

AGENDA ITEM NO. 12(A)

State of the Sector Survey 12

March 2013

Interim Results



Wales Council for Voluntary Action

March 2013

© WCVA March 2013

This survey was formerly called the Recession and Recovery Survey

Introduction

In response to the recession, WCVA initiated a series of on-line surveys of third sector organisations in Wales in February 2009. Further surveys have been conducted approximately every four months. This survey was conducted between 4 February and 11 March 2013. There have been between 434 to 750 responses (492 in this survey) to the surveys from a variety of organisations from all parts of the sector, all parts of Wales and representing both large and small organisations.

The survey findings

The surveys have provided evidence of the effect of the now double and triple dip recession and the current public sector spending cuts on the third sector in Wales. Whilst the data is not able to provide a comprehensive picture, the responses received are illustrative of the situations of many organisations in Wales.

The March 2013 survey has shown that

- The general attitude of the sector indicates more pessimism this quarter as the situation of more organisations continues to worsen: 37 per cent of organisations are feeling that their situation had deteriorated over the past three months a rise of 5 per cent from 32 per cent in October 2012 but is still much lower than the peak of 47 per cent from January 2011. The proportion of organisations reporting an improvement has remained the same as October 2012, at 18 per cent.
- The financial situation of 31 per cent of organisations that responded has worsened over the last three months. This is up three per cent from October 2012 and is still lower than the 35 per cent who reported their financial situation had worsened in June 2011.
- Looking forward, 40 per cent of organisations predict that their financial situation will get worse over the next twelve months, a rise of 3 per cent from the responses received in October 2012. Again this is still less than surveys in 2011 where between 42 and 46 per cent felt their situation would worsen.
- Since the survey began in December 2008 a minimum of 983 posts have been reported to have been made redundant in Wales. Of the 273 organisations with staff in the current survey, 38 report making 40 redundancies in the past three months.
- In this survey, a total of 72 organisations have reported 211 posts are at risk. This continues the decrease from 368 in June and 267 in October 2012.
- In the last three months, 30 per cent of volunteer involving organisations have seen a change in the number of volunteers. Looking forward, 30 per cent of organisations expect the number of volunteers to rise in the next 12 months.
- In this survey 24 per cent of organisations provided a service and of those 29 per cent (34 organisations) had seen an increase in demand during the last three months.

Conclusions

The overall outlook of the February 2013 survey reflects a trend that more organisations are feeling pessimistic and more are reporting financial difficulties as we come to the end of a financial year. The number of organisations making redundancies and the number of redundancies reported has again increased. The number of posts threatened with redundancy has decreased since October, but redundancies are affecting more

organisations. This reflects the uncertainties in future funding following changes to funding streams (particularly EU funding for employability activities and continued transference of funding from grants to contract methods).

Organisations with volunteers continue to report seeing numbers rise particularly highlighting an increase in those returning to volunteering, more women volunteers and younger people compared with those of retirement age. These trends are expected to continue.

WCVA will continue to monitor these trends twice yearly, to record the challenges, and opportunities that the Welsh Third Sector should be aware of over the remaining year.