

# Stakeholder workshop report: Cardiff

25<sup>th</sup> April 2013



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## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Date and location

The stakeholder workshop took place on 25th April 2013 at Wales Millennium Centre, Bute Place, Cardiff Bay, Cardiff CF10 5AL

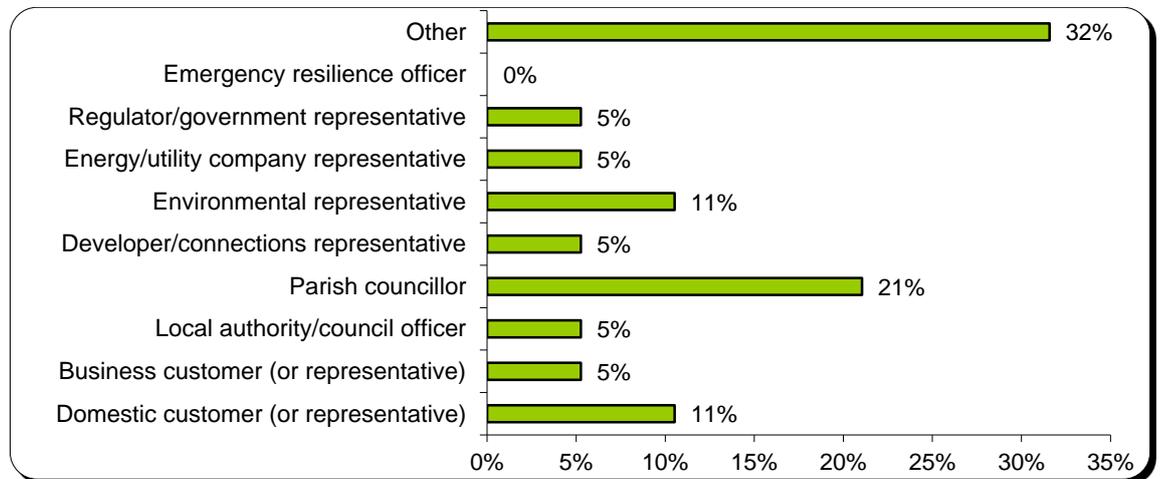
### 2.2. Attendees:

20 stakeholders attended the Cardiff workshop. The details of all attendees are shown below:

- Professor Haddad - Deputy Director, Cardiff School of Engineering, Cardiff University
- Andrew Burgess - Key Account Manager, Schneider Electric
- Andrew Self - Energy Efficiency & Sustainability Officer, Cardiff Council
- Andrew Nixon - Development Officer, Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Ashley Thomas - Chairman Wye Valley AONB
- Charles De Winton - Chartered Surveyor, Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
- Cllr Colin Crick - Community Councillor, Croesyceiliog & Llantrafon Community Council
- Fruzsina Kemenes - Regulations and Policy Manager, RWE
- Cllr G Ingram - Town Councillor, Llantwit Major Town Council
- Graham Morgan - Chamber Director, South Wales Chamber of Commerce
- Jonathan Hopkins - Regional Manager, Lucy Switchgear
- Mark Evans - Area Commercial Manager, SSE Contracting
- Mike Parr – Director, PWR Limited
- Ninian Williams - Clerk to the Council, Resolven Community Council
- Peter Morgan - Senior Technician, Energy and Water Conservation
- Richard Hall - Head of Energy Regulation, Consumer Focus
- Ron Loveland - Energy Advisor, Welsh Government
- Cllr Ron Jenkins - Town Councillor, Llantwit Major Town Council
- Russell Clayman - Business Development UK&I, Locamation

- Dr Stephen Robson – Lecturer, Cardiff School of Engineering

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
- Natasha Richardson - Regulation and Government Affairs
- Roger Hey - Future Networks Manager
- Steve Gough - Innovation & Low Carbon Networks Engineer
- Ian Lawrence - Distribution Manager, Cardiff
- Huw Thomas - Team Manager, Cardiff
- Gordon Downing - Distribution Manager, East Wales

### Green Issues Communiqué

- James Garland - Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Harry Hudson - Associate Director (Workshop Facilitator)
- Chris Brown – Senior Consultant (Workshop Facilitator)
- Lorna Campbell – Senior Consultant (Workshop Facilitator)
- Mike Townend – Senior Consultant (Workshop Facilitator)
- Alex Coleman - Account Executive (scribe)

- Nick Carthew – Consultant (scribe)
- Bob Parkes- Account Executive (scribe)
- Fiona McAra – Account Executive (scribe)
- Robert De Angeli - Account Executive (scribe)

## 3. Executive summary

### 3.1. Feedback from participants

- All stakeholders who attended the workshop said that they found it to be either *'useful'* or *'very useful'*
- The majority of attendees stated that they had enough information provided to them and all said they had sufficient opportunity to express and discuss their views
- There was a good deal of praise for the workshop format and for WPD's approach to stakeholder engagement

### 3.2. Topics for discussion

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

### 3.3. Summary of outcomes

- There was overwhelming support for WPD's proposed packages to improve network reliability and availability
- Half of the stakeholders in attendance agree with WPD's proposals to reduce by 20% the number of power cuts experienced by worst served customers. The remaining 50% were split quite equally between those who are of the view that WPD should go further and those who believe the company should do less
- There was considerable support for WPD's packages relating to innovation and the environment
- One third of attendees highlighted proposals to reduce costs for future customers by developing smart solutions to provide alternative and innovative techniques for network management as one area where WPD should go further than proposed and a similar proportion identified the proposals to underground overhead lines in AONB's as the network environmental impact where WPD's proposals should go further than planned
- Almost 30% of stakeholders identified reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill as a business impact where WPD should do more and almost a quarter stated that the company should go further with its proposals to reduce the volume of SF6 gas that is lost from switchgear

- There was overwhelming support for all of WPD's overall packages for improving customer service and communication. Just over one fifth of stakeholders felt that WPD should go further than proposed with regard to resolving at least 65% of complaints within one day and a similar proportion (18%) stated that the company should host more than six stakeholder workshops per annum
- All of WPD's overall packages for improving levels of service for connections customers were generally very well supported, although almost one fifth of stakeholders highlighted working with major customers to identify where processes can be improved as the one area where the company should do more than planned
- Just under 30% identified improving customer awareness of third party connection providers as the area where WPD should go further than proposed in its business plan

## 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 said *'one thing that is difficult to forecast is the adverse weather conditions, it would be interesting to see how WPD have built forecasting into the predictions'*
- An environmental representative asked *'will this benefit any particular group of customers?'*

**Table 2**

- A business customer representative asked *'out of the 12,000 worst affected customers, how many are businesses?'*
- An environmental representative said s/he would like *'clarification on what the definition of a power cut is'*
- A business customer representative enquired *'if power is required to maintain high speed broadband?'*
- An environmental representative said *'I am only able to understand the plans and outputs because I have been to previous events'*

**Table 3**

- A parish councillor said s/he was interested to know *'why there was no mention of ammeter masts when it came to the future of network reliability'*
- A domestic customer representative noted *'WPD covers four network areas'* and asked *'are the worst served customers clustered or are they spread across the four regions WPD cover?'*
- An energy/utility company representative asked *'am I correct in assuming power cuts are based on static generation failures?'*
- A parish councillor stated *'I am interested to know how much extra electricity a heat pump used'*
- A local authority/council representative enquired how heat pumps will fit in with Green Deal because *'it is important people had all the information'*. S/he went on to ask *'will people have to switch off heat pumps if they cannot afford them? More importantly, will the existing networks be able to cope with demand?'*

- An energy/utility company representative asked 'do WPD had any issues gaining access to properties to deal with the trees?'

**Table 4**

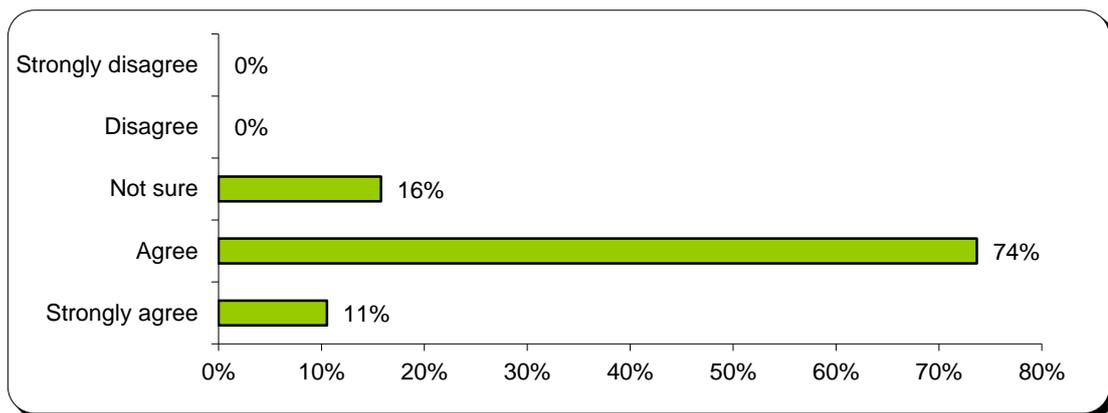
- An energy/utility company representative made the point 'what's not clear here is the difference between underground and overhead faults'

**Table 5**

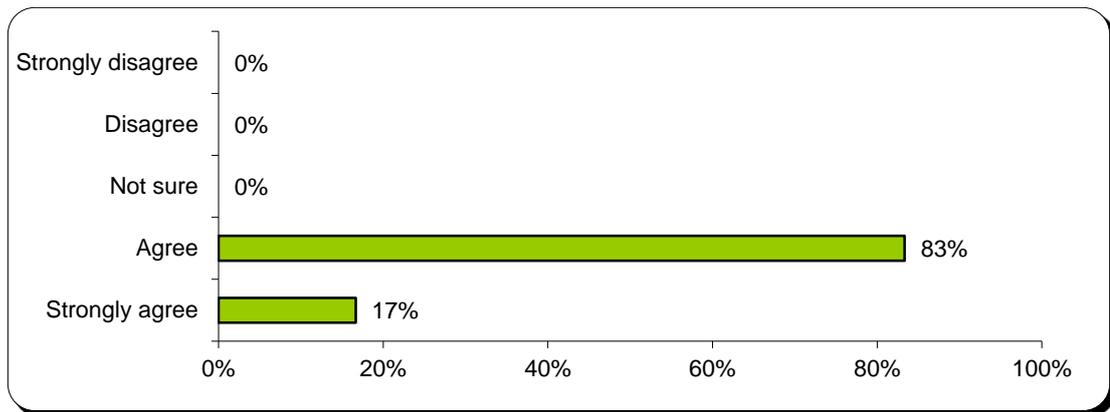
- A business customer representative asked if the worst served customers are domestic or commercial customer 'or are they just lumped together?'
- A stakeholder said 'it would have been useful to have comparisons with other DNOs on the number of power cuts and restoration times'. S/he also said it would have been 'interesting to know which other DNOs now have 72-hour batteries in their substations'
- A business customer representative asked 'do substations have an infinite life? If not are there any plans to replace them?' S/he also asked if WPD 'replace old cables as a matter of course as part of a programme?'
- A business customer representative queried if 'the maintenance costs of substations are included in the business plans?'
- A stakeholder asked 'how are WPD going to target the worst served?'

**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**

- A business customer representative commented *'on behalf of our members, who are a rural community, we understand that there will be occasional problems with the service and there are businesses and farms which may have their own generators. We all need electricity to survive and I appreciate that WPD do what they can to put people back on'*
- A business customer representative mentioned *'in my job role I cover the whole of Wales so I can compare how we deal with different utilities companies. WPD are really good when talking to other organisations, particularly those in the north of Wales who are difficult to engage with'*

**Table 2**

- A stakeholder stated *'WPD's outputs depend on National Grid doing its bit'*
- An environmental representative said *'lifting up substations to avoid the weather involves planning and it should be done properly'*
- A business customer representative added *'it is a good news story that WPD are bringing forward plans to repair stations. It is also good news for contractors who need the money'*
- An energy/utility company representative agreed, saying *'it is good news for us'*
- A business customer representative stated *'a Welsh directive to deliver high-speed broadband is imminent, so remote working will become more prevalent and interruptions will frustrate more people. The internet is vital and these disruptions cost time and money so need to be eradicated'*
- An environmental representative made the point *'the targets given over a ten-year period are very small over such a long length of time'*. S/he added *'I am not sure whether to be impressed by the improvement or not because over such a long time these measurements are hard to think about'*
- An environmental representative added *'things have changed for the better'*

- A stakeholder was of the view *'the number of reductions for people affected by power cuts in rural areas is not a large number. It is just a large investment per person benefiting'*. S/he added *'the more you do for rural customers, the larger the bills for those in fuel poverty. There are no free gifts'*
- A business customer representative stated the outputs were a *'sensible balance'*

### Table 3

- A domestic customer representative said s/he *'would be happy to pay 2p a year in dealing with worst served customers'*

### Table 4

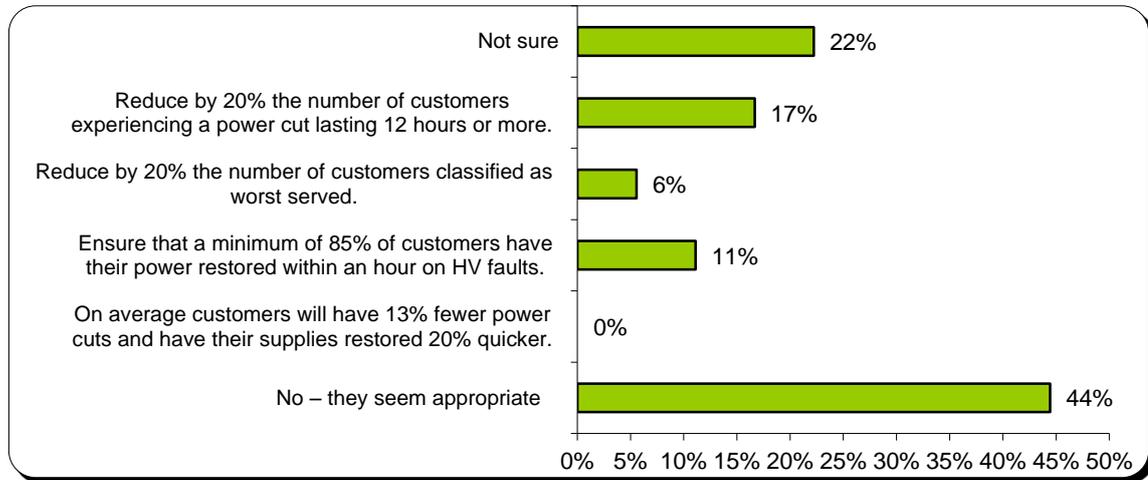
- An energy/utility company representative pointed out *'at some point you are going to reach a point that you can't improve any further'*
- A parish councillor stated *'my concern is that we have suffered flooding before, and that it was worse 10 years ago and recent flooding has been less severe, why are they doing more work now if the level is less?'*
- A developer/connections representative stated *'they sound reasonable achievements and it's interesting to see that there are savings being made'*
- A developer/connections representative added *'it's hard for WPD to show that they are the ones giving people the savings, as the public are hardly aware of them being around'*
- A developer/connections representative said *'it's a tough one as you can only do so much'*

### Table 5

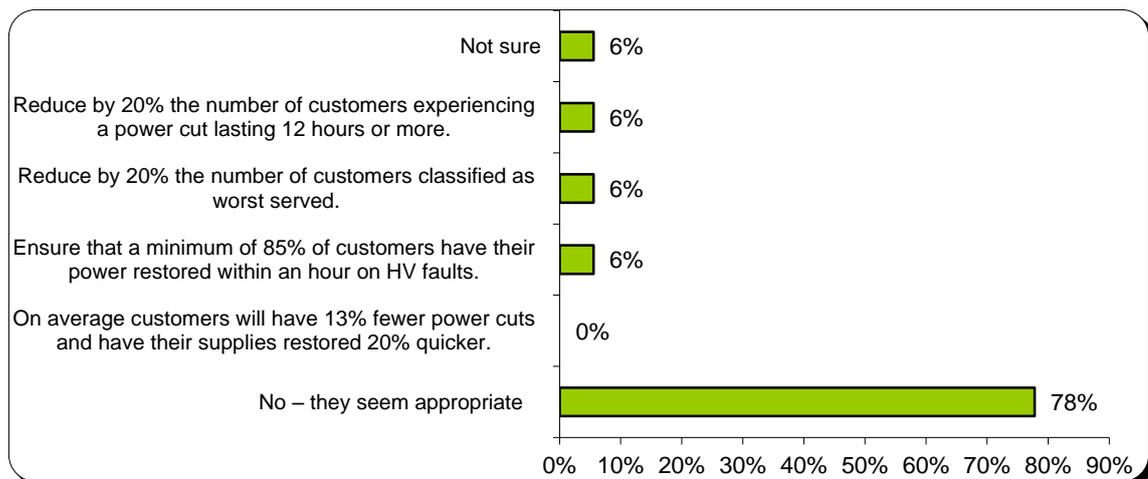
- A business customer representative was of the opinion *'it is less about fewer power cuts and more about when they occur. If the cuts happen in the winter there are more repercussions'*. S/he went on to say *'I support the lowering of frequency but I would like the impact taken in to account'*
- A stakeholder commented *'I am working on some projects which include rural areas, so I am pleased that WPD have put worst served customers in the business plan'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'it is not necessarily how often we are offline, more about better communication with large customers about outages'*
- A business customer representative commented *'it seems like an awful lot of time for the tree clearing. If it is really that important, why does it take so long?'*

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

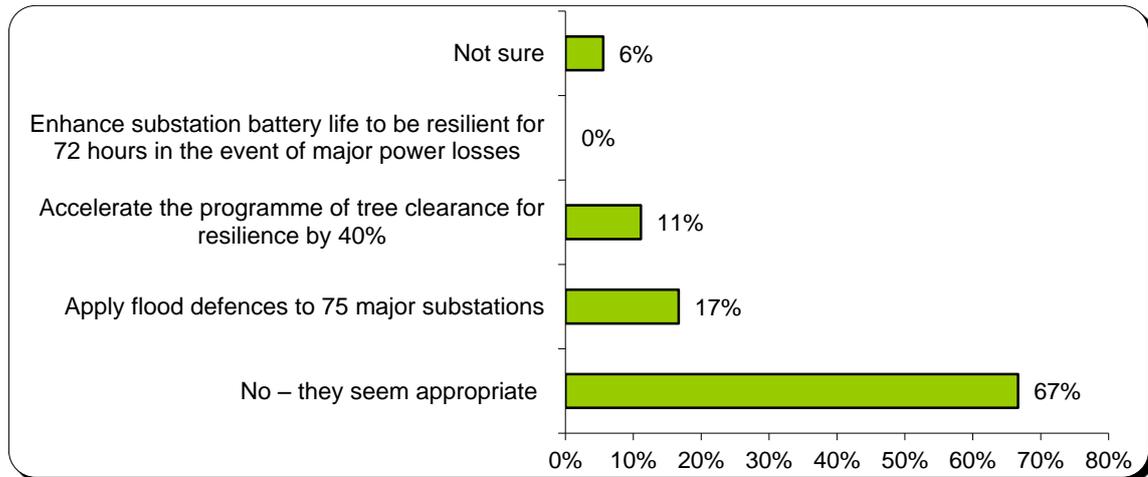
#### Improving network performance: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?



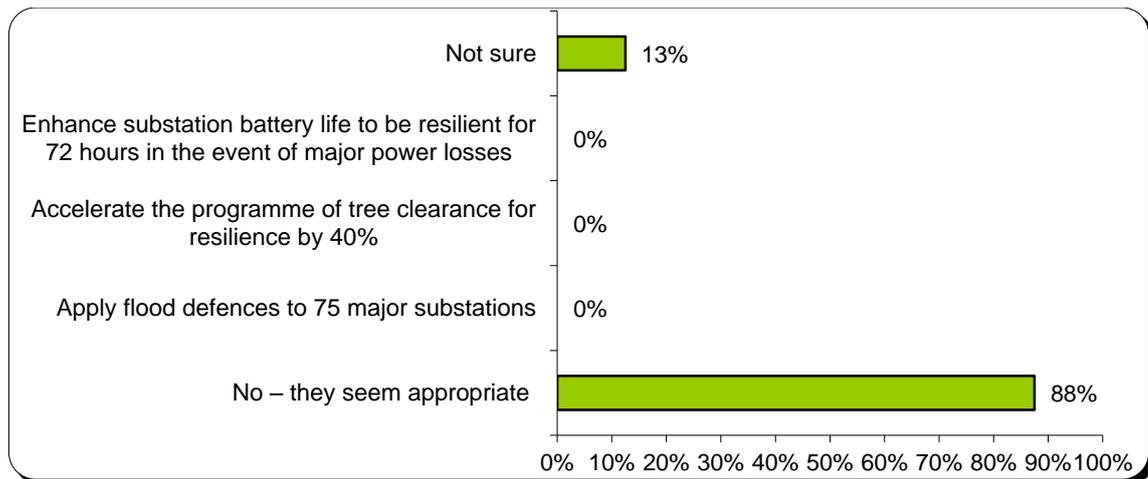
#### Improving network performance: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?



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



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



**Table 1**

- A parish councillor stated '*severe weather events are becoming more frequent*' and asked '*are you going to build this into the system?*'

**Table 2**

- No comments were made

**Table 3**

- An energy/utility company representative said '*while engaging with school children is a good thing, I would want WPD to use this opportunity to promote engineering, energy efficiency and low carbon technologies. WPD should use the Business Plan to say how it would expand this work*'

- An energy/utility company representative asked if WPD had *'considered having targets that change over the course of a year to deal with the different problems caused by the weather conditions in different seasons?'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view, in the business plan, *'WPD should expand on what is being done to replant trees when WPD remove them'*
- A parish councillor agreed with this suggestion
- An energy/utility company representative said *'I am keen to see WPD increase the pace at which they are redesigning the substations in flood plains so they sit on stilts'*
- An environmental representative believed *'it is appropriate for WPD to do extra work to maintain and improve equipment'*

#### **Table 4**

- A stakeholder held the view *'reducing the number of customers affected could be improved more by introducing new technologies and employing different strategies to respond quicker to issues'*
- A stakeholder adding *'finding where the actual fault occurs is something that should be looked at'*

#### **Table 5**

- No comments were made

### **4.4. Any other comments?**

#### **Table 1**

- An energy/utility company representative commented *'a lot of houses are built on flood plains and this is going to have a further effect on flooding'*

#### **Table 2**

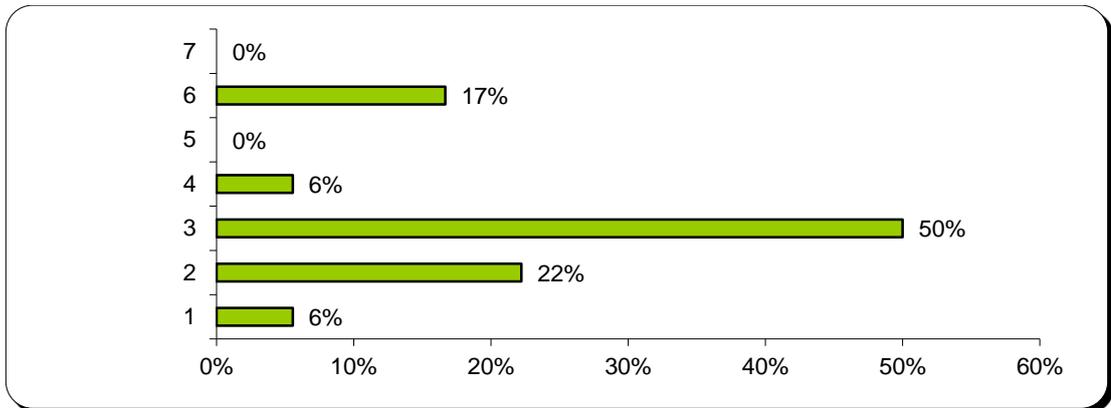
- An environmental representative was of the view *'the big problems are caused by very short power cuts as they muck things up'. S/he added these are 'becoming fewer but are still frustrating'*
- An environmental representative commented *'people operate remotely from work and interruptions are very difficult to deal with. Wales is pretty rural and it disrupts businesses when people cannot log on'*

#### **Table 4**

- A parish councillor said s/he had *'not heard of tree cutting being a problem locally'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented *'in the final report, it may be worth saying improvements will be made despite there being a more demanding environment'*

4.5. Of the options to improve service for 4,000 Worst Served Customers, which investment option 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

- An environmental representative asked *'will there be a regional dimension to the increase in bills if you see an uptake in new renewable generation?'*
- An environmental representative stated *'WPD have identified that they can reduce bills. Can I ask why WPD have chosen this approach rather than to invest more in the network?'*

#### Table 2

- An environmental representative wondered *'to what extent is the problem with SF6? It's very hard to imagine a number, it needs to be quantified'*
- A stakeholder asked *'does undergrounding include mostly wooden poles as there is a huge difference between steel towers and wooden poles?'*

#### Table 3

- An energy/utility company representative said *'I would like further information on what was being done to identify low carbon technology hotspots'. S/he also asked 'does the Data Protection Act stop WPD from accessing information from Smart Meters installed in homes?'*
- A domestic customer representative enquired about WPD's target for delivering assistance to individual households who want to put in low carbon technologies and added *'these targets should be shown in the plan'*

#### Table 4

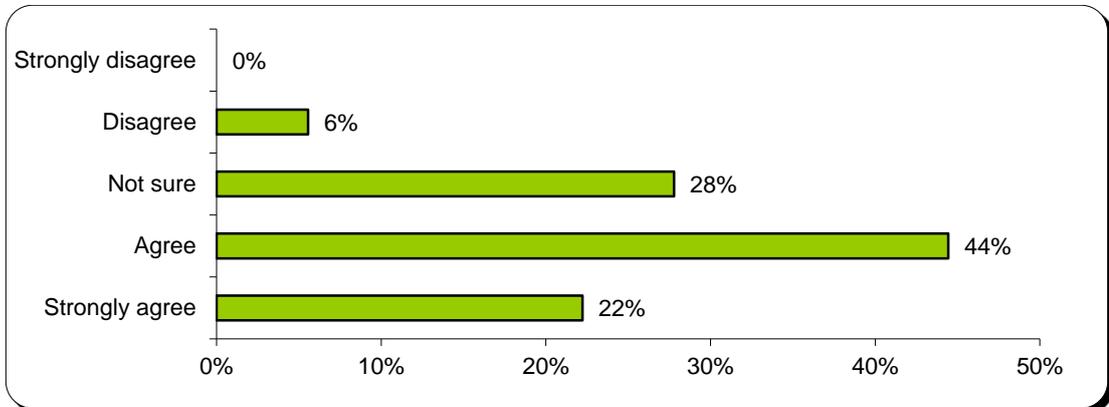
- A stakeholder asked *'how are you going to lower the amount of leakage from cables?'*

#### Table 5

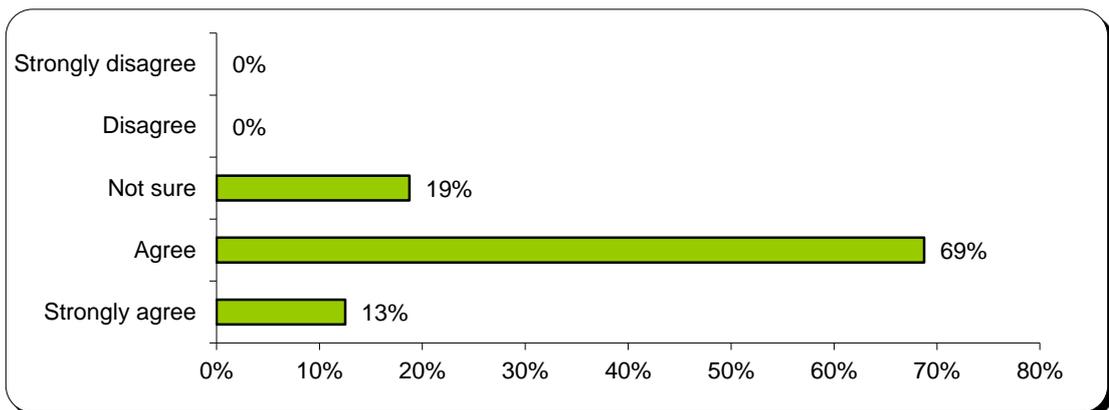
- No comments were made

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

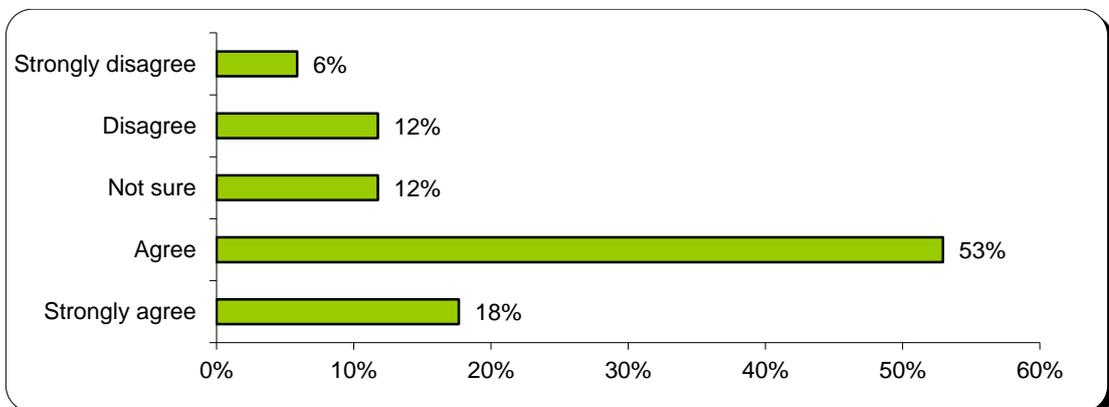
**WPD’s overall package to facilitate increased volumes of LCTs seems appropriate**



**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**

- A parish councillor said *'I think it's quite clear that it is a good plan'*
- An environmental representative commented on undergrounding in ANOB *'basically we know what the current levels are and we have allocated funds. We are working with WPD so there are no capacity issues from our perspective and we are happy to work further with WPD. Allocation for undergrounding is particularly prevalent on what we call "iconic sites" and in these areas it is really valuable. There is certainly a tourism dimension and it would help make the places more attractive. It's interesting that the undergrounding issue is so polarised and I suppose I understand why non-local people do not see it as important'*

**Table 2**

- A stakeholder was of the view *'PV is an effective income stream, but at the other end of the spectrum, only rich people can afford electric vehicles, so it then becomes a different scenario'. S/he went on to say the innovations are 'hard to quantify because no one is predicting that a lot of pure electric vehicles will be in use and heat pumps depend on the price of gas'*
- An environmental representative commented *'home sourced gas is better and cheaper'*
- A stakeholder was of the view there is *'a bigger drive in rural areas in the uptake of innovation'*
- An environmental representative stated when it came to fixing oil leaks, it was a *'no brainer'*; and asked *'why cannot it be 100%?'*
- A stakeholder added *'a 50kg reduction of a nasty gas is still not very much'*
- An environmental representative made the point *'WPD only talks about landscaping, but does not illustrate it; you cannot persuade people to the impact without showing them. WPD has done quite a bit to make things better, but it would be more effective if illustrated'*
- An environmental representative highlighted *'poles with transformers can distort the view'*
- A business customer representative asked *'what is the average size (in km) of an area of outstanding national beauty? My view is why bother as there are so many kilometres, WPD would be better to just leave it?'*
- A stakeholder insisted *'WPD should not replace Fords with Fiats as Fords are produced in the UK whereas importing Fiats would increase WPD's carbon footprint'*
- An environmental representative commented *'where I live there are quite a lot of trees so it is beneficial to move them away from the power lines'*
- A business customer representative was of the view *'tree problems are also affected by climate change and will get worse if WPD does not do something about the damage caused by trees'*

**Table 3**

- A domestic customer representative said *'some of these areas could be more challenging'*
- An energy/utility company representative made the point it was a *'challenging target for WPD to increase the amount of undergrounding in AONB'*

**Table 4**

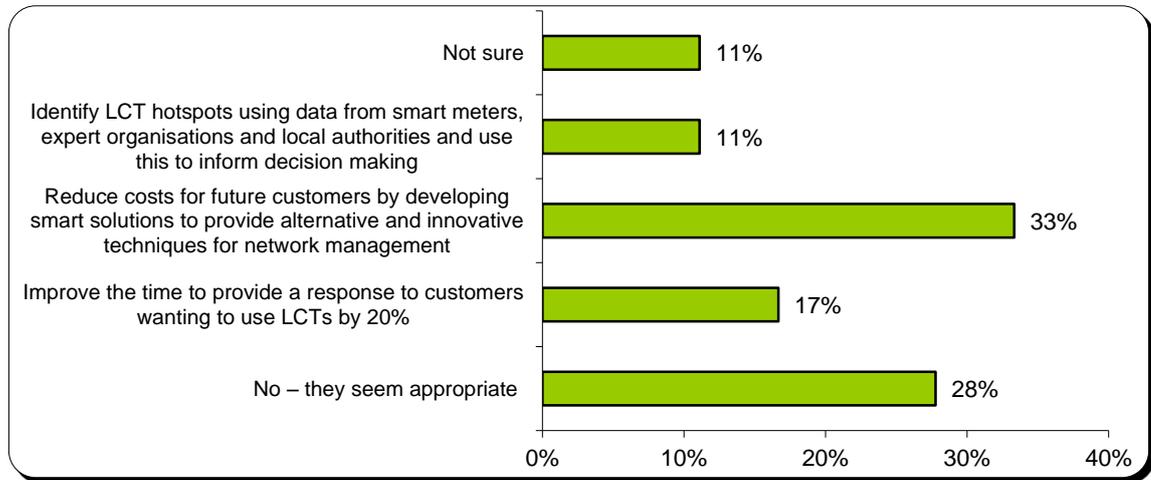
- A stakeholder said *'It is important to look at new innovation and solutions'*
- A developer/connections representative commented *'it's a balancing act as it's such an old asset, that is going to be stressed with LCT expanding'*
- A developer/connections representative held the opinion *'if the case is there is a lot of leaking SF6 gas then replacing it is the best idea so it should be done'*
- A stakeholder pointed out his / her company *'are looking at alternative gases'*. S/he asked *'are WPD looking at it as well?'*
- An energy/utility company representative made the point *'speculative applications should be separated from the "real customers", people such as residential customers wanting PV in their home or business. WPD should focus on these cases rather than the larger organisations'*
- An energy/utility company representative said in relation to undergrounding *'you could say if residents have a pretty village and have the money, pay for it themselves'*
- An energy/utility company representative added *'if WPD are going to underground a positive output is it will increase the value of homes'*

**Table 5**

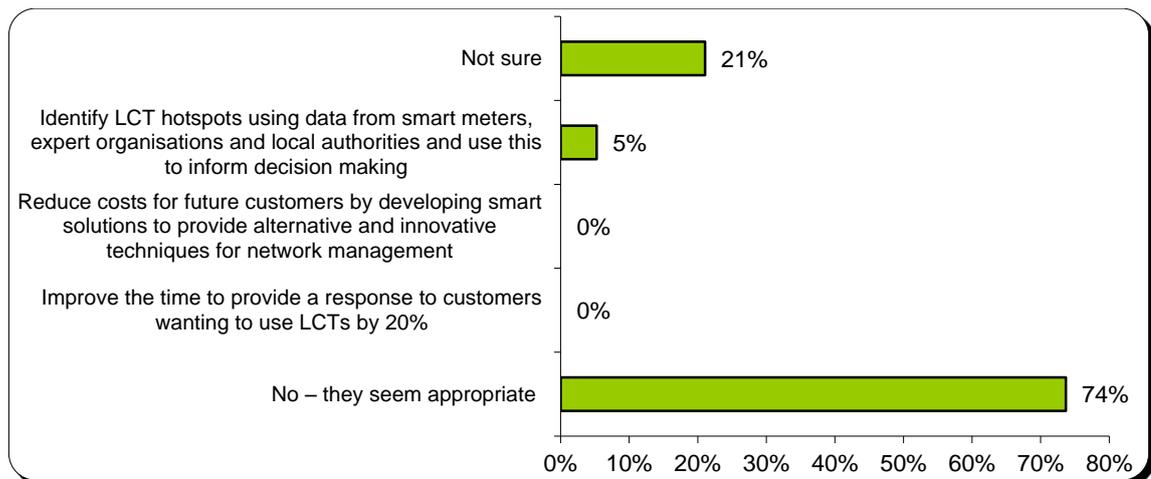
- An energy/utility company representative said *'current projections of LCT take-off is a very step curve. However, at the same time WPD only have their annual expenditure on it.'* S/he went on to ask if WPD is *'hoping its learning curve will make up for this?'*
- A stakeholder stated there is *'a lot of uncertainty about how LCTs are going to take off'* and asked *'is there room in the plan for dynamic pricing?'*
- An energy/utility company representative said in relation to undergrounding *'the impact WPD will be making is so minimal, the undergrounding seems a bit pointless'*. S/he did add, however, that it would be *'nice to do it for new connections'*

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

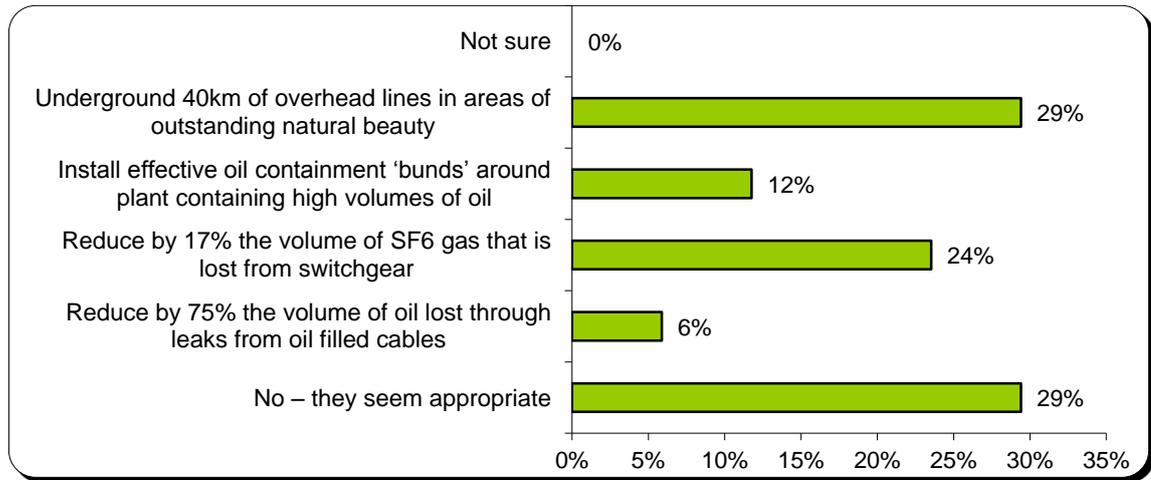
**Facilitating increased volumes of LCTs: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should to do more than proposed?**



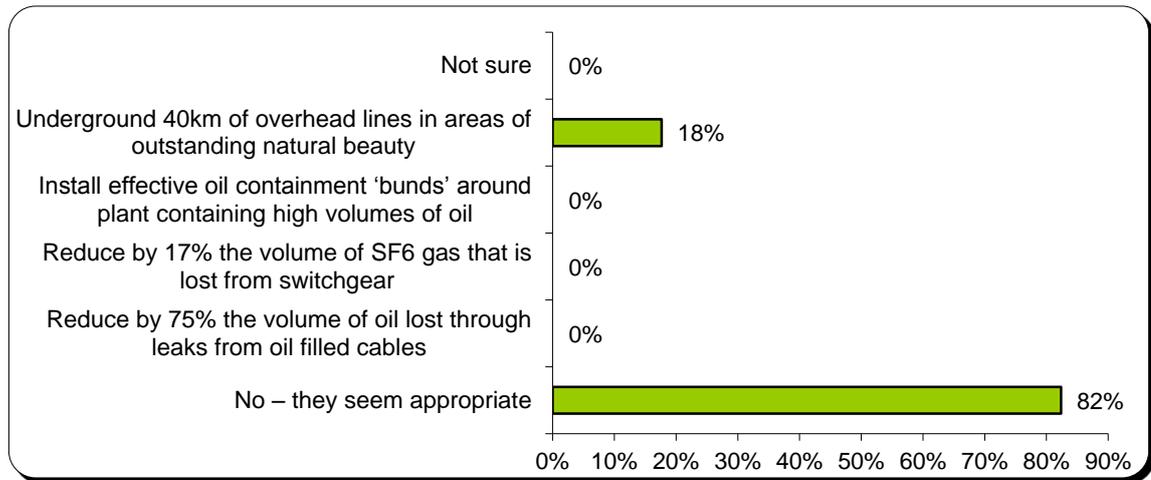
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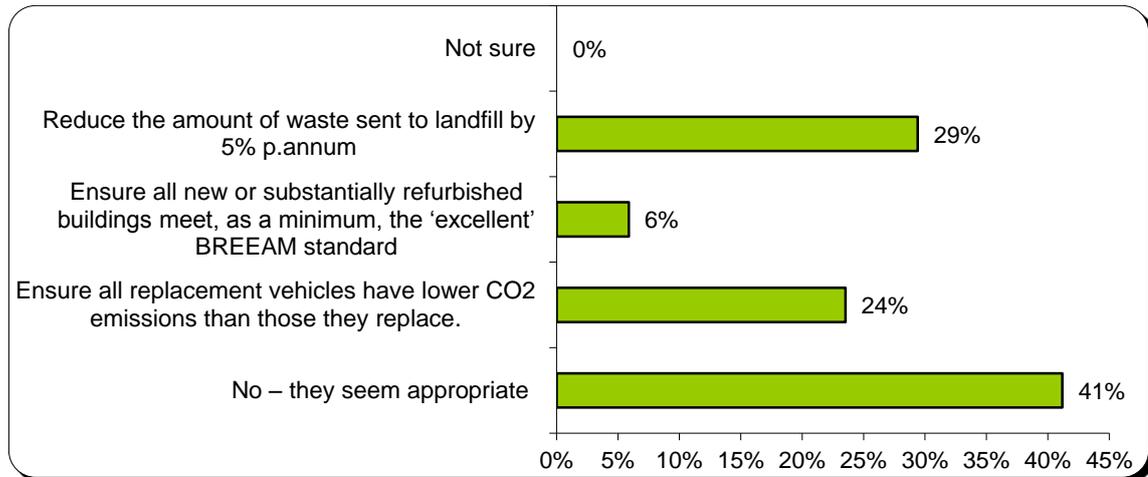
**Reducing network environmental impact: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should to do more than proposed?**



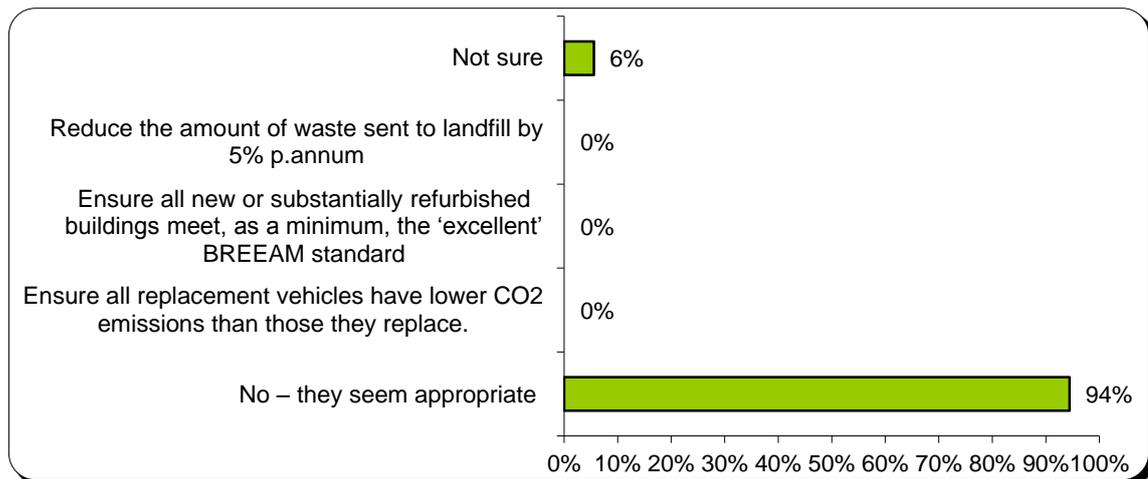
**Reducing network environmental impact: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should to do less than proposed?**



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



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



**Table 1**

- A parish councillor stated that *'we are doing a project in a 6<sup>th</sup> century church and are looking at doing undergrounding. We are currently liaising with a WPD representative. Rural communities seem to understand the benefits of this. Perhaps this commitment could be stretched beyond ANOBs, this would certainly help out with us and many others'*
- A business customer representative mentioned *'we have members in mid-Wales and I know that undergrounding is a massive operation. Would it be possible for any new infrastructure that is needed to be automatically put underground? Would this be a good policy?'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative made the point '*co-ordination with tree management companies is needed*'. S/he went on to say s/he thinks '*WPD should work with local authorities and forest management companies*'
- A stakeholder admitted s/he was slightly worried by '*WPD's plans to reduce the volume of SF6 gas that is lost from switchgear*'. S/he explained '*switchgear is a dangerous territory and I would like to know what the risks to safety are?*'
- An energy/utility representative company explained switchgear is tested to a standard safety level and if it is not operable, it can be switched off. S/he commented '*17% is good, and most SF6 switchgear is monitored, so reductions are critical*'. S/he added '*while it is a nasty gas, it is incredibly safe and effective. In a small, cramped station, SF6 is critical*'

**Table 3**

- A council officer said '*I need a direct contact on response times in helping to deliver low carbon technologies on estates. The contact would have to be always available too*'
- A council officer said British Gas is rolling out smart meters across Cardiff and suggested '*it would be worth exploring if British Gas would, or could, share the information collected with WPD to help develop new innovations*'

**Table 4**

- A parish councillor stated '*I commend WPD for getting involved in undergrounding. I live in a medieval village and it is blighted by wiring. Why is it always AONBs, not conservation areas?*'
- An energy/utility company representative commented on WPD's vehicles, '*it's a good idea to buy cheaper vehicles. Sometimes engineers sit in the car with the motor running to keep warm, it negates all your CO2 savings and you need to look at finding alternative ways of keeping them warm in a more efficient way*'

**Table 5**

- A business customer representative was of the view '*WPD should not be spending money on undergrounding. Money is tight and we can spend it on other things*'
- A business customer representative commented on the landfill waste reduction target. S/he stated it '*is not good*'. S/he continued, '*local authorities have higher targets and I feel WPD can do better than this. Even if WPD were to miss them, it is better to aim high. Get a recycling specialist in and make that target bigger*'
- A stakeholder commented '*I understand WPD do not yet know how customers are going to react to new incentives to save electricity. Demand for electricity is pretty inelastic. However, consumers want to save money and this is how WPD need to be selling it to them*'

- A business customer representative suggested WPD *'should work closely with other agencies, such as suppliers and Governments, in order to promote energy efficiency'*

## 5.4. Any other comments?

### Table 1

- A business customer representative commented on a recent project s/he has worked on with the NFU. S/he stated *'it was great to see WPD representatives down there engaging with local farmers on certain issues. In my personal experience WPD have always been good at this sort of thing. For my members capacity is a major issue and a lack of capacity can discourage investment in development'*

### Table 2

- An environmental representative commented *'WPD simply transports electricity, so is invisible to consumers'*
- A stakeholder said *'so much generation depends on the low carbon technologies discussed today'*

### Table 4

- A parish councillor stated *'my worry is the loss of British jobs as we build Ford vehicles in the UK and we are exporting money to Italy'*

### Table 5

- An energy/utility company representative made the point *'as a customer you do not have much interface with WPD. I am not sure how many customers actually know WPD exist'*
- A business customer representative asked *'do WPD have a central legal team dealing with permissions to clear trees, or is it more regional'*

## 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

- An environmental representative stated *'these stakeholder workshops are very useful. Are the six workshops per annum over the different regions or are there six in each region?'*

#### Table 2

- No comments were made

#### Table 3

- A council officer asked *'why are only 70% of customers affected by power cuts given a restoration time?'*

#### Table 4

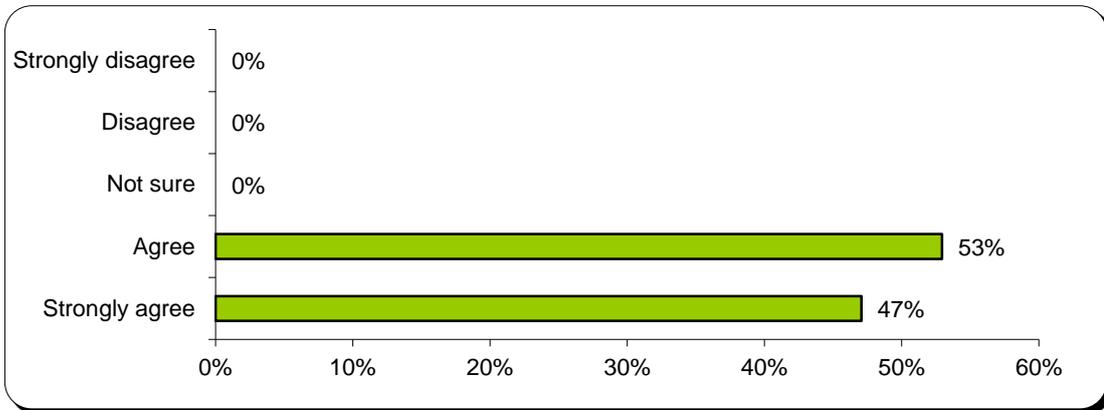
- A developer/connections representative said *'I find it difficult as I have never had a reason to call WPD'*
- An energy/utility company representative asked *'from the workshops has there been a response to the RIIO proposals? If so will these stop after the RIIO plans are finalised or will there be further communications between businesses and customers in general?'*

#### Table 5

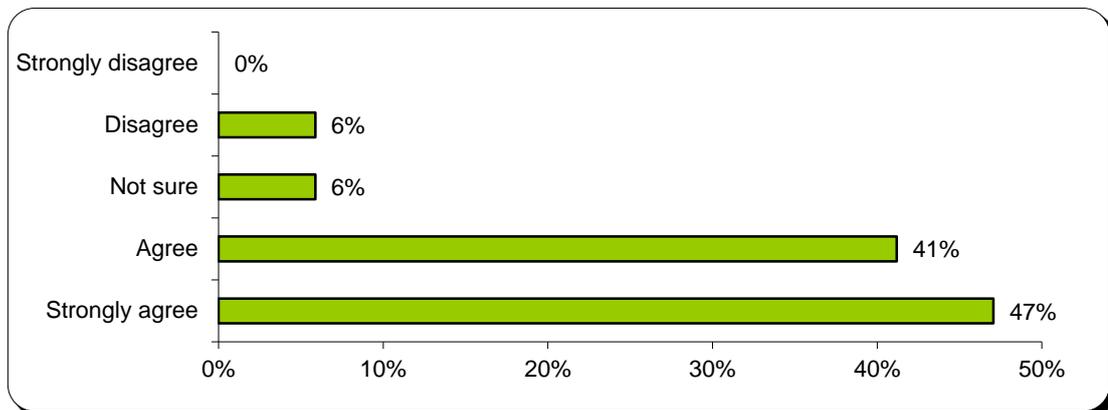
- An energy/utility company representative said *'sometimes it would be useful to know what Ofgem is asking of DNOs as well as what DNOs are planning to do on top of that'*
- A business customer representative asked *'how are WPD engaging with local authorities?'*

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

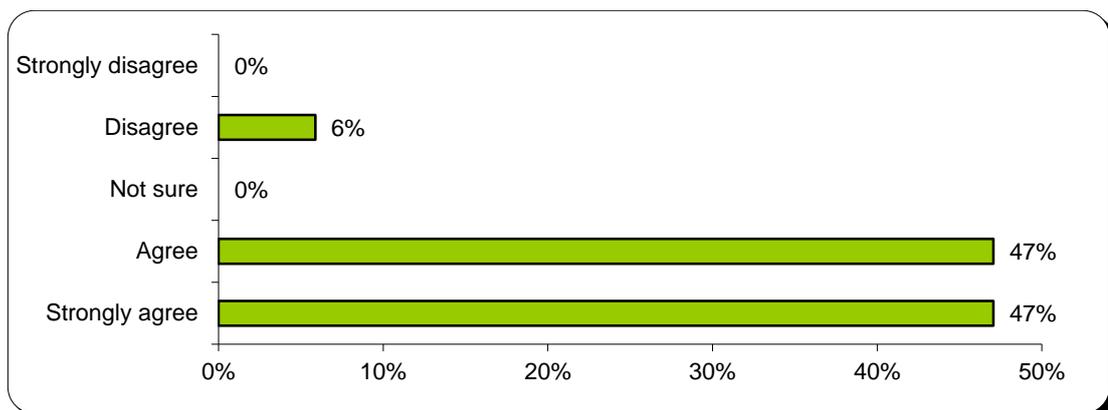
**WPD’s overall package for customer service & complaints seems appropriate**



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



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



**Table 1**

- A business customer representative made the point 'if you lose your electricity supply and you call WPD you want to speak to a real person'

- A business customer representative mentioned *'some communication companies do their best not to speak to you. It would be best if WPD could have somebody in the UK available to talk to you'*
- A business customer representative said *'text messaging would work well'*
- A parish councillor agreed
- An environmental representative stated regarding the target of dealing with 65% of customer complaints within one day *'it is difficult to say how many complaints are resolvable. I imagine this is dependent on the system and WPD cannot control it. Therefore achieving this target is not truly within your power'*
- A stakeholder stated *'to excel WPD have to spend money and that will go onto people's bills. Customers want the best possible service, at what cost? Is there a metric for value for money?'*

## Table 2

- An environmental representative commented *'WPD knowing who is calling by recognising the telephone number is excellent as it means the line is not being clogged up'. S/he added 'an incremental improvement to the service provided is expected and appreciated'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated *'calling customers back can be rather pointless as there is no need if the power supply is back on'. However, s/he added 'an update is always appreciated'*
- An energy/utility company representative was impressed an operator calls back and *'it is not an automated call'*
- A business customer representative commented the call backs seem *'logical and comfortable'* but enquired *'it is a good use of staff?'* S/he suggested maybe *'texts might be better, or email, Facebook, social media etc to speed up feedback'*
- An environmental representative was of the view *'the responses would have to be altered and re-sent to different people, which would take as much time as calling them'. S/he added 'not everyone has access to social media or smartphones, so telephone calls are preferable'*
- An environmental representative said *'the only things that matter to customers are their own personal experience, when the relationship is good the conversation will be swift and courteous. Customers don't regulate WPD and all they can do is complain. Solving customer complaints is the benchmark'*
- A business customer representative and an energy/utility company representative both agreed
- An environmental representative added *'it's good enough for me and WPD's telephone answering time is excellent compared to banks'*

- An energy/utility company representative added *'the WPD call taker figures are very impressive compared to service from other providers'*
- An environmental representative questioned *'if customer panels consist of customer representatives or customers themselves, I am worried representatives might not represent the right views'*. S/he asked *'how many customers were present at the workshop? I believe customer panels have weaknesses as they are not always in touch with customers'*

### Table 3

- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'in my experience the packages go much further than other DNOs'*
- A parish councillor said *'the outputs are looking about right'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'the stakeholder workshops are a good way of gaining an understanding of WPD's business drivers'*
- A domestic customer representative raised a concern that *'by lengthening consultation for the price review it could cause customers to think WPD are responding to customer concerns'*. S/he thought *'it was good WPD do respond to customer concerns and promise to continue doing'*

### Table 4

- An energy/utility company representative held the view *'the important thing is the caller connects to a human being'*
- A stakeholder added *'it's good WPD want to maintain their current position'*
- A developer/connections representative stated s/he believed *'WPD are years ahead of their competitors'*
- A developer/connections representative held the view *'these stakeholder events are good and have been informative'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out *'it's a balancing act of how WPD spend the money and it's great they consult everyone'*
- A developer/connections representative said in relation to social media *'it is one of those very personal things, I wouldn't like it but I know some people would prefer to receive updates'*

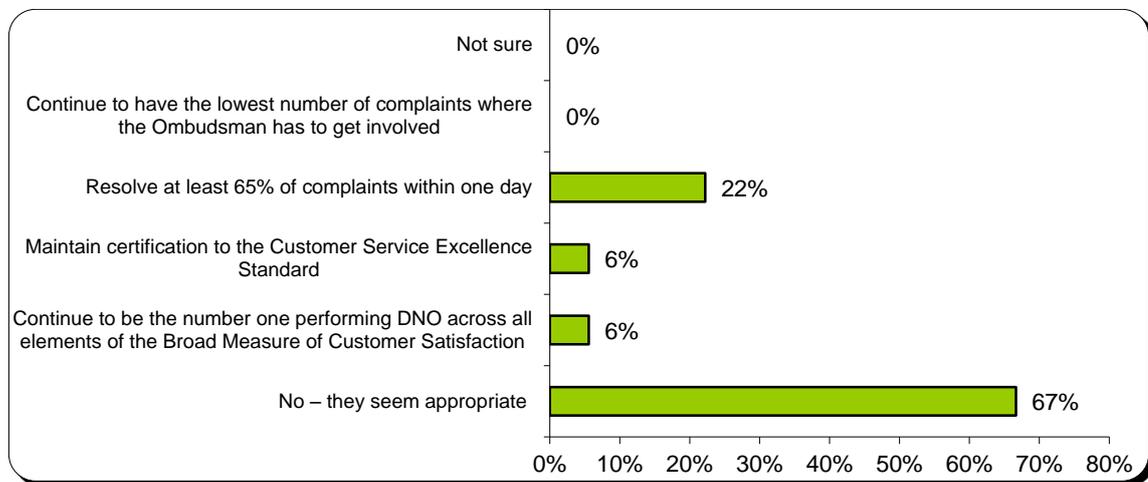
### Table 5

- A stakeholder was of the view *'the use of a Twitter feed is expected now'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'I hope some of the communication methods available will not be massively expensive'*
- A business customer representative stated *'if the lights go out, I pick the phone up'*

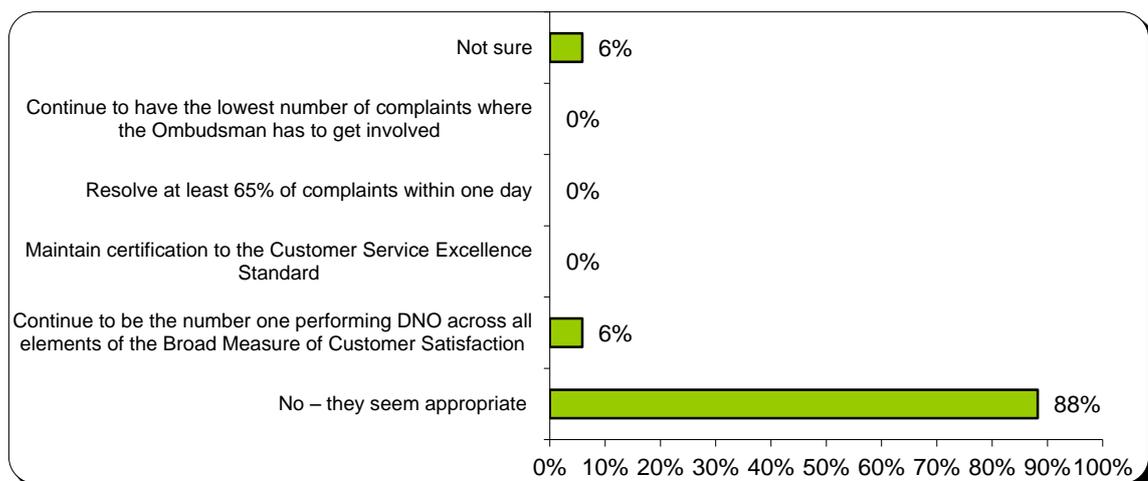
- A business customer representative was of the view *'the telephone pick-up time is very fast. Not many companies can beat that'*
- An energy/utility company representative commented *'all customers want to pay less but have a better service; how does WPD deal with this conflict?'*
- A stakeholder was of the opinion that *'WPD cannot control the number of complaints very much and they just go up and down each year'*
- A stakeholder said *'resolving complaints in one day is very good'*

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

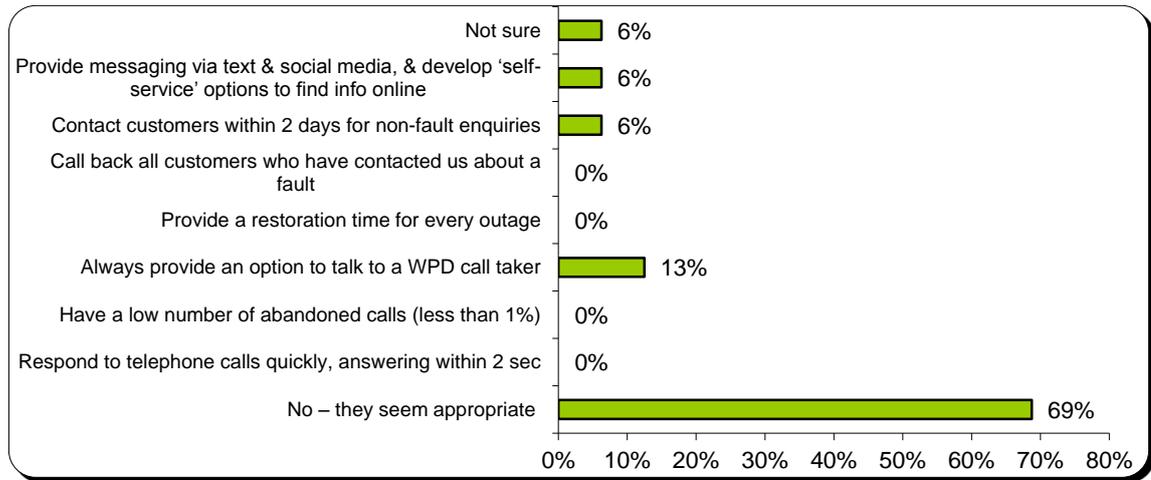
#### Customer service & complaints: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?



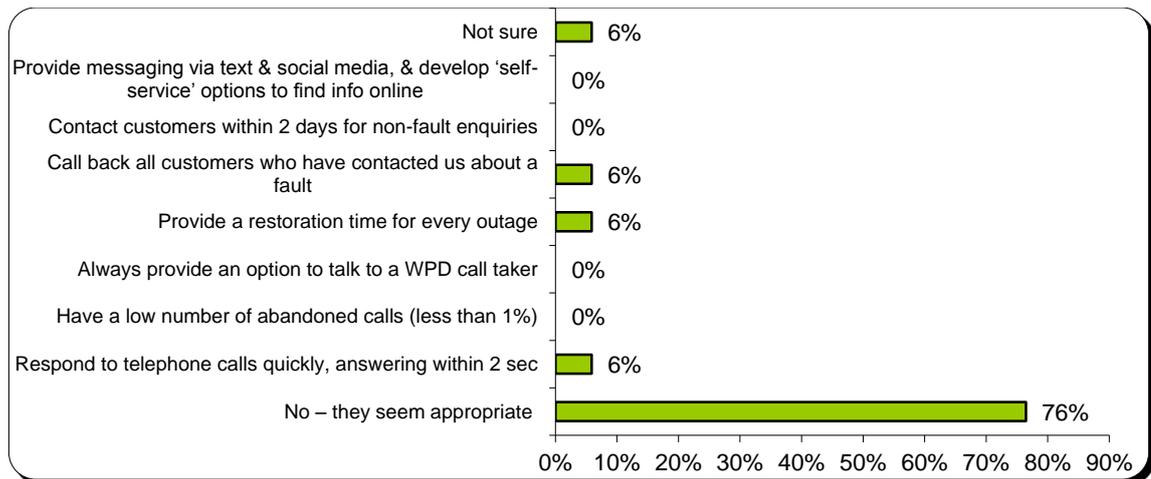
#### Customer service & complaints: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?



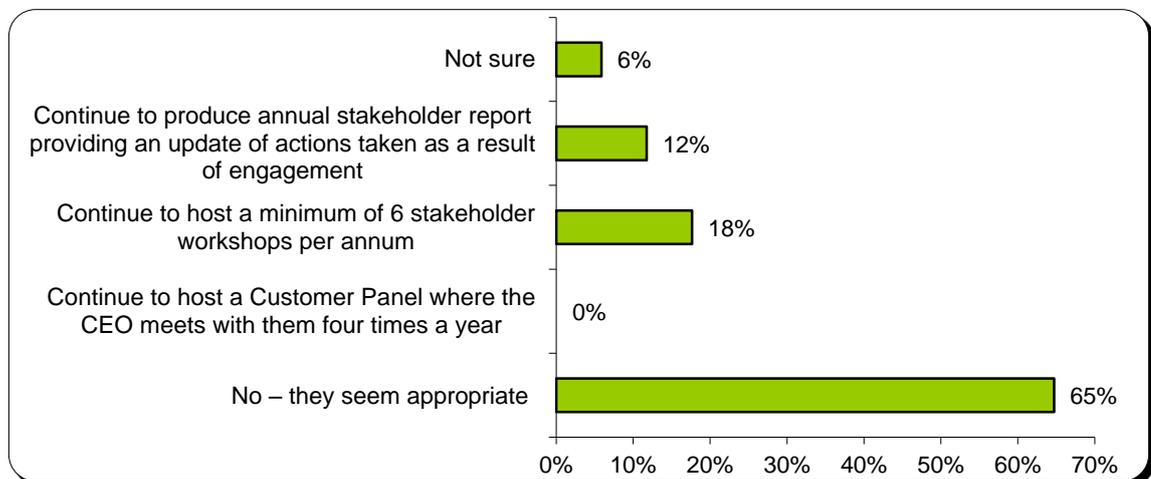
**Communication: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



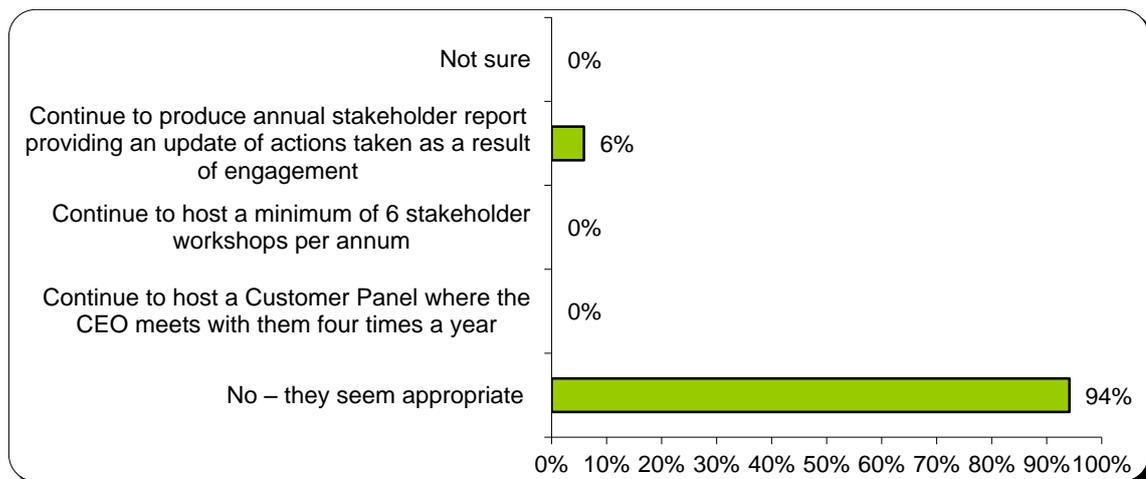
**Communication: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**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**

- An environmental representative mentioned *'constant communication through workshops like this would allow people to understand WPD better and this will continue with the process WPD have outlined'*

**Table 2**

- A business customer representative said *'stakeholder engagement is great, but six surgeries a year might not be enough as people need to see the local WPD manager, someone you can get to know and knows the area, such as a bank manager'*
- A business customer representative commented *'the Business Chamber of Commerce runs 24 workshops across Wales per year, in contrast WPD's six seems a little low'*

**Table 3**

- An energy/utility company representative suggested *'WPD should use its vans to promote ways of contacting them'*
- A domestic customer representative commented *'WPD could possibly do more to use mystery shoppers to test how good the customer experience was'*
- A council officer suggested *'maybe more could be done as the 40% call back target to customers looks low'*
- A domestic customer representative was of the view *'it is important that WPD's reports show, in a meaningful way, what WPD have done in the last year and feedback is given on what has been learnt'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'maybe WPD could do more public events to increase its profile'*
- A parish councillor was of the view *'the date for resolving 65% of all complaints in one day could be pushed further forward'*

**Table 4**

- No comments were made

**Table 5**

- An energy/utility company representative made the suggestion *'WPD should make a commitment to keep up with communication methods throughout the price control period'*
- An energy/utility company representative said *'in my organisation I find the stakeholder events really helpful. The six per year suggestion is quite low because of the size of the region'*
- A stakeholder stated *'WPD do not need to spend a penny extra on the phones, but you do on the other methods. There is a revolution going on and WPD need to keep up'*
- A business customer representative commented *'all looks fine but social media needs more information in the business plan'*
- An energy/utility company representative stated *'interestingly WPD are not actually trying to reduce the number of complaints they are getting in'*
- A business customer representative agreed and said s/he felt *'WPD should set a target for lowering the amount of complaints'*

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

- A parish councillor asked *'do customers have to call a 0800 number?'*
- A business customer representative commented *'a lot of modern phones in houses need electricity to work'*
- A parish councillor asked *'what are your proposed plans for upgrading in my area? We are doing an article in the local paper and it would be good to speak to WPD about this'*
- A business customer representative commented *'it is very difficult to know who the right person to speak to'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative asked *'what is WPD's direct relationship with customers? Is WPD trying to raise its profile?'*
- A business customer representative countered *'WPD's brand is visible, it's just people don't realise its presence'*
- An energy/utility company representative added *'WPD might get associated with high bills if customers don't understand its role in the distribution of electricity'*

- An environmental representative said *'WPD has very helpful and courteous staff, as they always explain things to me'*

**Table 3**

- No comments were made

**Table 4**

- A parish councillor queried *'do WPD have any synergy with the other utility companies like the water companies? The benefit being the same areas are not being dug up again and again?'*

**Table 5**

- An energy/utility company representative agreed with the business customer representative and added *'when people have a complaint or a complex problem, they like to have a voice at the end of the phone'*

## 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

- A parish councillor commented '*WPD are in a competitive market for connections. How is this being managed?*'

#### Table 2

- An environmental representative believed '*the educational aspect of surgeries is good and has the potential to interact with new customers*'
- A business customer representative stated '*in my experience, new businesses focus on getting their business off the ground so going to events, especially in this economic climate, is becoming less common*'. S/he thought '*intermediaries are the best ways to get WPD's message out*'

#### Table 3

- A domestic customer representative said '*it is difficult to tell if some of the figures could be more challenging*'
- An energy/utility company representative commented '*it would be interesting to see how many people go to 3<sup>rd</sup> party suppliers for a connections quote then come back to WPD to actually carry out the work*'

#### Table 4

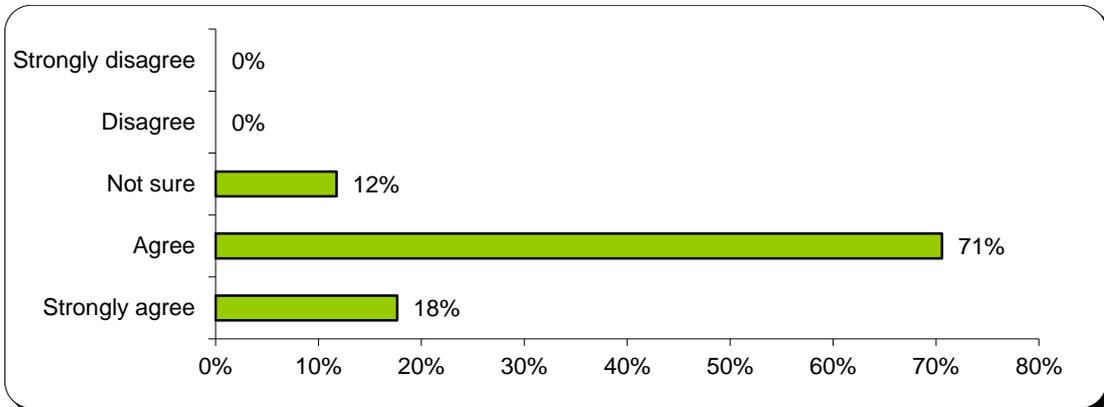
- An energy/utility company representative commented on the description of small and large businesses, saying '*it's a fairly crude breakdown of sizes*'

#### Table 5

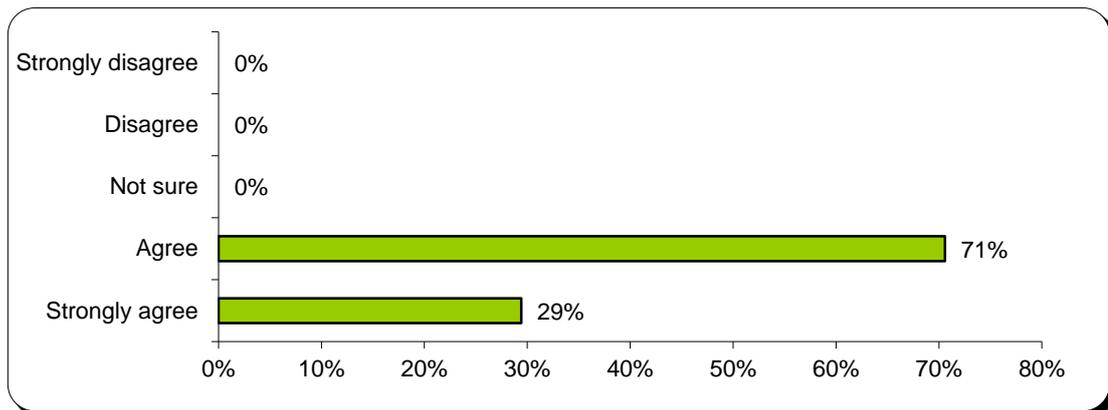
- A stakeholder stated '*it would be helpful to know how long other DNOs take to carry out connections*'
- An energy/utility company representative asked '*are WPD planning to exceed Ofgem targets?*'

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

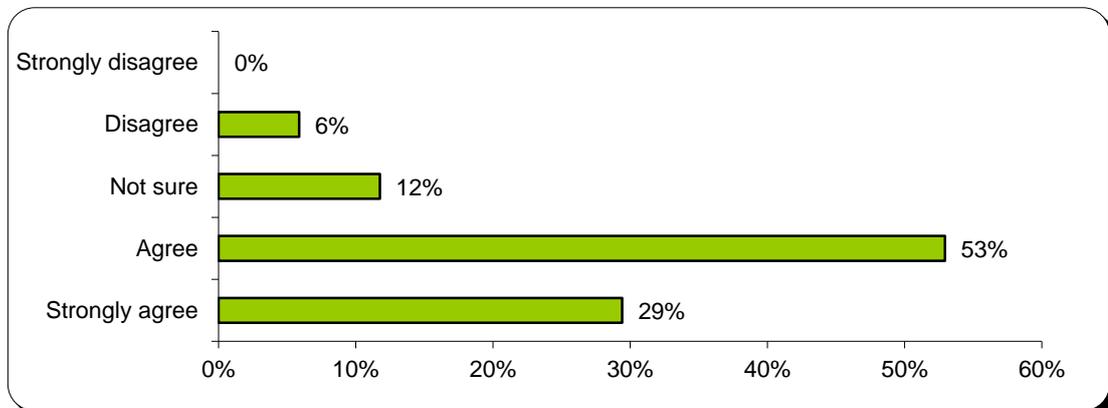
**WPD’s overall package for a faster more efficient connections service seems appropriate**



**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 commented *'I work on gas and electricity connection contracts. In a few years' time I think the connections market will open up a bit more, we are now looking at costs as is WPD and therefore it all depends on how much profit you want to take. We have had to open up in the same way that WPD have and all of the DNOs are facilitating competitors in the same way'*
- An energy/utility company representative made the point *'it's going to help a lot of people, but many will still go with their local DNO'*
- A business customer representative stated *'any reduction in waiting times for new connection is welcome. Planning is a really big issue for new connections and anything that will speed up the system is a good thing in my view but I am conscious that there is a cost implication here'*
- A business customer representative commented *'we were putting in a ground source heat pump and it was considered that WPD would be the best people to do this as they have the experience and the equipment'*

**Table 2**

- A business customer representative was of the view *'there are many third party connection providers and they all have a mystique around them'*

**Table 3**

- A domestic customer representative stated *'I think surgeries for connections are always useful'* and that *'better communication is always the key'*
- An energy/utility company representative was of the opinion *'keeping both the regional and local teams was useful'* and believes these teams should remain

**Table 4**

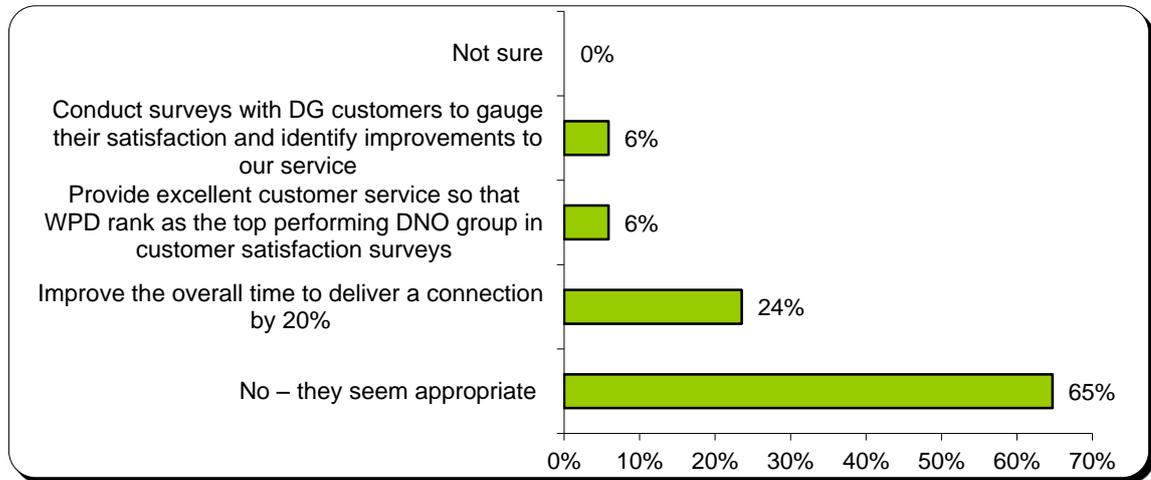
- An energy/utility company representative said in relation to new connections *'for us the problem is not really the time, it is about having it when we want it'*
- A developer/connections representative said it *'seems reasonable'*

**Table 5**

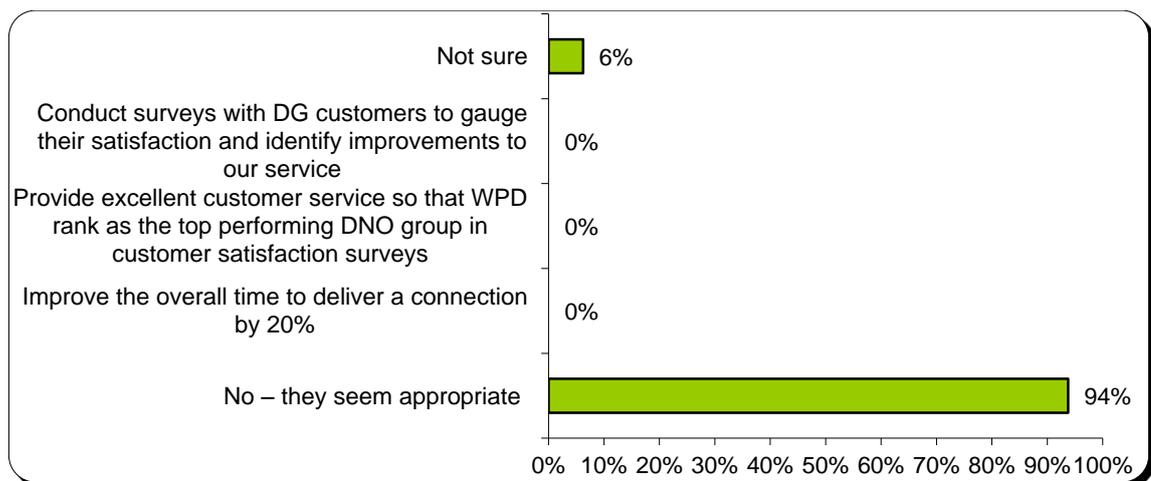
- An energy/utility company representative was of the opinion *'providing excellent customer services and satisfaction surveys is a really good idea'*
- A stakeholder was of the view *'there is no incentive for WPD to explain that a customer could use a third party connection provider'*
- An energy/utility company representative disagreed, saying *'yes there is'*

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

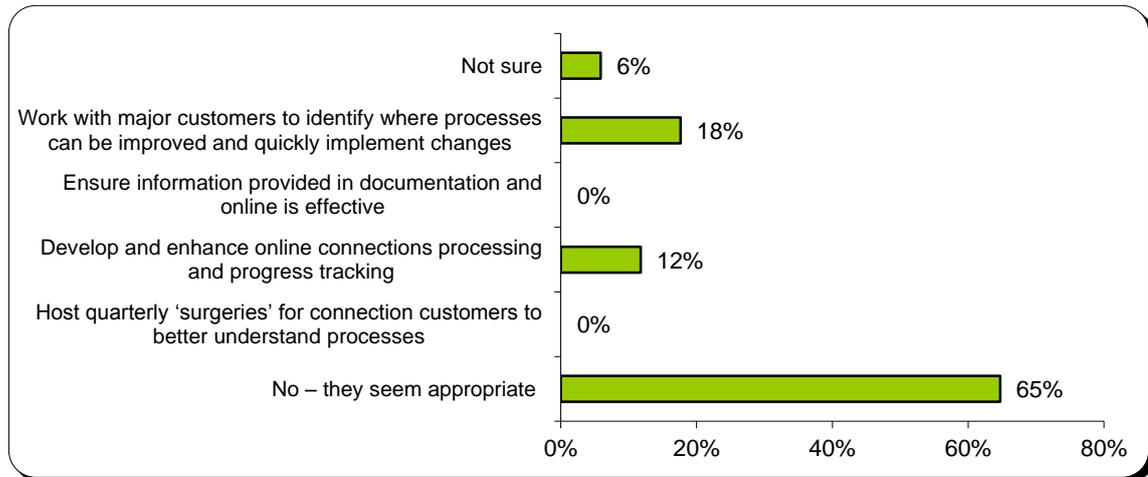
**Fast & more efficient connections service: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should to do more than proposed?**



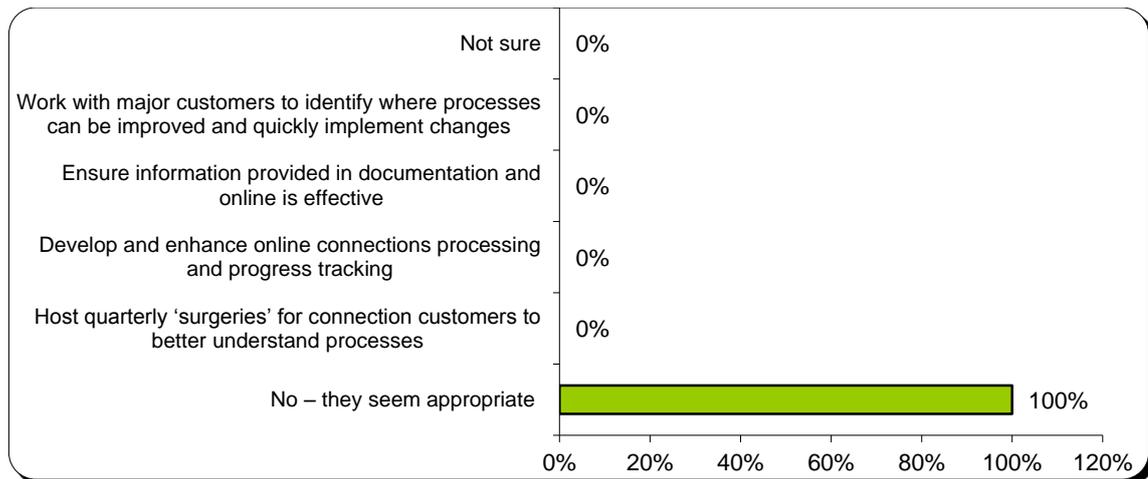
**Fast & more efficient connections service: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should to do less than proposed?**



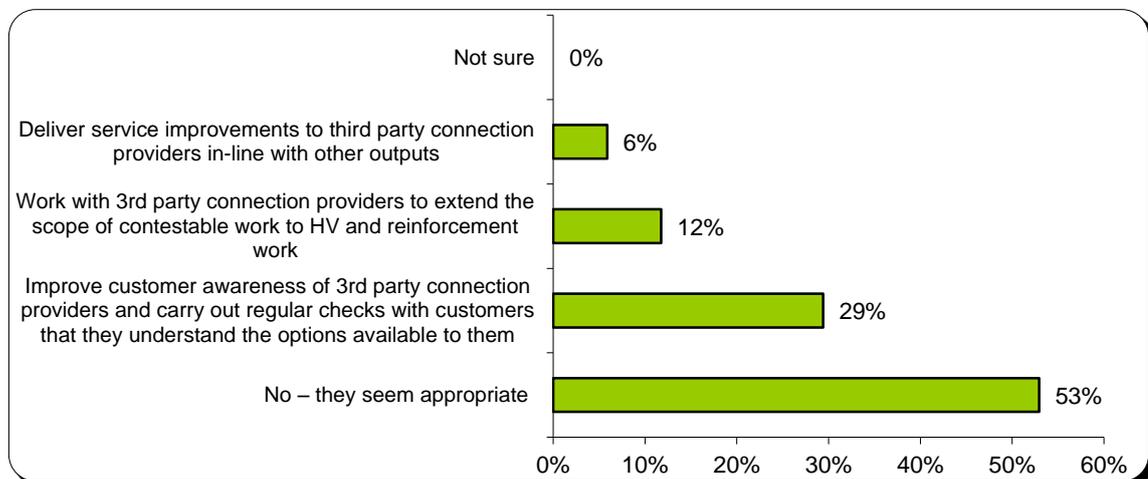
**Connections communications: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do more than proposed?**



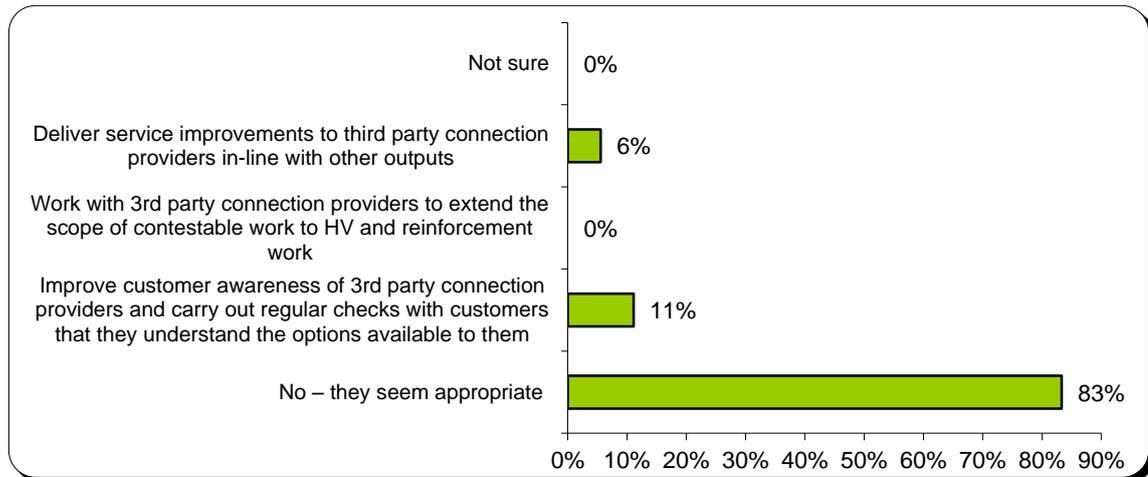
**Connections communications: Is there one output you feel strongly WPD should do less than proposed?**



**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**

- A business customer representative stated *'if WPD had an open door policy on discussing connections issues then this would help prevent log jams in the work pipeline'*
- A business customer representative made the point *'planning and early discussions are really important for achieving a healthy pipeline of work'*
- A parish councillor commented *'real time updating on connections issues would be really useful'*
- An environmental representative suggested *'this could be done online with user accounts'*

**Table 2**

- An environmental representative asked *'does WPD have a national association? Could this national association highlight the work of WPD and its peers to educate consumers to the different roles in the market?'*

**Table 3**

- An energy/utility company representative was of the view *'the vast majority of applications for new connections are from developers who then do not go ahead with the plans'*. S/he suggested WPD provide *'a form of the software online so that developers can do their own calculations. This could even prove to be cost effective'*

**Table 5**

- A stakeholder was of the opinion it is *'better to ask the customer after the connection has been made if they knew about third party connection providers'*

## 7.4. Any other comments?

### Table 1

- A business customer representative stated *'connections are a continued learning process and it would just get better and better'*
- A business customer representative stated *'WPD have a big stand at the Royal Welsh Show each year which is great; our chief surveyor said that you are the only DNO which got involved in this sort of thing. WPD seem to be opening the door for alternative developments'*

### Table 2

- A business customer representative said his / her company has *'quarterly surveys about connectivity for businesses and I have never seen any complaints about WPD, unlike BT. The only problem is connection costs underlie profitability'*

### Table 4

- A stakeholder asked *'recently I was contacted by people objecting about solar farms; do you contact local communities or people who are against it?'*
- A developer/connections representative pointed out *'it's amazing how many turbines are going up and people aren't objecting as much'*
- A parish councillor said *'it's all about the impact'*
- A parish councillor held the view *'it's the fracking we are worried about'*

### Table 5

- A stakeholder commented that s/he has *'noticed WPD have television adverts now'* and wondered if it was *'aimed at the average consumer or people interested in connections'*

## 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. Use of system charges?

- *'Should we be expecting any changes? I read that we should be expecting changes in route control and I wasn't clear on how you would achieve this'*
- WPD explained that there would be general movement in prices as well as variation between the four licence areas
- *'Would the overall averages be indicative of what major users would expect?'*
- WPD explained that it would fluctuate
- *'We haven't really discussed system charges with these schemes and how these will be treated by DNOs'*
- WPD explained that the charges will be treated exactly the same
- *'Which would you suggest would be the best route forward if we wanted to make a change to the regulatory body?'*
- WPD suggested that 'if you have any proposals you would like discussed with Ofgem you may want to ask a DNO to represent you with this, and we would be happy to be your point of contact on this'
- *'This exchange was concluded by the stakeholder saying that they would send an email explaining the network's descriptions and the assets they are looking to use'*

### 8.2. Connections/DG?

- *'It is interesting hearing the anti-view to undergrounding but I think it's critical'*
- *'5-10% of the networks needing undergrounding have an impact on visuals. Photos need to be taken to make a point'*
- *'A national communication campaign could help with conveying the problem about undergrounding'*
- *'Wooden poles are blighting their town and affecting tourism. I am putting a proposal together to obtain WPD funding to underground the lines. It's an ancient settlement with listed buildings which needs protecting and support from local communities'*
- *'It will be a good way to build WPD's profile by helping towns raise tourism and undergrounding ugly lines'*

- *'The Government wants to encourage people to get involved with renewables through feed-in tariffs, but the network capacity is going to fill up quickly and I am worried capacity on the grid will soon have run out. S/he was also concerned about what happens when the existing infrastructure runs out and a £3 million pylon needs to be put up'*
- *'There will be queues for connections, developers will have to pay when capacity is breached and connections will be delayed as permission will be needed. The planning process causes problems as it's not factored in and plans fall at the first hurdle, local authorities are unwilling to grant planning permission. If the Government wants to see renewables make up electrical infrastructure it won't happen if people aren't helped'*
- *'I have a project with WPD to regulate voltage and had a problem finding enough connections in Wales for renewables on 11kV line. The flow of electricity on the lines is hard to read as the company can't tell which way the electricity is flowing. In some areas there is plenty of slack in the system and generators can be put on'*
- *Big turbines are very cost effective and with a private line and storage, many locals can be supplied with cheaper energy*

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

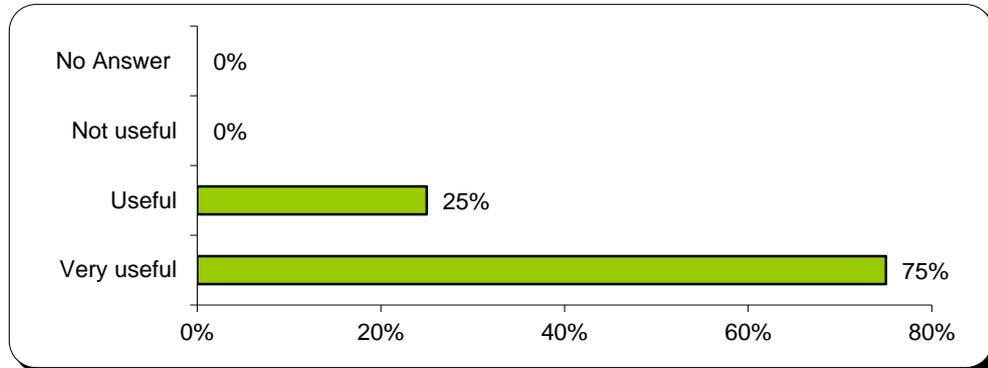
- *'Can those academics establish from where, and what, the demand is and what the loads are? New algorithms will need to be developed'*
- WPD explained that they were doing a lot of work (3,500 homes with smart meters in SW Wales for example) but did wonder what the balance between measuring and estimating demand is
- *'Can WPD let the market decide and instead offer people a choice, based on price, but doesn't stop people from using power?'*
- *'How much information can we give people to help them save money'*
- *'Are there are plans in place for any increase in generation because of fracking? There is still a lot of discussion between what people want to do, and what is achievable. We will all need to make some tough decisions'*
- WPD explained what they are doing, or not doing with new technologies. They don't want to force issues or go against the law of physics
- *'A stakeholder concluded that the key for WPD is to be involved in more trials, more models and to keep collecting data. It was also important that the data be made public'*

### 8.4. Q4. Social Obligations

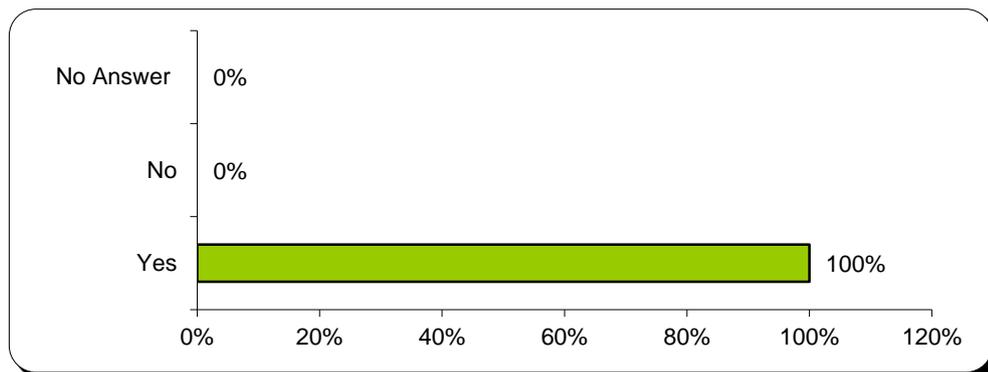
- No stakeholders had any questions on this topic

## 9. Stakeholder feedback

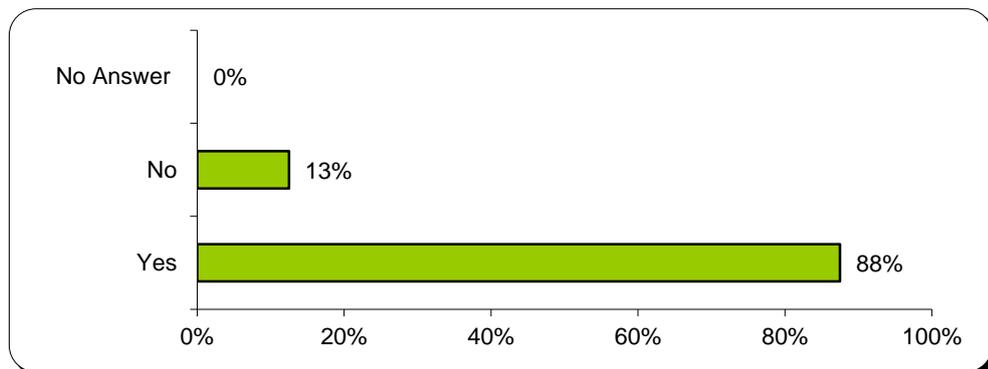
### 9.1. Q1. Did you find the workshops useful?



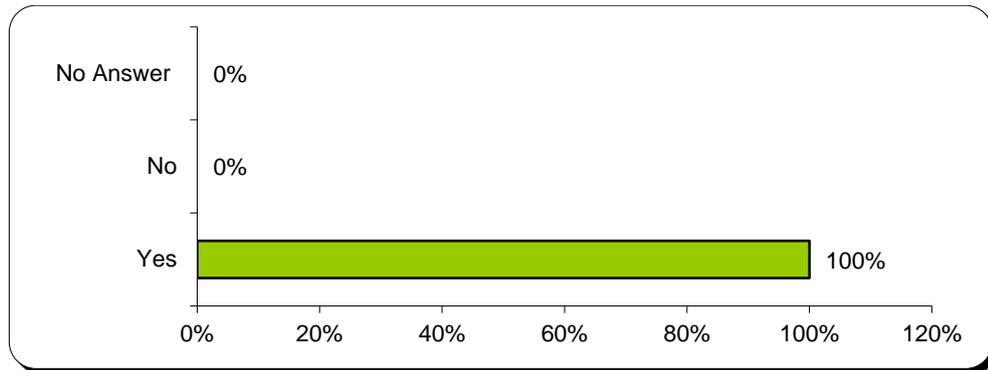
### 9.2. Q2. Was the venue conveniently located for you?



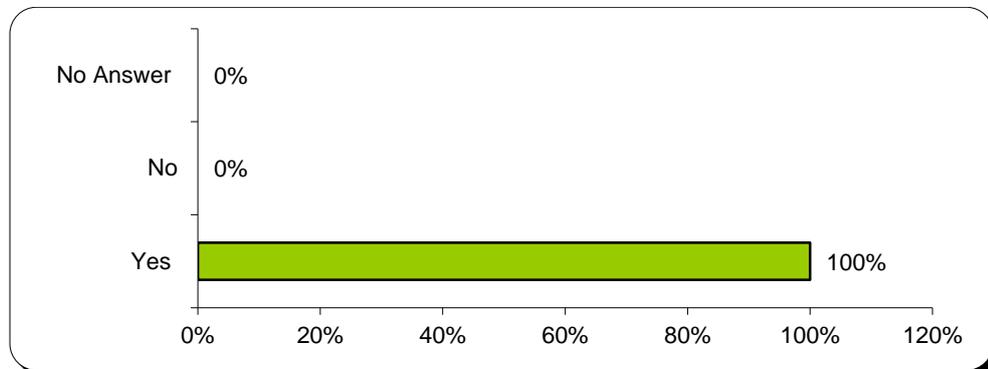
### 9.3. Q3. Did we provide enough information at the workshop?



#### 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:

- *'It was good to see WPD had listened to our previous points raised in previous sessions'*
- *'Well facilitated with all themes well developed'*
- *'Good to see the business drivers'*
- *'Good review of the package'*
- *'Well structured, interesting mix of delegates'*
- *'Excellent opportunity to network and express views'*
- *'Time was tight but a few more visuals in the presentations would have been useful and deeper explanation of the various elements'*
- *'Good amount of info provided'*
- *'Very open forum'*

- *'Interesting to have a discussion on AONBs'*
- *'I think it would be useful if you continually try to spread the net to get more stakeholders'*
- *'Happy to continue a dialogue with WPD so we can update members and to direct specific member queries to the right person within WPD'*
- *'Well presented with explanations'*
- *'Very positive, looking forward to the major connections engagement plan development'*
- *'Excellent event'*
- *'Everyone was very helpful'*
- *'It would be useful if targets, etc could be broken down by region, and comparison will target/performance of other networks to give context'*
- *'Very interesting meeting. I like the wide range of different people with different backgrounds'*