



# Research Report

## Stakeholder Perceptions Survey 2019

**Prepared for: Local Government Association**

**Prepared by: BMG Research**

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**Prepared for: Local Government Association**  
**Prepared by: BMG**  
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# 1 Executive Summary

## 1.1 Background and Objectives

BMG Research has prepared this summary report for the Local Government Association (LGA) detailing the findings from the 2019 LGA Stakeholder Perceptions Survey. The LGA's Perceptions Survey is a key measure of: the extent to which councillors and senior officers in LGA-member authorities understand and engage with the LGA and its offer; how they view the LGA and its communications; and their views on and experiences of the support and resources it offers relating to sector-led improvement.

This research aims to:

- Quantify LGA's members' awareness of the organisation and the benefits it currently offers.
- Examine how stakeholders communicate and engage with the LGA.
- Investigate what the LGA's membership want from the organisation.
- Assess stakeholders' views on the support that the LGA offers councils to help them improve and develop.

## 1.2 Method

A total of 1,106 interviews were undertaken with a sample of representatives from local authorities across all the English regions. The following stakeholder groups were included in the research:

- Chief executives
- Directors
- Leaders
- Chairs of scrutiny
- Portfolio holders
- Leaders of the opposition
- Frontline councillors

Most responses were gathered through Computer Aided Telephone Interviews (CATI) (915) with the remainder through Computer Aided Web Interviews (CAWI) (191). It should be noted that the number of CAWI completes has increased substantially compared to previous waves (6 CAWI completes in 2017) due to this option being further promoted to offer stakeholders greater flexibility and encourage participation.

The sample size has a maximum standard error of  $\pm 2.9\%$  at the 95% level of confidence, giving these findings a high level of accuracy.

## 1.3 Findings

### 1.3.1 Overview

This report provides a summary of top-line frequencies; significant findings from cross-tabulations based upon region, role type, and amalgamated role type (officer, senior councillors and frontline councillors) and comparisons to previous waves. Where specific findings are discussed in the report it is because they have been identified as statistically significant unless otherwise stated. Significant changes compared to the previous waves are also discussed.

Significant changes from 2017 have been **highlighted** in the table below.<sup>1</sup>

**Table 1: Summary of positive responses<sup>2</sup> given for key measures**

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019	Change from 2017
Sample size	(937)	(917)	(821)	(835)	(862)	(1104)	(1106)	
How well do you know the LGA?	62%	72%	73%	73%	75%	73%	80%	<b>+7</b>
I would speak positively about the LGA	63%	73%	72%	74%	74%	73%	79%	<b>+6</b>
Satisfied with the work of the LGA	63%	70%	75%	76%	73%	73%	78%	<b>+5</b>
The LGA keeps you informed about its work	69%	78%	79%	84%	83%	80%	84%	<b>+4</b>
Sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context	59%	62%	63%	71%	70%	78%	78%	0
The LGA demonstrates value for money	43%	53%	53%	57%	N/A	59%	57%	-2

- All the categories in Table 1 have seen a significant increase in positive responses since the first wave of the survey in 2012. Most notably, there

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that a 2018 wave of the survey was not undertaken due to competing research requirements for the respondent group and local elections.

<sup>2</sup> Positive responses are defined as following: How well do you know the LGA (know a great deal/fair amount); I would speak positively about the LGA (I speak positively... without being asked/if I am asked about this); Satisfied with the work of the LGA (very/fairly satisfied); The LGA keeps you informed about its work (very/fairly well informed); Sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context (strongly agree/agree); and The LGA demonstrates value for money (strongly/tend to agree).



has been a 19-percentage point increase in the proportion of stakeholders who think that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context, and an 18-percentage point increase in those who know either a great or fair amount about the LGA.

- 4 in 5 stakeholders know a great deal/fair amount about the LGA (80%); the highest figure on record for this indicator and a 7-percentage point increase compared to 2017 (73%).
- There has been a 6-percentage point increase in stakeholders who would speak positively about the LGA (79% in 2019, 73% in 2017), making this the highest positive response recorded for this question. Those in the North East are the most likely to speak positively about the LGA (90%).
- Satisfaction with the work of the LGA has increased by 5-percentage points compared to 2017 (78% in 2019, 73% in 2017). This represents the highest satisfaction rating recorded for this indicator. Chief executives are the most likely to be satisfied (90%).
- There has been a small but significant increase in the percentage of stakeholders who feel that the LGA keeps them informed about its work, compared to 2017 (84% in 2019, 80% in 2017). Nearly all chief executives feel either very or fairly well informed (97%).
- 78% of stakeholders feel that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context, maintaining the increase in positive responses seen in 2017.
- Just under 3 in 5 (57%) stakeholders believe that the LGA demonstrates value for money. This result varies substantially by job role, with chief executives being most inclined to agree that good value is delivered (87%) and frontline councillors being the least likely (49%).

### 1.3.2 Usefulness of activities provided by the LGA

**Table 2: Proportion who find activities useful**

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2019	Change from 2017
Sample size	(937)	(917)	(821)	(835)	(862)	(1004)	(1106)	
<b>How useful are the following LGA activities to your council or local government as a whole?</b>								
Providing up-to-date information about local government	92%	89%	88%	93%	91%	91%	92%	+1
Providing a single voice for local government	90%*	94%*	91%*	88%	89%	92%	88%	<b>-4</b>
Lobbying on behalf of local government	90%	92%	93%	92%	89%	90%	87%	<b>-3</b>
Providing conferences and events	71%	79%	77%	85%	83%	79%	83%	<b>+4</b>
Managing local government's reputation in the national media	89%*	93%*	90%*	83%	83%	82%	82%	0
Providing advice and information through the political group offices	72%	78%	78%	78%	76%	79%	70%	<b>-9</b>
Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice	73%	78%	75%	74%	71%	65%	63%	-2
Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils	67%	78%	73%	72%	64%	62%	55%	<b>-7</b>

\*Prior to 2015/16, respondents were asked whether or not these activities were important which means that these results are not directly comparable.

- *Providing up-to-date information about local government (92%) is rated as the most useful activity undertaken by the LGA, closely followed by providing a single voice for local government (88%) and lobbying on behalf of local government (87%).*
- *There have been four declines, compared to 2017, in the LGA activities that stakeholders find useful: providing advice and information through the political group officers (a drop of 9-percentage points to 70%); providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils (a drop of 7-percentage points to 55%); providing a single voice for local government (a drop of 4-percentage points to 88%) and lobbying on behalf of local government (a drop of 3-percentage points to 87%).*

- *Providing conferences and events* has seen an increase in the proportion of stakeholders who found these useful, an increase of 4-percentage points (83% in 2019, 79% in 2017).

### 1.3.3 Finding out about the work of the LGA

- 84% of stakeholders feel either very or fairly well informed by the LGA about its work. All role types were in line with this average except for Chief Executives where 97% feel at least fairly well informed.
- ‘First’ magazine remains the most popular method of discovering the work of the LGA. The magazine remains particularly popular with senior councillors (86%) and frontline councillors (88%). Officers, meanwhile, are most likely get LGA news from the *LGA website* (76%) or *events and conferences* (72%).
- Most stakeholders would prefer to find out about the LGA’s work through email. This is shown by the three most popular channels being a generic email (23%), *LGA Chairman, Cllr Jamieson’s weekly email* (21%) or *LGA Chief Executive Mark Lloyd’s email* (19%).

### 1.3.4 Engagement with the LGA

- *Responding to LGA consultations* (55%) is the most popular form of engagement among LGA stakeholders, as it was in 2017. Meanwhile, around half of respondents’ engagement with the LGA takes the form of *contacting LGA officers* (50%), *attending LGA events and conferences* (49%) and *visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council* (48%). Interestingly, frontline councillors are less likely to engage through nearly all the methods listed.

### 1.3.5 Support for councils

- The increase seen in 2017 in the percentage of stakeholders who feel that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context has been maintained (78%). Directors (88%), chief executives and leaders (both 86%) are all more likely to agree than average.
- *Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others* is seen as the most useful aspect of the LGA’s improvement support offer (85%), followed by *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* (82%). Interestingly, officers are more likely than average to find both areas useful.
- 86% of stakeholders feel that LGA improvement support has had a positive impact on their authority, and this is consistent with 2017. Chief executives (98%), leaders (94%) and directors (93%) are more likely than average to agree with this, while the reverse is true for leaders of the opposition (76%) and frontline councillors (80%).

- Most stakeholders feel that the LGA should continue to provide support in all the areas put forward in the survey. *Training for councillors* proved the most popular (92%) alongside *providing peer challenge and peer support* (91%). *Increasing housing supply* is the lowest rated element but it still enjoys the backing of 75% of stakeholders; interestingly stakeholders in London (83%) are more likely than average (75%) to feel that the LGA should continue support in this area while those in the South East are less likely (69%).
- Awareness of the recently launched Transformation and Innovation Exchange is low with just 22% having at least a little knowledge of the initiative. This rises to 55% among chief executives, but this is mostly driven by the 44% who know just a little about it rather than a great deal or a fair amount.
- Asked if they would like to see new commercial support offered by the LGA, 57% of stakeholders said they would. Similarly, asked if they would like to see new communications support 54% of stakeholders agreed.

#### **1.3.5.1 Local partnerships**

- Just under half of stakeholders have heard of Local Partnerships (47%).
- 27% of these stakeholders recall their council using Local Partnerships' services in the last year and satisfaction with the service is high among this group (70%, 99 stakeholders in total).

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

This is the seventh time the Local Government Association (LGA) has undertaken a survey of its members. The LGA's Stakeholder Perceptions Survey is a key measure of councils' perceptions of the LGA and its communications, while also exploring members' views and experiences of the support and resources the LGA offers.

### 2.2 Objectives

The main research objectives are to explore:

- Perceptions of the LGA in a range of areas.
- Views on how the LGA communicates and engages with members.
- Any differences between stakeholder groups in terms of knowledge of or engagement with the LGA.
- Perceptions of the services and benefits members get from the LGA and whether there are other services that would be of value or benefit to members or the local government sector.

### 2.3 Method

The 2019 LGA perceptions survey was primarily delivered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) and supplemented with Computer Assisted Web Interviews (CAWI). In total 915 interviews were delivered via CATI and 191 via CAWI.

The number of CAWI completes represents a substantial increase on previous years (6 in 2017). While in 2017 the CAWI option was only offered to respondents in a limited set of circumstances, in 2019, stakeholders were more readily offered the option to complete the survey online. This more flexible approach allowed stakeholders maximum flexibility in order to encourage them to participate.

The survey was designed by the LGA in partnership with BMG Research. In most cases, question wording was retained from previous waves of the survey in order to ensure comparability. As well as this, a small number of questions were added or reintroduced to explore new areas of interest.

The survey explored:

- Overall views of the LGA.
- The LGA's communications and methods of engagement.
- The LGA's role, its offer to councils and how this could be developed.

Prior to the full launch of the survey a live pilot was conducted with 20 respondents to ensure that the survey worked correctly. No issues were identified relating to either the functioning of the survey or respondents' understanding of its content.

Fieldwork for the survey took place from 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 to 17<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

## **2.4 Sampling**

As in previous waves, the research aimed to gather the views of a representative sample of three key stakeholder groups in LGA-member authorities: officers (chief executives and directors), senior councillors (chairs of scrutiny, leaders, leaders of the opposition and portfolio holders) and frontline councillors from LGA member authorities.

Interlocking role and region quotas were set by region and role to ensure that the research achieved a broadly representative sample. As well as this, minimum targets were set by region and by role (both 30) to allow robust subgroup analysis to be carried out. These minimum targets were met for all subgroups. Moreover, quotas were set by role, as in previous waves, to ensure comparability

A sample frame of 18,547 unique and usable contacts (including 12,810 frontline councillors) were provided to BMG Research by the LGA. A total of 1,106 interviews were conducted which results in a maximum standard error of  $\pm 2.9\%$  (compared with  $\pm 3.0\%$  in 2017,  $\pm 3.3\%$  in 2016,  $\pm 3.4\%$  in 2015/2014 and  $\pm 3.1\%$  in 2013/2012) at the 95% level of confidence, giving these finds a high level of accuracy. Further details of the standard errors by region and role type are included in Appendix 1.

In previous waves stakeholder responses were automatically linked to relevant data that the LGA held about an individual and their membership, specifically the stakeholder's role and political affiliation along with information about their council such as council type and region. However, due to changes in data protection regulations, in 2019 respondents were asked for their explicit consent for their responses to be linked back and used in this way. If they refused, respondents were asked if they would be willing to provide this information themselves by answering a small set of additional questions, while making it clear they could still refuse to answer any individual question should they wish.

A small percentage (6%) refused to have this information linked from the LGA database and declined to answer the additional questions to collect this information. Therefore, the responses of these stakeholders will contribute to the overall total of 1,106 and not any subgroups

Table 3 displays the breakdown of completed interviews by region, role and amalgamated role of those who did agree to have their data linked to the LGA database or those who answered the relevant additional question(s) and provided this information themselves.

**Table 3: Completed interviews where role & region data is available**

Amalgamated role:	Officers		Senior councillors				Frontline councillors	No role recorded	Regional total
	Chief executives	Directors	Leaders	Chairs of scrutiny	Portfolio holder	Leaders of the opposition	Frontline councillors		
East of England	15	36	16	5	13	12	41	3	141
East Midlands	11	27	14	3	8	7	30	2	102
London	6	24	3	16	27	8	34	0	118
North East	3	14	2	3	5	5	15	3	50
North West	11	28	10	10	19	13	41	1	133
South East	11	53	25	11	20	21	56	5	202
South West	9	27	10	5	8	8	29	3	99
West Midlands	11	22	13	12	10	7	28	1	104
Yorkshire & the Humber	10	24	0	8	8	9	22	1	82
No region recorded	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	74	75
<b>Role Total:</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>296</b>		
<b>Amalgamated role total:</b>	<b>343</b>		<b>374</b>				<b>296</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>1106</b>



In addition to this, Table 4 shows the breakdown of respondents by the type of local authority for whom they are employed.

**Table 4: Respondent local authority type where data is available**

Local authority	Number of available contacts	% of available contacts	Number of respondents	% of responses
English county	1,852	10%	75	7%
English unitary	3,551	19%	191	19%
London borough	2,031	11%	119	12%
Metropolitan district	2,681	14%	126	12%
Non-metropolitan district	9,036	47%	514	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,151</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,025</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 2.5 Analytical approach

This report provides a summary of the top-line frequencies and, where relevant, significant findings from cross-tabulations based upon role type, amalgamated role type, and region.

Results were also analysed by the number of years a respondent has spent as a councillor (where applicable). However, upon analysing the results it became clear that this variable is heavily correlated with job role, meaning that it provided little additional insight. Consequentially, time served as a councillor has not been included in this report's analysis. A breakdown of time served a councillor can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5: Time served as a councillor by role type**

Job role	Leaders	Chairs of scrutiny	Portfolio holders	Leaders of the opposition	Frontline councillors
4 years or less	9%	21%	16%	19%	37%
5-9 years	29%	30%	35%	27%	25%
10-14 years	19%	16%	18%	14%	10%
15-19 years	14%	15%	15%	16%	8%
20 years or more	27%	18%	16%	24%	19%

Z-tests within the groups of interest (e.g. region, role etc.) were conducted at the 95% confidence level to identify where findings were significantly different. Where specific findings from cross-tabulations are discussed in the report it is because they have been identified as statistically significant unless otherwise stated. Significant changes compared to the previous waves are also discussed. In all tables in this report, all figures which are significantly higher than at least one other figure in the same row are **highlighted**. Full tables showing detailed cross-tabulations have been provided to the LGA separately.

### 3 Views on the LGA and its services

#### 3.1 Knowledge of the LGA

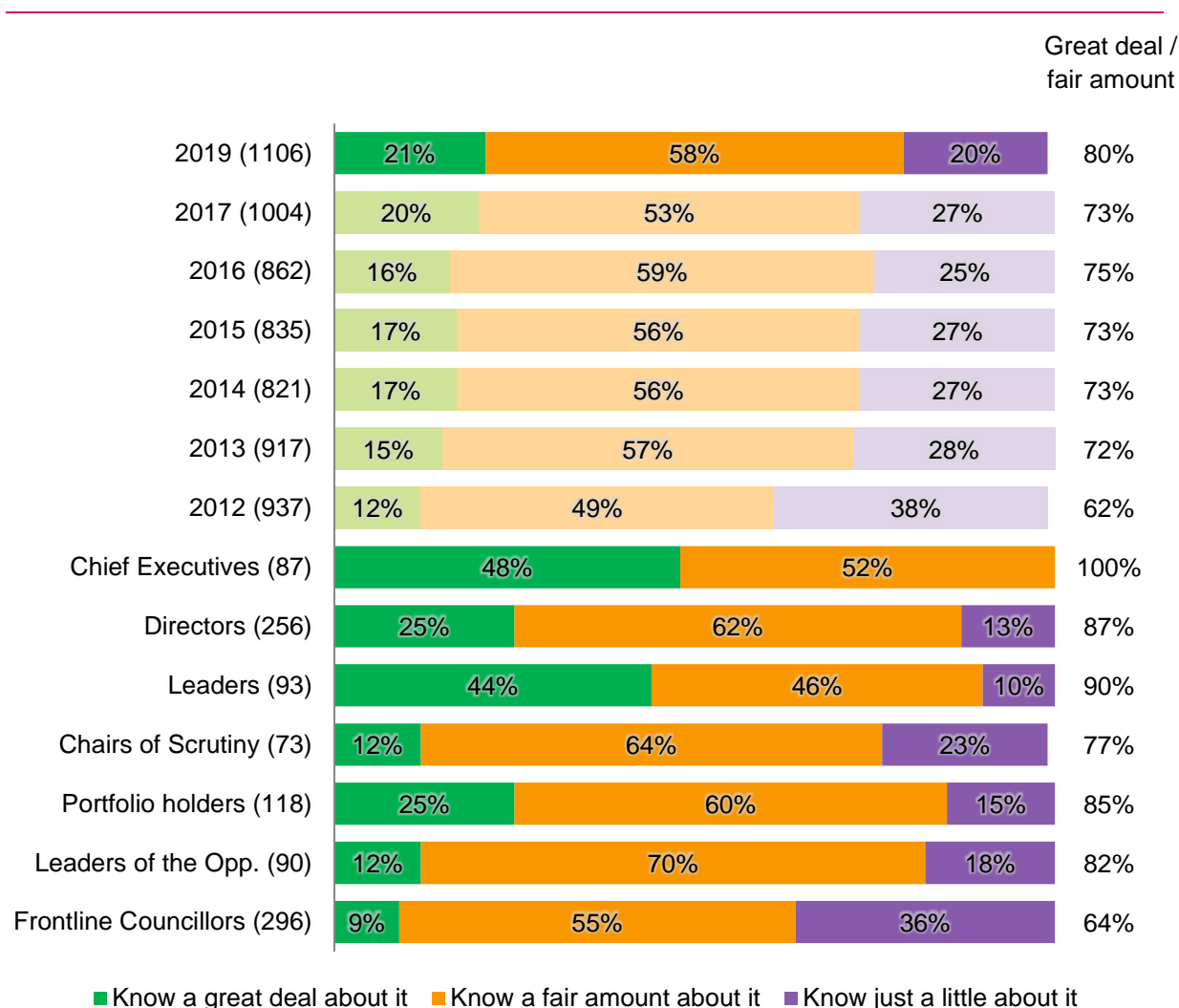
There has been an increase in stakeholder knowledge of the LGA compared to previous years. The proportion who have a great deal or fair amount of knowledge of the LGA has increased 7-percentage points compared to 2017 to (80% in 2019, 73% in 2017) and is the highest result ever recorded for this question.<sup>3</sup>

Chief executives are the most knowledgeable group, with all of them reporting either a great (48%) or fair (52%) amount of knowledge of the LGA. Leaders (90%) and directors (87%) are also more likely to have this level of knowledge about the LGA than average. In contrast, frontline councillors (64%) are less likely than average to have at least a fair amount of knowledge of the LGA.

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<sup>3</sup> Only respondents who said that they know at least a little about LGA took part in the survey. If a respondent said that they have never heard of LGA or had heard of LGA but knew nothing about it, the survey was terminated. This is because at least a little knowledge of LGA is needed to be able to answer the later questions in the survey. In total, 18 respondents said that they have heard of LGA but know nothing about it and one said that they have never heard of LGA.

**Figure 1: How well do you know the LGA? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

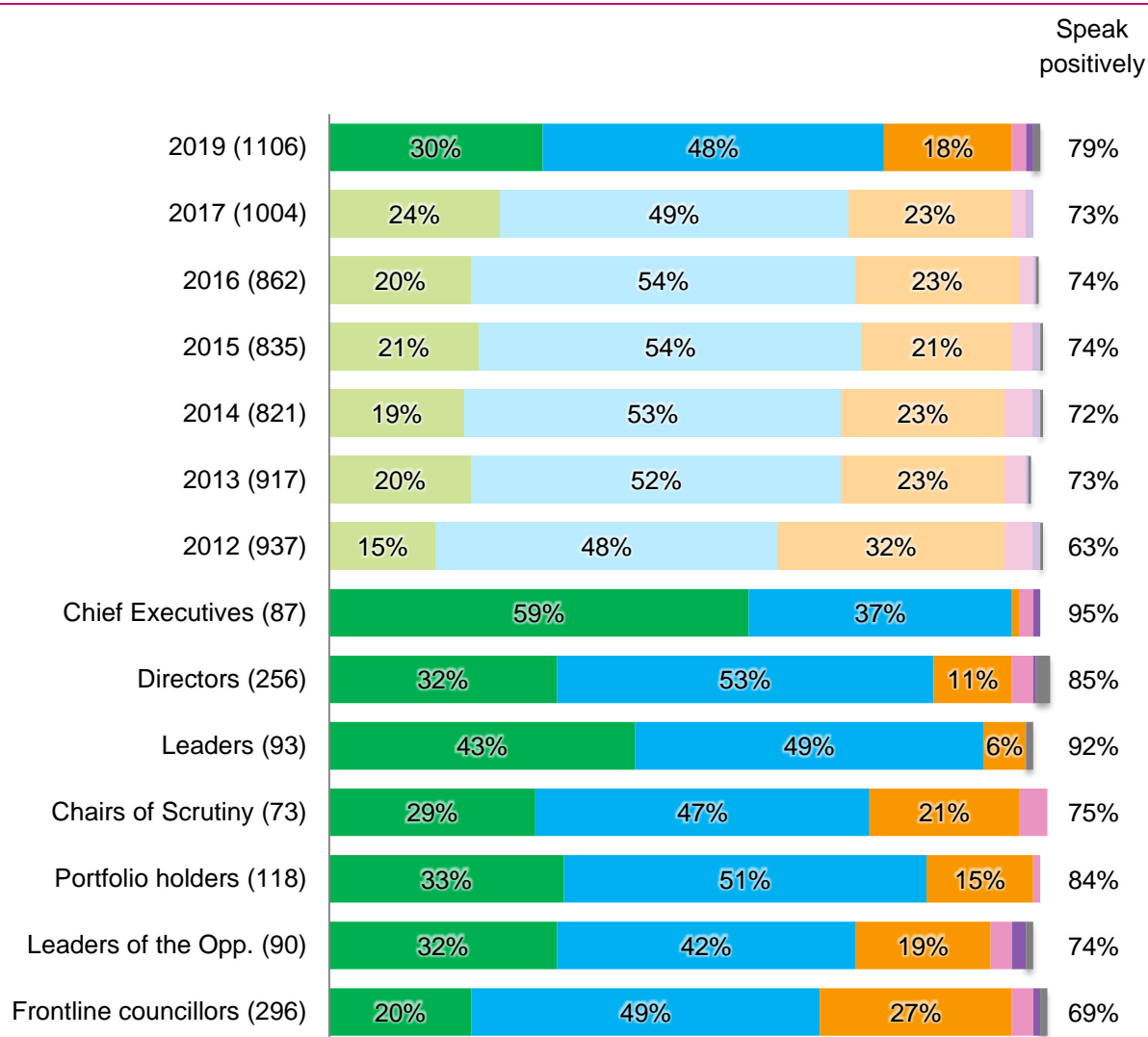
Results for the percentage of stakeholders who know either a great deal or fair amount about the LGA is consistent between regions. This is demonstrated by the small, 6-percentage point gap between the region with the highest level of knowledge (London 84%) and the regions with the lowest (South East/South West 78%). Interestingly, the proportion of stakeholders with at least a fair level of knowledge in the South West has increased by 10-percentage points compared to 2017 (78% in 2019, 68% in 2017).

### 3.2 Advocacy for the LGA

Respondents were asked how positively or negatively they would speak about the LGA, either prompted or unprompted. The percentage who would speak positively about the LGA without being asked has increased to 30%, a significant 6-percentage point increase compared to 2017 (24%). This increase brings the percentage of stakeholders who speak positively about the LGA, either prompted or unprompted, to a new high of 79%. The percentage who would speak negatively about the LGA has remained consistent with the results for previous years at 3%.

Chief executives (95%), leaders (92%) and directors (85%) are the roles more likely to speak positively about the LGA. Not only this, but chief executives are significantly more likely than every other job role to speak positively unprompted (59%). Frontline councillors (69%) are less likely than average to speak positively about the LGA than other stakeholder groups.

**Figure 2: Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of the LGA to other people? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



- I speak positively about the Local Government Association without being asked
- I speak positively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it
- I have no views one way or another
- I speak negatively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it
- I speak negatively about the Local Government Association without being asked
- Don't know

Bases in parentheses, single response question

Source: survey of LGA members

Data labels for values of 5% or lower have been removed

Breaking this down by region, stakeholders in the North East are the most likely to speak positively about the LGA (90%). This represents a substantial 21-percentage point increase on this figure compared to 2017 (69%). Alongside this, there have been significant increases in the percentages who would speak positively about the LGA in London (80% in 2019, 63% in 2017) and the West Midlands (79% in 2019, 67% in 2017). Encouragingly, these were the two regions least likely to speak positively about the LGA in 2017.

**Figure 3: Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of the LGA to other people? (Cross-tabulated by region)**



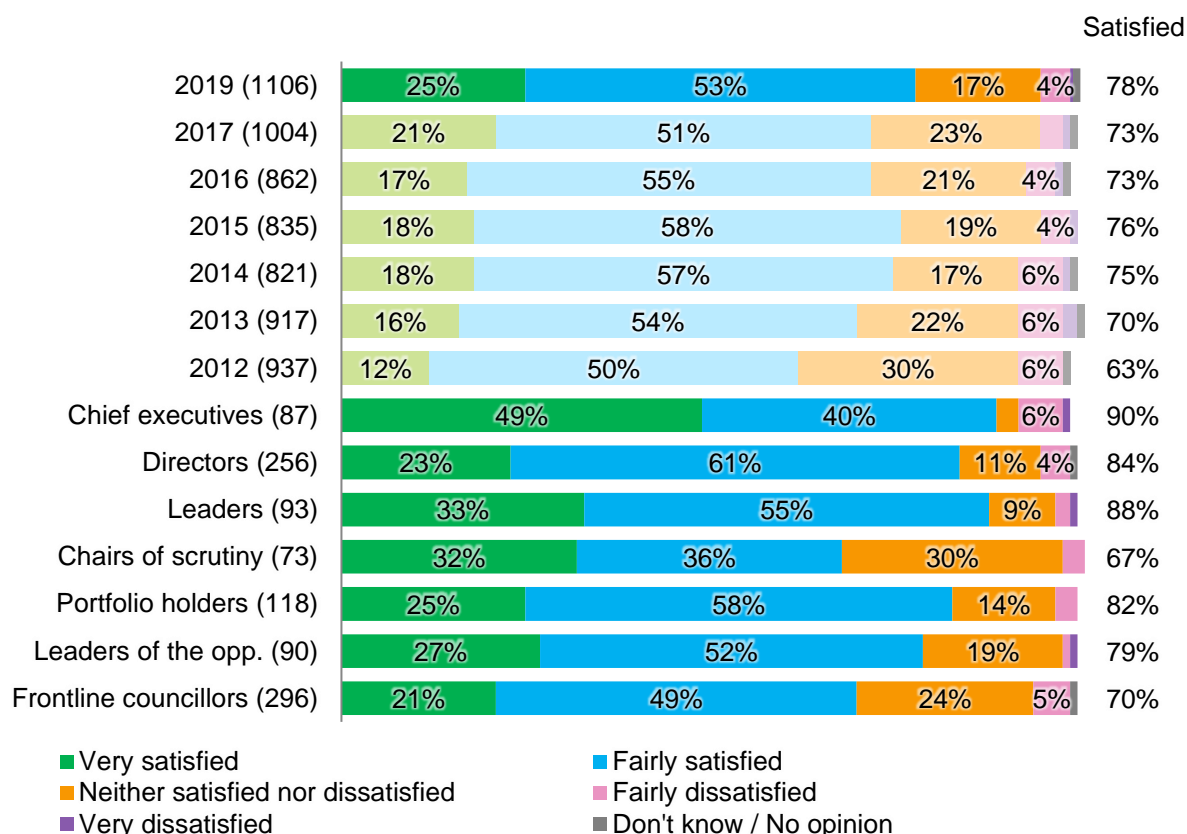
Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

### 3.3 Satisfaction with the work of the LGA

Overall satisfaction with the LGA’s work has increased by 5-percentage points compared to 2017 (78% in 2019, 73% in 2017). This is the best satisfaction score since 2015 (76%).

Chief executives (90%) are the most satisfied group which is further emphasised by nearly half reporting that they are very satisfied (49%). Meanwhile, the group least likely to be satisfied is Chairs of Scrutiny (67%), followed by frontline councillors (70%). Although, there has been a 10-percentage point increase in satisfaction compared to 2017 for frontline councillors. It should be noted that lower levels of satisfaction within groups are primarily driven through higher neutral ratings rather than by high levels of dissatisfaction.

**Figure 4: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work of the LGA? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**

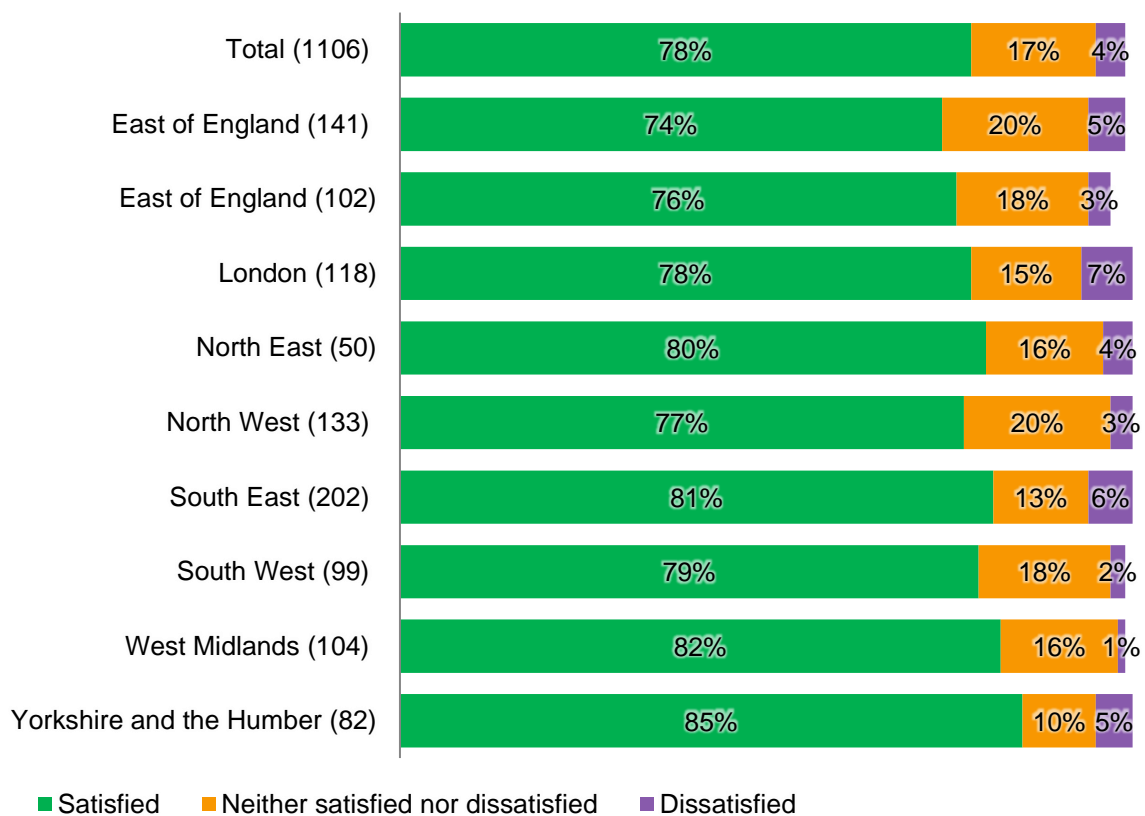


Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed



Looking at this by region, Yorkshire and the Humber reports the highest levels of satisfaction (85%) while the East of England reports the lowest (74%). Interestingly, the two least satisfied regions in 2017, London and Yorkshire & the Humber, have seen large increases this year to bring them in line with other regions (78% in 2019, 62% in 2017 and 85% in 2019, 65% in 2017 respectively). It should be noted that there are no significant differences between regions with regards to overall levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

**Figure 5: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work of the LGA? (Cross-tabulated by region)**



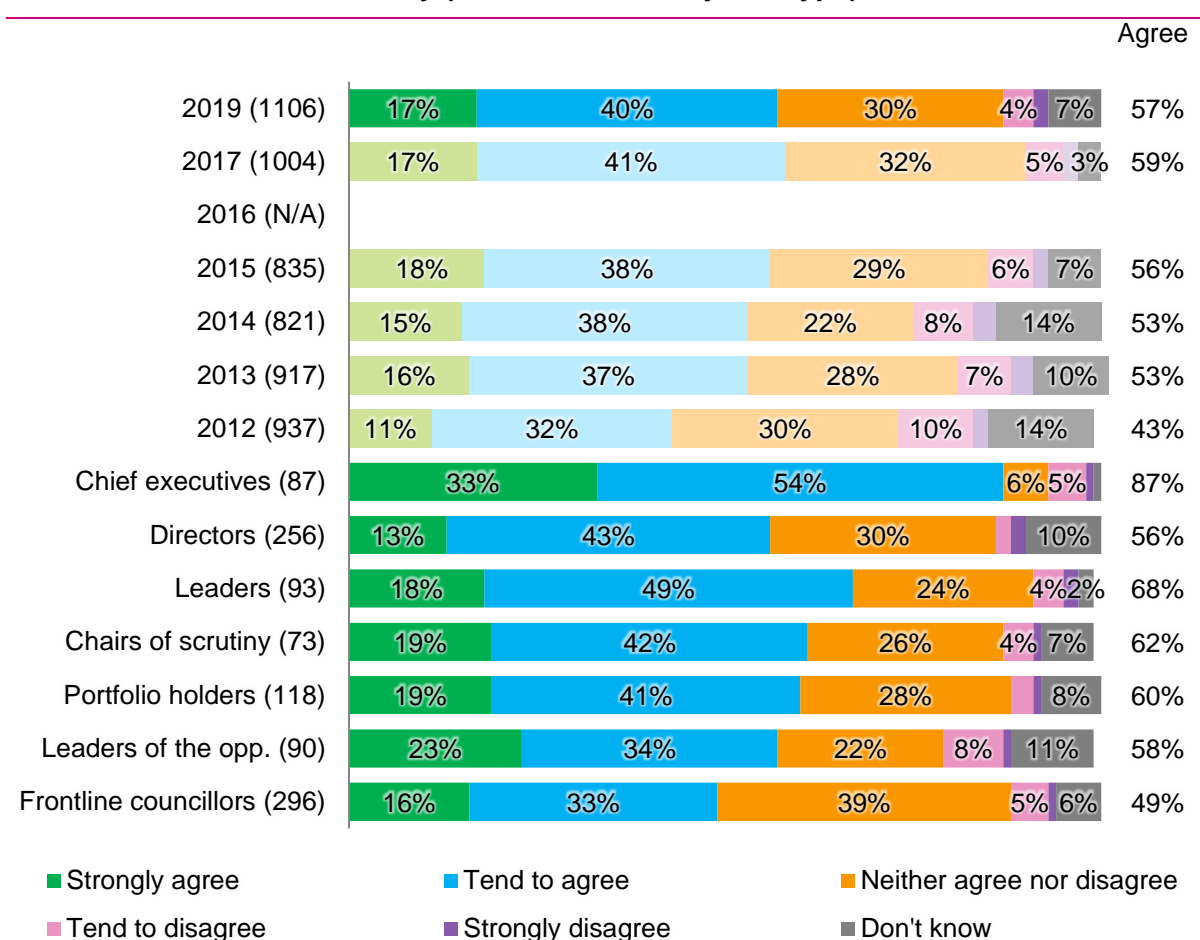
Bases in parentheses, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

### 3.4 Value for money of the LGA

Respondents were then asked to state the extent to which they agree that the LGA demonstrates value for money. There has been no real change compared to the previous year on this metric, with 57% agreeing that the LGA represents value for money in 2019 compared to 59% in 2017. It is worth noting, however, that the percentage who were unsure (7%) has returned to 2015 levels after reaching a low of 3% in 2017.

Chief executives are significantly more likely to agree that the LGA demonstrates value for money compared to all other roles (87%). The disparity between chief executives and all other groups is highlighted by the 19-percentage point gap between it and the group with the second highest level of agreement, leaders (68%). As seen previously, the difference between Chief Executives and other role types is largely a result of those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree', rather than being due to higher levels of disagreement.

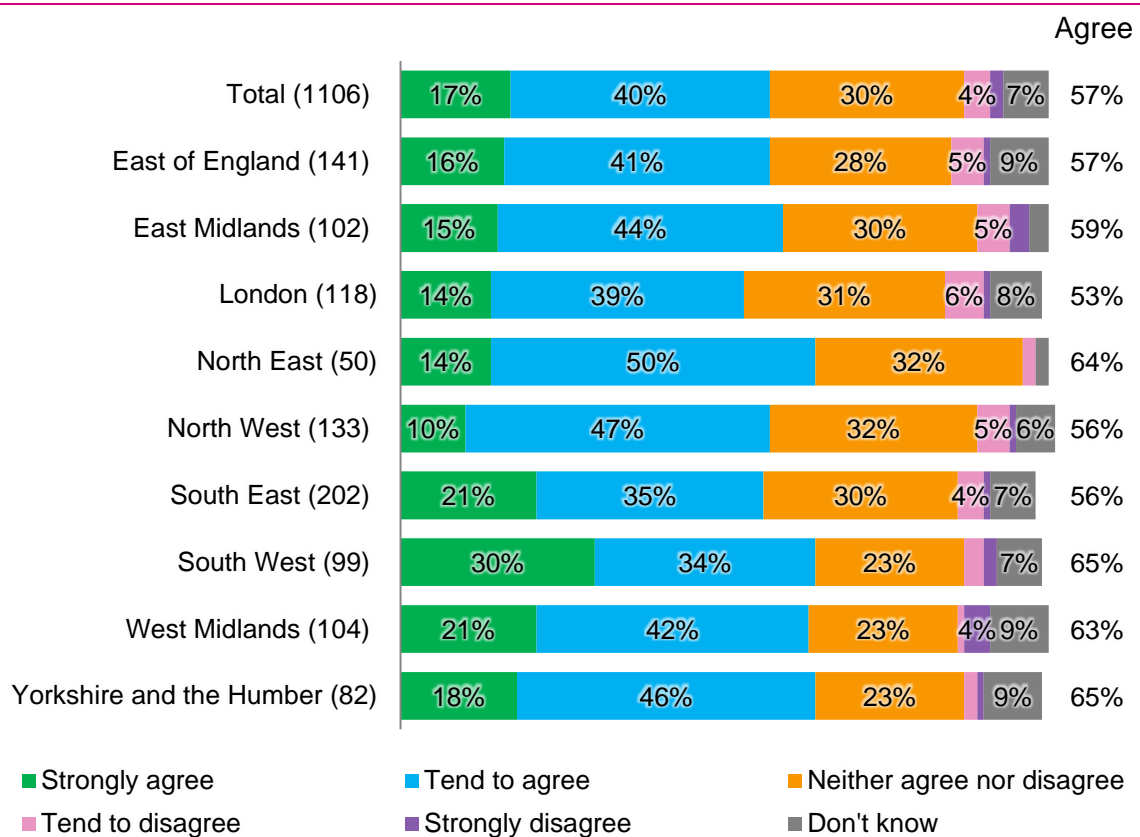
**Figure 6: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? LGA demonstrates value for money (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

Consistent with 2017, stakeholders in the South West are the most likely to feel that the LGA demonstrates value for money (65% in 2019 and 2017). Indeed, those in the South West are significantly more likely than average to strongly agree with this statement (30% South West, 17% average). North West stakeholders are significantly less likely to strongly agree than average (10% North West, 17% average) but when this figure is combined with those who tend to agree, the overall figure is in line with total (56% North West, 57% average).

**Figure 7: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? LGA demonstrates value for money (Cross-tabulated by region)**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

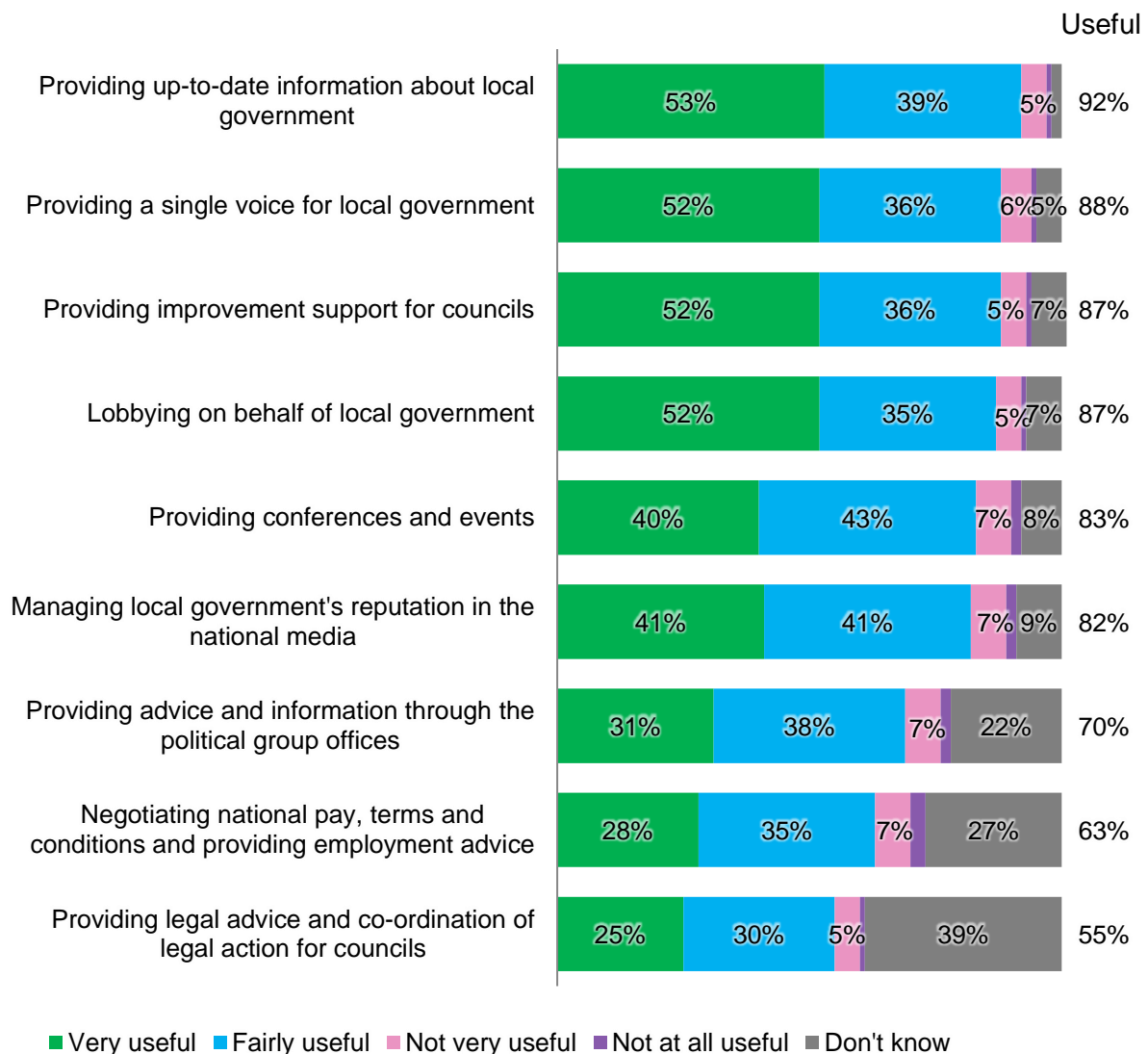
### 3.5 Usefulness of activities undertaken by the LGA

Figure 8 details how useful stakeholders find various activities that the LGA performs either to their council or local government. As was the case in 2016 and 2017, *providing up-to-date information about local government*, continues to perform strongly and is rated the most useful activity this year (92%). *Providing a single voice for local government* (88%), *providing improvement support for councils* and *lobbying on behalf of local government* (87%) are considered the next most useful activities by stakeholders. Both *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions* and *providing employment advice* (63%) and *providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils* (55%) remain the least useful activities in the opinion of stakeholders, as was the case in 2017.

The percentage of stakeholders who find *providing advice and information through the political group offices* and *providing legal advice and coordination of legal action for councils* useful has declined compared to 2017 (9 and 7 percentage points respectively). This can largely be explained by an increase in the percentage answering don't know (11 and 9 percentage points respectively). As might be expected, given the political nature of the activity, senior councillors (80%) and frontline councillors (73%) are more likely than officers (60%) to find *providing advice and information through the political group offices* useful.

The percentage of stakeholders who find the LGA's role in *providing conferences and events* has increased significantly by 4-percentage points compared to 2017 (83% in 2019, 79% in 2017).

**Figure 8: Please tell me how useful or not each of the following LGA activities are to your council or local government as a whole.**



Base = 1106, single response question

Source: survey of LGA members

Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

By region, the following findings differ significantly compared to the average:

- East of England
  - More likely to find an activity useful: *Providing conferences and events* (91% East of England, 83% average)
- East Midlands
  - More likely to find an activity not useful: *Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils* (14% East Midlands, 7% average) and *providing up-to-date information about local government* (12% East Midlands, 5% average)

- South West
  - More likely to find an activity useful: *Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice* (73% South West, 63% average).
- West Midlands
  - More likely to find an activity useful: *Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils* (64% West Midlands, cf. 55% average)

Table 6 shows the usefulness of LGA activities by amalgamated role, combining those who deem the activities either very or fairly useful. Any figures which are significantly higher than at least one other figure in the same row are **highlighted**.

As was the case in 2017, officers rate seven of the nine activities significantly more useful compared to at least one of the other groups. Meanwhile, the number of activities that senior councillors find more useful has increased from one in 2017 to six in 2019. Frontline councillors only find one activity more useful than at least one other group: *providing advice and information through the political group officers* (73% frontline councillors, 60% officers).

**Table 6: Proportion saying LGA activities are useful (Cross-tabulated by amalgamated role type)**

Stakeholder group	Officers	Senior councillors	Frontline councillors
Sample size	(343)	(374)	(296)
Providing a single voice for local government	<u>93%</u>	<u>89%</u>	84%
Providing up-to-date information about local government (for example, 'first' magazine, e-bulletins and website)	93%	92%	92%
Lobbying on behalf of local government	<u>92%</u>	<u>89%</u>	80%
Providing improvement support for councils	<u>93%</u>	<u>89%</u>	82%
Managing local government's reputation in the national media	<u>90%</u>	<u>82%</u>	75%
Providing advice and information through the political group offices	60%	<u>80%</u>	<u>73%</u>
Providing conferences and events	<u>91%</u>	<u>85%</u>	76%
Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice	<u>72%</u>	60%	59%
Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils	<u>61%</u>	51%	53%

## 4 Views on LGA communications

### 4.1 How the LGA keeps members informed

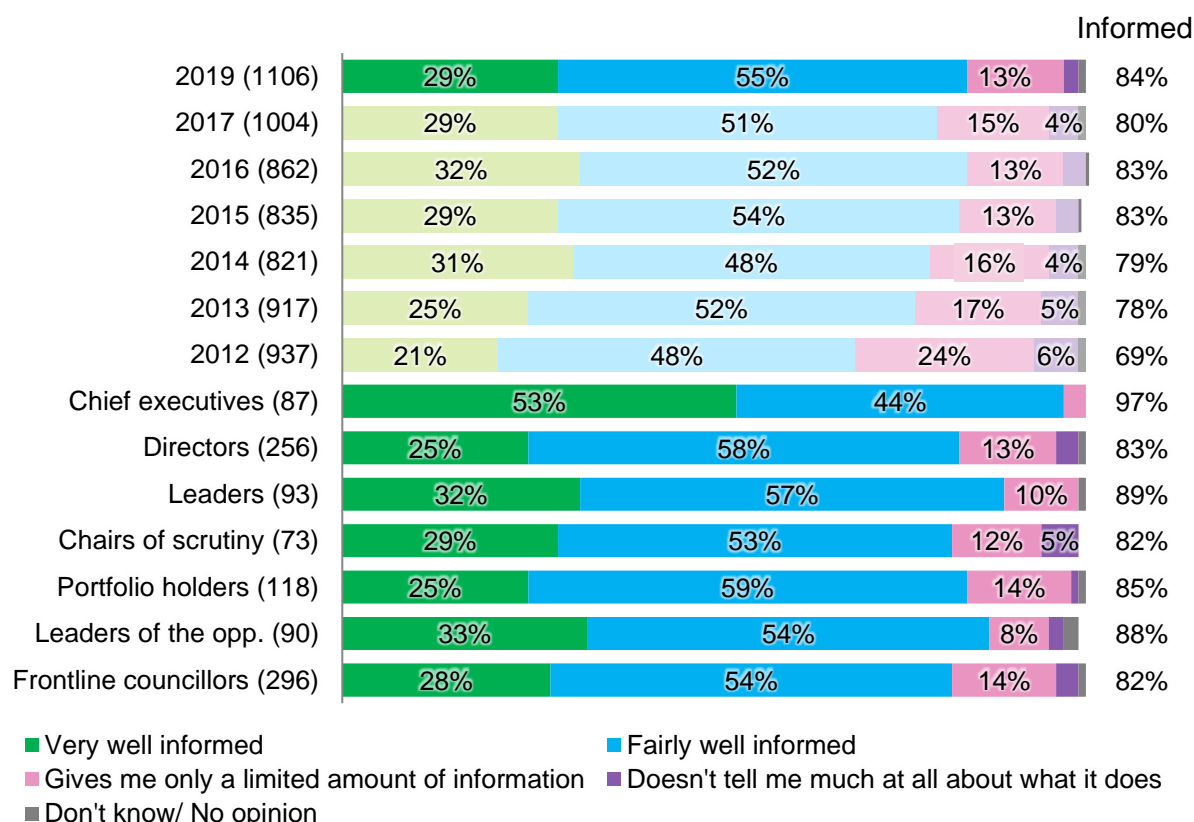
84% of stakeholders believe that the LGA keeps them very or fairly well informed about its work. This increase can be traced to a rise in the number of stakeholders who feel fairly well informed compared to 2017 (55% in 2019, 51% in 2017).

One in eight stakeholders (13%) feel that the LGA gives only a limited amount of information and 2% say that the LGA doesn't tell them much at all about what it does.

Chief executives are by far the most likely to feel informed (97%), exemplified by over half of this group feeling very well informed (53%). All other role types do not differ significantly from the average.

Results by region are consistent with the average, with no significant differences detected.

**Figure 9: How well informed, if at all, do you think the LGA keeps you about its work? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



Bases in parentheses, single response question

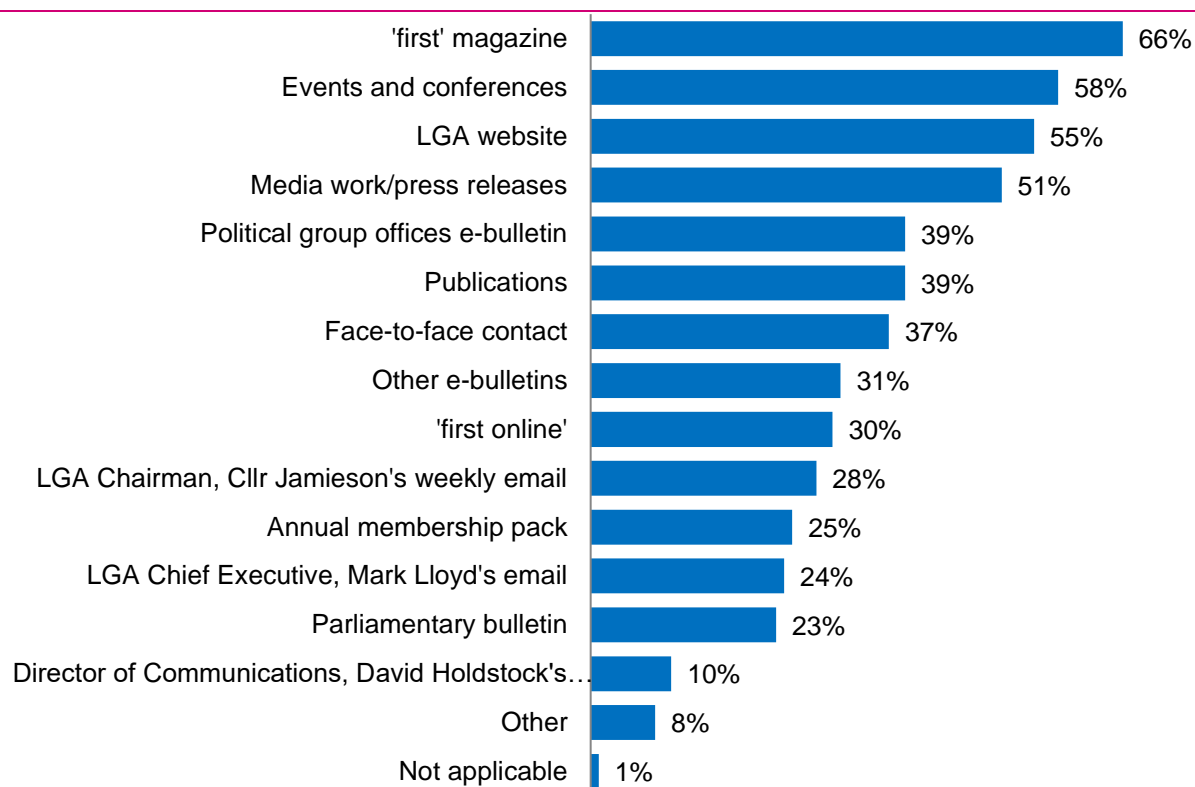
Source: survey of LGA members

Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed



As was the case in 2017, *'first' magazine* is the most popular method for finding out about the work of the LGA among stakeholders (66%). *Events and conferences* is the second most popular channel (58%) and the *LGA website* is in third position (55%).

**Figure 10: How do you generally find out about the work of the LGA?**



Base =1106, multiple response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

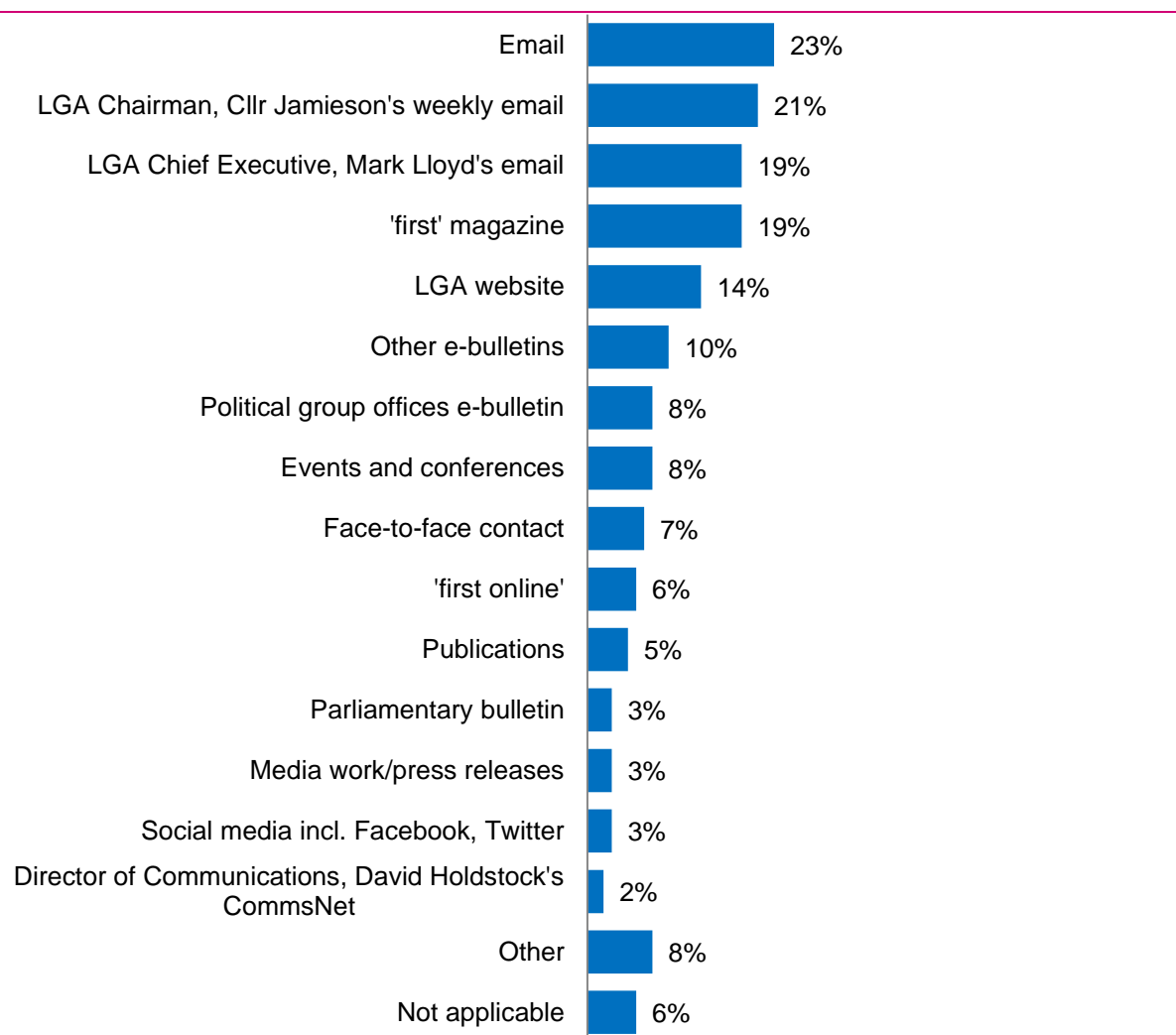
For senior councillors (86%) and frontline councillors (88%), *'first' magazine* remains the most popular channel, as was the case in 2017. While the online version of the magazine, *'first online'*, has increased significantly compared to the previous wave among both senior councillors (33% in 2019, 23% in 2017) and frontline councillors (33% in 2019, 24% in 2017). *'First online'* is one of the only channels to see a significant increase in popularity compared to the previous wave within these groups.

**Table 7: How do you generally find out about the work of the LGA? (Cross-tabulated by amalgamated role type; All responses selected by above 2% overall)**

	Officers (343)	Senior councillors (374)	Frontline councillors (296)
'first' magazine	32%	<b><u>86%</u></b>	<b><u>88%</u></b>
Events and conferences	<b><u>72%</u></b>	<b><u>59%</u></b>	46%
LGA website	<b><u>76%</u></b>	<b><u>50%</u></b>	36%
Media work/press releases	<b><u>68%</u></b>	46%	40%
Political group offices e-bulletin	7%	<b><u>62%</u></b>	<b><u>54%</u></b>
Publications	<b><u>55%</u></b>	33%	32%
Face-to-face contact	<b><u>48%</u></b>	<b><u>39%</u></b>	25%
Other e-bulletins	<b><u>42%</u></b>	28%	25%
'first online'	28%	33%	33%
LGA Chairman, Cllr Jamieson's weekly email	9%	<b><u>41%</u></b>	<b><u>37%</u></b>
Annual membership pack	21%	25%	<b><u>32%</u></b>
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	<b><u>46%</u></b>	13%	15%
Parliamentary bulletin	21%	25%	26%
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	<b><u>17%</u></b>	6%	6%
Other	<b><u>11%</u></b>	7%	6%

Following on from feedback on how stakeholders generally find out about the work of the LGA, respondents were asked how they would prefer to find out about its work. Email is the most popular method of communication, with around one in five expressing preference for either a generic email (23%), *LGA Chairman, Cllr Jamieson's weekly email* (21%) or *LGA Chief Executive Mark Lloyd's email* (19%). Alternatively, *'first' magazine* enjoys a similar level of popularity (19%). It should be noted that respondents were asked this as an open-ended question, without being prompted with response options rather than responding 'yes' or 'no' to each form of communication. This means that the results capture the most 'top of mind' methods of communication.

**Figure 11: Thinking about the communication methods I just listed, and any others that you might know of, how would you like to find out about the work of the LGA? (All responses above 2%)**



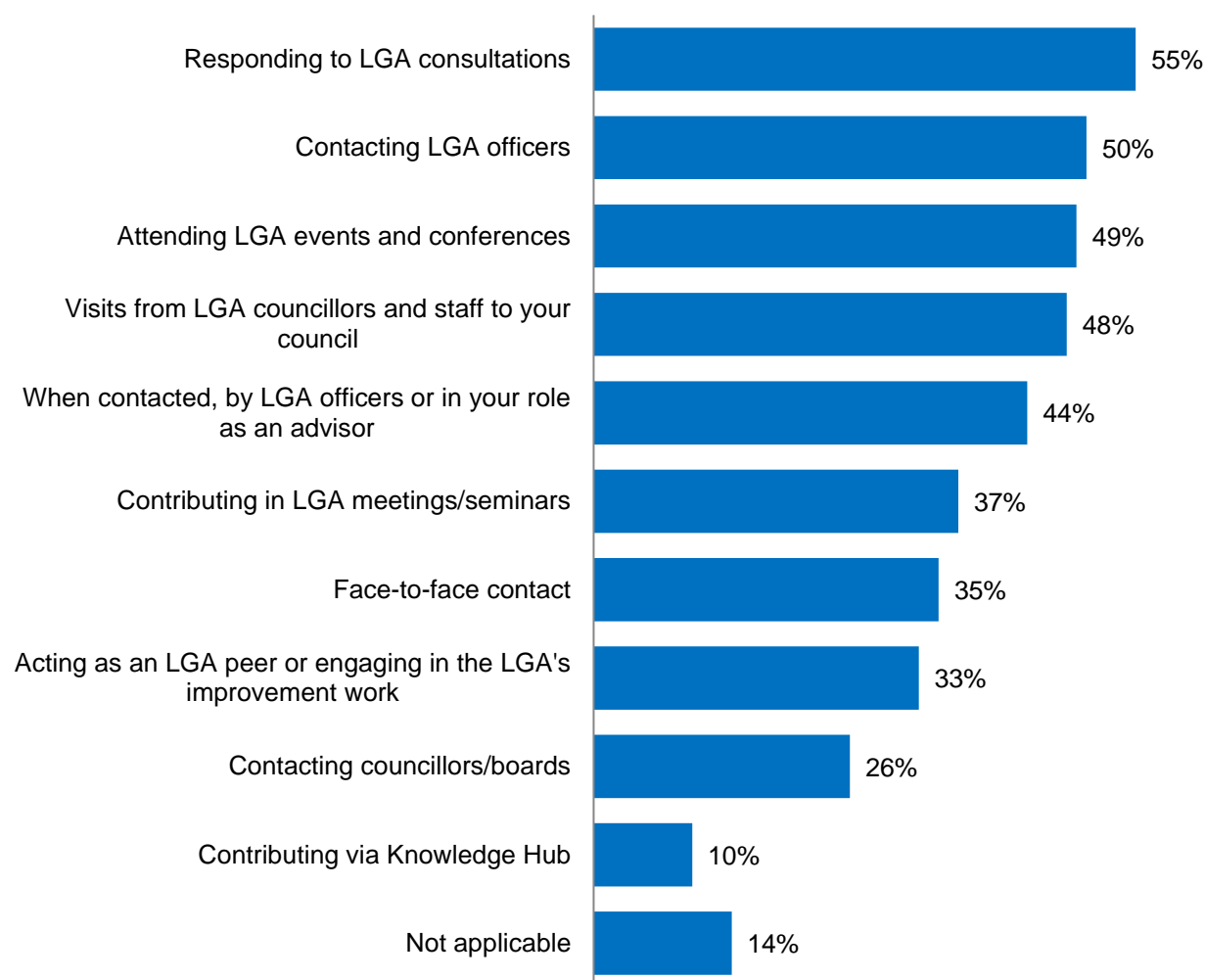
Base =1106, multiple response question

Source: survey of LGA members

## 4.2 How authorities engage with the LGA

*Responding to LGA consultations (55%) continues to be the most popular form of engagement among LGA stakeholders. Around half of respondents engage with the LGA by contacting LGA officers (50%), attending LGA events and conferences (49%) or visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council (48%). One in 10 engage through contributing via Knowledge Hub (10%), making it the least common form of engagement.*

**Figure 12: How do you engage with the LGA? (All responses above 2%)**



Base = 1106, multiple response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

Analysing the results by amalgamated role, the most common form of engagement for officers is *responding to LGA consultations*.

For senior councillors, *visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council* (55%) is the most common form of engagement while, for frontline councillors, *responding to LGA consultations* is also the most popular (39%).

**Table 8: How do you engage with the LGA? (Cross-tabulated by role type, all responses selected by above 2% overall)**

	Officers (343)	Senior councillors (374)	Frontline councillors (296)
Responding to LGA consultations	<u>76%</u>	<u>54%</u>	39%
Contacting LGA officers	<u>72%</u>	<u>50%</u>	30%
Attending LGA events and conferences	<u>66%</u>	<u>52%</u>	30%
Visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council	<u>56%</u>	<u>55%</u>	35%
When contacted, by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor	<u>62%</u>	<u>43%</u>	28%
Contributing in LGA meetings/seminars	<u>52%</u>	<u>39%</u>	21%
Face-to-face contact	<u>50%</u>	<u>38%</u>	19%
Acting as an LGA peer or engaging in the LGA's improvement work	<u>53%</u>	<u>32%</u>	14%
Contacting councillors/boards	15%	<u>37%</u>	<u>29%</u>
Contributing via Knowledge Hub	<u>17%</u>	7%	4%

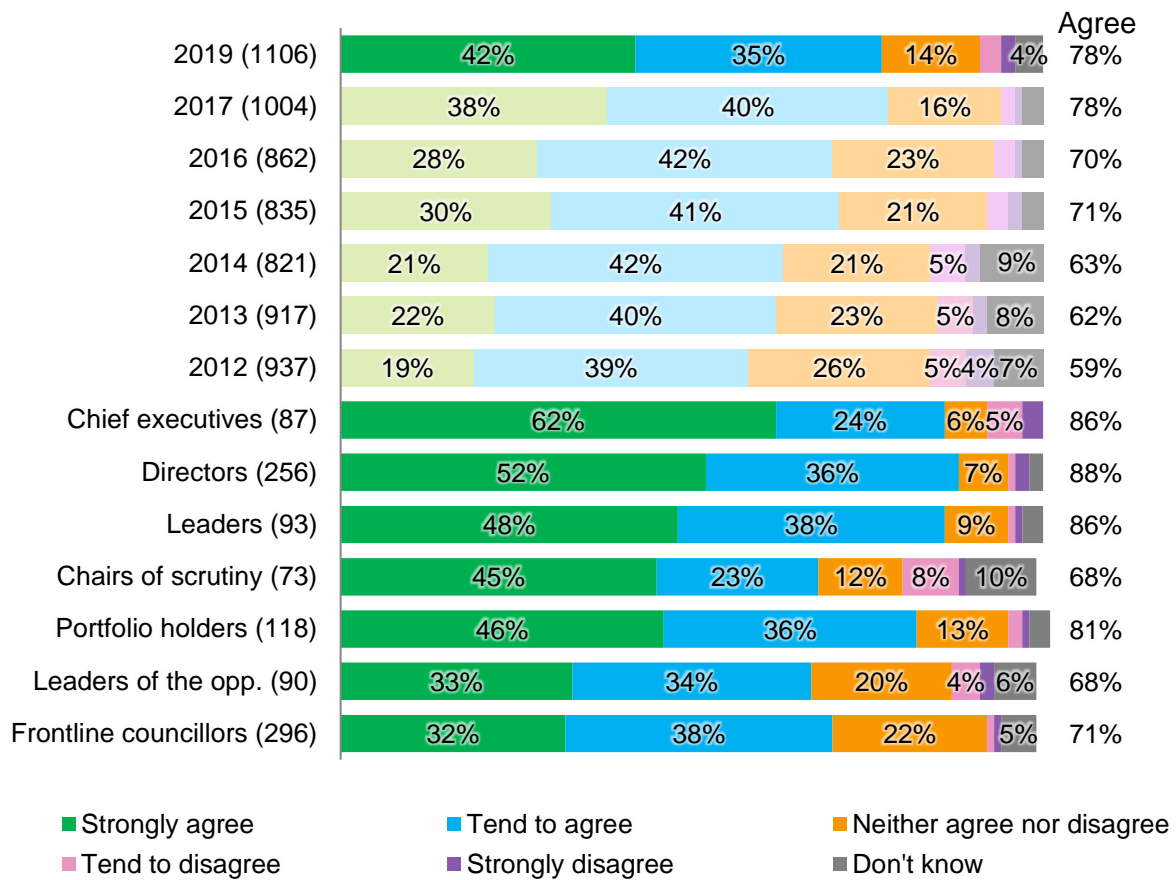
## 5 Views on sector-led improvement

### 5.1 Views on LGA's approach to sector-led improvement

One of the key goals of the LGA is to facilitate the improvement of councils by mobilising knowledge, skills and experience within the sector. This approach is called 'sector-led improvement'. Stakeholders are largely positive about this, with 78% agreeing that this is the right approach in the current context. Other stakeholders are mostly neutral (14%) while only 4% disagree.

Directors (88%), chief executives (86%) and leaders (86%) are the most likely groups to agree that sector-led improvement is the right approach. Meanwhile, leaders of the opposition (68%) and frontline councillors (71%) are less likely to agree, but this is mainly down to more people choosing the neutral option in these groups. It is worth noting that Chairs of Scrutiny are significantly more likely than average to disagree that the approach is the right one to be taking (10% chairs of scrutiny, 4% average).

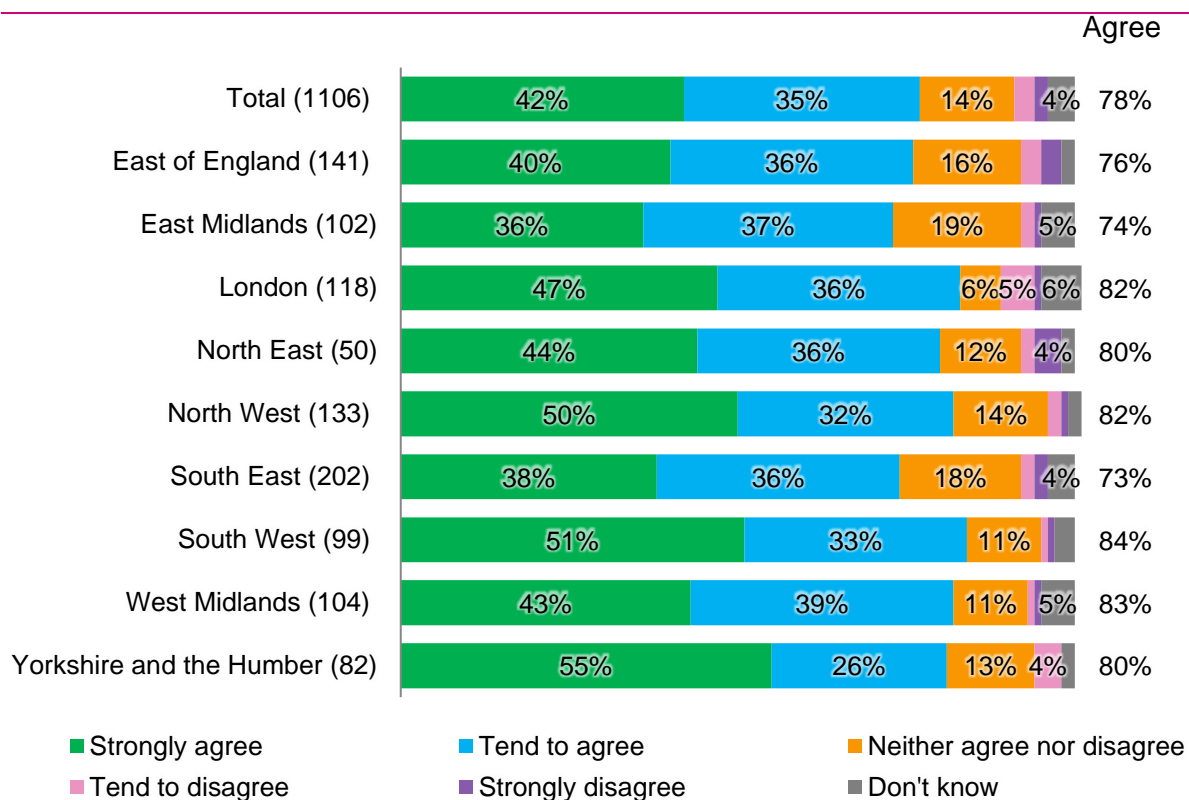
**Figure 13: To what extent do you agree or disagree that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

No significant differences compared to the average are present when analysing the results about sector-led improvement by region. Further to this, the only agree figure that has changed significantly compared to the previous wave is the North West, increasing by 13-percentage points (82% in 2019, 69% in 2017).

**Figure 14: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the approach to sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context? (Cross-tabulated by region)**

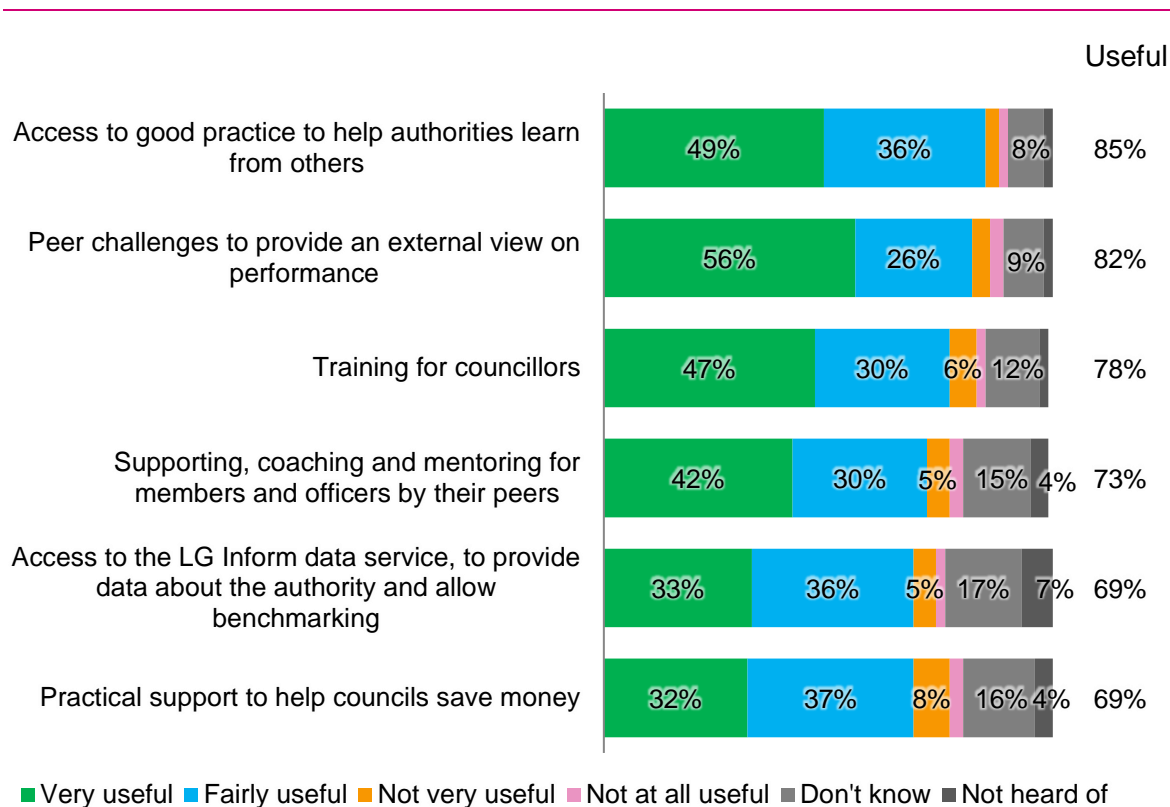


Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members  
 Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed



After being asked about sector-led improvement as an approach, stakeholders were asked about the usefulness of specific elements of the LGA's improvement support offer. Like in 2017, *access to good practice to help authorities learn from others* is deemed the most useful (85%), followed by *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* (82%). Only one element has changed significantly, *supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers*, which 77% found useful in 2017 compared to 73% in 2019.

**Figure 15: How useful are the following elements of the LGA's improvement support offer for councils?**



Base=1106, single response question

Source: survey of LGA members

Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

Looking at the usefulness of the LGA's support offer by amalgamated job role, both officers and senior councillors are more likely to find *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* useful (94% and 82% respectively) than frontline councillors (72%). As well as this, officers are more likely than both senior councillors and frontline councillors to find *access to good practice to help authorities learn from others* useful (90% officers, 83% senior councillors and 82% frontline councillors). This element of the LGA improvement offer is rated the most useful among both senior councillors and frontline councillors.

It is also worth noting that officers rate the usefulness of *supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers* 13-percentage points lower than they did in the previous wave (76% in 2019, 89% in 2017). More positively, *training for councillors* is rated more useful than it was previously by frontline councillors (81% in 2019, 73% in 2017).

Every region apart from the London rates *access to good practice to help authorities learn from others* as the most useful element of the LGA's improvement support offer. In London *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* is the most useful element, and in the East Midlands this element is the joint most useful.

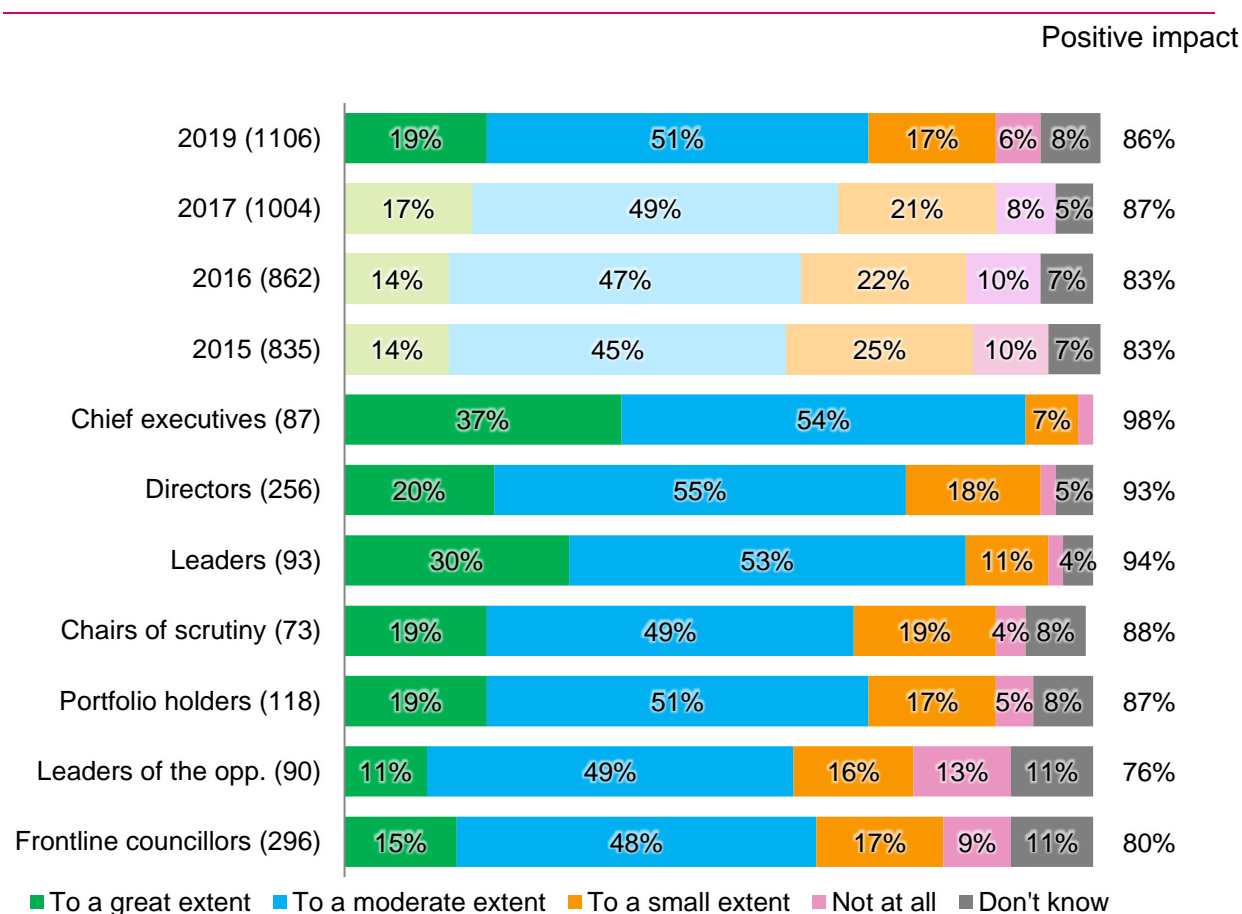
**Table 9: How useful are the following elements of the LGAs improvement support offer for councils? (Cross-tabulated by role type, very/fairly useful combined values shown).**

	Officers (343)	Senior councillors (374)	Frontline councillors (296)
Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others	<b>90%</b>	83%	82%
Peer challenges to provide an external view on performance	<b>94%</b>	<b>82%</b>	72%
Training for councillors	75%	81%	81%
Supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers	76%	74%	72%
Access to the LG Inform data service, to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking	<b>78%</b>	68%	66%
Practical support to help councils save money	73%	68%	68%

Moving onto the impact that improvement support has had on local authorities, most stakeholders are positive. Overall, 86% feel that this support has benefited their local authority by a great, moderate or small extent whereas only 6% say it has had no impact at all.

Nearly all chief executives describe the support as having a positive impact (98%), while leaders (94%) and directors (93%) also have overwhelmingly positive opinions. Leaders of the opposition are least positive but even here nearly three-quarters of respondents feel that the improvement offer has had at least a small impact (76%).

**Figure 16: Overall, thinking about this improvement support to what extent do you think that these have had a positive impact on your authority? (Cross-tabulated by role type)<sup>4</sup>**



Bases in parentheses, single response question

Source: survey of LGA members

Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

<sup>4</sup> Note that the summary figure includes all those who selected the 'great', 'moderate' or 'small extent' answer options.

## 5.2 Support

Most stakeholders feel that the LGA should continue to provide support in all the areas asked about. More than nine in 10 stakeholders would like continued support in *training for councillors* (92%), *providing peer challenge and peer support* (91%) and *practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income* (88%).

*Supporting economic growth and devolution* has increased by 4-percentage points compared to the previous year (83% in 2019, 79% in 2017).

Agreement is lowest *increasing housing supply*, but three-quarters of stakeholders want the support to continue in these areas (75%), the highest level of agreement being from those in London (83%).

**Figure 17: Do you think the LGA should continue to provide support in the following areas?**

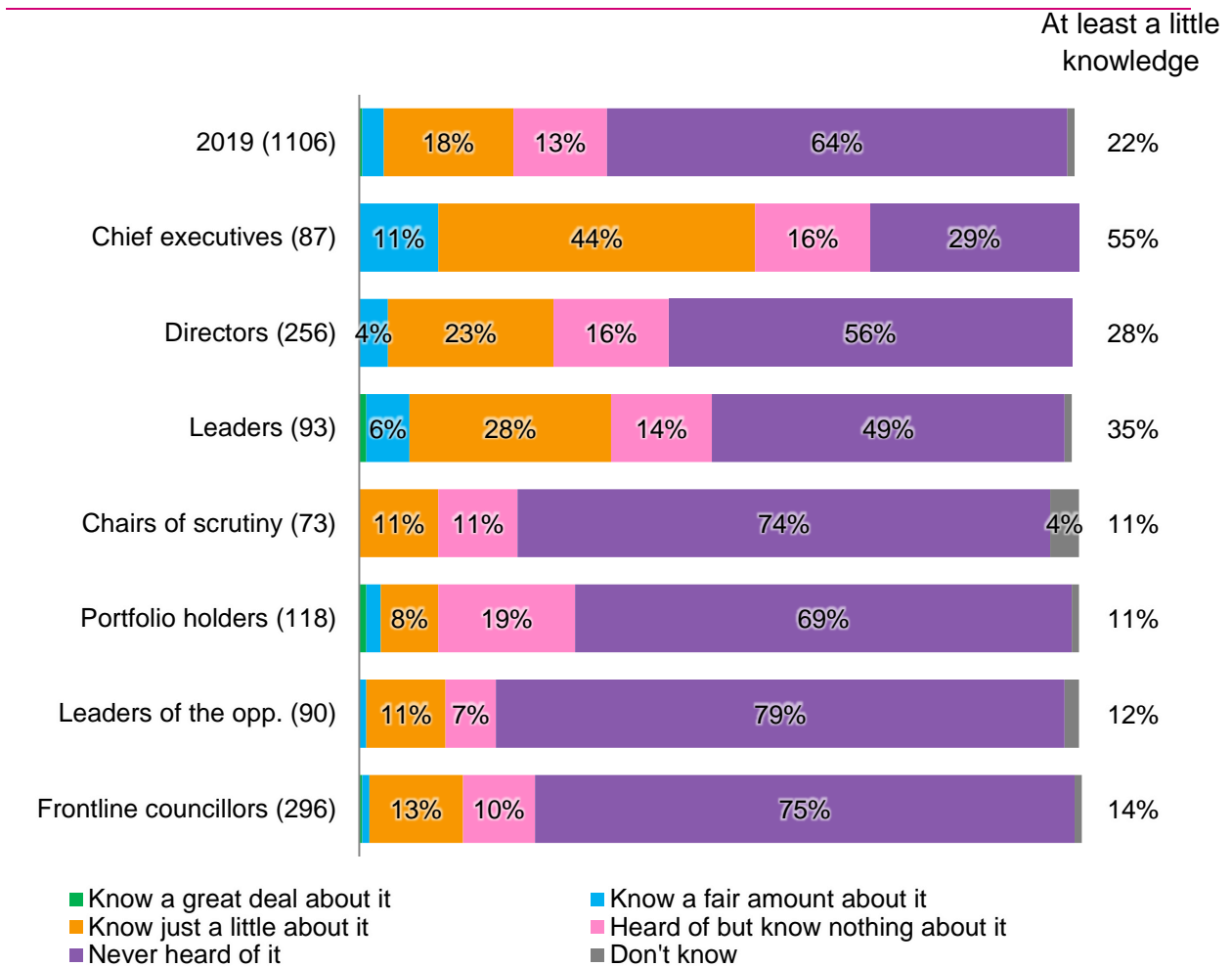


Base = 1106, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

Stakeholders were asked about a newly launched LGA initiative to help councils improve – the Transformation and Innovation Exchange (TIEx). Knowledge of this initiative is currently limited. Overall, 64% have not heard of TIEx, 13% have heard of it but have no knowledge and 18% know just a little about the project, 3% know a fair amount and fewer than 1% know a great deal.

Awareness of TIEx by job role shows that knowledge is strongest among chief executives with more than half (55%) having at least a little knowledge.

**Figure 18: As part of the work to help councils to continuously improve, the LGA has recently launched the Transformation and Innovation Exchange... How much have you heard about this support offer? (Cross-tabulated by role type)**



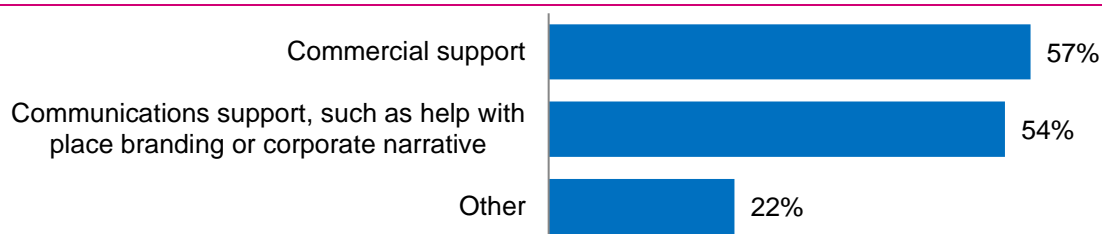
Base = 1106, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

### 5.3 New areas of support

Looking to the future, stakeholders were asked if they would like the LGA to introduce new areas of support relating to commercialisation and communications. Levels of agreement for these two areas are similar, with 57% of stakeholders expressing a desire to see *commercial support* and 54% wanting *communications support*.

As well as this, 22% of stakeholders suggest that the LGA should provide support in other areas. Of those who could identify a new area of support, 16% would like *support for individual/minority councillors* while 15% want support related to *sustainable environment (including climate change)*.

**Figure 19: Which, if any, of the following new areas of support would you like to see provided by the LGA? [Multicode question]**



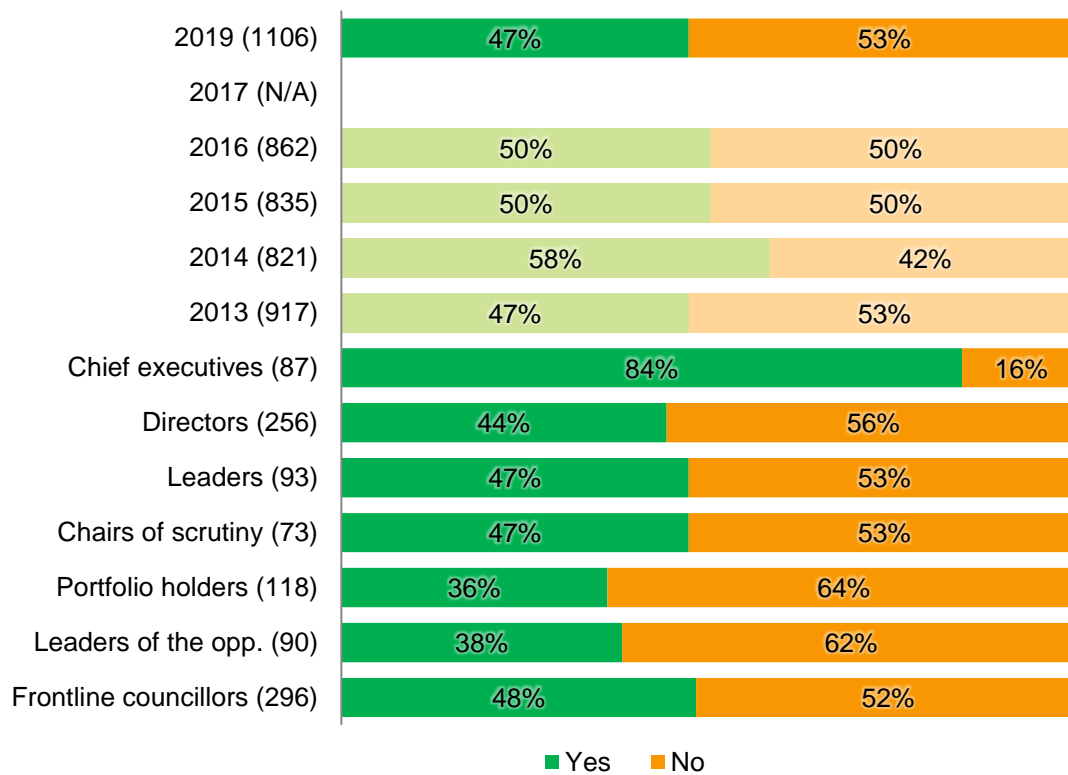
Base = 1106, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

## 6 Views on Local Partnerships

Stakeholders were asked about Local Partnerships – a company jointly owned by HM Treasury and the LGA which provides commercial expertise to public sector organisations on planning and delivering complex projects. Awareness is mixed as 47% of stakeholders have heard of Local Partnerships while 53% have not. This does not represent a significant change versus 2016; the last year this question was asked.

Chief executives are the most likely role to have heard of local partnerships (84%).

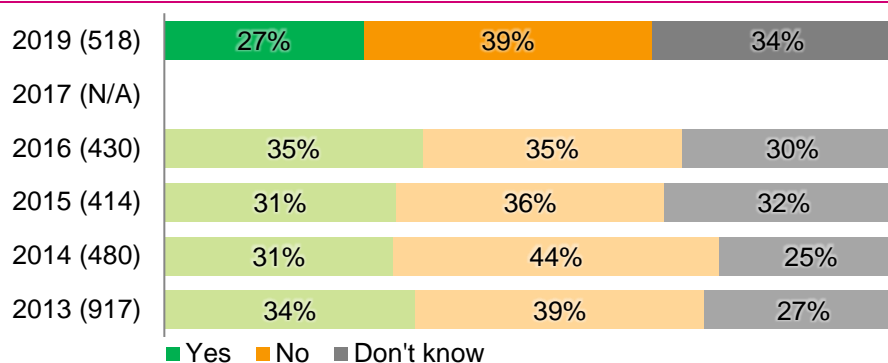
**Figure 20: Have you heard of Local Partnerships?**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

Stakeholders who have heard of Local Partnerships were asked whether their council has used any of the services it provides in the last year. A total of 27% say that their council has used these services, which is a drop of 8-percentage points compared to 2016. 39% say that these services have not been used and 34% don't know.

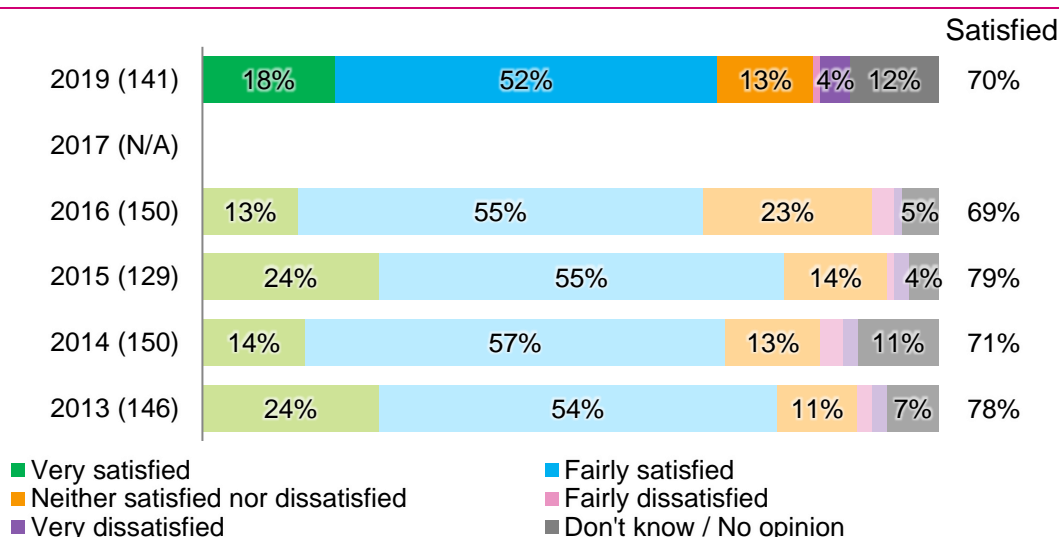
**Figure 21: Has your council used any of the services provided by Local Partnerships in the last year?**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

Stakeholders from councils that had used services provided by Local Partnerships were asked to rate their level of satisfaction. Satisfaction remained at a consistent level with 2016 as seven in 10 are satisfied (70%) with the services provided.

**Figure 22: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services provided by Local Partnerships?**



Bases in parentheses, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members  
Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed



## 7 Conclusions

This section summarises the main findings and themes evident from this research.

- **Is the LGA well-known among its members?** 80% of stakeholders know the LGA a great or fair amount, a substantial increase from 62% in 2012. Awareness levels are higher in some job roles, with all Chief Executives having at least a fair understanding of the LGA and 90% of leaders.
- **How would the LGA's members describe it to others?** 79% of stakeholders would speak positively about the LGA, an increase of 6-percentage points compared to 2017. The most notable regional increases from the previous round are the North East, London and the West Midlands.
- **Are LGA's members satisfied with its work?** 78% of stakeholders are satisfied with the work of the LGA compared to 73% in 2017. Satisfaction among frontline councillors has increased by 10-percentage points compared to 2017. The most notable regional increases from the previous round are London, and Yorkshire and the Humber.
- **Do the LGA's members think it offers value for money?** 57% of stakeholders agree that the LGA demonstrates value for money and 30% have a neutral view, broadly consistent with 2017. Perceptions of the LGA providing value for money are highest in the South West (65%), Yorkshire and the Humber (65%), and the North East (64%).
- **Do the LGA's members consider its work useful?** Stakeholders are largely positive about the usefulness of the LGA's activities, particularly its role in providing members with up-to-date information about local government (92%) and lobbying on behalf of the sector (88%).
- **Does the LGA keep its members informed about its work?** 84% of stakeholders feel informed about the LGA's work, reversing a drop noted in 2017. This indicator received the highest proportion of positive comments across all the key measures. Levels of feeling informed are highest among chief executives (97%), leaders (89%) and leaders of the opposition (88%).

- **How do the LGA's members find out its work?** 'first' magazine is the main way stakeholders find out about the LGA's work (66%), followed by events and conferences (58%) and the LGA website (55%). The most popular channel for senior and frontline councillors is 'first' magazine (86% and 88% respectively), and the LGA website is the most popular among officers (76%).
- **How do the LGA's members want to find out about its work?** Email channels are members' preferred ways to find out about the LGA's work, including general email and ebulletins from the chairman and chief executive.
- **How do the LGA's members engage with the organisation?** Stakeholders mainly engage with the LGA by responding to consultations (55%), contacting LGA officers (50%) and attending events and conferences (49%).
- **Is sector-led improvement the right approach, according to the LGA's members?** 78% of stakeholders think sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context. All elements of the LGA's sector-led improvement offer are considered useful by most stakeholders, particularly access to good practice to help authorities learn from others (85%), peer challenges (82%) and councillor training (78%).
- **Has the LGA's improvement support to councils had a positive impact?** 86% of stakeholders agree that the LGA's improvement support has had a positive impact on their authority.
- **Which aspects of the LGA's support offer do its members want to see continue?** Stakeholders said all support offers put forward in the survey should continue, particularly *training for councillors* (92%), *providing peer challenge and peer support* (91%), and *practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income* (88%).

## Appendix 1: Standard error

The following table shows the maximum standard error for each of the region and role types considered in this report<sup>5</sup>.

Category	Number in sample population	Number of interviews achieved	Maximum standard error (%)
<b>Region</b>			
East of England	2,559	141	±8%
East Midlands	2,094	102	±9.5%
London	2,025	118	±8.8%
North East	857	50	±13.5%
North West	2,526	133	±8.3%
South East	3,672	202	±6.7%
South West	1,767	99	±9.6%
West Midlands	1,731	104	±9.3%
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,316	82	±10.5%
<b>Amalgamated role type</b>			
Officers	2,399	343	±4.9%
Senior councillors	3,338	374	±4.8%
Frontline councillors	12,810	296	±5.6%
<b>Role type</b>			
Chief executives	324	87	±9%
Directors	2,075	256	±5.7%
Leaders	259	93	±8.2%
Leaders of the opposition	522	90	±9.4%
Chairs of scrutiny	772	73	±10.9%
Portfolio holders	1,785	118	±8.7%
Frontline councillors	12,810	296	±5.6%
<b>Local authority type<sup>6</sup></b>			
English county	1,852	75	±11.1%
English unitary	3,551	191	±6.9%
London borough	2,031	119	±8.7%
Metropolitan district	2,681	126	±8.5%
Non-metropolitan district	9,036	514	±4.2%

<sup>5</sup> Please note, the total base sizes for local authority, region and role subgroups are not equal due to some respondents refusing to disclose this information.

<sup>6</sup> The total population size for local authority type is larger than the total population due to the presence of duplicates between local authority types (e.g. a councillor who is both a county councillor and a district councillor is counted in both relevant rows). However, it should be noted that for sampling and analysis purposes, each councillor is only counted once (i.e. they will only be counted in one row in the number of interviews achieved column).

## Appendix 2: Questionnaire

**Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.**

ARE YOU INTERVIEWING THE ORIGINAL CONTACT? IF NOT, PLEASE CONFIRM JOB TITLE WITH REFERRAL AND CODE ACCORDINGLY:

Officer – Chief Executive
Officer – Deputy/Assistant Chief Executive
Officer – Director/Assistant Director/Head of Communications
Councillor – Leader of the council
Councillor – Deputy leader of the council
Councillor – Cabinet member of the council/portfolio holder
Councillor – Chair of scrutiny
Councillor – Backbench member of the council
Councillor – Leader of the opposition
Other: PLEASE CLOSE

ASK ALL

**Q1. How well do you know the Local Government Association (the LGA)?**  
READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Know a great deal about it	1	CONTINUE
Know a fair amount about it	2	CONTINUE
Know just a little about it	3	CONTINUE
Heard of but know nothing about it	4	THANK & CLOSE
Never heard of it	5	THANK & CLOSE
Don't know/ No opinion	6	THANK & CLOSE

ASK ALL

**Q2. Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of the Local Government Association to other people?**

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

I speak positively about the Local Government Association without being asked	1	CONTINUE
I speak positively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it	2	CONTINUE
I have no views one way or another	3	CONTINUE
I speak negatively about the Local Government Association if I am asked about it	4	CONTINUE
I speak negatively about the Local Government Association without being asked	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q3. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work of the Local Government Association?**

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Very satisfied	1	CONTINUE
Fairly satisfied	2	CONTINUE

Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	CONTINUE
Fairly dissatisfied	4	CONTINUE
Very dissatisfied	5	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The LGA demonstrates value for money.**

SINGLE CODE ONLY

Strongly agree	1	CONTINUE
Tend to agree	2	CONTINUE
Neither agree nor disagree	3	CONTINUE
Tend to disagree	4	CONTINUE
Strongly disagree	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q5. Please tell me how useful or not each of the following LGA activities are to your council or local government as a whole.**

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-J.

**Q5 A Providing a single voice for local government**

**Q5 B Lobbying on behalf of local government**

**Q5 C Providing advice and information through the political group offices**

**Q5 D Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice**

**Q5 E Managing local government's reputation in the national media**

**Q5 F Providing improvement support for councils (for example, peer challenges, training and mentoring for councillors, helping councils make efficiency savings and generate income, good practice)**

**Q5 G Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils (for example, property searches, and NHS claims for business rate rebates)**

**Q5 H Providing up-to-date information about local government (for example, 'first' magazine, e-bulletins and website)**

**Q5 I Providing conferences and events**

**Q5 J Any other LGA activities you use or benefit from (Please specify)**

Very useful	1	CONTINUE
Fairly useful	2	CONTINUE
Not very useful	3	CONTINUE
Not at all useful	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q6. How well informed, if at all, do you think the LGA keeps you about its work?**

READ OUT. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Very well informed	1	CONTINUE
Fairly well informed	2	CONTINUE
Gives me only a limited amount of information	3	CONTINUE
Doesn't tell me much at all about what it does	4	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	5	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q7a. How do you generally find out about the work of the LGA?**

READ OUT. MULTI CODE. ASK EACH METHOD ONE BY ONE

LGA Chairman, Cllr Jamieson's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	2	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin (from the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat or Independent groups)	3	CONTINUE
Parliamentary bulletin	4	CONTINUE
Other e-bulletins (for example, children and young people e-bulletin, finance e-bulletin)	5	CONTINUE
'first' magazine	6	CONTINUE
'first online'	7	CONTINUE
LGA website	8	CONTINUE
Media work/press releases	9	CONTINUE
Publications (for example, the LGA's green paper 'The Lives We Want to Lead')	10	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	11	CONTINUE
Face-to-face contact	12	CONTINUE
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	13	CONTINUE
Annual membership pack	14	CONTINUE
Other	15	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q7b. Thinking about the communication methods I just listed, and any others that you might know of, how would you like to find out about the work of the LGA?**

UNPROMPTED DO NOT READ OUT. CODE UP TO THREE

LGA Chairman, Cllr Jamieson's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	2	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin (from the Conservative, Labour, Liberal Democrat or Independent groups)	3	CONTINUE
Parliamentary bulletin	4	CONTINUE
Other e-bulletins (for example, children and young people e-bulletin, finance e-bulletin)	5	CONTINUE
'first' magazine	6	CONTINUE
'first online'	7	CONTINUE
LGA website	8	CONTINUE
Media work/press releases	9	CONTINUE
Publications (for example, the LGA's green paper 'The Lives We Want to Lead')	10	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	11	CONTINUE
Face-to-face contact	12	CONTINUE
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	13	CONTINUE
Annual membership pack	14	CONTINUE
Other: please specify	15	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q8. How do you engage with the LGA?**

READ OUT. MULTI CODE

Contacting LGA officers, for example via email or telephone	1	CONTINUE
Contacting councillors/boards, for example via email or telephone	2	CONTINUE
When contacted, by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor, for example via email or telephone	3	CONTINUE
Contributing via Knowledge Hub	4	CONTINUE
Contributing in LGA meetings/seminars	5	CONTINUE
Responding to LGA consultations	6	CONTINUE
Face-to-face contact, for example, with your principal advisor	7	CONTINUE
Acting as an LGA peer or engaging in the LGA's improvement work (for example through a peer challenge)	8	CONTINUE
Attending LGA events and conferences (for example the LGA Annual Conference and NCAS the National Children and Adult Services Conference)	9	CONTINUE
Visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council	10	CONTINUE
Other (please specify)	11	CONTINUE

Finally, the LGA also helps councils improve. It uses the knowledge, skills and experience in councils to help other councils improve. This approach is called “sector-led improvement”.

ASK ALL

**Q9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context?**

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE

Strongly agree	1	CONTINUE
Agree	2	CONTINUE
Neither agree nor disagree	3	CONTINUE
Disagree	4	CONTINUE
Strongly disagree	5	CONTINUE
Don't know/No opinion	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q10. How useful are the following elements of the LGA's improvement support offer for councils?**

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH A-F.

**Q10 A: Peer challenges to provide an external view on performance**

**Q10 B: Supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers**

**Q10 C: Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others**

**Q10 D: Access to the LG Inform data service, to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking**

**Q10 E: Practical support to help councils save money**

**Q10 F: Training for councillors**

Very useful	1	CONTINUE
Fairly useful	2	CONTINUE
Not very useful	3	CONTINUE
Not at all useful	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE
Not heard of	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q11. Overall, thinking about this improvement support to what extent do you think that these have had a positive impact on your authority?**

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE

To a great extent	1	CONTINUE
To a moderate extent	2	CONTINUE
To a small extent	3	CONTINUE
Not at all	4	CONTINUE
Don't know	5	CONTINUE



ASK ALL

**Q12. Do you think the LGA should continue to provide support in the following areas?**

RANDOMISE READOUT OF STATEMENTS. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH

**Q12 A: Practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income**

**Q12 B: Providing peer challenge and peer support**

**Q12 C: Training for councillors**

**Q12 D: Supporting economic growth and devolution**

**Q12 E: Increasing housing supply**

**Q12 F: Developing a flexible and productive workforce, including training for officers**

**Q12 G: Care and health, including integration**

ASK ALL

**Q13 As part of the work to help councils to continuously improve, the LGA has recently launched the Transformation and Innovation Exchange, bringing together a package of innovation and efficiency support and a self-assessment tool in one place. How much have you heard about this support offer?**

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Know a great deal about it	1	CONTINUE
Know a fair amount about it	2	CONTINUE
Know just a little about it	3	CONTINUE
Heard of but know nothing about it	4	CONTINUE
Never heard of it	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q14: Which, if any, of the following new areas of support would you like to see provided by the LGA? For example**

READ OUT. MULTI CODE

A: Commercial support	1	CONTINUE
B: Communications support, such as help with place branding or corporate narrative	2	CONTINUE
C: Other (please specify)	3	CONTINUE
D: None of these	4	CONTINUE
E: Don't know	5	CONTINUE

READ OUT

Local Partnerships is a company, jointly owned by HM Treasury and the LGA, which provides commercial expertise to public sector organisations on planning and delivering complex projects.

ASK ALL

**Q15a. Have you heard of Local Partnerships?**

SINGLE CODE

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	CONTINUE

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED "YES" TO Q15a

**Q15b. Has your council used any of the services provided by Local Partnerships in the last year?**

SINGLE CODE

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	CONTINUE
Don't know	3	CONTINUE

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED “YES” TO Q15b

**Q15c. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services provided by Local Partnerships?**

REVERSE READ OUT OF SCALE. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Very satisfied	1	CONTINUE
Fairly satisfied	2	CONTINUE
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3	CONTINUE
Fairly dissatisfied	4	CONTINUE
Very dissatisfied	5	CONTINUE
Don't know	6	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q16. Finally, do you have any other comments about the LGA generally or how you would like the LGA to support you further?**

OPEN RESPONSE

ASK ALL COUNCILLORS [FROM SAMPLE]

**Q17. For how many years have you been a councillor?**

TYPE IN NUMBER OF YEARS.

ASK ALL

**Q18a. The LGA would like to use the information collected in this survey to provide targeted support and further information to local authorities. Do you consent to us sharing your responses linked to your contact details with the LGA for this purpose (your responses will remain anonymous in any wider publications, and the LGA will keep your response confidential)?**

SINGLE RESPONSE

Yes	1
No	2

ASK ALL

**Q18b. The LGA would like to link the responses you provide to information they hold about you and your membership. Specifically, your organisation type, your role, where in the country your authority is based, and your political affiliation. This helps to ensure that we gather and understand the views of a representative mix of authorities and individuals. Do you consent to this information being used in this way?**

SINGLE RESPONSE

Yes	1
No	2

THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B

**In order to ensure that we speak to a representative mix of stakeholders, I'd like to ask you a few more questions regarding your role and your council. I recognise that you might not wish to give this information, in which case you are free not to answer**

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B

**Q19. Are you happy to be asked these questions? [IF NECESSARY: You can still refuse to answer any individual question should you so wish]**

Yes	1	CONTINUE
No	2	GO TO END SCREEN

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B AND NOT REFERRAL.

**Q20. Could you please confirm your job title / role that you have in your council?**  
SINGLE CODE. PROBE TO PRECODES

Officer – Chief Executive	1
Officer – Deputy/Assistant Chief Executive	2
Officer – Director/Assistant Director/Head of Communications	3
Councillor – Leader of the council	4
Councillor – Deputy leader of the council	5
Councillor – Cabinet member of the council/portfolio holder	6
Councillor – Chair of scrutiny	7
Councillor – Backbench member of the council	8
Councillor – Leader of the opposition	9
Other: PLEASE SPECIFY	10
Refused	11

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B

**Q21. What is the name of your council?**

SINGLE CODE. IF MULTIPLE COUNCILS GIVEN CODE FIRST ONE MENTIONED.

LIST OF COUNCILS	1
Refused	999

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B

**Q22. What type of council is this?**

READ OUT. SINGLE CODE.

English County Council	1
English Non-Metropolitan District	2
English Unitary Authority	3
London Borough	4
Metropolitan Council	5
Don't know	6
Refused	7

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B  
**Q23. In which region is your council located?**  
 SINGLE CODE.

East of England	1
East Midlands	2
London	3
North East	4
North West	5
South East	6
South West	7
West Midlands	8
Yorkshire and the Humber	9
Refused	10

ASK THOSE WHO ANSWERED 'NO' AT Q18B AND JOB IS COUNCILLOR AT Q20 (4-9)  
**Q24. Could you please confirm your political party affiliation?**  
 SINGLE CODE.

Conservative	1
Green	2
Independent	3
Labour	4
Liberal Democrat	5
Other	6
Refused	7

**Thank you very much for taking the time to answer these questions.**

## Appendix 3: Statement of Terms

### **Compliance with International Standards**

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2015) and the International Standard for Market, opinion and social research service requirements (ISO 20252:2012) and The International Standard for Information Security Management (ISO 27001:2013).

### **Interpretation and publication of results**

The interpretation of the results as reported in this document pertain to the research problem and are supported by the empirical findings of this research project and, where applicable, by other data. These interpretations and recommendations are based on empirical findings and are distinguishable from personal views and opinions.

BMG will not publish any part of these results without the written and informed consent of the client.

### **Ethical practice**

BMG promotes ethical practice in research: We conduct our work responsibly and in light of the legal and moral codes of society.

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We recognise we have a duty of care to all those undertaking and participating in research and strive to protect subjects from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that subjects' participation should be as fully informed as possible and no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. All adequate steps shall be taken by both agency and client to ensure that the identity of each respondent participating in the research is protected.



With more than 25 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

BMG serves both the public and the private sector, providing market and customer insight which is vital in the development of plans, the support of campaigns and the evaluation of performance.

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