1. Q1. Did you find the workshops useful?



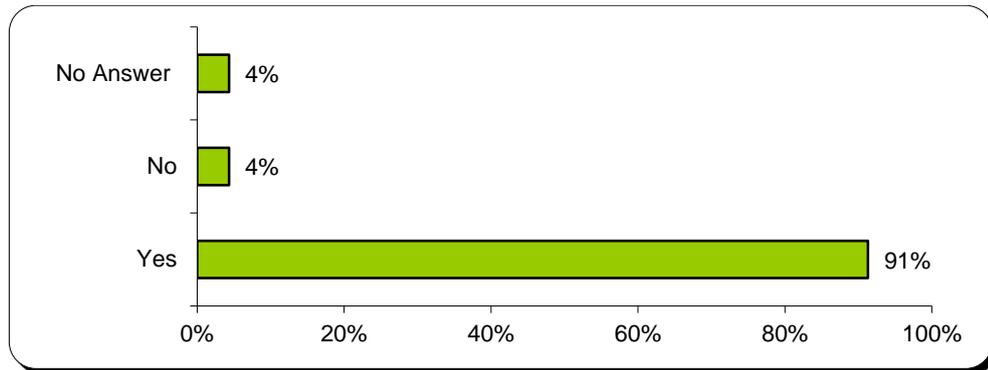
### 9.2. Q2. Was the venue conveniently located for you?



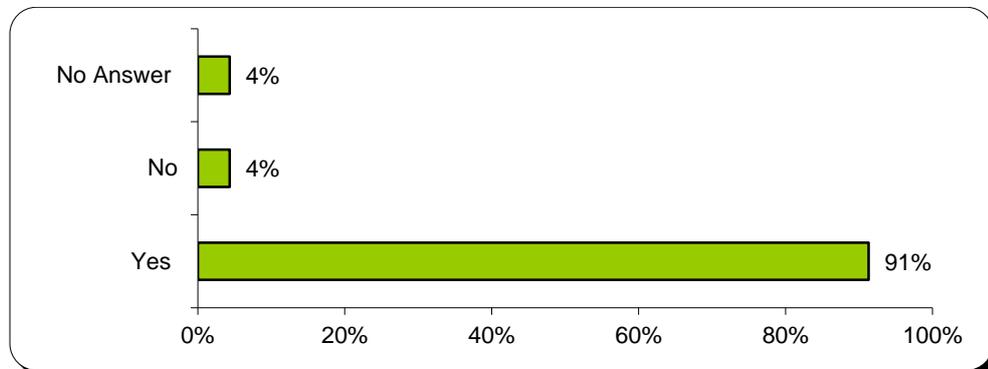
### 9.3. Q3. Did we provide enough information at the workshop?



#### 9.4. Q4. Did you feel you had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss your views today?



#### 9.5. Q5. Did you feel we covered the right topics?



#### 9.6. Written feedback

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

- *'Fully covered all key aspects-met my expectations'*
- *'The other DNO's should do the same and WPD should share the leasing'*
- *'Interested to hear how the business plan has evolved, having attended 2 previous workshops'*
- *'Very impressive for a "user". And good for a WPD supplier to appreciate your customer care and due diligence'*
- *'Good interaction around the table, and very well facilitated'*
- *'I wanted to understand more of the logic behind the old packages, perhaps I should have come to previous workshops'*
- *'Very interesting, could do with separate connections into domestic (smaller) and business (larger)'*
- *'Good to see ideas and solutions are taken on board by WPD'*

- *'Good to integrate with WPD and find out how their customers perceive them'*
- *'Very interesting (First time I have attended)'*
- *'Would have been helpful to have costing information to judge whether balance is appropriate'*
- *'More information on overall costs. I.e. Spend on each package relative to each other would have been good'*
- *'Very impressive consultation!'*
- *'Would be useful to have more specific targeted events. E.g. one for planning officers to focus solely on new connection issues, timeframes, links with planning system, etc'*
- *'It was useful to have well justified WPD staff present'*
- *'Would be interested to talk to generators but have no idea how this could be accommodated'*