

# Business Support Services Local Market Survey Topline Results

The survey was emailed to various organisations in the three districts on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

The types of organisations that were forwarded a questionnaire included non-County Council controlled educational establishments, housing associations, town councils and large parish councils. 65 were identified across the three council areas. In addition, SDC were able to forward details, via the Voluntary Action Stratford-upon-Avon (VASA) email newsletter, which went to 480 voluntary groups.

On the day of the closing date (7<sup>th</sup> November) a reminder email was sent out giving a deadline extension of one week. Further to this on 14<sup>th</sup> November and 17<sup>th</sup> November those not responding were contacted by telephone.

23 completed questionnaires were received. Three other organisations responded but did not want to complete the survey.

## Part 1: About You

**Name of your organisation** - 22 of the 23 respondents provided a name

**Type of work you do (for example parish council, education provider)**

22 of the 23 respondents provided a response

- Advice and information provider
- Advice services, voluntary sector
- Art Gallery
- Charity
- Charity managing village assets and residents association
- Community Project Manager
- Education provider
- Housing
- Mental health support
- Parish Council
- Parish Council
- Parish Council
- Parish Council
- Provision of county wide support to Young Carers aged 6- 25
- Run a weekly coffee morning in the village and occasional outings
- Short Breaks Disabled children, young people and adults
- Social Enterprise Support
- Sports Club
- Town Council
- Town Council
- Town Council
- Town Council

**Size of organisation (approximate number of people you employ)**

22 of the 23 respondents provided a response – these are not grouped together as this shows the breadth of response

- |             |                |        |
|-------------|----------------|--------|
| • Voluntary | • 6            | • 20   |
| • None      | • 10           | • 20   |
| • 3         | • 12           | • 65   |
| • 3         | • 13           | • 70   |
| • 3         | • 14           | • 160  |
| • 4         | • 15           | • 1200 |
| • 5         | • 3 & 13 Cllrs |        |
| • 6         | • 20           |        |

Q1	<b>Business support services your organisation currently uses.</b>			
		Yes, we have an in-house team/service	Yes, we buy this service in when we need it	No, we don't need this service
	Human Resources	3 (16%)	11 (58%)	5 (26%)
	Organisational Development and Training	5 (28%)	10 (56%)	3 (17%)
	Payroll	10 (45%)	8 (36%)	4 (18%)
	Accountancy / Financial Services	9 (41%)	10 (45%)	3 (14%)
	Legal Services	5 (24%)	14 (67%)	2 (10%)
	Market Research / Customer Surveys	7 (39%)	7 (39%)	4 (22%)
	ICT	7 (33%)	11 (52%)	3 (14%)
	Print and Design	6 (29%)	13 (62%)	2 (10%)

## **Part 2: Access to Business Support Services**

Q2	<b>Accountancy and Financial Services - these types of services include accountancy, financial strategy, budget monitoring, preparation of business cases and options appraisals for projects.</b>		
		Agree	Disagree
	It is easy to access accountancy services locally that provide what we want	17 (89%)	2 (11%)
	If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	12 (63%)	7 (37%)
	We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	6 (30%)	14 (70%)
	We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	5 (29%)	12 (71%)

Q3	<b>Payroll Services - running payroll, production of payroll reports and distribution of payslips.</b>		
		Agree	Disagree
	It is easy to access payroll services locally that provide what we want	16 (94%)	1 (6%)
	If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	9 (47%)	10 (53%)
	We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	8 (47%)	9 (53%)
	We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	6 (33%)	12 (67%)

Q4	<b>Human Resources and Organisational Development Services - including employment law advice, managing grievances, disciplinary hearings, employee relations, recruitment, retention and drafting policy. Organisational development includes training, support to employees (for example coaching) and managing organisational change.</b>		
		Agree	Disagree
	It is easy to access human resources locally that provide what we want	15 (83%)	3 (17%)
	It is easy to access organisational development services locally that provide what we want	12 (71%)	5 (29%)
	If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	13 (68%)	6 (32%)
	We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	6 (33%)	12 (67%)
	We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	2 (12%)	15 (88%)

Q5	<b>ICT and Web Services - including network infrastructure and desktop support, maintenance of major IT systems, setting up and hosting websites.</b>		
		Agree	Disagree
	It is easy to access ICT services locally that provide what we want	18 (95%)	1 (5%)
	It is easy to access web services locally that provide what we want	15 (83%)	3 (17%)
	If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	14 (74%)	5 (26%)
	We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	3 (18%)	14 (82%)
	We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	2 (12%)	15 (88%)

Q6	Print Services - for example regular or ad-hoc high volume printing.	Agree	Disagree
		It is easy to access print and design services locally that provide what we want	20 (100%)
If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	18 (86%)	3 (14%)	
We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	4 (22%)	14 (78%)	
We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	1 (6%)	16 (94%)	

Q7	Consultation and Research Services - including survey design and analysis, local consultations, focus groups and community engagement and research reports.	Agree	Disagree
		It is easy to access consultation and research services locally that provide what we want	11 (61%)
If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	13 (65%)	7 (35%)	
We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	3 (18%)	14 (82%)	
We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	4 (22%)	14 (78%)	

Q8	Legal Services - for example litigation, contracts, conveyancing, employment and planning law.	Agree	Disagree
		It is easy to access legal services locally that provide what we want	19 (95%)
If the Councils provided this service at a low cost we might consider using it	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	
We provide this service in-house and would not consider asking a third party to provide it for us	2 (11%)	16 (89%)	
We may consider using an external provider but not a local authority	3 (17%)	15 (83%)	

### Part 3: Your view of local authorities as service providers

Q9	If local authorities offered business support services at competitive rates would you consider using them?		
	16 (80%)	Yes	If you answered no, what are your concerns?
4 (20%)	No		
3 responses			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reliability is always an issue - when the budget cuts are made it is always the last tier of local Government office that suffer from the removal of these services which is why we either do them ourselves or rely on external sources rather than the principle councils.</li> <li>e are not a business.</li> <li>e have worked with our current providers who continue to offer services at a negotiated rate for charities.</li> </ul>			

#### **Additional Comments**

- We would be particularly interested if the local authority could provide a part time Financial Director
- In some cases it's difficult to say whether we can access all the service we need locally - of course we have external support organisations that provide specialist services or services that can be tailored to meet our specific needs. We have not used any local authority services so far - and the only area I would be concerned about would be minimising any potential conflict with the organisation having funding streams to deliver services from the local authority. I am not aware of the scope or breadth of the current services that are offered - however I would be interested in finding out - such as payroll support etc.
- We have already used the services of SDC to help us formulate and analyse a residents survey so would be very happy to use any other services, particularly IT if this available and local.
- Sorry it is not appropriate for us.
- I think this is very interesting but should say that perhaps our idea of "low cost" might be quite a bit lower than yours. We get some services subsidised by local firms who want to help us and so I suspect that we pay

relatively small amounts for some services. However we do have aspects of project work where there is a reasonable budget provided e.g. for research and for printing - so these might be of use.