



# Northumbrian Water Group

People Panels

#3 Aims and measures

Research report

May 2022

# People Panels [May '22]

## # 3: Aims and measures

### Background

This was the third round of a series of four initial deliberative discussion sessions to be conducted online over Zoom. One session was conducted with each of the five panels on the following dates:

- **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April: Employees**
- **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April: Northumbrian**
- **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April: Essex**
- **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April: Suffolk**
- **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April: Young**

Having developed all of the session materials in partnership between NWG and Explain, Explain was responsible for the running of the events and for independent chairing and facilitation of two breakout room discussions per group. A NWG representative, [REDACTED], attended all sessions and provided information and responses to any clarification questions posed by attendees.

### Purpose of the session

The event was designed to introduce panellists to the areas, themes and measures, and work through several ranking exercises in relation to these. The results of these exercises can be found in this document and a summary of findings can be found below. The final exercise used star voting to allow panel members to share 25 stars across the 15 measures, thus providing information on the order of importance of measures in relation to one another.

### Notes on analysis

During this round, panellists were taken through a series of Mentimeter polls to rank the measures of Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water from most important to least important. The five Mentimeter polls were separated as follows: five 'areas', seven 'themes', 'customer' measures, 'environment' measures, and 'community, people, and competitiveness' measures. The figures shown throughout the report therefore show the averages of their ranking positions, with '1' being the most important, therefore the lower the value the higher the priority panellists thought the measure is.



## Attendee profile

| Panel group  | Total number of attendees             | 'Defining the Future' |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Northumbrian | 15 (1 lost, to resume #5)             | 3                     |
| Employees    | 5 (3 lost)                            | n/a                   |
| Essex        | 14 (5 lost, 3 to resume #5)           | 1                     |
| Suffolk      | 15 (remains the same)                 | 3                     |
| Young        | 13 (remains the same; 2 to resume #5) | 2                     |

Within the 'employees' group, there was a lower attendance of five panellists compared to the attendance eight employees in round two. There were also five fewer Essex panellists in attendance this round. As this third round relied on knowledge and understanding of the first two rounds, panellists who did not attend the second session were not contacted for this third round. However, these individuals will be invited to the panels following the fourth session

Feedback from chairs and moderators of the respective sessions indicated that the individuals in each group were engaged and interested in sharing their views. The event feedback gathered from the closing polls, completed by panellists themselves, is shared at the end of this report.

## Pre-work findings

There were 90 minutes in each session, with roughly 10 minutes spent in breakout rooms, which were facilitated by Explain. This round began with reviewing the pre-work set in advance of the session, which included thinking about:

- reflecting on the longer term future, and what they would like to come into fruition in 2050 and why
- how they anticipated their own behaviour will change in relation to using water in this future
- what would be most important to them in 2050 in terms of what Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water would deliver.

The key themes appearing in the responses provided by panellists can be summarised as:

### **Accessibility of water and eradication of poverty:**

Showing empathy and the recognition of water as a necessity, panellists thought water should be accessible to all with a view of eradicating water poverty by 2050.

□ *"I wouldn't want to be in a world where we had food, water, electricity poverty etc." – Employees*

□ *"Nobody should ever suffer through not having water, for whatever reason" – Suffolk*



### High quality, safe, drinking water:

Panellists were conscious of what they would be putting into their bodies and making sure that clean water was available to them continually, which mirrors previous discussions highlighting how they care for their family.

- *"Maybe less chemicals, we're living in a bleach filled society" – Essex*
- *"The quality of water, the delivery, the safe drinking water and minimising the wastewater with a minimal impact on the environment is very important" – Essex*
- *"Water that we have coming out of the tap, should always still be of top quality" – Suffolk*
- *"It's healthier to have [water] filtered and less chance of maybe bacteria infecting the water. It would be good to see... [water] coming out of the tap, already filtered, in an ideal world" – Young*

### Consciousness of water usage, via technological innovation:

Some current technological innovations were discussed, such as the toilet 'dual flush', allowing us to use less water, as well as smart meters to track gas and electricity. Panellists wanted to see more innovations in future, such as water smart-meters, to help them stay conscious of water usage.

- *"I would hope that as a population, we are less wasteful of everything, not just water, and being more aware of how we can look after the resources that we have" – Northumbrian*
- *"Now, we've got the dual flush, don't we? ... this short flush and long flush [on toilets] ... So, there's lots of technology out there that we can tap into" – Northumbrian*
- *"The idea of bringing in the technology because I think it makes it easier to keep track of what you're using and that probably makes it easier to see if you're using too much water and it's more expensive for you" – Young*
- *"It's important for them to invest heavily in technology and lead the industry in exploring and developing things that are emerging" – Young*

### Consciousness of water usage, via recycling solutions:

Other non-technological ways to stay conscious of water usage in future were discussed in relation to Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water thinking of nature-based solutions and recognising an existing method of using sluices to filter water. Similarly, simple solutions such as rainwater collection were discussed as being important in future.

- *"Using things like nature-based solutions so whatever we need to look at doing, trying mimic what happens in nature as opposed to... vast concrete structures" – Employee*
- *"Essex and Suffolk water have put... sluice beds... where they used reed beds to filter water [which] I think is wonderful... I'd like to see more of that occurring" – Essex*



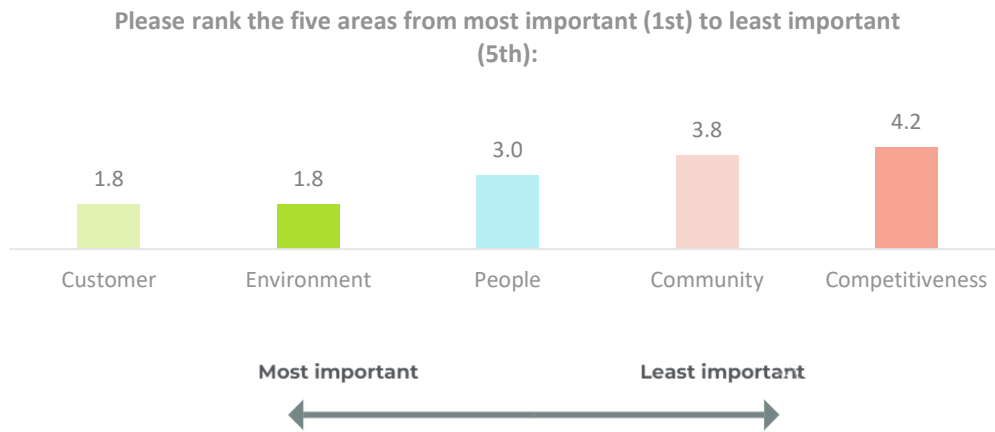
- *“We've got to be able to recycle in a much better way. We're inefficient at the moment” – Essex*
- *“We ought to be able to collect rainwater in order to do the things that don't require drinking quality water, such as laundry. So, I thought that perhaps we'd be going back to having tanks of water in our homes, and using them for purposes where, shall we say, sterile water wasn't essential” - Suffolk*



# Employee

## Ranking exercises

### Areas

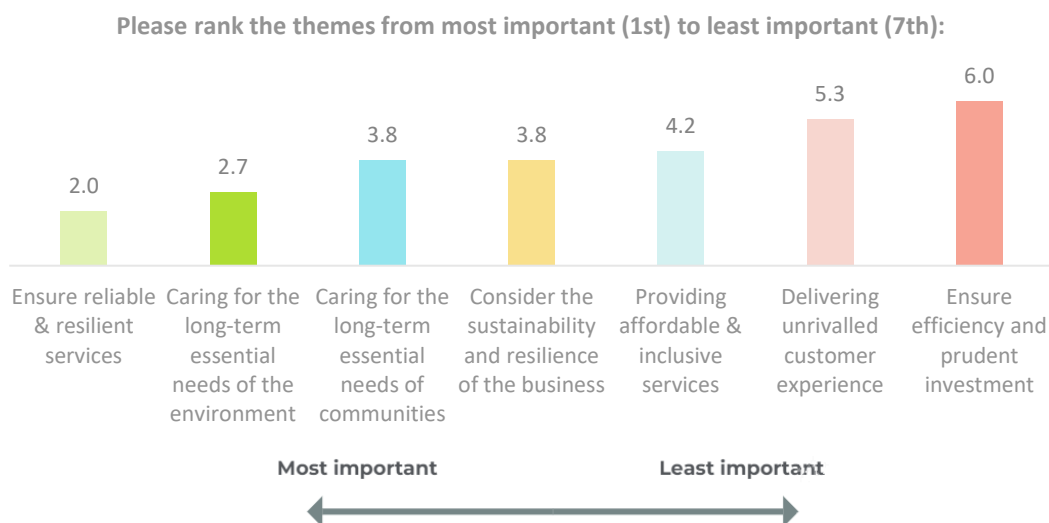


Customer and environment were perceived to be the two most equally important areas of the five.

- “You need to look after [customers] and there could be a time where we actually have got to compete for them”
- “That’s where our income comes from, our user, so that kind of has to be at the forefront of what we aim for”

The least important was thought to be competitiveness. When prompted to provide a reason, panellists weren’t able to specify why this was least important to them so they may have not understood this area properly.

### Themes



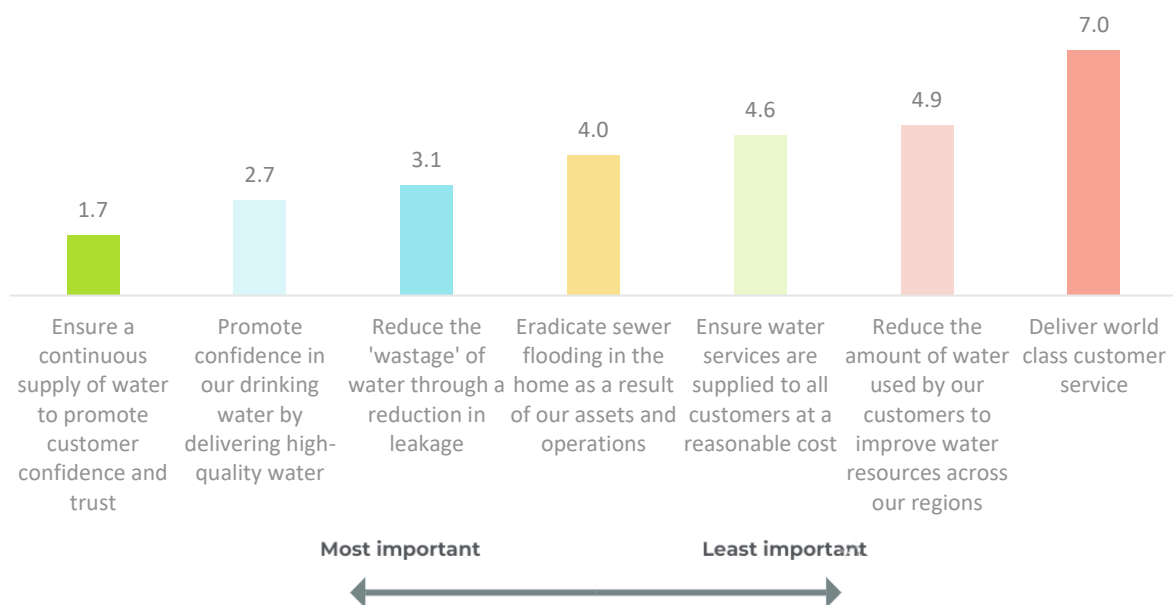
When ranking the seven themes, employees explained that the reliability and resilience of the service was most important as water resources are needed before other aims can be achieved.

- *“You could have the best customer service on the planet, but if you haven’t got enough water to go round... there’s no point having the customer service in place”*
- *“Personally, I could live with poor customer service, if everything else was being sort of, addressed in there”*
- *Ranking as second most important was the measure regarding the environment, with some panellists highlighting that this was also of high importance to them*
- *“My most important one was the long-term essential needs of the environment because personally I think the health and safety of the water and the treatment of the effluent needs to be right”*
- *“If you could put two as an equal first, I would put environment and reliable resilient service at the top, I think they’re equally important”*

### Customer measures

In alignment with their view of reliable and resilient services being the most important theme, panellists considered the customer measure of ensuring a ‘continuous supply of water’ and ‘promoting customer confidence’ were also of upmost importance as customer measures. This reveals employees’ thoughts that water is a basic necessity that everyone expects to have access to, and the consequence that water interruption may have on customer confidence. However, when explaining customer service as being of lower importance, panellists thought that this would naturally follow if other measures were met.

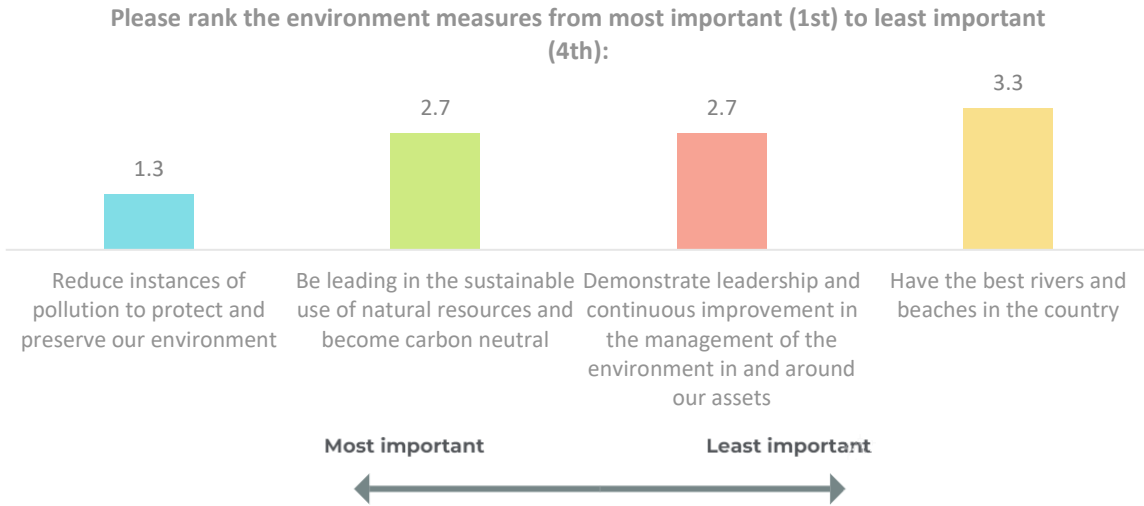
Please rank the customer measures from most important (1st) to least important (7th):



**Environment measures**

One environment measure was deemed to be more important than the other three, which was the reduction of pollution instances to protect and preserve the environment. The reasons for this centred around the belief that successfully achieving this measure will positively impact the other three measures.

□ *“As long as we’re doing the fundamentals right which is keeping the pollution incidences down, then I think that the rest will follow”*



Panellists agreed that they did not view three of the measures as being more important than the other, however this was with the exception for the measure concerning financial resilience, as all panellists agreed that this felt the least important to them. It was also thought that in meeting the other three measures, financial resilience can be achieved.

**Community, people, and competitiveness measures**

Panellists considered health and safety in the workplace to be most important, which reflects their position as employees of Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water.





The least important measure was 'financial resilience', which panellists justified as a natural consequence of prioritising the other three measures.

- *"I think that we can still be a strong and sustainable financial business with good returns, whilst not prioritising [financial resilience] as our primary objective, so the other three trumped it"*
- *"If you get the other three right, four [financial resilience] should fall in line anyway, for me"*

### Star vote exercise

In the first star voting exercise, employees were asked to allocate 25 stars anywhere over the 15 measures, placing more stars on the measures which they viewed as most important for Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water to consider in their long-term plan. In the second exercise, panellists were to identify the top five measures they considered most important for Northumbrian Water and Essex & Suffolk Water and allocate their 25 stars across them. The results for the top three measures overall were consistent across both first and second star voting exercises, and were as follows:

1st: Ensure a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust.

2nd: Reduce instances of pollution to protect and preserve our environment.

3<sup>rd</sup>: Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water

These results aligned with how employees had ranked areas and themes in the session. Key reasons for prioritising continuous supply were around population growth and ensuring ongoing availability of an essential resource. Regarding pollution incidents, it was highlighted that the value of making other environmental investments was limited if ultimately the business continued to pollute and thus this was a high priority.

- *"The continuous supply of water because there are more people on the planet than there has ever been, we've got the same amount of water, and it's not all necessarily in the right places"*
- *"Reducing instances of pollution obviously because the more pollution the more work we have to do to sort the water out"*

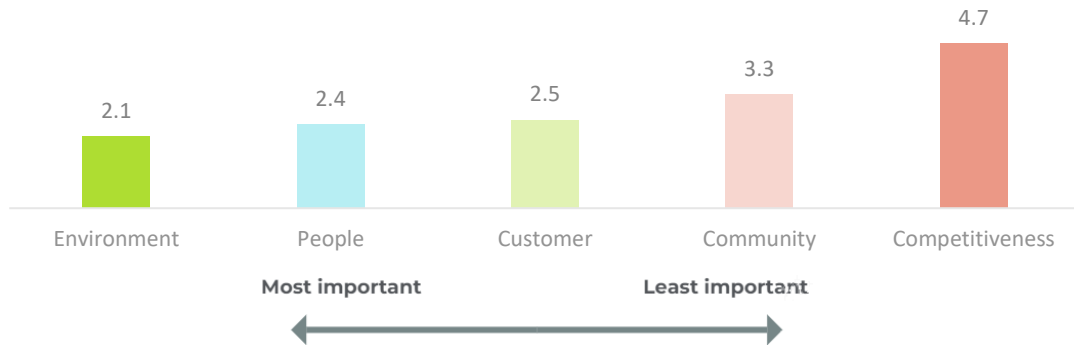


# Northumbrian

## Ranking exercises

### Areas

Please rank the five areas from most important (1st) to least important (5th):

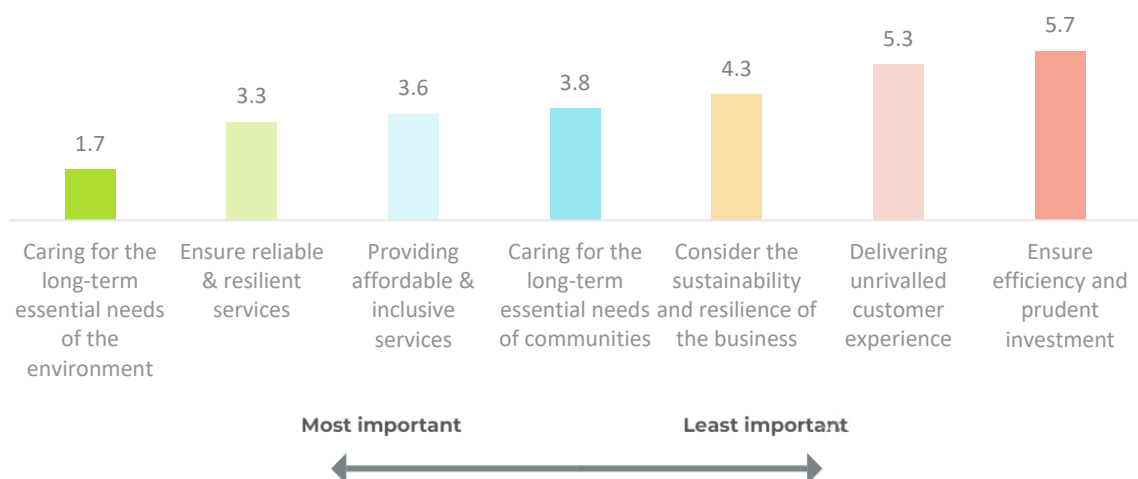


In the exercise to rank the importance of the five areas, Northumbrian panellists considered the environment to be fundamental to everything else and discussed how looking after the world is necessary otherwise there could be costs relating to non-environmentally friendly waste.

- *“If we don't look after the environment, then our lives are going to be so just disastrous... we won't have everything to worry about because we won't have an Earth”*
- *“I think competitiveness is right at the very bottom of the list. It needs to be sort of customer focused and environment focused really for me”*

### Themes

Please rank the themes from most important (1st) to least important (7th):



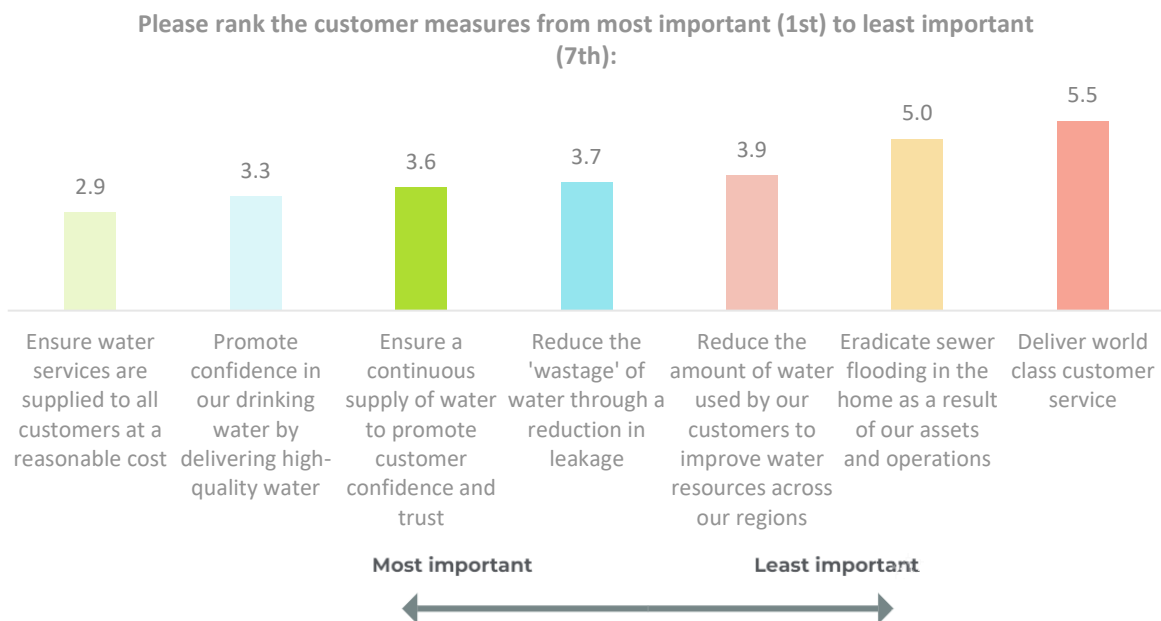
Regarding the seven themes, 'caring for the long-term essential needs for the environment' was also deemed most important, but there was no clear agreement on the importance of themes following this. One panellist explained this was due to their perception that caring for the environment has a positive impact of caring for the customer and positively affecting other measures.

□ *"If you're caring for the environment, you're going to care for the customer, and everything would sort of work down from that"*

Aside from mentioning the environment, panellists highlighted the need to be provided with water as it is a necessity to life, demonstrating 'ensuring reliable and resilient services' ranking as second most important.

□ *"First and foremost, we have to ensure that we keep getting the service that we get at the moment"*

### Customer measures



Cost was viewed to be the most important customer measure amongst the Northumbrian panel, with panellists discussing the rising cost of living. Though world class customer service was rated the least important, panellists explained that this is because they believe customer service would automatically follow if the other points had been achieved.

□ *"Cost is very important to me. I think for all of us, we want to pay as little as possible for water or at least maintaining within our budget, so that we don't spend too much on water"*

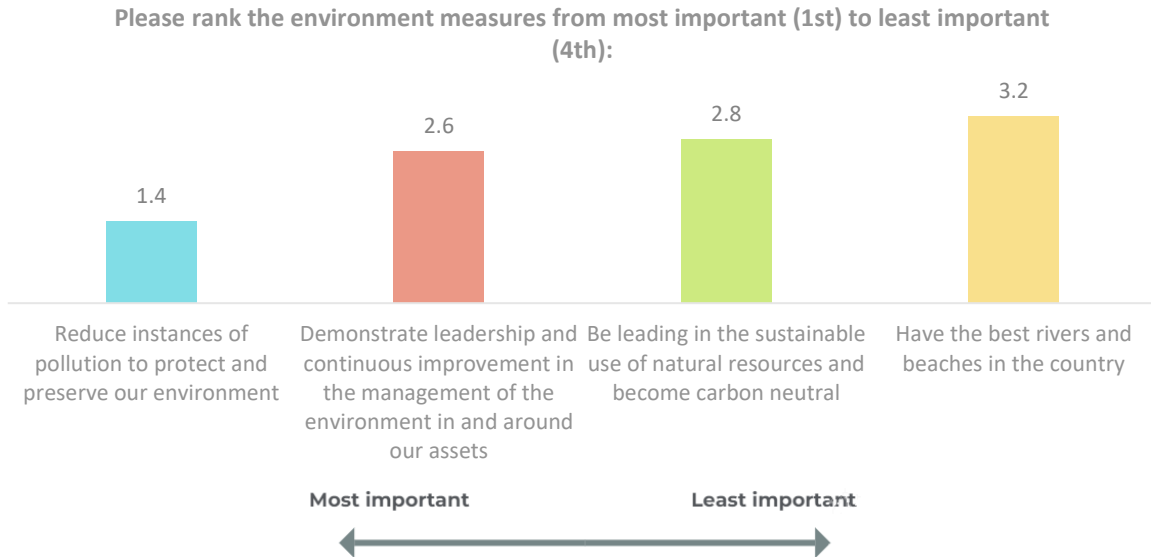
One panellist explained their vote for 'eradicating sewer flooding' as less important due to them perceiving sewer flooding as not occurring as frequently.

□ *"Eradicated sewer flooding [is] not so frequent, so I thought that was the least important"*



## Environment measures

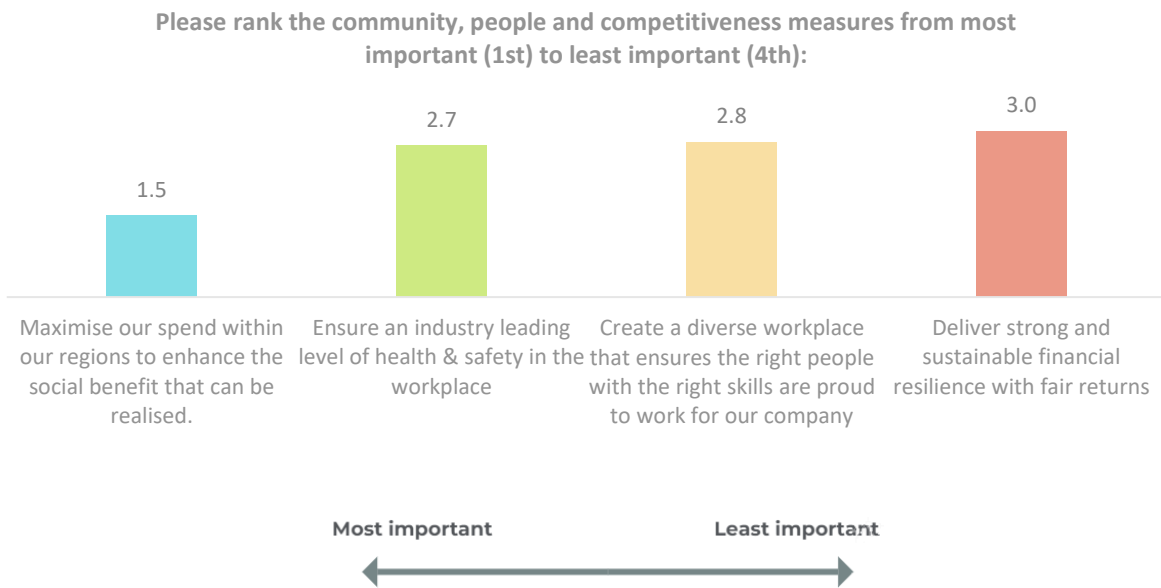
The most important environment measure was reducing instances of pollution. Panellists explained their ranking of this measure as the most important of the four as they believed reducing instances of pollution would then have a positive impact on the others. This same reason was given when discussing why “best rivers and beaches” ranked the least important, as panellists thought this would be positively impacted automatically if instances of pollution were reduced.



- “If you start polluting the very resource, your trading of it seems to be a bit of a contradiction. So, I thought pollution was the most important to maintain the resource”
- “If you do the other things, you're going to have the best beaches and rivers, aren't you? If you reduce pollution and use well, the other three things will make the fourth [better]”



## Community, people and competitiveness measures



‘Maximising spend within regions’ ranked with the highest importance, though panellists were unable to provide a clear reason for voting in this way. Similarly, financial resilience was least important to the Northumbrian panel, though panellists stated this was due to not having a clear understanding.

□ “[For me, this is] hard to understand... I don't know the financial side of it”

### Star vote exercises

In the Northumbrian Panel, although the environment area and theme ranked highly in the prior exercises, providing services at a reasonable cost was prioritised in the final star voting exercises, followed by the measure related to high quality drinking water. Reducing instances of pollution was ranked third and fourth in the two respective star votes.

Environment was discussed throughout the session as incredibly important now and in the future, however in the final breakout reference was made to the general rise in cost of living, emphasising the need for Northumbrian Water to keep cost down in the long term. Water quality was highlighted as one of Northumbrian Water’s core responsibilities and thus considered a long-term priority for that reason.

1<sup>st</sup>: Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost

2<sup>nd</sup>: Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water

3<sup>rd</sup>: Reduce instances of pollution to protect and preserve our environment

3<sup>rd</sup>: Ensure a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust



In the final breakout room discussions, panellists explained their reasons for voting in the star vote exercises in the way that they did, including the high cost of living, and water being fit and safe for consumption, as well as the environment and how these three were interrelated.

- *“Everything's so expensive nowadays”*
- *“Otherwise, we're not going to have that efficient, like local economy”*
- *“If you're drinking water isn't safe then you're on a hiding to nothing... It's got to be safe, and it needs to be one of the priorities”*
- *“We need to ensure that... what we pay for water is reasonable and also the quality of the water is good enough for consumption”*
- *“‘Becoming carbon neutral in reducing the amount of waste,’ because reducing the amount of waste was quite a highly rated one for me, because I think that if everyone were to reduce waste that would then in turn reduce costs. That would also benefit the environment, so it's like three birds – one stone... I would really rate Northumbria Water if they did have an initiative to help people reduce waste in the home”*

The panellists also explained why ‘world class customer service’ was not important in itself to them, as it is made up of the success of other measures.

- *“[‘Delivering world class customer service’] doesn't tell the story of why effectively. So that's why it's low down the list. The other things lead to it. It doesn't itself mean anything to me”*

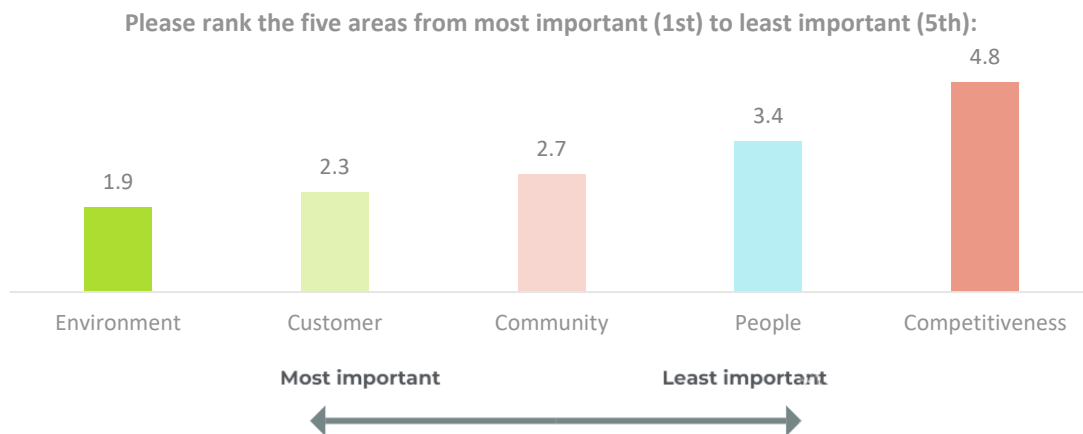


# Essex

## Ranking exercise

### Areas

Essex panellists considered environment to be the most important area, though this was only slightly more important than customer and community, respectively. One reason highlighted how they see plastic laying around wherever they go, and they wish this wouldn't be the case, therefore see the importance of prioritising the environment.

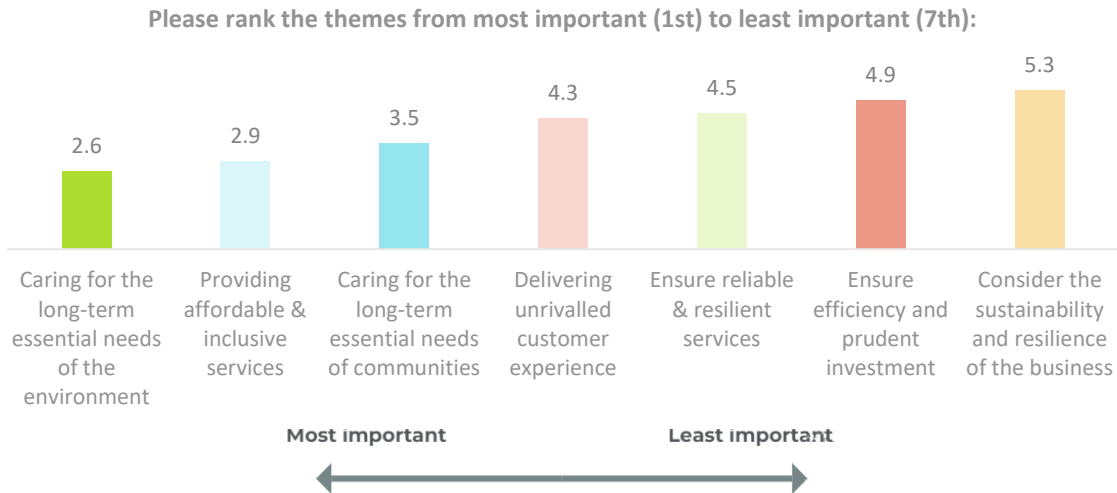


- “I know [Essex & Suffolk Water] do clean up estuaries and everything like that, I have seen it first-hand. But people need to be educated on the environment and how to keep it clean and tidy”
- “I am in a customer facing role in the government. You have to put the customer first and understand their view as well”



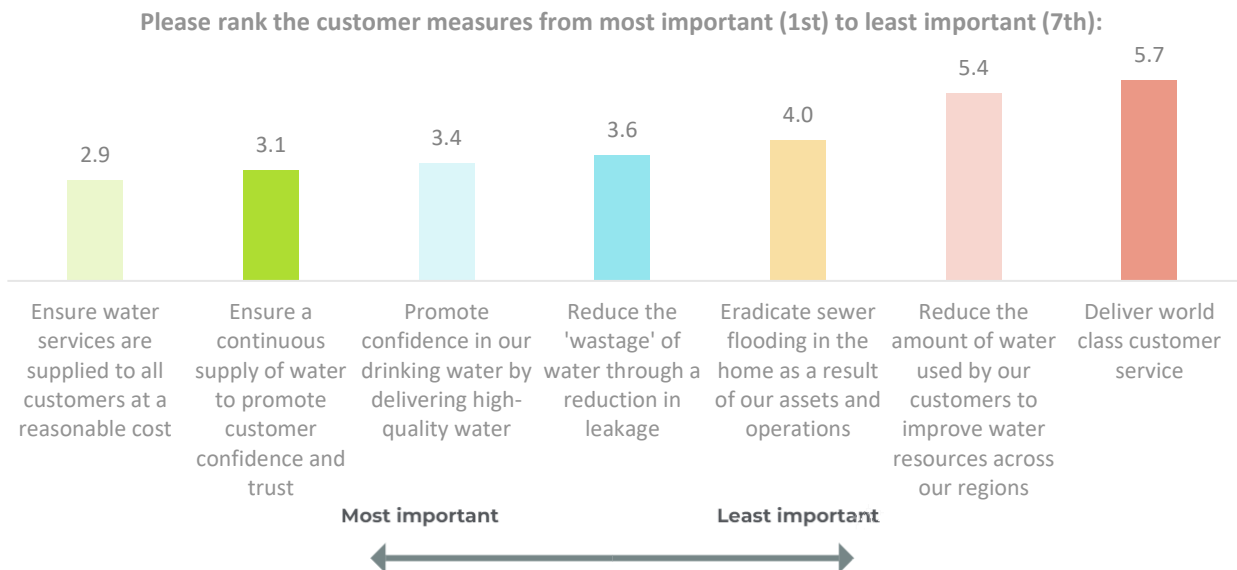
## Themes

When considering the themes, the highest two ranking areas were 'caring for the long-term needs of the environment' followed by 'providing affordable and inclusive services'. This aligns with the viewpoints exhibited in the previous ranking exercise, as panellists considered affordability and environment to be more important than customer experience or business-related themes, which ranked lower in importance.



## Customer measures

The ranking of the customer measures is shown below, illustrating that 'world class customer service' was of the least importance to panellists in the Essex group, with the reduction of the amount of water used also viewed as of lower importance. Though the customer measure concerning 'reasonable costs' was deemed the most important in the ranking exercise, this was followed closely by ensuring a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust, whilst 'world class customer service' was ranked with as being least important.

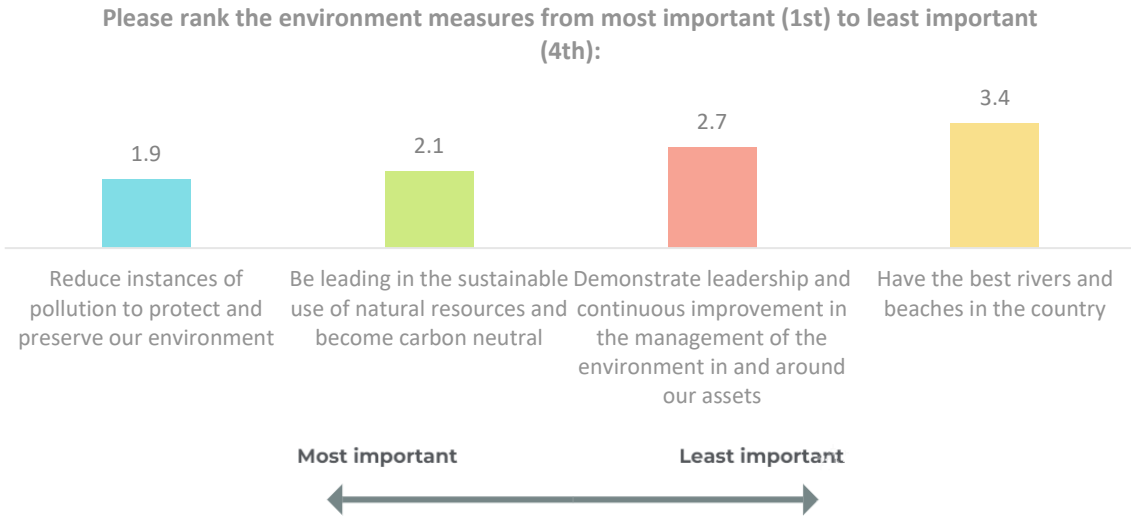




### Environment measures

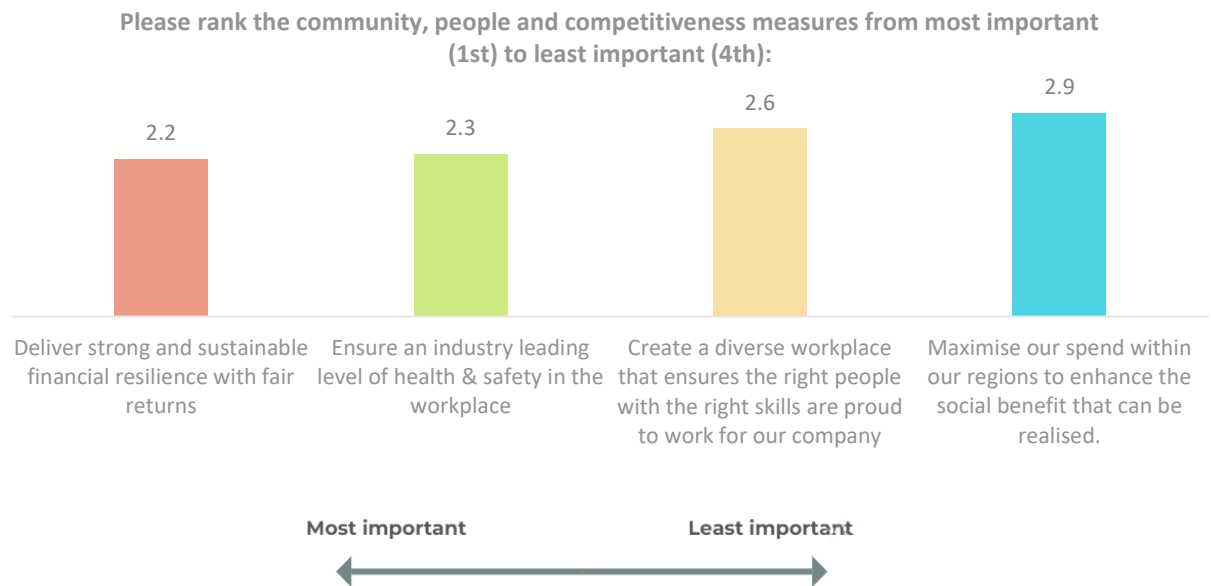
Two of the environmental measures were both thought to have similar levels of importance, with ‘reduce instances of pollution’ being slightly more so than ‘leading in sustainable use of natural resources’. When explaining the reasons for ‘best rivers and beaches’ being of least importance, panellists discussed how they believed this would follow if the other aims were met.

□ *“I put in reducing the pollution and then the others will follow easier. You will have cleaner beaches without trying too hard”*



### Community, people and competitiveness measures

Though maximising spend within regions was voted as the least important of these four measures, this was not a significant difference, and one panellist explained that this was most important to them as a means of them, as a customer, seeing that money is spent well.



□ *“I voted for most important as maximising spend in regions... it's probably the easiest way for customers to see that the money is being spent well, if they can see that it's been used to its fullest within the community”*

### Star vote exercise

Amongst Essex panellists, their top three aims differed between the first and second rounds of star vote exercises. Star vote exercise one votes show on the left, and the second star votes on the right:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> : Reduce instances of pollution to protect and preserve our environment    | 1 <sup>st</sup> : Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Reduce the 'wastage' of water through a reduction in leakage             | 2 <sup>nd</sup> : Reduce instances of pollution to protect and preserve our environment     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost | 3 <sup>rd</sup> : Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water |

The environment ranked highly amongst this group when considering the areas and themes, which is broadly reflected in the star voting results. However, affordability was also important to this group, as seen when considering the themes and the customer measures – there was concern about this for the future given the current ongoing fuel and cost of living crisis. The group highlighted that customers should be considered at the heart of decision making, for example including ensuring a reliable, high-quality supply.

- *“I think pricing would definitely be a factor, would be a major factor in terms of what the priorities should be, and keeping that cost low, yet the quality of water high, would be very beneficial to people”*
- *“The environment is primary. We have an obligation to care for it, and I think that should be at the top list of Essex and Suffolk Water’s priorities... We have to care for the world in which we live”*
- *“One of my top ones was about pollution, because, unless that can be addressed, you know, millions of pounds are going to be spent on that”*
- *“Clean, high-quality water; another one being use, sustainable use of our national resources, and, of course, pollution, kind of, going carbon neutral. I think all three of those things kind of go hand-in-hand with each other”*



# Suffolk

## Ranking exercises

### Areas

The results of panellists ranking the five areas revealed 'environment' as the top area, closely followed by 'customer', explaining that fulfilling these areas would help the other areas benefit. Competitiveness was voted least important, with panellists discussing how they did not see the relevance to themselves.

- “I put the 'Customer' first, and then the 'Environment', purely on the grounds that if you've got a good customer base, you can afford, as it were, to do the 'Environment' bit; it would sort of come naturally. I think the two are fairly interchangeable”
- “I actually put 'Customer' first, because with water usage, if an idea was put to a customer for them to save, as long as they're a happy customer, they've been looked after, then they'd be more open to taking part”
- “If the environment wasn't managed, then that would have a 'knock-on' effect to the people and the community, so I thought that was the most important”
- “I chose 'Environment' first because I think there's a moral duty to ensure that there's a clean, healthy water supply. 'Competitiveness' I chose last because who are they up against?”

Please rank the five areas from most important (1st) to least important (5th):



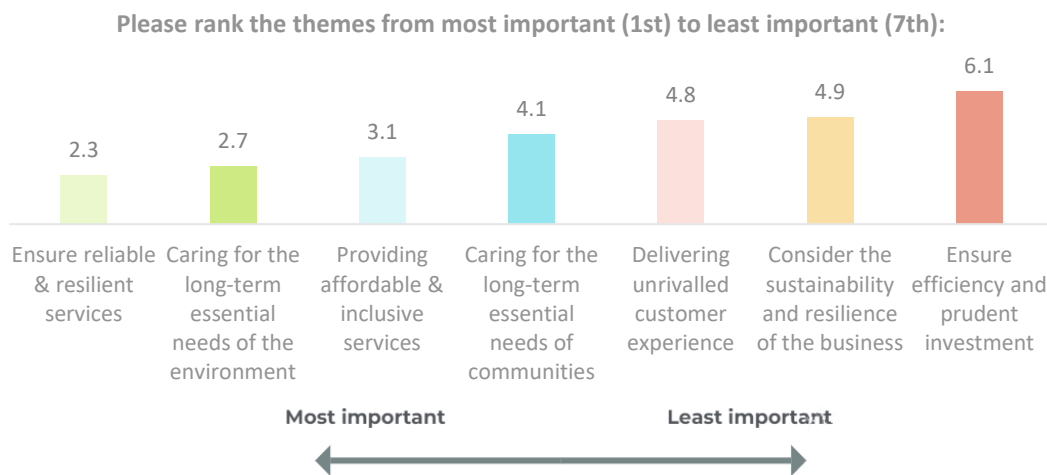
## Themes

Of the seven themes, the most important to panellists was the reliability and resilience of services. Panellists highlighted that they wanted autonomy, therefore a constant flow of clean water was important to them.

□ *“For the highest, I went ‘Ensure Reliable and Resilient Services’ based on the notion that I want things to remain autonomous so, within that, a constant flow of water supply is as clean as expected”*

Efficient and prudent investment, however, ranked with the lowest importance. This was due to the belief that other factors are in place, such as OFWAT, which make it less of a concern to customers.

□ *“For seventh ‘Ensure Efficiency and Prudent Investment’... there’s lots of factors in place, such as OFWAT and everything, so it can look after itself, really”*



The results between the second to sixth most important measures ranked closely to one another, with panellists sharing reasons they had personally thought differently when prioritising. One mother mentioned the environment is most important due to thinking of her children, whilst another stated affordability is most important as water is a necessity.

□ *“I put ‘Caring for the Long Term and Essential Needs of the Environment’, simply because, as a Mum...for my children, I want them to live in a place with seasons”*

□ *“Certain groups of people would have an issue with affording the services... ensuring everybody, the elderly on their pensions, whatever, can afford to actually have the basics they need”*



Others explained they had voted in this way due to considering wider factors, such as government subsidies, and that the measures link into one another.

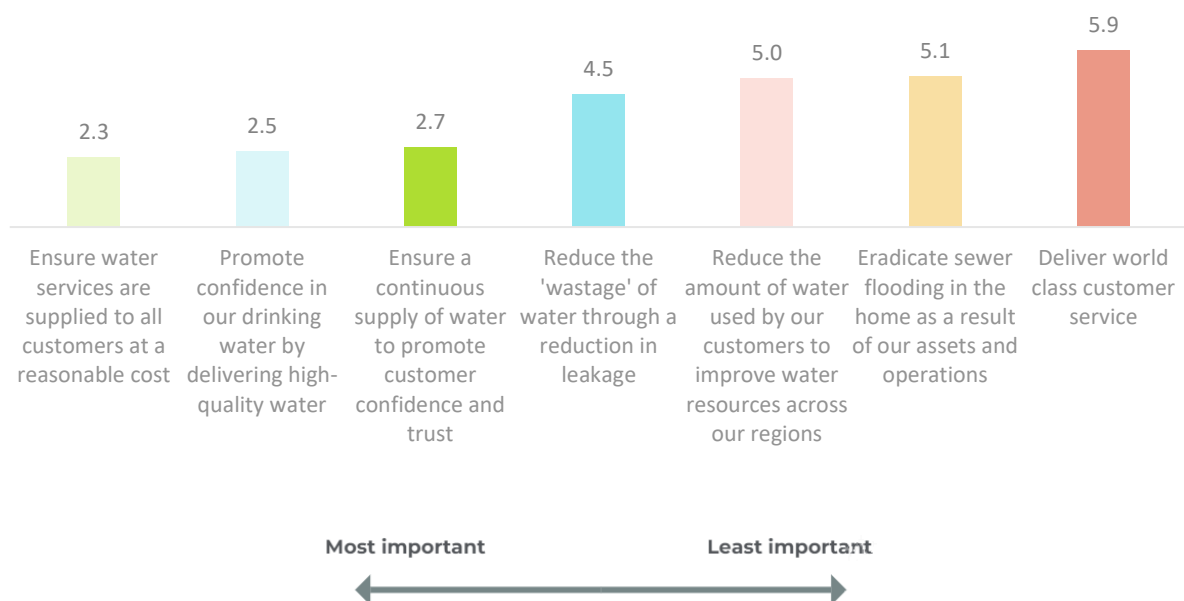
□ *“Considering the Sustainability and the Resilience of the Business... you need a business to be self-sufficient... because you’re bound by a contract and policy and procedure, they’ll have to honour those prices, or there’ll have to be a subsidy from the government... I think it was of lesser importance because of the safety net”*

### Customer measures

The customer measure that ranked most important to the Suffolk panellists centred around affordability to all customers, followed by two measures as second and third most important which both centre around promoting confidence in drinking water.

Whilst affordability to all and raising confidence in customers were viewed as most important of the customer measures, ‘world class customer service’ placed as least important. Panellists touched on a similar idea as in previous ranking exercises, that they believe fulfilling the other customer measures would naturally improve customer service, therefore this measure is of lesser importance.

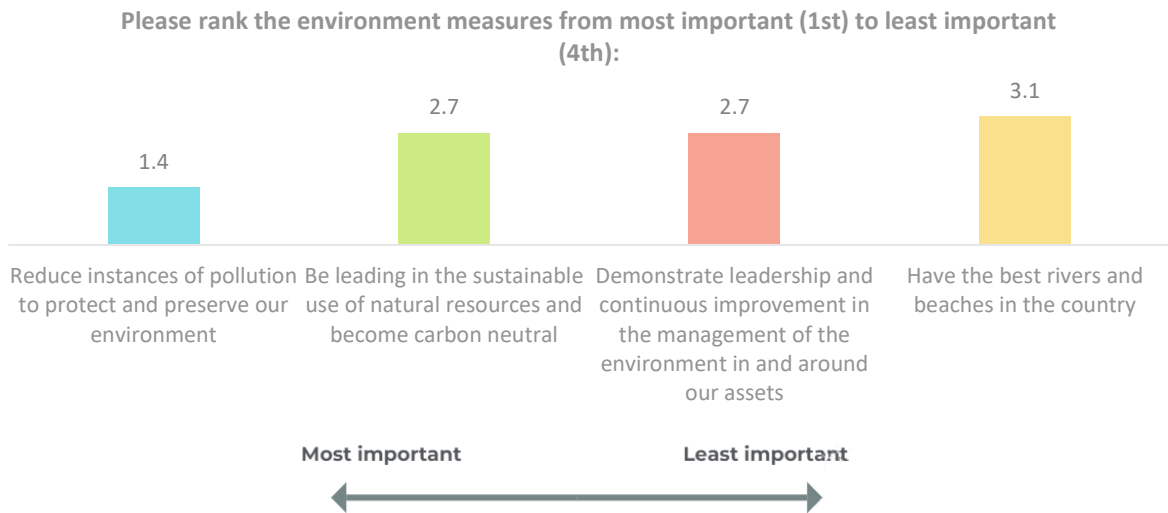
Please rank the customer measures from most important (1st) to least important (7th):



## Environment measures

By quite a margin, the most important environment measure was ‘reducing instances of pollution, to protect and preserve our environment’. One panellist highlighted that if pollution is reduced, this would automatically positively impact rivers and beaches.

□ *“If those rivers aren’t clean, what are [animals] going to be drinking? ... If the lambs drink horrible water, eventually someone’s going to eat that lamb, and then that’s going to be passed on... But if the pollution’s good, then the rivers and beaches will be good”*



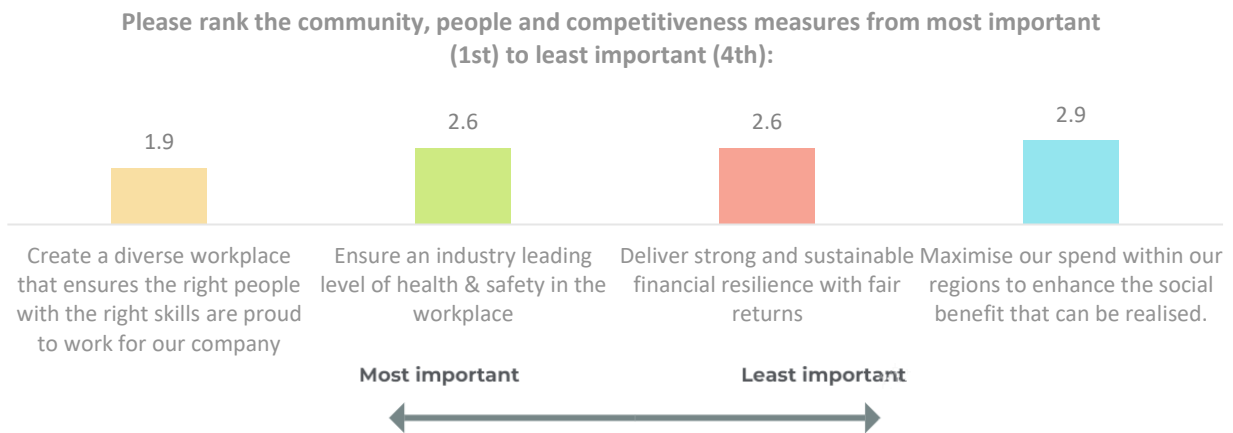
The three other measures ranked closely, but ‘having the best rivers and beaches’ was considered the least important of these three, which one panellist exclaimed was a surprise due to their perception as it being most important.

□ *“I’m quite surprised that the rivers and beaches on our scores scored quite low... that was linked to the reducing pollution bit about making sure in terms of quality of life”*



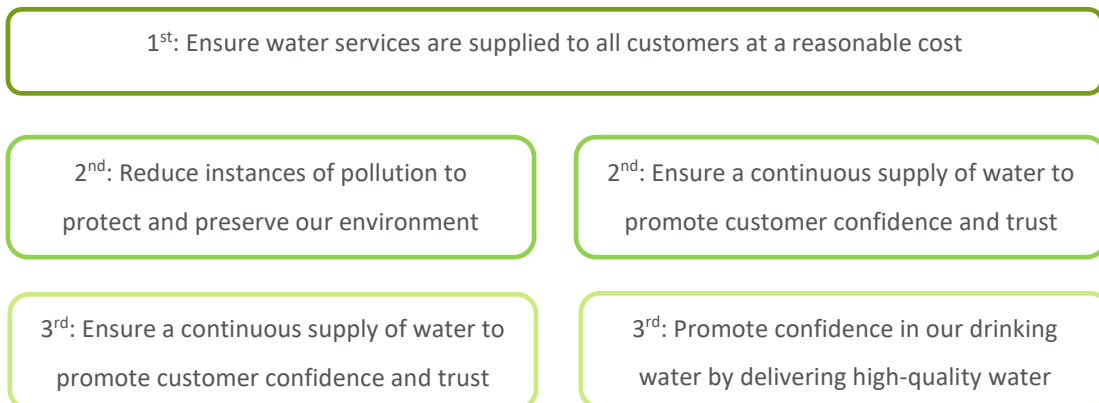
## Community, people and competitiveness measures

Collectively, the diversity within the workplace was voted as most important, with the following three measures similarly ranking closely within one another.



## Star vote exercises

Despite the environment and reliability of supply being prioritised in ranking of the areas and themes, cost was the clear priority overall when considering the star voting results:



Early in the conversation when considering panellists' hopes for 2050, respondents hoped for greater sustainability and balance between the economy and the environment and hoped to see Essex & Suffolk Water ensuring secure supplies. These ideas remained important throughout the voting tasks. Interestingly, they were the group to consider diversity most important when considering the people aims.

- *"The important thing to me is that everybody is going to have affordable, good quality water and if we can do that and protect the environment then that is most of the battle"*
- *"Everyone is entitled to it at a price they can afford without having to worry about it"*
- *"If I need water to drink and survive, my concern may not be how you supply me that water or how clean that water is or what you're doing for other presentations of life elsewhere"*



- *“If you're struggling to pay for it, then you're going to get stressed and that sort of thing... it needs to be reliable as well. So, continuous supply”*
- *“I actually gave ten stars to the high-quality water because I feel that if I turned my tap on and fill a glass with water and sort of take swig, if it doesn't taste nice, then I'd lose confidence a bit with Essex and Suffolk water”*
- *“If you don't have sustainability your costs are going to go up... [then] your customers are going to have to suffer”*





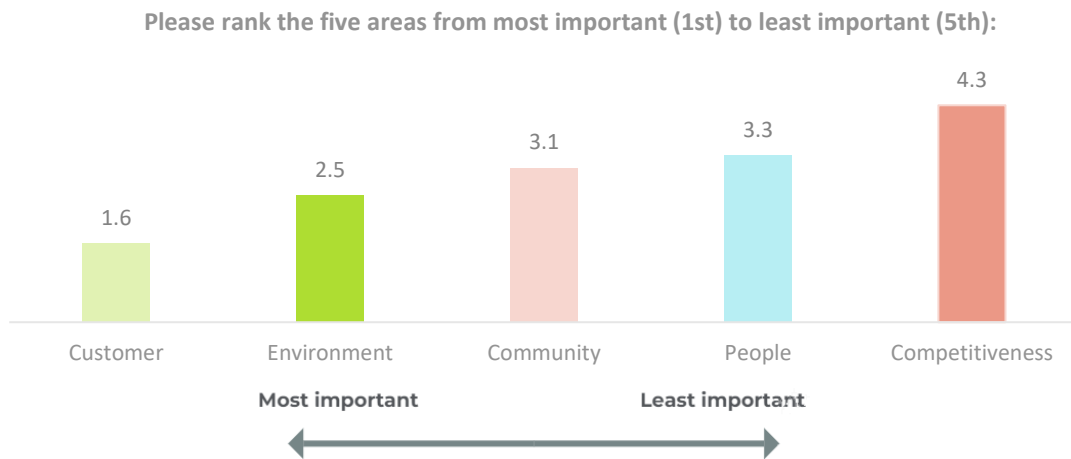
## Young

### Ranking exercises

#### Areas

Of the five areas being ranked, young panellists viewed 'customer' as being most important by quite a margin, and the discussions revealed that all panellists agreed this to be one of the most, if not the most, important. This was due to the 'customer' area consisting of themes which panellists considered important, such as affordability and accessibility.

□ *"I put customer first because I thought the themes under that were quite important, like affordability and access"*



Competitiveness ranked the least important, with discussion amongst panellists revealing a perception that water is a necessity so should have no competition. One panellist stated they ranked competitiveness as second most important, as they viewed competitiveness as linked to better customer service.

□ *"Competitiveness is the least important because there is no competition at all and... [it] isn't really a problem because everybody's going to need water anyway"*

□ *"Customer and environment and everything, it all helps the competitiveness, without actually having to do anything really"*

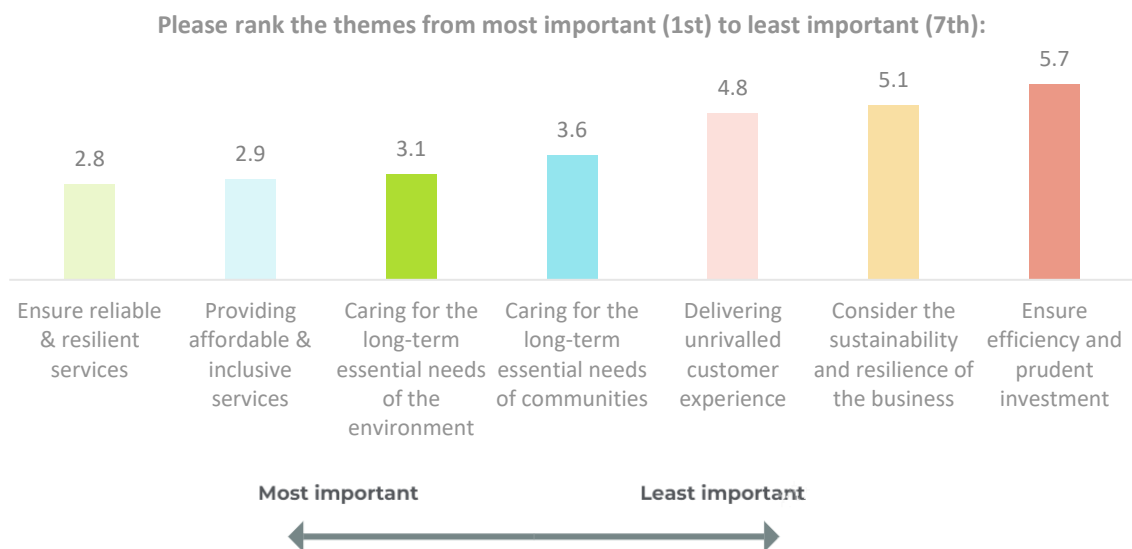
□ *"Competitiveness can tie all the others together... If they champion competitiveness, that can mean being the best customer service provider, doing the most for the community"*



## Themes

Within the themes, ensuring reliable and resilient services ranked as the most important, though this was very closely followed by affordability and environment themes. Panellists thought that, due to water being a basic necessity of life, water services must be accessible through a reliable service, shortly followed by affordable and inclusive to all.

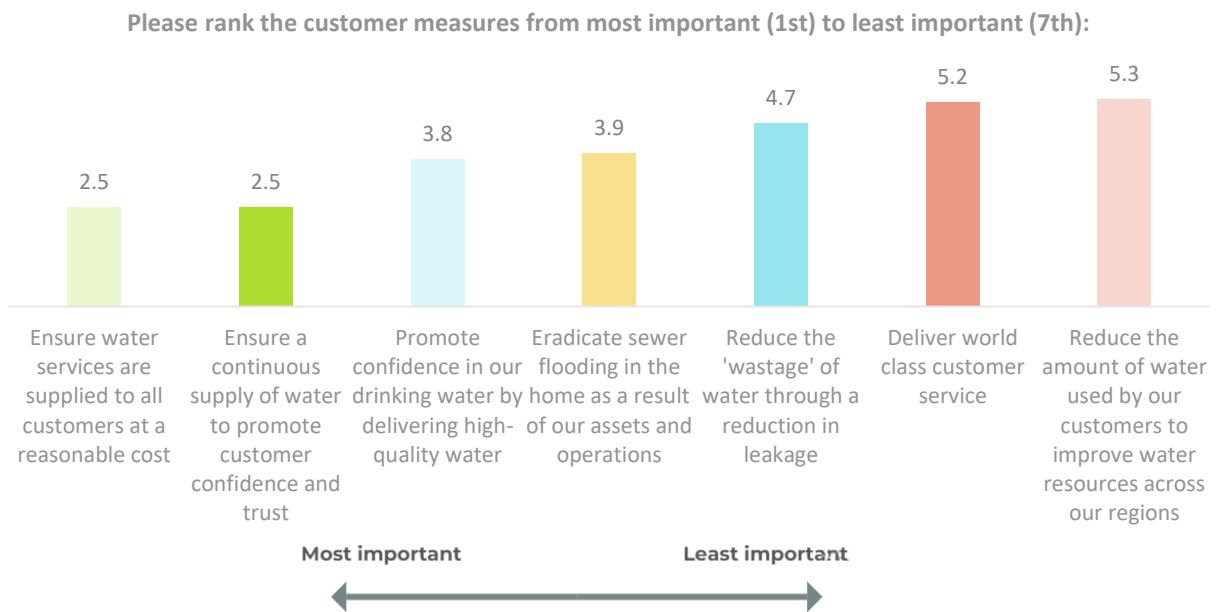
- *"I think [reliability and resilience] ties in with customer services and ensuring the customer has a good experience"*
- *"We've got a poverty crisis at the moment, and I think everyone deserves the basic necessities in life, one of them being water. I think, if you don't have affordable and inclusive services, you don't really have anything"*
- *"If you've got all the other things going right, then probably wouldn't need to be that efficient or prudent in further investment"*



## Customer measures

There was an even split with the most important customer measures equally split between reasonable costs and continuous supply of water to promote confidence.

□ *“The reason they’re probably closely tied is because they’re what the main aims of a water company should be- the highest quality of water and the lowest cost to the customer”*



Similarly, there was almost an equal split between those which ranked sixth and seventh, as least important, which were ‘world class customer service’ and ‘improve water resources across our region’.

□ *“I can understand why the world class customer service could be at the bottom... customer service is a very, very broad term”*

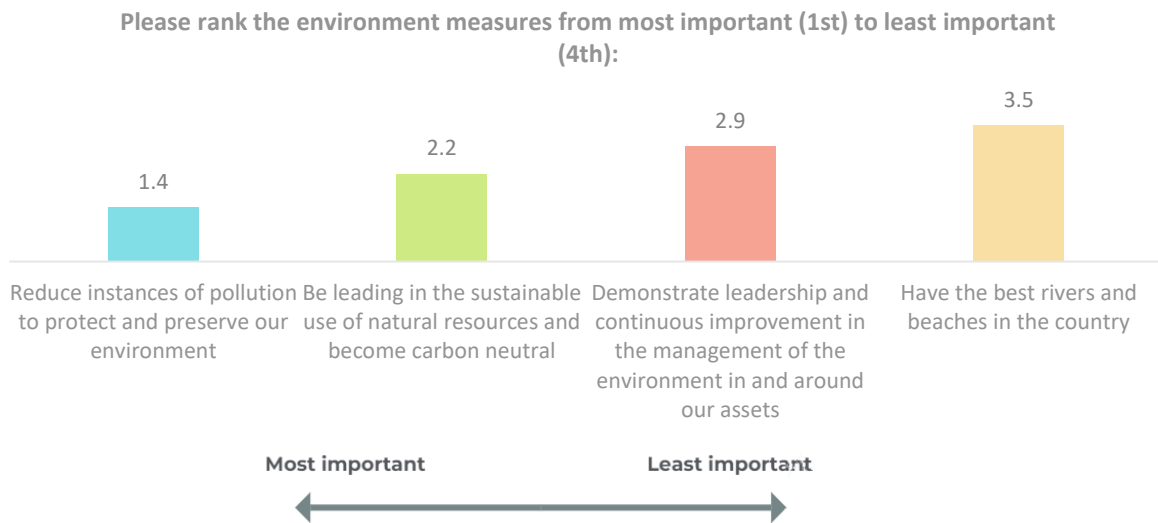
□ *“Reducing the amount of water used, that could also be at the bottom because it might not necessarily be exactly the main focus... no one wants to be forced into doing anything... maybe a bit of promotion, education, advertising on why saving water is important”*



## Environment measures

The priorities of the environment measures for young panellists were more distinct than they have been across other panels, with clear differences between the most to least important. Reducing instances of pollution was considered most important due to their understanding of the current climate as plastic pollution being prominent.

□ *“With the amount of plastic pollution and micro plastics that are all flowing through the water ... micro beads as well as fat balls and stuff people are putting down drains, that’s probably a big thing because it clogs up the system”*



This was followed by leading in the sustainable use of resources and carbon neutrality as second most important, then leadership and continuous improvements in the management of environment in and around assets as third. The least important was having the best rivers and beaches as it was thought that this can be impacted by factors outside of Northumbrian Water’s and Essex & Suffolk Water’s control.

□ *“There are other factors that can influence there being the best beaches... It’s not really something that’s totally in the water company’s control”*



## Community, people and competitiveness measures

There was an even split between the top two measures, thought to be most important, which included maximising spend within the regions to enhance social benefits and delivering sustainable financial resilience, respectively.

□ *“I think they’re all equally as important and that’s why it’s been split. I do think the spending what we deserve, in the area... is the most important”*

The bottom two measures, thought to be least important, also had an equal split between diversity in the workplace and health and safety in the workplace, respectively.

□ *“I’ve worked in a lot of different places, where health and safety has been top priority, whereas other places have been more about having that diverse workplace, so I really struggle, with those two in particular, to place them in what I thought was right because I thought they’re very much on equal par”*



## Star vote exercises

Throughout conversations with the Young panellists, affordability and preservation of the environment were key priority areas. Reliability was also important to them when considering the themes. In the star voting exercise, they ranked their top three as follows:

- Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost
- Ensure a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust
- Reduce instances of pollution to protect and preserve our environment.
- Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water



The group saw water as an essential resource and therefore felt affordability of it was crucial, including avoidance of water poverty – this was also drawn into sharper focus for them by the current cost of living crisis and uncertainty around how this would play out into the future to 2050. Though they considered the environment and sustainability important, it was noted by some of the group that they expected this would increase costs to customers and affordability was a greater priority particularly at their younger age when they reported lower disposable income.

- *“The prices, so making sure that everybody does have access to water. Because it is not really that fair if they are making their service really expensive but they are making it expensive because they are providing the highest quality water when people are not even getting water. I think you can compromise on like not having the best water so that everyone does have access to it”*
- *“The affordability side of things was what I use the most on... to make sure it's like accessible to everyone”*
- *“The ones I chose for stars were based on kind of like ethical principles. So obviously, like basic human rights, that people should be able to afford that without struggling with any of their other necessities”*
- *“Water is a necessity for health and everything, for washing, you use it all the time; if we haven't got affordability for that, then we can't have any other priorities met”*
- *“If say the majority of the population can't afford water, I don't think they are really going to care about whether or not the way they are providing the water isn't the most environmentally friendly because at the end of the day water is like a necessity”*
- *“We aren't thinking how we are going to improve someone else's business so I unprioritised quite a lot to do with the company and put anything to do more directly affecting us, such as things to do with finance and environmental health”*

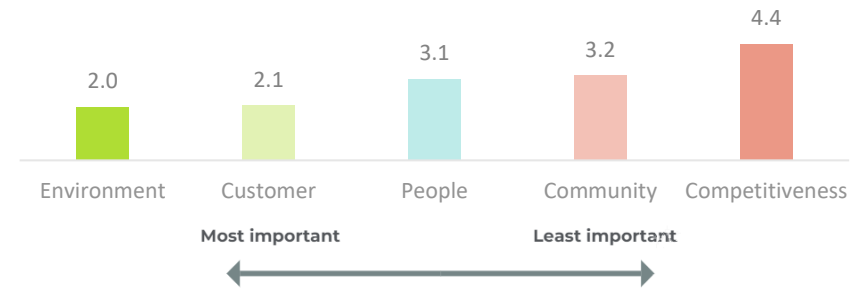


### #3: Ranking exercise results – comparison across panels

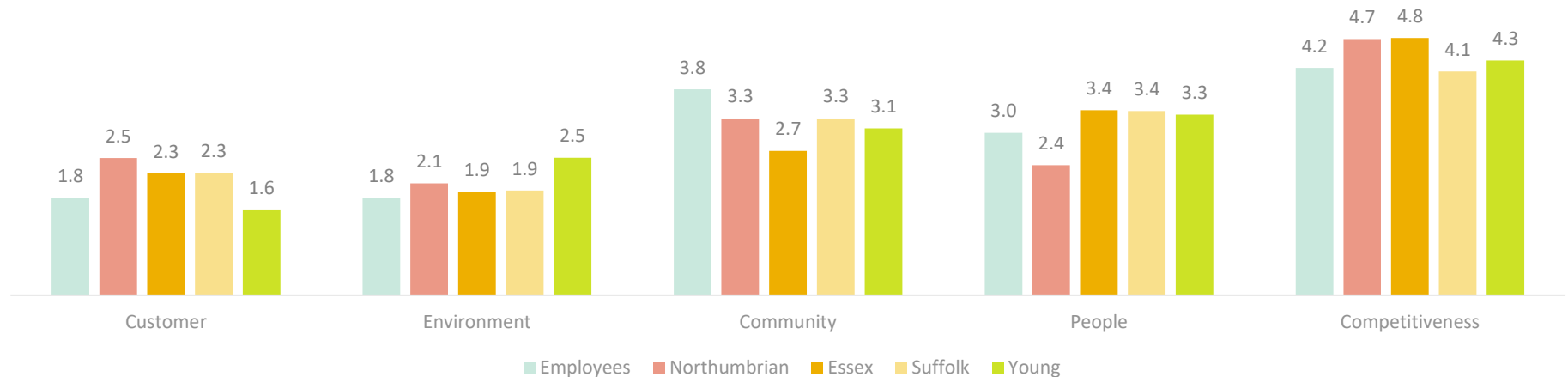
#### Ranking of the five areas

The five areas have been ranked from most important to least important, across all five panels and according to their mean averages, as follows. Whilst there is a narrow difference between environment and customer measures, then people and community measures, there is a large margin and agreement amongst panellists that competitiveness is the least important to them.

The average ranking of the five areas from most important (1st) to least important (5th) across all panels:

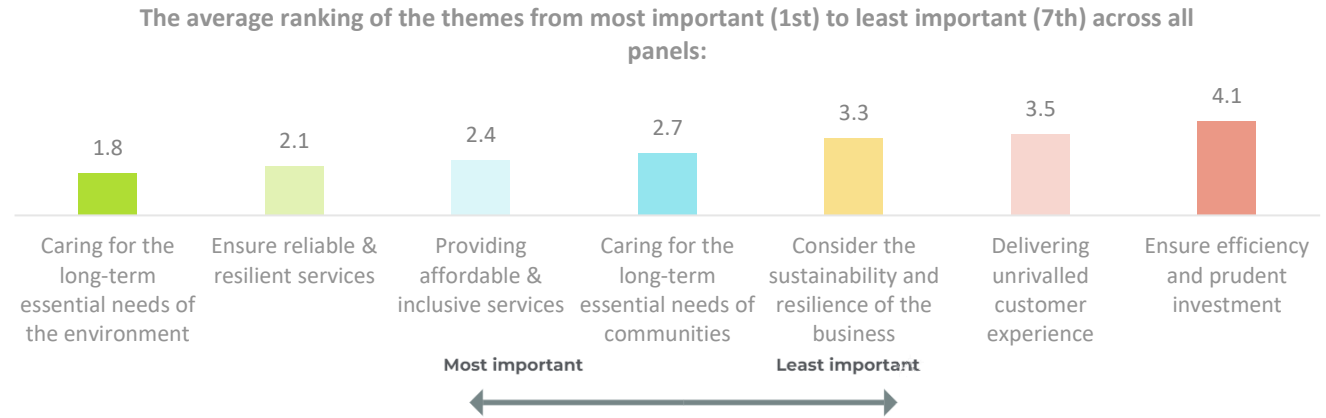


Please rank the five areas from most important (1st) to least important (5th):

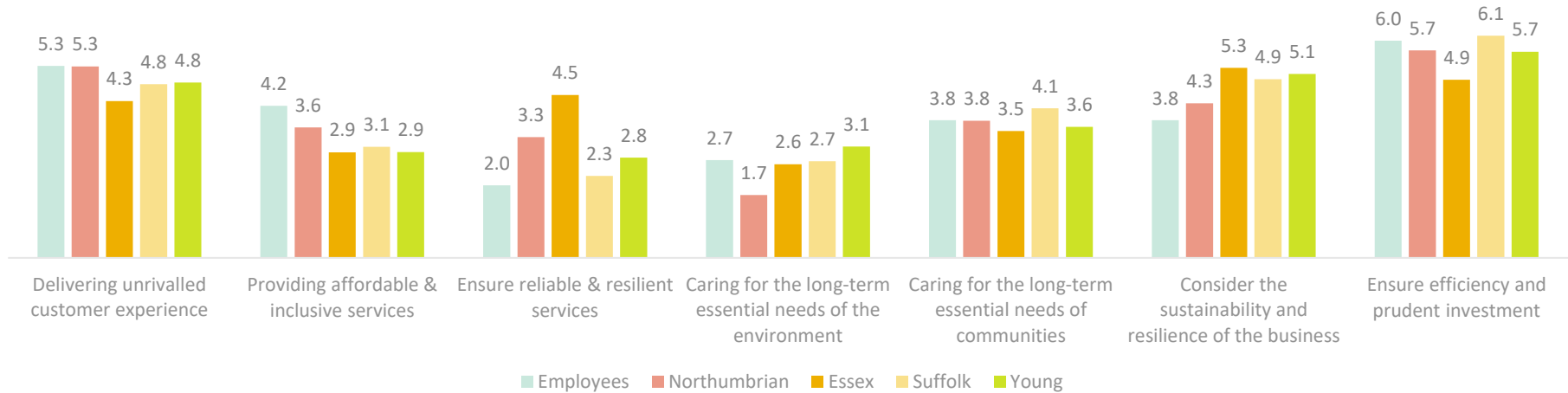


## Ranking of the seven themes

The seven themes have been ranked from most important to least important, across all five panels and according to their mean averages, as follows:



Please rank the themes from most important (1st) to least important (7th):

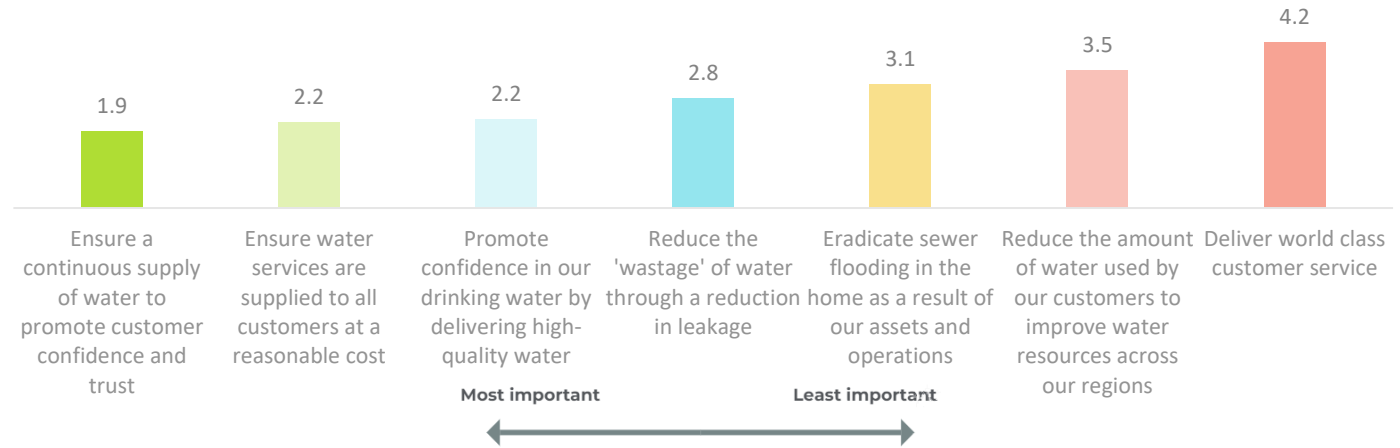




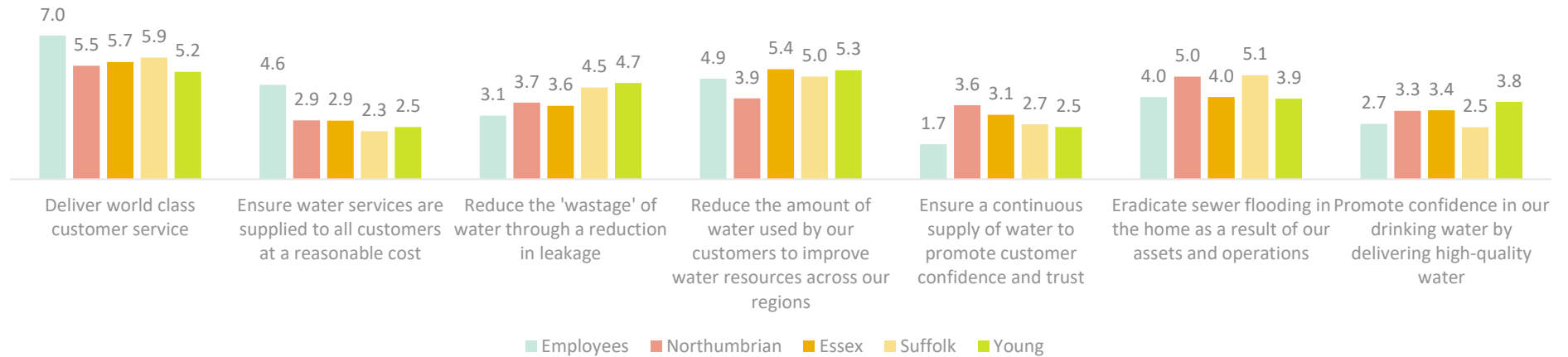
## Ranking of the customer measures

The seven themes have been ranked from most important to least important, across all five panels and according to their mean averages, as follows:

Please rank the customer measures from most important (1st) to least important (7th):

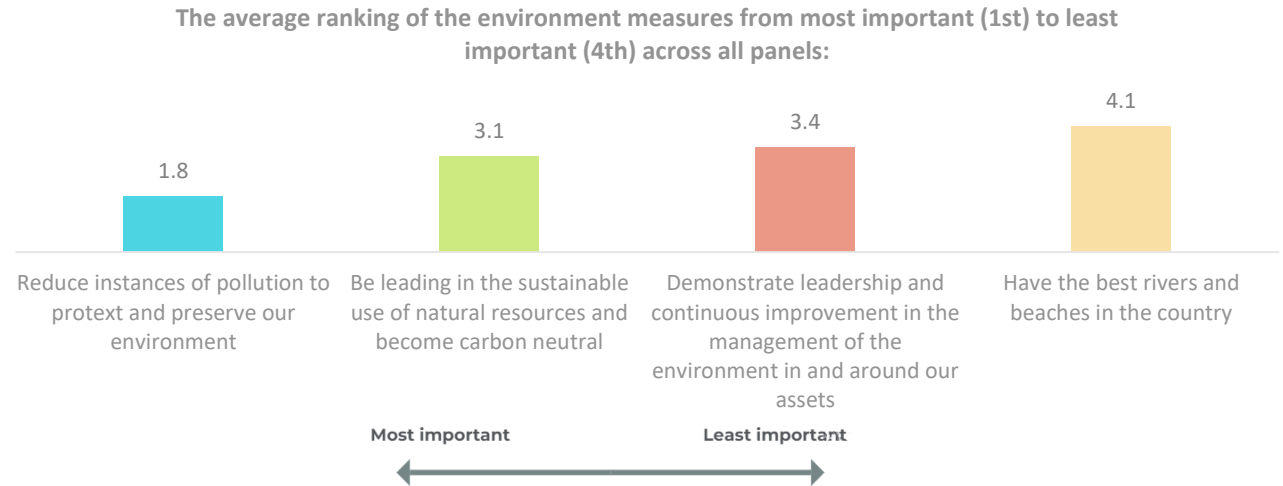


Please rank the customer measures from most important (1st) to least important (7th):

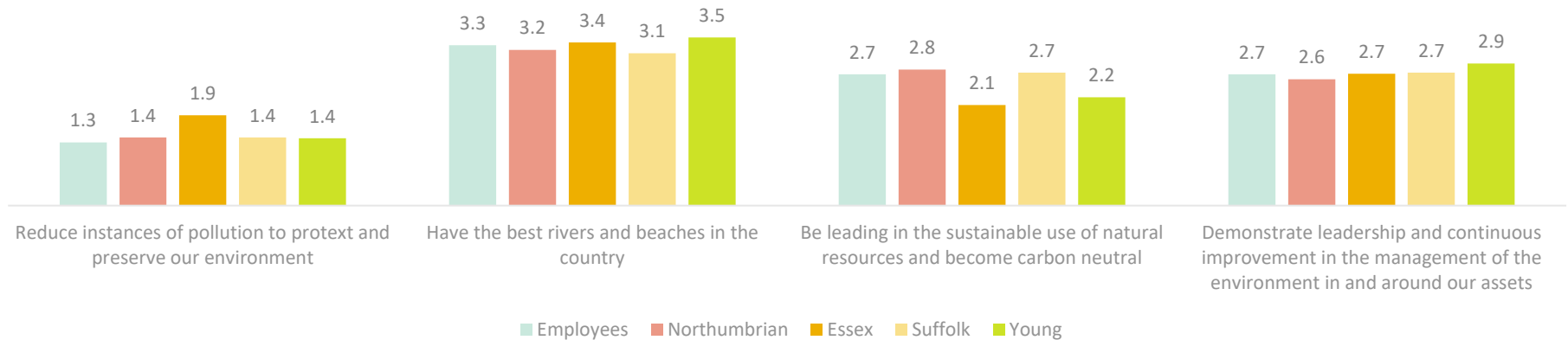


## Ranking of the environment measures

The four environment measures have been ranked from most important to least important, across all five panels and according to their mean averages, as follows:

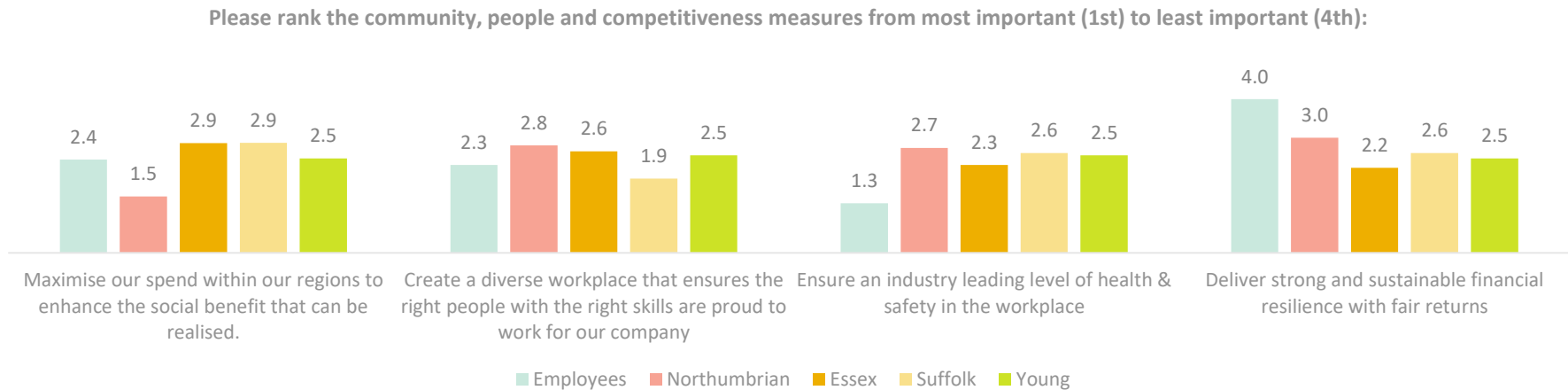
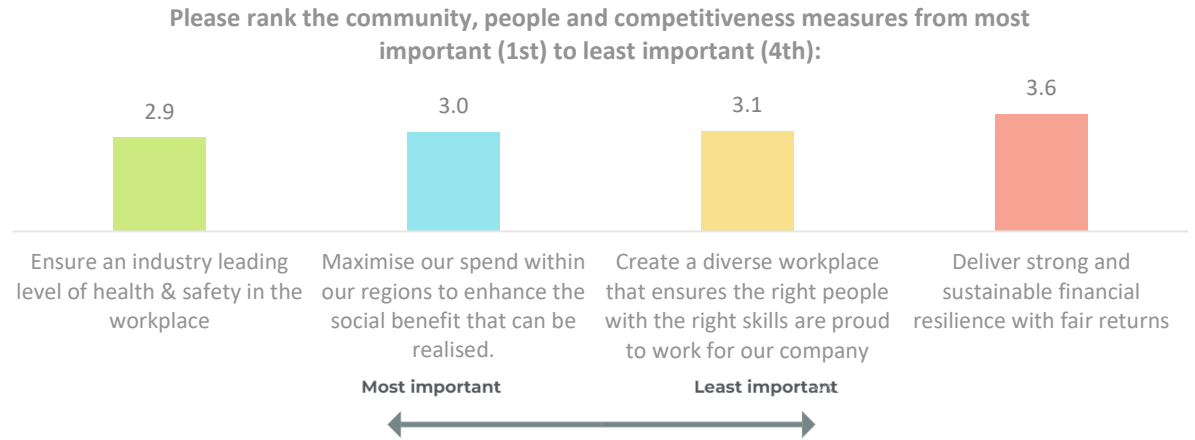


**Please rank the environment measures from most important (1st) to least important (4th):**



## Ranking of the four community, people, and competitiveness measures

The four community, people and competitive measures have been ranked from most important to least important, across all five panels and according to their mean averages, as follows:

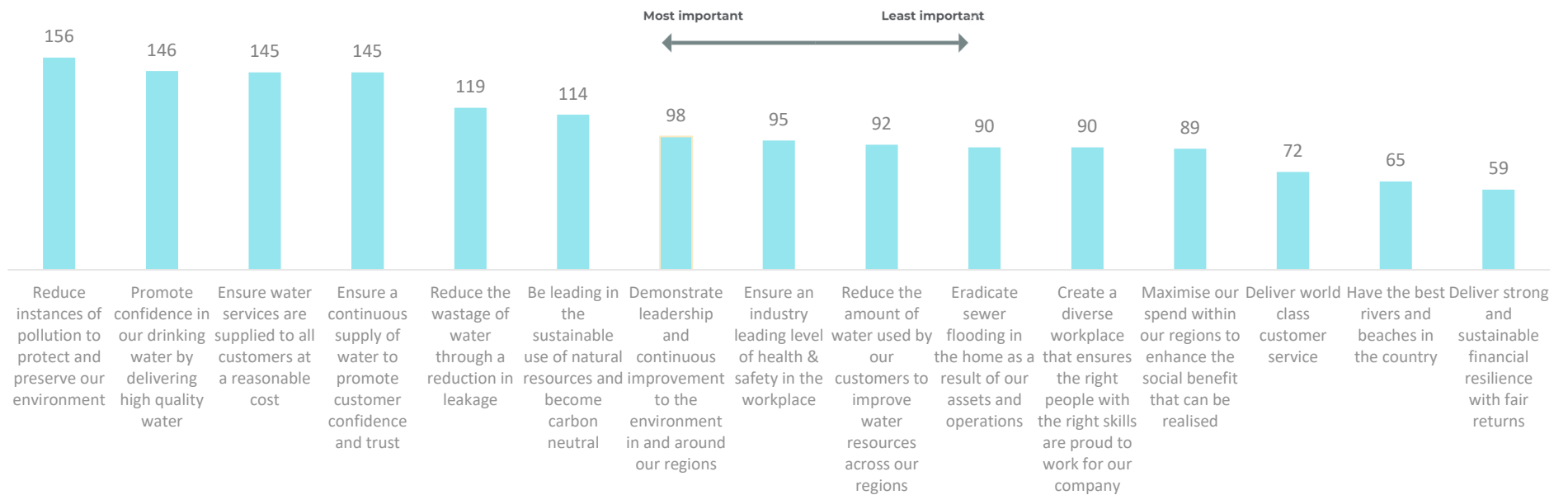


## Top measures in star poll 1 exercise

In the first star poll vote, panellists were asked to share their 25 stars across the 15 measures; giving a maximum of three stars on each measure and choosing to place more stars on the measures they considered most important. The results, presented below, show the total stars allocated to each across all five panels.

Within the top voted, the measures included a focus on environmental measures including a reduction of pollution to and reduction of water leakage. Customer focussed measures including promoting confidence and trust through continuous supply and high-quality water, high quality drinking water, and reasonable costs, were also identified as top priorities by panellists.

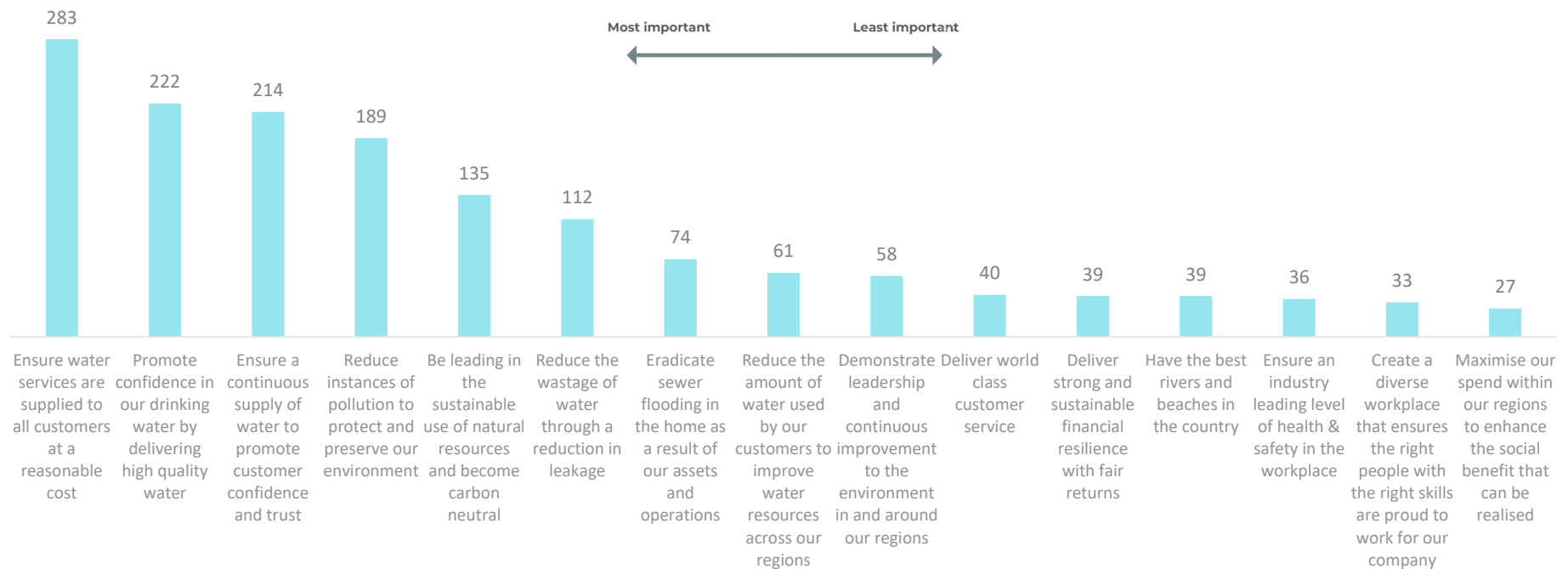
Star vote 1: 25 stars shared across 15 measures. Maximum of 3 stars on each measure.



## Top measures in star poll 2 exercise

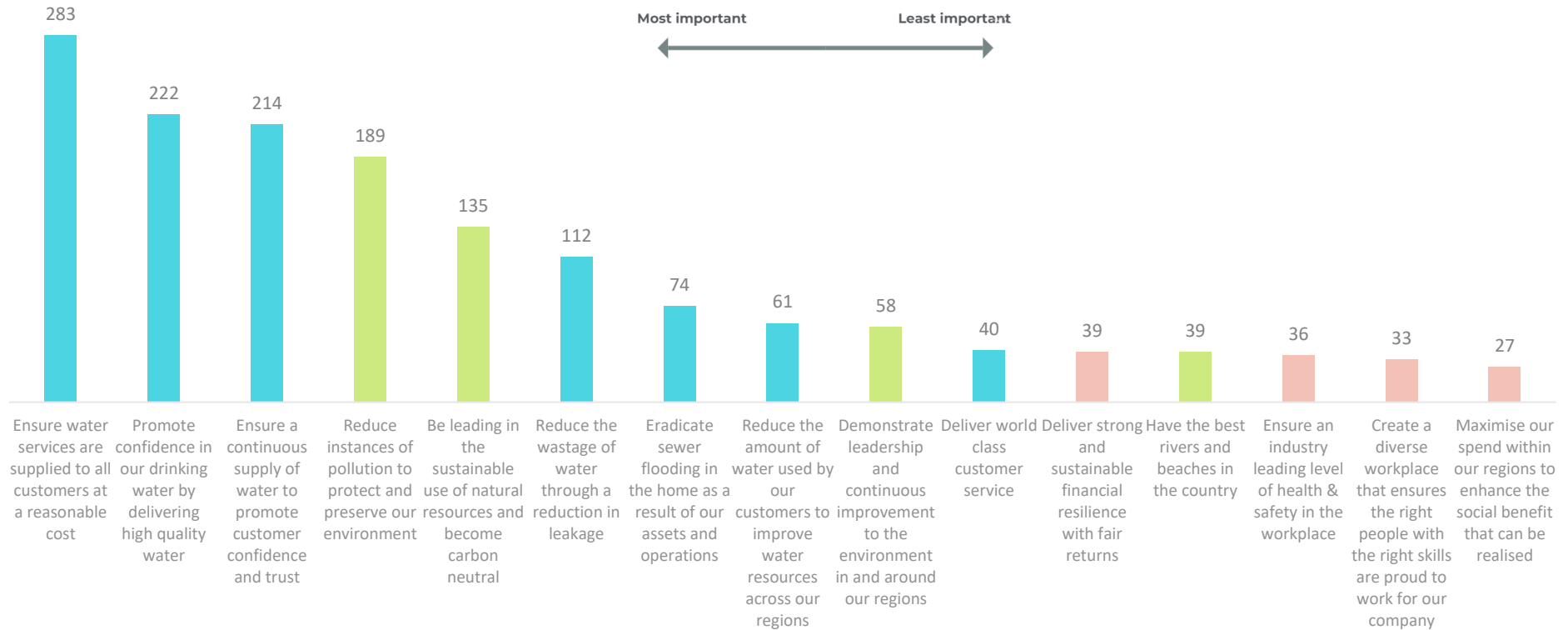
In the second star poll vote, panellists were asked to place their 25 stars across the five measures they considered to be most important; they could add up to 14 stars to each measure. Four of the five top measures in the previous star poll vote remained within the five most important. Notably, the number of stars placed on these five measures increased, widening the range from most to least important aims. The results demonstrate that the cost of water services was a key priority area for panellists, followed by core responsibilities around the supply and quality of water. Environmental measures ranked fairly highly, while those focused on NW/ESW as an organisation did not for this audience.

Star vote 2: 25 stars placed across five measures only. [Total stars across the five panels]



To view the same results in a slightly different format, the below chart shows the customer measures shaded in blue, which are generally rated of higher importance compared to the environmental measures, shaded in green, which in turn is ranked with higher importance than the pink shaded measures of community, people and competitiveness.

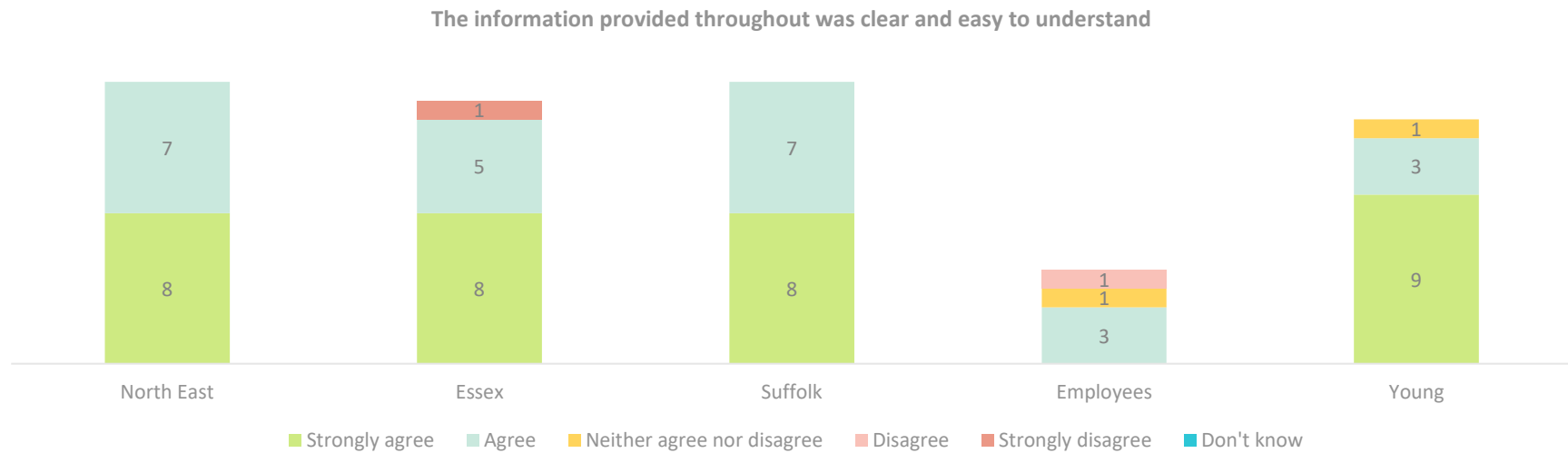
Star vote 2: 25 stars placed across five measures only. [Total stars across the five panels]



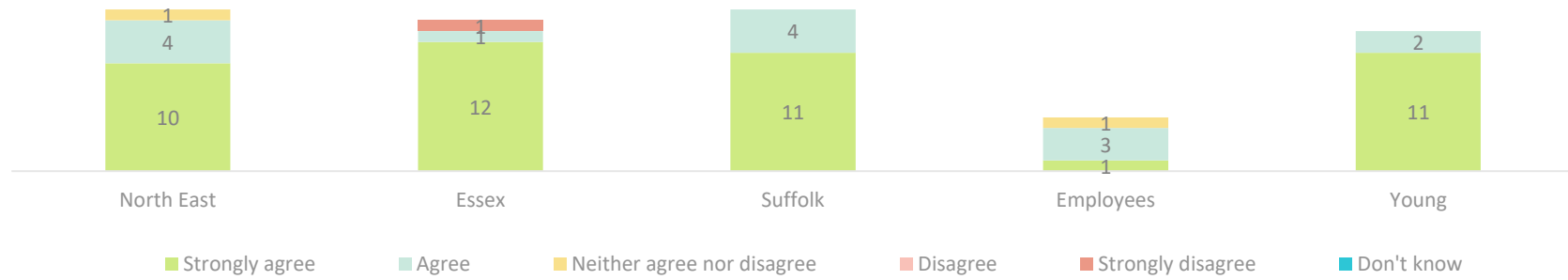
## # 3: Event feedback

### Poll feedback on session

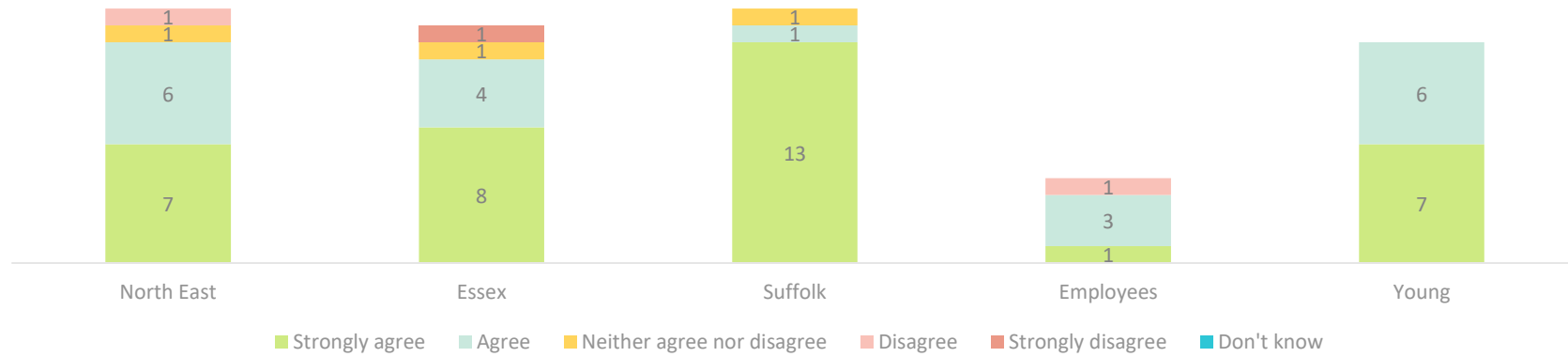
All panellists voted on a poll, containing four questions, at the end of the session. Panellists were asked to use a rating of 1 'strongly agree' to 5 'strongly disagree' to show how they felt about each statement. The results are as follows and generally demonstrate a positive experience for attendees, with the exception of one member of the Essex panel who disagreed across the board this round.



### I understood the purpose of the session



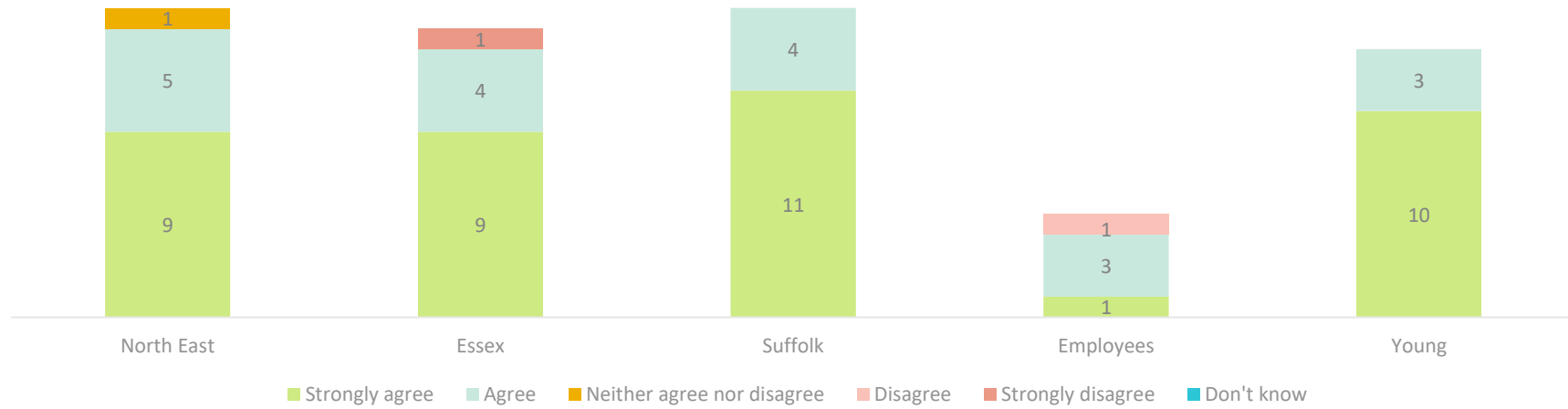
### The discussion was interesting





Compared to the first round's results, there was an increase from seven to nine Northumbrian panellists who 'strongly agreed' that they were satisfied with the session they participated, suggesting a positive experience for panellists.

Overall, I was satisfied with the session I participated in



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**NORTHUMBRIAN**  
**WATER** *living water*

Slide Pack

## PRE-WORK

### BEFORE YOU COME TO THE SESSION

---



- Think about what future you would like to come to fruition in 2050 and why
- How will your own behaviour in relation to using water change?
- In that world, what is most important to you about what Northumbrian Water deliver?

---

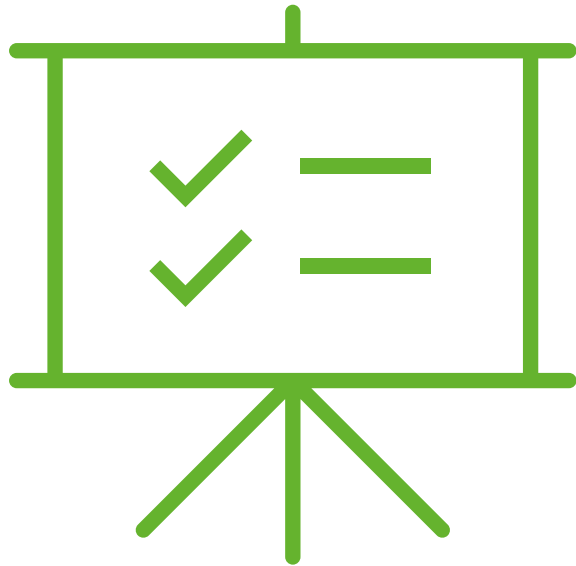
# **NORTHUMBRIAN WATER** *living water*

Welcome to the  
Northumbrian People Panel

## SESSION SUM UP

### TODAY WE WILL...

---



- Keep thinking about life in 2050 and the future you would like to live in
- Think about Northumbrian Water's strategy to 2050
- Which areas of their business should they prioritise to play their part in achieving your preferred future

---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**Thinking about what future you would like to come to fruition in 2050 and why...**

**How will your own behaviour in relation to using water change?**

**In that world, what is most important to you about what Northumbrian Water deliver?**

## INTRODUCTION

### WHAT IS A LONG TERM STRATEGY – A REMINDER

---

- Northumbrian Water, like all water companies, is a regulated business
- Our economic regulator is Ofwat
- Historically we have planned our investment in five year cycles, through the development of a five year business plan that we submit to Ofwat who then set the prices that we can charge for the services we provide
- Going forward we need to think longer term, and prepare our business plan for the next five years in the context of a longer term strategy e.g. the next 25 years
- This is because:
  - We are a long term business - we are still drinking the same water as the dinosaurs and some equipment like our pipes last up to or beyond 50 years
  - There are some long term issues and challenges that we must respond to, like the impact of climate change



## INTRODUCTION

# LONG TERM STRATEGIES

---

- Within the strategies, we must set targets
- We want to understand which of these targets you prioritise most and which you think we should be the most ambitious in





# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



---

# THE AREAS AND THEMES

First of all, let's look at the areas and themes that the targets sit within.

# LONG TERM STRATEGY

## THE AREAS

---

- The targets will fall into 5 areas and 7 themes:

| Area            | Theme   |
|-----------------|---|
| Customer        | Delivering unrivalled customer experience                   |
|                 | Providing affordable & Inclusive Services                   |
|                 | Ensure reliable & resilient services                        |
| Environment     | Caring for the long-term essential needs of the environment |
| Community       | Caring for the long-term essential needs of communities     |
| People          | Consider the sustainability and resilience of the business  |
| Competitiveness | Ensure efficiency and prudent investment                    |

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



---

# TEST POLL VOTE

**How would you rank the five foods listed, from your most (1<sup>st</sup>) to least favourite (5<sup>th</sup>)?**



Please rank the following five foods from your most favourite (1st) to least favourite (5th):

Think about how you would rank the foods listed against each other.

Select as many as you want in the order you prefer. There are 5 options in total.

1st

⋮

Select an option

Submit

---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the areas from most important to least important.**

**Customer, environment, community, people, competitiveness**

---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the areas in the poll.**

**What was most important and why?**

**What was least important and why?**

---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the themes from most important to least important.**

Delivering unrivalled customer experience

Providing affordable & Inclusive Services

Ensure reliable & resilient services

Caring for the long-term essential needs of the environment

Caring for the long-term essential needs of communities

Consider the sustainability and resilience of the business

Ensure efficiency and prudent investment



---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the themes in the poll.**

**What was most important and why?**

**What was least important and why?**

---

# THE MEASURES

We now want to get into a bit more detail around the measures under the themes that we have talked about already

# LONG TERM STRATEGY

## CUSTOMER AIMS AND MEASURES

---

### **Deliver world class customer service**

Measured through customer satisfaction surveys and a target will be set on our performance

### **Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost**

Measured by the proportion of our customers in water poverty\*

### **Reduce the 'wastage' of water through a reduction in leakage\***

Measured in the proportion of water that leaks from our pipes.

### **Reduce the amount of water used by our customers to improve water resources\* across our regions**

Measured in the average number of litres of water used per person

### **Ensure a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust.**

Measured in the number of interruptions to the water supply that our customers experience

### **Eradicate sewer flooding\* in the home as a result of our assets and operations**

Measured in the number of sewer flooding incidents our customers experience.

### **Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water**

Measured by testing our customer's water supply and measuring the number of issues identified.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050.  
What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to  
play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the customer measures from most  
important to least important.**

## **LONG TERM STRATEGY**

### **ENVIRONMENT AIMS AND MEASURES**

---

**Reduce instances of pollution\* to protect and preserve our environment.**

Measured by the number of pollution incidents caused by our assets or operations.

**Have the best rivers and beaches in the country.**

Measured by the number of rivers and bathing waters meeting good or excellent standards.

**Be leading in the sustainable use of natural resources and become carbon neutral.**

Measured in our greenhouse gas emissions.

**Demonstrate leadership and continuous improvement in the management of the environment in and around our assets.**

For example by planting trees or wildflowers, or promoting wildlife at our water treatment works, reservoirs or other equipment or landholdings.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the environment measures from most important to least important.**



## LONG TERM STRATEGY

### COMMUNITY, PEOPLE AND COMPETITIVENESS AIMS AND MEASURES

---

**Maximise our spend within our regions to enhance the social benefit that can be realised.**

This will be measured in the amount of money that is spent with local suppliers.

**Create a diverse workplace that ensures the right people with the right skills are proud to work for our company**

Measured through the 'Great Place to Work' survey

**Ensure an industry leading level of health & safety in the workplace**

Measured through the amount of time employees are off sick due to sustaining an injury at work.

**Deliver strong and sustainable financial resilience\* with fair returns\***

Measured through our credit rating, the same way you are if you try and take out a loan, credit card, or mortgage.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the community, people and competitiveness measures from most important to least important.**

---

# STAR VOTE - OVERALL

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**You have 25 stars, and these are all the measures we've talked through (list of all). Please use your stars and place them on measures based on how important you think each is. Think of each star as a vote. You can place more than one star on a measure, and you don't have to put stars on all measures, but please use all of your stars. We'd like to be able to understand how much you value individual measures overall.**

---

# STAR VOTE – TOP 5

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Northumbrian Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**You have 25 stars again, and these are all the measures we've talked through (list of all). Please use your stars and place them on the five measures you think are the most important this time. Again, allocate your stars based on how important you think they are relative to each other. Think of each star as a vote. You can place more than one dot on each of the five measures – please use all of your stars.**

---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the measures in the star voting exercise.**

**What was most important and why? What was in your top 5 and why?**

**What was least important and why?**



**NORTHUMBRIAN  
WATER** *living water*

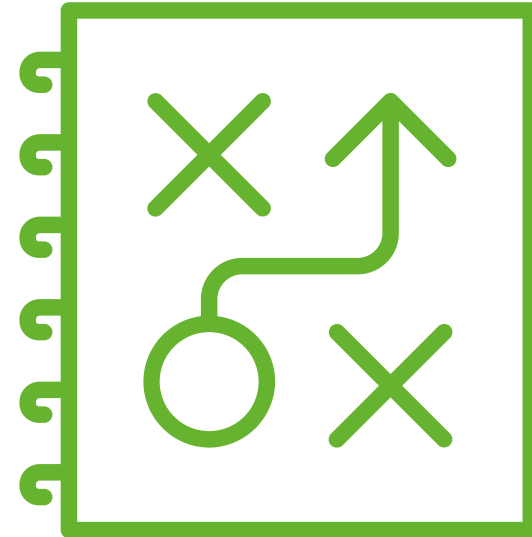
**WHAT'S NEXT?**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### YOUR TASK FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

---

- Thank you for your feedback!
- In the next session we will be discussing how ambitious you would like Northumbrian Water to be and what targets you would like them to set.
- We will be sending some pre-work in advance, so please look out for it.





---

# **THANK YOU**

**See you for our next session on Monday 25 April**

---

**ESSEX & SUFFOLK**  
**WATER** *living water*

Slide Pack

## PRE-WORK

### BEFORE YOU COME TO THE SESSION

---



- Think about what future you would like to come to fruition in 2050 and why
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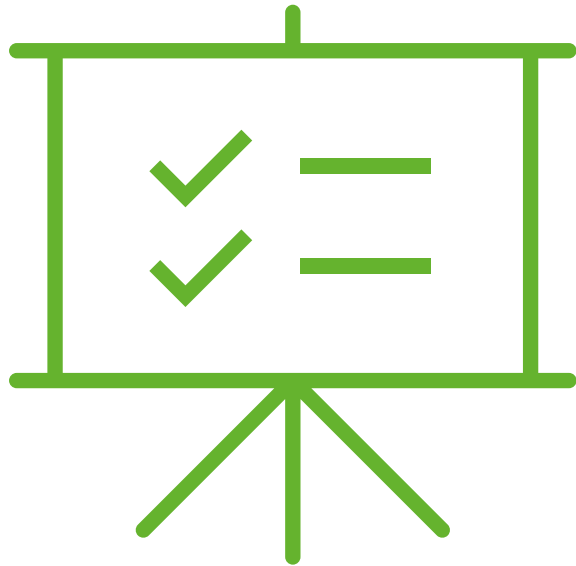
# ESSEX & SUFFOLK WATER *living water*

Welcome to the  
Essex People Panel

## SESSION SUM UP

### TODAY WE WILL...

---



- Keep thinking about life in 2050 and the future you would like to live in
- Think about Essex & Suffolk Water's strategy to 2050
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---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**Thinking about what future you would like to come to fruition in 2050 and why...**

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# LONG TERM STRATEGY

## THE AREAS

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- The targets will fall into 5 areas and 7 themes:

| Area            | Theme   |
|-----------------|---|
| Customer        | Delivering unrivalled customer experience                   |
|                 | Providing affordable & Inclusive Services                   |
|                 | Ensure reliable & resilient services                        |
| Environment     | Caring for the long-term essential needs of the environment |
| Community       | Caring for the long-term essential needs of communities     |
| People          | Consider the sustainability and resilience of the business  |
| Competitiveness | Ensure efficiency and prudent investment                    |

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



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# TEST POLL VOTE

**How would you rank the five foods listed, from your most (1<sup>st</sup>) to least favourite (5<sup>th</sup>)?**



Please rank the following five foods from your most favourite (1st) to least favourite (5th):

Think about how you would rank the foods listed against each other.

Select as many as you want in the order you prefer. There are 5 options in total.

1st

⋮

Select an option

Submit

---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the areas from most important to least important.**

**Customer, environment, community, people, competitiveness**

---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the areas in the poll.**

**What was most important and why?**

**What was least important and why?**

---

# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the themes from most important to least important.**

Delivering unrivalled customer experience

Providing affordable & Inclusive Services

Ensure reliable & resilient services

Caring for the long-term essential needs of the environment

Caring for the long-term essential needs of communities

Consider the sustainability and resilience of the business

Ensure efficiency and prudent investment



---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the themes in the poll.**

**What was most important and why?**

**What was least important and why?**

---

# THE MEASURES

We now want to get into a bit more detail around the measures under the themes that we have talked about already

# LONG TERM STRATEGY

## CUSTOMER AIMS AND MEASURES

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### **Deliver world class customer service**

Measured through customer satisfaction surveys and a target will be set on our performance

### **Ensure water services are supplied to all customers at a reasonable cost**

Measured by the proportion of our customers in water poverty\*

### **Reduce the 'wastage' of water through a reduction in leakage\***

Measured in the proportion of water that leaks from our pipes.

### **Reduce the amount of water used by our customers to improve water resources\* across our regions**

Measured in the average number of litres of water used per person

### **Ensure a continuous supply of water to promote customer confidence and trust.**

Measured in the number of interruptions to the water supply that our customers experience

### **Eradicate sewer flooding\* in the home as a result of our assets and operations**

Measured in the number of sewer flooding incidents our customers experience.

### **Promote confidence in our drinking water by delivering high-quality water**

Measured by testing our customer's water supply and measuring the number of issues identified.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



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# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050.  
What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to  
play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the customer measures from most  
important to least important.**

## **LONG TERM STRATEGY**

### **ENVIRONMENT AIMS AND MEASURES**

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**Reduce instances of pollution\* to protect and preserve our environment.**

Measured by the number of pollution incidents caused by our assets or operations.

**Have the best rivers and beaches in the country.**

Measured by the number of rivers and bathing waters meeting good or excellent standards.

**Be leading in the sustainable use of natural resources and become carbon neutral.**

Measured in our greenhouse gas emissions.

**Demonstrate leadership and continuous improvement in the management of the environment in and around our assets.**

For example by planting trees or wildflowers, or promoting wildlife at our water treatment works, reservoirs or other equipment or landholdings.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



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# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050.  
What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to  
play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the environment measures from most  
important to least important.**



## LONG TERM STRATEGY

### COMMUNITY, PEOPLE AND COMPETITIVENESS AIMS AND MEASURES

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**Maximise our spend within our regions to enhance the social benefit that can be realised.**

This will be measured in the amount of money that is spent with local suppliers.

**Create a diverse workplace that ensures the right people with the right skills are proud to work for our company**

Measured through the 'Great Place to Work' survey

**Ensure an industry leading level of health & safety in the workplace**

Measured through the amount of time employees are off sick due to sustaining an injury at work.

**Deliver strong and sustainable financial resilience\* with fair returns\***

Measured through our credit rating, the same way you are if you try and take out a loan, credit card, or mortgage.

# LET'S PAUSE FOR QUESTIONS



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# POLL VOTE

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050.  
What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to  
play their part to achieve this?**

**Please rank the community, people and  
competitiveness measures from most important to  
least important.**

---

# STAR VOTE - OVERALL

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**You have 25 stars, and these are all the measures we've talked through (list of all). Please use your stars and place them on measures based on how important you think each is. Think of each star as a vote. You can place more than one star on a measure, and you don't have to put stars on all measures, but please use all of your stars. We'd like to be able to understand how much you value individual measures overall.**

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# STAR VOTE – TOP 5

**Think about the world you want to live in, in 2050. What should Essex & Suffolk Water's priorities be to play their part to achieve this?**

**You have 25 stars again, and these are all the measures we've talked through (list of all). Please use your stars and place them on the five measures you think are the most important this time. Again, allocate your stars based on how important you think they are relative to each other. Think of each star as a vote. You can place more than one dot on each of the five measures – please use all of your stars.**

---

# LET'S CHAT

## Tell us...

**How you prioritised the measures in the star voting exercise.**

**What was most important and why? What was in your top 5 and why?**

**What was least important and why?**



**ESSEX & SUFFOLK**  
**WATER** *living water*

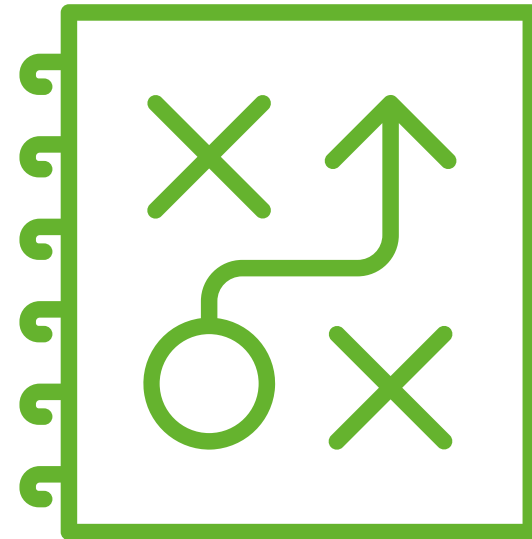
**WHAT'S NEXT?**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### YOUR TASK FOR THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

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- Thank you for your feedback!
- In the next session we will be discussing how ambitious you would like Essex & Suffolk Water to be and what targets you would like them to set.
- We will be sending some pre-work in advance, so please look out for it.





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# THANK YOU

**See you for our next session on Wednesday 27  
April**