

Scotland Excel

To: Chief Executive Officers Management Group

On: 12 June 2017

**Report
by
Director Scotland Excel**

Customer Satisfaction Survey – Senior Stakeholders

1. Background

Scotland Excel implemented a programme of customer satisfaction surveys for all local authority stakeholders in November 2016. Surveys were sent to Chief Executive Officers, Finance Directors, Joint Committee members, procurement leads, and other officers who assist with contract development.

The surveys were tailored to reflect the knowledge and interests of each stakeholder group. Surveys sent to senior stakeholders focused on strategic areas while those sent to procurement leads and other officers measured satisfaction with operational delivery.

The purpose of this report is to provide members of CEOMG with the key findings of the surveys sent to senior stakeholders. It also provides a brief overview of the results of the surveys sent to procurement and service stakeholders.

The full results of the senior stakeholder surveys are included in Appendices 1-3 for information.

2. Methodology

Online questionnaires were sent to all local authority Chief Executives and Finance Directors, and the forty elected members comprising Scotland Excel's Joint Committee. The survey period opened on 24 November 2016 and closed on 27 January 2017.

The surveys included questions on strategic direction, performance, engagement and value. Respondents were asked to measure their satisfaction on a five point scale – 'very good', 'good', 'average', 'poor' and 'very poor'. If a respondent had no knowledge of an area, they were asked to indicate this by choosing the 'not sure' option.

Results are presented in terms of the percentage of respondents who reported above average satisfaction, i.e. 'very good' or 'good'. Respondents with no knowledge of a particular area were excluded from this calculation.

More detailed analysis has been undertaken on the questionnaires to identify examples of good practice, pinpoint opportunities to increase awareness and engagement, and address any areas of dissatisfaction.

2.1 Key findings – Senior Stakeholders

Responses were received from 11 Chief Executive Officers, 8 Finance Directors and 13 Joint Committee members. Overall, the respondents represented 21 of the 32 member councils.

All three stakeholder groups indicated high levels of satisfaction with the relevance of Scotland Excel's strategy and overall performance, (minimum of 80% above average satisfaction).

The survey also looked at performance against each of the four strategic goals and, although satisfaction was generally positive, it was lower among some groups for Goal 2 (being sustainable in everything we do) and Goal 4 (becoming the partner of choice for delivering shared services).

Closer analysis of the comments in relation to sustainability suggests that some stakeholders would like to see more evidence of how Scotland Excel is supporting local economic impact. In terms of shared services, there is a difference of opinion between stakeholders in that some feel shared services should remain focused on procurement while others are open to considering new areas.

Stakeholders were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the services provided by Scotland Excel. Chief Executives and Joint Committee members reported high levels of satisfaction with all services (minimum of 71.4% above average satisfaction). Both groups highlighted education/training as key opportunities for further development in support of professionalism and best practice within the sector.

However, Finance Directors reported lower levels of satisfaction with development/consultancy services (50% above average satisfaction) and education/training (40% above average satisfaction). This may be because this group is more focused on contract savings and/or has lower visibility of these services than the other stakeholder groups.

All three questionnaires included tailored questions on engagement and communications. While satisfaction is generally very positive for Chief Executives and Joint Committee members, it is clear that current engagement with Finance Directors is minimal and requires improvement.

All three groups reported high levels of satisfaction with value for money, ranging from 66.7% above average satisfaction for Finance Directors to 90% above average satisfaction for Chief Executive Officers and Joint Committee members.

3. Key findings – procurement leads and other officers

The surveys for procurement leads and other officers measured satisfaction with our contracts, the contract delivery process, engagement activities and communications. The survey for procurement leads also covered other services such as Procurement & Commercial Programme (PCIP) assessments, leading change initiatives and account management.

Responses were received from 21 procurement leads (representing 22 councils), and 166 other officers involved in contract development. Satisfaction levels were generally very strong across all aspects surveyed and showed a marked increase in a number of areas when compared with a similar survey in 2013.

Overall, 95.5% of procurement leads and 80.7% of other officers reported above average satisfaction with the services delivered by Scotland Excel. This represented an 18.6% and 6.8% increase respectively when compared to the findings of the 2013 surveys.

A full report on surveys for procurement leads and other officers will be published on our website at the end of June.

4. Next steps

The findings of the senior stakeholder surveys will be used to develop engagement plans for each of the three stakeholder groups to increase awareness and interest in our plans, activities and performance. The findings will also inform our new 2018-22 strategy which will be developed later this year.

An internal customer forum is being implemented to respond to the findings of the surveys for procurement leads and other officers, and will be tasked with making ongoing improvements to the delivery of Scotland Excel services in response to customer feedback.

5. Conclusion

The members of the CEOMG are asked to note this report on the findings of the customer satisfaction survey for senior stakeholders.

Appendix 1: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Chief Executive Officers

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate their local authority. Responses were received from:

- Aberdeen City Council
- Glasgow City Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- South Lanarkshire Council
- Angus Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- West Lothian Council
- Argyll & Bute Council
- Midlothian Council
- South Ayrshire Council

Questions 2-4 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s strategy and performance. The results are displayed in Figures 1-3 below:

Fig. 1

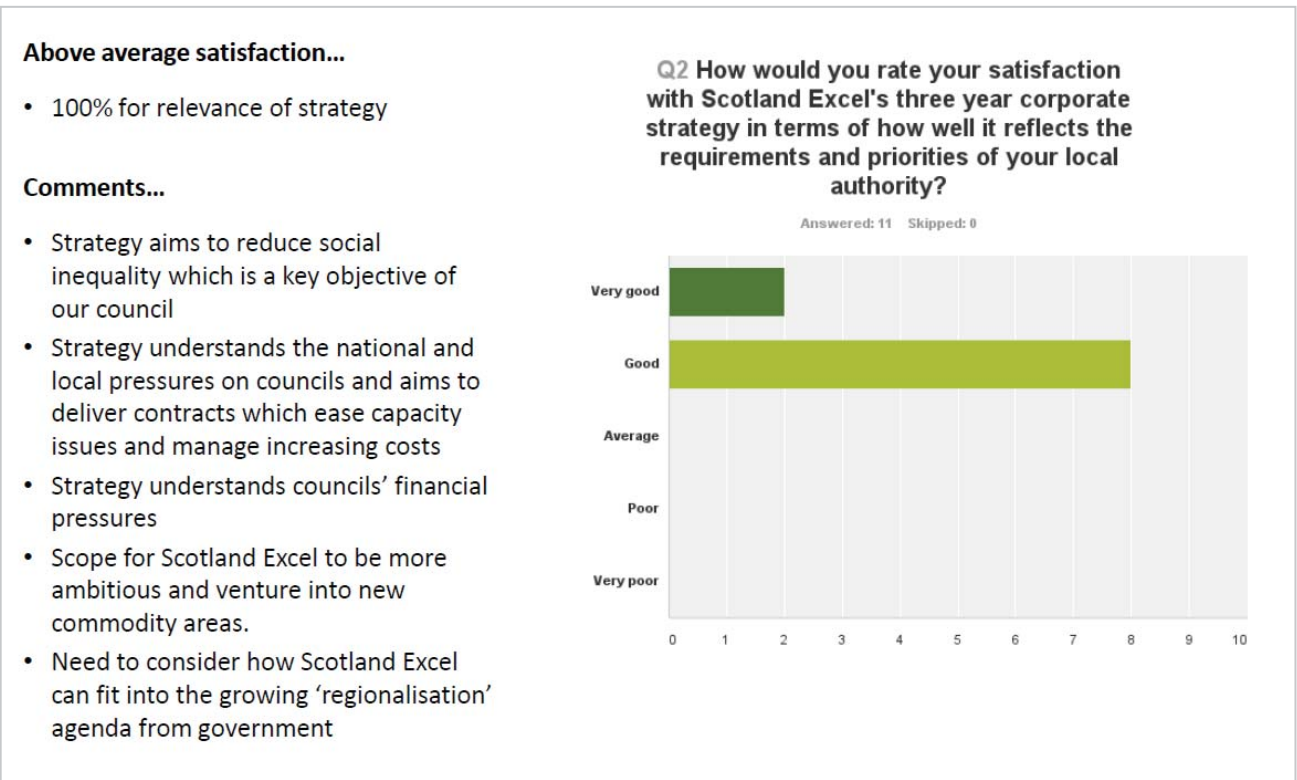


Fig. 2

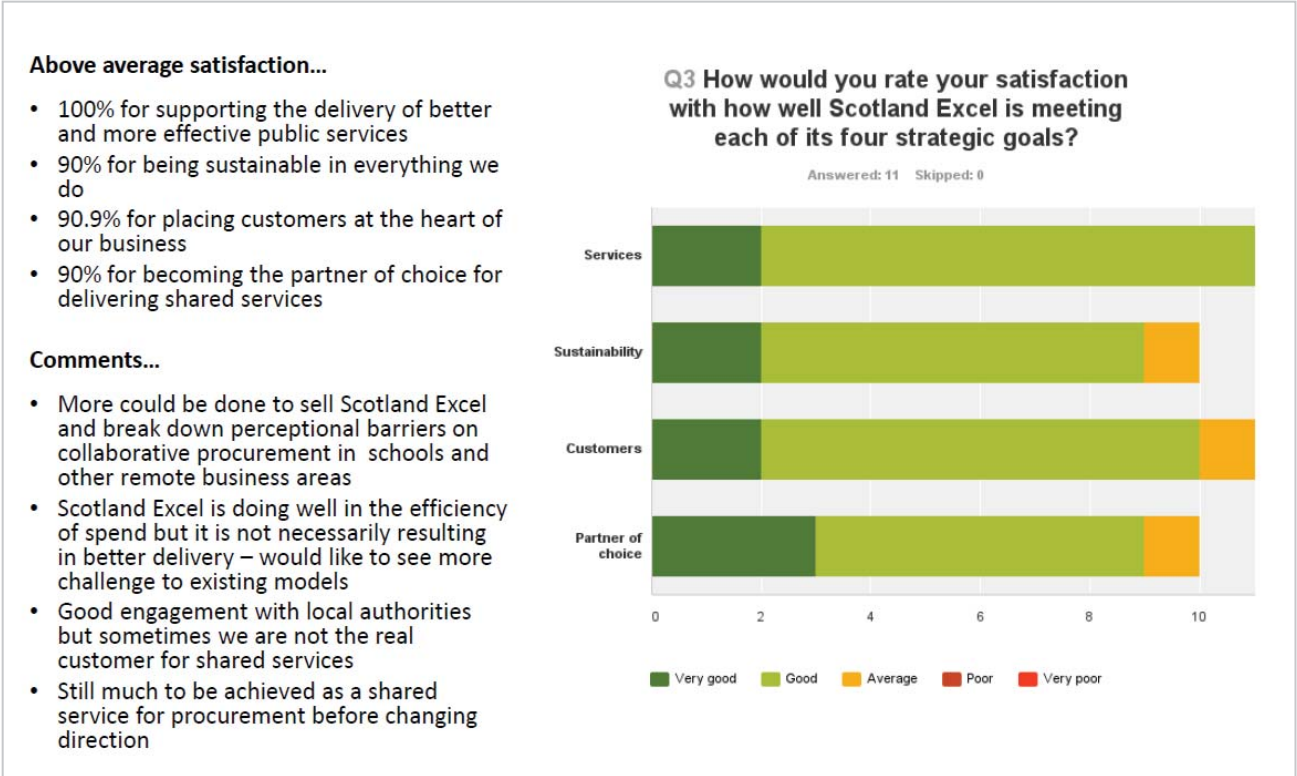
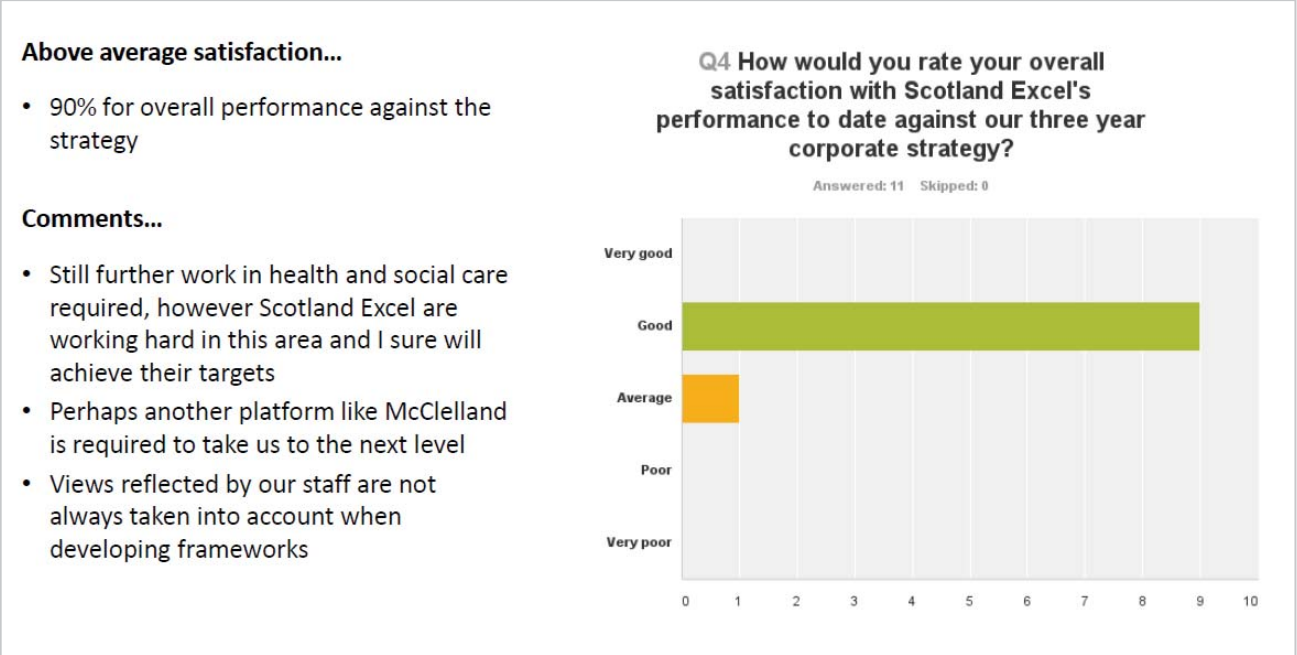
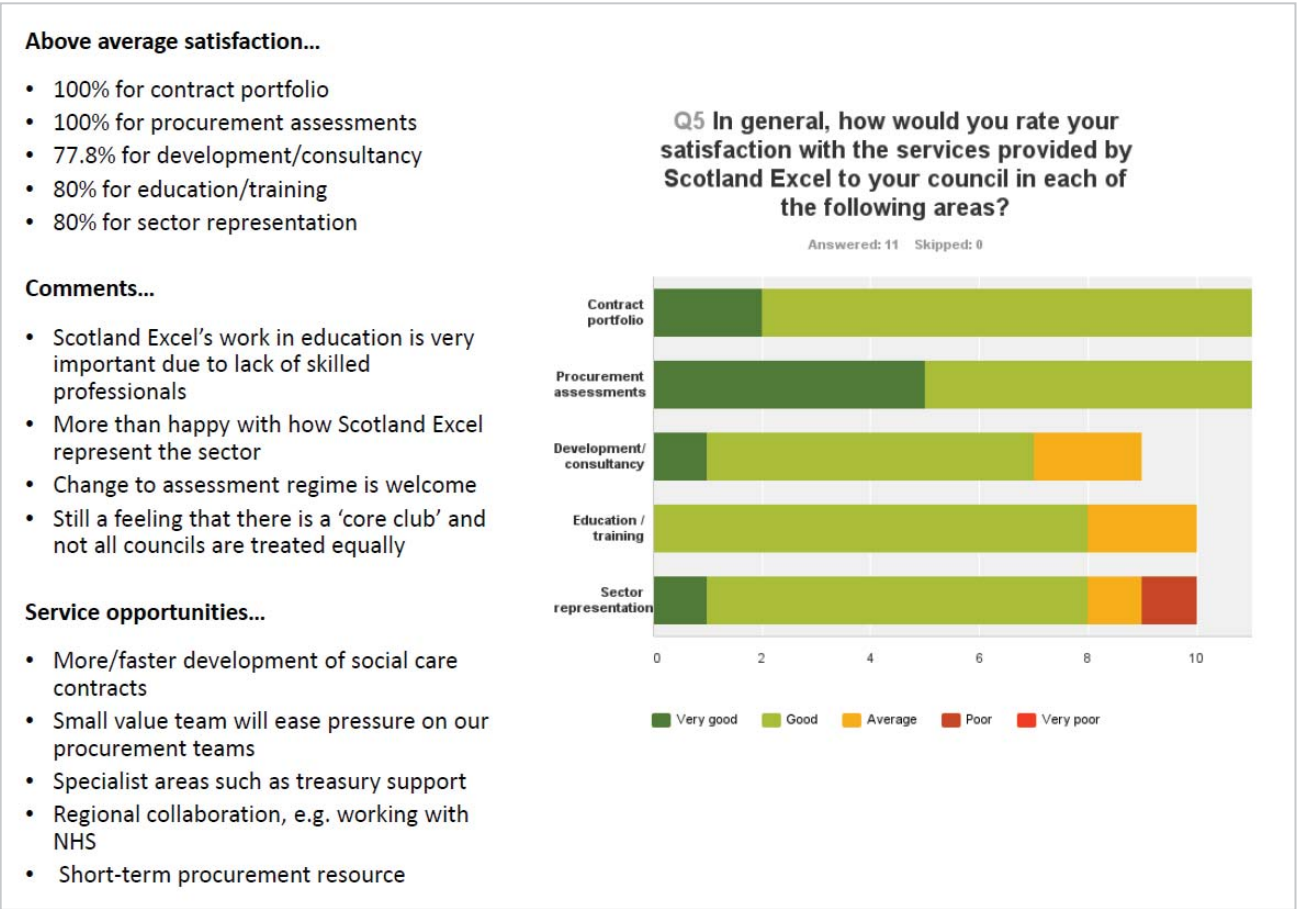


Fig. 3



Questions 5-6 measured satisfaction with the services provided by Scotland Excel, with the latter being an open-ended question on future service opportunities. The results can be found in Figure 4 below:

Fig. 4



Questions 7-9 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s engagement activity, with latter being an open-ended question on future engagement opportunities. The results are displayed in Figures 5-6 below:

Fig. 5

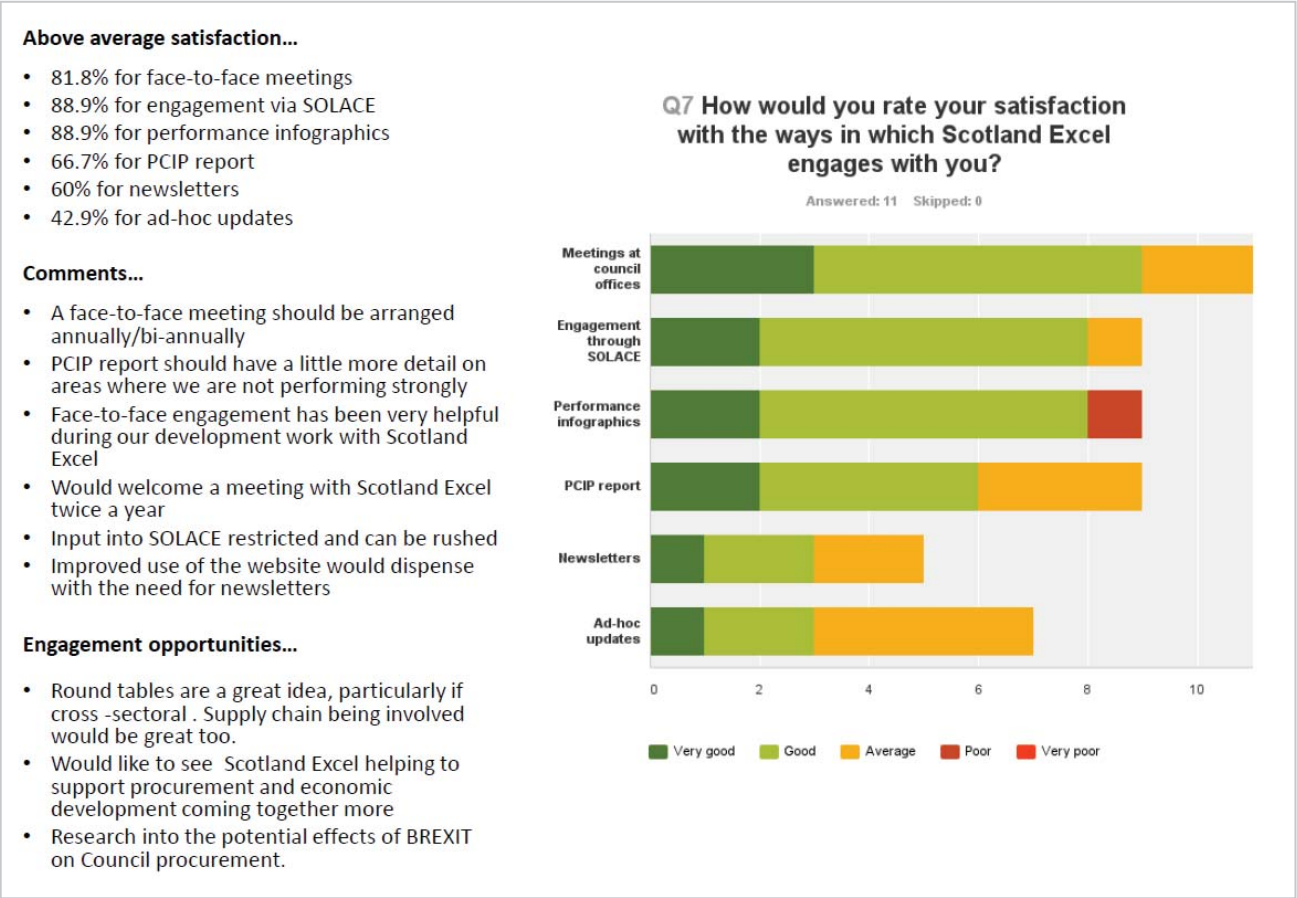
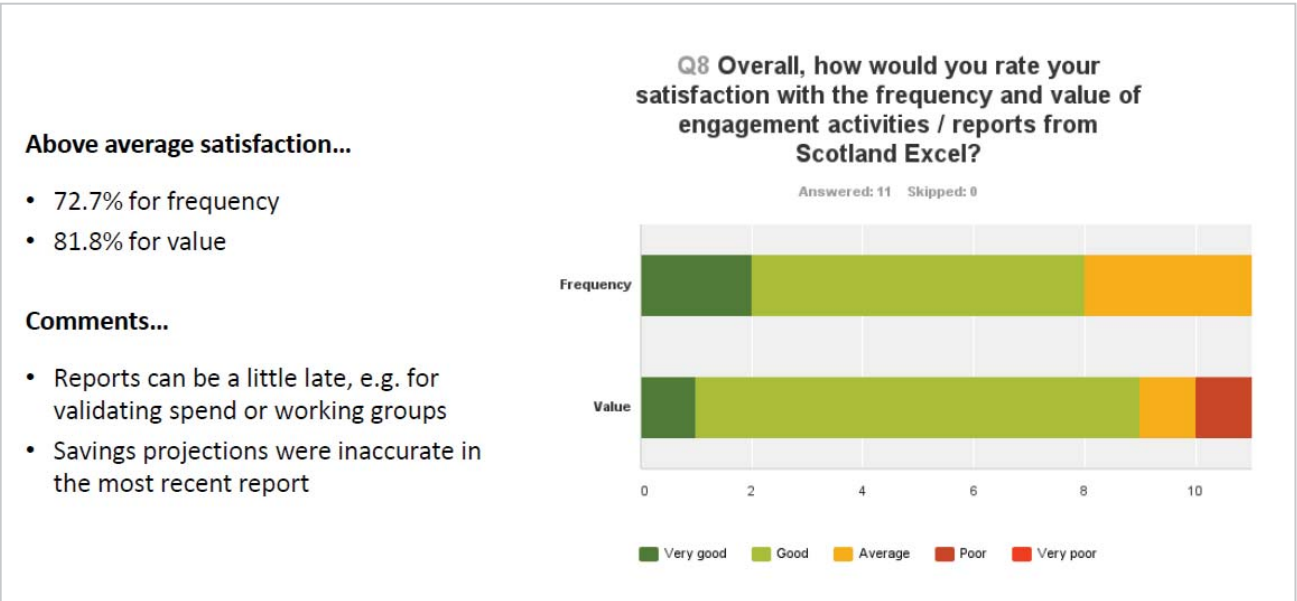


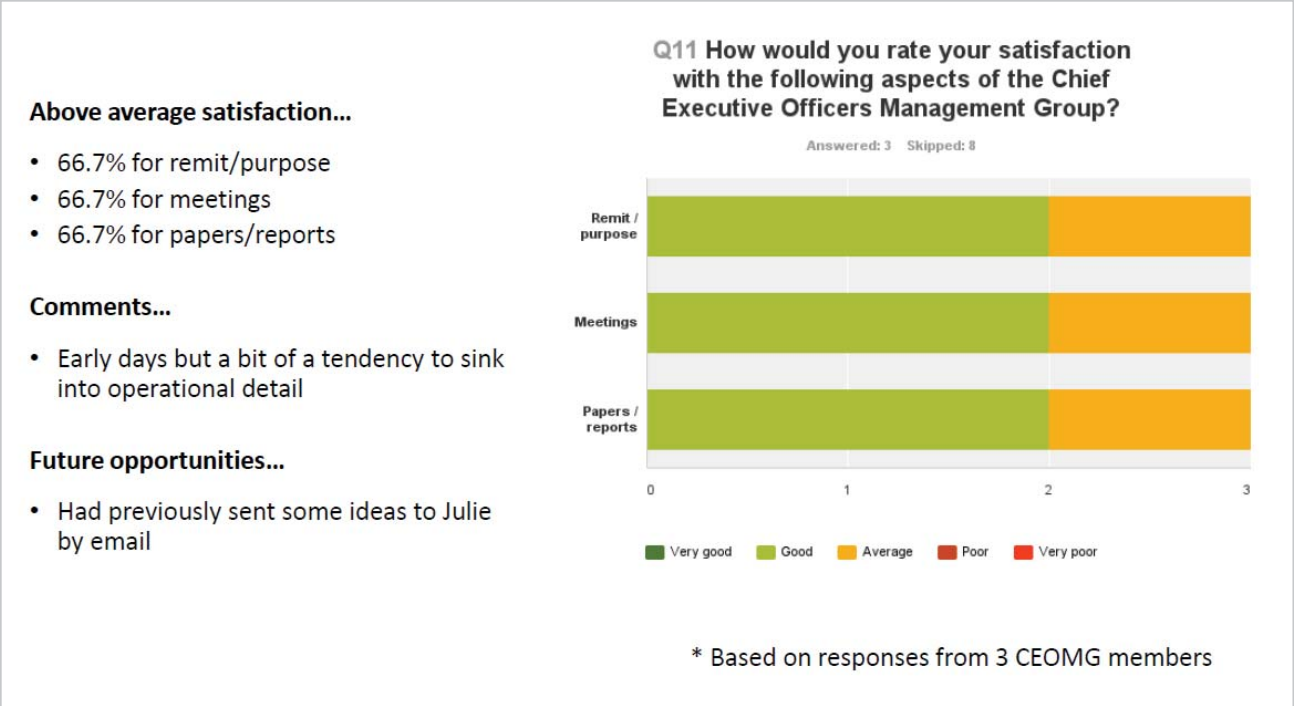
Fig. 6



Question 10 asked respondents if they were a member of the Chief Executive Officers Management Group. Three respondents identified as members of the group.

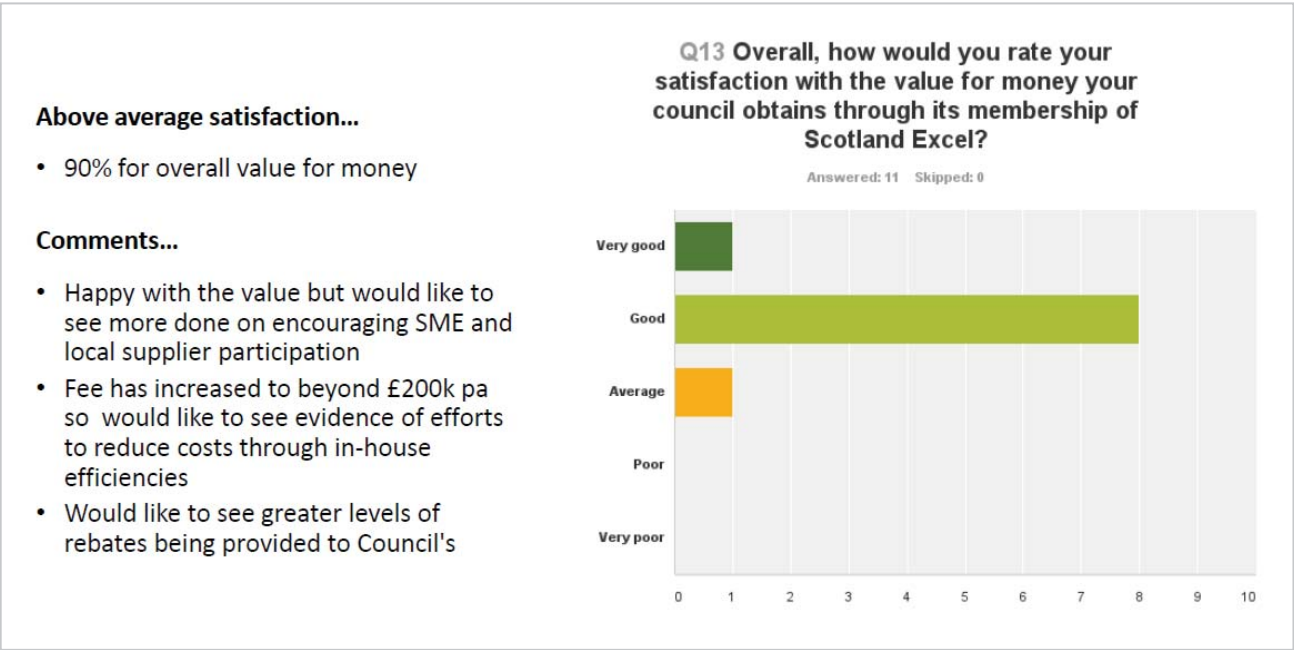
Questions 11-12 were posed to these three respondents to measure their satisfaction with the group, with the latter being an open-ended question on future opportunities for its remit. The results are displayed in Figure 7 below:

Fig. 7



Question 13 measured overall satisfaction with value for money. The results are displayed in Figure 8 below:

Fig. 8



The survey ended with an open-ended question on how Scotland Excel might support local authorities in the longer term through procurement or other shared services. The comments are included below:

- More on social care and assistance with modernising services via ICT
- Redesign of (council) service delivery to help us cope with budget cuts; picking up new commodities not yet tackled
- Focus should be on driving procurement efficiencies and new contract areas explored (e.g. social care)
- Procurement is Scotland Excel's specialism whereas there are many agencies already offering shared services or change management support
- The recent announcement re small value contracts is welcome, subject to the return of the rebate at the end of the project term.
- Would be willing to discuss the potential of other shared services that could be provided
- Consider taking on the commissioning of more front line services
- There is a further drive towards collaborative procurement so help is required in this area and in areas such as health and social care integration

Appendix 2: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Finance Directors

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate their local authority. Responses were received from:

- Aberdeenshire Council
- Dumfries & Galloway Council
- Highland Council
- Inverclyde Council
- Orkney Islands Council
- Renfrewshire Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- South Lanarkshire Council

Questions 2-4 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s strategy and performance. The results are displayed in Figures 1-3 below:

Fig. 1

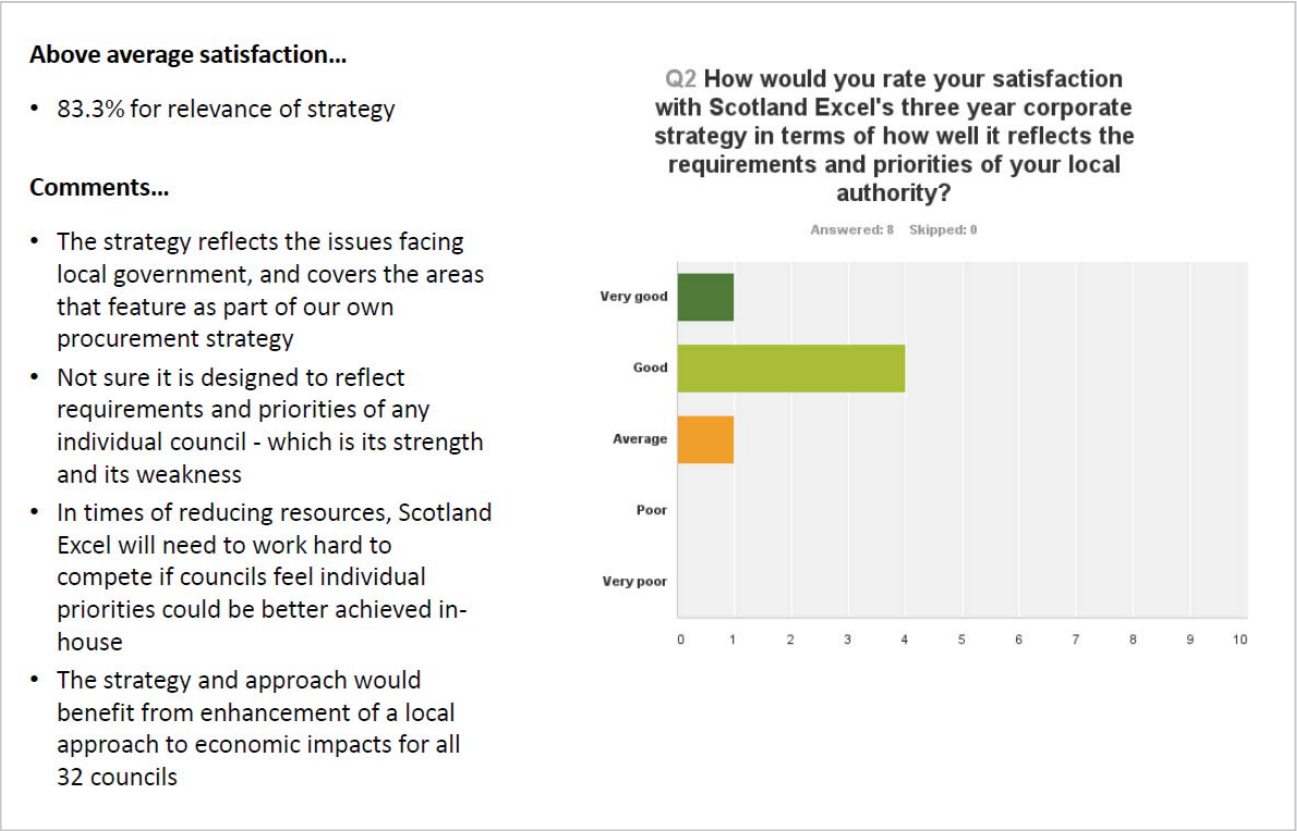


Fig. 2

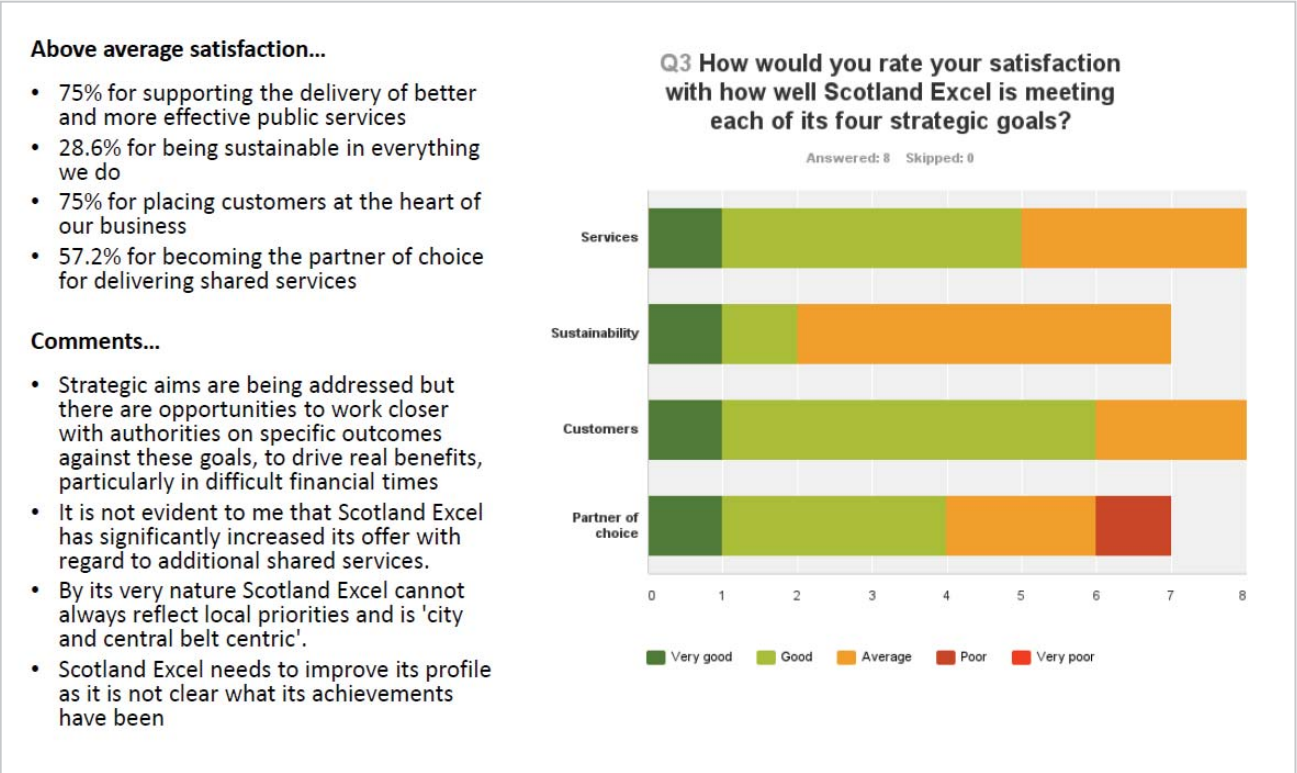
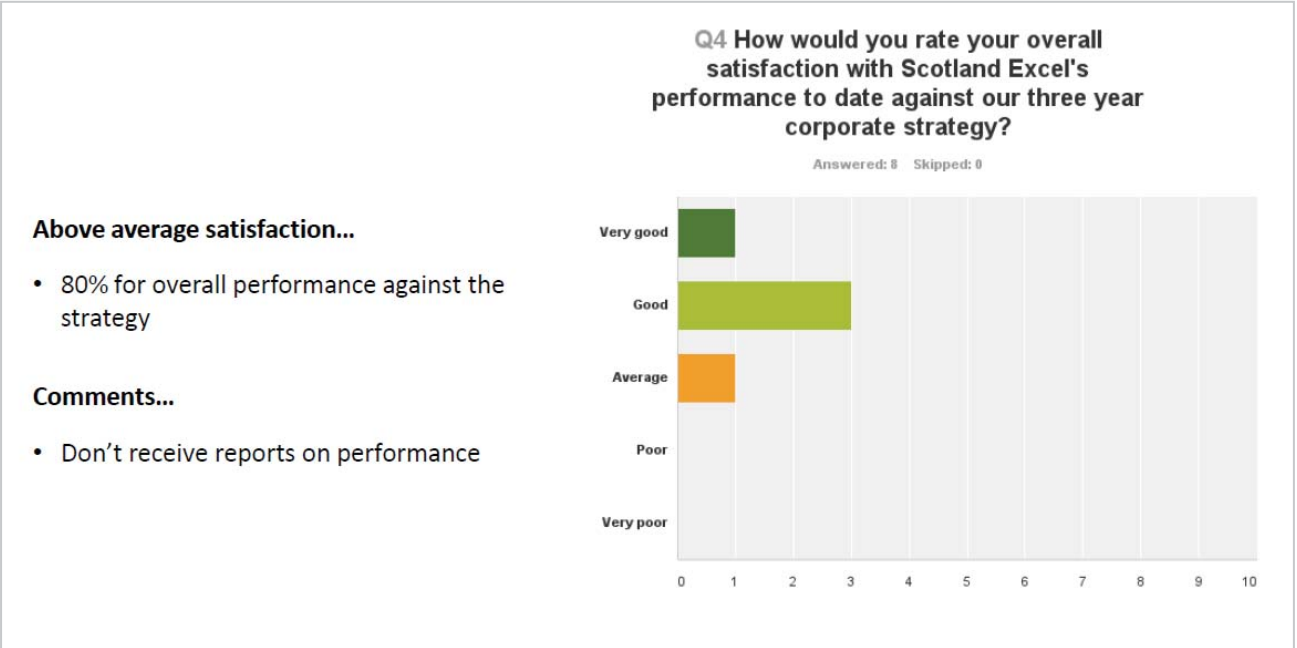
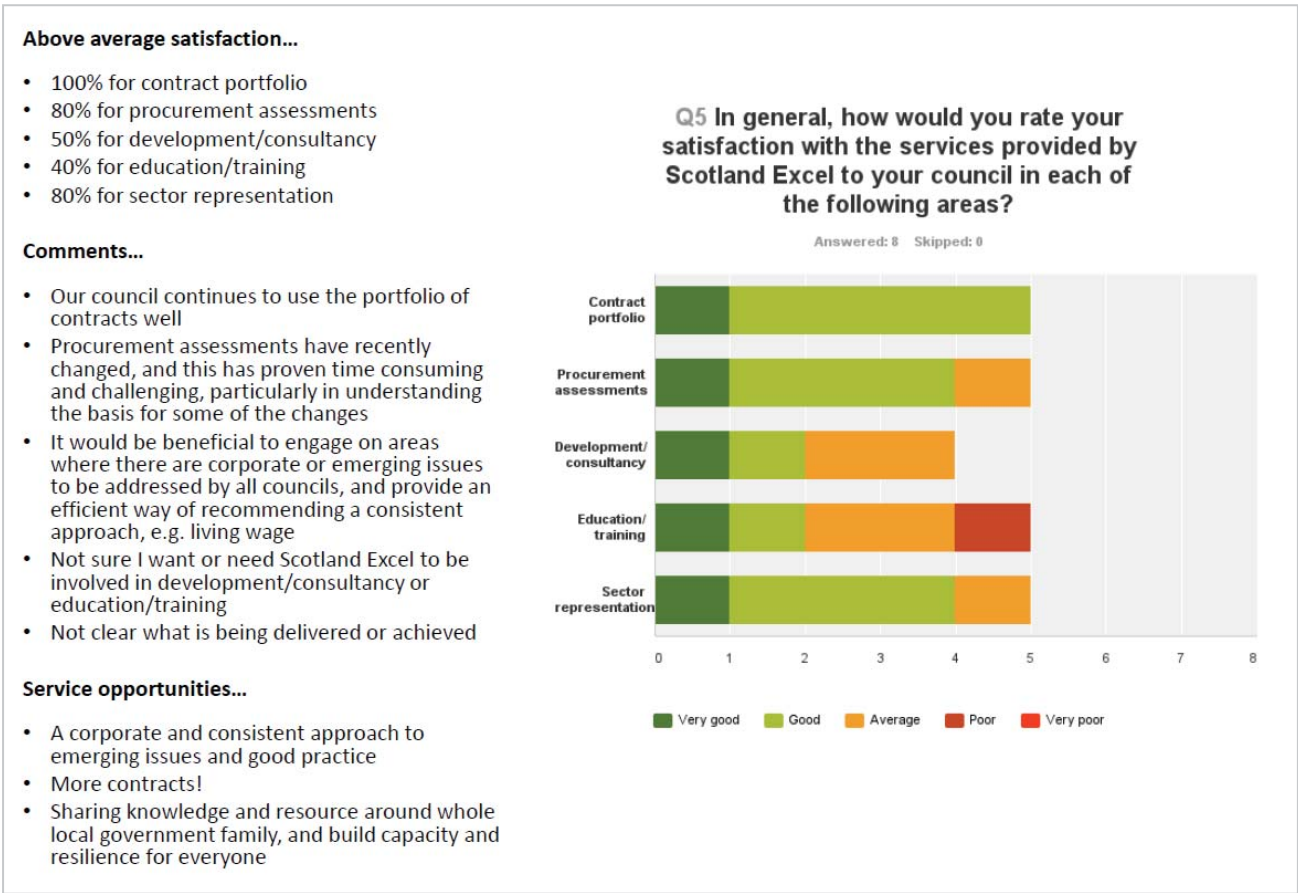


Fig. 3



Questions 5-6 measured satisfaction with the services provided by Scotland Excel, with the latter being an open-ended question on future service opportunities. The results can be found in Figure 4 below:

Fig. 4



Questions 7-9 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s engagement activity, with latter being an open-ended question on future engagement opportunities. The results are displayed in Figures 5-6 below:

Fig. 5

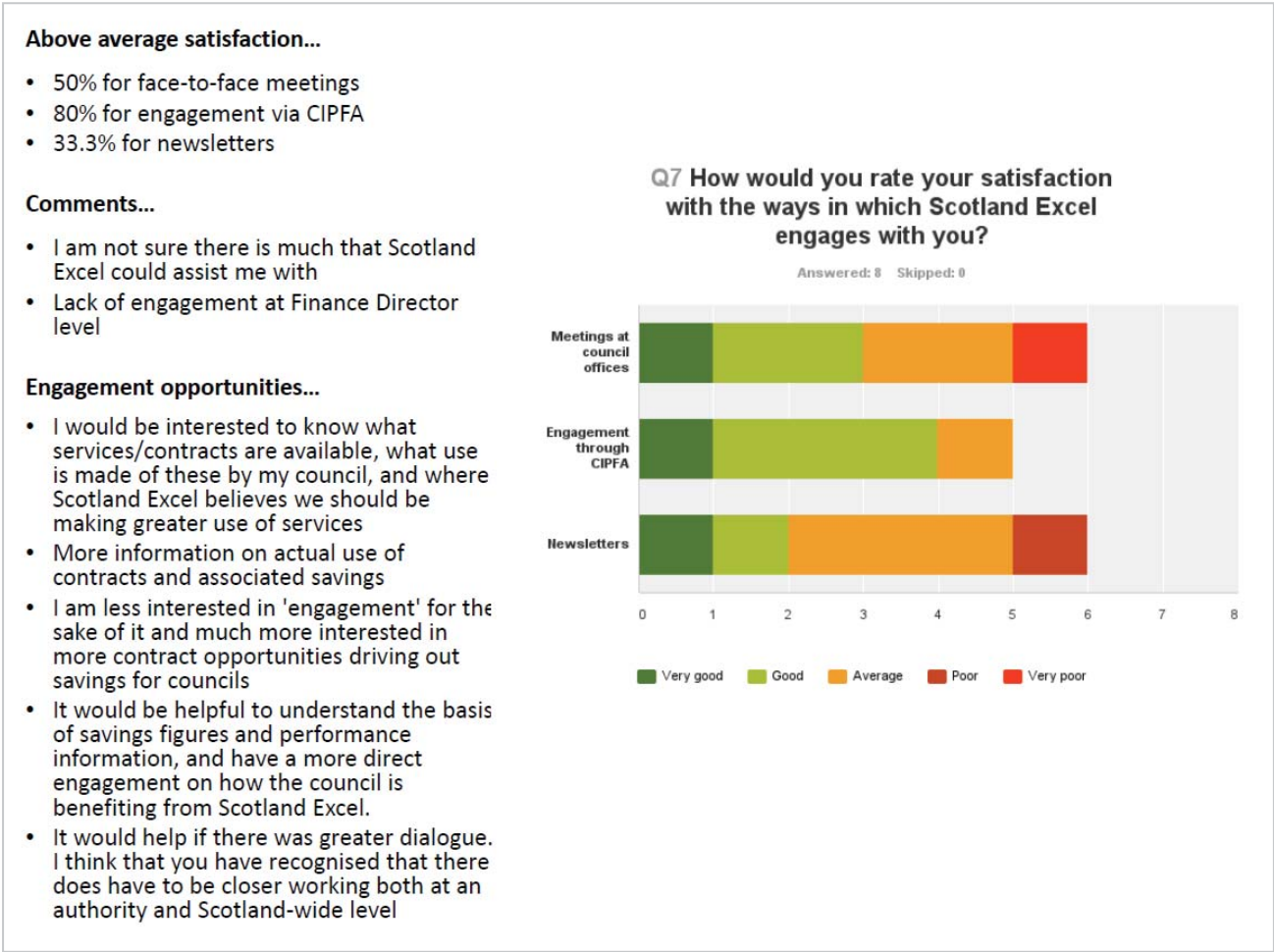


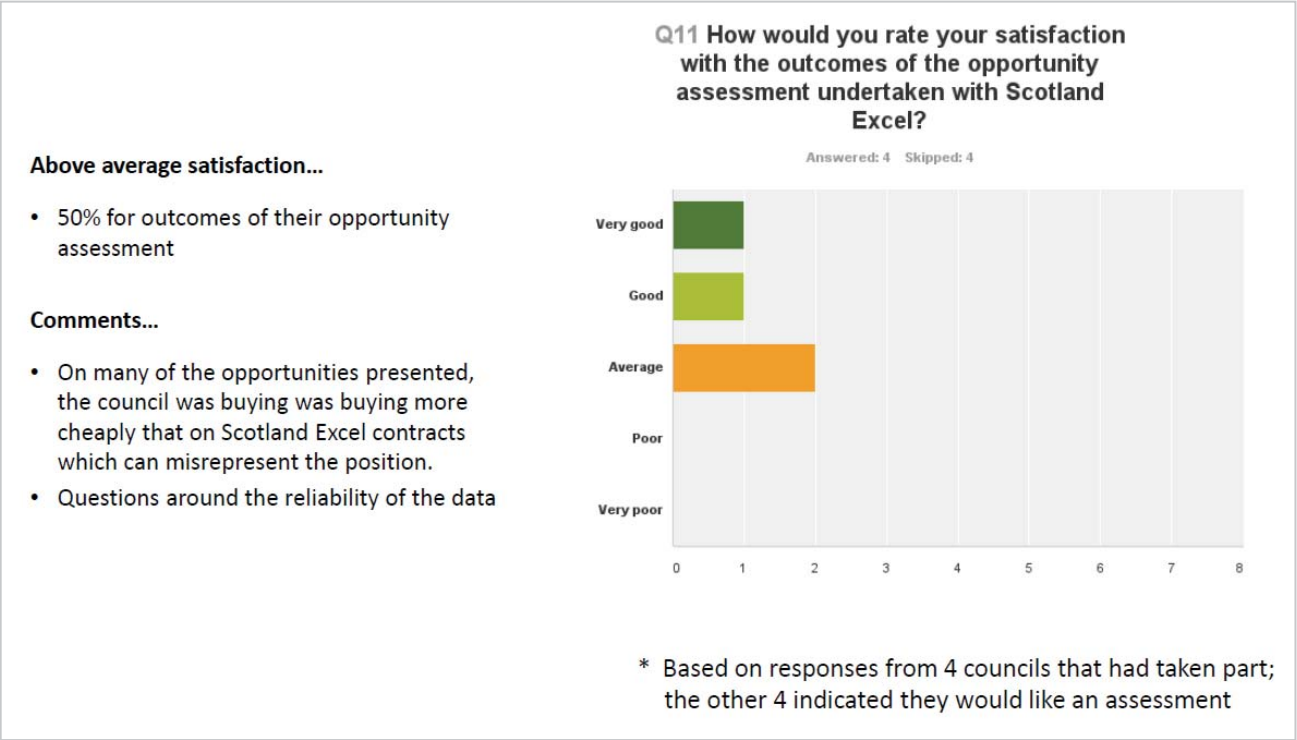
Fig. 6



Question 10 asked respondents if their council had taken part in an opportunity assessment to benchmark their contract usage and savings against Scotland Excel contracts. Four respondents had taken part in an assessment.

Question 11 was posed to these four respondents to measure their satisfaction with their assessment. The results are displayed in Figure 7 below:

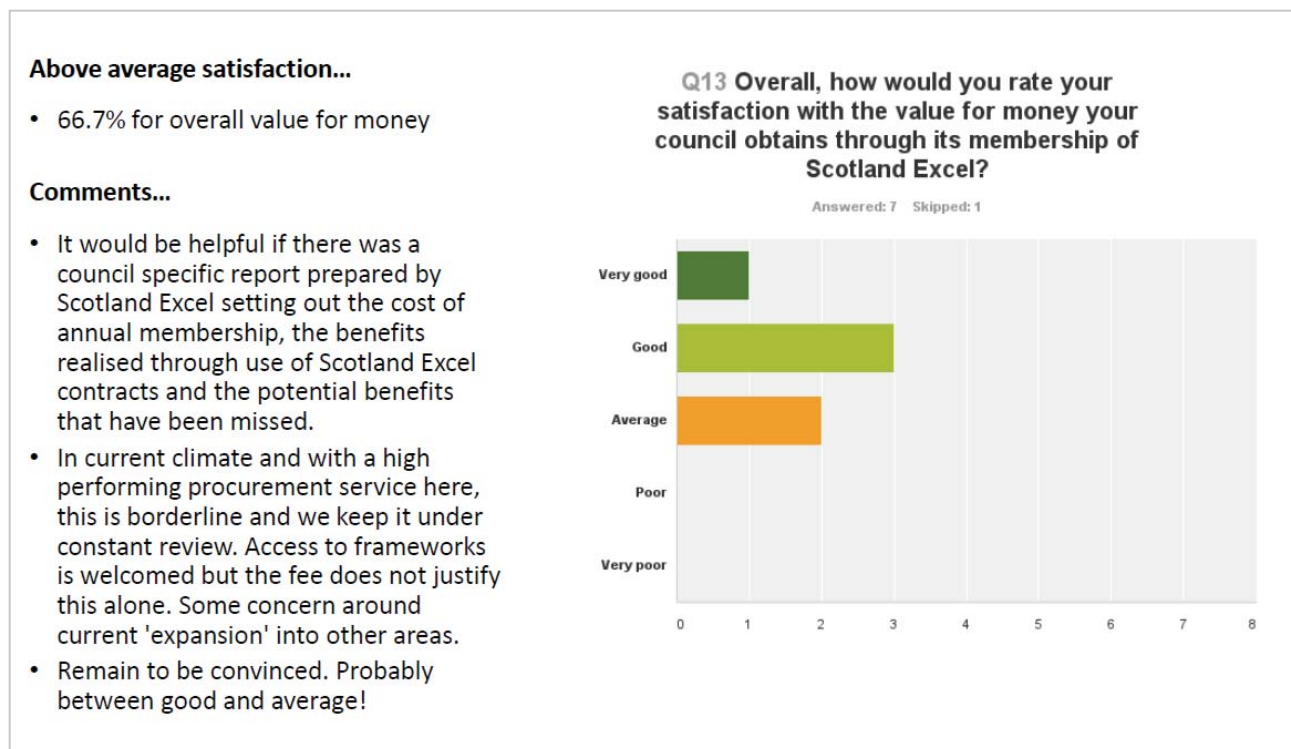
Fig. 7



Question 12 asked those respondents whose council had not taken part in an assessment whether this would be of interest. All four remaining respondents indicated their interest in undertaking an assessment.

Question 13 measured overall satisfaction with value for money. The results are displayed in Figure 8 below:

Fig. 8



The survey ended with an open-ended question on how Scotland Excel might support local authorities in the longer term through procurement or other shared services. The comments are included below:

- Scotland Excel was established to deliver benefits to local government procurement and that should be where efforts are concentrated rather than shared services. Better to ensure that there are shared IT platforms across local government and approach that from the procurement perspective, e.g. one Council Tax system
- Scotland Excel should continue to focus on developing areas where they are able to add real value and fund additional activities from associated savings based on well-developed business cases.
- Need to increase the social care added value aspects and ensure schools are directed to use Scotland Excel contracts in relation to the extra Attainment Funding.
- Primary focus needs to remain value for money frameworks - with attention paid to 'local' opportunities within council areas for smaller businesses
- More support in staff development to increase capacity at a local level. Help us increase our spend through Scotland Excel's existing portfolio for mutual benefit. Work with us to improve the opportunities for our local suppliers to bid for work
- Evidence value for money and explore new opportunities

Appendix 3: Customer Satisfaction Survey – Joint Committee Members

Question 1-2 asked respondents to indicate their name and local authority. Responses were received from:

- Angus Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- Highland Council
- North Ayrshire Council
- West Dunbartonshire Council
- Argyll & Bute Council
- Fife Council
- Midlothian Council
- Scottish Borders Council
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Glasgow City Council
- The Moray Council
- Shetland Islands Council

Questions 3-5 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s strategy and performance. The results are displayed in Figures 1-3 below:

Fig. 1

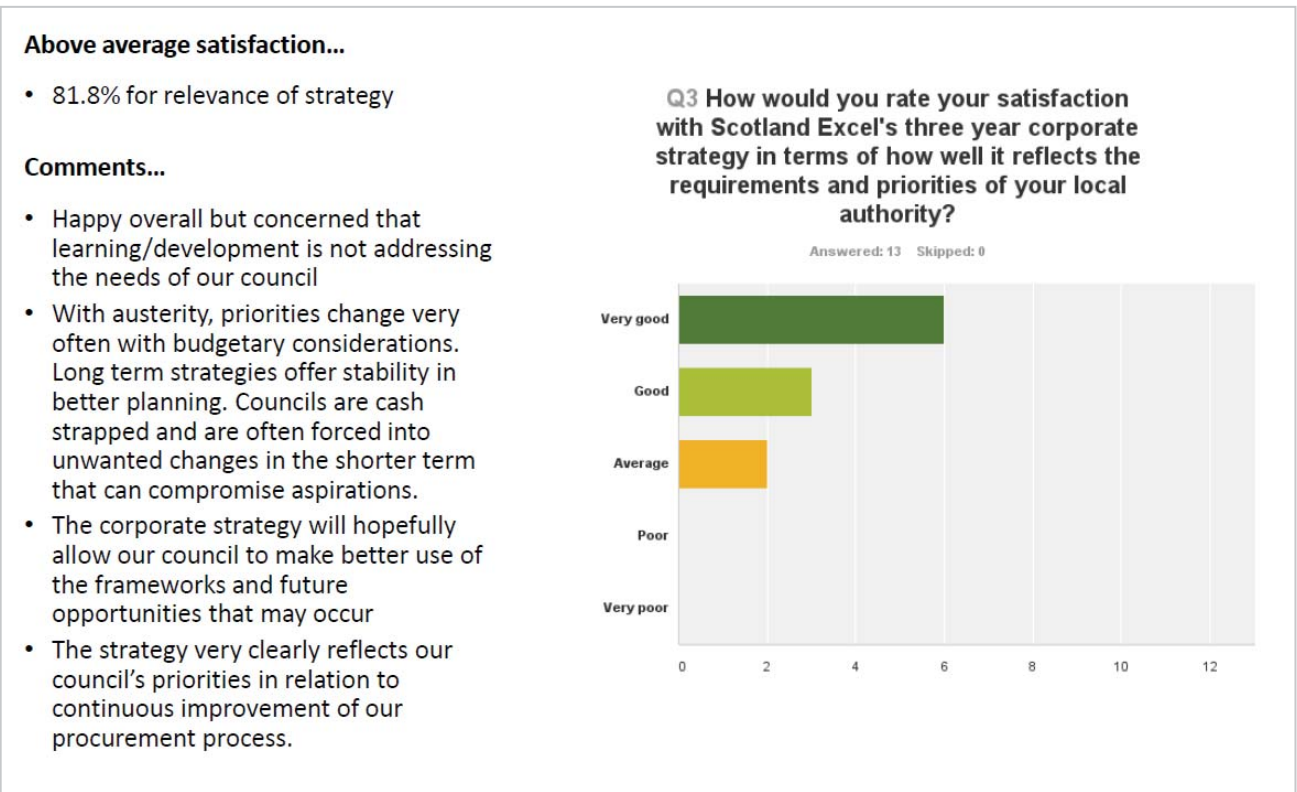


Fig. 2

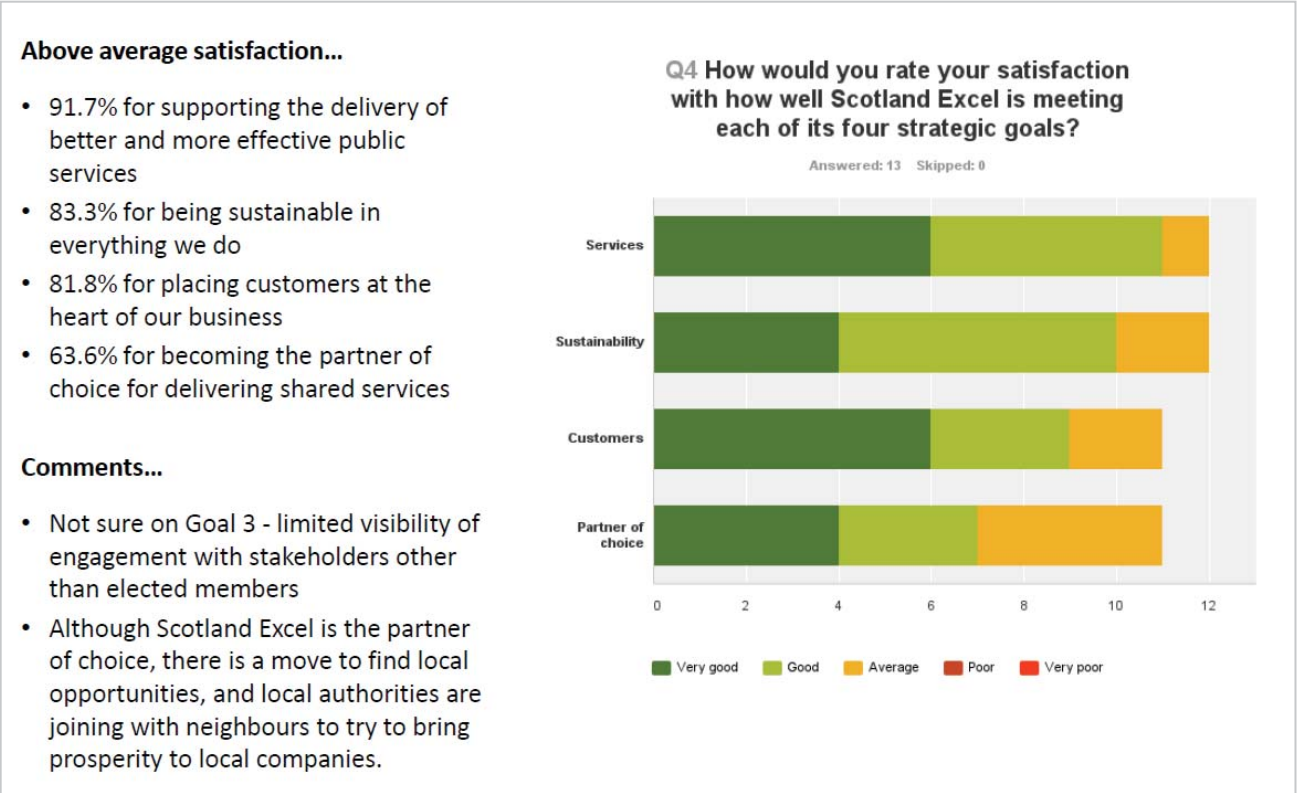
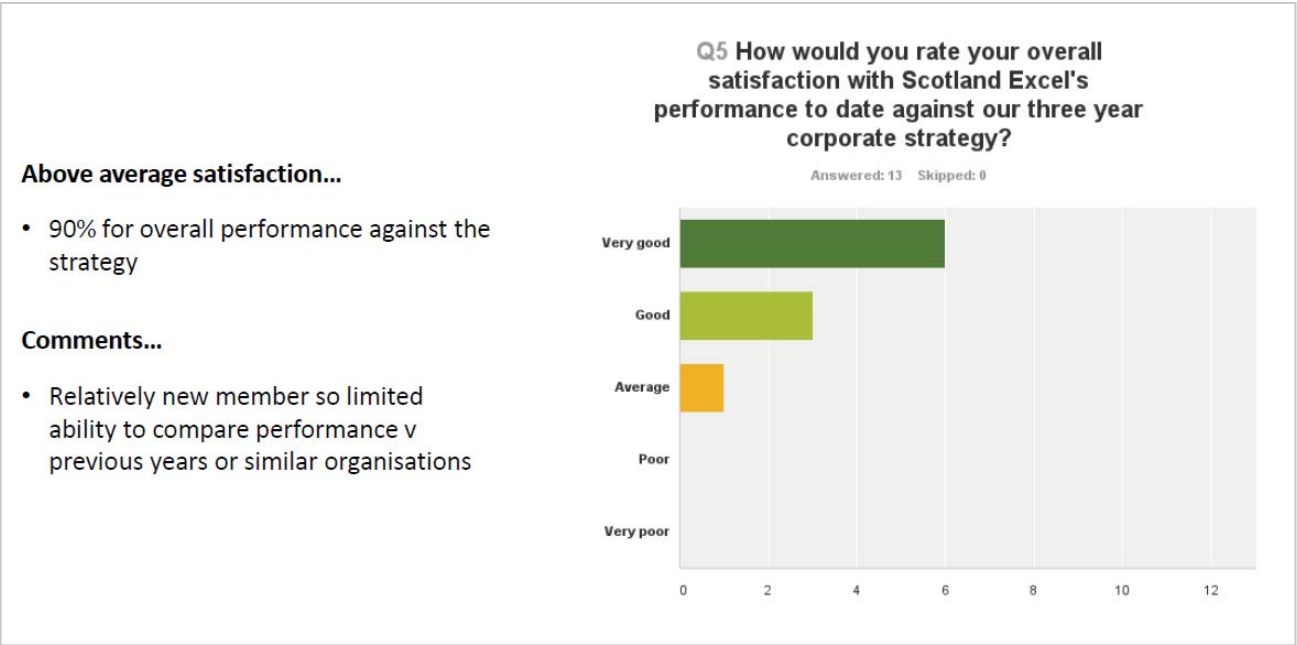
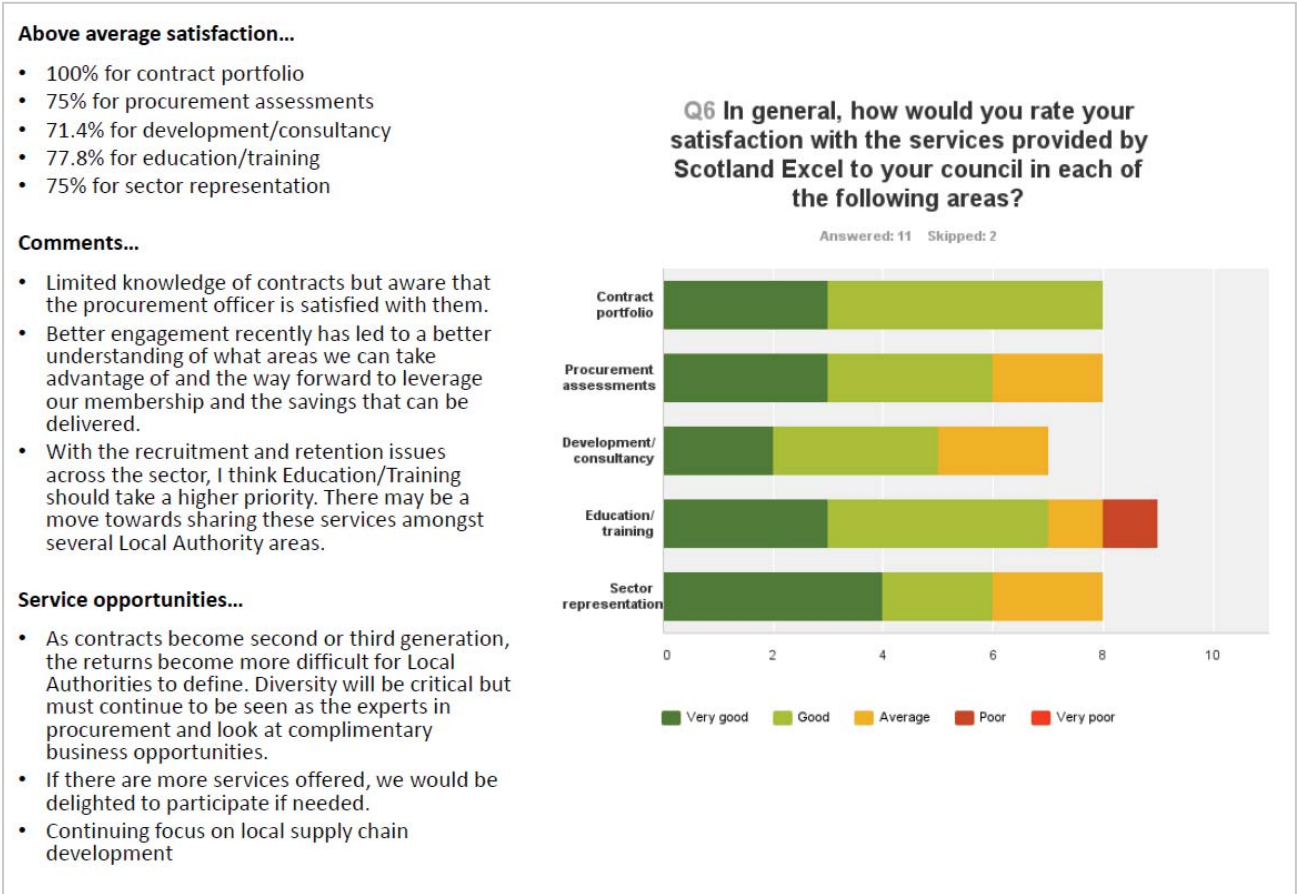


Fig. 3



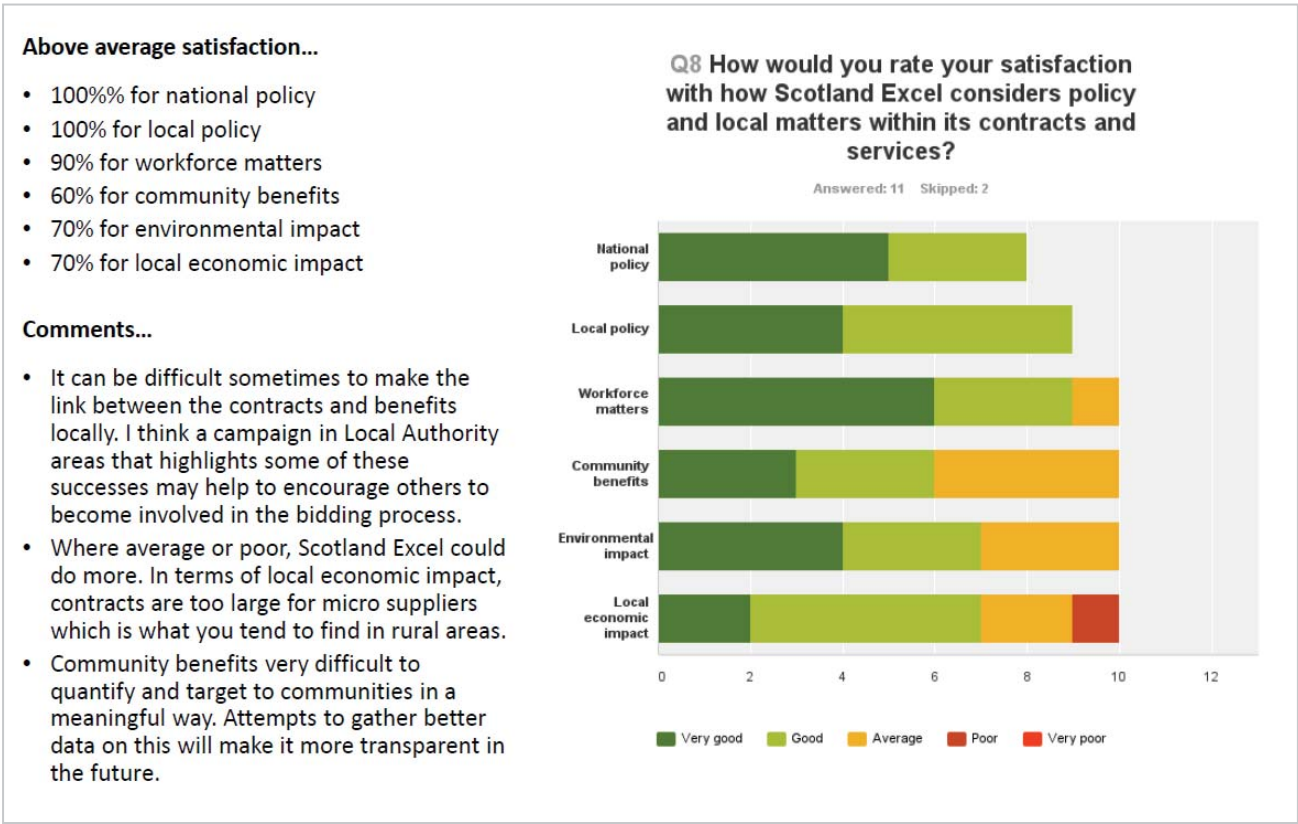
Questions 6-7 measured satisfaction with the services provided by Scotland Excel, with the latter being an open-ended question on future service opportunities. The results can be found in Figure 4 below:

Fig. 4



Question 8 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s consideration of policy and local matters within its contracts and services. The results are displayed in Figure 5 below:

Fig. 5



Questions 9-11 measured satisfaction with how Scotland Excel manages its governance arrangements, with the latter being an open-ended question on opportunities for future improvements. The results are displayed in Figures 6-7 below:

Fig. 6

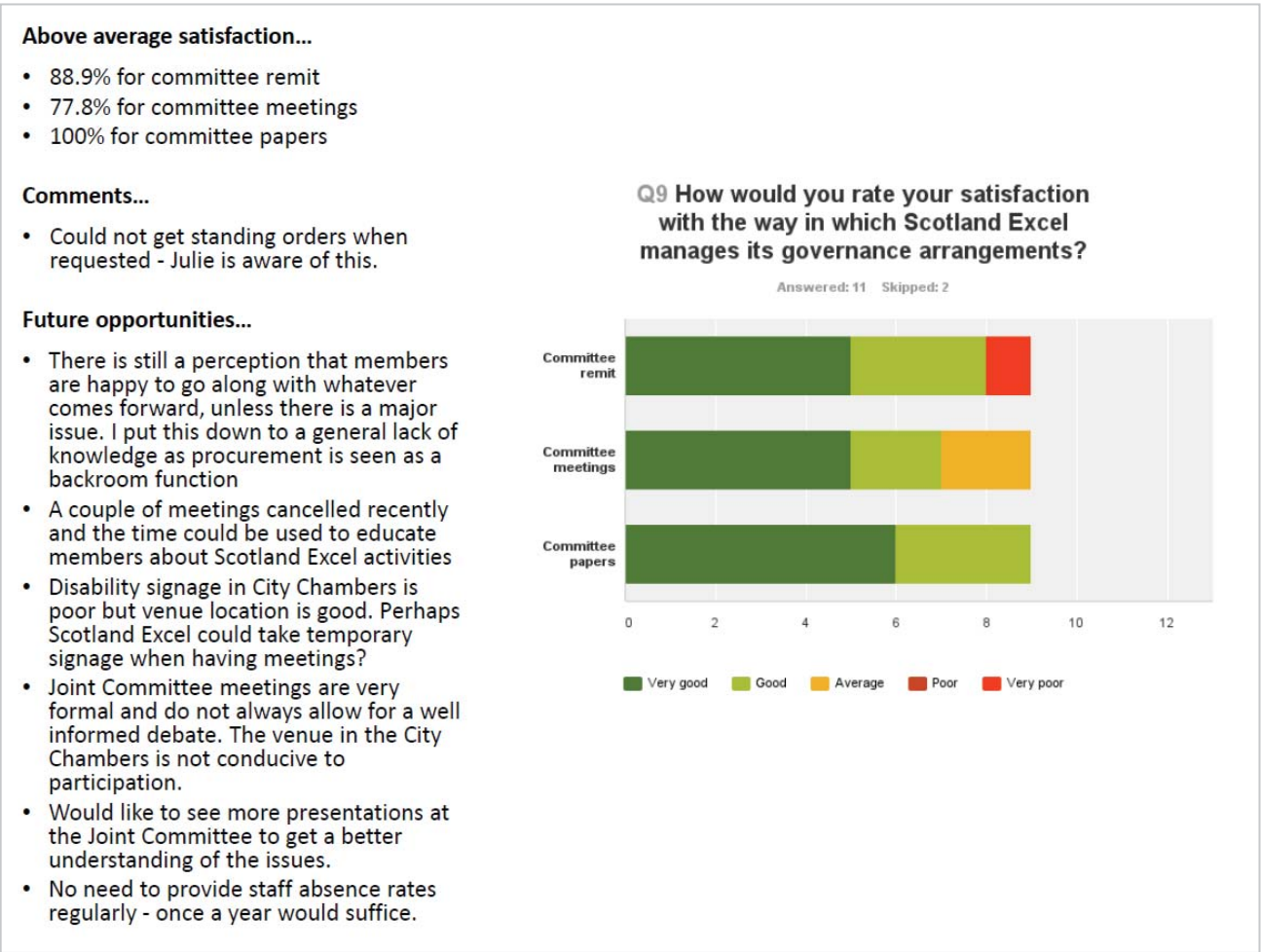
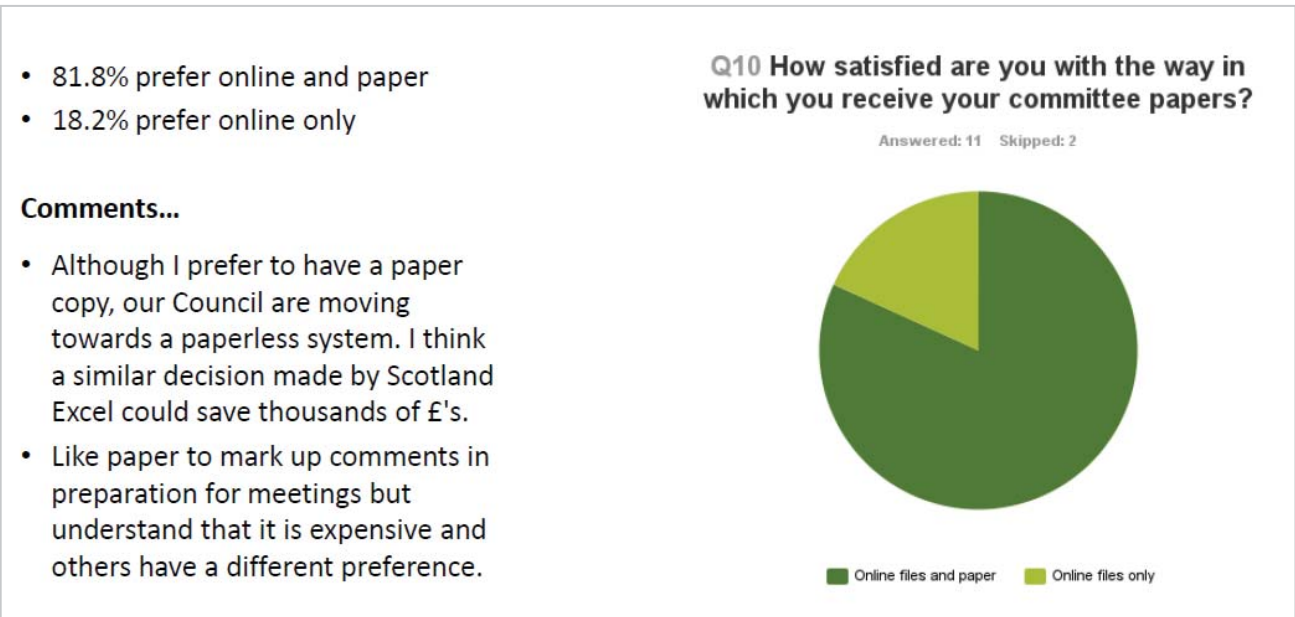


Fig. 7

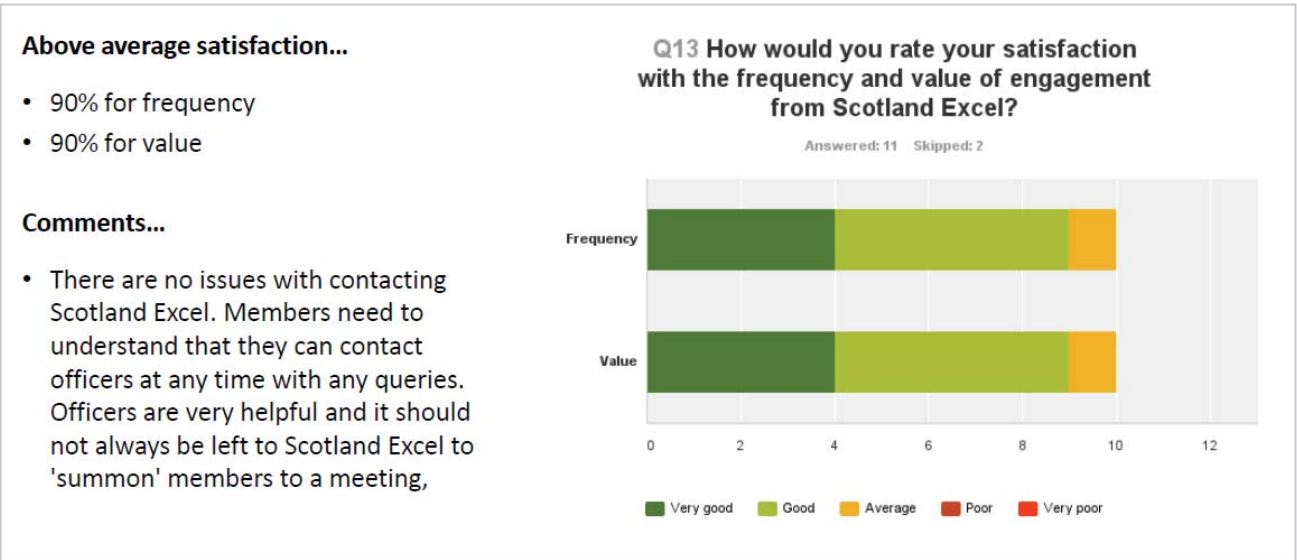


Questions 12-14 measured satisfaction with Scotland Excel’s engagement activity, with latter being an open-ended question on future engagement opportunities. The results are displayed in Figures 8-9 below:

Fig. 8

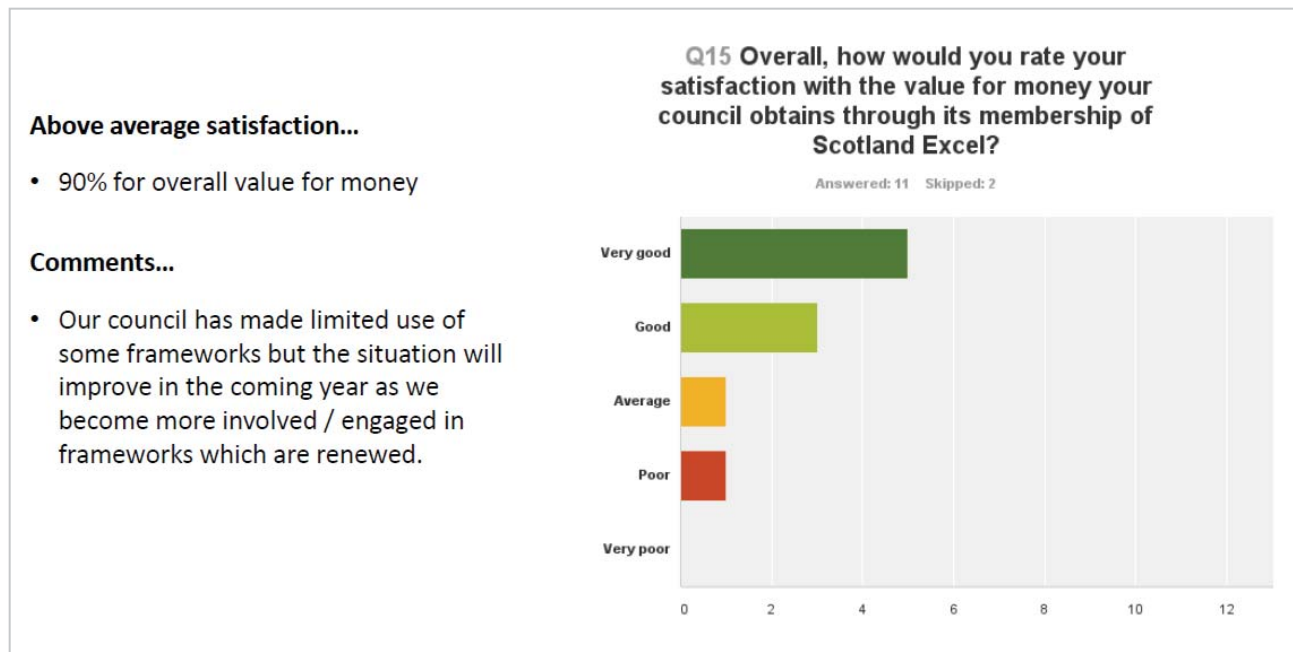


Fig. 9



Question 13 measured overall satisfaction with value for money. The results are displayed in Figure 10 below:

Fig. 10



The survey ended with an open-ended question on how Scotland Excel might support local authorities in the longer term through procurement or other shared services. The comments are included below:

- Councils are being urged to work more collaboratively and, as the experts in the field of procurement, I would like to see Scotland Excel offer training to officers and elected members. Scotland Excel should also explore opportunities to offer other related services for councils
- Building capacity and professionalism across the local government sector and supporting a drive for professionalism / professional education.
- I see this as a very important measure in supporting the 32 local authorities. As the economic climate changes, it becomes more imperative that Scotland Excel support and engage with the authorities in every way possible.
- By continued growth in the contracts portfolio and providing training and support for procurement teams. Facilitating shared services across local authorities and other public sector agencies would also benefit public services providers and users
- Scotland Excel is on the right track through its commitment to supporting local authorities in their procurement activities, particularly in the development of professional procurement capacity.