

Stakeholder Justification Paper – Attraction	
Output/Commitment Title	
Attract diverse and talented people who reflect the communities we serve and have or can develop the skills needed to deliver a net zero network.	
Detail	Take a strategic approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, keeping it central to all people-related processes, emphasising health, safety, and wellbeing. Make the energy sector appealing by offering high-level apprenticeships, graduate schemes and training academies, while using diverse recruitment methods such as skills bootcamps and part-time study options to reflect the needs of the communities served and supporting people re-entering the workforce. Offer a competitive, inclusive benefits package to provide fair reward and recognition and launch outreach campaigns and offer high-quality training programmes through partnerships with educational institutions.
Strategy Document/ Business Plan Section	Workforce and Supply Chain Resilience Strategy - BP
Cost & Bill Impact	
Proposed Funding	Base
Benefits & risks	
Summary of benefits	<p>Summary: Having a wider appeal for our employment opportunities will help us better understand our communities' needs, encourage innovation and delivery of an improved customer experience.</p> <p>Societal benefits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced Understanding of Community Needs - Diverse perspectives: A workforce that reflects a wider range of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences is better equipped to understand the needs of various segments of the community. Encouragement of Innovation - Broader skill sets: Attracting people from varied backgrounds increases the range of skills and knowledge, which can lead to the development of new innovations and improvements in existing processes. Improved Customer Experience - Cultural relevance: Colleagues who better reflect our demographics can offer more culturally competent services, improving customer satisfaction. Economic Growth and Opportunity - Increased employment: By broadening appeal, more people, including those from marginalised or underserved communities, have access to job opportunities, boosting local economies and reducing unemployment. Social Cohesion and Inclusion - Role models and aspirations: When people from diverse backgrounds see themselves reflected in different jobs, it creates role models and can inspire future generations to pursue careers they might not have previously considered. Better Organisational Performance - Higher employee engagement: Employees from diverse backgrounds are more likely to feel valued and engaged when they see their cultures and experiences represented. This can lead to higher retention rates and better overall performance.
Summary of risks	Our workforce becomes less relatable to the communities we serve risking customer trust and customer experience, service improvements and innovation.
Stakeholder voice - Golden thread	
Engagement method (what and who)	<p>Methods: A variety of engagement methods were used to gather feedback and insights from stakeholders, customers, and partners. These include:</p> <p>Workshops: These involve presentations, group discussions, and feedback sessions. Examples include the WWU Biodiversity Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report, WWU GD3 Business Planning Workshop Feedback Report, and WWU Safety Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report.</p> <p>Panels: These are structured discussions with key stakeholders, often including presentations and feedback sessions. Examples include the WWU Citizens Panel report Decarbonisation of home heat March 2022 FINAL, WWU Vulnerability Panel Report_V3_060923, and WWU - Critical Friends Panel - Feb 2024 - Feedback Report v5.</p> <p>Surveys: These are used to gather quantitative data from a larger audience. Examples include the WWU Customer Satisfaction_full report FINAL and Compact Hybrids - Customer Research -Final.</p> <p>Interviews and Focus Groups: These involve in-depth discussions with</p>

	<p>selected participants to gather qualitative insights. Examples include the WWU Employer of Choice Qualitative Follow-up - Findings report v1 and WWU qual priorities report FINAL. Online Communities: These involve engaging with participants through online platforms to gather feedback and insights. An example is the WWU Business Panel_full report with appendix. Consultations: These involve gathering views from partners and stakeholders on strategic policy approaches. An example is the consultation-just-transition-framework. These methods collectively ensure a comprehensive approach to stakeholder engagement, allowing for both qualitative and quantitative insights.</p> <p>Stakeholder: Stakeholders and Stakeholder Groups Engaged: Educational Institutions: Schools, colleges, and universities to discuss skills development and workforce readiness. Local Authorities and Council Members, Business Representatives: Provided insights into competitive salaries, recruitment, and career progression. Community Groups and Charities: Discussed inclusive employment, community trust, and support for vulnerable communities. Employees: Office-based and field operative employees provided feedback on benefits, career progression, and workplace flexibility. Industry Representatives and Vulnerability Groups. Overall, WWU employed a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to gather feedback from a diverse range of stakeholders, ensuring that the insights gathered would help shape their strategies to become an employer of choice.</p>
<p>Stakeholder Views (what they said, regional differences and how we responded)</p>	<p>Opinions, views: Stakeholders including employees have expressed a wide range of perspectives on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) at WWU. Some believe that WWU should adopt a holistic approach to attract and retain talent, emphasising career benefits and the gas industry's role in combating climate change, while others stress the importance of offering competitive salaries. There are calls for WWU to engage with schools and expand apprenticeship programmes to build a diverse future workforce. Stakeholders favour partnerships with local charities but have differing opinions on the aims of such collaborations, ranging from enhancing community trust to promoting inclusive employment and delivering public education campaigns about new technologies. Other strategies suggested to increase DEI within WWU's teams, include promoting gender diversity, and offering flexible working arrangements. Stakeholders also advocate for a holistic approach to benefits that includes career development opportunities, work-life balance, and non-monetary benefits such as mental health support and wellness programs. Recognition programmes are appreciated, but stakeholders feel they could be more robust and formalised to ensure regular acknowledgment of employees' contributions. Business representatives have criticised the lack of diversity in WWU's leadership roles and the lack of transparency in career progression. Additionally, stakeholders emphasise the necessity for significant investment in skills provision to support roles in hydrogen and associated net zero technologies, and the importance of training and upskilling programmes to equip workers with the necessary skills for greener supplies and technologies. Overall, stakeholders appreciate WWU's commitment to being an employer of choice but also recognise room for improvement.</p> <p>Associated facts: Removal of apprenticeship levy in Wales. Skill gap in our network coverage. Limited talent pool to support energy sector.</p> <p>Conflicts: Stakeholders opinions around EDI conflict with some suggesting a holistic approach that includes career benefits and the clear information on the gas industry's role in combating climate change as a way to attract talent, while others believed competitive salaries were more important. Feedback around skills was divided between the short term needs of the business vs the long-term sustainable solutions to support the gas network through the transition to net zero.</p> <p>Regional differences: Stakeholders noted the need for WWU to recruit more people from England. Business representatives suggested that expanding apprenticeship schemes could help connect more strongly with English communities. Salary competitiveness with cities like Liverpool and Bristol was emphasised as a key factor in attracting more English workers. There were also concerns about the accessibility of WWU's depots and offices, with flexible remote working recommended to expand the pool of potential recruits into England.</p> <p>Options considered: Continue with reactive management of market changes and limited involvement with future generations and talent pools. More proactive management of our resourcing and retirement with hiring managers and active brand management with recruiters. Strip back our offerings to only offer basic flexible benefits package and do limited activities in relation to wellbeing and EDI across the business. Continue as is and moderately be competitive in the market with focus on traditional areas but continue growth for wellbeing and E,D&I</p> <p>How we responded: Feedback from our engagement and research backs up our decision to take a</p>

strategic approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, keeping it central to all people-related processes, emphasising health, safety, and wellbeing. Make the energy sector appealing by offering high-level apprenticeships, graduate schemes and training academies, while using diverse recruitment methods such as skills bootcamps and part-time study options to reflect the needs of the communities served and supporting people re-entering the workforce. Offer a competitive, inclusive benefits package to provide fair reward and recognition and launch outreach campaigns and offer high-quality training programmes through partnerships with educational institutions. This approach is further justified by engagement with 1,401 participants (1,169 domestic consumers, 152 business customers and 80 future bill payers) on the acceptability of our commitment. The research shows that 90% of domestic gas consumers and 96% of business consumers find this commitment to be acceptable.

Performance

GD2 Performance, Benchmarking/ Industry comparison

GD2 Targets:
Diversity and Inclusion: Aimed to improve workforce diversity, reflecting the communities WWU serves, with a focus on inclusivity, particularly targeting gender, ethnicity, and underrepresented groups. In GD3 we will: Take a strategic approach to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, keeping it central to all people-related processes and report on workforce resilience metrics which are being decided collaboratively between the GDN's and the Sector Skills Council
Succession Planning: Intended to adapt planning to ensure key roles are filled by qualified individuals and to manage the high turnover and retirement rates expected between 2021 and 2036. In GD3 we will: Continue with annual succession planning to manage risks and anticipate the changes that could impact resilience and assess how we can enhance our planning to account for the projected skills shortage. This will include things like becoming a sponsoring employer, using diverse recruitment methods such as skills bootcamps and part time study options.
Health and Wellbeing: A “whole person” approach was emphasised, focusing on the physical and psychological wellbeing of employees. In GD3 we will: Emphasise health, safety, and wellbeing and ensure our strategies evolve to reflect emerging trends within the business and community. We will enhance our wellbeing offering on our flexible benefits portal whilst providing guidance to free apps and urls that could be of benefit to colleagues and their families

Deliverability & Whole Systems Impact

Deliverability & viability implications

We have been working with our sector skills council to develop consistent workforce resilience metrics that we can start to collect during GD3 and report to the National Skills Academy for Gas working group and Ofgem. The collaboration on the development of these metrics will mean consistent reporting across the GDNs that will provide us with further information on the make up of how our current workforce going forward.

Through our partnership with BITC (Business in the Community) we have an Inclusion Advisor, following their insight and recommendations in regards to diversity and inclusion, we evaluated our existing people-related processes to identify gaps in equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), ensuring that all hiring, training and development practices are aligned with EDI principles.

Stakeholder feedback has told us that we need to engage more with education institutes regarding our apprenticeship and graduate schemes – we are now piloting some work with Universities and developing our education strategy. Alongside these traditional ways of recruitment we are exploring other options as raised by stakeholders to include things such as skills bootcamps, return to work programmes and those seeking career changes.

We understand that our EDI & Wellbeing strategies are not set in stone, we are taking a continuous review and adaptation approach in order to stay current and reflective of the changing needs of our workforce and communities we serve.

Triangulation scorecard

Our engagement scoring methodology leverages the information from the HM Treasury's Magenta Book, Quality in Qualitative Evaluation framework and various weighing methodologies used by networks to assess how much impact each piece of evidence should have on their decision-making process.

Each piece of evidence is given a score between 0-2 against a scoring criteria including *Relevance to topic*, *Level of stakeholder knowledge*, *Quality of engagement*, *Rigour of feedback collection* and *Credibility of analysis and interpretation*.

The table below outlines how the evidence used to produce this document scored against each criteria and its overall score. An average and modal score is then provided, which is associated to a grading system that demonstrates the feedback robustness and quality.

Document Name	Score					Final Score
	Relevance to Topic	Level of Stakeholder Knowledge	Quality of Engagement	Rigour of Feedback Collection	Credibility of Analysis and Interpretation	
11920 CR Plus SWIC Cluster Report	2	2	2	2	2	10
3037 LCT Tracker W4 Report WWU FV	0	2	2	2	2	8
3564 WWU Customer Business Priorities FV2	2	2	2	2	2	10
3636 WWU Customer Priorities Report_Debrief_v3	2	2	2	2	2	10
Compact Hybrids - Customer Research -Final	0	2	2	2	2	8
consultation-just-transition-framework	2	2	2	2	2	10
Final version WWU - Critical Friends Panel - Feb 2023 - Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
Technical Report Cardiff DRAFT 2024_05_24	2	2	2	2	2	10
VCMA Year 1 Showcase Stakeholder Workshop - Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WGP Hydrogen Strategy v2.0 (Summary and Technical Reports) FINAL	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU - Critical Friends Panel - Feb 2024 - Feedback Report v5	2	2	2	2	2	10

WWU Biodiversity Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Business Panel_full report with appendix	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Citizen Panel Full Report_V1	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Citizens Panel report Decarbonisation of home heat March 2022 FINAL	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Customer Satisfaction_full report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Employer of Choice Qualitative Follow-up Findings report v1	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU FW strategy workshop 180721 final	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU GD3 Business Planning Workshop Feedback Report	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU LAEP Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU qual priorities report FINAL	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Report Cardiff November 2022 LW Comments	0	2	2	2	2	8
WWU Safety Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU Sustainability Strategy Workshop - Feedback Report	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU Vulnerability Panel Report_v3_060923	1	2	2	2	2	9
WWU_EVP_Insights_Report_Aug22_v1	2	2	2	2	2	10
WWU_Improving the CEX research programme_Stage 1_Report of findings_17.01.23	0	2	2	2	2	8
Average Score of Sources						9.07
Mode						10

Score	Grade	Description
0-3	Poor	Feedback should not be used for triangulation as it does not meet the minimum quality standards.
4-6	Average	Feedback could be used for triangulation but possible lacks robustness.
7-8	Good	Feedback meets the standards necessary for credible triangulation.
9-10	Excellent	Feedback meets the best standards of rigour and quality.