

Staff survey 2017/18

Methodology

The survey ran from 8 to 26 January via Survey Monkey software. The response rate was 82.9% (compared with 81.9% in 15/16) and the completion rate was 81.8% (compared with 79.7% in 15/16).

Survey key questions

About you (demographic information)

1. The organisation's objectives and purpose
2. You and your role
3. How we work
4. Our senior managers
5. Our leaders
6. My manager
7. Communication
8. Your overall experience
9. How we will use the survey results

Benchmarking

We have benchmarked 16 questions against the results from the Civil Service People Survey (conducted in October 2017) and/or the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's employee survey (conducted in October/November 2017).

About you (Demographic information)

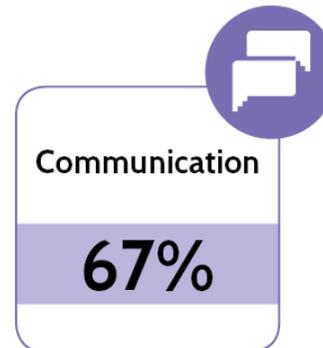
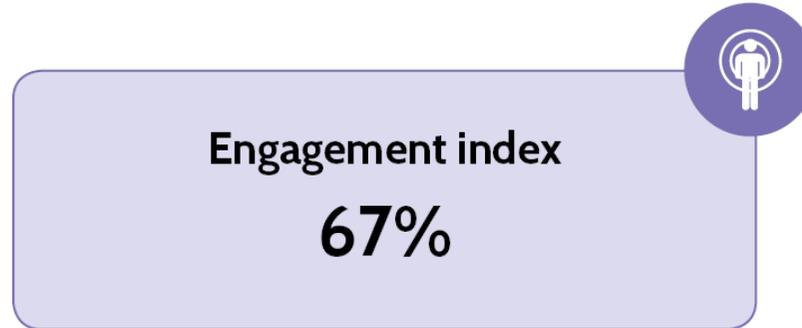
- > Which team do you work for?
 - 14% - Assessment
 - 47% - Investigation
 - 10% - Intake
 - 10% - Corporate services (Executive Support, Operational Support, Finance, HR, Policy & Comms, other)
 - 11% - Managerial (Leadership Team/Executive Team/Ombudsman)
 - 8% - Team Co-ordinators

- > How long have you worked at LGSCO?
 - 13% - Less than two years
 - 85% - More than two years
 - 2% - Prefer not to say

- > Which office do you work at?
 - 39% - Coventry
 - 28% - London
 - 21% - York
 - 6% - Homeworker
 - 6% - Prefer not to say

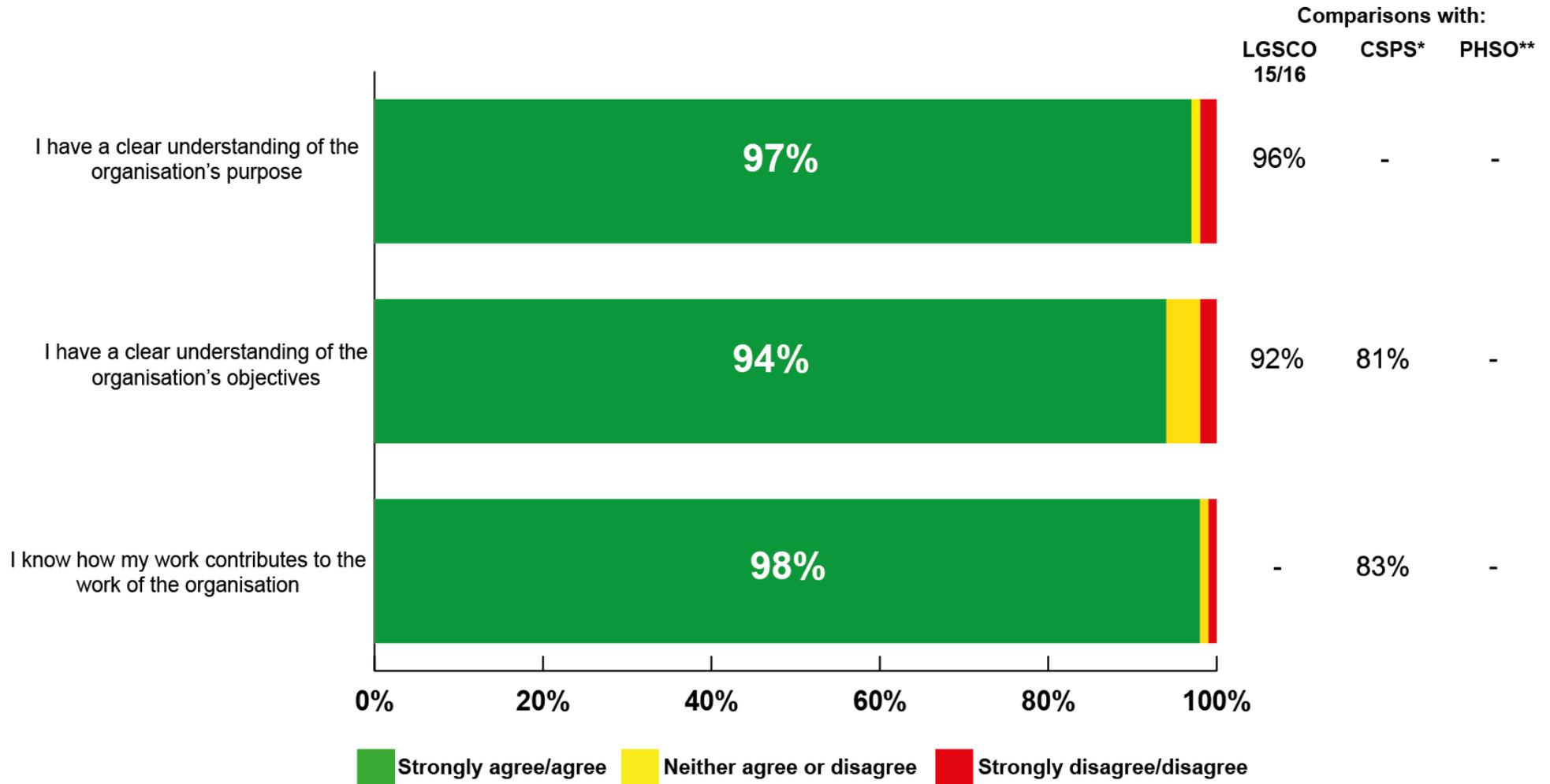
LGSCO Staff survey 2017/18: summary of findings - headline themes

The result for each of the headline themes below is calculated as the percentage of 'strongly agree' or 'agree' responses to all questions in that theme. The engagement index is calculated using a weighted average for the response to five questions.





1. The organisation's objectives and purpose



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

The organisation's role and purpose

Summary

The headline theme score* for this area is 96% (the highest in the survey). Staff are clear about the organisation's purpose and objectives and they know how their work contributes. However some staff feel:

- > our purpose and objectives are not understood by the people who use us
- > there's too much focus on how we look in the media rather than actually remedying injustice, and
- > there's too much focus and emphasis on complainants – we don't feel impartial.

Suggestions for improvements

- > Consider whether we should be using customer satisfaction surveys to assess if we are meeting our objectives. Our role is more closely aligned to a court or tribunal where customer satisfaction is not a useful measure of whether the organisation is meeting its objectives
- > Contribute to issues of national interest

Question breakdown

Clear understanding of the organisation's purpose

97% of staff agree they have a clear understanding of the organisation's purpose; a slight increase from the last survey (96%)

Clear understanding of the organisation's objectives

94% of staff agree they have a clear understanding of the organisation's objectives; a slight increase from the last survey (92%)

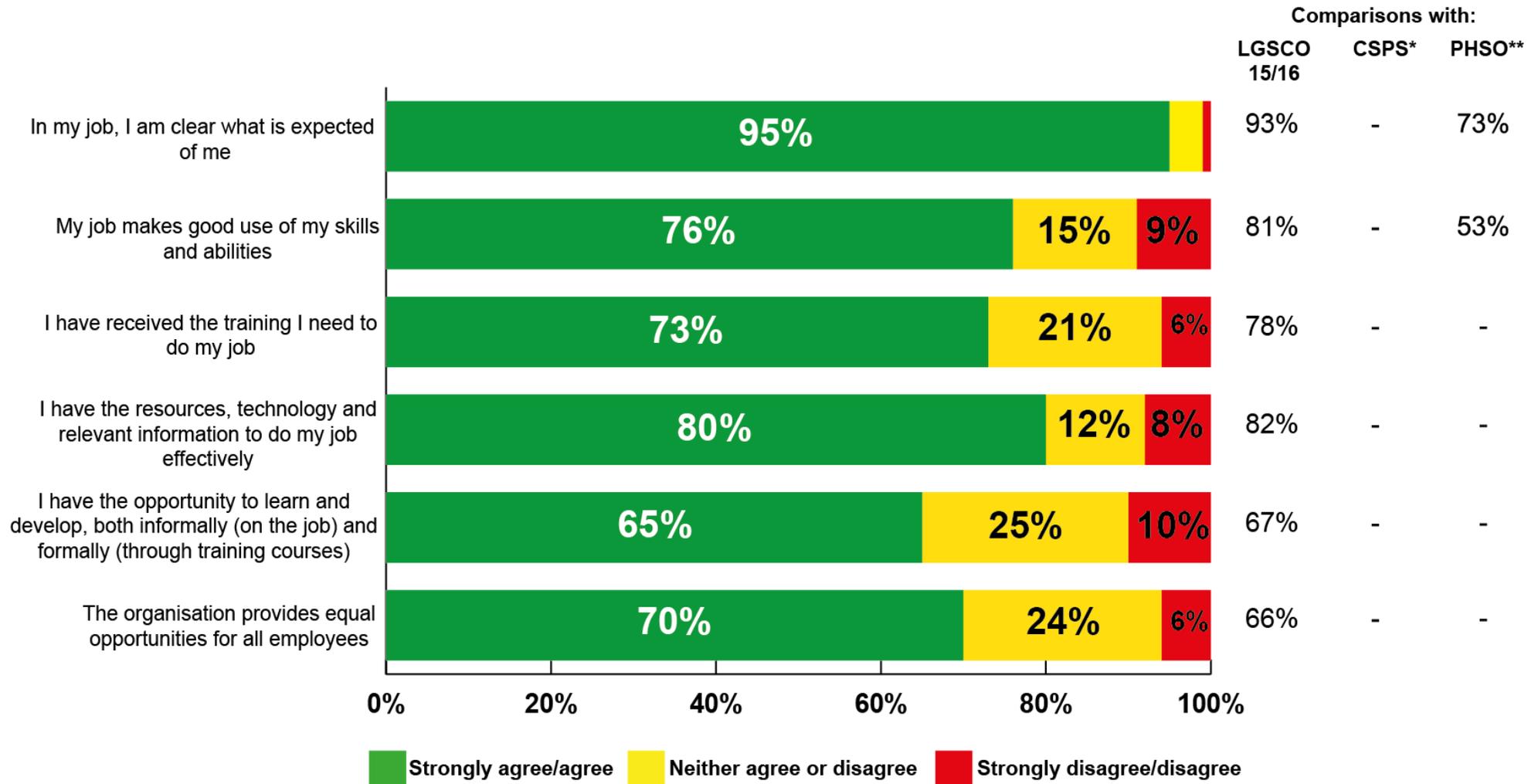
Knowing how work contributes to the work of the organisation

98% of staff agree they know how their work contributes to the work of the organisation

(* - the theme score is calculated as the percentage of 'strongly agree' or 'agree' responses for the questions in that theme.)



2. You and your role



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

You and your role

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 77%. Staff are clear what is expected of them in their roles although some feel there are mixed messages about work not directly linked to casework.

Although more than three quarters of staff agree their job makes good use of their skills and abilities a number suggest some of their skills are not being used despite them putting themselves forward for projects to specifically use those skills; others suggest call recording and the decline in field work is bringing about de-skilling. Some staff feel there needs to be some recognition that cases in Investigation are becoming more difficult to close.

Staff give many examples of courses they had attended which have helped them in their role. However gaps still exist both in specific subject areas and also the frequency of training to keep subject knowledge up to date.

Staff feel we should be doing more to develop people particularly when it comes to internal vacancies. We should also be more transparent when opportunities are available to make sure those opportunities are open to all.

Suggestions for improvements

- > Conduct a skills audit to determine the skills in the organisation
- > Recognise the increased complexity of cases in Investigation and how cases are getting tougher to close
- > Provide training on joint working, adult social care, children's services and dealing with people with disabilities and mental health problems
- > Provide more regular training to keep subject knowledge up to date
- > Open mentoring to all staff – not just new starters
- > Offer management/leadership/public speaking courses to those staff interested in progressing
- > Review quality of induction training and allow some time to consolidate learning before the next session
- > Create an internal training programme where a casework folder is compiled over time by carrying out tasks from the desired role to help internal candidates demonstrate their competence
- > Advertise what courses are available

- > Consider more external training rather than relying on staff to do the training
- > Cater for different learning styles - most guidance material is written or electronic - one size doesn't fit all
- > Provide more text books
- > More standard paragraphs for casework and more admin staff to free up investigator time
- > Offer support staff overtime to help with the unallocated
- > Give more thought to the unique working patterns of Intake when operational decisions are made
- > Be more transparent when opportunities are available

Question breakdown

Clear expectations of job role

95% of staff are clear what is expected of them in their jobs; a slight rise from the last survey (93%)

- > Some staff feel they receive mixed messages about priorities (keep making decisions / do non-casework activities / chase remedies)
- > Others feel the expectation – to close cases - is very clear

Job uses skills and abilities

76% of staff feel their job makes good use of their skills and abilities; a slight fall from the last survey (81%)

- > Staff feel some skills are not being utilised and when they have put themselves forward for projects where those skills could be utilised this has not been taken up
- > Staff feel some of their skills are being de-valued. Two examples; the move away from fieldwork and face to face interviews and the proposals to record calls which will lead to a change in the nature of these calls and detracts from having meaningful and complete conversations with complainants and councils
- > There are several comments about the increased complexity of cases in Investigation and how cases are getting tougher to close. There is increased expectation from complainants, less compliance from councils in providing information and reluctance to provide a remedy. Staff feel this isn't being recognised or anything done about it

Training to do job effectively

73% of staff feel they have received the training they need to do their job; a slight fall from the last survey (78%)

- > Staff cited many courses they have attended which have helped them in their role – these include subject specific training, the induction training, IT training, communication training (giving and receiving feedback, writing skills, confident communication) and reasonable adjustment training (including understanding autism)
- > Staff don't feel they have had training on joint working, adult social care, children's services and dealing with people with disabilities and mental health problems
- > Investigators feel being expected to source their own external training is inefficient and it should be done centrally
- > Requests for external training should be treated flexibly as jobs are 'niche'

Resources, technology or relevant information to do job effectively

80% of staff agree they have the resources to do their jobs effectively; a slight fall from the last survey (82%)

- > Some staff are frustrated with ECHO; speed and time lost following upgrades
- > Others find the phone system frustrating
- > Lack of IT support before 9am most days causes problems for some

Opportunity to learn and develop

65% of staff agree they have the opportunity to learn and develop; a slight fall from the last survey (67%)

- > Some staff feel the organisation is good at allowing staff to contribute outside of their job role
- > Others feel no proactive steps are taken to make internal candidates the best fit for vacancies in the organisation
- > Staff in Assessment feel they are not offered opportunities to take part in projects – they feel they are being missed because their managers are not part of the Leadership Team so they don't hear about the opportunities
- > Staff feel there needs to be transparency around the opportunities which are available and how they are allocated – it is felt many opportunities are 'right place right time'
- > Staff don't feel they have the time to keep up with developments or to invest in learning

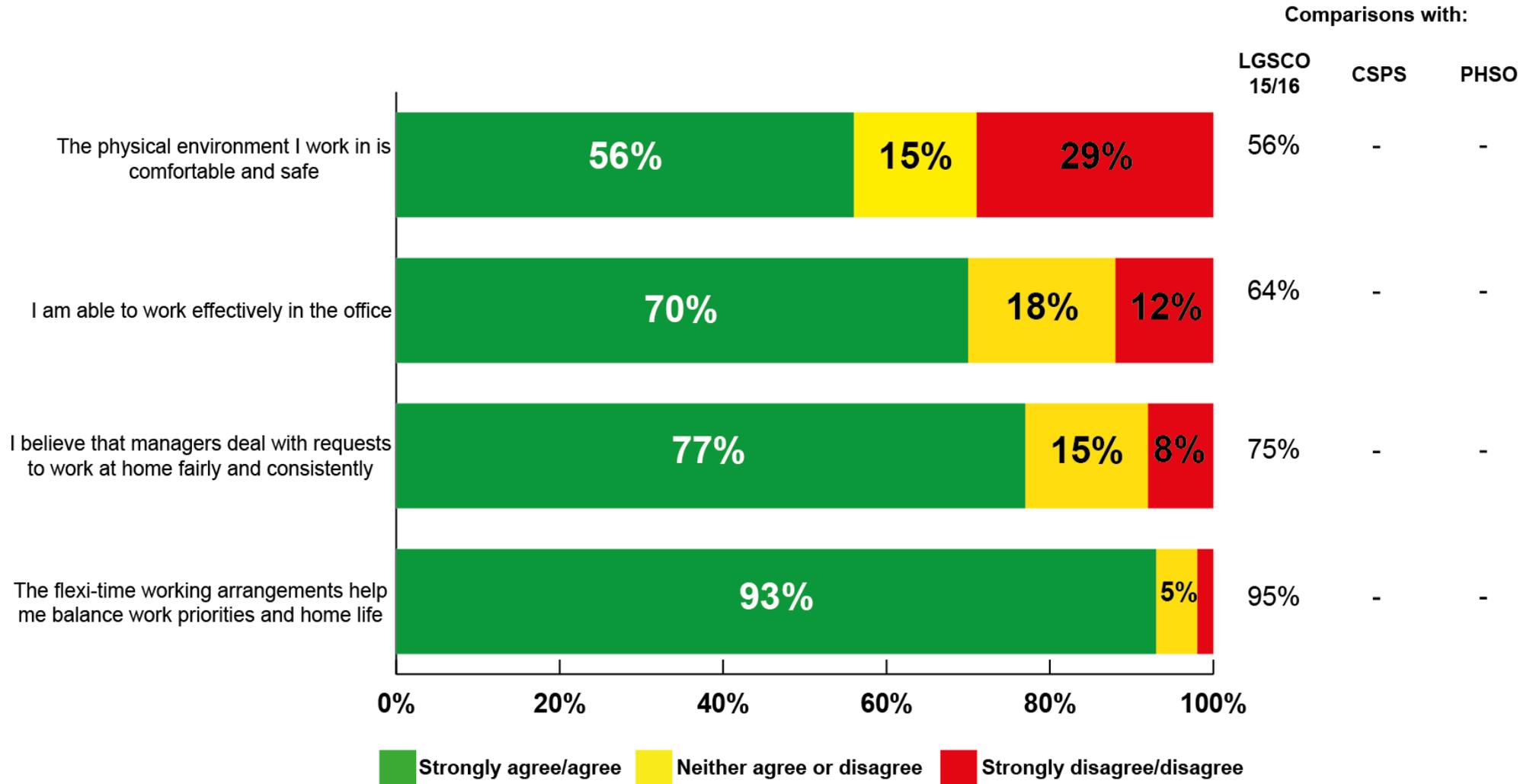
Equal opportunities

70% of staff agree the organisation provides equal opportunities for all employees; a slight increase from the last survey (66%)

- > No promotion prospects for investigators who work part time



3. How we work



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

How we work

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 74%. The flexi-time system continues to be seen as one of the most positive aspects of working at the LGSCO. Most staff feel requests to work at home are dealt with fairly and consistently although some feel there is inconsistency about how home working is treated across the business. Satisfaction with the physical environment has not increased since the last survey and there are several comments about the lack of improvement in this area. However, the number of staff who agree they can work effectively in the office has increased.

Suggestions for improvements

- > Have a consistent approach to timescales for booking desks. Some members of staff can book desks more than a month ahead – the same rule should apply to everyone
- > Improve the flexi-time system by allowing more than 14 hours to be carried over every month, allow working at weekends and evenings and allow two full days flexi a month in line with the Civil Service – rather than having the odd situation of a day and a half
- > Allow staff to clock up flexi before 7.30 in the morning
- > Assess whether the flexible working policies are being used in the way intended. (For example the practice of booking two and a half days' leave and then just use flexi every afternoon to get a week off)

Question breakdown

Physical environment is comfortable and safe/able to work effectively in the office

56% of staff agree the physical environment is comfortable and safe; the same as the last survey

70% of staff agree they can work effectively in the office; an increase from the last survey (64%)

- > Some staff find it wearing to constantly have to adjust desks and chairs

Physical environment/working effectively in the office (Coventry)

- > Office is too cold / drafty
- > Mechanism for reporting problems with the temperature doesn't work

- > The speed of resolution for issues is too long
- > Significant noise distraction from working in an open plan office (including from people standing outside meeting room 9013)
- > Not enough microwaves for the number of staff – impacts people with set lunch breaks
- > The breakout areas are used for meetings or people sat with laptops
- > There's an inconsistent approach to desk booking where some teams have designated areas and others have to hot desk

Physical environment/working effectively in the office (York)

- > Too cold
- > Too noisy (open plan office noise and noise from drilling)
- > Lighting is harsh
- > Not enough desks

Physical environment/working effectively in the office (London)

- > Too hot
- > Too noisy
- > Too enclosed/lack of natural light

Requests to work at home are dealt with fairly and consistently

77% of staff agree requests to work at home are dealt with fairly and consistently; a slight increase from the last survey (75%)

- > Most staff feel requests to work at home are granted
- > Some staff are supported by their AO to work effectively at home
- > Staff are mostly content with their own home working arrangements but feel there is an inconsistency in the approach across the organisation. Managers seem to have different approaches. Although staff want consistency others suggest requests to work at home should be taken on an individual basis – not a blanket approach
- > Lack of clarity for new starters about home working

Flexi-time helps balance work priorities and home life

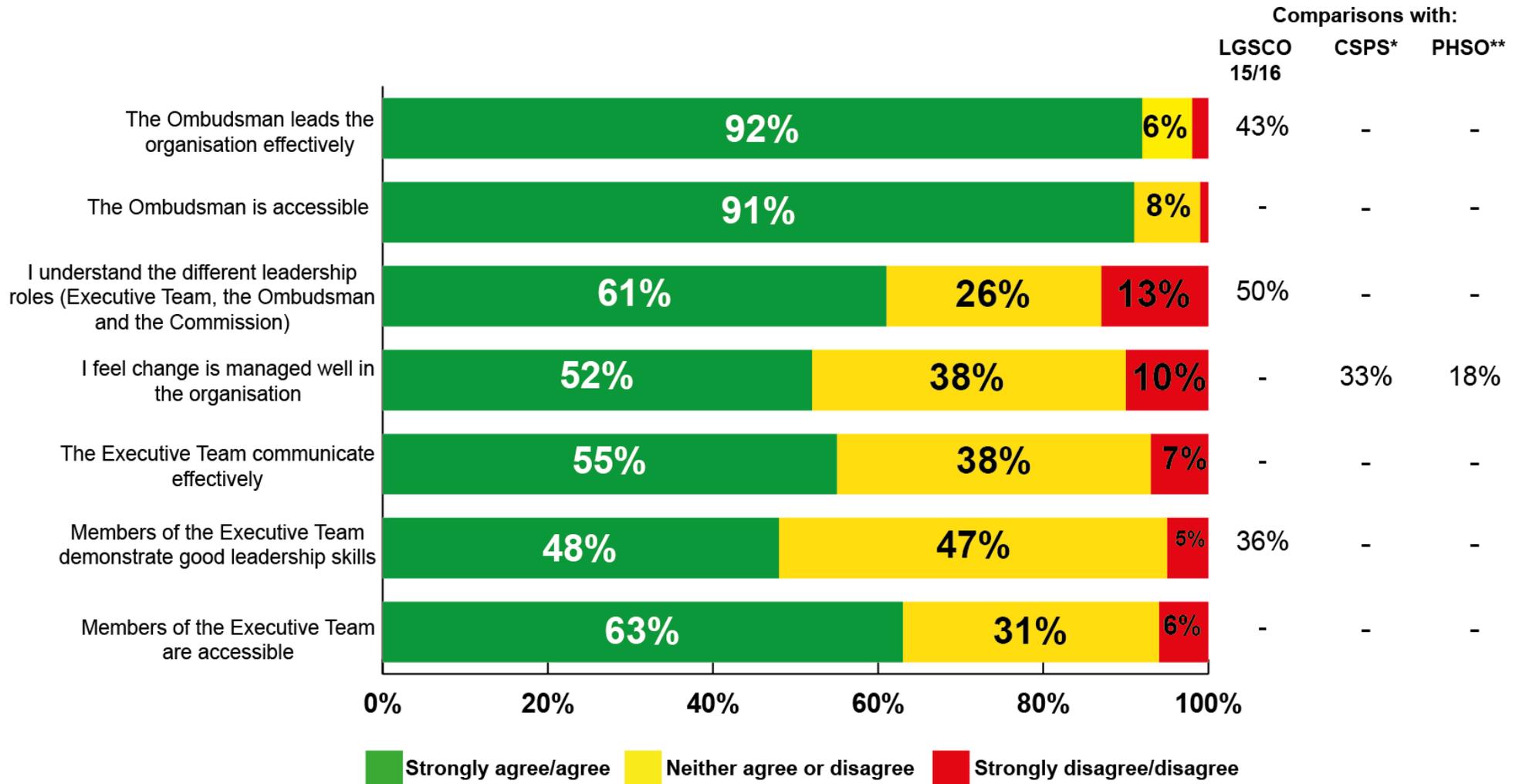
93% of staff agree flexi-time working arrangements help them balance work priorities and home life; a slight fall from the last survey (95%)

- > The flexi system is seen as one of most positive aspects of working at the LGSCO and one of our great strengths as an employer
- > The flexi system means the LGSCO gets the best out of staff – some stay late to finish something or get in early

- > Abolition of the core hours has helped staff manage work priorities and home commitments
- > Some staff feel flexi-time can drive the wrong behaviours with staff doing certain activities just to be able 'to bank' more time
- > Some staff would prefer to go back to the old flexi system where you could take a day and a half off a month
- > Some staff feel supported by their manager to be able to be flexible about their working pattern. While others feel their manager checks up on them all the time and are negative about flexible working
- > It needs to be made clearer when new staff can ask for flexible working – one new starter said they are not sure when they can ask for flexible working



4. Our senior managers



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

Our senior managers

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 66%. There is a substantial increase in the score for the Ombudsman leading the organisation effectively. His clear vision, his communication of his priorities, his focus on casework and his approach have all contributed to this score. Similarly, most staff agree he's accessible; achieved by sitting in open plan, his presence in all three offices and being approachable. Although understanding of the different leadership roles has increased from the last survey some staff don't understand the responsibilities of the Executive Team (ET) members and there are a number of suggestions about how this could be addressed.

More than half of staff agree change is managed effectively; the change to the new Ombudsman and the appointment of the new AOs are two examples. However, staff feel we could be better at communicating changes before they happen (particularly changes to the investigative process including changes to letters) and we need to do more to follow up on issues following IT upgrades.

More than half of staff agree ET communicate effectively. A number of examples of the channels used are cited. However, others feel the only channel used is the Monthly Message and as a group ET are secretive, distant and detached.

A large proportion of staff believe ET are accessible however others would like to see ET genuinely engaging with staff.

Suggestions for improvements

- > A quick guide to what each role covers could be provided or ET could explain their roles perhaps on the intranet
- > ET could do a round up about what they have been up to (like the Ombudsman's Monthly Message)
- > Senior people from Policy and Comms should attend team meetings as staff are not sure what they do
- > Consider providing a mechanism for feeding back on manager/AO/ET performance – appraisals should be '360'
- > ET should engage with staff when they visit other offices (attend team meetings, sit with different teams, attend training courses with staff)

Question breakdown

The Ombudsman leads the organisation effectively

92% of staff agree the Ombudsman leads the organisation effectively; a substantial increase from the last survey (43%)

- > He has a clear vision and expectations for the organisation and has communicated his priorities
- > Staff feel he is supportive, encouraging, enthusiastic, decisive, sensible, open, straight forward, friendly, chatty, treats people with respect and always smiles and says 'hello'
- > He's looking to make a difference and he's interested to hear what people say. He gives thoughtful praise and constructive feedback
- > He has put casework back at the heart of what we do and takes the lead with casework issues. He's always willing to take the time to discuss cases (doesn't want formal case conferences which add more time to the process) and he's open to comments and suggestions on how we can improve
- > He's raised the profile of the organisation in the media and made us more visible externally. He presents a strong image to outside parties. He's politically savvy and well informed

Ombudsman accessibility

91% of staff agree the Ombudsman is accessible

- > He achieves this by having a desk in the open plan office, being approachable, being visible around all three offices, being available to discuss cases by email or on the phone, by making a noticeable effort to engage with staff and knowing staff by name

Understanding the different leadership roles

61% of staff agree they understand the different leadership roles; an increase from the last survey (50%)

- > Some staff say they don't understand the role the Commission plays
- > Some staff don't understand the responsibilities of the individual members of ET

Managing change in the organisation

52% of staff agree change is managed well in the organisation

- > Staff feel the change from one Ombudsman to another has been managed well along with the subsequent changes to the management structure
- > The Office 2016 roll out, the office moves, the appointment of the new AOs and the change of name have all been managed well
- > Staff don't think we communicate changes before they happen. The investigative process and templates are changed without being flagged up
- > Staff don't feel we follow up on issues after upgrades to software. Staff have been left with workarounds after upgrades to ECHO and the Office 365 roll-out for months with no updates on when issues will be resolved

Effective communication (ET)

55% of staff agree ET communicate effectively

- > Staff feel ET communicate effectively through the Ombudsman's Monthly Message, Casework Briefings, Talking Points, Weekly News, their meeting minutes being published promptly and cascades to Leadership Team
- > Some staff don't feel ET communicated effectively the decision about the 2018 concessionary days and the allocation of a difficult complaint
- > The Ombudsman's Monthly Message is the only communication staff see from ET
- > Staff feel as a group ET are secretive, distant, detached and they don't genuinely engage with staff

Demonstrate good leadership skills (ET)

48% of staff agree members of ET demonstrate good leadership skills; an increase from the last survey (36%)

- > Adding more people to the team seen as a positive
- > ET members don't demonstrate leadership skills as they don't address day to day issues like noise and inappropriate discussions by AOs of personnel and performance issues in an open plan office. There seems to be a reluctance to be the 'senior manager' in the room when issues arise
- > ET members visit other offices but don't engage with staff (they just talk to AOs)

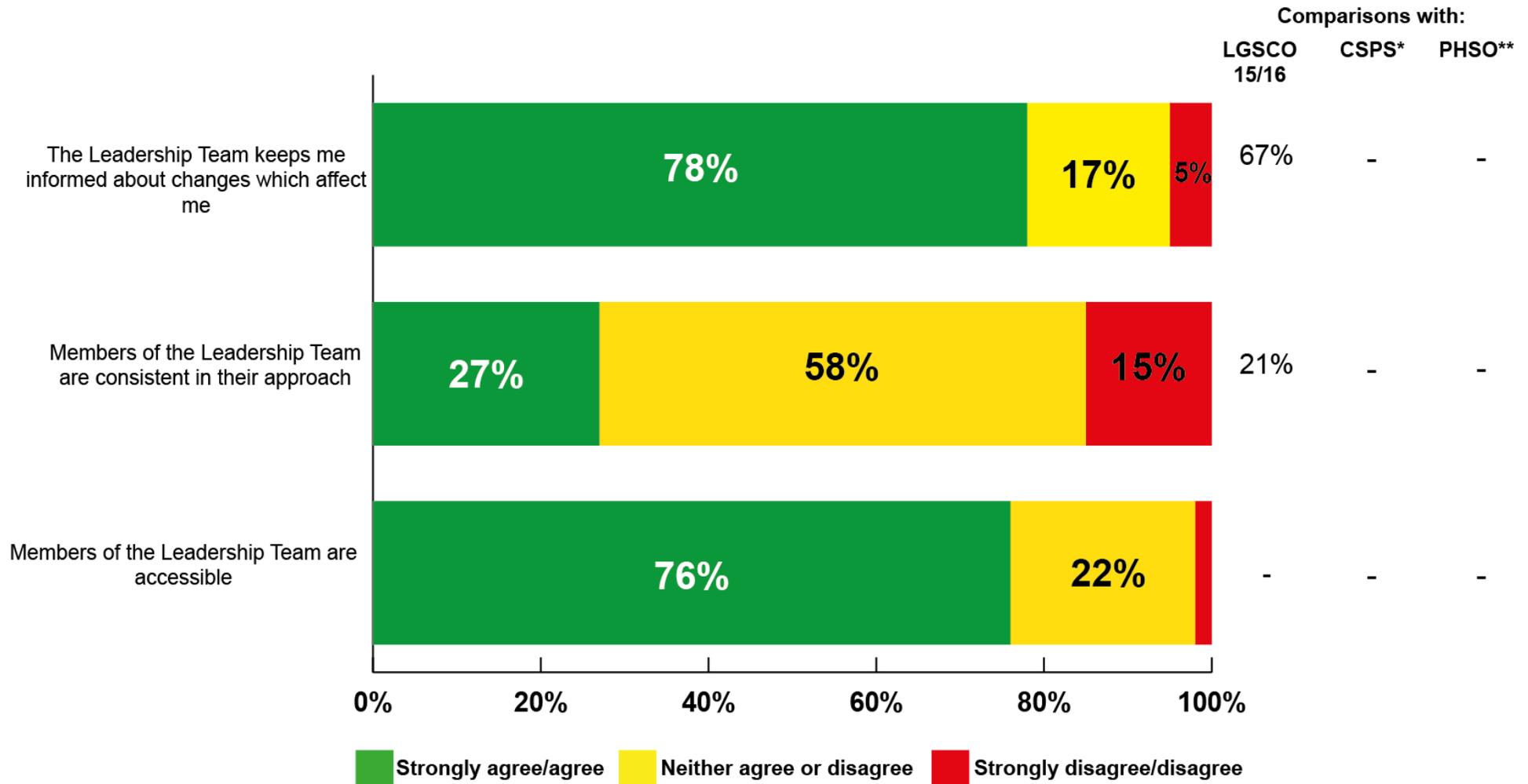
Accessible (ET)

63% of staff agree members of ET are accessible

- > Staff feel ET are accessible as they regularly see them in the office, are approachable and can be contacted by phone or email



5. Our leaders



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

Our leaders

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 60%. Most staff agree Leadership Team (LT) keep them informed about changes which affect them. Staff outline a number of channels such as Talking Points which work well and they also believe the cascade system works well. Several staff highlight the weekly update on cases as not being helpful and adding unnecessary pressure. Although higher than the last survey, LT consistency remains the lowest score in the survey with examples of inconsistency given. More than three quarters of staff agree members of LT are accessible although some believe there should be more AO presence in the office and AOs are becoming removed from the core business and getting pulled into corporate work.

Question breakdown

Communication (LT)

78% of staff agree LT keep them informed about changes; an increase from the last survey (67%)

- > LT communicate well through Talking Points, at team meetings and at Casework Briefings. Specific situations communicated well include changes to ECHO, IT updates and feedback from the court judgment
- > Cascade system works well
- > Communication now more difficult with LT meetings being held every other month
- > Some staff don't find the weekly update on cases helpful as it suggests they should be doing things more quickly or taking on higher caseloads. Constant pressure is unhelpful – it suggests staff are not working hard enough

Consistency (LT)

27% of staff agree LT are consistent in their approach; an increase from the last survey (21%)

- > Staff feel LT are consistent in their approach to the delivery of important messages and supporting and reinforcing messages
- > Staff feel there is inconsistency between LT members approach in a number of areas including allocations, tea breaks, homeworking, post-decision review feedback, how information is communicated, subsistence payments and what's expected to achieve delegation

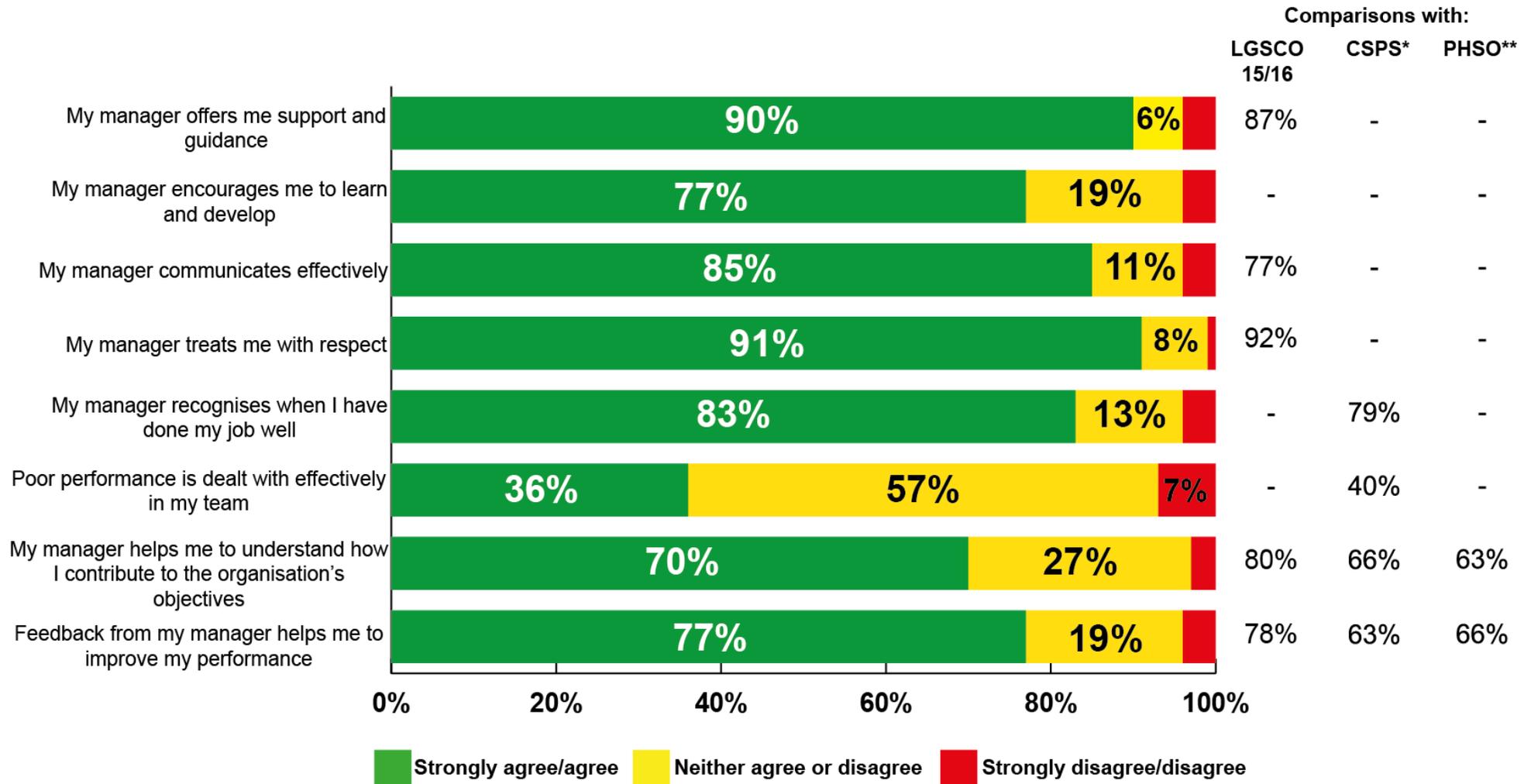
Accessible (LT)

76% of staff agree members of LT are accessible

- > Staff believe their AO is accessible
- > Some feel there some be more AO presence in the office
- > AOs are becoming removed from the core business and get sucked into corporate work



6. My manager



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

My manager

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 76%. Most staff agree their manager offers support and guidance and there are several comments about how managers do this. More than three quarters of staff agree their manager encourages them to learn and develop although new starters feel there needs to be a more consistent approach in this area. Most staff agree their manager communicates effectively. Staff agree their manager recognises when they have done their job well through praise, Exceptional Contribution Awards and passing on comments from other managers. The second lowest scoring question is about managers managing poor performance effectively. A number of staff are confident their line manager would act immediately if there are any signs of poor performance and suggest ways staff would be helped. Staff expect managers to have evidence to challenge performance and deal with the issue with individuals. Staff also feel managers should make a judgement call on passing on pressure from above – don't pass it on if it won't help. Managers help identify areas for improvement in a number of ways and how feedback is presented is key to its effectiveness.

Suggestions for improvements

- > Benchmark other organisations to see how learning and development is encouraged
- > Proactively assist in real development – introduce a development scheme for example

Question breakdown

Manager offers support and guidance

90% of staff agree their manager offers support and guidance; a slight increase from the last staff survey (87%)

- > Staff feel their manager is supportive, patient, flexible, takes a sensible view of the job and treats people like adults. Others comment their manager supports but doesn't dictate, motivates staff to do the best they can, supports training requests, passes on positive comments and helps staff manage their caseload
- > Managers are focussed on casework and less on non-casework activities – this creates a tension as senior management tell staff to do both. We need a more consistent approach

Manager encourages learning and development

77% of staff agree their manager encourages them to learn and develop

- > Staff feel managers try their best but the tools aren't there for them to do much to proactively assist in real development
- > New starters feel there should be a more consistent approach to managing new starters in terms of training, mentoring, working at home and targets

Manager communicates effectively

85% of staff agree their manager communicates effectively; an increase from the last survey (77%)

- > Managers are approachable, decisive and effective. Managers treat staff with respect, they are interested and care about the people in their teams and deal with staff as adults. Staff trust their manager's judgement
- > Managers take too long to communicate important information

Manager treats me with respect

91% of staff agree their manager treats them with respect; a slight fall from the last survey (92%)

Recognition of job well done

83% of staff agree their manager recognises when they have done their job well

- > Staff are praised verbally at one to ones or achievements shared at team meetings
- > Some staff are put forward for Exceptional Contribution Awards
- > Managers make sure they pass on positive comments from others
- > Staff expect their manager to say 'thank you' when they have done their job well

Dealing with poor performance effectively

36% of staff agree poor performance is dealt with effectively in their teams

- > Staff are confident their manager would spot any signs of poor performance and prevent it from escalating
- > Managers offer support at one to ones by going through complex cases, taking time with the individual to help and discuss, applying pressure when needed, focussing on the learning for next time rather than the negatives and not accepting excuses when work is not up to standard
- > Several staff acknowledge their manager tries to be consistent with how other managers deal with poor performance
- > Staff expect managers to use evidence to challenge poor performance and not take another manager's comments without question
- > Staff expect managers to recognise and challenge poor performance and see a change in behaviour as a result
- > Staff expect poor performing individuals to be dealt with directly rather than team behaviour having to be changed or blanket emails sent out to everyone
- > Staff expect managers to use their judgement when passing on 'pressure' from above. If it's not going to help productivity don't pass it on

Helping staff understand how they contribute

70% of staff agree their manager helps them understand how they contribute to the organisation's objectives; a fall from the last survey (80%)

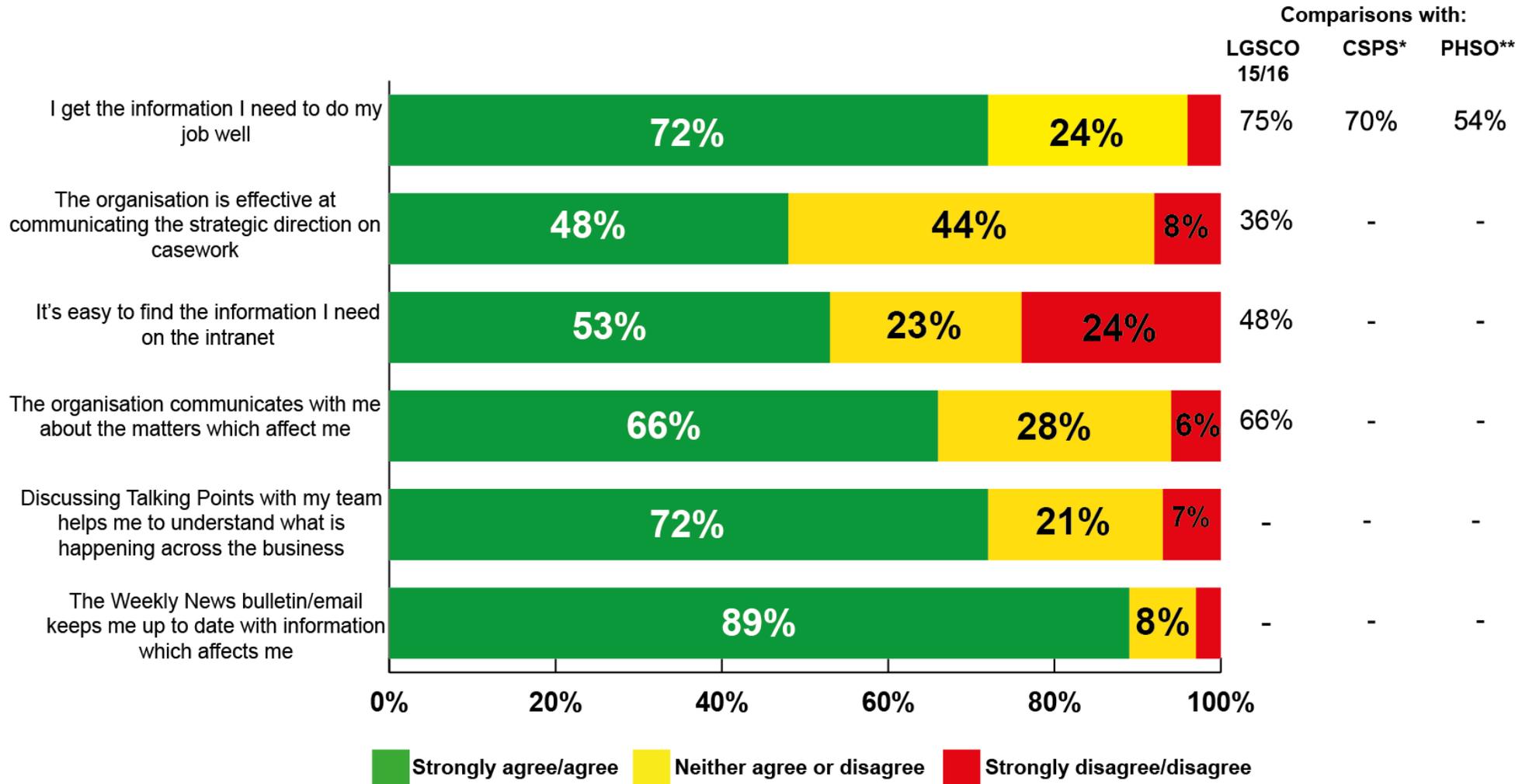
Feedback

77% of staff agree feedback from their manager helps them improve their performance; a slight fall from the last survey (78%)

- > Feedback from managers can help identify areas for improvement in a positive, constructive way. Managers share knowledge, advise and point people in the right direction. Managers suggest different approaches on complex and challenging situations. The feedback focuses on what works and what can be done differently. Some staff feel feedback from their manager helps get the best out of them and gives them the confidence they are doing things right
- > Feedback could be more constructive if it was based on actual examples and not put across in a negative way
- > It would be helpful if feedback was given on non-casework activities and not just casework to provide a balance



7. Communication

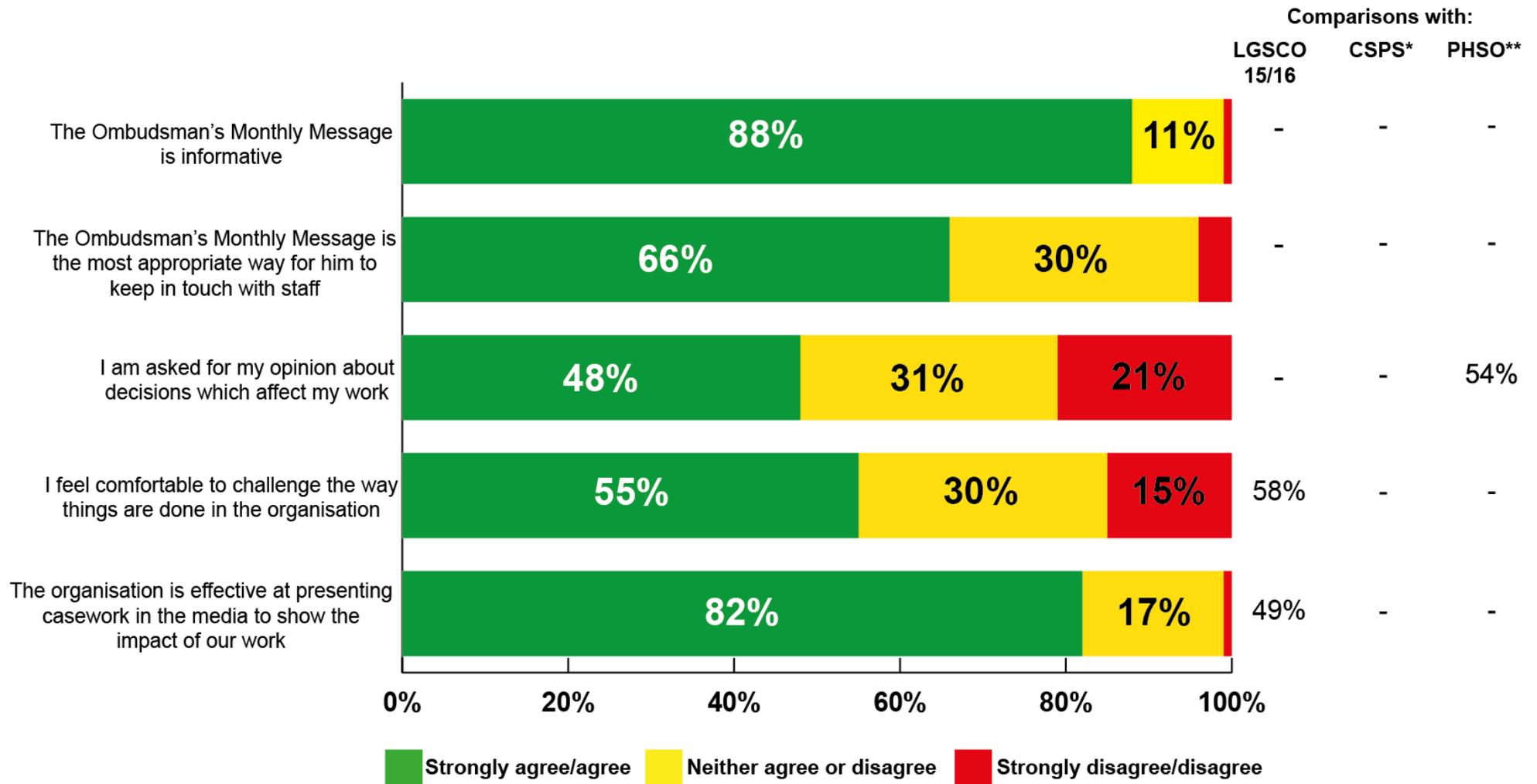


* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017



7. Communication



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

Communication

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 67%. Most staff agree they get the information they need to do their job well – guidance and legislation is the type of information most used and it's found in a variety of places. The main criticisms are information is not all in one place or even cross-referenced and the quality of the guidance is variable. Just over half of staff agree it's easy to find information on the intranet; the structure and the search mechanism are singled out as particular issues. Staff feel Casework Briefings work better now but changes to the investigative process are not being communicated before they happen or at all. There is a high level of agreement about the effectiveness of the Talking Points, Weekly News and Ombudsman's Monthly Message communication channels. Less than half of staff agree they are asked about decisions which affect their work. Staff feel they are not consulted about changes before they happen or given a chance to input. A higher percentage of staff are comfortable to challenge the way things are done. There has been a substantial increase in staff agreement on our effectiveness of presenting casework in the media to show the impact of our casework. Staff feel it's good to see our greater external impact as we are seen as a more credible and respected body as a result.

Suggestions for improvements

- > Staff suggest it would be useful to publish the legal advice issued on cases – this used to happen in the past
- > Provide more text books
- > The reports story should go on the intranet after the report has been issued so staff don't have to remember to go back and look
- > Consider increasing the frequency of the Monthly Message
- > In addition to the Monthly Message the Ombudsman should consider verbal feedback and discussion at team meetings
- > The organisation should show a more genuine attempt to listen and a more genuine commitment to consultations. Shouldn't just be a tokenistic exercise when staff are asked and give their views
- > Consult on issues you have committed to consult on - we haven't been consulted on some 'big' issues like call recording and all investigators taking on joint cases
- > Staff should be told in advance about when we are receiving national attention; complainants tell staff and they aren't aware
- > Extend the impact of the policy team with more resource. We can't take advantage of opportunities to work with partners and we are still not being proactive enough on topics we should be inputting into

Question breakdown

Information to do the job

72% of staff agree they get the information they need to do their job well; a slight fall from the last survey (75%)

- > Guidance and legislation are the types of information most used
- > Staff also find subject guidance, standard paragraphs, process manuals, HR policies, Casework Policy Forum guidance, focus reports and the guidance on jurisdiction useful
- > They find the information they need on the intranet, the internet (including our website for decisions), Lexus Nexis, from colleagues, books in the office, on ECHO, in Weekly News, from the forum, from their manager, at team meetings or from emails
- > Guidance isn't all in one place or even cross referenced to one place especially to Casework Policy Forum guidance notes
- > Quality of guidance is variable

Communicating the strategic direction on casework

48% of staff agree the organisation is effective at communicating the strategic direction on casework; an increase from the last survey (36%)

- > Casework Policy Forum don't seem to communicate at all
- > Casework Policy Forum need to consult more meaningfully
- > There is no definitive route to get casework advice

Easy to find information on the intranet

53% of staff agree it's easy to find the information they need on the intranet; a slight increase from the last survey (48%)

- > Staff find manuals, subject matter guidance, the authorities page, the standard paragraphs, guidance on jurisdiction, Org Plus, Casework Policy Forum guidance notes and the staff handbook the most useful information on the intranet
- > Search isn't very good
- > Intranet is not consistently structured/too many levels
- > Content out of date

Organisational information

66% of staff agree the organisation communicates with them about the matters which affect them; no change from the last survey

- > Staff feel they are kept well informed about structure changes, office moves, policy changes, ECHO changes, IT problems, implications of the court judgment and policy changes

- > Staff feel the remedies project work was communicated well and Casework Briefings are more focussed now
- > Staff don't feel as well informed about changes to the investigation process, what we are telling councils and the content of templates
- > The tone of communication is questioned – be honest when things go wrong – don't try to 'spin' it

Talking Points

72% of staff agree discussing Talking Points helps them understand what is happening across the business

- > Staff would like to see more discussions at team meetings but Talking Points is out of date by the time it is discussed

Weekly News

89% of staff agree the Weekly News email keeps them up to date with information which affects them

- > Staff find links to changes in guidance/policy, the Ombudsman's Monthly Message, 'In the news', weekly reports information, minutes, new guidance statements and links to the training programme useful
- > Staff feel Weekly News has a good layout/format which flags up headlines of items which you need to read. It's concise, it clearly differentiates what's mandatory and advisory, is easy to read, is the right size and frequency and is a unifying document. It's time well spent reading it
- > Staff questioned the usefulness of the meetings section as clicking through doesn't really take you to any more information

The Ombudsman's Monthly Message is informative

88% of staff agree the Ombudsman's Monthly Message is informative

The Ombudsman's Monthly Message is most appropriate way of keeping in touch with staff

66% of staff agree the Ombudsman's Monthly Message is the most appropriate way for him to keep in touch with staff

Asked about decisions that affect work

48% of staff agree they are asked about decisions which affect their work

- > Staff don't feel they have been consulted about changes to the draft decision cover letter, the introduction of call recording, the decision all investigators would take on joint working cases and changes to ECHO
- > Staff feel they are not made aware of what's happening with Government consultations which affect their work or able to input into them. The organisation doesn't make enough use of investigator knowledge when responding at a strategic level

Comfortable to challenge the way things are done

55% of staff agree they feel comfortable to challenge the way things are done in the organisation; a slight fall from the last survey (58%)

- > Some staff don't feel there is value in speaking up as nothing changes as a result of their comments

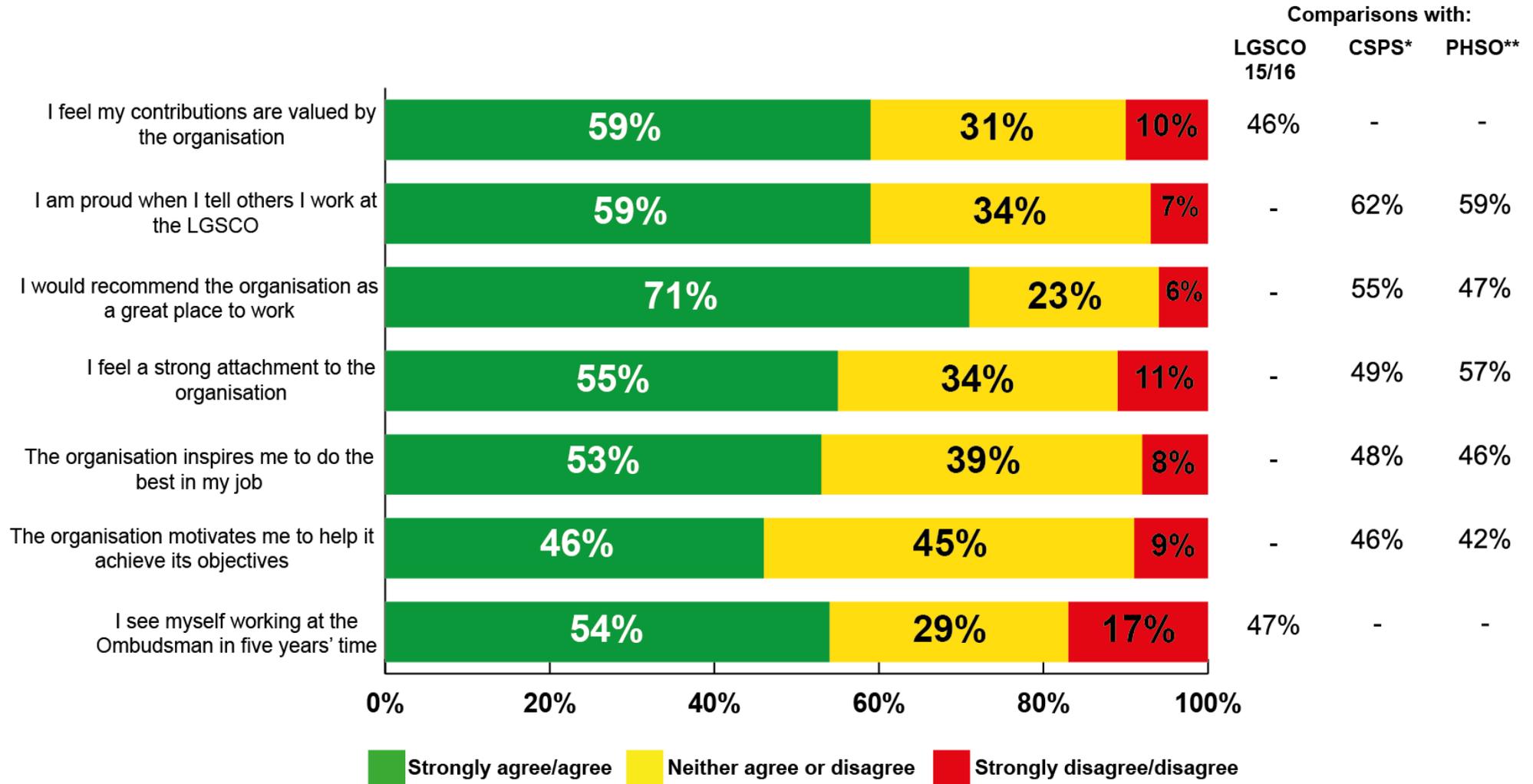
External impact

82% of staff agree the organisation is effective at presenting casework in the media; a substantial increase from the last survey (49%)

- > Staff feel it's good to see our greater external impact and we are seen as a more credible, authoritative and respected body as a result



8. Your overall experience



* Civil Service People Survey 2017 conducted in October 2017

** Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman Employee Survey 2017 conducted in Oct/Nov 2017

Your overall experience

Summary

The headline theme score for this area is 57% (the lowest in the survey). More than half of staff agree their contributions are valued; feedback from managers, Exceptional Contribution Awards and 'thank yous' all contribute to this view. The same percentage of staff (59%) agree they are proud to tell people they work at the LGSCO. The importance of the Ombudsman's role and its impact on people's lives are the reason many are proud. The highest score in this section is staff recommending the organisation as a great place to work. This is primarily driven by the flexibility, working conditions and their colleagues. Others don't agree saying the work is dispiriting, there is too much focus on numbers and too little personal development. Staff again cite the difference we can make to people's lives as the reason they have a strong attachment to the organisation and the inspiration to do their best. The lowest scoring question is this category is motivation to achieve objectives. Some staff say they are motivated to achieve because their work is valued whilst others would be more motivated if targets were realistic and quantity versus quality of decisions was rebalanced. More than half of staff see themselves working at the organisation in five years' time.

We also used the answers to the questions in this section to calculate our engagement index which is 67%. Engaged staff are committed to the organisation's goals and values and are motivated to contribute to organisational success. We will use this score to promote discussion throughout the organisation about what is creating, and what is getting in the way of higher levels of staff engagement. It's also a useful indicator of how engaged our staff are compared with the Civil Service and the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman.

The engagement index is calculated as a weighted average of the five employee engagement scores (all the questions in this section apart from 'I see myself working at the LGSCO in five years' time).

Improvements

- > Staff feel managers could send a monthly message to their teams which focuses on achievements rather than numbers
- > More work needs to be done on the transparency of the Exceptional Contribution Awards scheme – the consistency of the awards is questioned and whether we have the balance right in terms of the number of awards (more awards of lesser amounts)

Question breakdown

Contributions are valued

59% of staff agree their contributions are valued by the organisation; an increase from the last survey (46%)

- > Feedback from managers, Exceptional Contribution Awards, thanks from the Ombudsman and genuine 'thank yous' and praise make staff feel their contributions are valued
- > Some staff believe that investigators who reach target are valued regardless of the quality of their work. Whereas others hold the opposite view that no value is placed on hitting targets. Some believe there is too much focus on quantity

Proud of working at the LGSCO

59% of staff agree they are proud when they tell others they work at the LGSCO

- > Staff are proud of where they work because they believe the Ombudsman has an important role where one complaint can bring improvements for many
- > The organisation helps the most vulnerable people, helps society and puts right wrongs with meaningful remedies
- > The organisation has a positive impact on people's lives and is a small organisation which delivers a lot
- > It's a high-quality service, which is respected and has an improved public profile and reputation
- > The organisation is committed to keep improving
- > Staff commitment to the cause
- > The culture encourages openness and flexibility and recognises the contribution of all
- > Some staff feel this question is pointless

Great place to work

71% of staff agree they would recommend the organisation as a great place to work

- > Staff feel this is a great place to work because of the flexibility, the friendly, helpful, supportive, intelligent staff, the interesting and rewarding work, the terms and conditions (including the pension), the good rate of pay, the independence and autonomy, the good level of support and training, the working environment and the excellent working conditions
- > Staff feel the organisation has an important role to play, it welcomes diversity, is supportive and is well managed/well led. Staff feel they are valued, respected and trusted
- > Conversely some staff feel the organisation is a lonely/isolating place to work where the work is dispiriting. Not a place for sociable personalities or people who want to discuss their work. There is too much focus on numbers and too little personal development. The working environment is also poor

Strong attachment

55% of staff agree they feel a strong attachment to the organisation

- > Staff feel a strong attachment because they think we make a difference to people's lives and they are proud of what we can achieve. Others suggest the attachment comes from the length of time they have worked here and the familiarity that brings

- > Other reasons for the attachment include feeling valued, the flexibility, respect for their colleagues and how they have been made to feel welcome when joining the organisation

Inspired to do the best

53% of staff agree the organisation inspires them to do the best in their job

- > Staff say they are inspired to do the best in their job by seeing the difference we can make to the public and the importance of our work. Others say they are self-motivated and will always try to do their best
- > Other reasons include being trusted, the recognition of good bits of casework, respecting the work people do, working as part of a good team, treating staff as adults and a clear articulation of purpose and values
- > Others would be more inspired to do their best if the organisation was less fixated on numbers

Motivated to achieve objectives

46% of staff agree the organisation motivates it to achieve its objectives

- > Staff say they are motivated to help the organisation achieve its objectives because the organisation is transparent and inclusive, their work is valued, they are encouraged by their managers, they receive positive feedback on significant pieces of work and the focus is not just on decision numbers but also the professional development of our investigative staff
- > The organisation could motivate others to help it achieve its objectives by having realistic/achievable targets, rebalancing the quantity versus quality equation, showing more genuine appreciation, giving more positive feedback, giving credit for non-casework activities, promoting collaboration rather than competition, valuing people's work, treating staff with respect and being transparent and inclusive

I see myself working at the Ombudsman in five years' time

54% of staff agree they see themselves working at the Ombudsman in five years' time; an increase from the last survey (47%)

9. How we will use the survey results

- > Present the feedback from this survey in an honest way – not unrealistically positive
- > Don't gloss over low scores
- > Feedback the results more quickly
- > Do something more tangible with the results
- > Less focus on external work in the next survey