



# TIDAL LAGOON POWER COUNCILLORS AND MPS RESEARCH

May 2016



# METHODOLOGY NOTE



## Objectives

The key aims of this research were to:

- Understand attitudes towards the UK's energy mix, and the role tidal energy could play in this;
- Measurement of attitudes towards the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon among Conservative councillors and MPs;
- Explore attitudes towards the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon in detail.



## Method

ComRes surveyed 303 Conservative councillors online, and 150 MPs using a combination of paper and online surveys.

### MPs base



150



61

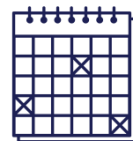


66

Other

14

9



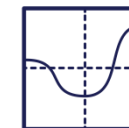
## Fieldwork dates



Councillors fieldwork was conducted between 25<sup>th</sup> February – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2016.



MPs fieldwork was conducted between 25<sup>th</sup> February – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016.



## Interpretation

Data have been weighted by region to be representative of Conservative councillors and the House of Commons.

With a sample size of 303 Conservative councillors, the margin of error on results at a 95% confidence level is  $\pm 5.53$ . Differences of less than this should be treated as indicative.

With a sample size of 150 MPs, the margin of error on results at a 95% confidence level is  $\pm 7.02$ . Differences of less than this should be treated as indicative.

Findings marked with an asterisk (\*) indicate a low base size. These results should be treated with caution.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ELIZABETH II AD 2000 THIS GREAT COURT CENTRE

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Awareness of and support for Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon are high

Three quarters of Conservative councillors and nine in ten Conservative MPs say they have heard about the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon, and just under half of councillors and two-thirds of Conservative MPs say they know at least a little about it.

Support for construction of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon is very high, with more than four in five saying they support the project among both Conservative MPs and councillors.

Conservative councillors think that solar and tidal are the power sources that could most credibly be integrated into the UK's low carbon system; Conservative MPs think the most credible source tested is tidal power.

## Conservatives are positive on long-term prospects for Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon

The vast majority of Conservative councillors and MPs see Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon as a first step with the potential to provide a secure, long-term source of power.

Both audiences generally say they believe that the cost to consumers could be managed, as could any environmental impacts. Majorities of both audiences are also convinced that construction would open up new UK supply chain opportunities.

## There is a clear mandate to focus on reducing costs in the longer-term

The vast majority of Conservative councillors and MPs say they think subsidies should be used to help new technologies become competitive, and a majority also think that the UK should invest now in the interests of developing cheaper energy in future rather than prioritising an immediate reduction in costs.

## Priorities for UK generation facilities are aligned with expectations on what tidal power would deliver

For both Conservative MPs and councillors, the top priorities for UK generation facilities to deliver are producing power for the long-term, and providing a reliable power source. These are also the attributes tested most likely to be associated with tidal power.

The next most important priority for councillors is to produce power at a competitive price, which is the fourth most likely to be selected as most important attribute for Conservative MPs, after producing a large amount of power. These are both attributes that only minorities of both audiences say apply to tidal power.



# AWARENESS OF THE SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON

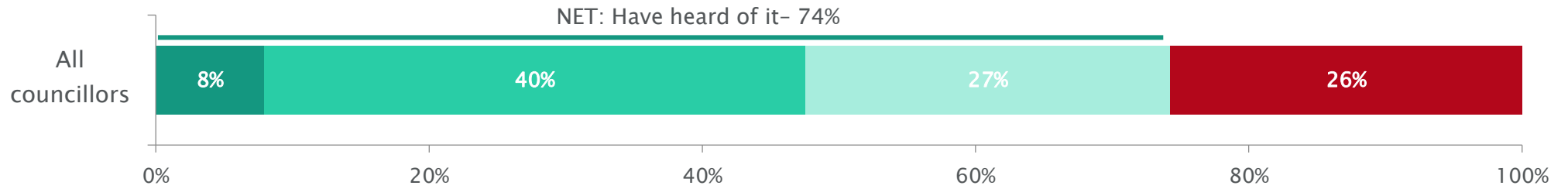


# VAST MAJORITY OF CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS AND CONSERVATIVE MPS SAY THEY HAVE HEARD OF THE SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON

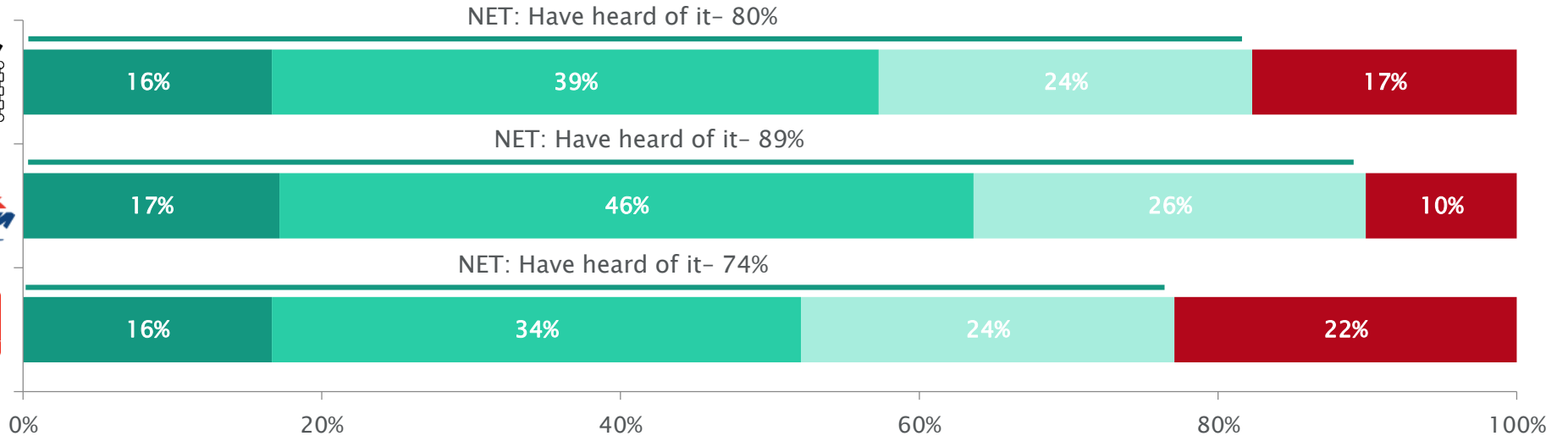
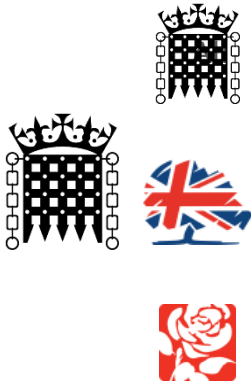
## Cllrs' awareness of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon:



- Have heard of and know a lot about it
- Have heard of and know a little about it
- Have heard of it but know nothing about it
- Have never heard of it



## MPs' awareness of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon:



# SUPPORT FOR SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON

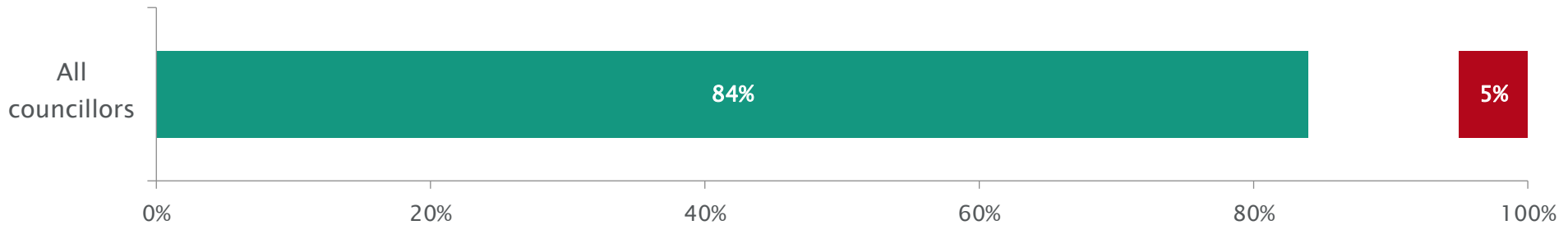


# THE VAST MAJORITY OF CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS AND MPS SUPPORT SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON

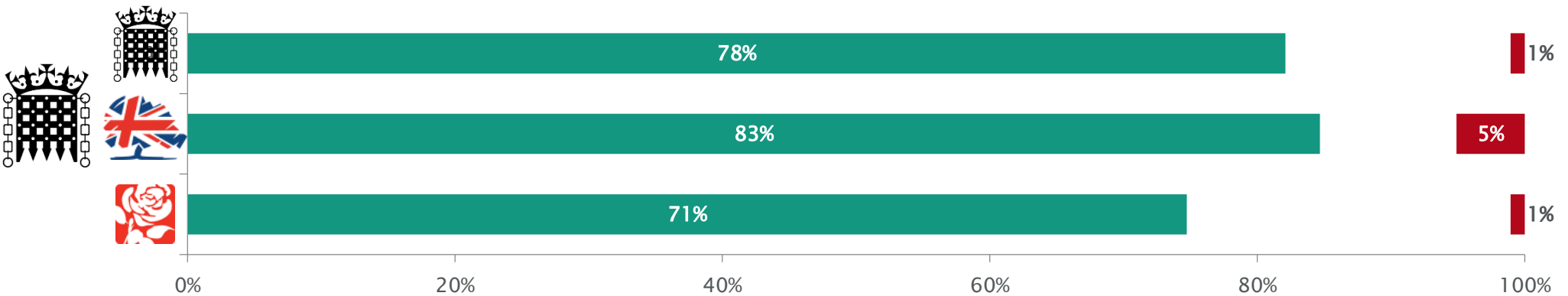


Support  
Oppose

### Cllrs' support for construction of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon:



### MPs' support for construction of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon:

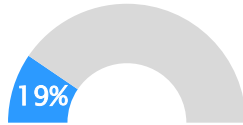


Q6. The Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon is a Conservative Party 2015 Manifesto pledge. It is a tidal lagoon power plant proposed to be constructed in Swansea Bay, forecast to generate 320 megawatts of power. To what extent do you support or oppose the construction of the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon? Base: All councillors (n=303), All MPs (n=150); All Conservative MPs (n=61); All Labour MPs (n=66).

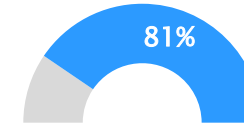


# MAJORITY OF CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS FIND POSITIVE STATEMENTS ON LONG-TERM POTENTIAL OF SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON CREDIBLE

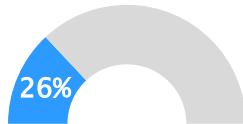
% Cllrs who believe each statement about the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon is most credible:



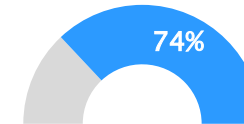
It would be a small project producing an insignificant amount of power



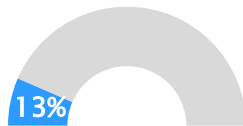
It would be a small project with the potential to be the first step towards a large new source of low carbon power



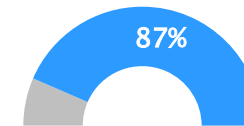
It would not be a long term solution for energy generation in the UK



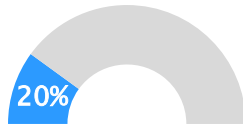
It would provide a secure supply of power for more than 100 years



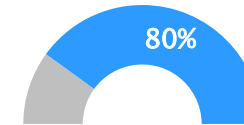
Its visual and environmental impacts would be unacceptable



Its visual and environmental impacts could be managed



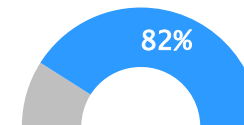
It would impose unacceptable costs on today's energy consumer



Its costs to today's energy consumer would be relatively small and can be managed

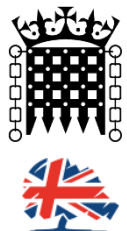


It would rely on foreign technology



It would open up new supply chain opportunities in the UK

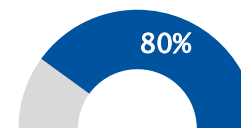
# VAST MAJORITIES OF CONSERVATIVE MPS FIND POSITIVE STATEMENTS ON LONG-TERM POTENTIAL OF SWANSEA BAY TIDAL LAGOON CREDIBLE



% Conservative MPs who believe each statement about the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon is most credible:



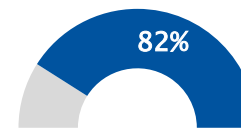
It would be a small project producing an insignificant amount of power



It would be a small project with the potential to be the first step towards a large new source of low carbon power



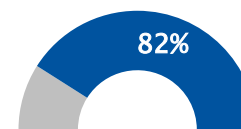
It would not be a long term solution for energy generation in the UK



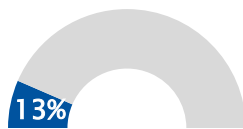
It would provide a secure supply of power for more than 100 years



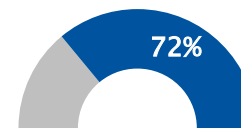
Its visual and environmental impacts would be unacceptable



Its visual and environmental impacts could be managed



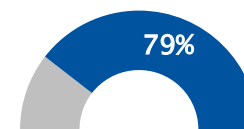
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Its costs to today's energy consumer would be relatively small and can be managed



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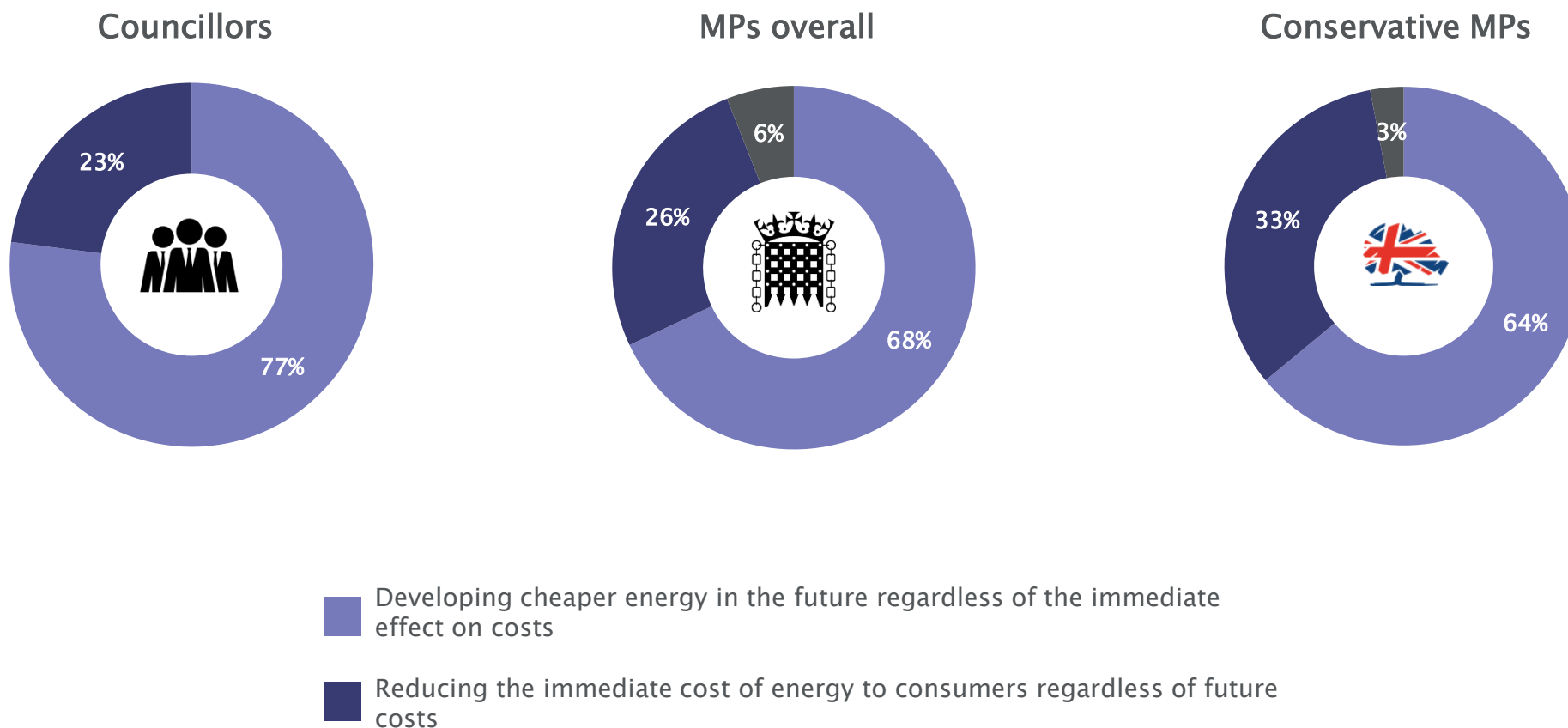
# PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT





# MAJORITY OF COUNCILLORS AND MPS THINK UK SHOULD PRIORITISE CHEAPER ENERGY IN FUTURE OVER REDUCING IMMEDIATE COSTS

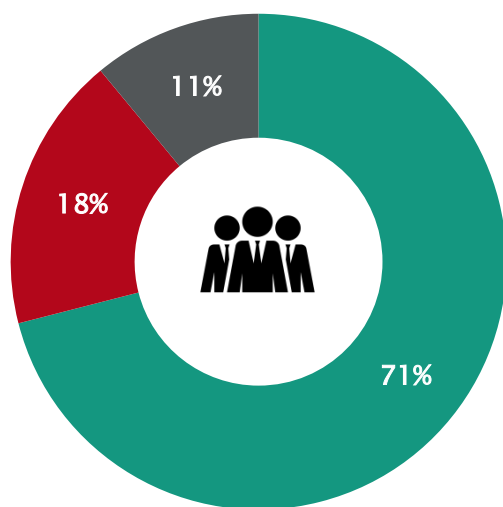
Priorities for UK energy infrastructure investment:



# MAJORITIES OF CONSERVATIVE COUNCILLORS AND MPS SAY SUBSIDIES SHOULD BE USED TO HELP NEW TECHNOLOGIES BECOME COMPETITIVE

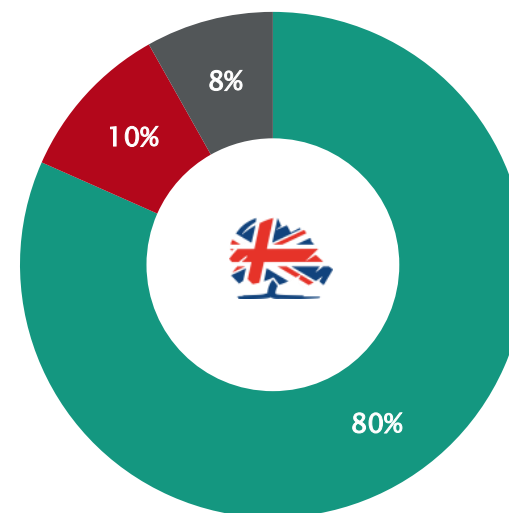


Conservative councillors' views on energy subsidies:



- Energy subsidies should be used to help new technologies become competitive
- Energy subsidies should not be allocated to develop new technology
- Don't know

Conservative MPs' views on energy subsidies:



Q8. Which of the following statements, if any, come closest to your view on energy subsidies? Base: All councillors (n=303), All Conservative MPs (n=61).

# ENERGY PREFERENCES

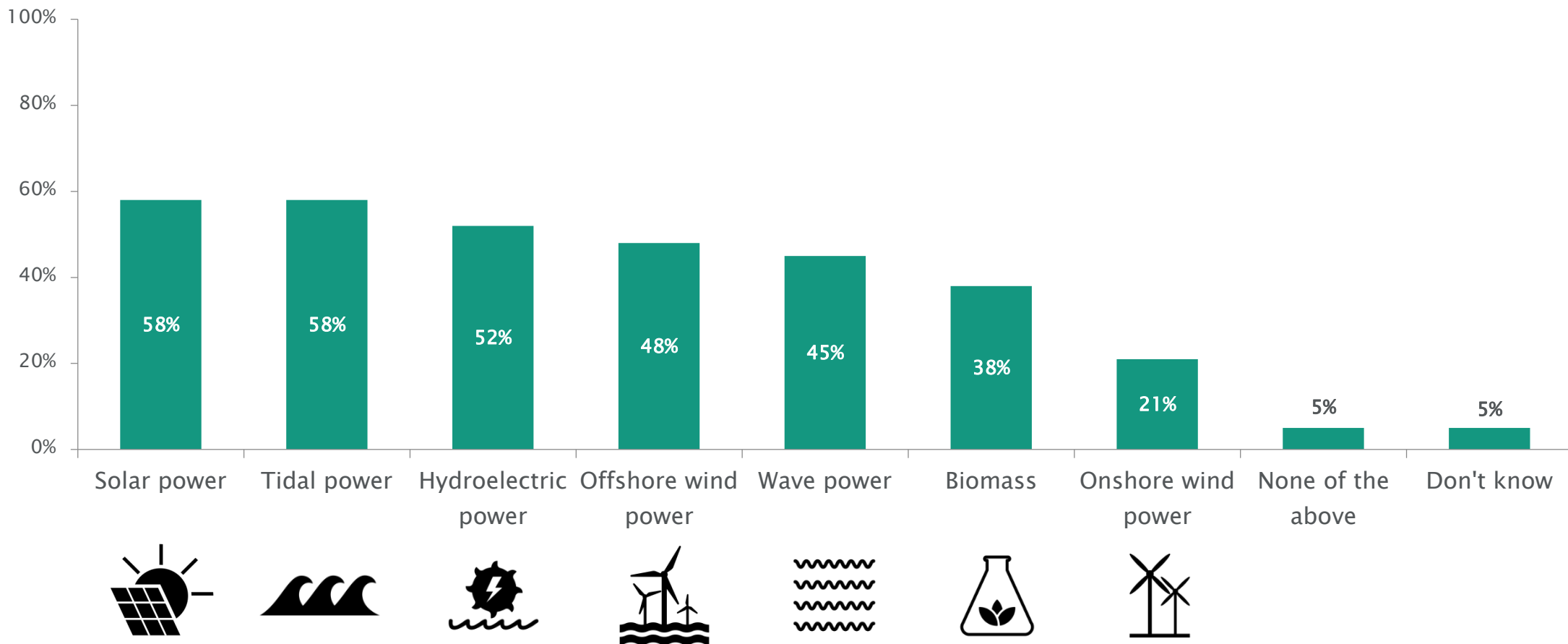




# SOLAR AND TIDAL ARE THE ENERGY SOURCES COUNCILLORS ARE MOST LIKELY TO SAY COULD BE CREDIBLY INTEGRATED INTO LOW CARBON SYSTEM



% Cllrs that think each energy source could be credibly integrated into a low carbon UK energy system:

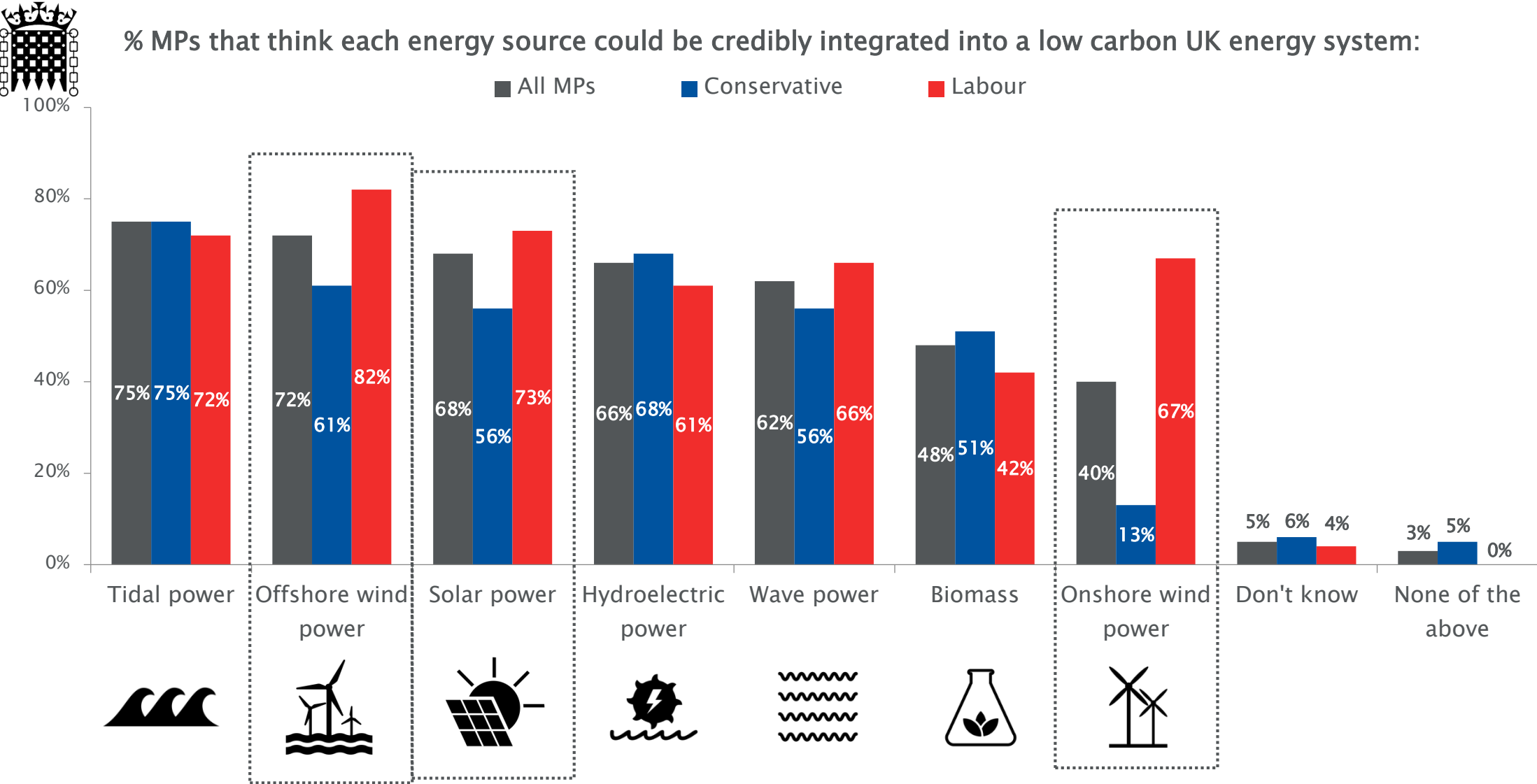


Q1. In November 2015, the UK government announced its aim of a low carbon UK energy system based on offshore wind, nuclear and gas. Which of the following, if any, do you think could credibly be integrated into this energy system? Base: All councillors (n=303).

# TIDAL POWER AND OFFSHORE WIND ARE ENERGY SOURCES MPS ARE MOST LIKELY TO SAY COULD BE CREDIBLY INTEGRATED INTO LOW CARBON SYSTEM



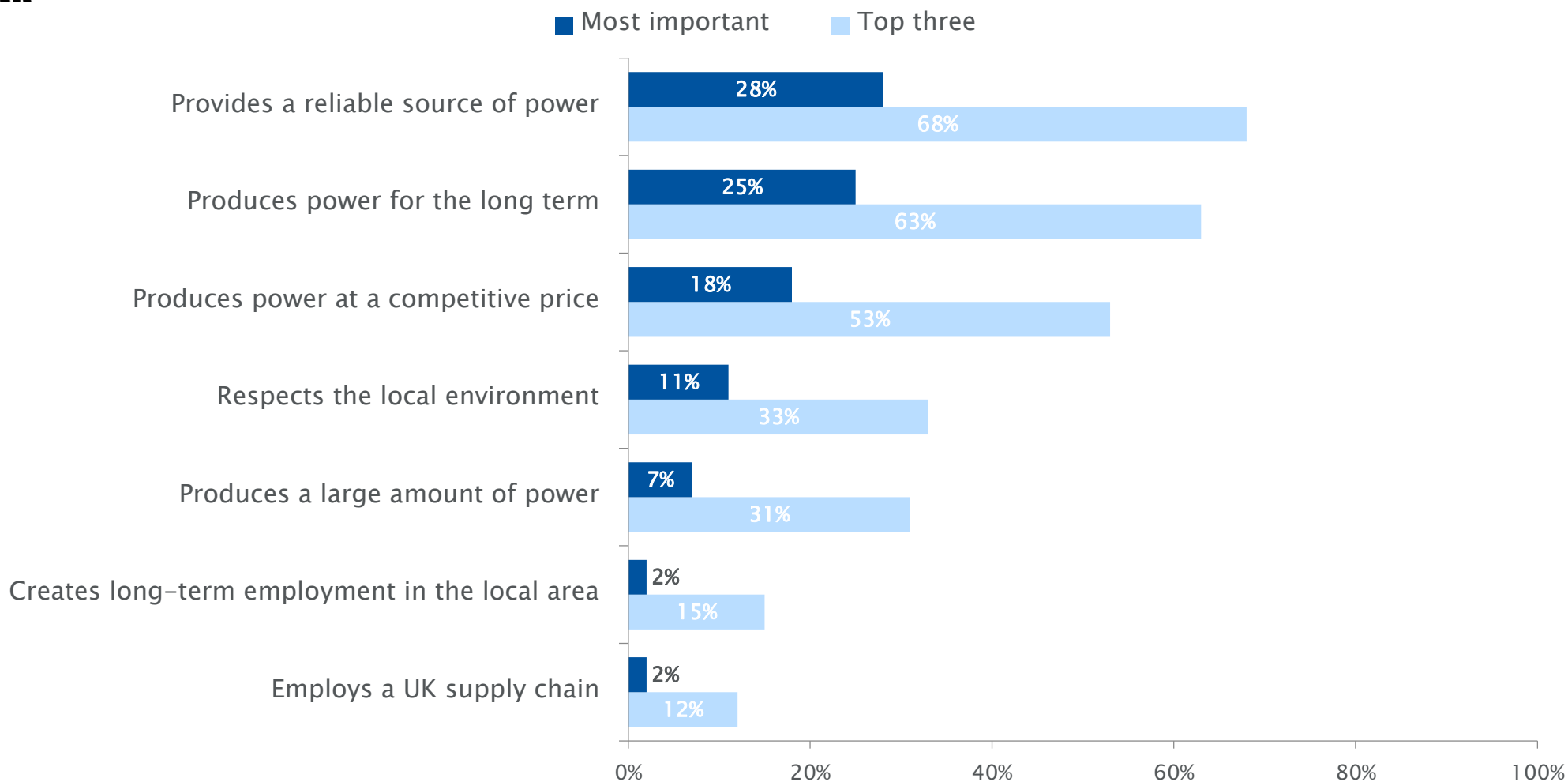
% MPs that think each energy source could be credibly integrated into a low carbon UK energy system:



Q1. In November 2015, the UK government announced its aim of a low carbon UK energy system based on offshore wind, nuclear and gas. Which of the following, if any, do you think could credibly be integrated into this energy system? Base: All MPs (n=150); All Conservative MPs (n=61); All Labour MPs (n=66)

# RELIABILITY AND BEING A LONG-TERM POWER SOURCE ARE ATTRIBUTES RANKED MOST IMPORTANT BY COUNCILLORS

% Cllrs that rank each of the following most important to a UK generation facility:

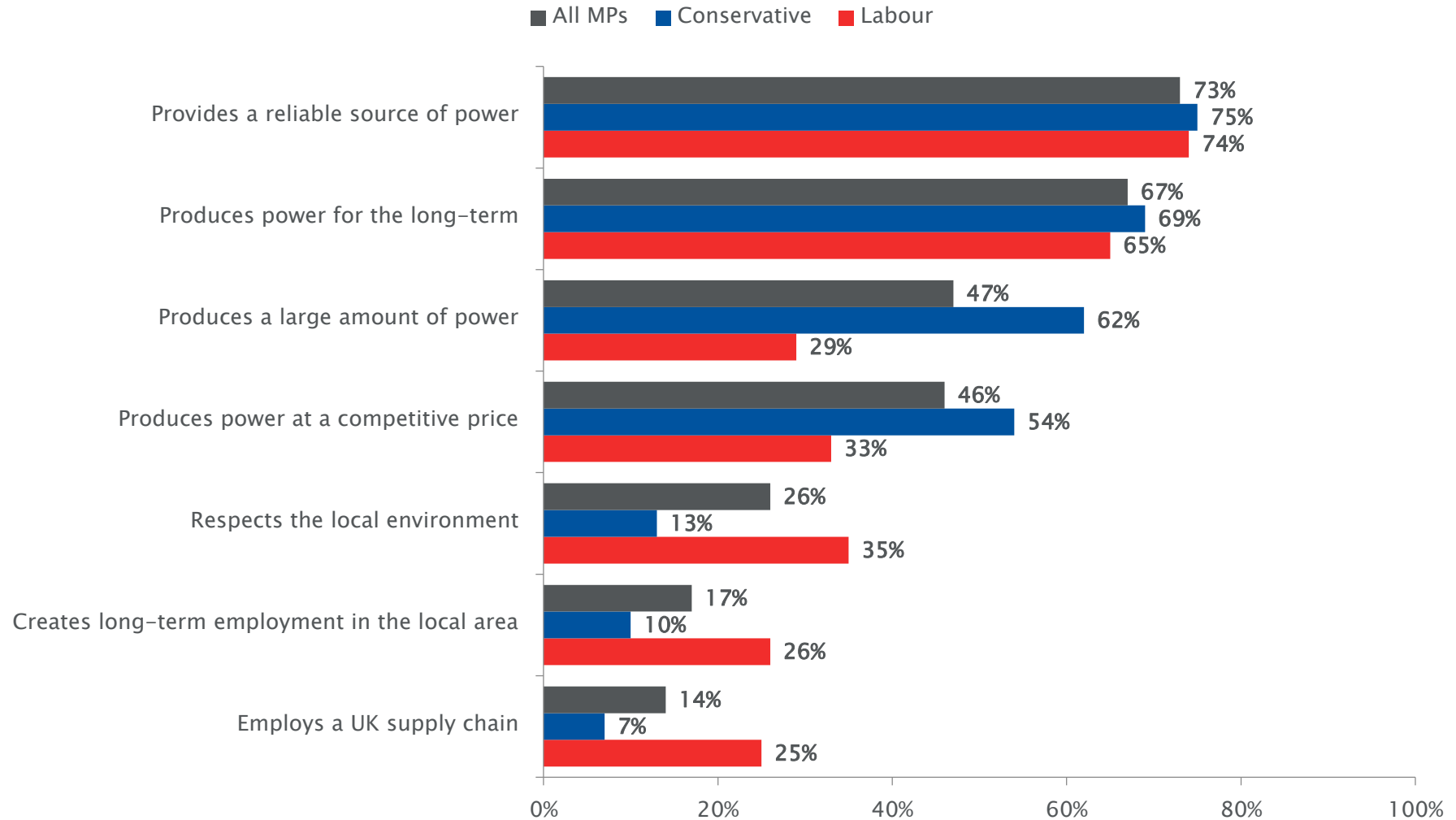




# RELIABILITY AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTION RANKED OF HIGHEST IMPORTANCE BY MPS OVERALL



% MPs that rank each in their top three most important to a UK generation facility:





# TIDAL POWER

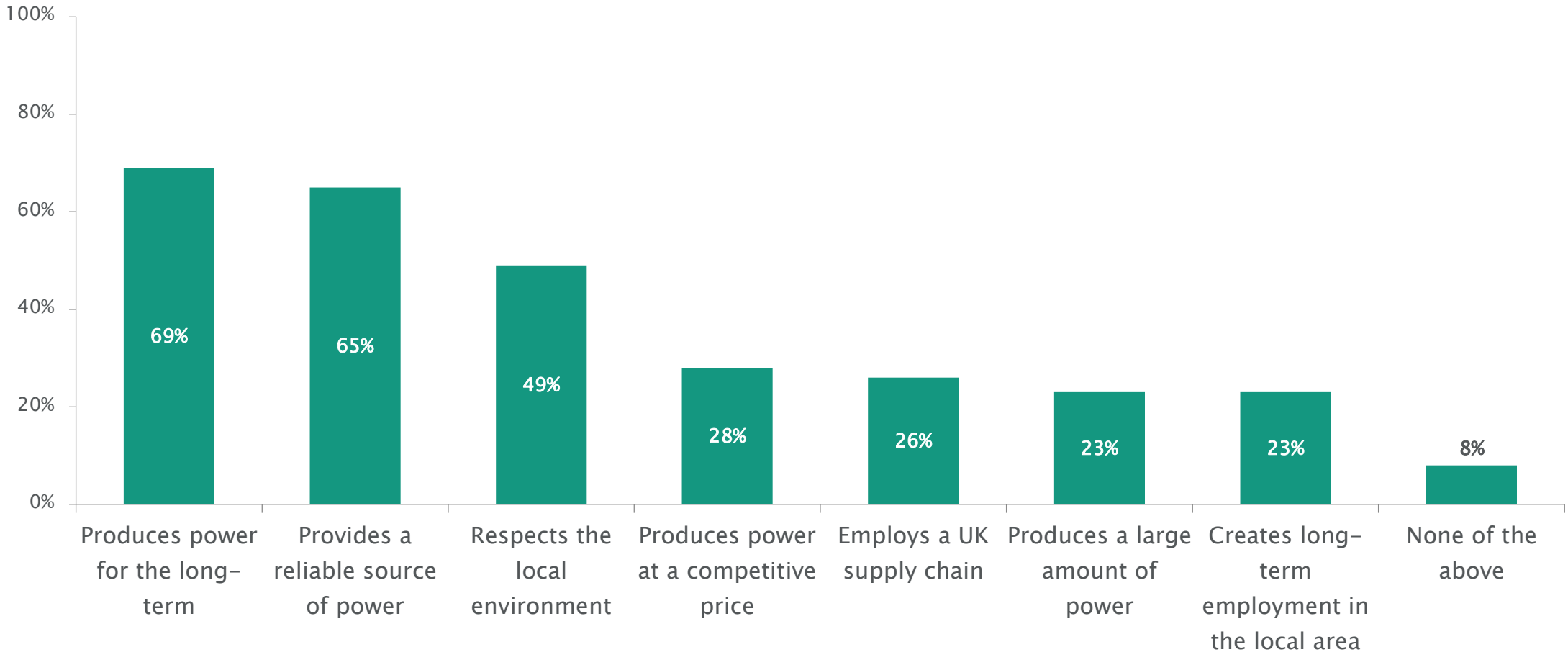




# REFLECTING TOP PRIORITIES FOR UK GENERATION FACILITIES, MAJORITY OF COUNCILLORS SAY TIDAL PRODUCES LONG-TERM OR RELIABLE POWER



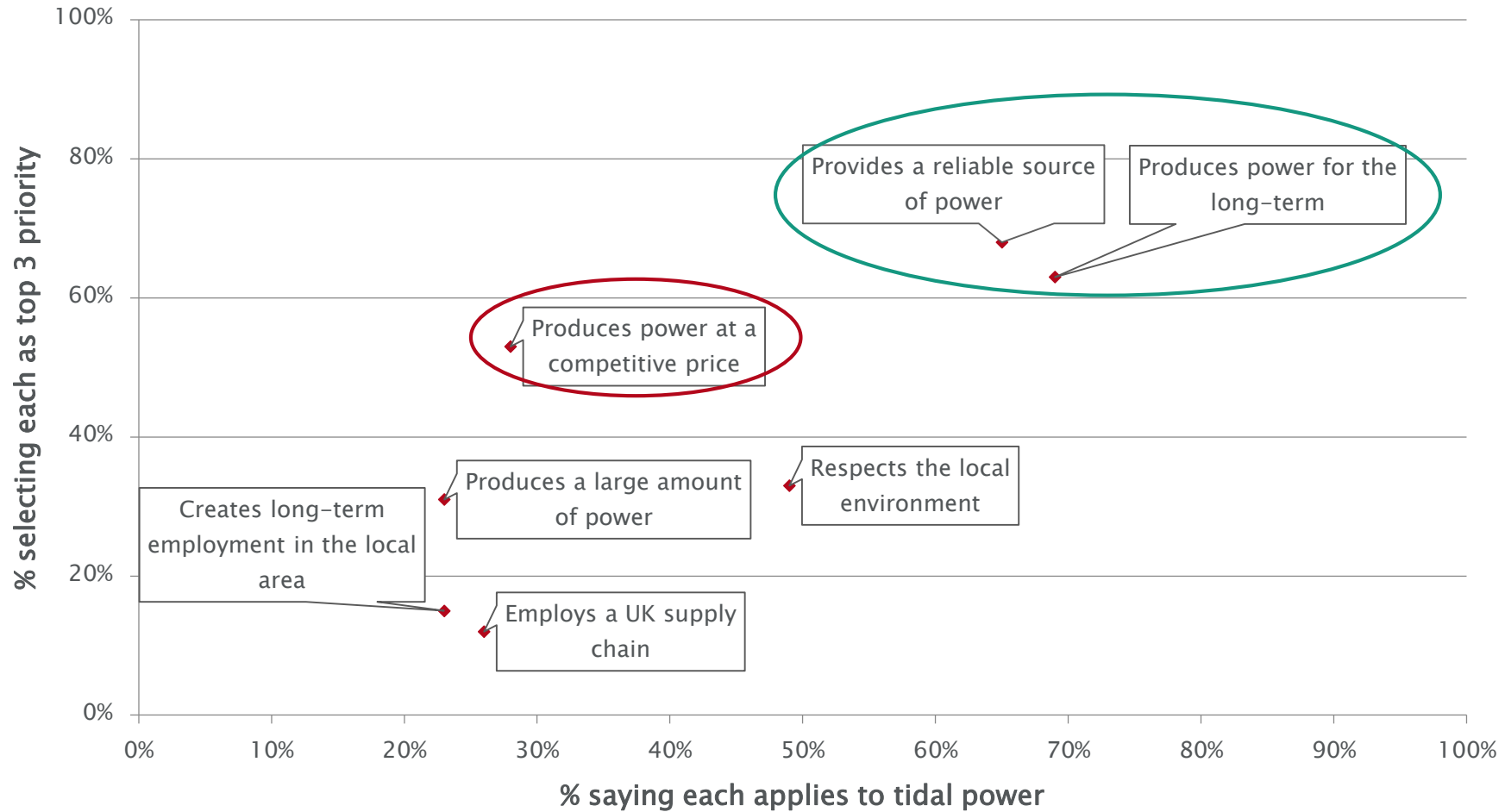
Showing which statements Conservative councillors believe to apply to tidal power:



# PRIORITIES FOR GENERATION BY ASSOCIATION WITH TIDAL POWER AMONG COUNCILLORS



Showing % selecting each as a top 3 priority by attributes Conservative councillors associate with tidal power:

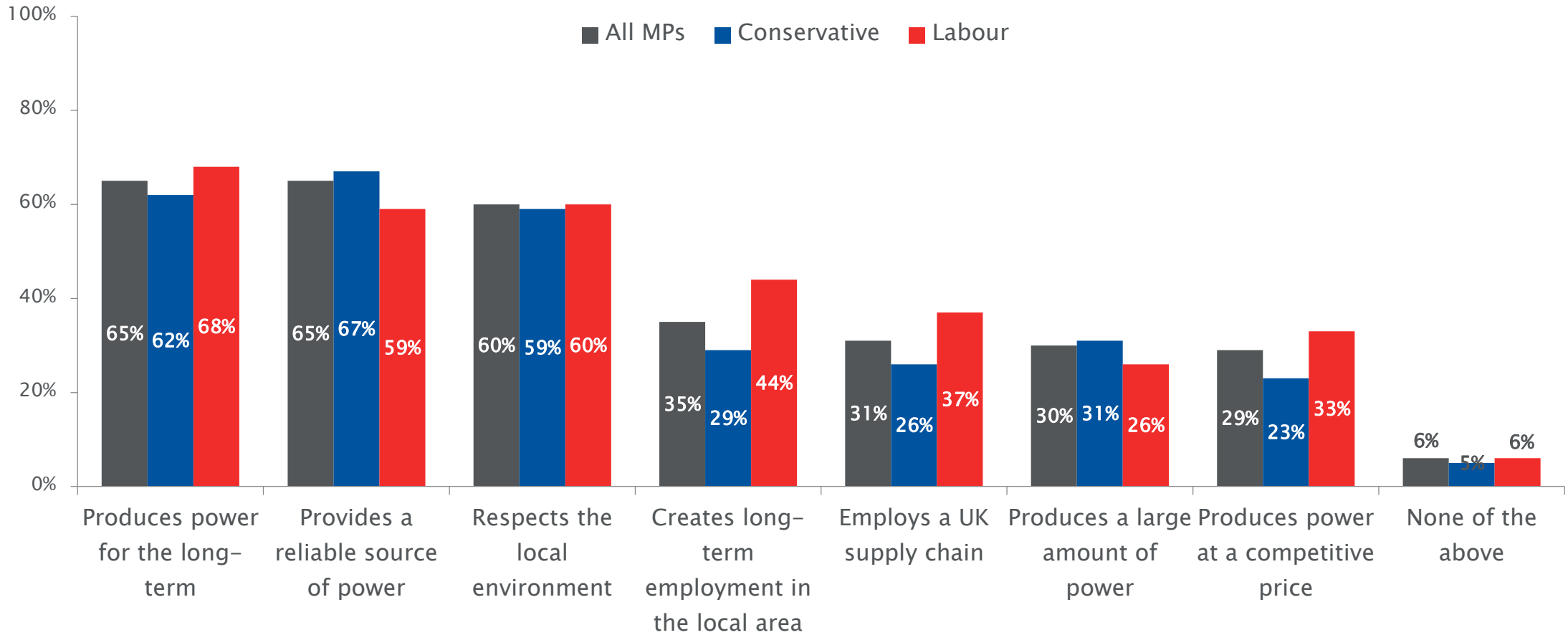




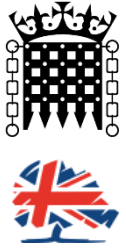
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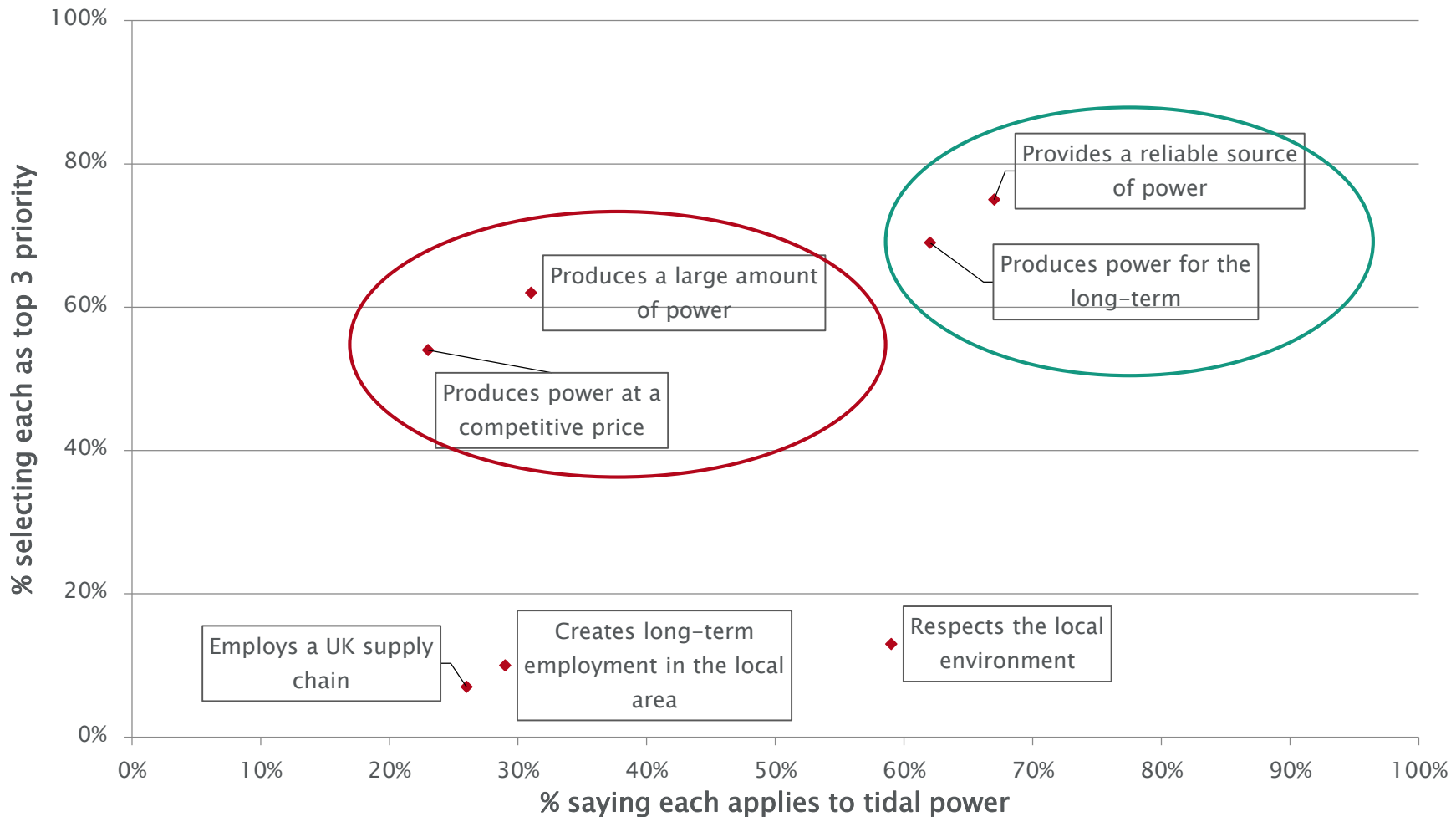
Showing which statements MPs believe to apply to tidal power:



# COMPARISON BETWEEN WHAT CONSERVATIVE MPS SEE AS PRIORITIES FOR GENERATION FACILITIES AND ATTRIBUTES ASSOCIATED WITH TIDAL POWER



Showing % selecting each as a top 3 priority by attributes Conservative MPs associate with tidal power:



Q2. Please rank the following in order of how important you believe it is that an electricity generation facility built in the UK delivers each of these. Q4. Please indicate which of the following, if any, you believe apply to tidal power. Base: All Conservative MPs (n=61)



An aerial night view of London, featuring the Gherkin skyscraper in the foreground and the city lights extending to the River Thames in the background. A large red diagonal overlay covers the left side of the image.

## FURTHER INFORMATION:

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