Community Planning Officials Survey Report

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The purpose of WWS is to use evidence
to inform public service reform
and transform public services
for all of Scotland's communities to flourish

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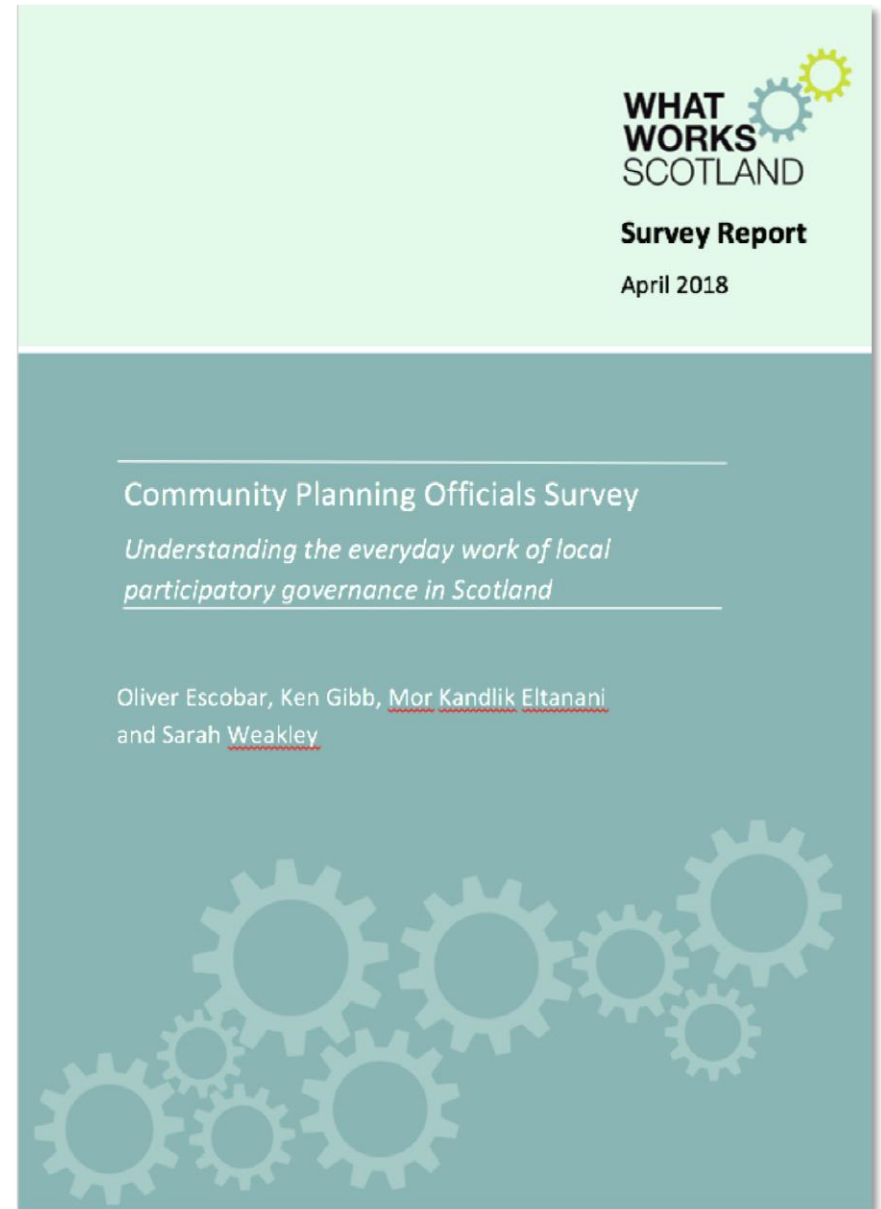We want to start by thanking all who participated and helped with the survey!

CPOs in context

- Collaborative **partnerships and community engagement** processes are found across the world as strategies to…

  - deal with complex issues, increase problem-solving capacity, foster social capital, improve public services, counter democratic deficits and improve legitimacy of governance processes

- CPOs carry out the **everyday work** of enabling local participatory governance in Scotland, at the interface of 3 crucial policy agendas:

  - public service reform, social justice and community empowerment

- Yet, despite their crucial role in local governance, we know surprisingly little about this emerging community of practice

The report

- **first survey of CPOs** (managers and officers), to reflect their perspectives on:
  - Role of CPOs
  - Key dynamics in CPPs
  - Use of evidence in CPPs
  - Community engagement in CPPs
  - Policies, frameworks and reforms shaping CP work
  - CP achievements and challenges
- **Baseline** for a second survey in 2018

WHAT WORKS SCOTLAND

Survey Report

April 2018

Community Planning Officials Survey

Understanding the everyday work of local participatory governance in Scotland

Oliver Escobar, Ken Gibb, Mor Kandlik Eltanani and Sarah Weakley

http://whatworksscotland.ac.uk/publications/community-planning-officials-survey-everyday-work-of-local-participatory-governance/

Methodological notes

- Reached out to CP Managers
  - Asked to define teams
  - Criteria: main job is CP (50% of their time or more)
- Census of **171 CPOs**
  - managers and officers, at local and strategic levels
- **107 responses (62% response rate)**
  - 29 CPPs
  - 39% men and 61% women
  - age group:
    - 20% were 21-35 years old,
    - 46% were 36-50 years old,
    - and 36% were 51-65 years old.
- **Limitations:** mapping a changing workforce; small sample for statistical testing; categories not clear cut (e.g. local/strategic)

The CPOs workforce

- Highly educated
- Wide range of professional backgrounds and experiences
- 57% in post more than four years
- **Job satisfaction:**
  - 77% satisfied
    - 35% fairly; 34% very; 8% completely
  - 14% dissatisfied
    - 11% fairly; 2% very; 1% completely
  - However… qualitative studies have shown that there is also **burnout** in this community of practice > will check this in wave 2 of the survey
- There doesn't yet seem to be a 'natural' **institutional space** for CP teams
  - cross-cutting roles defy established departmental boundaries and functions

CPOs = new type of policy workers combining various roles studied in previous research

- *boundary-spanners* (Williams, 2012) – practitioners who foster collaboration by working across, and seeking to transcend, various organisational and policy boundaries

- *deliberative practitioners* (Forester, 1999) **and** *public engagers* (Escobar, 2017a, 2015b) – practitioners who work to involve communities of place, practice and interest in dialogue and deliberation as part of policymaking and/or governance processes

- and *knowledge brokers* (Ward et al., 2009) – practitioners who connect various sorts of evidence to policy and practice.
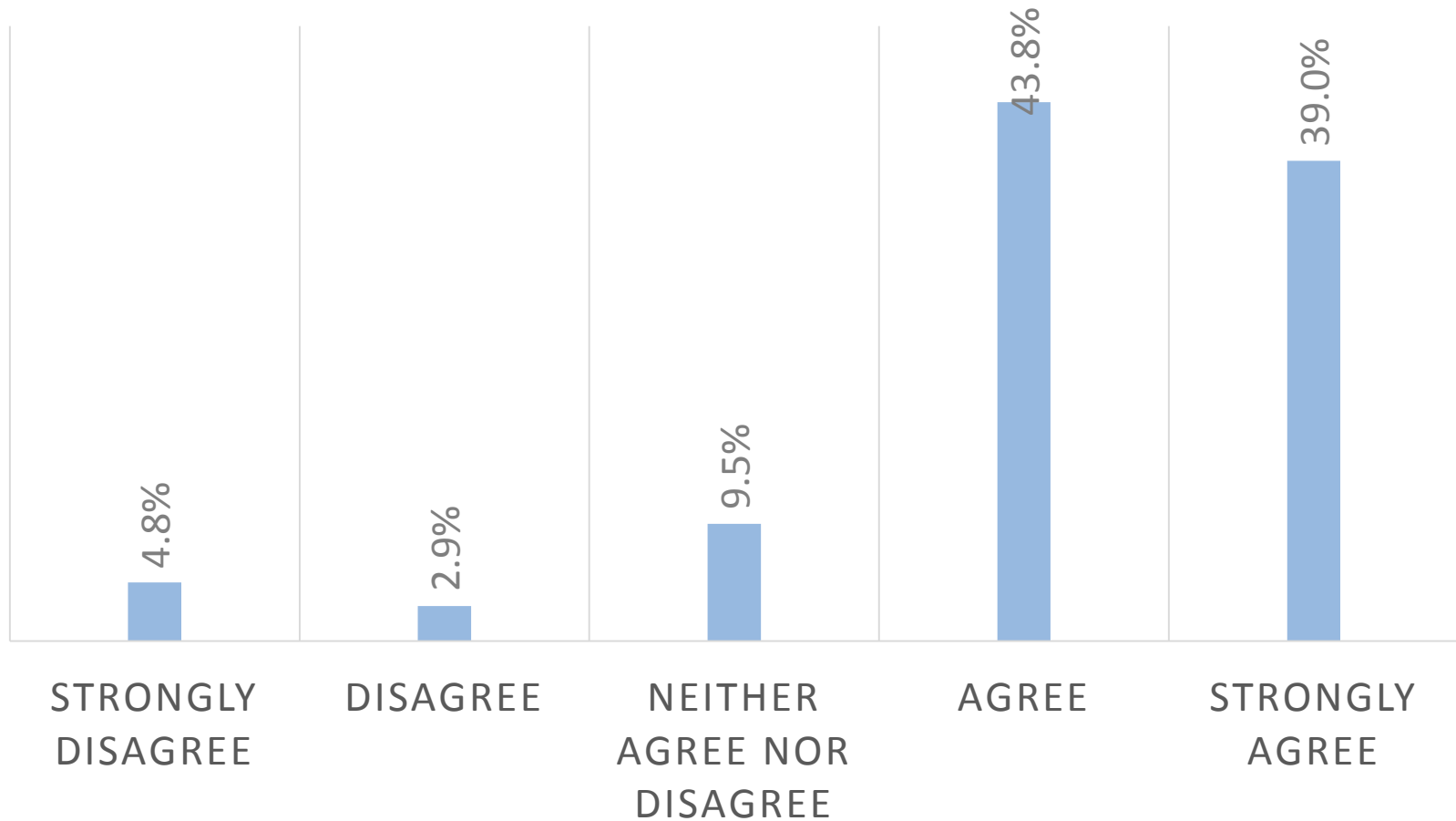
What are the three most important aspects of your work?

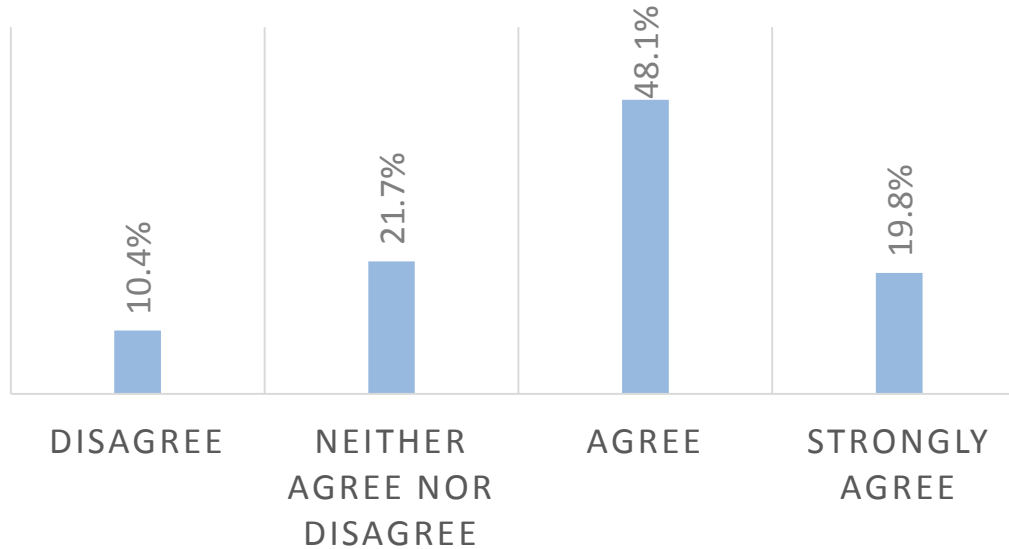|	
Working across various organisational boundaries	62%
Involving communities in policy and decision making	50%
Planning and managing the Single Outcome Agreement (SOA)	38%
Encouraging 'culture change'	31%
Managing dialogue and deliberation between different groups	30%
Working across departmental boundaries in my organisation	29%
Performance management and governance	26%
Using evidence to support policies and projects	23%

CPOs indicated that <u>more time and energy should go into</u>

1) involving communities in policy and decision-making,
2) managing dialogue and deliberation
3) encouraging culture change,
4) and using evidence to support policies and projects

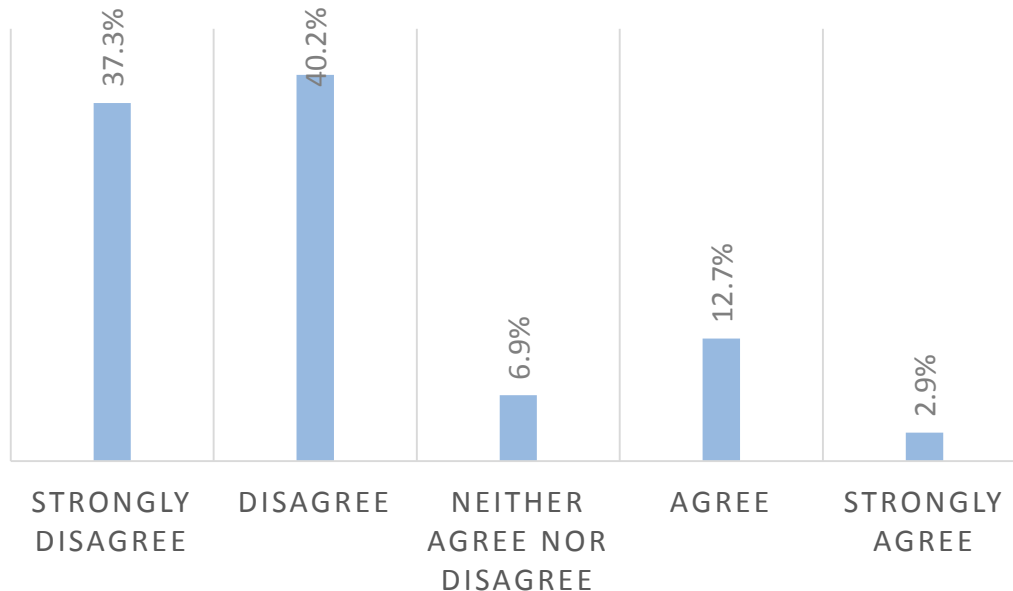# The best way to achieve CP goals is to promote 'culture change' amongst CP partners

4.8%	2.9%	9.5%	43.8%	39.0%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

It is important to sometimes bend the rules to make things happen in this job

10.4%	21.7%	48.1%	19.8%
DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

CP work is mainly administrative

37.3%	40.2%	6.9%	12.7%	2.9%
STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE

strong presence of 'activist approaches' to the role of CPO

Ranking of skills present in the workforce

1. Writing for different audiences **(81%)**

2. Consultation and engagement **(77%)**

3. Facilitation **(74%)**

4. Negotiation **(69%);** Managing team work **(69%)**

5. Persuasion **(64%)**

6. Presentation / public speaking **(61%)**

7. Finding and sharing evidence **(54%)**

8. Mediation **(53%)**

9. Resource management **(51%)**

10. Research **(47%)**

11. Process design **(33%)**

Ranking of skills according to <u>importance</u> attributed by CPOs

1. Consultation and engagement **(96%)**

2. Negotiation **(88%);** Persuasion **(88%);** Facilitation **(88%)**; Writing for different audiences (88%)

3. Presentation / public speaking **(81%)**

4. Finding and sharing evidence **(80%)**

5. Research **(74%)**

6. Resource management **(73%)**; Process design **(73%)**

7. Mediation **(72%)**

8. Managing team work **(68%)**

Training

## When you started your CP role, what training were you given? Please choose all that apply

All in all, I had no real training	49%
Learned the job from documents	27%
Trained by someone with the same position as me	17%
Trained by someone with a different position	16%
Participated in group training	12%

Most desirable training (open question):

1. leadership and management with emphasis on managing change or processes
2. mediation and facilitation
3. research methods
4. community engagement
5. monitoring and evaluation
6. politics and policy training
7. resource and funding management
8. media and digital training (emphasising social media)
9. public speaking
10. use of evidence.

Where do you usually find evidence to use in CPP work?
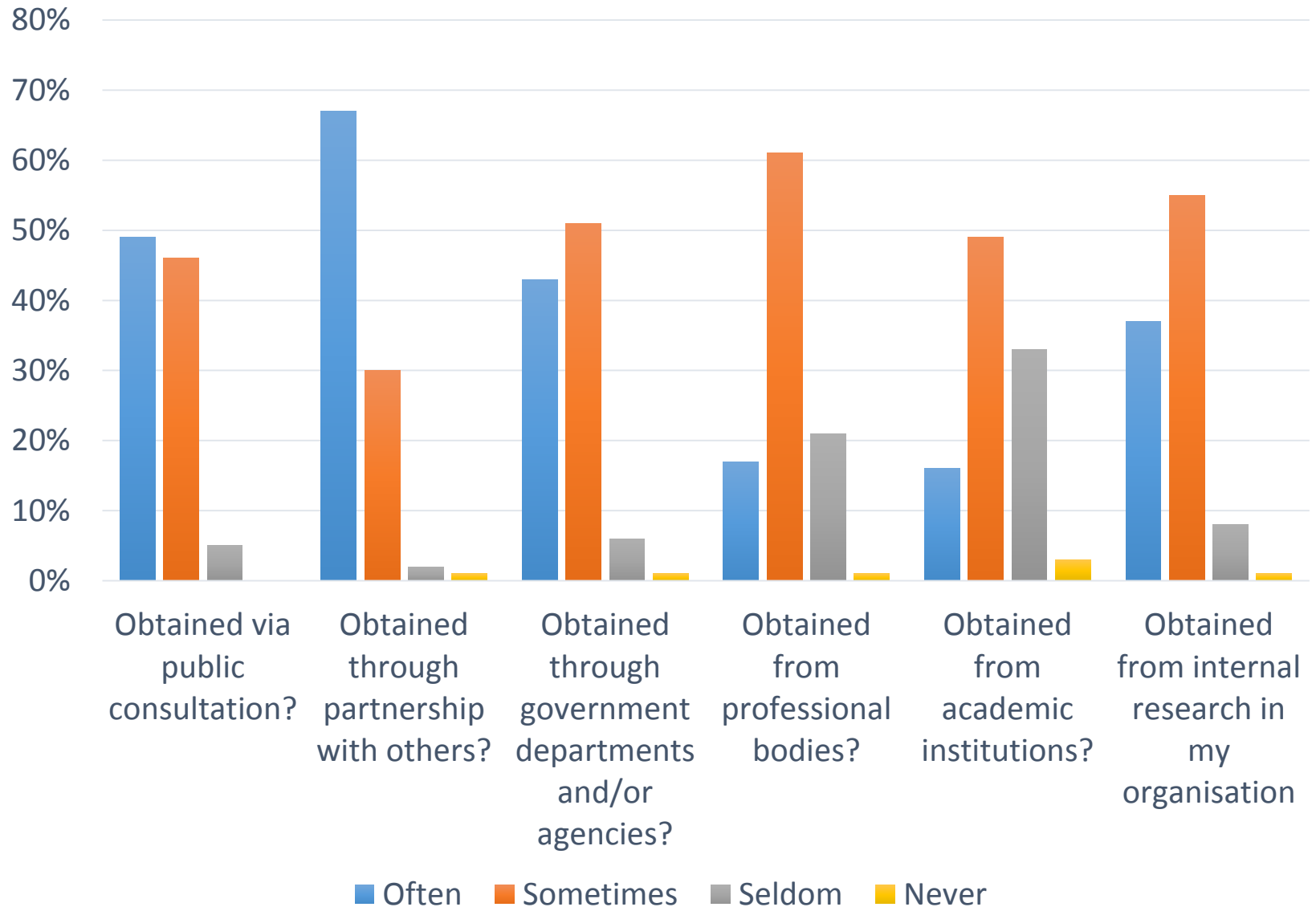
Using evidence in CPPs

- only **33%** indicated that their CPP makes **full use of partners' data sources and expertise in data analysis**
    - This raises questions about the level of confidence in sharing evidence amongst CP partners

- **strong focus (70%) on using evidence to assess outcomes**, particularly regarding inequalities

- focus (55%) on using evidence to assess value for money and achieve SOA outcomes

- 50% reported their CPP team has expertise in evaluation

- **88% agreed that CP could be improved by better use of evidence and evaluation**

Which of the following challenges does the CPP face in the use of evidence and research in general? Please tick all that apply
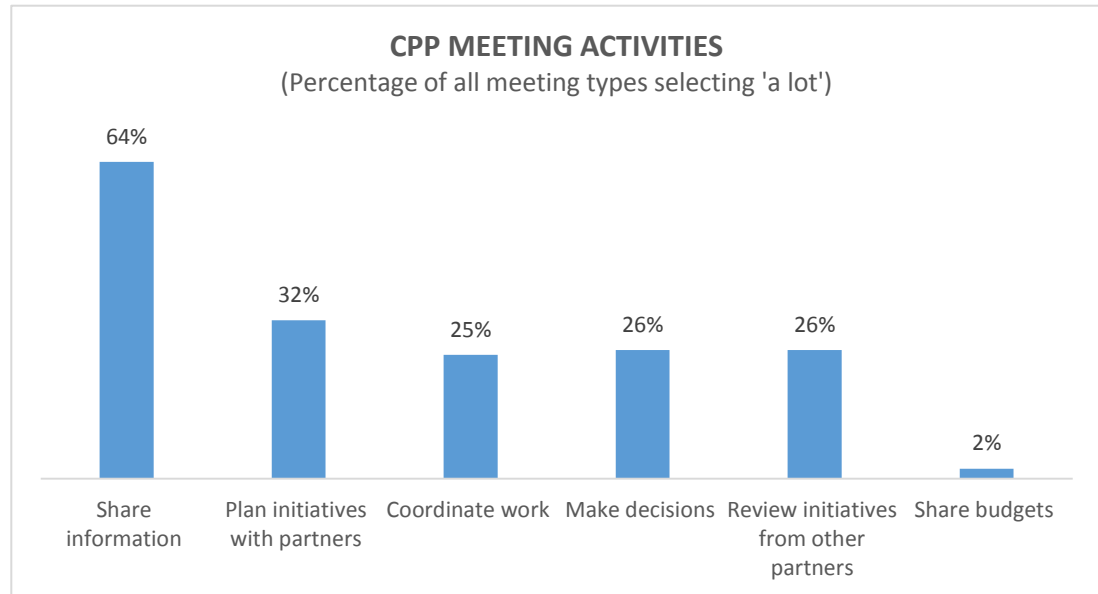
We do not have enough **capacity / resource to undertake** our own research	61%
We do not have enough **capacity / resource to commission** research from others	44%
Elected members do not prioritise using evidence and research to inform policy- and decision-making	36%
Officers do not prioritise using evidence and research to inform policy- and decision-making	24%
Partners do not prioritise using evidence and research to inform policy- and decision-making	17%
We cannot identify partners who would be willing to work together to build an evidence and research base	9%

Which of the following challenges does the CPP face in the use of statistical data?

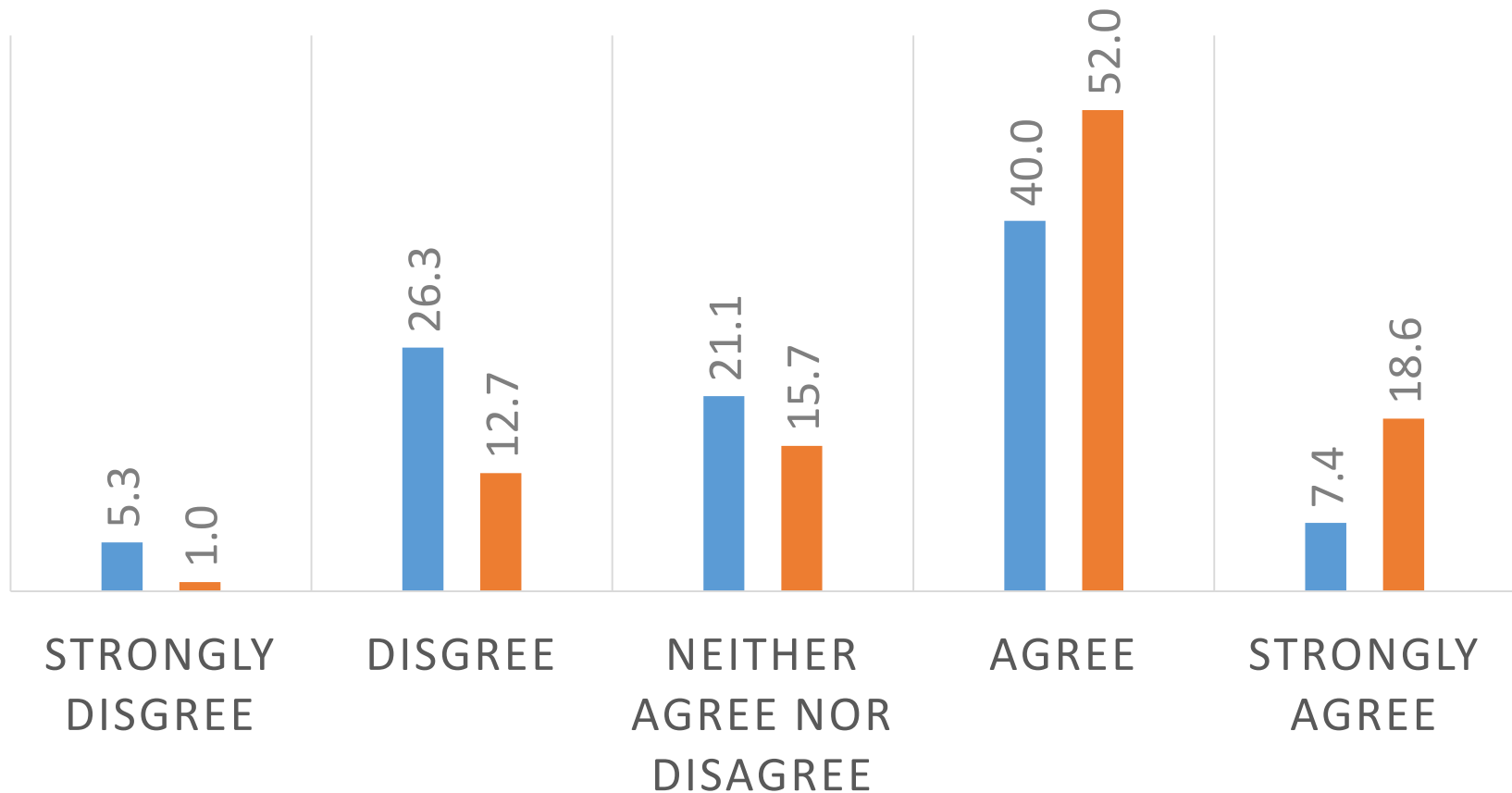|	
We do not have the **capacity/resource to undertake** our own data analysis	43%
We can rarely find **data that is at the appropriate spatial scale**	43%
We can rarely find evidence and research that we think is applicable in our circumstances	22%
We can rarely find data that is applicable to the questions we are seeking to answer	19%

Understanding how CPPs work

- **CPP meetings**, at all levels, are spaces for
  - sharing information, and to some extent coordinate and plan together;
  - to a lesser extent, collaborative decision-making (i.e. local forums and area partnerships) and review of each other's initiatives.
  - They are not reported as spaces where partnership working entails sharing budgets

CPP MEETING ACTIVITIES
(Percentage of all meeting types selecting 'a lot')

Share information	64%
Plan initiatives with partners	32%
Coordinate work	25%
Make decisions	26%
Review initiatives from other partners	26%
Share budgets	2%

- **External inclusion**
  - diversity at the board: strong public and third sector presence and weaker community representation
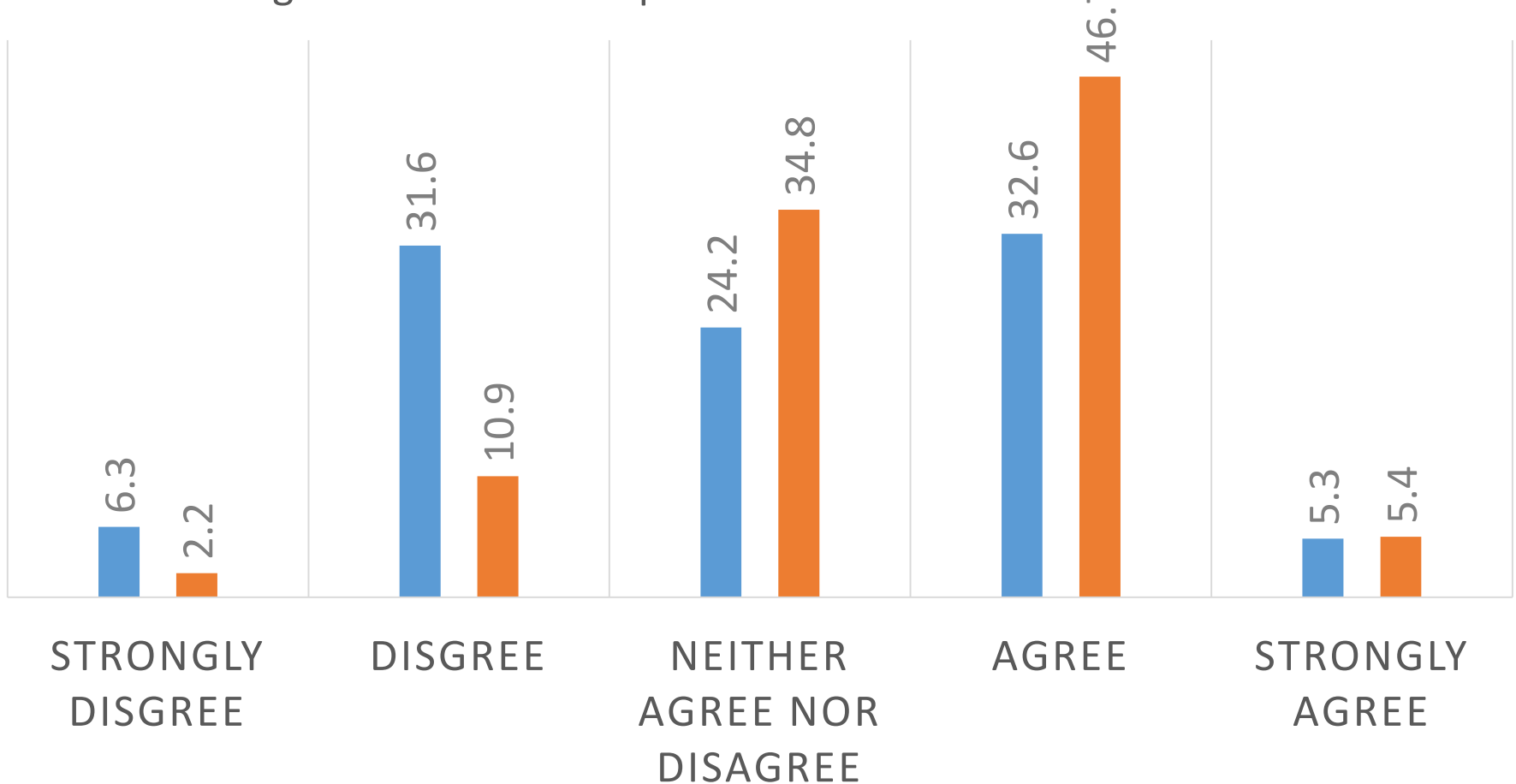 - 50% said that their CP board features community representation

Internal inclusion

- ■ The different partners at the Board all have an equal opportunity to influence the Board's decisions
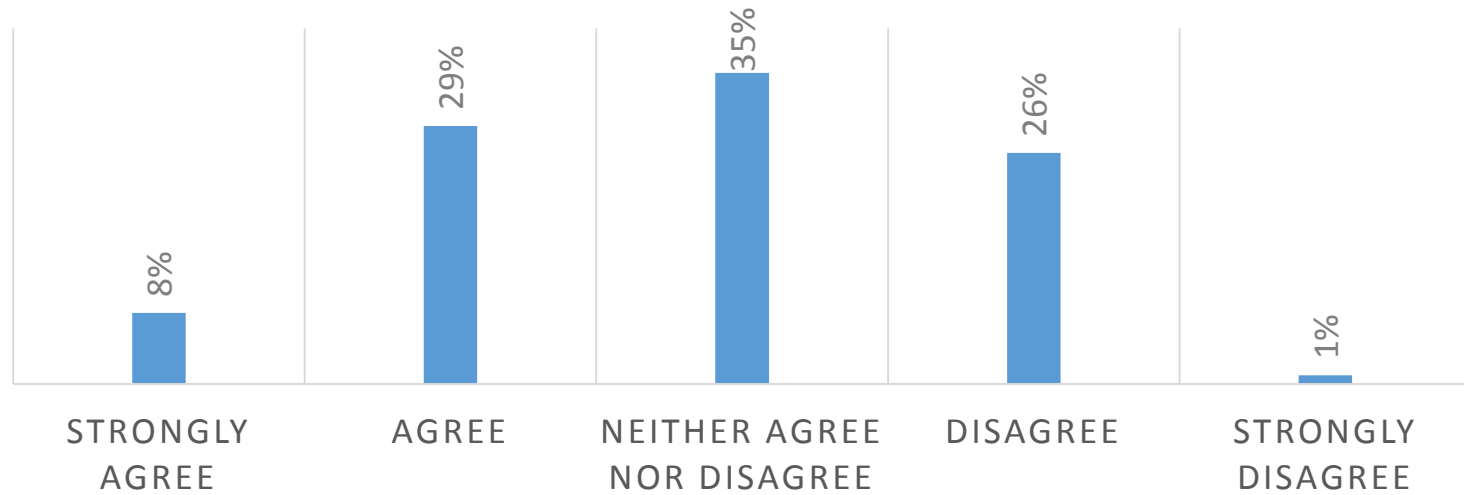- ■ The third sector is treated as an equal partner

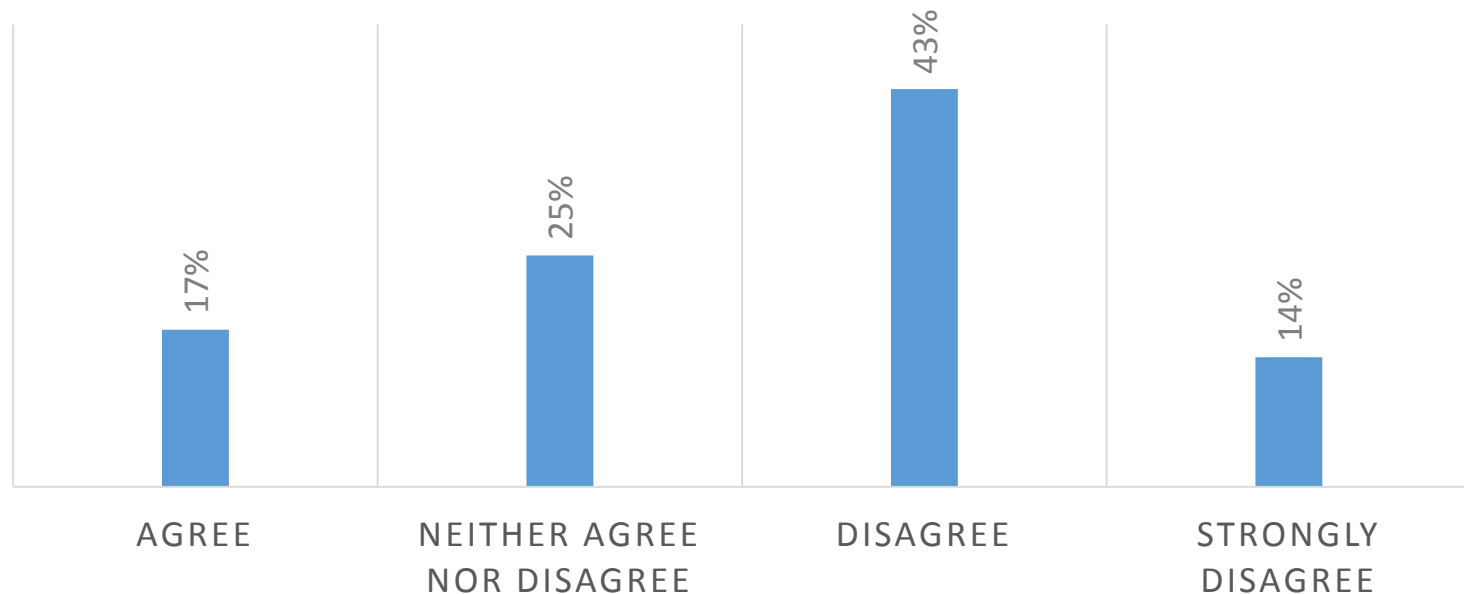|	STRONGLY DISGREE	DISGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Blue	5.3	26.3	21.1	40.0	7.4
Orange	1.0	12.7	15.7	52.0	18.6

Deliberative quality

■ The Board is a place where policies and decisions are properly scrutinized

■ Disagreement between partners is unusual at Board discussions

	STRONGLY DISGREE	DISGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
The Board is a place where policies and decisions are properly scrutinized	6.3	31.6	24.2	32.6	5.3
Disagreement between partners is unusual at Board discussions	2.2	10.9	34.8	46.1	5.4

Unproductive relationships between partners often get in the way of achieving more

8%	29%	35%	26%	1%
STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

The SOA is the key framework that guides the work of all the partners

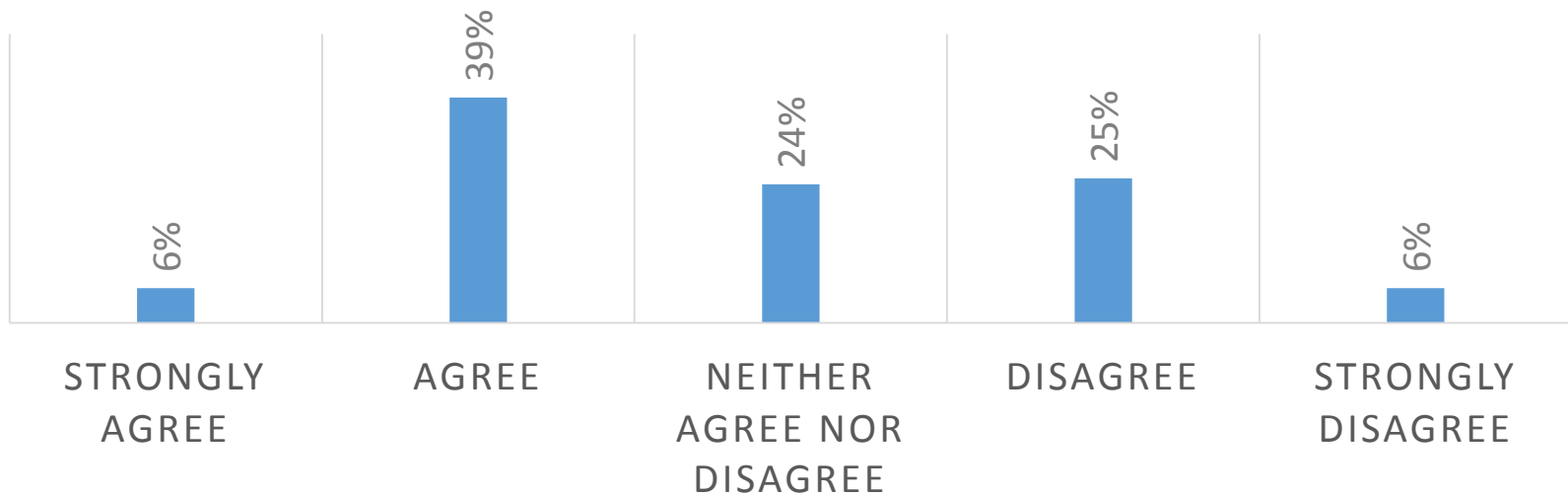|			
17%	25%	43%	14%
AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE

added value / impact of CPPs

- **most respondents listed specific projects** addressing a range of issues including

  – safety, care for children and the elderly, support for refugees, drugs and alcohol, employment, tackling poverty, responding to the effects of budget cuts, participatory budgeting, and sharing resources

- CPOs are **sceptical about the extent to which some CP partners see the value** of partnership work

- CPPs sometimes seen as **'secondary arenas' for policy and decision-making**, with core business happening elsewhere

  – CPPs function more as spaces for sharing information and planning and coordinating initiatives, than as sites for co-production and decision-making.

Community engagement is a key part of how CPPs work

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
4%	23%	11%	44%	17%
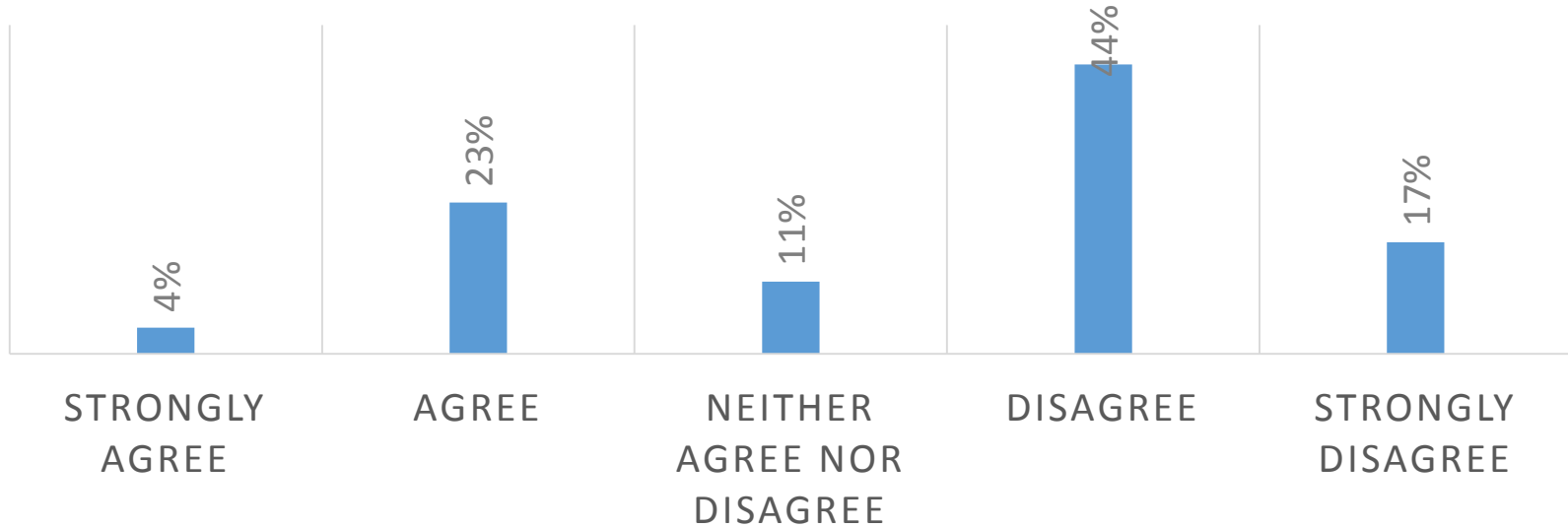
Priorities from local partnerships & forums feed clearly into the work of CPP board

STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
6%	39%	24%	25%	6%

Types of community engagement

- Ranking of **types of processes:**
  - Task groups/working groups (79%)
  - Targeted workshops (78%)
  - Public meetings (65%)
  - Participatory budgeting (55%)
  - Community forums (45%)
  - Community activities (37%)
  - Citizen panels/juries (27%)
  - Community galas and festivals (16%)
- **Toolbox** of CPOs active in organising community engagement is wide-ranging
  - potential to reach a broad cross-section of the local population
  - democratic innovations remain somewhat peripheral to CPPs
- **Overreliance on intermediaries?**
  - CPPs should include opportunities for direct participation by citizens who do not see themselves represented by existing intermediaries

Challenges of community engagement in CPPs

- **lack of resources and capacity in CP teams**
  - given that in policy and legislation community engagement is seen as core CP business, it is important that this can be supported by properly resourced teams of participation professionals within the ranks of the CPP

- **public fatigue** regarding the sheer quantity of inconsequential consultations taking place

- **quality of the engagement process**, highlighting CPOs' aspiration of more meaningful and inclusive forms of participation

Community Empowerment Act: 72% agree with its potential to improve CP; but there are concerns:

  - resources

  - level of cooperation between CP partners

  - capacity of communities to engage

  - may benefit communities who are already better off, and therefore further increase inequalities

Our Recommendations

(please see full explanation in the report)

Developing resources and evidence to support the work of CPPs

- **Recommendation 1.** It would be valuable to develop and maintain a national census of all CPOs (managers and officers, both local and strategic levels), particularly if their views are to be gathered periodically to support public service reform at the frontline.

- **Recommendation 2.** Future research must assess the impact of the Community Empowerment Act on transforming CPPs into spaces for participatory governance – i.e. governance through partnership across sectors and organisations, underpinned by meaningful and consequential participation by citizens and communities of place, practice and interest.

Staff development and support

- **Recommendation 3**. There should be further support for capacity-building and skills development in CP teams, in particular analytical training, to make effective use of evidence from a range of sources. Other skills in high demand amongst CPOs relate to leadership and facilitation. There is therefore scope for a national programme to support professional development and peer learning.

- **Recommendation 4**. The Community Planning Network may consider the scope for developing a stronger sense of shared professional identity across the country, with more training opportunities as well as networking spaces for CPOs to gather and share experiences, challenges and strategies.

*Note on terminology: What do we mean by *deliberation*?

- Deliberation is a form of communication that can support robust decision-making and governance
- Assessing CPPs according to **deliberative standards** can ensure that priorities and services are developed on the basis of:
  - critical engagement with the best available evidence
  - inclusion of diverse perspectives that can shed light on the issue at hand
  - respectful dialogue that enables working through differences and disagreements, including productive exchanges of reasons, emotions and values
  - and conclusions/recommendations/decisions that reflect informed and considered judgement.

Improving deliberative quality in CPPs

- **Recommendation 5.** CPPs should consider developing a framework to improve the sharing and using of evidence between CP partners in order to make the most of existing capacity across organisations and sectors.

- **Recommendation 6**. CPP boards should investigate how board members see their role and capacity to participate, challenge and influence decisions and, if appropriate, revise working arrangements to enable productive scrutiny and shared decision-making.

- **Recommendation 7.** CP partners should clarify the scope for shared decision-making at their CPP in order to increase transparency about what issues and priorities are within, or beyond, their shared remit. The implementation of Local Outcome Improvement Plans and Locality Plans is an opportunity to clarify how, and to what extent, power is being shared and services are being co-produced.

- **Recommendation 8.** CPPs should examine the extent to which they constitute effective 'deliberative systems' where different meetings and forums, from the local to the strategic, are coherently linked and feature high quality deliberation throughout.

Participation and engagement

- **Recommendation 9**. The role of community councils in CPPs, and more broadly in local democracy, should be a central consideration in the forthcoming Local Governance Review.

- **Recommendation 10.** The monitoring of the new LOIPs and Locality Plans should pay particular attention to the level and quality of community engagement in deciding CPP priorities and developing policies and services.

- **Recommendation 11.** Community participation in CPPs should be more coherently and transparently linked to decision-making, regardless of the type of process and level of power-sharing at stake (e.g. consultation, co-production, delegation).

- **Recommendation 12.** Improving the level and quality of public participation in CP requires building capacity to carry out this work, and thus CPPs should review whether engagement teams are adequately resourced and supported to fulfil the expectations of their communities and the Community Empowerment Act.

Impact on communities and inequalities

- **Recommendation 13.** Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Community Empowerment Act should pay close attention to the extent to which it contributes to reduce, increase or reproduce existing inequalities at local level and across Scotland.

- **Recommendation 14.** The added value of CPPs needs to be better understood and communicated within CPPs, across local government and communities, and at national level – for example, by reporting more systematically the collaborative advantages gained through partnership work, as well as specific outcomes for a range of communities of place, practice and interest.

Thank you!

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