

Social Enterprise Business Survey

- Two surveys were carried out in April 2015
 - Core survey by telephone of 24 enterprises with 54% response rate
 - Additional shorter email survey to 80 enterprises with 20% response rate
 - There was additional qualitative information and insight from meetings with clients however this has not been included.
- The typical range of people employed was 5 to 10 people.
- The sector was defined as profitable trading enterprises who also were making a social impact and were not for private profit.
- Covered co-operatives, companies ltd by guarantee, CICs and primarily trading charities

Future Growth

- Last year 50% reported business growth
- 91% are planning for growth in their business
 - 66% increase in people employed
 - 66% introduce a new product or service
 - 66% expect to increase profits
- Comparison in email survey:
 - 75% expected growth in turnover and employees
 - 60% expected to develop/offer new products and services

Business Concerns

- The main areas of concern in the core survey were:
 - 77% access to finance
 - 66% finding new business
 - 66% regulation and red tape
 - 41% identified cash flow as being of great concern
- In the email survey the major constraints to growth were:
 - Marketing and sales was an issue; 63% of respondents had some need and 25% described this area as a major need.
 - 57% access to finance
 - 38% people recruitment and retention
 - 31% identified premises

Business Support

- A significant 75% in the core survey had a business plan
- 80% had sought business advice in the last 12 months.
 - 84% cited a sector specific support organisation
 - 50% had referred to professional advice eg an accountant
 - Least preferred were web based, social media and government advice
- Email survey had 100% having sought advice
 - CASE was quoted by 94% of respondents
 - Also included professional services, web –based (12%) , LforB (6%) and growth accelerator (6%)

Business Gateway

- Business Gateway, general support however 50% sought reassurance the advice would “understand and share the ethos and values of the sector”
 - Speaking to an advisor on business plans and issues 67%
 - General advice on Growth – 58%
 - Developing a business plan – 58%
 - NB least interest in export, funding new premises and research and development; our interpretation is this is a mix of lack of need related to the sector or a lack of awareness support relevance & availability
- Access to support
 - 67% face to face
 - 42% workshops

Workforce Recruitment & Development

- 65% of core respondents had recruited people in the last year
- 41% of these had difficulties however no underlying cause discernible
- 81% provided skills training
- 75% provided both off and on the job training
- 75% used sector specialist support with 100% satisfaction
- Private sector providers were used for regulated training eg food hygiene
- The one key issue in self reported skills gap was for management and supervisory skills (41%)
- NB contrast with major limit growth being sales & marketing.

Conclusions

- There were similar results with the different methods
- High level of expected growth
 - People employed
 - Turnover
 - Profit
- Innovative sector
- High focus on ethos and way of doing things

Conclusions

- Value one to one support from people who understand their values
- Across sectors identity as a social enterprise was important to them.
- Low expectation to export.
- High level of innovation, not seen as an area to look for available support.
- Challenges otherwise in line with other businesses



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Thank you

Welcome Questions ?

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