



# Research Report

## Stakeholder Perceptions Survey 2017

Prepared for: Local Government Association (LGA)

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Prepared for: Local Government Association (LGA)

Prepared by: BMG Research

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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). The LGA's Perceptions Survey is a key measure of: the extent to which councils 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:

1. Quantify members' understanding of the LGA and what the LGA currently offers.
2. Investigate what the membership want from the LGA.
3. Assess views of sector-led improvement within local government, and views on the support offered by the LGA to assist its members in this.

## 1.2 Method

A total of 1,004 interviews were undertaken with a sample of representatives from local authorities across all the English regions (including chief executives, directors, leaders, chairs of scrutiny, portfolio holders, frontline councillors, and, for the first time in 2017, leaders of the opposition). The majority of interviews were undertaken via Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI), with 6 completed via Computer Aided Web Interview (CAWI). This sample size has a maximum standard error of  $\pm 3.0\%$  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 the top-line frequencies and, where relevant, significant findings from cross-tabulations based upon role type, amalgamated role type (officer, senior councillor<sup>1</sup>, frontline councillor) and region.

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<sup>1</sup> In previous years this group was referred to as 'frontbench councillors', however as it now contains groups who may not technically be frontbench (for example, leaders of the opposition were added this year), the name has been changed to senior councillors.

**Table 1: Summary of positive responses given for key measures**

Question	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change from 2016
How well do you know the LGA?	62%	72%	73%	73%	75%	73%	-2
I would speak positively about the LGA	63%	73%	72%	74%	74%	73%	-1
Satisfied with the work of the LGA	63%	70%	75%	76%	73%	73%	0
The LGA keeps you informed about its work	69%	78%	79%	84%	83%	80%	<b>-3</b>
Sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context	59%	62%	63%	71%	70%	78%	<b>+8</b>
The LGA demonstrates value for money	43%	53%	53%	57%	N/A	59%	+2*

\*change from 2015

- Overall, seven in ten feel that they know the LGA well (73%). This ranges from 96% of chief executives to 53% of frontline councillors.
- Nearly three quarters of respondents (73%) say that they would speak positively about the LGA to others (either prompted or unasked). Just 3% say they would speak negatively. Leaders (89%) are the most likely group to speak positively about the LGA.
- Nearly three quarters (73%) say they are either fairly or very satisfied with the work of the LGA. This is in keeping with results since 2013. Leaders proved the most satisfied group (88%) compared to the lowest, frontline councillors (60%).
- Four in 5 respondents (80%) feel that the LGA keeps them informed about its work. This is a small but statistically significant drop from 2016.
- There is a significant 8 percentage point increase in the proportion who think that a sector-led improvement approach is right in the current context (78%).
- Three in 5 respondents agree that the LGA represents value for money (59%).
- All of the categories in Table 1 have seen a significant increase since the first wave of the survey in 2012. Most notably, there has been a 19 percentage point increase in the proportion who think that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context, and a 16 percentage point increase in the proportion saying that the LGA demonstrates value for money.

### 1.3.2 Value for money

- Three in five respondents agree that the LGA represents value for money (59%). This varies substantially by type of respondent, with chief executives (78%) and leaders (76%) more inclined to agree, compared to frontline councillors (49%) who are the least likely to.

### 1.3.3 Usefulness of activities provided by the LGA

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

Question <sup>2</sup>	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	Change from 2016
<b>How useful are the following LGA activities to your council or local government as a whole?</b>							
Providing a single voice for local government	90%*	94%*	91%*	88%	89%	92%	<b>+3</b>
Providing up-to-date information about local government	92%	89%	88%	93%	91%	91%	0
Lobbying on behalf of local government	90%	92%	93%	92%	89%	90%	+1
Managing local government's reputation in the national media	89%*	93%*	90%*	83%	83%	82%	-1
Providing conferences and events	71%	79%	77%	85%	83%	79%	<b>-4</b>
Providing advice and information through the political group offices	72%	78%	78%	78%	76%	79%	+3
Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice	73%	78%	75%	74%	71%	65%	<b>-6</b>
Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils	67%	78%	73%	72%	64%	62%	-2

\* Prior to 2015/16 respondents were asked whether or not these activities were important and are therefore not directly compatible.

- *Providing a single voice for local government* is the activity found most useful by respondents, at 92%. Also scoring highly is *providing up-to-date information about local government* (91%) and *lobbying on behalf of local government* (90%).
- The results are mostly in line with 2016, although there are three statistically significant changes to report: the proportion who say the activity of *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice* is useful has fallen by 6 percentage points compared to 2016, while the proportion who say *providing conferences and events* is useful fell by 4 percentage points. Meanwhile, the proportion who say that *providing a single voice for local government* is useful has risen by 3 percentage points.

<sup>2</sup> Data have not been trended for 'providing improvement support for councils' due to changes in the way the activity has been asked about across the years, meaning that data are not directly comparable.

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

- Four in five respondents (80%) feel that the LGA keeps them informed about its work. Leaders (92%), chief executives (88%) and chairs of scrutiny (84%) are the groups most likely to feel informed.
- The popularity of *'first' magazine* has declined significantly by 6 percentage points (down to 70%) but remains the most popular method of discovering the work of the LGA. It is particularly popular with senior councillors and frontline councillors (both 84%). Meanwhile, officers are more likely to get LGA news from *events and conferences* (80%), the *LGA website* (80%) or *media work/press releases* (78%).
- In terms of how respondents wish to find out about the work of the LGA, around a quarter express their preference for emails from the LGA Chairman (26%) or the Chief Executive (25%). These are the two most popular methods.

### 1.3.5 Engagement with the LGA

- *Responding to LGA consultations* is the most popular form of engagement with the LGA (63%). This was also the most popular in 2016, however the proportion selecting this option in 2016 was significantly higher, at 72%. Around half of respondents indicate they engage via *attending LGA events and conferences* or through *visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council* (both 52%). Results for these two methods of engagement are particularly high for officers. However, a little over one in ten of all respondents (11%) say that engagement with the LGA is not applicable to them.

### 1.3.6 Support for councils

- There is a significant 8 percentage point increase in the proportion who think that a sector-led improvement approach is right in the current context (78%). Directors (90%), chief executives (88%) and leaders (86%) are strong drivers of this. Since 2012, there has been a 19 percentage point increase in the proportion saying that sector-led improvement is the right approach.
- *Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others* is seen as the most useful aspect of the LGA's improvement support offer for councils (87%), followed by *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* (83%) and *training for councillors* (79%). A notable proportion answered 'don't know' when asked about the usefulness of *access to LG Inform data service to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking* (14%), although more than two-thirds (69%) said it was useful.
- Overall 87% think that LGA improvement support has had a positive impact on their authority (a significant increase from 83% in 2016). This increases to 95% among chief executives and 96% among leaders. Meanwhile, just 80% of leaders of the opposition and 78% of frontline councillors think that LGA improvement support has had a positive impact on their authority.
- The majority of respondents feel that the LGA should continue to provide support in all of the areas put forward in the survey. *Practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income*

proved the most popular alongside *providing peer challenge and peer support* (both 93%). *Increasing housing supply* was the least prominent response but still enjoyed majority support, with 75% of respondents believing this support should continue.

- Seven in ten indicate that they would like to see the LGA provide increased support in *emergency planning and resilience* (70%) and over six in ten to provide *specific support for children's improvement* (62%).

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

This is the sixth time the Local Government Association (LGA) has undertaken a survey of its members. The LGA's Perceptions Survey is a key measure of the extent to which councils understand and engage with the LGA and its offer, how they view the LGA and its communications, and members' views on, and experiences of, the support and resources the LGA offers relating to sector-led improvement.

### 2.2 Objectives

The overarching aim of the research is to provide insight into how councillors and senior officers in LGA-member authorities view the LGA and how the LGA engages with them, and to explore their feelings about LGA support for sector-led improvement.

More specifically the research aims to explore the following:

- Perceptions of the LGA across the board;
- Views of how the LGA communicates and engages with members;
- Whether there are groups of councillors and/or officers who are more likely to have different levels of knowledge about/engagement with the LGA;
- Perceptions of the service and benefits members get from the LGA, and whether there are other services and benefits they would value, or that would promote and improve the sector most effectively in the future.

### 2.3 Method

The Perceptions Survey 2017 was primarily delivered using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI), which was chosen as it offers the most neutral (and least self-selecting) method of interviewing.

In order to accommodate those who did not wish, or did not have the time available, to complete the survey over the telephone, the CATI element was supplemented by an online version which mirrored the CATI interview. This option was offered only to those respondents who indicated that they would not be able, or were not prepared, to complete a telephone interview within the fieldwork window, those who requested a call back at an unspecified time on five or more occasions, or those who specifically requested this option for completion.

The survey was designed by the LGA in partnership with BMG Research and in most cases retained the questions and wording from previous waves to ensure comparability. However, in order to maximise response rates, and to ensure the quality of the information collected, the 2017 survey was reviewed in detail to identify ways in which the length could be reduced from the average of 18.5 minutes achieved in the 2016 survey. This process resulted in changes to the wording of some questions to minimise the amount interviewers had to read out to participants, and also in the removal of a number of questions that were either of lower priority, or where information needs had already been addressed via previous surveys or other work undertaken by the LGA.

The survey explored:

- Overall views of the LGA;
- Its current role and offer and how these can be developed;
- Its communications and methods of engagement;
- Sector-led improvement within local government, the support offered by the LGA to assist its members in this and how this can be developed/improved.

Prior to launching the survey a live pilot was conducted with 20 respondents to ensure the survey was fit for purpose and would last no longer than around 15 minutes. No issues were identified relating to respondents' understanding of the survey content. The survey subsequently took place between 12th October 2017 and 15<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

## 2.4 Sampling

As in previous waves the research aimed to consult a representative sample of a range of officers (including chief executives and directors) and both senior members (leaders, chairs of scrutiny and portfolio holders) and frontline elected members, from LGA member authorities. Additionally a new group were consulted for the 2017 survey: leaders of the opposition. Analysis was carried out on the results for this group to determine if they could be included in comparisons to previous years' results. They were found not to impact comparisons and so have been included in the 2017 results, both at a total level and in the senior councillors amalgamated group.

Following discussion with the LGA, interlocking quotas were set to ensure the research achieved a broadly representative sample whilst establishing minimum quotas to enable detailed analysis by region and role (a minimum of 30 respondents per region and role group). These minimum base sizes were achieved for all sub groups.

Similar quotas were set by role, as in previous waves, to ensure comparability. In the majority of instances quotas were achieved however, as in 2014 and 2015, there was a small shortfall in terms of chief executives. However, this does not affect overall comparability over time.

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A sample frame of 18,676 unique and usable contacts (including 13,960 frontline councillors) was provided to BMG Research by the LGA. Computer Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI) were undertaken with 998 respondents<sup>3</sup>. This sample size has a maximum standard error of +/-3.0% (compared with +/-3.1% in 2012 and 2013, +/-3.4% in 2014 and 2015, and +/- 3.3% in 2016) at the 95% level of confidence, giving these findings a high level of accuracy. Further details of the standard errors by region and role type are included in Appendix 1.

Table 3 shows the final sample achieved which forms the basis of this report.

**Table 3: Completed interviews**

Amalgamated role:	Officers		Senior councillors				Frontline councillors	Regional Total
	Role:	Chief executives	Directors	Leaders	Chairs of scrutiny	Portfolio holders	Leaders of the opposition	
East	10	31	20	12	13	12	53	151
East Midlands	13	29	10	9	9	14	33	117
London	5	19	2	6	12	4	15	63
North East	2	12	2	8	7	4	14	49
North West	6	31	9	8	13	10	33	110
South East	18	55	24	17	20	14	66	214
South West	6	7	15	15	19	11	44	117
West Midlands	8	25	10	9	10	14	36	112
Yorkshire and the Humber	8	20	4	7	3	7	22	71
<b>Role Total:</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>1004</b>
<b>Amalgamated role Total:</b>	<b>305</b>		<b>383</b>				<b>316</b>	<b>1004</b>

<sup>3</sup> Six interviews were completed online, representing 0.6% of the total. Five of these were with directors, indicating that this option did help to improve the response within this groups. Differences between telephone and online completion results reflect differences by role rather than method of completion.

Within this sample the research also captured responses from a range of types of council. A local authority type was not recorded for every respondent, but for those where it was (92% of respondents) this included:

**Table 4: Respondent local authority type**

Local authority type	Number	%
English unitary	176	18
London borough	58	6
Metropolitan District	93	9
English County	84	8
Non-Metropolitan District	514	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>925</b>	<b>92</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 amalgamated role type (officer, senior councillor, frontline councillor) and region.

Results were also analysed by the number of years a respondent had spent as a councillor (where applicable), but it was found that this was heavily correlated with job role due to the nature of the two variables. Thus, time served as a councillor is not included in this report's analysis. A breakdown of time served as a councillor by job role can be seen in table 5 below.

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

Job Role	Leaders	Chairs of scrutiny	Portfolio holders	Frontline councillors	Leaders of opposition
<b>4 years or less</b>	2%	24%	9%	27%	4%
<b>5-9 years</b>	16%	20%	31%	21%	18%
<b>10-14 years</b>	17%	21%	21%	20%	21%
<b>15-19 years</b>	24%	9%	13%	13%	17%
<b>20 years or more</b>	42%	26%	25%	19%	40%

Independent t-tests (within the groups of interest e.g. region) were conducted at the 95% confidence level to identify where findings were statistically significant. 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 previous waves are also discussed. In all tables in this report, all

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figures which are significantly higher than at least one other figure in the same row are **highlighted**. Full tables showing cross-tabulations by region, role, and authority, and individual tables for amalgamated roles and each region have been provided to the LGA separately.

## 3 Views on the LGA and its services

### 3.1 Knowledge of the LGA

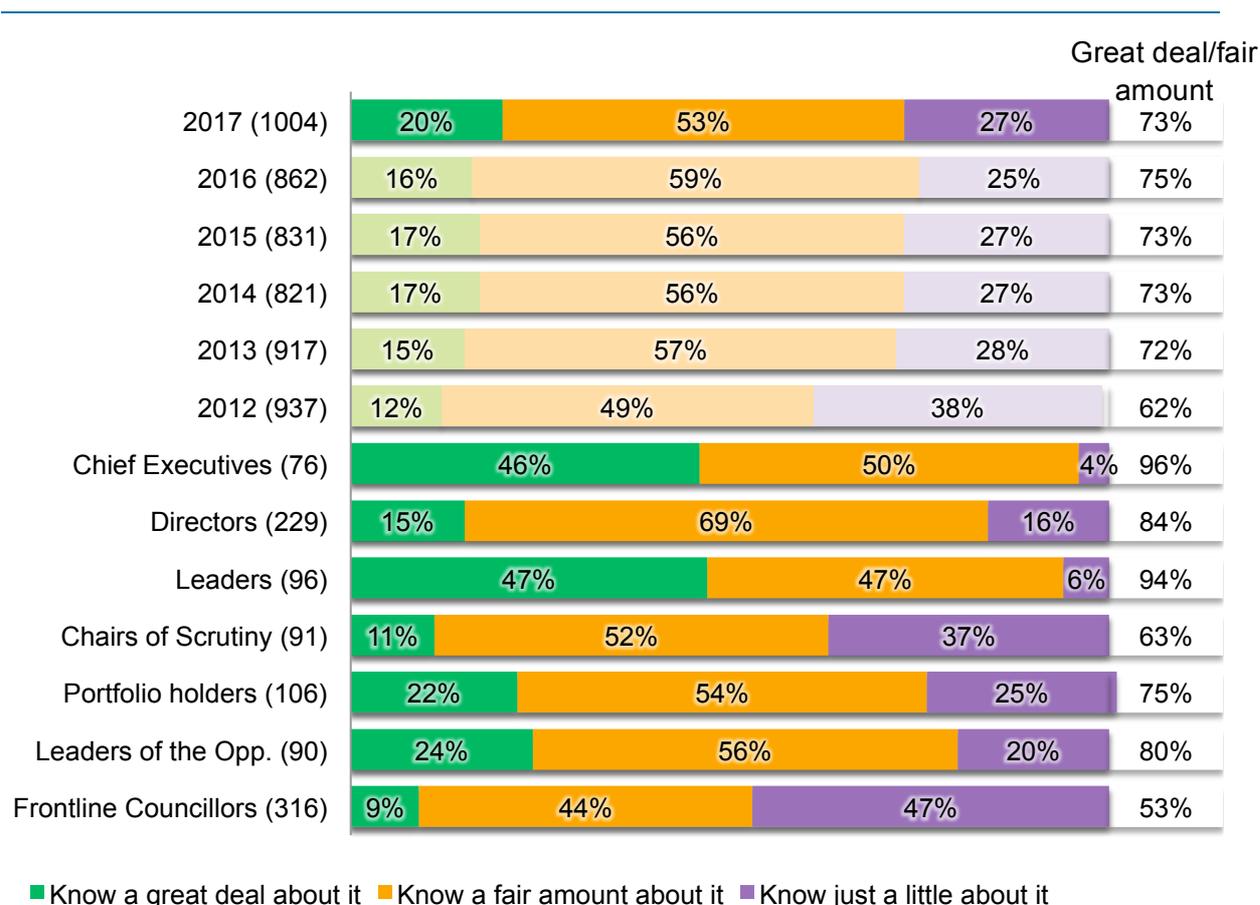
One in five say that they 'know a great deal' (20%) about the LGA, a four percentage point increase on 2016, which is statistically significant. A further 53% 'know a fair amount' about the LGA. Therefore, the overall percentage who know a great deal or fair amount about the LGA (73%) is in line with results since 2013.<sup>4</sup>

Figure 1 demonstrates that chief executives (96%) and leaders (94%) are more likely to 'know a great deal/a fair amount' about the LGA than other job roles. In contrast, frontline councillors (53%) and chairs of scrutiny (63%) are the least likely to have this level of knowledge of the LGA. Only about 1 in 10 in these categories claim to 'know a great deal about' the LGA.

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<sup>4</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 a least a little knowledge of LGA is needed to be able to answer the later questions in the survey. In total 14 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? Do you... (Cross-tabulated by role type)<sup>5</sup>**



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

Results across the regions all remain broadly consistent with those seen in 2016, and there are no statistically significant differences to report between regions. The regions with the highest proportion who ‘know a great deal/fair amount’ are the West Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber (both 77%). The region with the lowest proportion is the South West (68%).

### 3.2 Advocates for the LGA

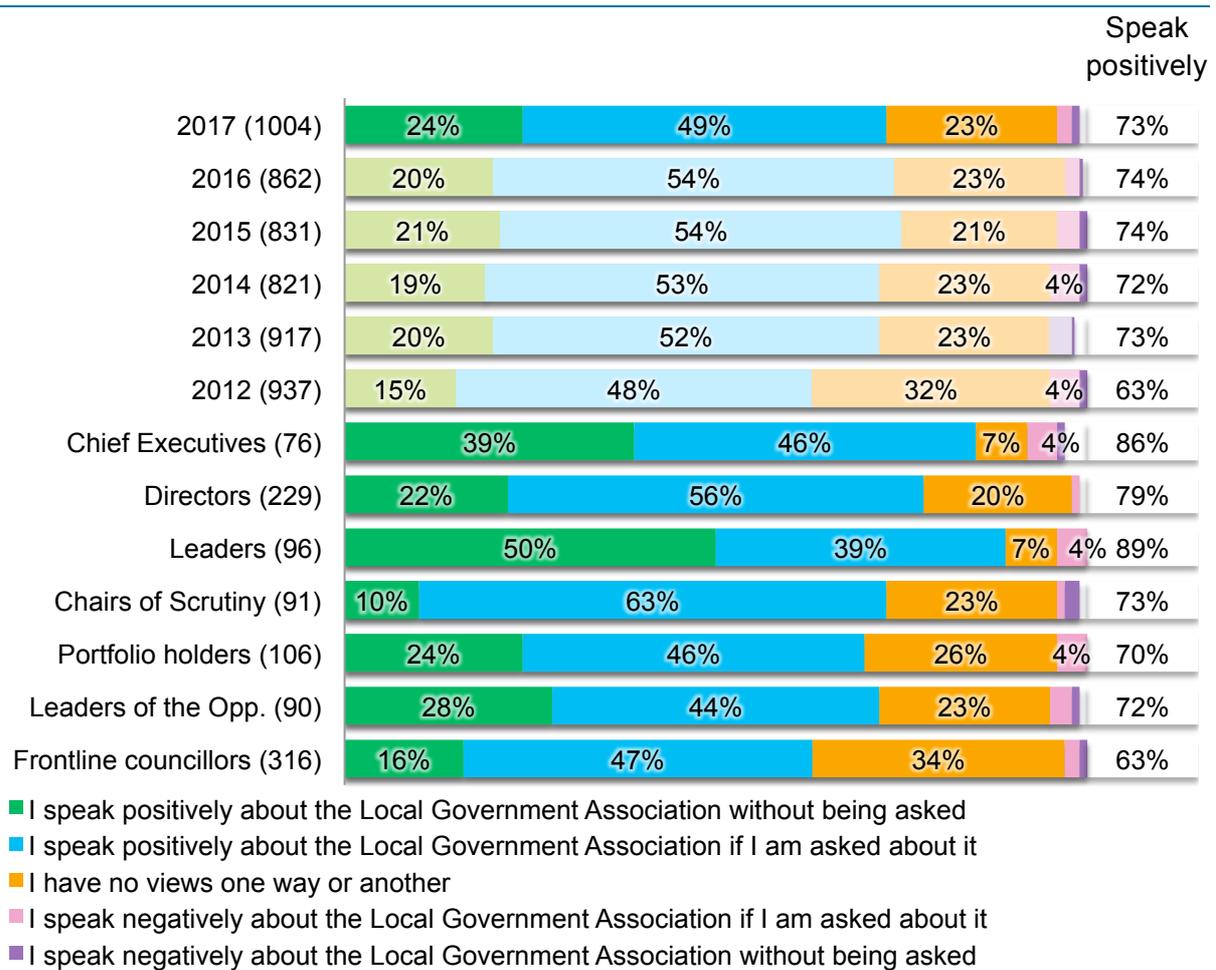
Respondents were asked how positively or negatively they would speak about the LGA, and whether they would do so unprompted. The proportion who would speak positively of the LGA, unprompted or otherwise, is consistent with that of recent years (73%), while the proportion who would speak positively without being asked has increased by 4 percentage points. This increase is not statistically significant. Only 3% state that they would speak negatively about the LGA, again in line with recent years.

<sup>5</sup> The individual ‘great deal’ and ‘fair amount’ answer results displayed in Figure 1 may not sum exactly to the ‘great deal or fair amount’ summary figure at the right hand side. This is due to the fact that all figures have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Please note that this may also occur in other parts of the report where answer categories are combined.

Similarly to the results discussed in the previous section, leaders (89%) and chief executives (86%) are more likely to speak positively about the LGA. Of particular note is the significant, 15 percentage point increase from 2016 among leaders who say that they would speak positively about the LGA without being asked.

Frontline councillors are the group least likely to speak positively about the LGA (63%), while also having the highest proportion of respondents who 'have no views one way or another'. Across all categories the proportion who would speak negatively of the LGA never climbs above 5%.

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

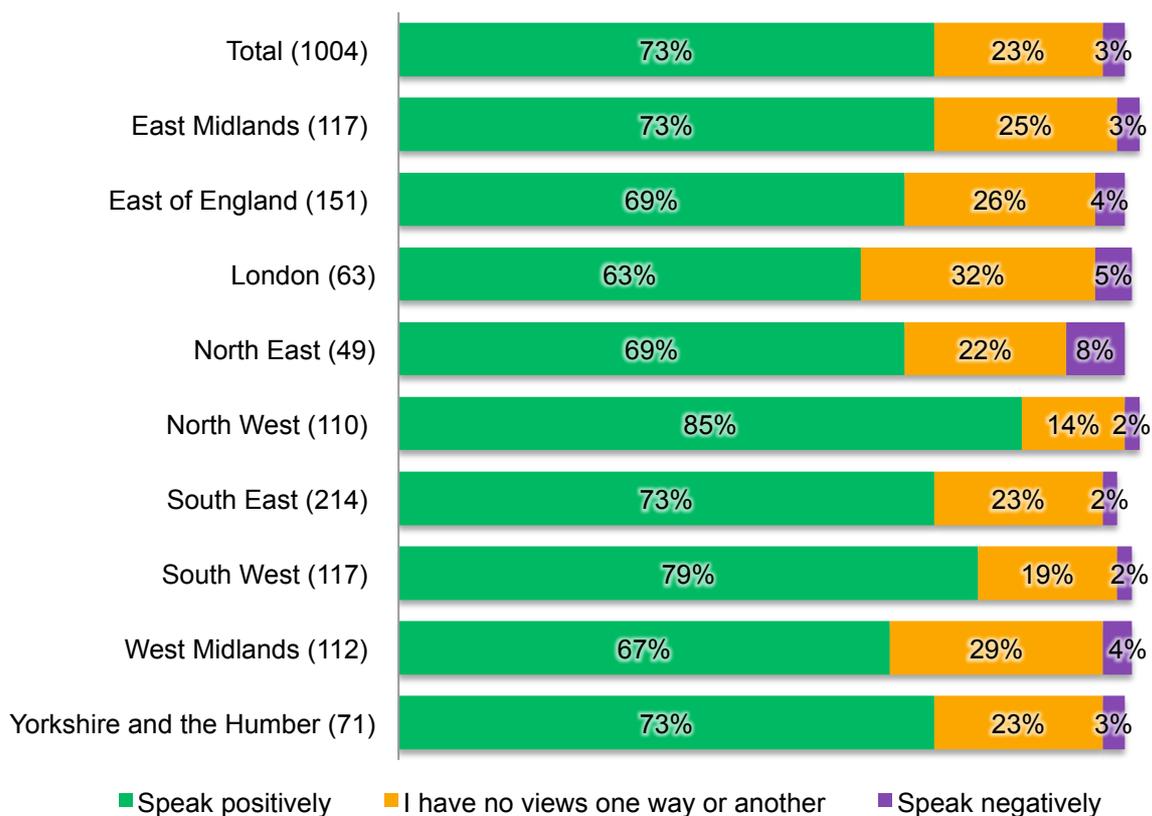


Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

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

When the results are broken down by region, it can be seen that those in the North West are significantly more likely than average to speak positively about the LGA (85% vs. 73% in total). London (63%) and the West Midlands (67%) are the least likely to speak positively about the LGA, but they are not significantly more likely to speak negatively. The only region significantly more likely to speak negatively about the LGA is the North East (8%).

**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

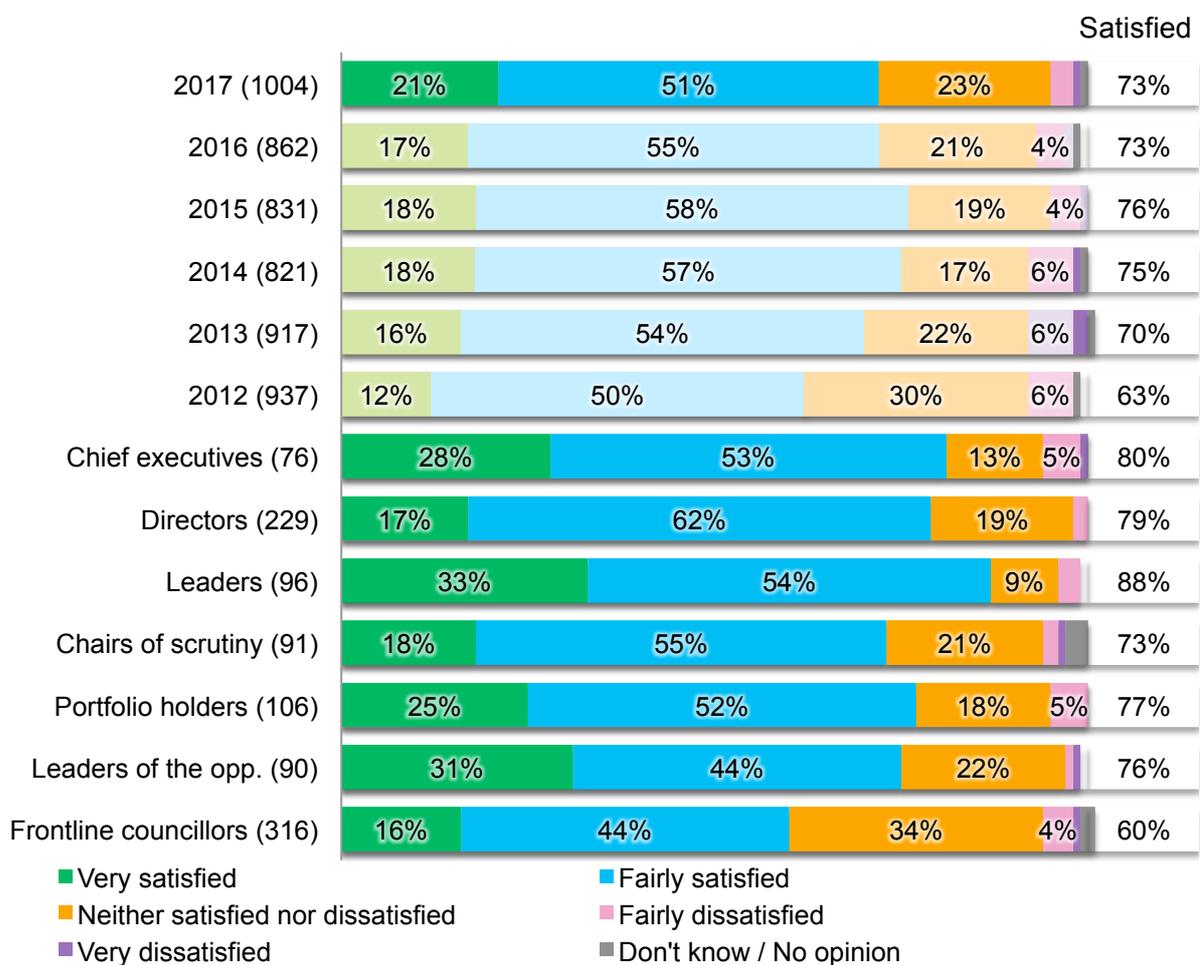
### 3.3 Satisfaction with the work of the LGA

In terms of satisfaction with the work of the LGA, 73% are either fairly or very satisfied, maintaining the increase achieved in 2014. The proportion who are very satisfied with the LGA has risen significantly by 4 percentage points to 21% (compared to 17% in 2016).

Leaders are the most satisfied group with approximately nine in ten (88%) stating that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is 8 percentage points higher than the second most satisfied group, chief executives (80%).

Following the significant decline in satisfaction seen among frontline councillors in 2016, this group remains the least likely to be satisfied (60%). As in 2016, it should be noted that this is largely driven by a high proportion of those who are indifferent towards the LGA, 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)**

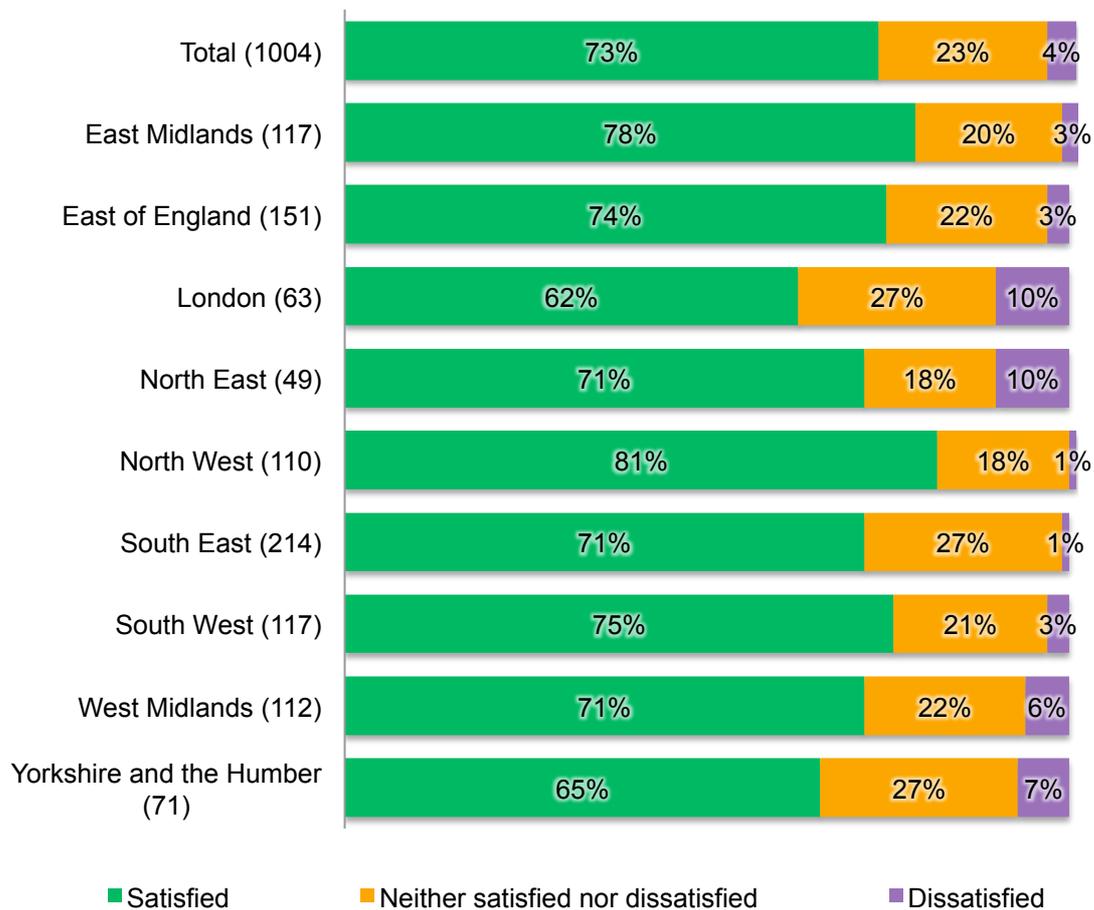


Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

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

The North West has the highest proportion who are satisfied with the work of the LGA (81%) and the joint lowest of those dissatisfied (1%). London and the North East remain the regions most likely to be dissatisfied (10% for both).

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



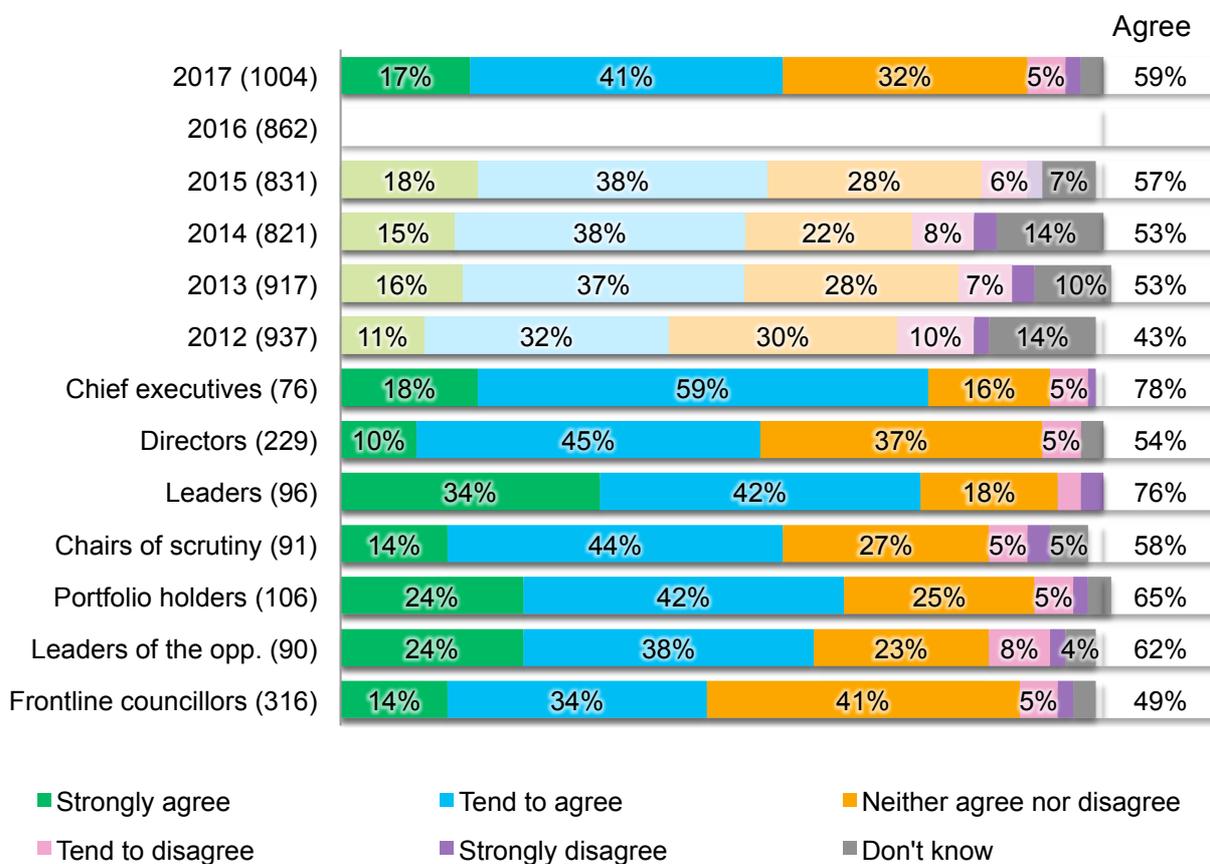
Bases in parentheses, single response question  
 Source: survey of LGA members

### 3.4 Value for money of the LGA

Respondents were also asked to what extent they viewed the LGA as demonstrating value for money. Overall 59% agree that that LGA represents value for money, in line with when this was last asked in 2015 (57%). Just 7% of respondents disagree that the LGA demonstrates value for money, with 32% expressing a neutral opinion.

Chief executives (78%) and leaders (76%) are the most inclined to agree that the LGA represents value for money, significantly higher than the average (59%). Leaders are significantly more likely to ‘strongly agree’ (34%) with the statement than other groups. Leaders of the opposition are the most likely to disagree, but not significantly so (10%).

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



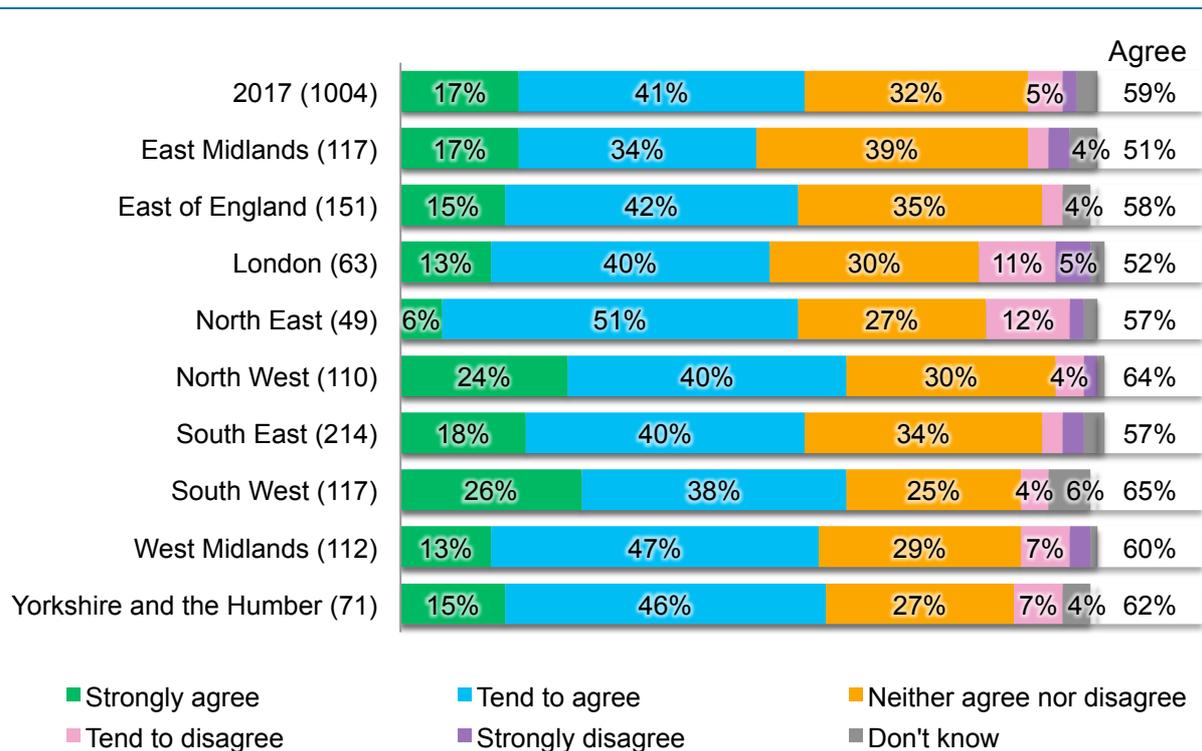
Bases in parentheses, single response question

Source: survey of LGA members

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

Breaking this down by region, the North East (6%) is the region least likely to ‘strongly agree’ with the LGA demonstrating value for money. However, when added to the proportion who ‘tend to agree’ the overall figure is similar to that of other regions. The South West is the region most likely to express some form of agreement with the statement (65%).

**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

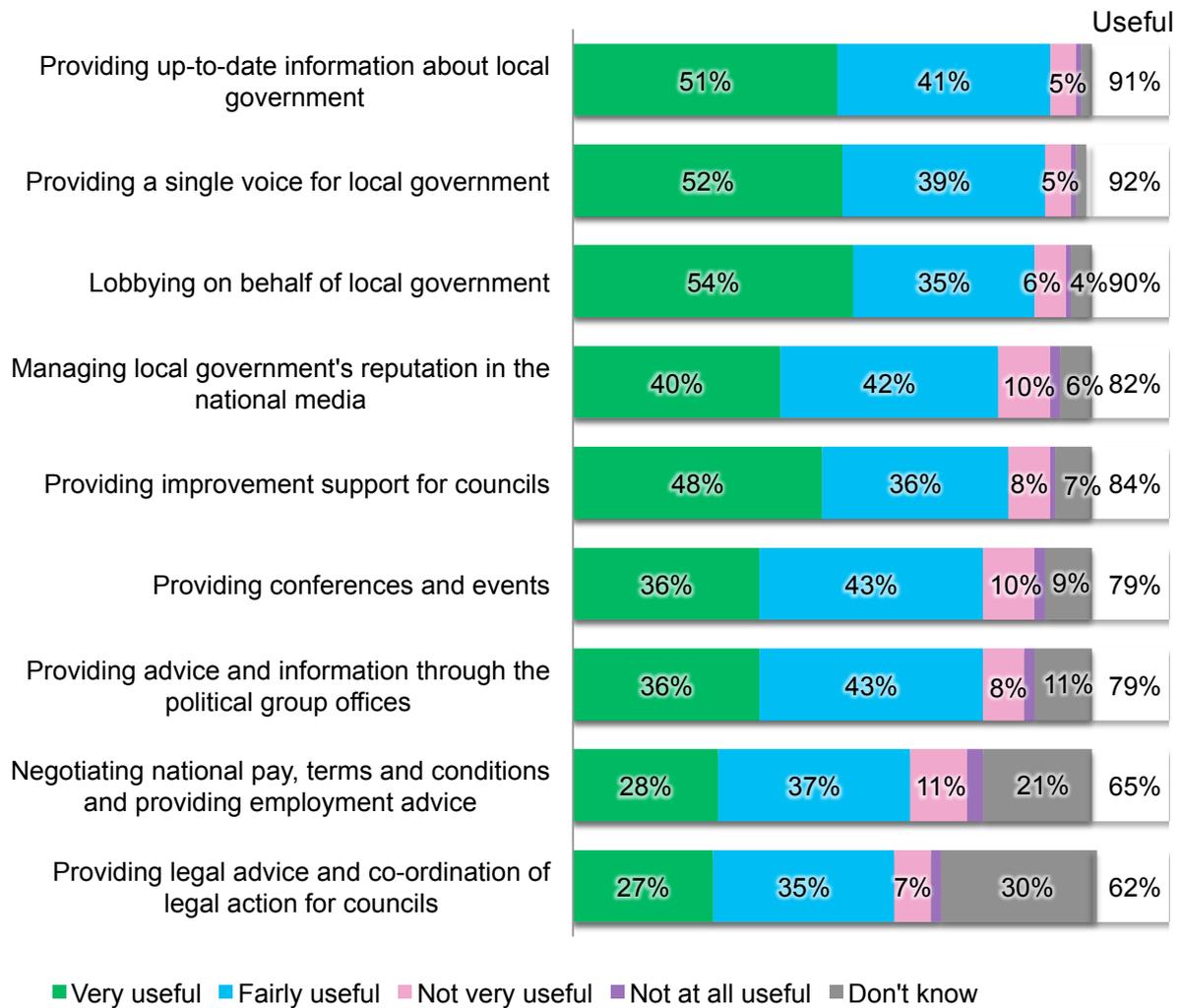
### 3.5 Usefulness of activities undertaken by the LGA

Figure 8 details a range of activities undertaken by the LGA and how useful respondents rated them to their council or to local government as a whole. The results are largely consistent with previous years. 2016's top performing activity, *providing up-to-date information about local government*, continues to perform strongly with 91% agreeing that it is useful, while a similar proportion say that *lobbying on behalf of local government* (90%) and *providing a single voice for local government* (92%) are useful activities, making 2017's top three most useful activities consistent with 2016.

The two activities ranked least useful, *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions* and *providing employment advice* (65% find this useful), and *providing legal advice and co-ordination* (62% find this useful) were also lowest in 2016. A high proportion in both categories (21% and 30% respectively) say that they 'don't know'.

The proportion who find *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions* and *providing employment advice* useful has decreased significantly by 6 percentage points from 2016 (to 65%), whilst the proportion saying *providing conferences and events* is useful has also declined significantly, by 4 percentage points. Meanwhile, the proportion who say that *providing a single voice for local government* is useful has seen a small but statistically significant rise of 3 percentage points.

**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 = 1004, 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 national average:

- East Midlands
  - More useful than the national average: *providing conferences and events* (88% compared to 79%)
- London
  - Less useful than the national average: *providing advice and information through the political group offices* (68% compared to 79%)
- North East
  - Less useful than the national average: *managing local government's reputation in the national media* (71% compared to 82%); *providing improvement support for councils* (73% compared to 84%)

- South East
  - Less useful than the national average: *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice* (58% compared to 65%)
  - More useful than the national average: *managing local government's reputation in the national media* (88% compared to 82%); *providing conferences and events* (84% compared to 79%)
- South West
  - More useful than the national average: *lobbying on behalf of local government* (96% compared to 90%); *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice* (78% compared to 65%); *providing improvement support for councils* (91% compared to 84%)

Table 6 shows the usefulness of LGA activities by amalgamated role, combining the proportions for each role which deemed them 'very useful' or 'fairly useful'. Any figures which are significantly higher than at least one other figure in the same row are **highlighted**. Officers found seven of the nine activities significantly more useful compared to at least one of the other groups. Meanwhile, senior councillors found *providing advice and information through the political group offices* more useful than officers. In 2016 senior councillors were significantly more likely to find *providing conferences and events* useful than frontline councillors, but this significant difference is not present in 2017.

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

	Officers (305)	Senior councillors (383)	Frontline councillors (316)
Providing up-to-date information about local government	94%	91%	90%
Providing a single voice for local government	<b>96%</b>	92%	88%
Lobbying on behalf of local government	<b>94%</b>	90%	85%
Managing local government's reputation in the national media	<b>86%</b>	80%	80%
Providing conferences and events	<b>90%</b>	76%	72%
Providing improvement support for councils	<b>90%</b>	84%	79%
Providing advice and information through the political group offices	74%	<b>83%</b>	79%
Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice	<b>68%</b>	67%	60%
Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils	<b>67%</b>	61%	58%

## 4 Views on LGA communications

### 4.1 How the LGA keeps members informed

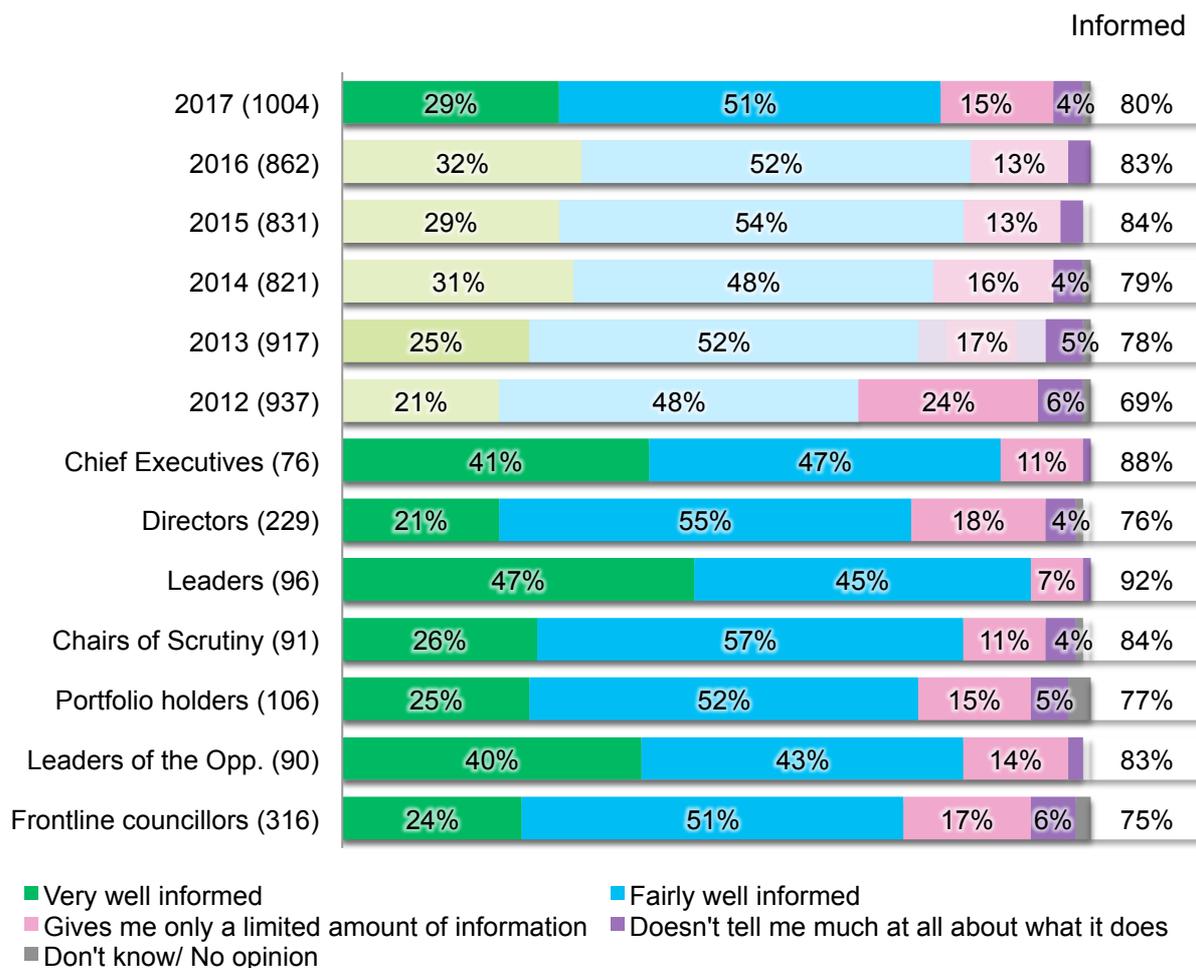
Four in five respondents (80%) believe that the LGA keeps them 'very' or 'fairly' well informed about their work. This is a small but statistically significant drop of 3 percentage points from 2016.

A minority (15%) say they feel the LGA only offers them a limited amount of information. A further 4% of respondents say that they do not feel like the LGA tells them much about what it does.

Breaking the results down by job role, leaders are the most likely to feel informed (92%), followed by chief executives (88%).

Results by region are largely consistent, although those in London are significantly less likely to feel informed compared to the average (70% vs. 80%).

**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

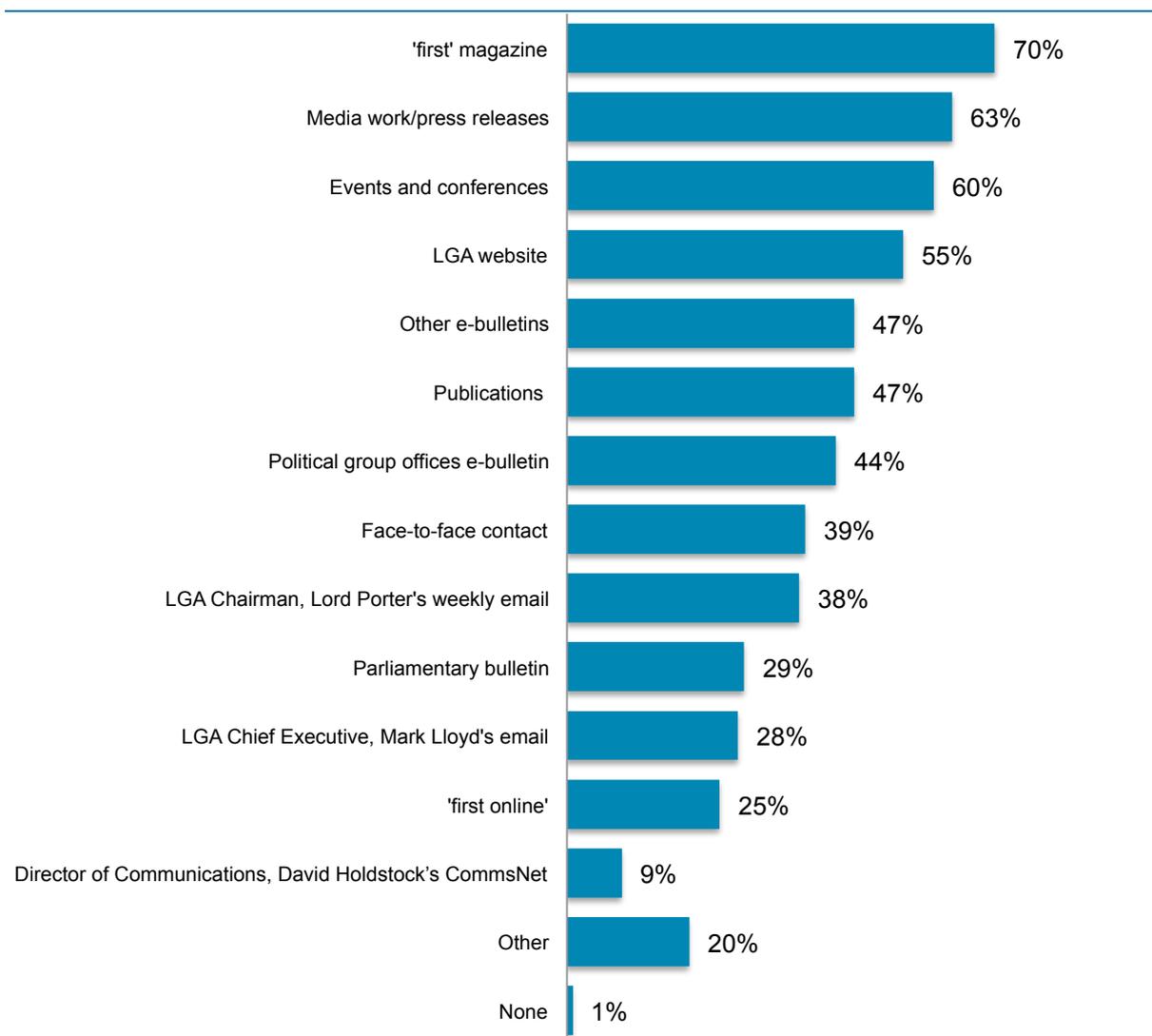
Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

The prominence of sources where respondents are most likely to find out about the work of the LGA remains virtually unchanged from 2016. Respondents are most likely to find out about the work of the LGA via *'first' magazine* (70%), despite a significant, 6 percentage point fall compared to 2016. Over half of respondents cite *media work/press releases* (63%), *events and conferences* (60%), and the *LGA website* (55%).

There is some change in the prevalence of the less popular methods of finding out about the work of the LGA, with the role of publications rising to 47% (from 40% in 2016). *CommsNet* and *'first online'* decline 7 percentage points to 9% (16% in 2016) and 5 percentage points to 25% (30% in 2016) respectively.

Whilst Figure 10 gives an overview of the whole sample, different forms of communication will have different target audiences. Therefore Table 7 overleaf goes on to break down the results by amalgamated roles.

**Figure 10: How do you generally find out about the work of the LGA? (All responses above 2%)**



Base =1004, multiple response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

Looking at the results by amalgamated roles, results for senior councillors remain consistent with 2016, with no significant changes. Officers and frontline councillors, meanwhile, show more variability.

In terms of officers the results are mixed. There are significant increases in those finding out about the LGA's work via *other e-bulletins* (65% compared to 56% in 2016) and *publications* (67% compared to 49%) but significant decreases in *'first' magazine* (36% compared to 49%), *media work/press releases* (78% compared to 84%) and *CommsNet* (10% compared to 32%).

For frontline councillors, there are some significant decreases, with *'first' magazine* (84% compared to 92%) falling alongside *events and conferences* (39% compared to 47%), and *LGA Chairman, Lord Porter's weekly email* (37% compared to 46%).

**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)**

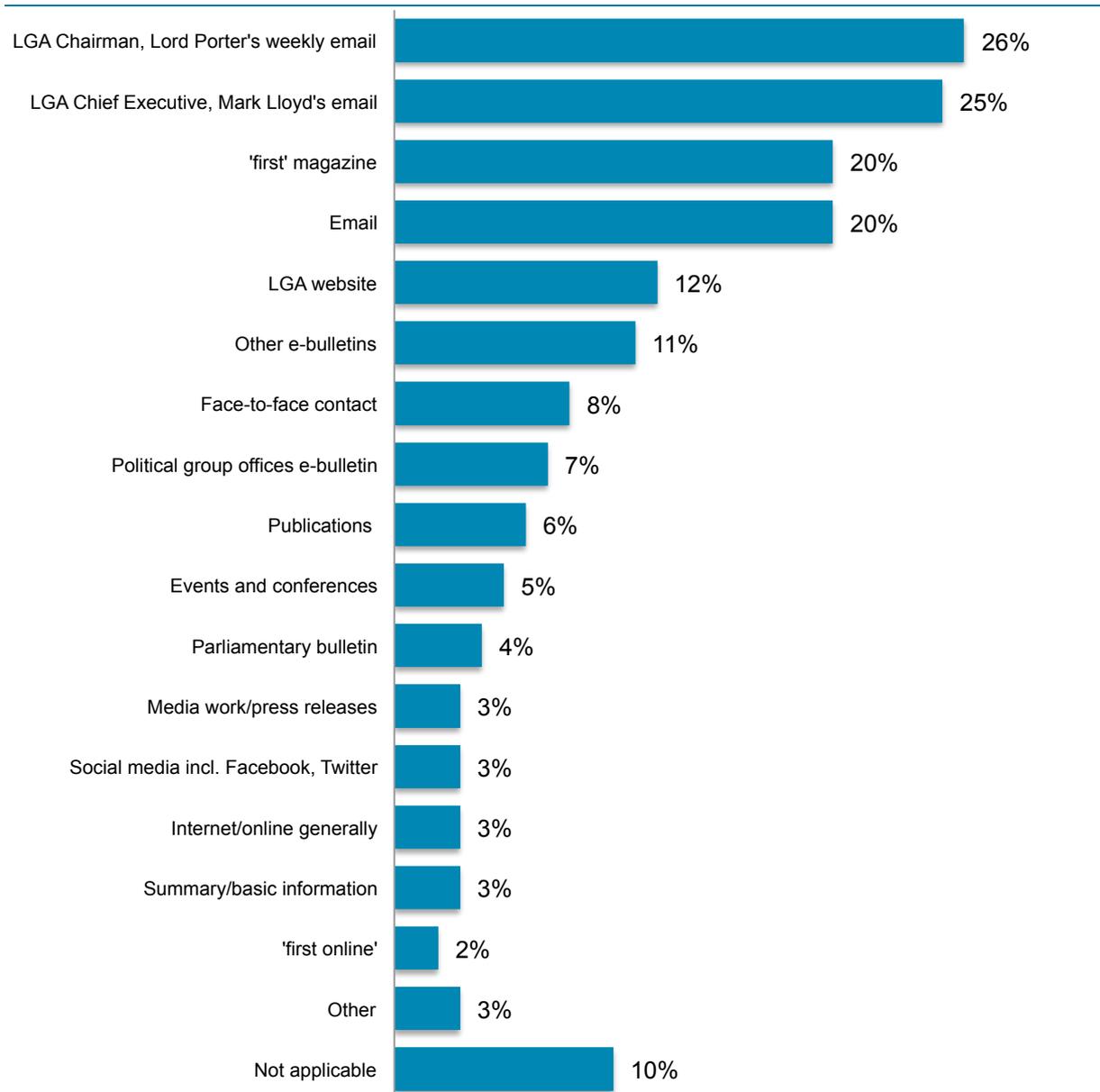
	Officers (305)	Senior councillors (383)	Frontline councillors (316)
'first' magazine	36%	<u>84%</u>	<u>84%</u>
Media work/press releases	<u>78%</u>	<u>61%</u>	51%
Events and conferences	<u>80%</u>	<u>62%</u>	39%
LGA website	<u>80%</u>	<u>49%</u>	39%
Other e-bulletins	<u>65%</u>	42%	35%
Political group offices e-bulletin	17%	<u>62%</u>	<u>47%</u>
Publications	<u>67%</u>	41%	36%
LGA Chairman, Lord Porter's weekly email	22%	<u>52%</u>	<u>37%</u>
Face-to-face contact	<u>49%</u>	<u>44%</u>	25%
Parliamentary bulletin	27%	33%	27%
'first online'	28%	23%	24%
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	<u>46%</u>	22%	18%
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	10%	9%	7%
Other	18%	21%	20%

Looking at the differences between groups, officers are the most likely to find out about the work of the LGA from the *LGA website* (80%), *events and conferences* (80%) and *media work/press releases* (78%). Meanwhile, for senior councillors and frontline councillors, *first magazine* is the clear leader, with 84% of both groups citing it as a source of LGA news.

### 4.2 Authorities' preferences for LGA communication

In terms of how respondents wish to find out about the work of the LGA, the two email options from Lord Porter (26%) and Mark Lloyd (25%) are the most popular, with a quarter of respondents citing this as their preferred method. One in five (20%) simply state *email* without specifying further when asked about how they would like to find out about the work of the LGA. Other online options such as *social media* (3%) and *'first online'* (2%) are less popular. 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%)**



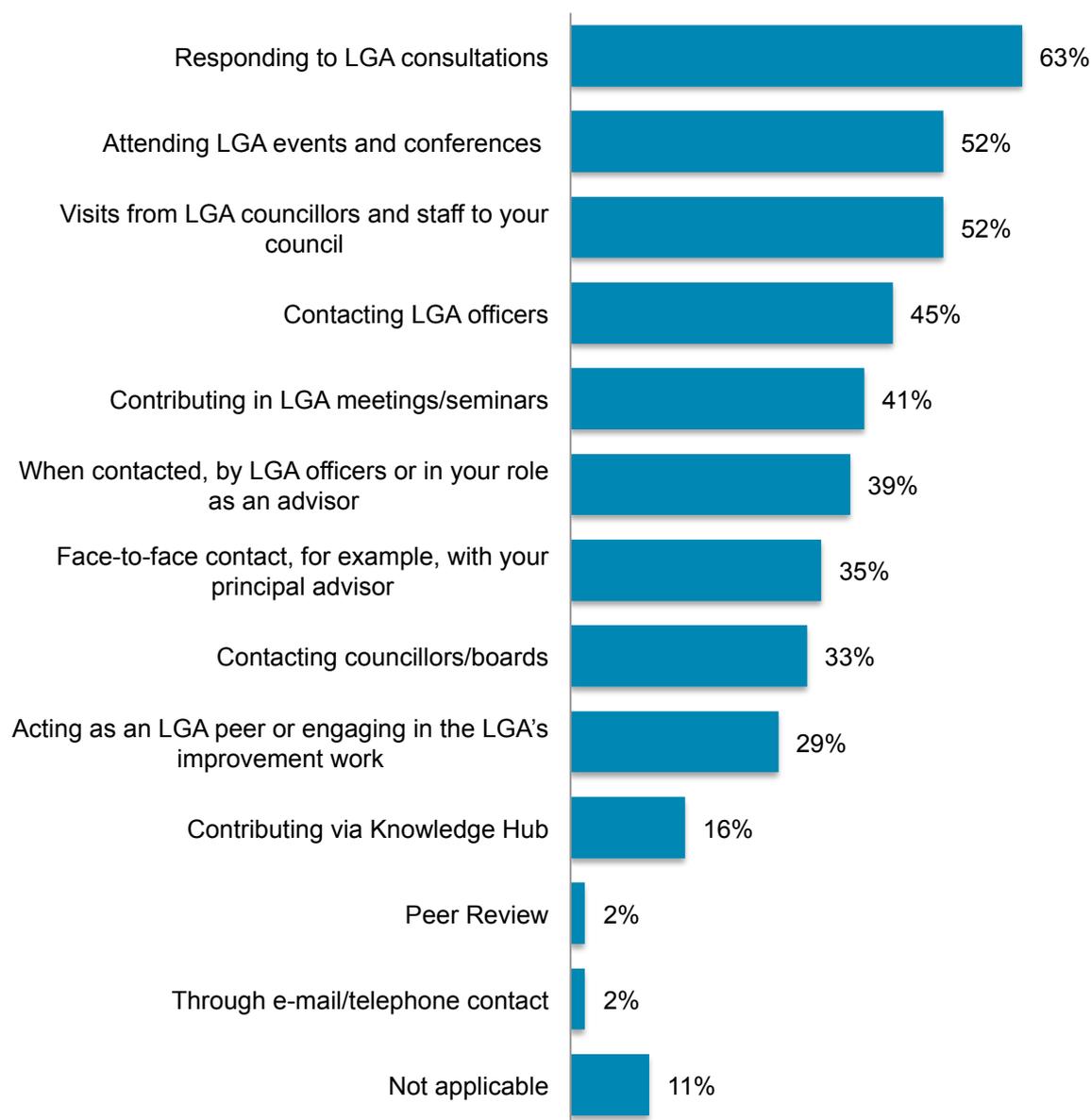
Base =1004, multiple response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

### 4.3 How authorities engage with the LGA

Respondents identified a variety of ways in which they engage with the LGA. *Responding to LGA consultations* (63%) is the most popular form of engagement, with over three in five reporting it. This was also the most popular in 2016, however the proportion selecting this option in 2016 was significantly higher, at 72%.

It is worth noting that *peer review* and *through e-mail/telephone contact* were added due to specified responses for those who answered *other*. These were therefore not read out like the other options, explaining their lower prominence.

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



Base = 1004, multiple response question

Source: survey of LGA members

Evaluating the responses by amalgamated job role reveals a significant decline in the proportion of senior councillors (58% compared to 72% in 2016) and frontline councillors (44% compared to 59%) who engage with the LGA by *responding to LGA consultations*. There is also a significant decline in the proportion of senior councillors that engage with the LGA *when contacted by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor* (down 10 percentage points from 2016 to 34%). For officers there are significant increases for *attending LGA events and conferences* (80% compared to 68%) and *visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council* (65% compared to 56%).

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

	Officers (305)	Senior councillors (383)	Frontline councillors (316)
Responding to LGA consultations	<b>89%</b>	<b>58%</b>	44%
Attending LGA events and conferences	<b>80%</b>	<b>53%</b>	25%
Visits from LGA councillors and staff to your council	<b>65%</b>	<b>57%</b>	35%
Contacting LGA officers	<b>66%</b>	<b>46%</b>	25%
Contributing in LGA meetings/seminars	<b>61%</b>	<b>43%</b>	20%
When contacted, by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor	<b>67%</b>	<b>34%</b>	17%
Face-to-face contact	<b>52%</b>	<b>35%</b>	18%
Contacting councillors/boards by email or phone	22%	<b>44%</b>	31%
Acting as an LGA peer or engaging in the LGA's improvement work	<b>50%</b>	<b>28%</b>	10%
Contributing via Knowledge Hub	<b>26%</b>	12%	11%
Peer review	<b>4%</b>	2%	1%
Through e-mail/telephone contact	*	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>

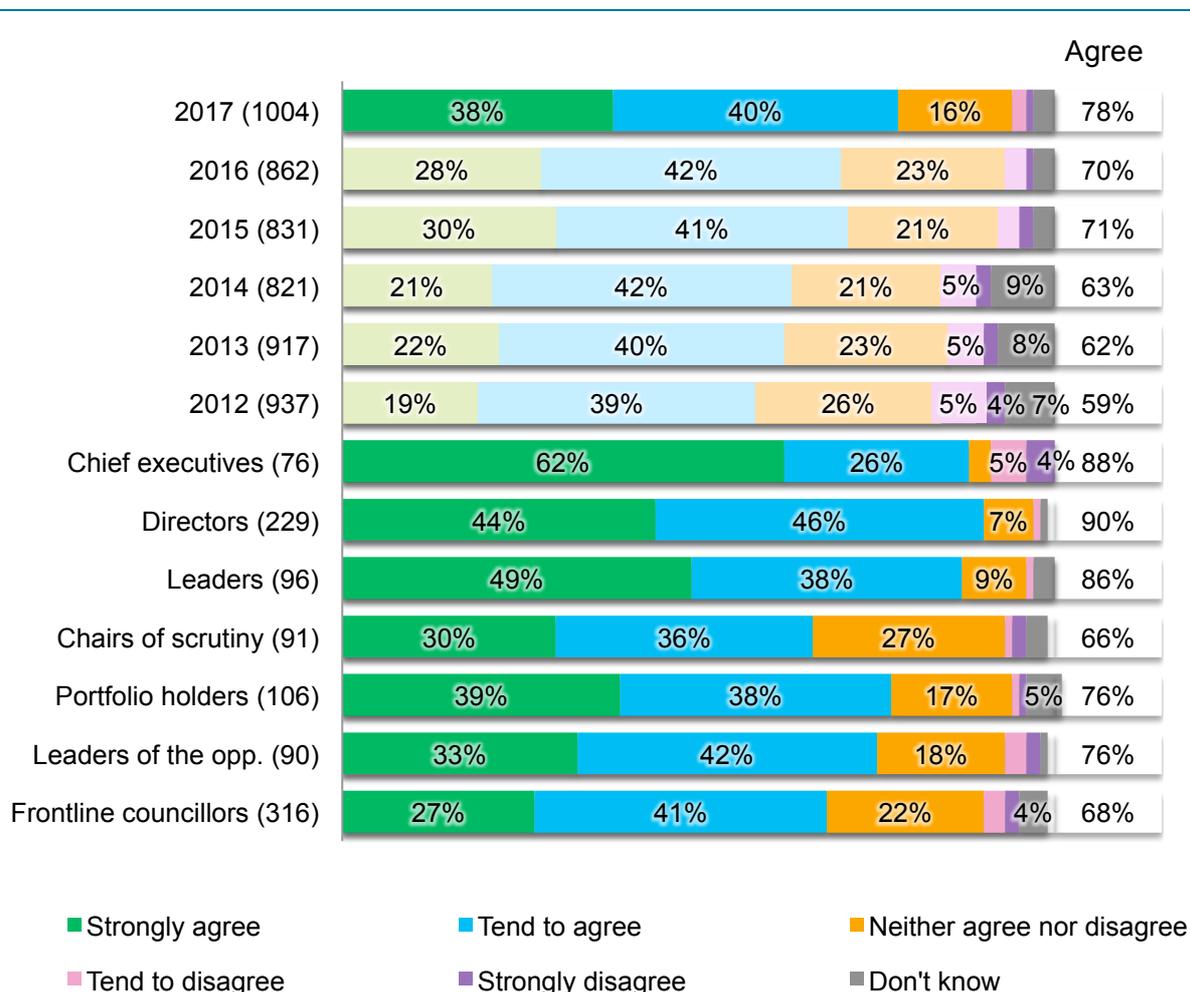
Senior councillors are significantly more likely than frontline councillors to say that they engage with LGA for nearly all of the methods listed in the table above, the exceptions are *contributing via Knowledge Hub, peer review, and through e-mail/telephone contact*. Officers are more likely than both senior councillors and frontline councillors to say that they engage with LGA for all of the methods listed in the table above, except for *contacting councillors/boards by email or phone, peer review* (where they are only more likely than frontline councillors) and *through e-mail/telephone contact*. The most popular form of engagement overall, *responding to LGA consultations*, is driven by officers with nearly nine in ten (89%) engaging via this method compared to 58% of senior councillors and 44% of frontline councillors.

## 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'. When asked for their views on whether or not this is the right approach, 78% of respondents agree that it is. This is a significant, 8 percentage point increase on 2016<sup>6</sup>.

**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

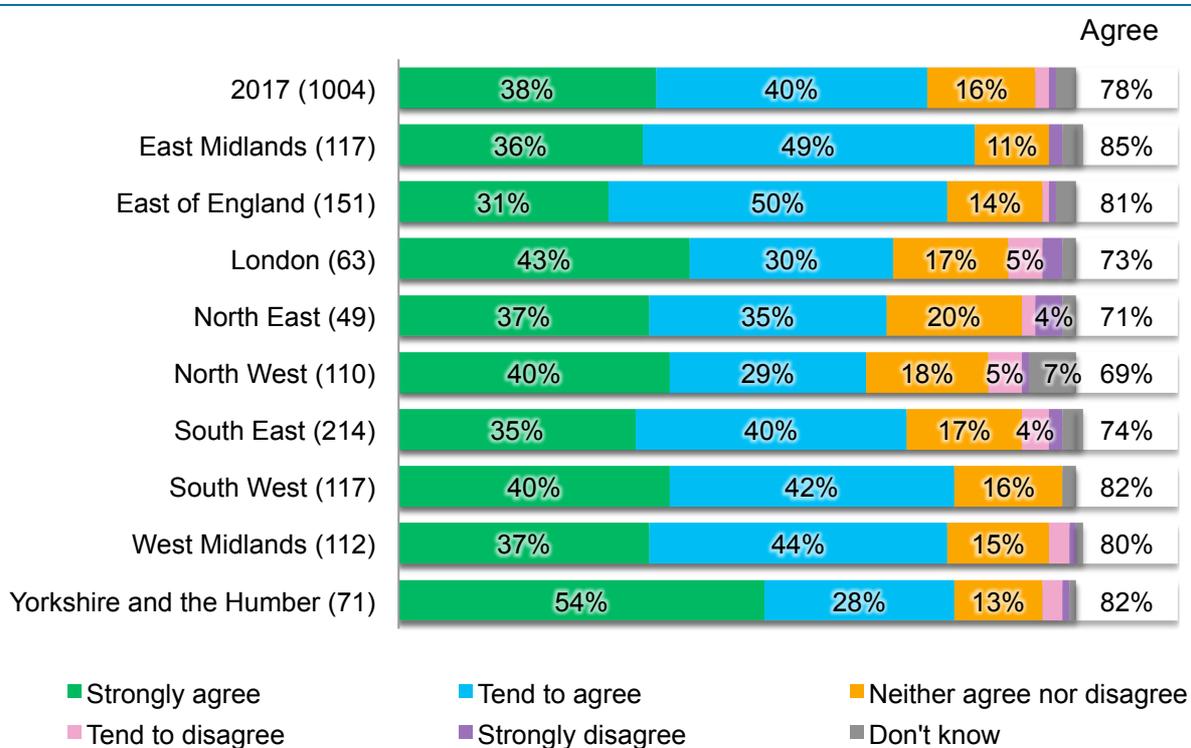
<sup>6</sup> Prior to this question respondents were read (or shown, for those who completed the survey online) a description of what sector-led improvement is. This description changed slightly in 2017, but this wording change is not considered to affect comparability of the results over time.

When considering this question by role type, chief executives are the most likely to agree strongly that sector-led improvement is the right approach (62%). This is 13 percentage points more than leaders, who are the next most likely group to agree strongly. There has been a 9 percentage point rise in the proportion of leaders who agree with the approach compared to 2016 (86% compared to 77%), however this is not a significant difference, due to the relatively small sample size of this group.

Those groups that had lower agree ratings are largely driven by a higher proportion who neither agree nor disagree, as levels of disagreement were low across all groups.

Breaking the results down by region, the North West is significantly less likely than the average to agree that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context (69% vs. 78%). Barring this, there are no significant differences.

**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

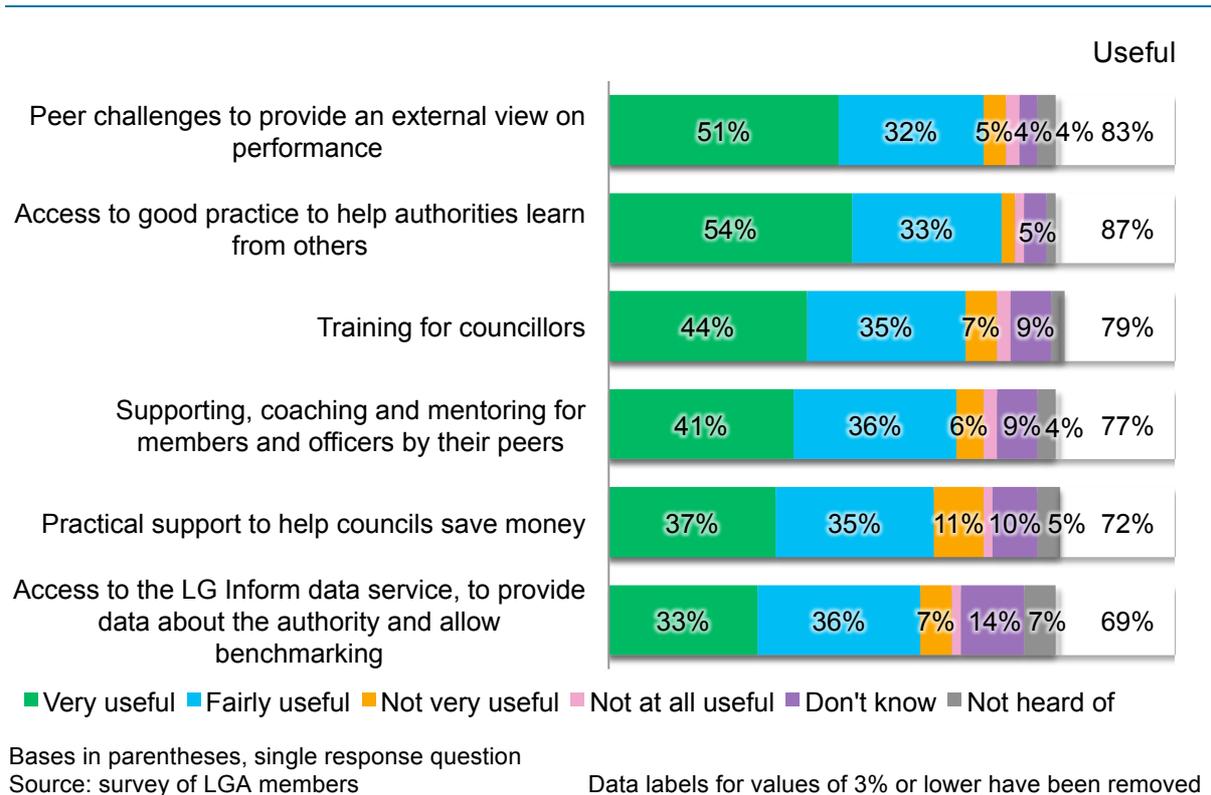
Data labels for values of 3% or lower have been removed

Respondents were also asked about specific elements of the LGA’s improvement support offer for councils<sup>7</sup>. A majority of respondents describe each element as either

<sup>7</sup> Data for this question have not been compared to previous years due to differences in how the questions were asked. In previous years respondents were first asked which elements of the LGAs improvement support off for councils they had heard of and then only asked about the usefulness of those activities that they had heard of. In 2017 respondents were asked about all elements, but given the option to say that they had not heard of each element. This question change has impacted the results to a large enough degree so that results cannot be directly compared.

'very useful' or 'fairly useful'. The best performing element is *access to good practice to help authorities learn from others*, which has an overall usefulness score of 87%. *Practical support to help councils save money* and *access to the LG Inform data service to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking* are the two bottom categories in terms of overall usefulness with 72% and 69% respectively. This is largely driven by the proportion of respondents who are not aware of that support being available (5% and 7%) or who answered 'don't know' (10% and 14%).

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



When these results are broken down by amalgamated job role, it is found that officers are significantly more likely to find all elements, except for *practical support to help councils save money*, useful. Senior councillors are significantly more likely than frontline councillors to find *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance*, *training for councillors* and *supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers* useful. Frontline councillors give each element the lowest usefulness score out of the three amalgamated role groups.

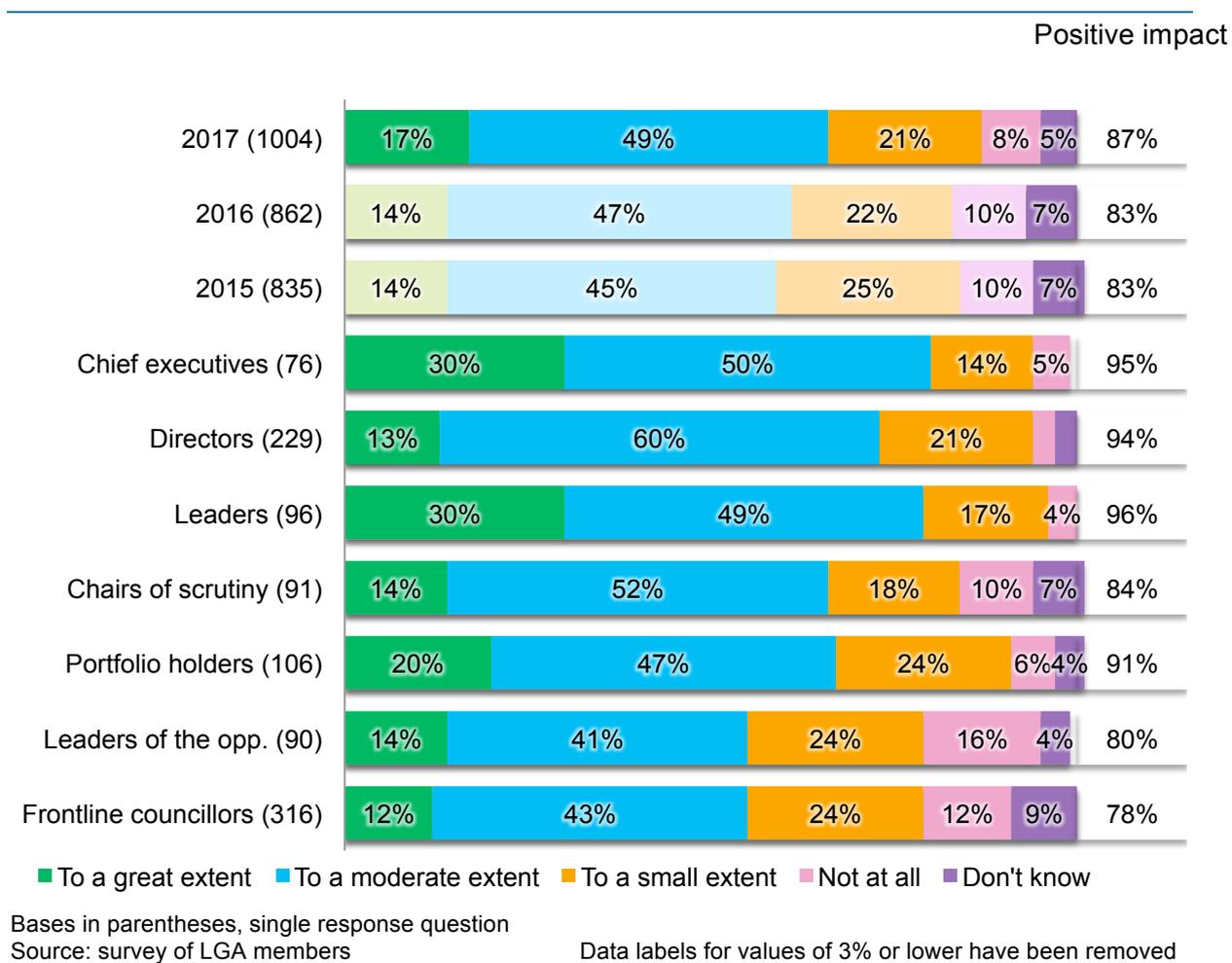
The South East region is significantly less likely to find *peer challenges to provide an external view on performance* useful than average (78% vs. 83%), but this is the only notable difference detected between regions.

**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 (305)	Senior councillors (383)	Frontline councillors (316)
Peer challenges to provide an external view on performance	<b><u>93%</u></b>	<b><u>85%</u></b>	72%
Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others	<b><u>94%</u></b>	86%	81%
Training for councillors	<b><u>82%</u></b>	<b><u>83%</u></b>	73%
Supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers	<b><u>89%</u></b>	<b><u>77%</u></b>	67%
Practical support to help councils save money	72%	73%	70%
Access to LG Inform data service to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking	<b><u>74%</u></b>	69%	66%

In terms of the positive impact that improvement support has had on the respondent's authorities, 87% overall agree that there has been a positive effect (a significant increase from 83% in 2016). This is particularly pronounced among chief executives (95%), leaders (96%) and directors (94%). Frontline councillors are once again the least positive group, joining leaders of the opposition as the least likely to say that improvement support has had a positive impact on their local authority (78% and 80% respectively).

**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>8</sup>**



<sup>8</sup> Note that the summary figure includes all those who selected the 'great', 'moderate' or 'small extent' answer options.

## 5.2 Support

The majority think that the LGA should continue to provide support in all areas asked about. Over nine in ten would like continued LGA support in: *practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income* (93%); *providing peer challenge and peer support* (93%); and *training for councillors* (91%). The area of support that respondents are least likely to think the LGA should continue to provide is increasing housing supply but even so support remains high (75%). This is a new area asked about in the 2017 survey.

The proportion who think that the LGA should continue to provide support in the area of *peer challenge and peer support* has increased significantly from 2016 (93%, compared to 90% in 2016). The only other area that was asked about in 2016 is *training for councillors* but there has been no change in the proportion who think LGA should continue to provide support (91% in both years).

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

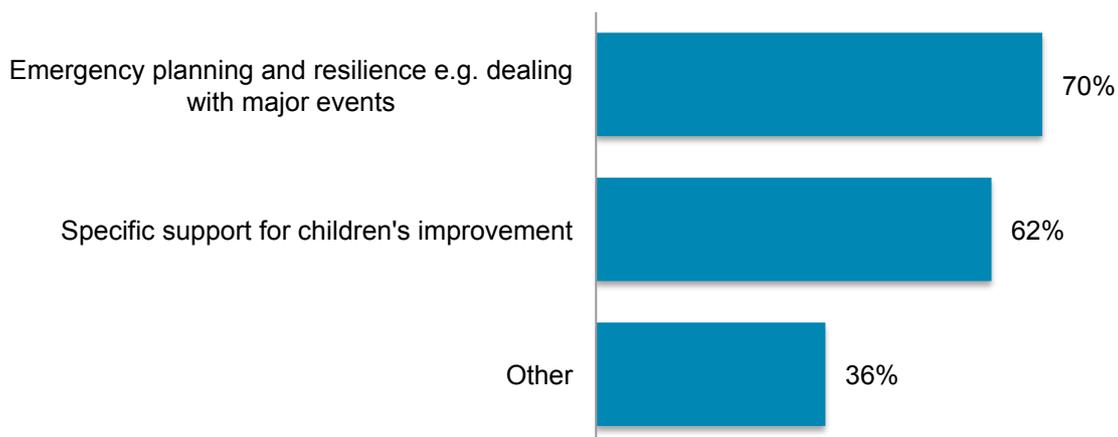


Base = 1004, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

### 5.3 New areas of support

When asked what new areas of support they would like to see provided by the LGA, seven in ten respondents (70%) indicate that they would like to see support provided for *emergency planning and resilience*. Additionally, 62% indicate that *specific support for children's improvement* would be useful. Of those who said there are other new areas where they would like to see LGA support, 28% say this should be in *health and social care*, followed by *financial management* (9%) and *training and development* (8%). All other responses score 6% or less.

**Figure 18: Which, if any, of the following new areas of support would you like to see provided by the LGA?**



Base = 1004, single response question  
Source: survey of LGA members

## 6 Conclusions

This section summarises the main findings and themes evident from this research. In large part, it is consistent with the 2016 Stakeholder Perceptions survey.

- In terms of overall knowledge of the LGA, there continues to be a high level of awareness, and the gains seen in 2013 continue to be maintained.
  - In keeping with last year's results, there remains a high degree of variability within these results when they are broken down by specific job roles. Over nine in ten chief executives and leaders express at least a fair understanding of the LGA compared to just 53% of frontline councillors.
- Advocacy for the LGA remains strong, and now half of leaders express that they would speak positively of the LGA without being asked, a significant 15 percentage point increase from 2016.
- Levels of satisfaction with the work of the LGA are maintained, with a small but statistically significant increase in the percentage of respondents who describe themselves as very satisfied.
  - London and the North East have the highest levels of dissatisfaction, totalling one in ten respondents.
- Just six in ten respondents agree that the LGA demonstrates value for money, while three in ten are neutral.
- Results concerning the usefulness of activities undertaken by the LGA are broadly consistent with that of previous years. Two activities see significant decreases when compared to 2016: *negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice* and *providing conferences and events*. Meanwhile, the proportion who say that *providing a single voice for local government* is useful has seen a small but statistically significant rise of 3 percentage points.
- Four in five people feel they are kept fairly or very well informed by the LGA. This is a small but statistically significant drop of 3 percentage points from 2016.
  - This rises to around nine in ten among chief executives and leaders.
- 'first' magazine continues to be the most common way respondents find out about the work of the LGA, despite a significant decline of six percentage points from 2016.
  - Senior councillors and frontline councillors tend to prefer 'first' magazine as their source of news while officers prefer alternatives such as events and conferences, media work/press releases and the LGA website.
- Responding to LGA consultations is the most popular form of engagement with the LGA, with six in ten respondents selecting this. However, this proportion is strongly driven by officers.

- The proportion supporting sector-led improvement as an approach has increased to nearly four in five respondents. A majority of respondents find all of the elements of the LGA's sector-led improvement offer which were asked about useful. Less popular elements, such as *access to the LG Inform data service to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking*, are largely driven by a higher proportion who don't know (or have not heard of it).
- In terms of the positive impact that improvement support has had on respondent's authorities, 87% overall agree that there has been a positive effect (a significant increase from 83% in 2016).
- The majority of respondents think that the LGA should continue to provide support in the areas put forward in the survey. The lowest performing area, *increasing housing supply*, still garners the support of three-quarters of respondents.
- Seven in ten would like to see support given in the future for *emergency planning and resilience*.

## Appendix 1: Standard error

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

Category	Number in sample population	Number of interviews achieved	Maximum standard error (%)
<b>Region</b>			
East	2577	151	±7.7%
East Midlands	1925	117	±8.8%
London	2097	63	±12.2%
North East	845	49	±13.6%
North West	2527	110	±9.1%
South East	3630	214	±6.5%
South West	1990	117	±8.8%
West Midlands	1709	112	±9%
Yorkshire and the Humber	1376	71	±11.3%
<b>Amalgamated role type</b>			
Officers	1851	305	±5.1%
Senior councillors	2865	383	±4.7%
Frontline councillors	13960	316	±5.5%
<b>Role type</b>			
Chief Executives	320	76	±9.8%
Directors	1531	229	±6%
Leaders	231	96	±7.7%
Leaders of the opposition	267	90	±8.4%
Chairs of scrutiny	915	91	±9.8%
Portfolio Holders	1452	106	±9.2%
Frontline councillors	13960	316	±5.5%

## Appendix 2: Statement of terms

### **Compliance with International Standards**

BMG complies with the International Standard for Quality Management Systems requirements (ISO 9001:2008) 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 be 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.

We have a responsibility to maintain high scientific standards in the methods employed in the collection and dissemination of data, in the impartial assessment and dissemination of findings and in the maintenance of standards commensurate with professional integrity.

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.

## Appendix 3: Questionnaire

### Introduction

Good morning, afternoon, evening. My name is ..... from BMG Research, an independent research organisation.

We are conducting a survey on behalf of the Local Government Association to understand the views of their member councils.

As you are a key stakeholder of the LGA, we are keen to hear from you. The survey is shorter than previous years, and should take 15 minutes to complete. We would really appreciate it if you could take part.

Are you able to take part now, or would you like to arrange a suitable time for me to call you back?

IF WANT TO RE-ARRANGE – CONFIRM TIME AND PHONE NUMBER, THANK AND CLOSE.

IF COMMENCING INTERVIEW, CONTINUE AS FOLLOWS:

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.

The results will be used to help the LGA reflect on the views of its members and plan for the future.

The interview will take around 15 minutes of your time.

All the information provided will be treated confidentially. No identifiable information about any council or person will be published without your permission.

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
Councillor – Chair of scrutiny
Councillor – Backbench member of the council
Councillor – Leader of the opposition
Other: PLEASE CLOSE

IF REFUSE TO TAKE PART, WHY?

No time/too busy
Don't do surveys
No interest in helping LGA

Other, PLEASE WRITE IN:

ASK ALL

**Q1. How well do you know the Local Government Association? Do you...**  
 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	THANK & CLOSE
Never heard of it	5	THANK & CLOSE
Don't know/ No opinion	6	THANK & CLOSE

ASK ALL

**Q3. 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

**Q4. 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

**Q5. 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

**Q7. 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-M.

**Q7 A Providing a single voice for local government**

**Q7 B Lobbying on behalf of local government**

**Q7 C Providing advice and information through the political group offices**

**Q7 D Negotiating national pay, terms and conditions and providing employment advice**

**Q7 E Managing local government's reputation in the national media**

**Q7 G Providing improvement support for councils (for example, peer challenges, training and mentoring for councillors, helping councils make efficiency savings and generate income, good practice)**

**Q7 J Providing legal advice and co-ordination of legal action for councils (for example, property searches, and NHS claims for business rate rebates)**

**Q7 L Providing up-to-date information about local government (for example, 'first' magazine, e-bulletins and website)**

**Q7 M Providing conferences and events**

Stakeholder Perceptions Survey 2017

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

**Q10. 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

**Q11. How do you generally find out about the work of the LGA?**

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

LGA Chairman, Lord Porter's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	2	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin	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, Growing Places)	11	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	12	CONTINUE
Face-to-face contact	13	CONTINUE
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	14	CONTINUE
Other	15	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q11b. 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, Lord Porter's weekly email	1	CONTINUE
LGA Chief Executive, Mark Lloyd's email	2	CONTINUE
Political group offices e-bulletin	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, Growing Places)	11	CONTINUE
Events and conferences	12	CONTINUE
Face-to-face contact	13	CONTINUE
Director of Communications, David Holdstock's CommsNet	14	CONTINUE
Other: please specify	15	CONTINUE

ASK ALL

**Q13. How do you engage with the LGA?**

READ OUT. MULTI CODE

Contacting LGA officers	1	CONTINUE
Contacting councillors/boards	2	CONTINUE
When contacted, by LGA officers or in your role as an advisor	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	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 mobilises the knowledge, skills and experience in councils to help other councils improve. This approach is called “sector-led improvement”.**

ASK ALL

**Q15. To what extent do you agree or disagree that sector-led improvement is the right approach in the current context?**

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

**Q16. 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.

**Q16 A: Peer challenges to provide an external view on performance**

**Q16 B: Supporting, coaching and mentoring for members and officers by their peers**

**Q16 C: Access to good practice to help authorities learn from others**

**Q16 D: Access to the LG Inform data service, to provide data about the authority and allow benchmarking**

**Q16 E: Practical support to help councils save money**

**Q16 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

**Q18. Overall, thinking about this improvement support to what extent do you think that these have had a positive impact on your authority?**

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

**Q21. Do you think the LGA should continue to provide support in the following areas?**

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

**Q21 A: practical support to help councils make efficiency savings, transform services and generate income;**

**Q21 B: Providing peer challenge and peer support**

**Q21 C: Training for councillors**

**Q21 D: Supporting economic growth and devolution**

**Q21 E: Increasing housing supply**

**Q21 F: Developing a flexible and productive workforce, including training for officers**

ASK ALL

**Q22: Which, if any, of the following new areas of support would you like to see provided by the LGA? For example**

**Q22 A: Emergency planning and resilience e.g. dealing with major events**

**Q22 B: Specific support for Children's improvement**

**Q22 C: Other please specify**

ASK ALL

**Q24. 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]

**Q25. For how many years have you been a councillor?**

TYPE IN NUMBER OF YEARS.

ASK ALL

**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

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



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.

Innovation and development is very much at the heart of our business, and considerable attention is paid to the utilisation of the most up to date technologies and information systems to ensure that market and customer intelligence is widely shared.

