Stakeholder Justification Paper – Retention	
Output/Commitment Title	
Invest in improving our colleagues' knowledge and skills so we can deliver a net zero ready network.	
Detail	Maintain a resilient workforce, tackling all levels of ability from entry-level to fully proficient. Give colleagues the skills and know-how to do their jobs well today and adapt for the future skills changes needed. Develop inclusive leadership and management programmes that foster inclusivity and psychological safety, insourcing training management along with annual succession planning to manage risks and anticipate the changes that could impact resilience. Continue comprehensive colleague engagement programmes, including satisfaction surveys and roadshows.
Strategy Document/ Business Plan Section	Workforce Resilience and Supply Chain Chapter and Strategy
Cost & Bill Impact	
Proposed Funding	Base
Benefits & risks	
Summary of benefits	**Summary:** Improving colleagues' knowledge and skills to deliver a net zero ready network benefits consumers by providing more sustainable, reliable services, reducing environmental impact, and potentially lowering long-term costs through energy efficiency and innovation. **Direct financial benefits:** The direct financial benefits of investing in workforce skills for a net zero ready network include reduced operational costs through improved efficiency and minimised waste. Additionally, it can lead to enhanced productivity, and long-term savings from innovations in sustainable practices. Societal benefits: 1. Economic Growth and Stability - Increased productivity: Well-trained and adaptive workers contribute to higher productivity, which drives business growth and, by extension, economic development. This can result in greater prosperity for communities and regions. 2. Future-ready workforce: Preparing employees for future skill changes and industry shifts ensures a workforce that is adaptable to new technologies and market demands. This resilience benefits society by ensuring that industries can evolve without significant disruptions, contributing to long-term economic stability and innovation. 3. Culture of lifelong learning: By investing in skills development and training for employees at all levels, we promote a culture of lifelong learning. This encourages continuous personal and professional growth, which benefits society by creating a more knowledgeable and skilled population. 4. Employee satisfaction and well-being: Comprehensive engagement programs, such as satisfaction surveys and roadshows, allow us to maintain a strong connection with our workforce. Engaged and satisfied employees tend to be more productive and contribute positively to their communities, both professionally and personally. 5. Long-term workforce sustainability: Comprehensive training and succession planning help ensure that the workforce remains robust over time. This benefits society by maintaining the sustainability of industries, ensuring that businesses are not overly reliant on external hiring or outsourcing to fill critical roles.
Summary of risks	Without continuous development colleagues would have outdated skills, risk of high employee turnover and low engagement levels, decreased employee satisfaction.
Stakeholder voice - Golden thread	
Engagement method (what and who)	**Methods:** A variety of engagement methods were used to gather feedback and insights from stakeholders, customers, and partners. These include: 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. 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. 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. <u>Literature Reviews, Interviews and Focus Groups:</u> These involve in-depth discussions with 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. <u>Online Communities:</u> These involve engaging with participants through online platforms to gather feedback and insights. An example is the WWU Business Panel_full report with appendix. <u>Consultations:</u> 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. 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.
Stakeholder Views (what they said, regional differences and how we responded)	**Opinions, views:** Some stakeholders advocate for a holistic approach that emphasises broader career benefits and the gas industry's role in combating climate change, appealing to employees' values and sense of purpose. Others emphasise the importance of competitive salaries as a key factor in retaining employees. Employees themselves have fed back on opportunities for progression within their current roles and their concerns about potential ceilings in career advancement. Stakeholders have made suggestions to address issues such as career progression, training fulfilment, and managerial support including clear pathways for advancement, better training for managers, and more flexible and accessible training programmes that could improve job retention and overall employee satisfaction at WWU. Additionally, employees generally support WWU's commitment to the net zero transition and feel that it aligns with their personal values, providing them with a sense of purpose. However, they acknowledge the need for specialised training to equip them with the skills required for this transition. **Associated facts:** Potential training costs, time and productivity, adoption of new technology, culture change, colleague engagement, uncontrollable external factors e.g. covid **Conflicts:** Conflicts have been identified relating to work-life balance, scepticism about training fulfilment, managerial support, financial impacts, and regional differences. Office-based employees are generally content with their flexibility, while field operatives feel like they face challenges like standby duties and lack of trust from some managers. Employees are sceptical about the company's commitment to training, as despite the company recognising the need for new skills, employees have experienced inconsistencies with managerial support for training. Readiness for the net zero transition differs by region, with Welsh local authorities making more progress with Local Area Energy Plans (LAEPs) compared to English local authorities. Additionally, employees recognise the potential financial burdens that the transition to net zero could place on consumers. There is a concern about ensuring that the investments made in new technologies and training are cost-effective and do not lead to ongoing financial burdens for customers. **Regional differences:** As mentioned above Employees have observed that the readiness for the net zero transition can differ by region. For example, the progress Welsh local authorities have made with LAEPs vs English local authorities. There is a call for stronger partnerships with local authorities to support regional energy plans, given they vary in ambition and scope. Job security is highly valued across all regions, but perceptions can vary depending on the presence of key projects or offices. Employees have noted that opportunities for career progression can vary significantly between different regions. For example, the availability of senior roles may be more limited in certain areas, creating bottlenecks for career advancement. **Options considered** Removal of some L&D programmes and stripping back our offering to a mandatory programme with maintenance of key skills as and when required. Stay reactive to the market changes and management of skills in line with industry standards with light touch succession planning carried out including different entry routes such as apprentices and graduates. **How we responded:** The feedback above directs us to maintain a resilient workforce, tackling all levels of ability from entry-level to fully proficient. Give colleagues the skills and know-how to do their jobs well today and adapt for the future skills changes needed. Develop inclusive leadership and management programmes that foster inclusivity and psychological safety, insourcing training management along with annual succession planning to manage risks and anticipate the changes that could impact resilience. Continue

	comprehensive colleague engagement programmes, including satisfaction surveys and roadshows. This level of ambition 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 91% of domestic gas consumers and 97% of business consumers find this commitment to be acceptable.
Performance	
GD2 Performance, Benchmarking/ Industry comparison	How is this over and above what we have done in GD2 **Maintaining and Developing Skills:** Committed to ongoing investment in apprenticeships and training to ensure the workforce remains skilled and capable of meeting future challenges. In GD3 we will: Enhance inclusive leadership and management programmes that foster inclusivity and psychological safety, provide upskilling and cross training opportunities, conduct regular skills assessments and continuous improvement of our tailored training programmes. **Employee Satisfaction and Retention:** Emphasised the importance of retaining skilled workers through engagement, satisfaction initiatives, and providing opportunities for career progression. This includes a commitment to multi-skilling and upskilling to address workforce shortages in rural areas. In GD3 we will: Offer a competitive, inclusive benefits package to provide fair reward and recognition, Emphasise health, safety, and wellbeing and ensure our strategies evolve to reflect emerging trends within the business and community, move away from our traditional accreditations to more modern certifications which will provide us with action plans to enhance our colleague satisfaction which in turn should improve our retention.
Deliverability & Whole Systems Impact	
Deliverability & viability implications	Ofgem GD3 Commitment scorecard info: Business plan commitments relating to all activities funded as part of RIIO-3 baseline are underpinned by clear and credible plans for delivery which are supported by high-quality evidence, taking appropriate account of all relevant delivery risks. Timelines are provided for the implementation of commitments which are well justified and evidenced. Could be illustrated by: Reassurance that we can deliver e.g. existing experience/ plans/ resilience to change High-level timeline with key milestones Top 4-5 risks e.g. Gov legislation, skill shortages etc.. Our commitment here has developed our thinking on colleague satisfaction monitoring, we will look to certify with Great Place to Work which will provide us with much richer data and detailed action plans that we can look to implement. We are aware that it's highly unlikely to get the certification on our first try but will stive towards this goal whilst making WWU a great place to work for our colleagues. This annual survey will provide us with tracking data and help us to measure our success. We will enhance our training and development offerings through the introduction of our aspire and inspire leadership courses. Insourcing our training management also means we'll have great control over the quality and relevance of our learning programmes for technical training. This ensures that our training is tailored to our needs and is more responsive to the changes in workforce and wider market.

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.