

Employee survey 2013: the results





2013 Corporate employee survey

Thank you to everyone who completed the 2013 employee survey.

The survey included 9,697 Nottinghamshire County Council employees outside of schools. 4,730 employees completed the survey, a response rate of almost 49% which was a 14% increase on when we last undertook a survey in 2008. It was conducted on line, via email, with a paper copy for those without an email address. Because so many of you took the time to respond we can be confident about the accuracy of the results and that they are likely to be representative across the whole organisation.

The survey objectives were to:

- give employees the opportunity to express their views on working for Nottinghamshire County Council
- identify strengths and areas for improvement where employees are expressing concerns
- assess employee engagement across the Council.

We asked to what extent employees agreed with about 60 statements on the areas of 'Your Job', 'Your Colleagues', 'Communication', 'Our Customers', 'Training and Career Development', 'Awards and Rewards', 'Management and Leadership', 'Worklife balance and Wellbeing', 'Diversity' and, 'Overall perceptions of the County Council'.

The survey results told us what we're doing well and what needs to be improved. I have included the full results for every question asked as I feel very strongly that it is important that you are able to see all the answers. I am also committed to ensuring that you have the opportunity to shape our responses and develop the actions.

Results are reported as "positive" "neutral" or "negative" depending on whether you agreed or disagreed with the statements made and how strongly. Where possible, results are compared to those from 2008 and benchmarked across the public sector.

The main areas of strength you have identified are that many of you:

- are satisfied with the job that you do
- understand what is expected of you and how your work relates to the wider objectives of your team
- agree you would consider changing the way you do things to work more effectively
- place great value on the support and co-operation of colleagues
- consider you are treated with respect by your line manager and that your line manager does a good job
- consider you are treated fairly and inclusively by the County Council.

The main areas for improvement identified are that many of you:

- raise questions over the clarity of vision for the organisation and whether this makes you feel more valued
- consider that change is not effectively managed
- feel that personal development and career progression is not effectively supported by the Council
- feel that senior managers need to improve their communication with you, their visibility and provide effective leadership
- feel that the increasing demands made of you are not recognised.

In addition to the responses to the standard survey questions you made 7,288 individual comments which are also being analysed to identify common themes and potential actions. We will also publish a summary of this information.

Next steps

You will see that we have identified a series of high level actions to take this forward. Some, such as Eureka!, the new staff suggestion scheme, are already in place.

There are a number of areas where I think it is really important that you have the opportunity to develop ideas. We will be using Eureka! the online ideas scheme to ask you what you think will work best for learning and career development activity across the Council and enable you to work together to develop proposals for consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team. We will also use Eureka! to develop other actions in response to the survey going forward.

We also plan to use employee focus groups to drill down into some of the areas in more detail and develop further options.

The data from the survey is also being made available to departments and specific service areas so that work can be done to prioritise and target activity in key areas. For example, the Children's Social Care Improvement Programme will be using information

provided as part of the survey to support their various work streams.

Further information including how we want to work with you to further develop our plans to address the areas for improvement which you have identified will be published on the intranet.

If you have questions about any of the information, please:

Tel: **0115 977 2439**

email: moira.whelan@nottcc.gov.uk

Your views will help to make a real difference and will be used to shape a range of new projects to improve working life at the County Council.

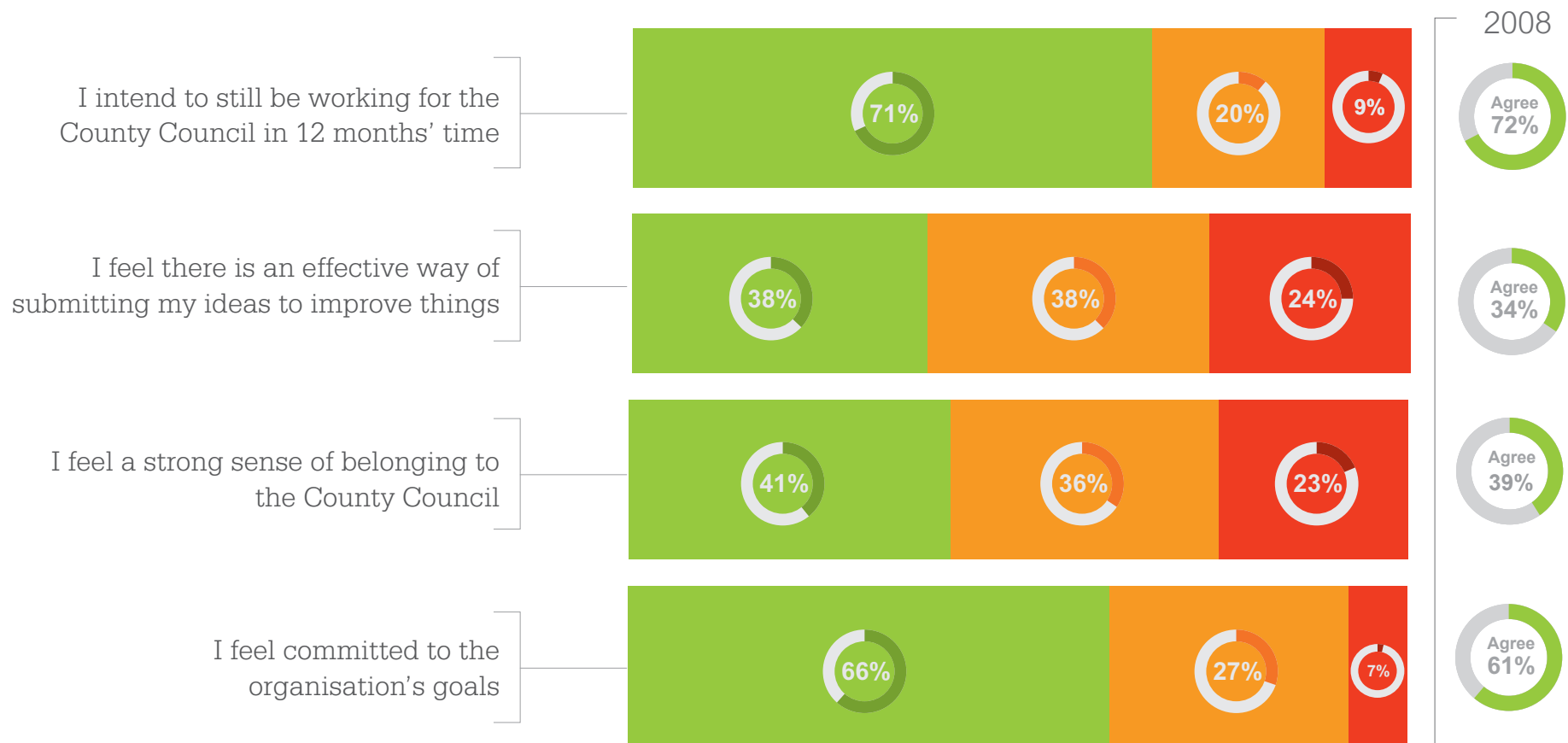


Mick Burrows

Chief Executive

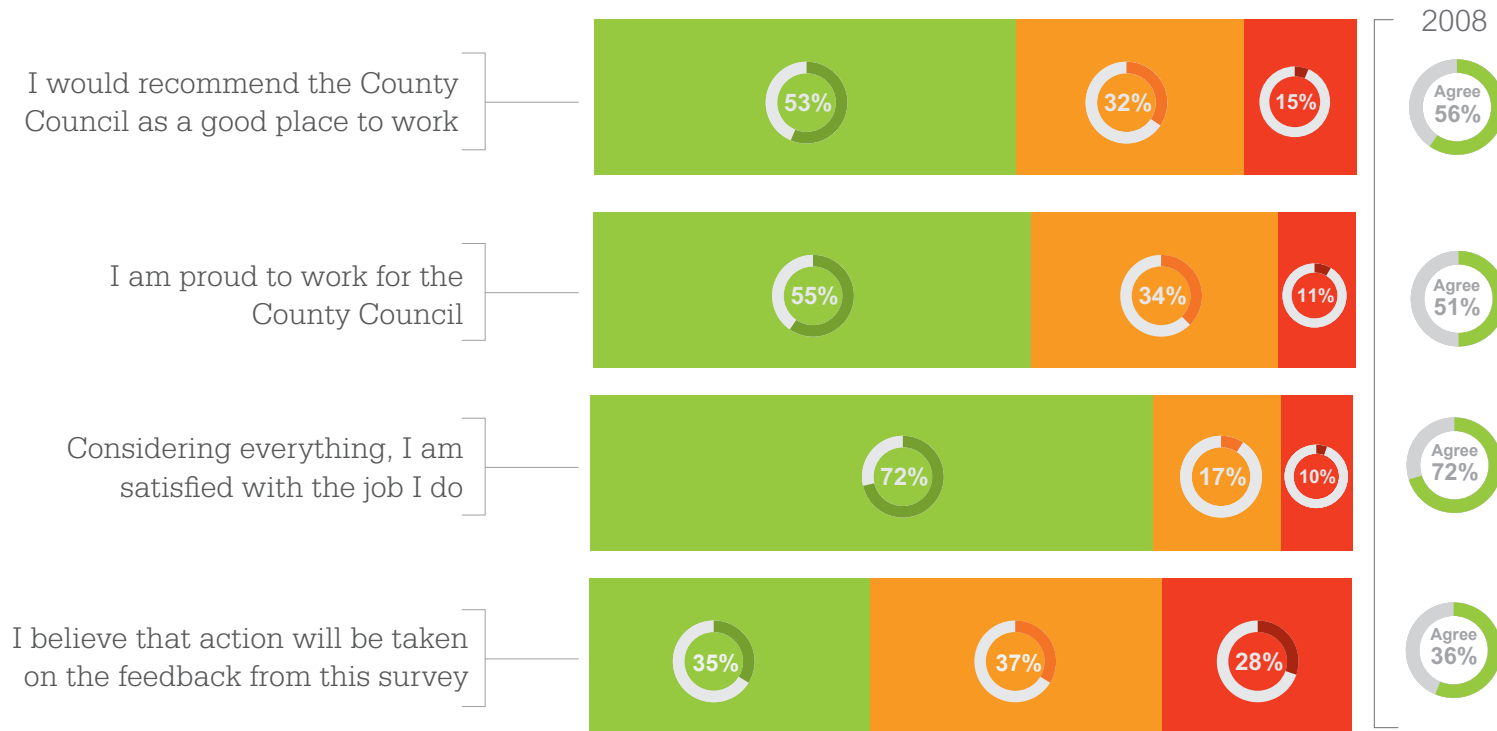


Overall Perceptions of the County Council





2013 Corporate employee survey



Analysis

- 72% of employees are satisfied with working for the Council with high levels of commitment to the Council's goals and over 70% of you still want to be working for the Council in 12 months' time.
- The overall level of employee engagement for the Council is 60%. This 1% increase since 2008 is encouraging in the current context and gives us a platform from which to build.
- Just over half of employees are proud to work for the County Council (a 4% increase since 2008) and slightly fewer would recommend the Council as a good place to work.

- Employees are less positive about effective ways of submitting ideas for improvement and that action would be taken in response to the survey.

Actions

- Publish the survey results so that they are accessible to all employees.
- Involve employees in developing specific actions in response to the feedback.
- Develop and implement a corporate action plan.
- Expand usage of the new employee ideas scheme – Eureka!

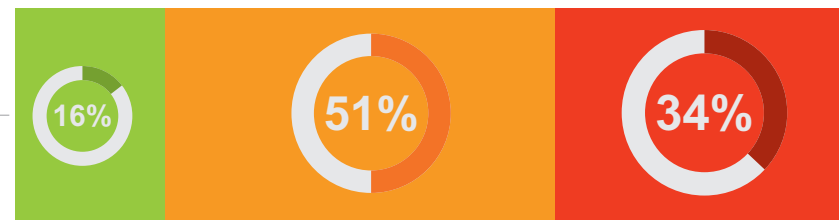


The County Council's vision

I understand the County Council's
One Council - One Team vision for
Nottinghamshire



This vision has made me feel more
valued by the County Council



Analysis

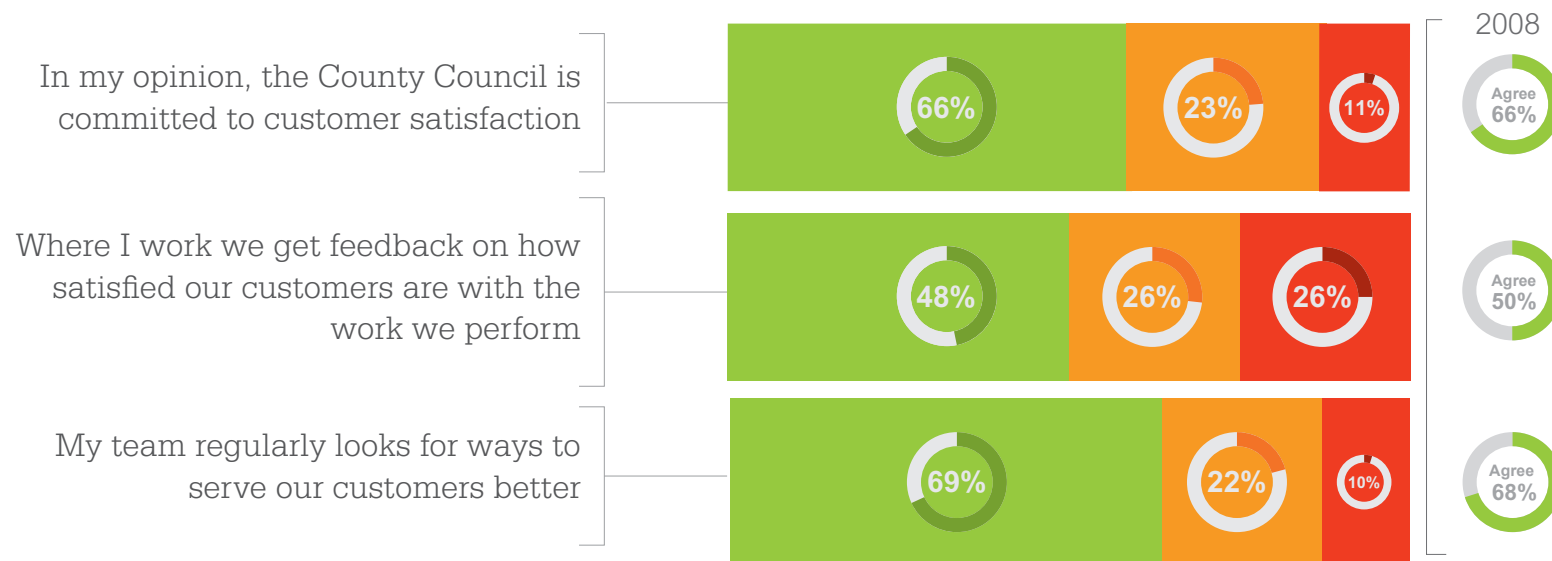
- Just over half of employees understand the County Council's vision.
- The majority of you are either uncertain or negative about the Council's vision making you feel more valued by the organisation; which has a significant impact on the overall levels of employee engagement.
- 66% of employees are committed to the organisation's goals (a 5% increase since 2008) which is an improving indication of engagement.

Actions

- Further work to be undertaken to clarify the Council's vision for the future; the core service offer and key outcomes for the people of Nottinghamshire and the Council's operating model in order to achieve this.
- These need to be communicated clearly across the whole organisation; involving employees at all levels.
- Work to be undertaken in service areas to translate this into service specific plans and targets and objectives in individual EPDR's within the new strategic management framework.



Our Customers



Analysis

- Generally employees feel that the Council looks for ways to serve our customers better and is committed to improving customer satisfaction; highlighting the importance we all put on meeting customer needs. The scores in these areas are comparable with 2008.
- However, less than half of employees work in areas which regularly get feedback on customer satisfaction. This was lower than in 2008.

Actions

- Put the customer at heart of what we do as we transform the Council by using customer insight and intelligence to inform the development of the new service offer and operating model.
- Ensure that service and process redesign and service delivery have effective customer and employee feedback mechanisms.



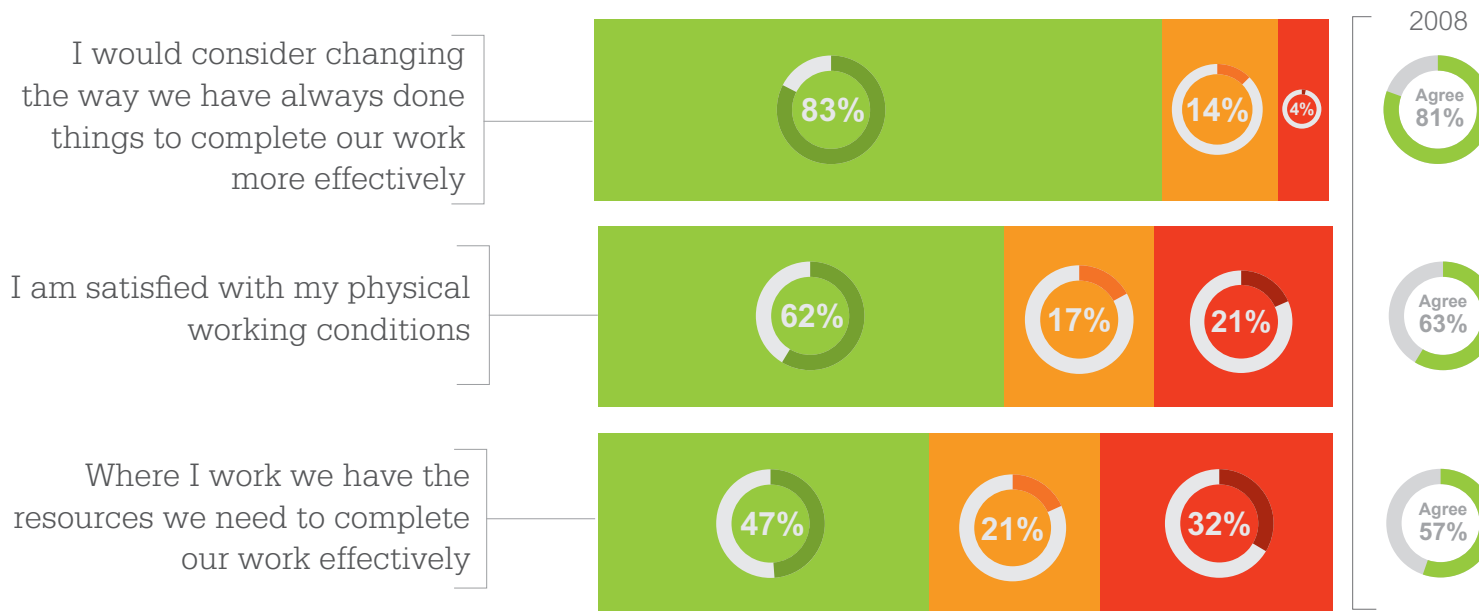
2013 Corporate employee survey

Your Job





2013 Corporate employee survey



Analysis

- The highest scores across the survey relate to personal contributions and impact by employees which demonstrated higher than average levels of satisfaction with individual jobs compared to public sector benchmarks.
- 72% of employees are satisfied with the job that they do – 5% above public sector norms.
- You are clear about what is expected of you and how your work relates to the wider objectives of your service/team; you work co-operatively with colleagues and are open to changing how you do things to work more effectively.

- The areas where you were less positive relate to having the authority and resources you need to get the job done effectively.

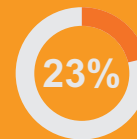
Actions

- Generally scores in relation to individual jobs were high. It is perhaps to be expected that in the current context and given the challenges the Council is facing that some employees are concerned about resources and levels of responsibility and accountability. We will undertake further analysis at team and service level to identify patterns and priority areas for action.

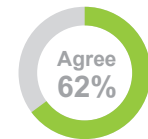


Your Colleagues

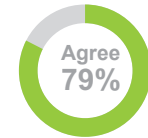
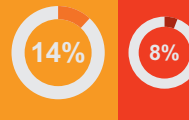
I feel I work with motivated and enthusiastic colleagues



2008



In my team we treat each other as we would wish to be treated



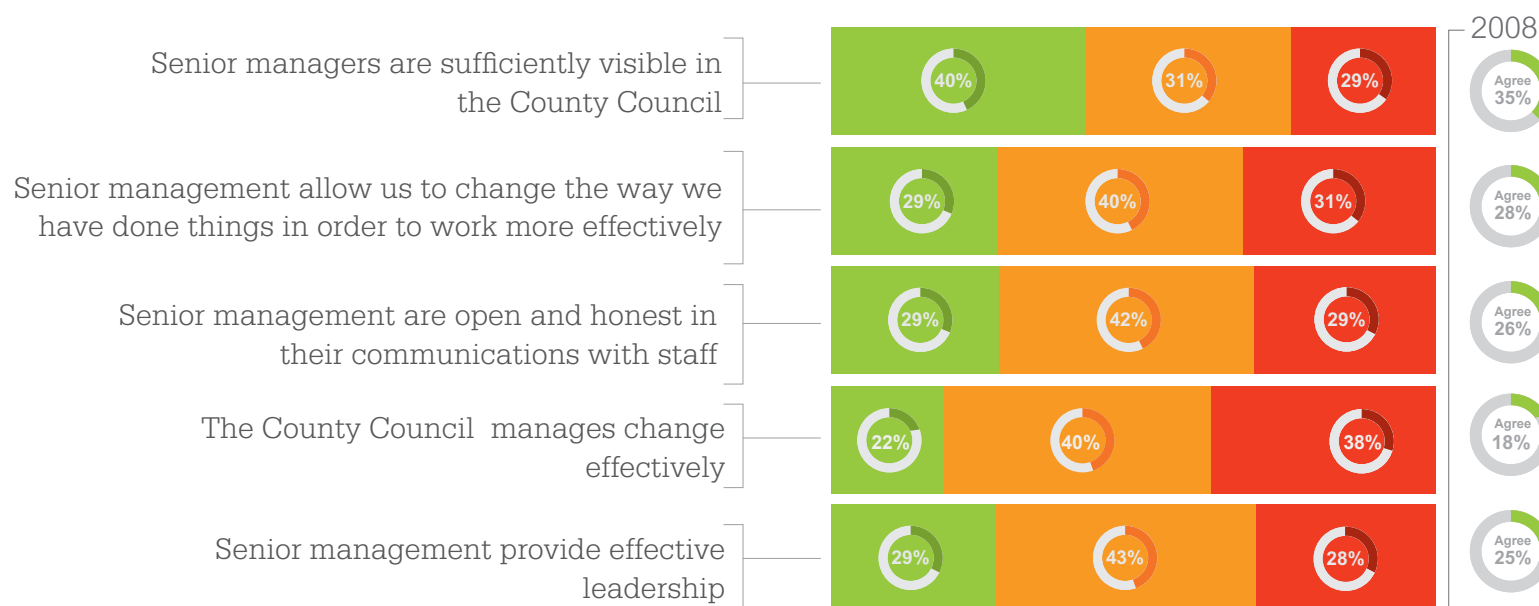
Analysis

- Teamwork is strong with people treating each other with respect and co-operating to get the job done; reinforcing a more positive view at individual and local team level.
- 66% of you said that in your service area you acknowledge each other's efforts and achievements.
- The number of you describing your colleagues as motivated and enthusiastic has fallen by 3% since 2008.

Actions

- Ensure that as we transform the Council we embed values and behaviours which support the delivery of the Council's core service offer and key priorities.
- Use the leadership development programme to encourage and support managers to demonstrate positive behaviours such as complimenting colleagues publicly for successful work to help build enthusiasm and "can do" attitudes.

Senior Management and Change Management



Analysis

- This section overall contained some of the lowest scores across the whole employee survey and scores were below benchmark norms for the public sector. There were also a high number of neutral (neither agree nor disagree) responses.
- However, positive scores were mostly higher than in 2008. There was an overall increase in the number of employees who feel that senior managers are sufficiently visible across the Council; in those who feel senior managers are open and honest in their communications and in the number of employees who feel that senior managers provide effective leadership. This suggests that we have a platform to build on and the individual job and team scores indicate that employees are willing to change and do things differently.

- The main area where you were least positive related to the effective management of change. Although even this score was an increase on the 2008 figure.

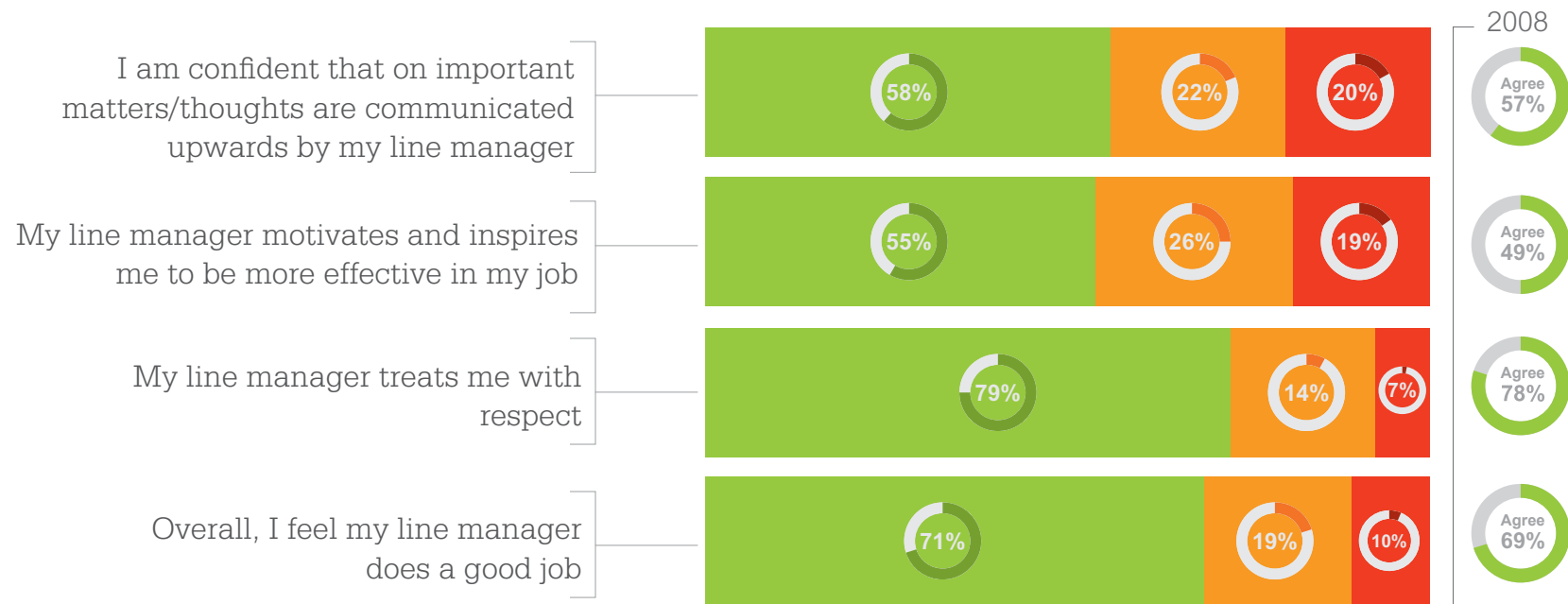
Actions

- Corporate Leadership Team to use the revised strategic plan, new vision and core service offer to develop a revised operating model and use this to drive the transformation of the Council. This should include actively involving employees at a whole council level as well as service and team levels.
- Corporate and Service Directors and Group Managers to be involved in the roll out of the Leadership Development programme to Team Managers starting in Spring 2014.



2013 Corporate employee survey

Line Management



Analysis

- There is evidence across the survey of good relationships between line managers and employees. Managers have a key influence over employee satisfaction so it is encouraging that 79% of you agree that your manager treats you with respect.
- 71% agree that overall managers do a good job and the same number feel they can talk to their manager if they feel under pressure.
- The number of employees who feel that their manager motivates and inspires them to be more effective has increased by 6%.

- The number of employees who feel that the EPDR process is used effectively to manage performance has decreased.

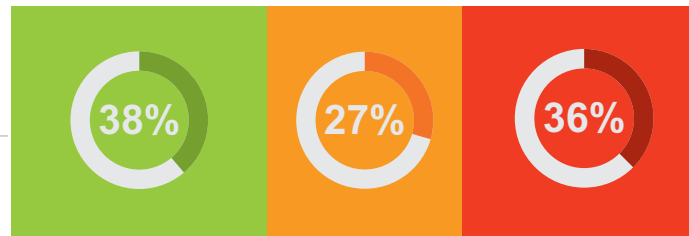
Actions

- Audit the number and quality of EPDRs undertaken.
- Undertake focus groups with managers and employees to see how we can encourage more effective use of the EPDR process within the revised performance management framework.
- Include the EPDR process and performance management as part of the Leadership Development Programme.

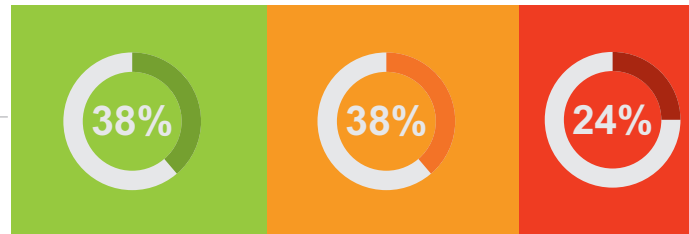


Communication - Bottom Up

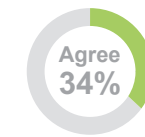
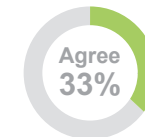
I have the opportunity to contribute my views before changes are made which affect my job



I feel there is an effective way of submitting my ideas to improve things



2008



Analysis

- 38% of employees feel they have the opportunity to contribute their views before changes are made that affect you and the same proportion of you feel that there is an effective way to submit ideas for improvements. These figures are slightly better than 2008 but further improvement is needed to involve you more effectively.

Actions

- Increase usage of new the on-line employee suggestion scheme – Eureka!

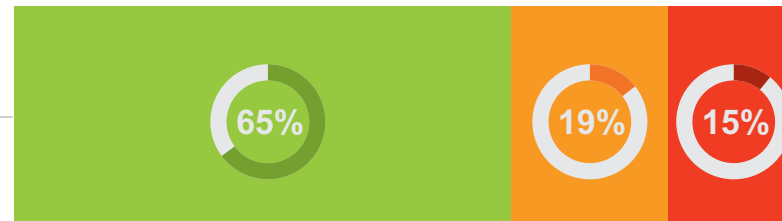


Communication - Top Down

The County Council does a good job of keeping me informed about matters affecting me



My manager does a good job of keeping me informed about matters affecting me



2008



Analysis

- 65% of employees feel that your manager does a good job of keeping you informed and just over half feel the Council keeps you informed. This suggests that further work is required on some of the Council's major communication channels to improve these and build on what works well in particular service areas and more locally.

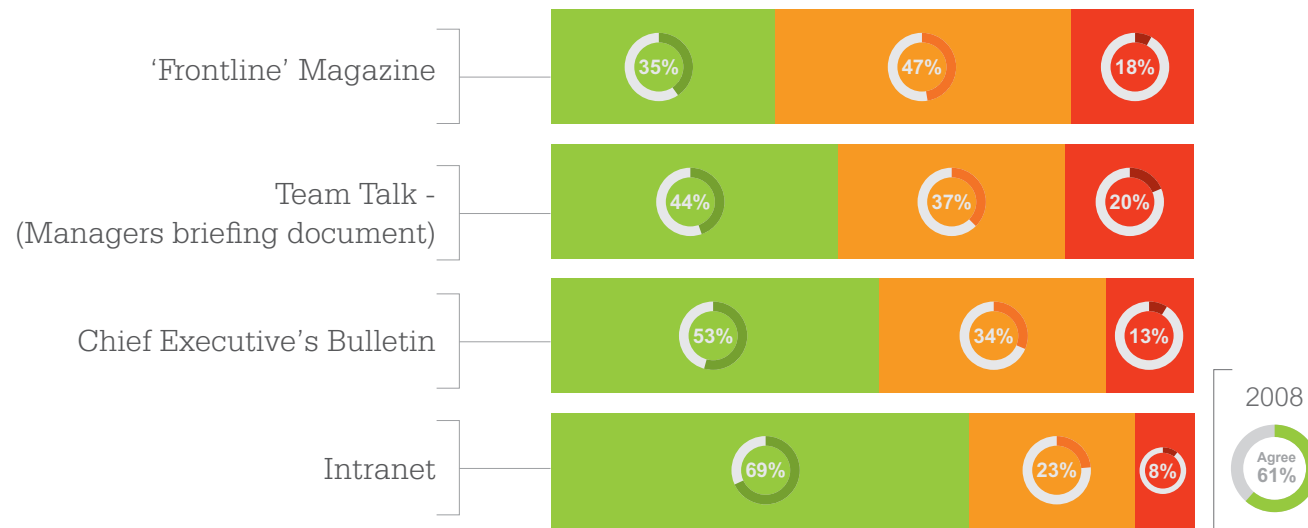
Actions

- Use employee focus groups in low and high scoring areas to identify learning points for application across the Council.



Communication - Channels

Q. I believe the following communications methods keep me fully informed about what is going on within NCC



Analysis

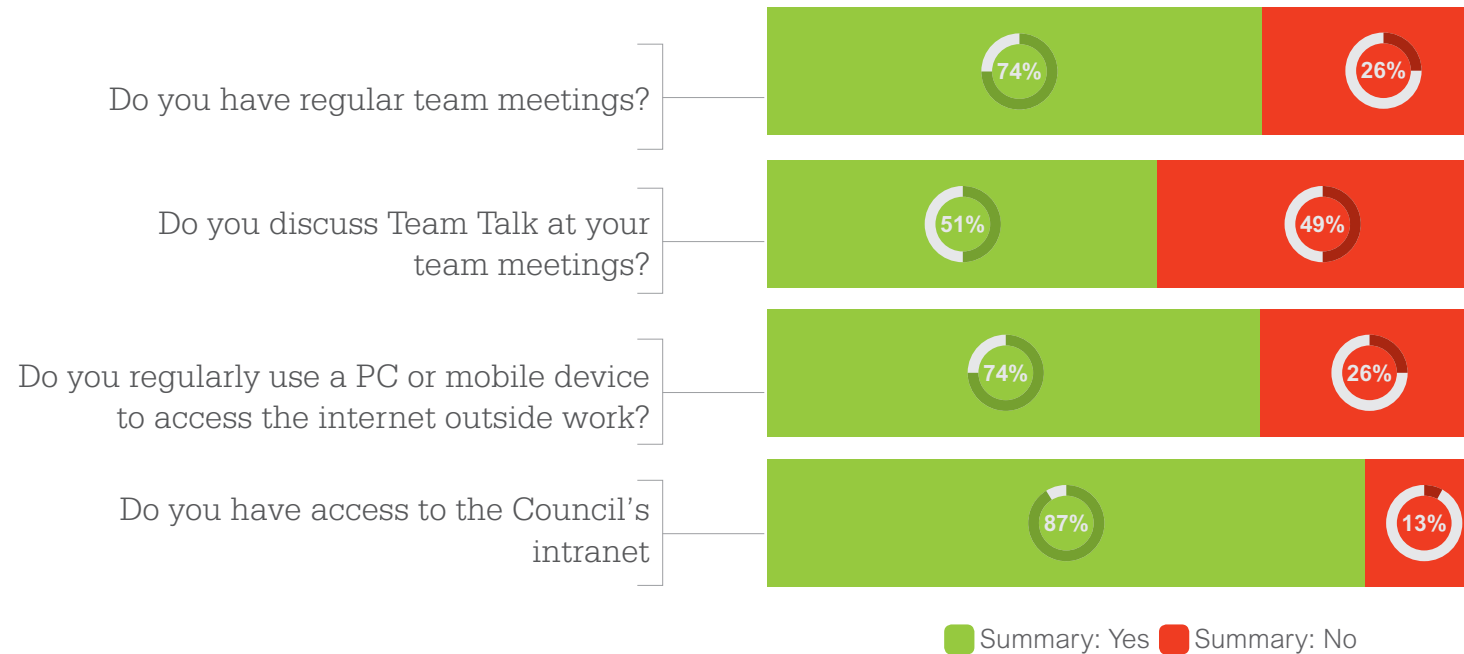
- We asked you about different communication channels and their effectiveness in keeping you informed. The intranet was most popular with an 8% increase since 2008 with "Frontline" being least popular. This score could in part be due to the lower number of frontline staff who completed the survey so we are planning to undertake more work on the responses from frontline staff to identify any particular patterns so we can target our responses.

Actions

- In an organisation of the size and complexity of the County Council making sure that we communicate effectively with everyone can be challenging but is critical to our success. The questions in the survey on communication were designed to gather your views on what works well currently; what is less effective and your preferred methods and channels for communication. We intend to use this to refine our communications approach going forward to ensure that we improve the information flow through the organisation and communicate with you and give you the opportunity to make your views known in the most effective ways.



Communication - Access



Analysis

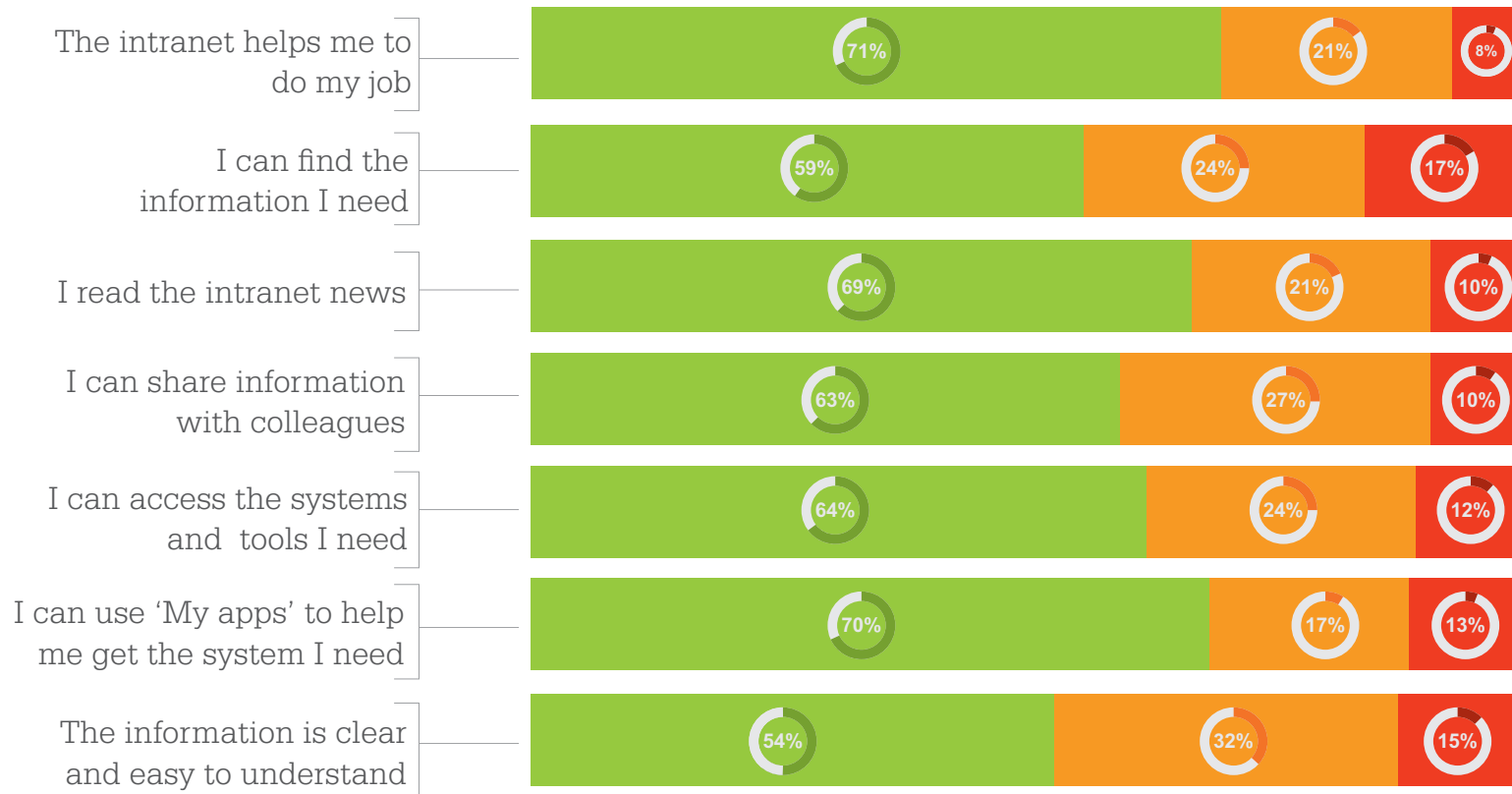
- Access to the intranet was high at 87% with 74% of you having regular team meetings and the same percentage having access to a PC or mobile device outside of work. This was helpful feedback which we intend to use to enable us to communicate with you more effectively going forward.
- The statistics around usage of Team Talk in team meetings are more concerning.

Actions

- Workshops to take place with managers and employees to identify the most effective communication tools and encourage their usage by managers. This will be enforced by the Council's Leadership Development programme.



Communication - Intranet



Analysis

- We asked a detailed set of questions about the intranet which received strong positive responses indicating that the intranet is a key workplace resource. The lowest scores related to your ability to find the information you need and the clarity of the information itself.

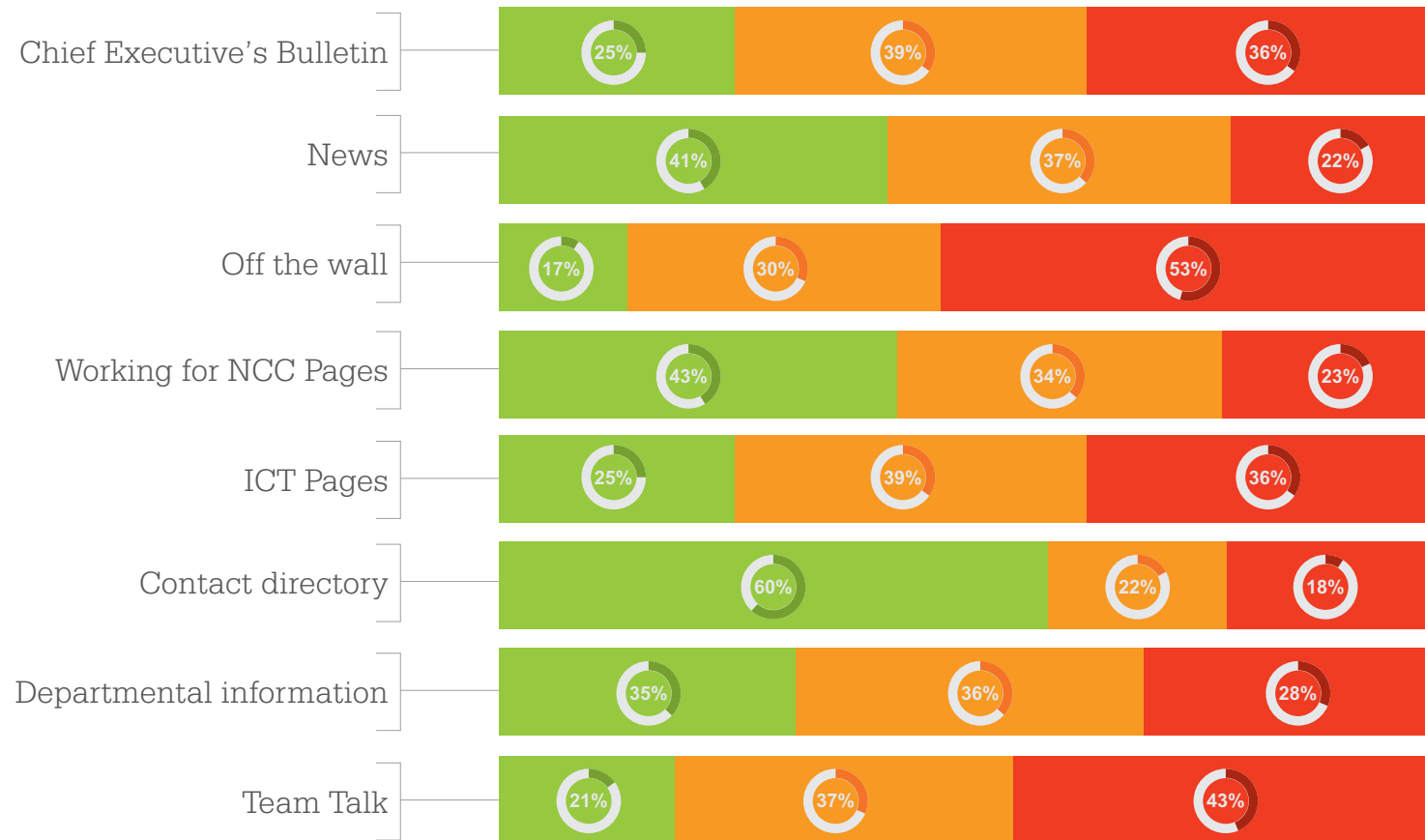
Actions

- Implement a digital development plan to improve the intranet look and content and available functionality including the search facility.

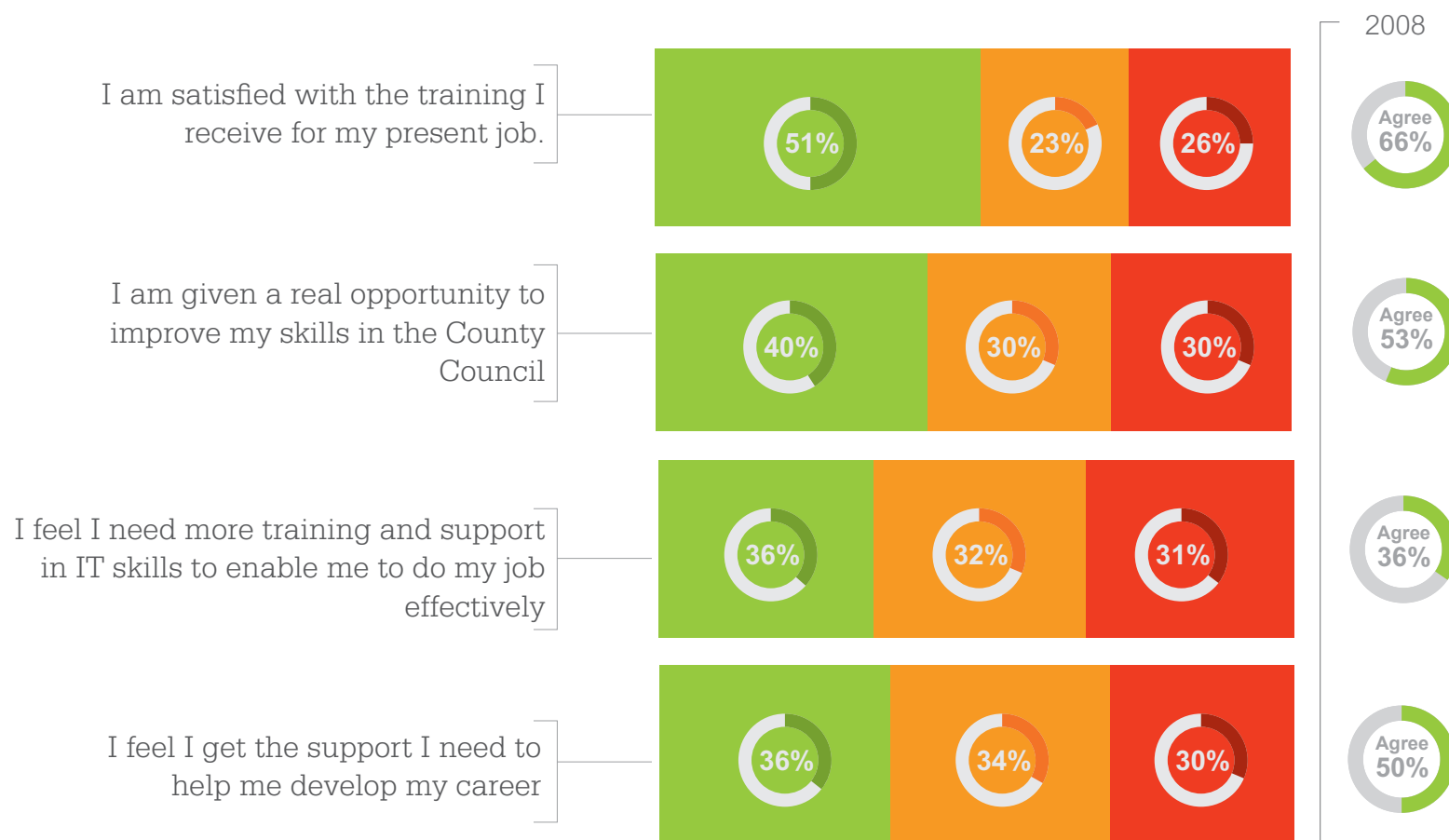


Communication - What's of value on the Intranet?

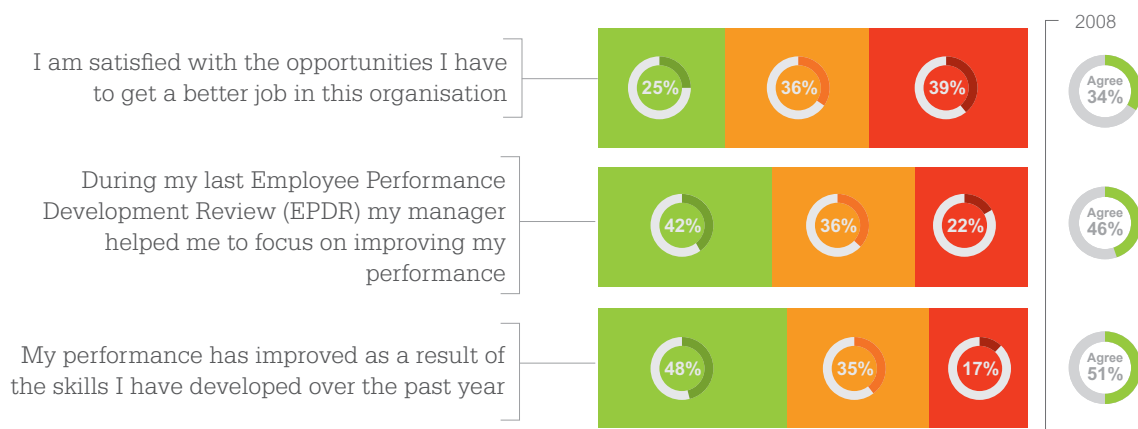
Q. Rank the following sections of the intranet of being of value to you



Training and Development



2013 Corporate employee survey



Analysis

- The most negative shifts in scores since 2008 related to your satisfaction with the training you receive in your present role; the opportunities you have to improve your skills, improve performance and get a better job in the organisation and the support you get to develop your career. There was also a fall in the number of employees who felt that their manager had helped improve their performance through the EPDR process. This is probably partly a reflection of the uncertainty and challenges which the Council and wider economy has faced. Another factor is that as we have prioritised front line service delivery we have had less money to spend on functions such as learning and development. This has meant that although a wide range of learning and development opportunities are still available we have increasingly moved to less costly methods of training such as e-learning and self- directed learning. These are not always accessible by employees or recognised and valued as development opportunities. We have also asked you to take greater responsibility for your own learning and development directly linked to delivery of the Council's priorities perhaps further reinforcing the perception that there has been a reduction in the Council's support for personal development and progression.

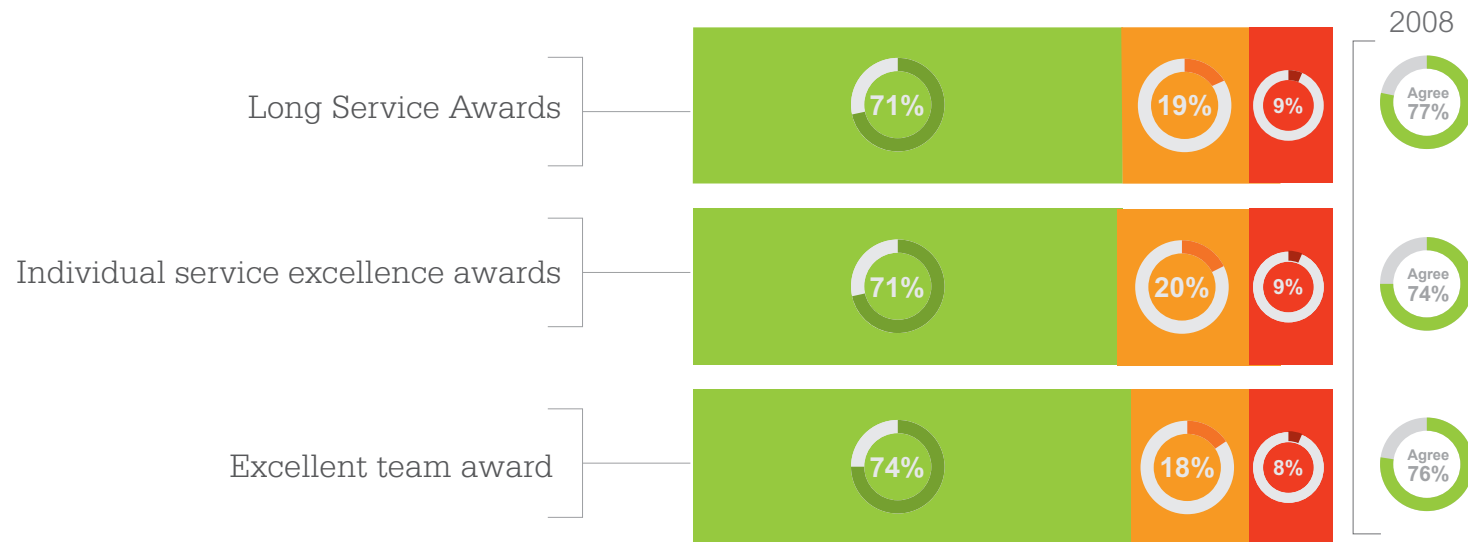
Actions

- Seek your ideas and views as to how we can improve access to learning and development opportunities across the Council within a reduced budget via Eureka!
- Use employee focus groups to drill down into particular areas as necessary.
- Use the above to enable employees to identify priority areas and develop a set of proposals for consideration by the Corporate Leadership Team.
- Link this to a review of the application of the EPDR process and performance management with more effective identification of learning and development needs linked to corporate priorities.
- Undertake work on career pathways, retraining and more flexible deployment of staff across the Council and our partners to ensure that we have the skills we need now and for the foreseeable future as part of the development of the Workforce Strategy for 2014-18 to support the application of the Council's new operating model.



Awards and Rewards

Q. I think the following rewards are / would be valuable



Analysis

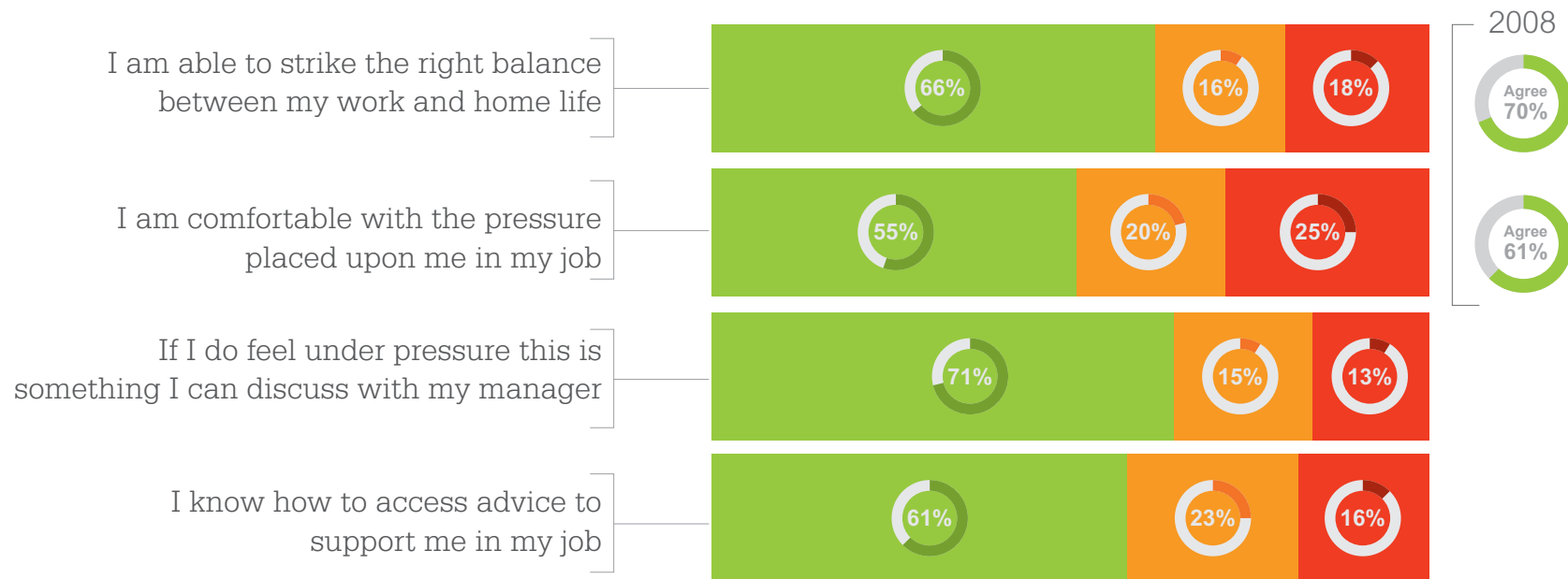
- Overall you felt that long service awards, individual service and team excellence awards were valuable.
- Unsurprisingly, the proportion of employees who favour long service awards is higher amongst those who have been with the County Council for more than 10 years.
- We asked you which format of reward would be most meaningful. Of the options presented 77% of employees favoured a voucher followed by 35% opting for an award of some kind.

Actions

- Use your feedback to develop proposals for inclusion in the Council's total rewards package.



Work Life balance and wellbeing



Analysis

- This section represented a fairly positive picture of your views towards work life balance with 66% feeling that you are able to strike an effective balance between work and home life - although this is a reduction on the 2008 figures.
- The majority of you indicated that you were able to discuss feeling under pressure with your manager and know how to access advice and support.

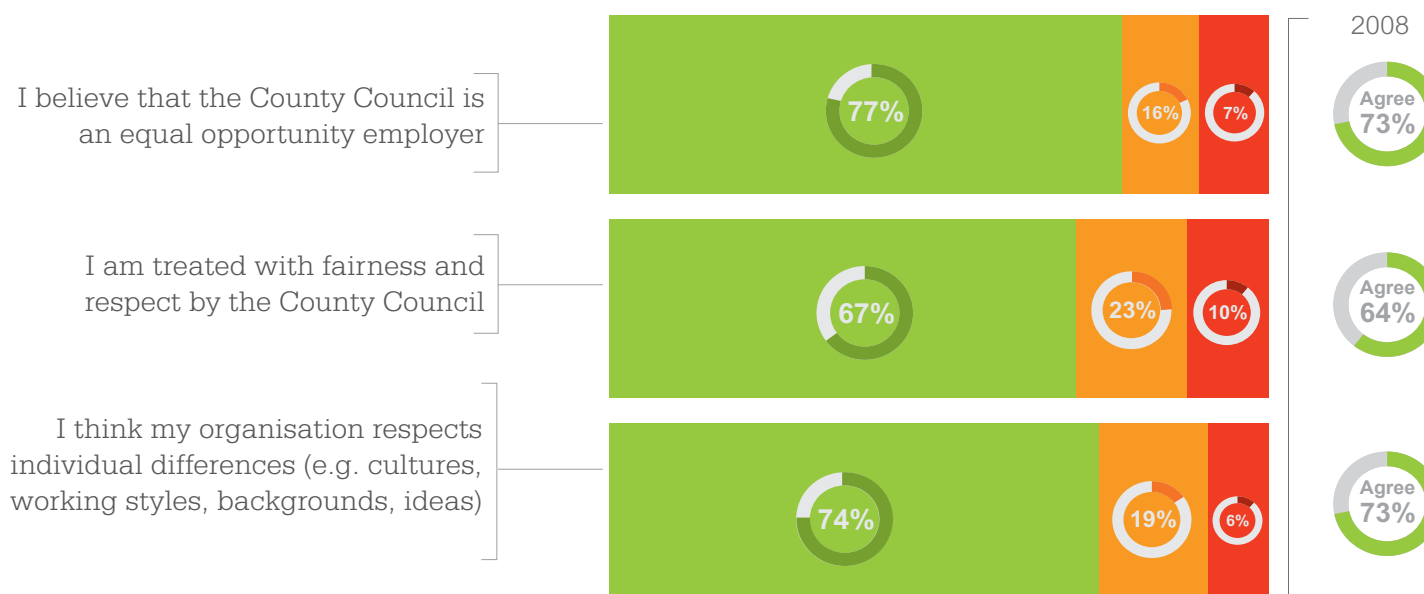
- The area where you felt least positive related to being comfortable with the level of pressure you are under with a reduction from the 2008 figures.

Actions

- Use feedback from employees to revise the Wellbeing Action Plan for 2014 and deliver priorities within the revised Workforce Strategy as part of working towards the gold level Wellbeing Award.

2013 Corporate employee survey

Diversity



Analysis

- These factors are important in driving overall job satisfaction and are reflected in the majority of employees who are satisfied with their work with the Council.
- On the whole, employees view the Council as an equal opportunities employer which respects individual differences and treats people with fairness and respect. Overall scores in this area have improved since 2008.
- 78% of employees indicated that no aspect of their personal profile had an adverse effect on their career with the Council. This is reflected in the Council's workforce monitoring data which shows that despite an

overall reduction in the number of employees of approximately 3,000 since 2009 the proportion of employees with protected characteristics has not significantly changed.

Actions

- Continue to monitor and publish workforce profile data on the internet and report to members on an annual basis to identify trends and any actions required. This information to be used as the basis for equality impact assessments in relation to the potential impact on employees of service reviews and any outline business cases going forward and to identify key areas for action.

2013 Corporate employee survey

Do you believe that any of the following have had an adverse effect on your career with the County Council?

