



**VONNE**  
voluntary organisations' network north east

# North East VCSE Sector Covid-19 Impact Survey

May 2020

*"We hope all our fellow VCS colleagues come out of this pandemic safe and well and that we can all work together to build up the sector."*

Thanks to our funders:



Community  
Foundation



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Foundation

# NE VCSE Covid-19 Impact Survey

## Introduction

VONNE (Voluntary Organisations' Network North East) joined together with VCSE Local Infrastructure Organisations (LIOs) and members of the NE and Cumbria Funders Network to prepare and promote a comprehensive survey to understand the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on VCSE organisations and their beneficiaries in North East England.

The survey, which was launched on Wednesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020, was open for 12 days until it closed to responses at 9am on May 4<sup>th</sup>. Throughout this time, it was widely promoted to sector organisations across the region by VONNE, and through the websites, news bulletins and social media channels of our partnership of Local Infrastructure Organisations, funders, social investors and local authorities. The survey received 461 responses from across the region. An initial data cleanse revealed 57 responses that were either not from VCSE organisations or duplicates, which left 404 responses to analyse.

We are confident from the range of responses from different size organisations and the geographical reach of their delivery that we have achieved a representative sample of responses from across the sector. For some analysis, to extrapolate findings to a North East VCSE sector level, we used data on the sector's breakdown by income, provided by Prof. Tony Chapman of Durham University as part of the Third Sector Trends study<sup>1</sup>, due to be launched at the end of May 2020.

The data and information collected will enable VONNE and its partners to understand the impact of Covid-19, so we can effectively represent and support the sector and influence how funders, local authorities and LIOs focus their support, both now and in the future recovery period.

The findings will be shared with stakeholders including local authorities, LEPs, private sector organisations and the health system, to make the case for additional support and resources for the sector, and with national infrastructure partners including NCVO, ACEVO, NAVCA and the Charity Finance Group, to help us influence government decisions affecting the sector.

In addition to the regional analysis provided in this report, each LIO and local authority has been provided with the data and analysis of responses for their locality, and we've produced overviews relating to the Local Enterprise Partnership geographies of North East (Northumberland, Tyne & Wear and Durham)m and Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton). Funders or statutory organisations interested in these reports or sets of data for different parts of the region can request them by emailing [vonne@vonne.org.uk](mailto:vonne@vonne.org.uk).

We would like to share our thanks to all the organisations that took the time to respond to this survey, and to our colleagues in LIOs, local authorities, funders, social investors and others who promoted the survey and encouraged organisations to respond. Thanks also to Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland, and to County Durham Community Foundation, both of which provided us with funding which has enabled this work; our thanks also to Millfield House Foundation, which provides core funding towards our work. Finally, thanks to Prof. Tony Chapman of Durham University for sharing the data from the 2020 Third Sector Trends study to help us extrapolate our findings to provide a regional picture.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/knowledge-and-leadership/third-sector-trends-research/>

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## 1. Key findings

- A third of VCSE organisations surveyed expect to lose more than 50 per cent of their income in the quarter April to June 2020, with small/medium organisations (those with turnover less than £500k) expecting the biggest income reductions. Aggregating this to a sector level across the North East, organisations could lose between £75m and £223m of income between April and June 2020.
- The VCSE sector's capacity is severely limited at the current time, with 53 per cent of the workforce not operational and 75 per cent of volunteers unable to support their organisations. Reduced capacity is likely to continue, with organisations expecting an average drop in staffing capacity of a third because of reduced income levels.
- Almost 400k individuals are no longer receiving, or are receiving a significantly reduced service from the 269 VCSE organisations that support them. If this is aggregated against the 7,200 VCSE organisations across the North East (according to scale) the total figure is likely to be staggering.
- The groups with the highest levels of currently unmet need are children and young people, older people, and people with disabilities, including learning disabilities. These are also the groups most likely to be unable to access services either online or by telephone.
- Only a third of organisations have successfully secured Covid-19 related funding. There is a clear need for unrestricted core funding alongside Covid-19 related and other project funding, to support the sector's recovery and longer-term sustainability.
- 40 per cent of organisations are at risk in the shorter-term, as they hold no reserves or only enough to cover three months' core costs. Small/medium sized organisations are most at risk due to them losing income while holding fewer reserves. Despite this, only 13 per cent of respondents consider it likely or very likely that their organisation will close as a result of Covid-19.
- 65 per cent of those surveyed rate the response by, and flexibility shown by funders, to be good or very good. Respondents request that funders continue to streamline and simplify application processes, and to be flexible, responsive and long term in their thinking.
- The sector needs clarity and practical advice in the short, medium and longer term across a number of key areas, and this support must be flexible, responsive and tailored to recognise the range of impacting factors.
- The survey indicates high levels of collaboration and partnership working with local authorities and other organisations, both to deliver services and to address demand for support directly related to Covid-19. A number of organisations among the 73 per cent that identified some positive impacts spoke of a desire to continue to collaborative and work in partnership over the longer term.

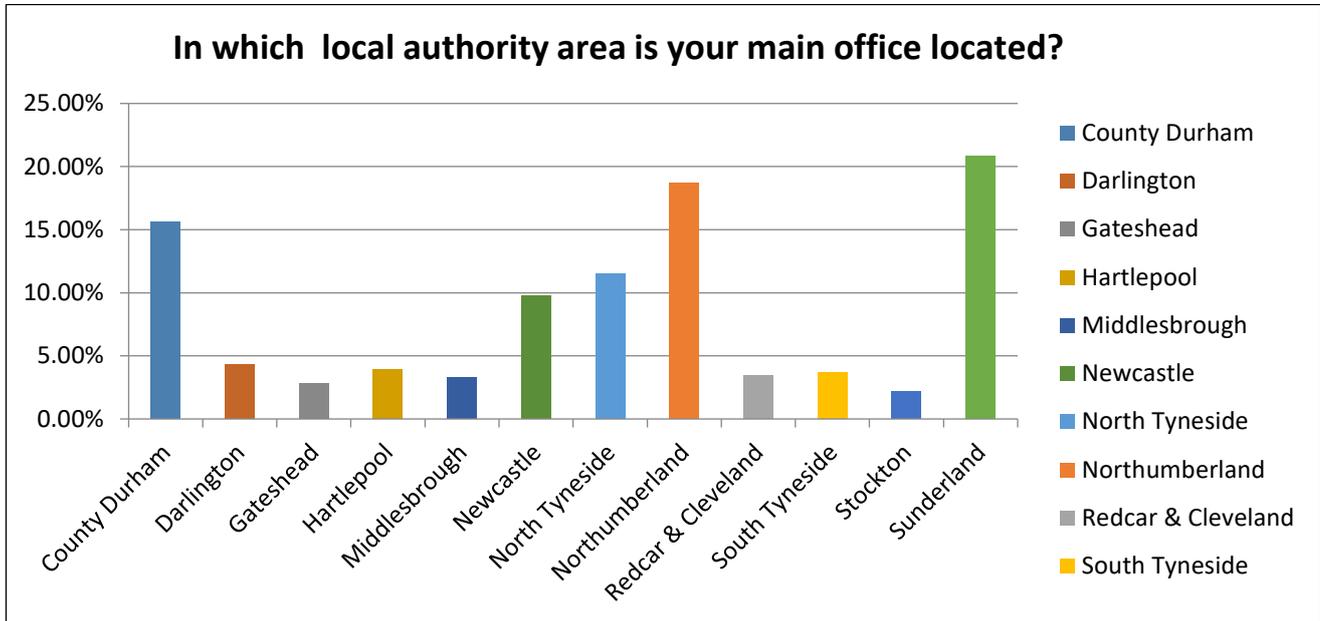
## 2. Key recommendations

- The sector is likely to feel the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the associated impact of lockdown and social distancing measures for a long time. This is not only due to the reduction in organisational capacity and income across the sector, but also the increased demand for services created both directly and indirectly due to the societal impact on health and wellbeing, poverty and debt, and levels of unemployment. Therefore, long-term thinking is required both in planning for the sector, and responding with support for the sector. Uncertainty and rapid change are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. Organisations must ensure they are geared up to be able to respond and flex to emerging needs. Funders, commissioners and support agencies must match this flexibility in terms of the support they can offer.
- As well as a multitude of challenges, many opportunities have emerged from the Covid-19 crisis, including more innovative and digital ways of working, new collaborations and partnerships, and an openness and willingness to respond effectively. It's important the sector is encouraged and supported to reflect and build upon this learning moving forward.
- The swift reconfiguration of services and adoption of digital technology by the sector is to be applauded, but it should be recognised that not all organisations, VCSE staff and volunteer teams have had the capacity, confidence or access to kit or software to be able to respond in this way, and continued support will be required for them to do so. Many organisations have identified the need to tackle digital exclusion among beneficiaries, stating it is often the individuals most likely to be at high risk of Covid-19, or that are furthest from accessing services, impacted most by this. We must develop urgent solutions to this or the digital and inequality divide will widen.
- We're already seeing a greater capacity for trust and relationship-based funding and commissioning, and a greater willingness among funders and commissioners to work alongside local authorities, LIOs and VCSE providers collaboratively, aligning efforts to find solutions to address emerging needs.
- As with previous emergency situations and economic downturns, we've already seen the unequal impacts of Covid-19 on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society, and this is likely to continue. Amplifying the voices of beneficiaries around the injustices they face must be at the heart of the sector's role moving forward. We must influence wider systemic changes, and challenge the inadequate policies and practices upon which a light has been shone by Covid-19, and strive together to 'Build Back Better'. This is a once-in-a-generation crisis, but also a once-in-a-generation opportunity to rebuild.
- Statutory agencies including the integrated care system, local authorities, combined authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships must ensure the VCSE sector has a 'seat at the table' to engage with, and input into, restart and recovery plans. We must ensure the sector's needs are considered, and be given the chance to share our knowledge on emerging needs in communities. The sector has a key role to play, in partnership with statutory agencies, to develop collaborative solutions within recovery plans.

## Survey findings and analysis

### 3. Geographical coverage

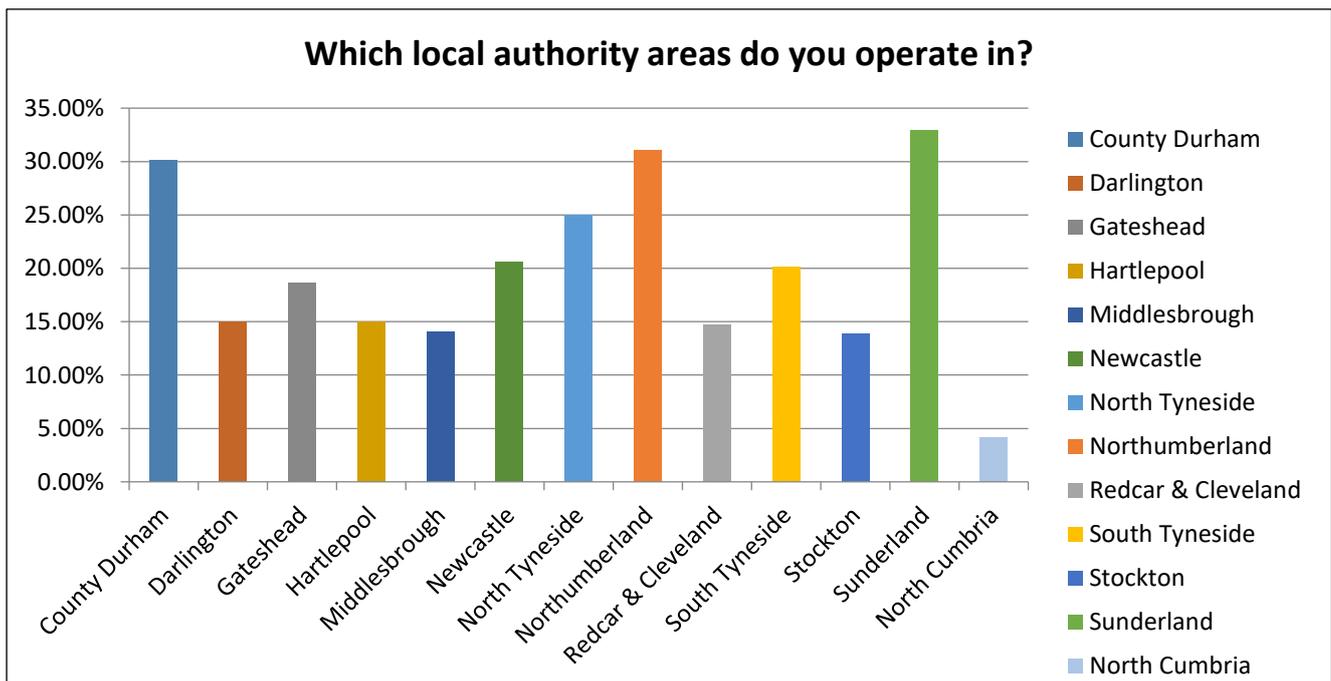
#### 3a. The local authority area of the organisations' main office:



Survey responses show a good spread across the NE geography, but noticeably fewer responses from Tees Valley-based organisations, and from South Tyneside and Gateshead.

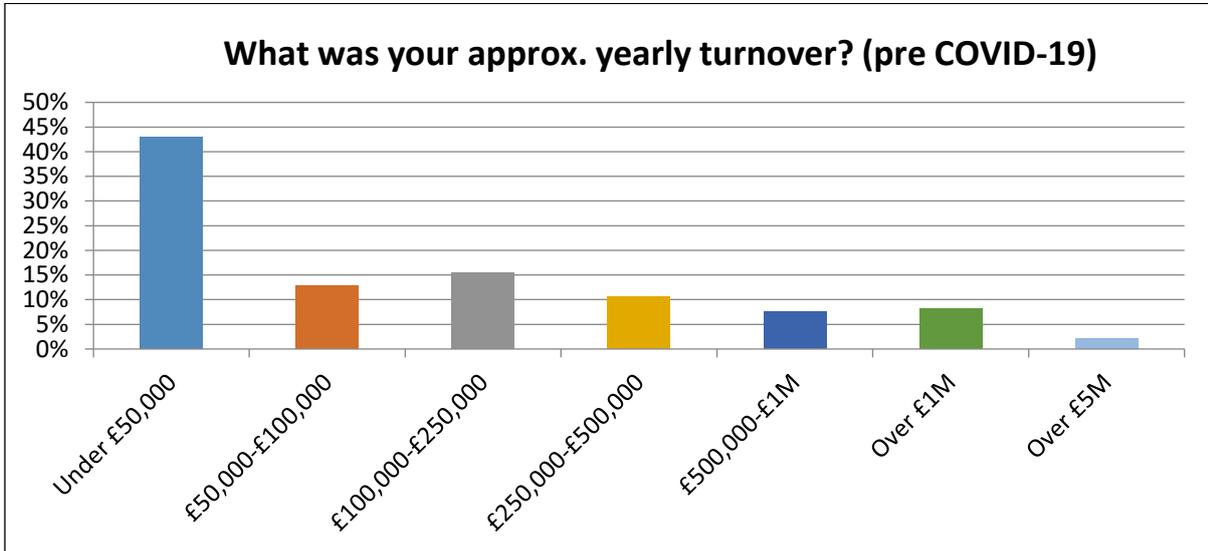
#### 3b. Local authority areas of operation

When looking at local authority areas covered by respondents in the delivery of their work, the geographical spread is more even across the region; we can therefore be confident the survey is broadly representative of all geographies across the NE region. We recognise we had some responses from organisations that also deliver in North Cumbria, and a multi-agency Covid-19 impact survey of the VCSE sector in that area has also taken place.



## 4. Finance and funding

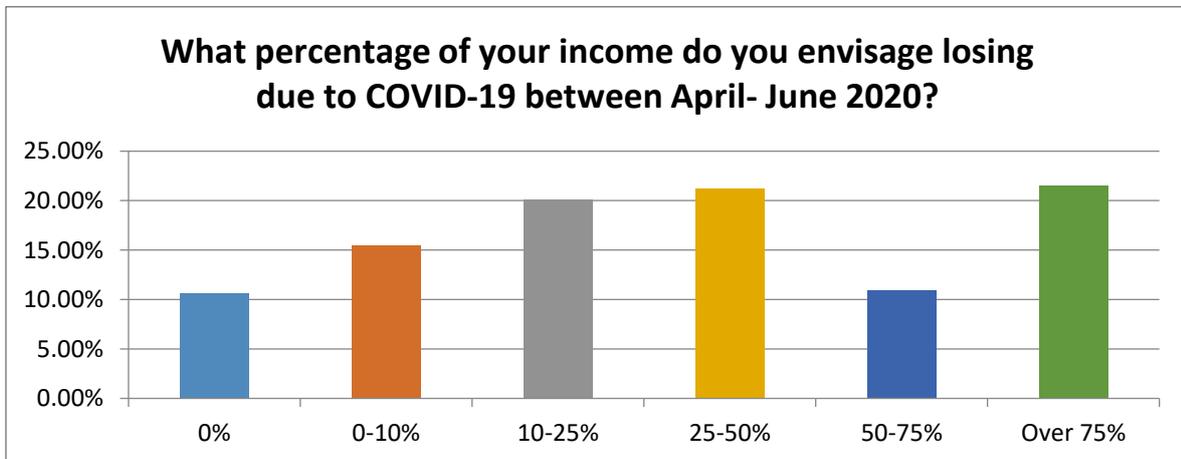
### 4.1 Income level of organisation



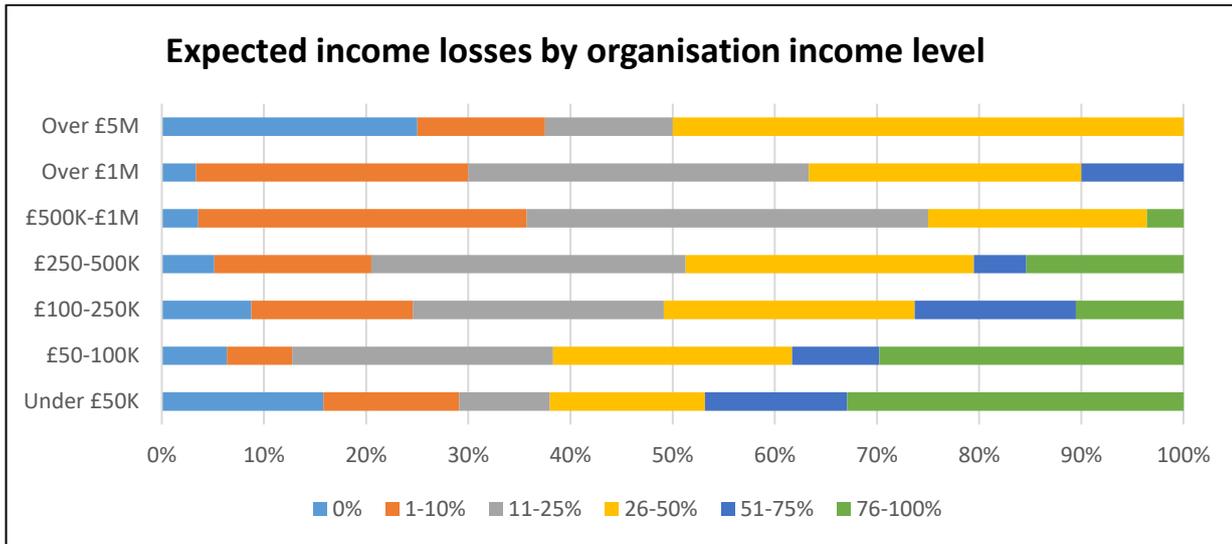
Consistent with other data on the make-up of the VCSE sector in the North East, 43 per cent of respondents would be classed as micro, with an income of less than £50k per year, and 13 per cent, with an income of between £50-£100k, would be classed as small. 35 per cent of organisations with a turnover of between £100k and £1 million would be classed as medium sized, and 10 per cent, with a turnover of over £1 million, as large or extra-large (over £5 million) organisations.

### 4.2 Impact on income

Responses to the question, 'What proportion of your income do you envisage losing between April and June 2020 due to Covid-19?' show that 31 per cent of organisations expect a very significant impact, with 22 per cent expecting a loss of more than 75 per cent, and 11 per cent anticipating a loss of between 50 per cent and 75 per cent. A further 41 per cent of respondents expect to lose between 10 per cent and 50 per cent, while just over a quarter expect a small reduction in income of 10 per cent or less.



Further analysis shows that different scales of organisation by annual income are expecting different levels of impact on their income.

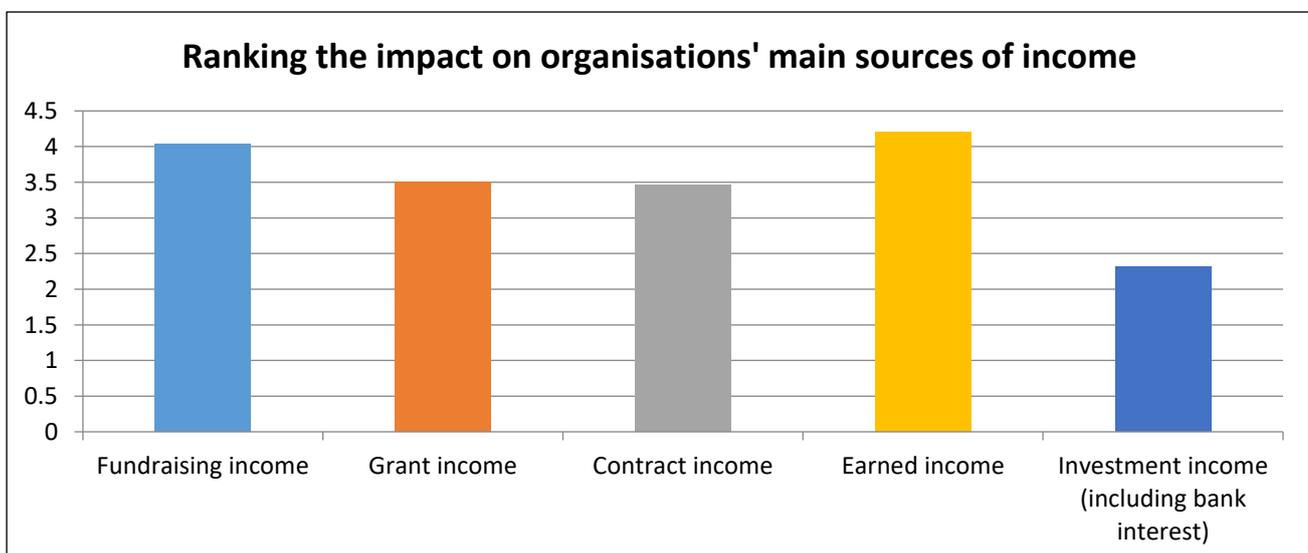


Generally, larger organisations are expecting less of an impact on their income levels than smaller organisations, with 25 per cent of those with a turnover of £5 million+ expecting no impact, compared to between three per cent and nine per cent of organisations with a turnover between £50k to £1 million.

As staff tend to account for a significant proportion of organisational costs, especially for organisations with an income of more than £100k, those organisations that have furloughed staff (see section 7.2) may feel that some lost income will be replaced by contributions from the government’s Job Retention Scheme. The smallest organisations, those with an income under £50k, show a more extreme spectrum of impact, with 16 per cent expecting no drop in income, but a third expecting a drop of more than 75 per cent. This is likely because the smallest organisations rely more heavily on fundraising income.

If we map the expected income loss shown here against the latest Third Sector Trends data on the number of VCSE organisations in the North East (7,200) at each income range, we can expect the income losses between April and June 2020 to be in the range of **£75m to £225m**.

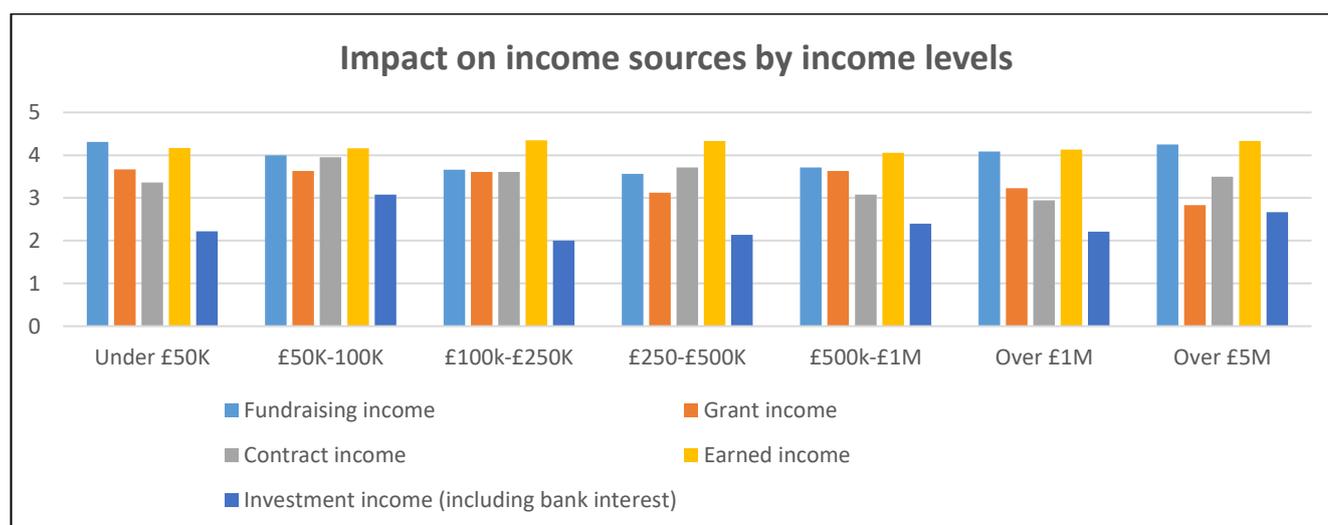
### 4.3 Impact on income sources



Survey respondents indicated the Covid-19 situation was having the most impact on earned and fundraising income, and that grants and contract income are moderately affected. Investment income was considered to have been impacted upon the least.

Earned income, through charity shops and the selling of services and products, has been squeezed by social distancing measures and the reduced demand for products, and fundraising income by the inability of supporters to take part in face-to-face fundraising activities and events, as well as the fact that many individuals and companies are instead choosing to support Covid-19-related campaigns and initiatives, in response to the pandemic emergency.

It is interesting to look at the impact on different income sources by organisational scale:



There isn't a huge variance in terms of impact on different income sources by organisational scale, with earned income and fundraising income most affected across the majority of organisations. Impact on contracted income is greater in mid-sized organisations with an income between £50k and £500k.

#### 4.4 Covid-19 related funding

56 per cent of survey respondents have applied for Covid-19-specific funding and of them, 60 per cent were successful. Of the 44 per cent of organisations that haven't applied for Covid-19 funding, the following reasons were stated:

Don't meet the criteria of funding opportunities available	37%
Need funding for ongoing core costs not Covid-19 related activity	36%
Don't need funding at the moment	27%
Not aware of any opportunities	12%
Lack of staff capacity	10%

73 per cent haven't applied as the Covid-19 funding opportunities don't match their funding requirements, while just under a third don't require funding, and smaller percentages due to lack of awareness or reduced staff capacity.

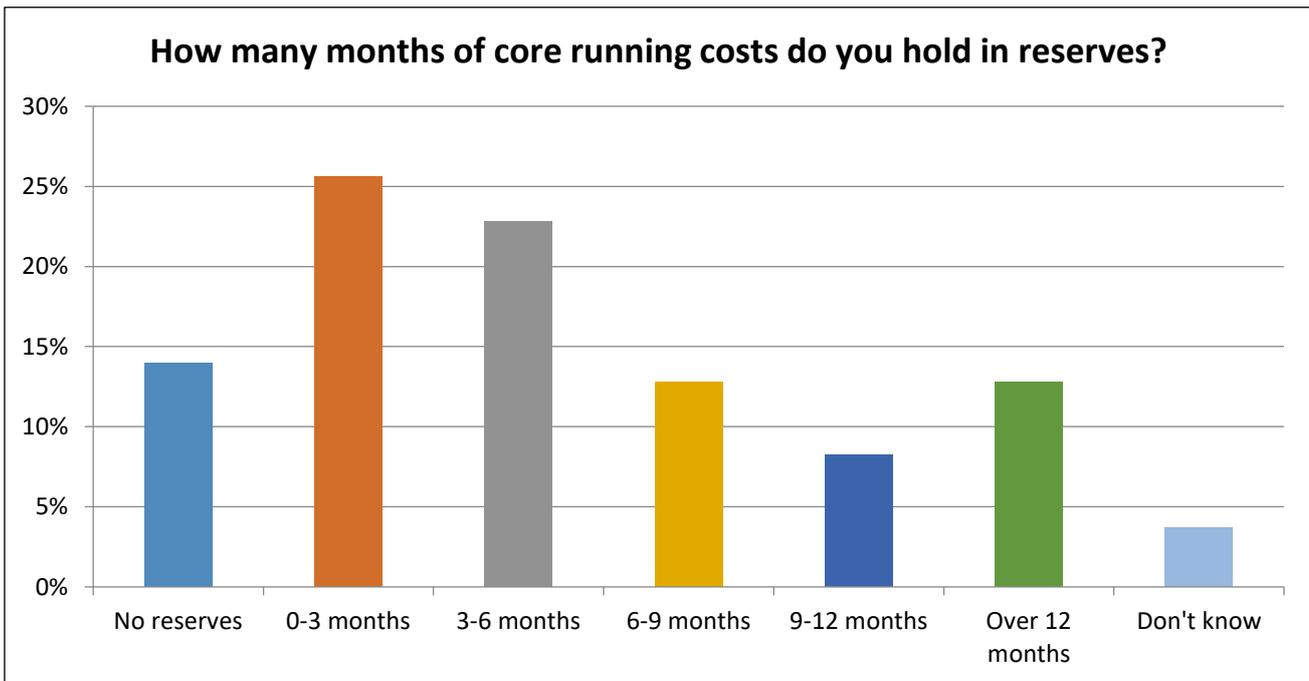
VONNE has responded directly to this issue by temporarily making Membership+ supporter benefits open to all. For example, our Funding Information North East (FINE) bulletin is currently being sent to subscribers of all VONNE e-bulletins, and we've also updated our online Funding Directory ([vonne.org.uk/fine-directory](https://vonne.org.uk/fine-directory)), usually only accessible to Silver and Gold Membership+ supporters, to include Covid-19 funding opportunities, and enabled functionality to search for Covid-19 specific grants.

Funders should be aware of the high percentage of organisations that don't meet Covid-19 funding opportunity criteria and/or require funding for ongoing core costs. As we move into the recovery phase following lockdown, these organisations are more likely to be negatively impacted by being unable to apply for additional Covid-19 funding over the last couple of months.

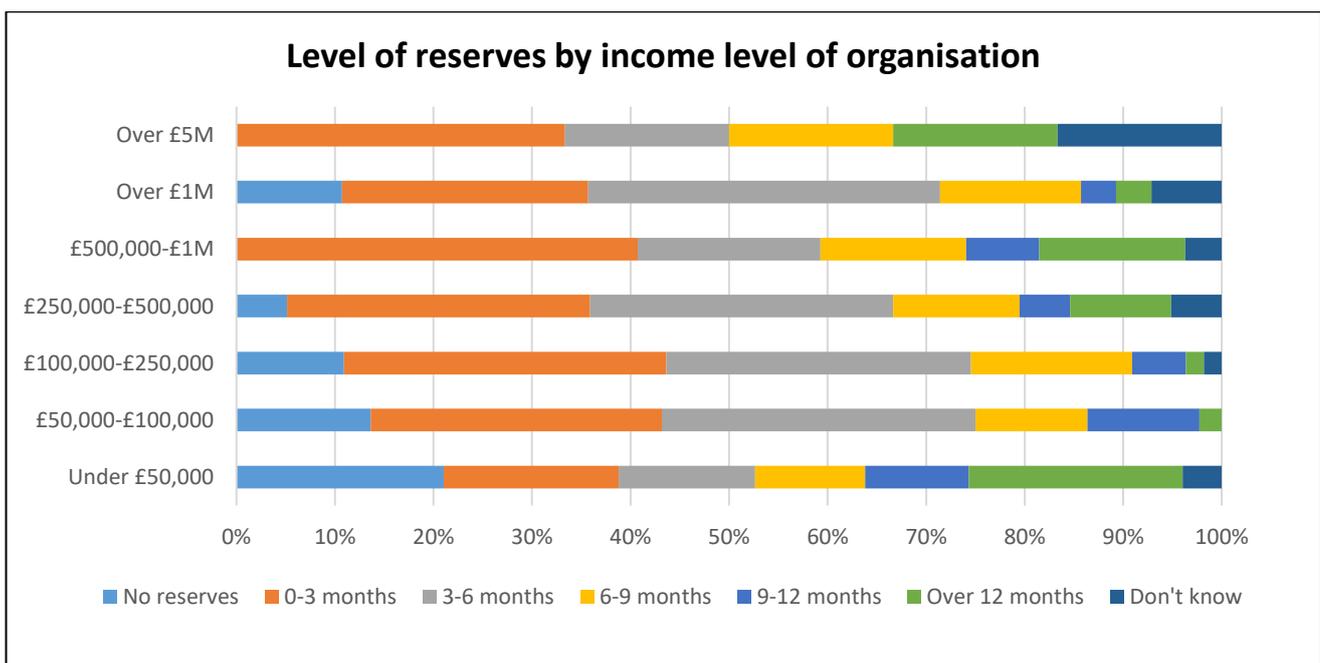
## 5. Sustainability and governance

### 5.1 Reserves position

The ability of VCSE organisations to sustain activities when faced with a significant reduction in core income is in part indicated by the level of reserves they hold to enable them to continue to cover running costs. 40 per cent of organisations stated they either had no reserves, or only enough to cover three months of core costs. If the financial impact of Covid-19 lasts beyond three months, this proportion of the sector may be at risk of closure.



It is interesting to look at the reserves position of organisations in relation to their scale by annual income.

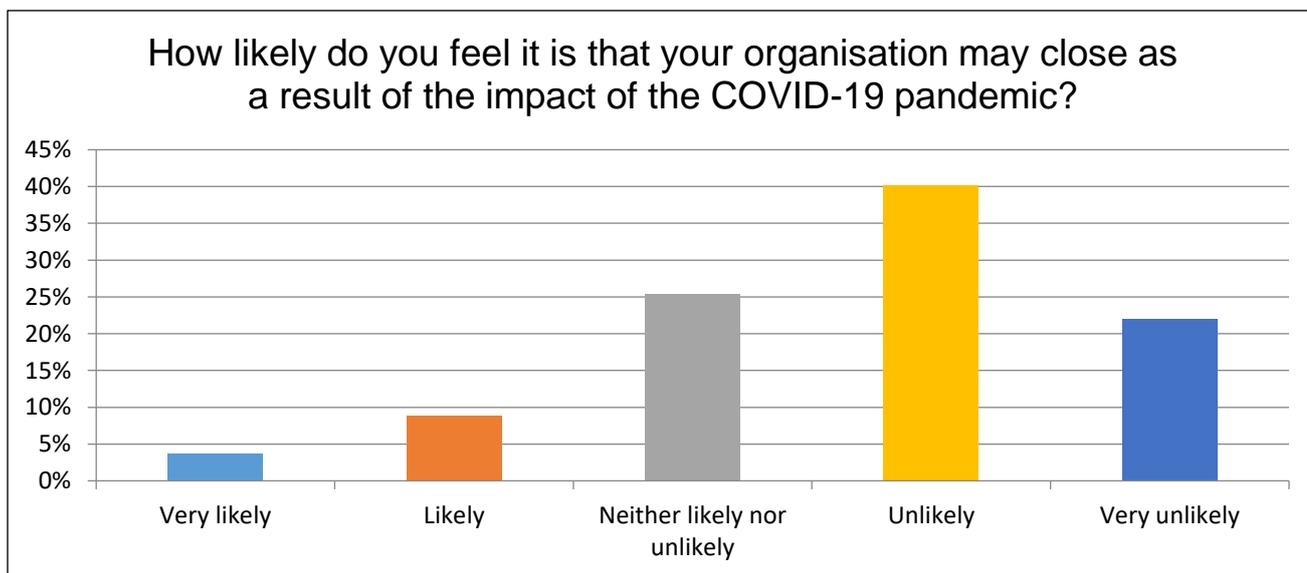


As you can see from the graph above, generally the larger the organisation, the better their reserves position.

Similar to anticipated income losses, organisations with a turnover of less than £50k turnover are the outliers, as although 39 per cent have three months or less in reserve, a much higher percentage (22 per cent) of these sized organisations have more than 12 months' core costs in reserve, significantly higher than any other group. The data for income organisations with an income higher than £5 million is less robust, due to the small number that responded to this question (6).

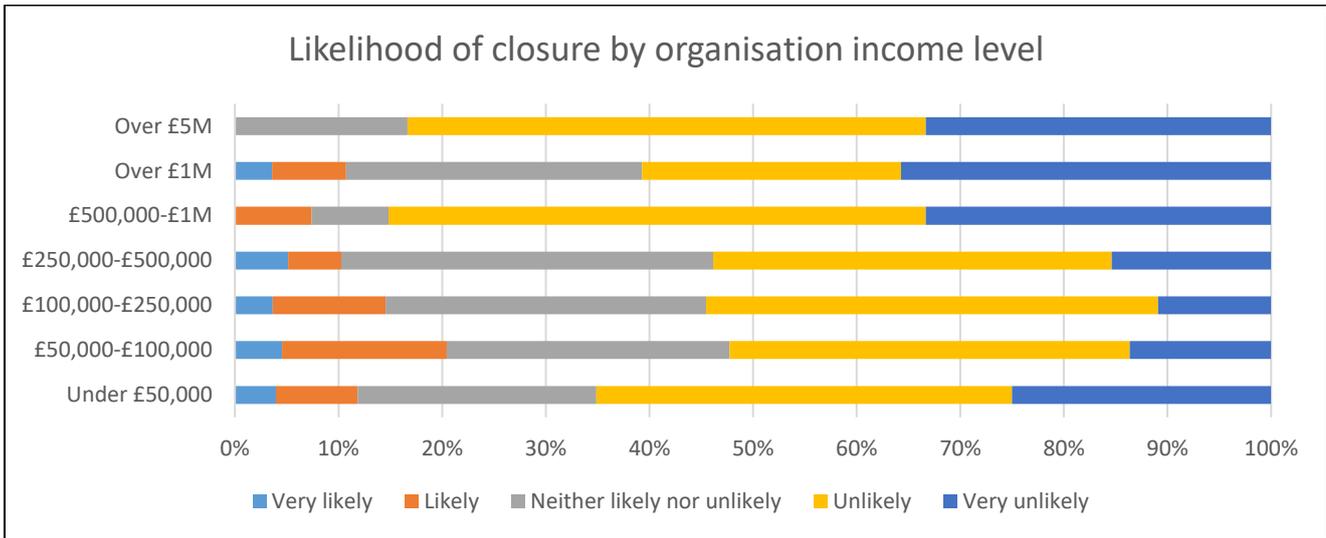
## 5.2 Likelihood of closure

Despite 31 per cent of organisations anticipating a significant (more than 50 per cent) drop in income between April and June, and 40 per cent having less than three months running costs in reserve, only 13 per cent of respondents consider it likely or very likely that their organisation will close as a result of the pandemic. It could be that they are expecting the impact to be short-lived, and/or that their organisations will bounce back once lockdown restrictions begin to be eased. In addition, previous Third Sector Trends studies have recognised the 'optimistic' nature of sector organisations when forward planning and forecasting.<sup>2</sup>



As you might expect, there is some correlation between scale of organisation and their confidence around the potential of closure. Broadly, larger organisations feel least likely to close. The exception to this is very small organisations, a quarter of which think it's 'very unlikely' they will close.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Third-Sector-Trends-in-North-East-England-2017-1.pdf> Pg 70.



### 5.3 Governance

Positively, 66 per cent of respondents rated the capacity and engagement of their board members/trustees/management committee as very good or good during this time. Of those that felt their board was doing a good job, reasons given included supporting staff and volunteers, maintaining regular contact and assisting with funding applications. A number of organisations stated they've received significantly higher levels of engagement from trustees and committee members during this time. Some challenges organisations have faced include not being able to replace physical meetings with online contacts or virtual meetings, having a number of trustees in the 'high risk' category, and the impact of individual circumstances and challenges.

## 6. Organisational impact and priorities

### 6.1 Positive organisational impacts

Of the 250 people who answered this question, 182 (73 per cent) stated they'd identified some positive impacts for their organisation. Key themes from responses were:

Outcome	% of responses
Partnerships and relationships	52%
Stronger networks	25%
New volunteers	21%
Working remotely using digital technology	21%
Other – included focus on new projects, raised profile and stronger communications	20%

#### **Partnerships, relationships and networks**

Organisations stated they'd built new partnerships and relationships, and existing relationships had strengthened. This was both internal and external, with local authorities, NHS, other VCSE organisations, and one respondent quoted that their Lloyd's Bank Foundation Grant Manager had been really supportive and proactive.

#### **Working remotely using digital technology**

Organisations thought working remotely, and having to consider new ways of working using digital technology, was positive for a number of reasons; it encourages future more sustainable ways of working; social media engagement has been higher, there has been an increase in information sharing and more frequent meetings have taken place. One respondent said they may continue with online activities in the future for children with high levels of anxiety.

## 6.2 Organisational priorities over the next two months

The next set of questions asked respondents to rate a variety of issues as high, medium or low priority for their organisation across the themes of: staff and volunteers, services and beneficiaries, funding and income, homeworking and remote delivery, and organisational support and development. An in-depth analysis of this section is provided in **Appendix 3**.

The issues highlighted as most important across the themes were:

<b>Staff and volunteers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supporting volunteers and staff – health, wellbeing and morale</li><li>• Coping with reduced volunteer and staff capacity</li><li>• Safeguarding staff, volunteers and beneficiaries including availability of PPE, homeworking and using digital</li></ul>
<b>Services and beneficiaries</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Redesigning the delivery of your services – using digital and in other ways</li><li>• Communications and marketing</li><li>• Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries</li></ul>
<b>Funding and income</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developing new income streams</li><li>• Liaising with funders and commissioners</li><li>• Funding advice and applying for grants</li></ul>
<b>Homeworking and remote delivery</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IT/telephone kit for staff and volunteers</li><li>• Software, digital and communication tools</li><li>• Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries</li></ul>
<b>Organisational support and development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Strategic planning in short, medium and longer term</li><li>• Financial planning and management – cash flow, reducing costs, new liabilities</li><li>• Contingency planning and risk management</li></ul>

Interestingly, organisational support and development issues such as financial management, strategic planning, contingency planning, governance and legal support or advice around mergers and closure, were generally rated much lower for most respondents at this stage. This may reflect that organisations were still focusing on the immediate aftermath of lockdown and its impact on staff, volunteers and beneficiaries, rather than the short/medium term issues facing them.

### 6.3 Longer-term organisational priorities

Next, respondents were asked to rate the same set of issues as high, medium or low priority across the themes of staff and volunteers, services and beneficiaries, funding and income, homeworking and remote delivery, organisational support and development, but this time considering their needs during the recovery period, post Covid-19 lockdown.

The issues highlighted as the most important across the themes over the longer term were:

Supporting volunteers and staff – health, wellbeing and morale
Safeguarding staff, volunteers and beneficiaries - homeworking and using digital
Communications and marketing
Redesigning the delivery of your services – using digital
Developing new income streams
Funding advice and applying for grants
Fundraising advice and support
Financial planning
Strategic planning

There were a number of issues that remained as longer-term priorities such as staff and volunteer wellbeing and perhaps more surprisingly, digital redesign of services. Seeking funding, fundraising and developing new income streams increased in importance over the longer term. There was also more emphasis placed on organisational support and development across financial and strategic planning, contingency planning and governance support.

### 6.4 Recovery process

Finally in this section, respondents were asked an open question about how the recovery process for the VCSE sector could be best supported by funders, VCSE support organisations and statutory bodies. 194 people responded and the key themes are outlined below.

#### Funding

Overwhelmingly the largest theme of responses at 57 per cent, with many organisations stating that the provision of core funding will be key to supporting both recovery, and longer-term sustainability:

***"...Support for core costs is crucial for bringing staff back from furlough, to give that immediate support to move through the transition..."***

Alongside core funding, several respondents requested that funders streamline and simplify application processes, with clearer and broader criteria for support:

***"...less paperwork to make the process accessible for those working with small staff teams and no core funding."***

Many expressed a need for funding beyond the initial response to the pandemic, and stated funders should continue to be flexible, responsive and long term in their thinking:

***"For funders to understand that this is not just an immediate crisis, the impact will show in varying ways over the next two years and we need to continue to remain flexible to our response as new issues emerge."***

***"By being as flexible as possible on meeting deadlines, targets, outcomes, outputs etc"***

### **Advice and knowledge**

14 per cent of respondents spoke of their requirement for support, advice and information with 'clarity' a key request in guidance and information:

***"Advice and guidance on how we can operate post Covid-19...we need guidance and clarity on when and how we can safely start to open and provide services again."***

Other responses asked for practical advice relating to PPE and managing social distancing within buildings, organisational and business planning support, financial advice, legal and governance support all cited as important. Several organisations stated the need for tailored support according to their own circumstances, indicating that a one-size fits all approach would not be welcome, and that support organisations should listen and respond to the needs of individual organisations.

### **Strategy and partnerships**

Finally, 14 per cent of organisations commented on the need for a strategic approach to supporting the sector during the recovery phase, acknowledging that competition for funding is likely to be fierce and that working collaboratively offers a better solution to meet the higher levels of expected demand on charities.

***"By considering the landscape of the sector and looking at the number of charities fighting for funds, how can we sensibly structure the sector to reduce competition, and demonstrate value for money and economies of scale?"***

***"Building and supporting partnership working within the sector."***

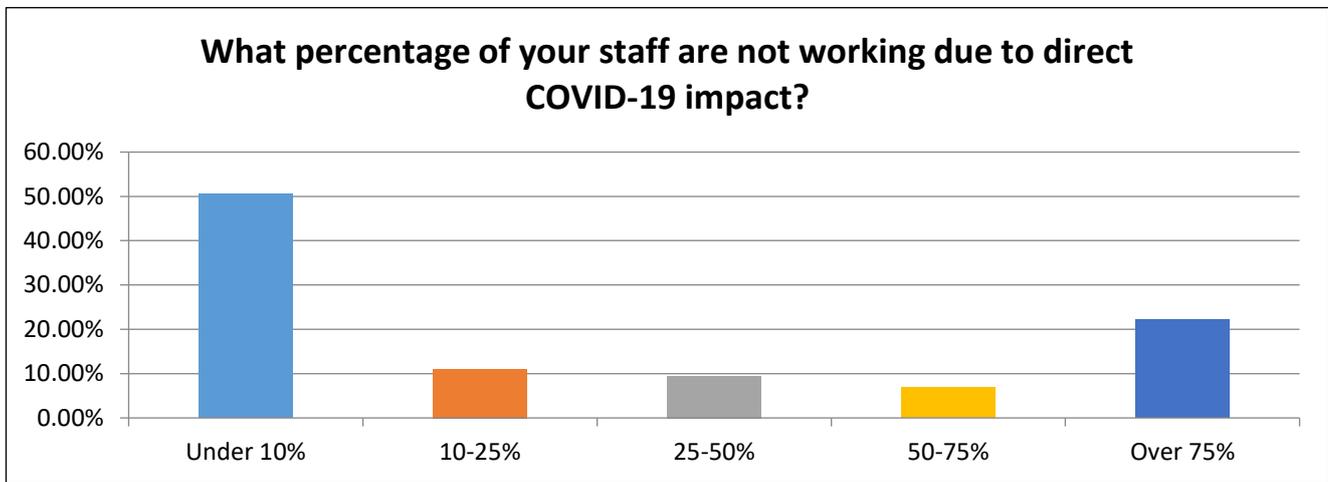
***"Coordinated responses."***

## 7. Staff and volunteers

69 per cent of respondents had paid staff and went onto answer specific questions relating to staff teams.

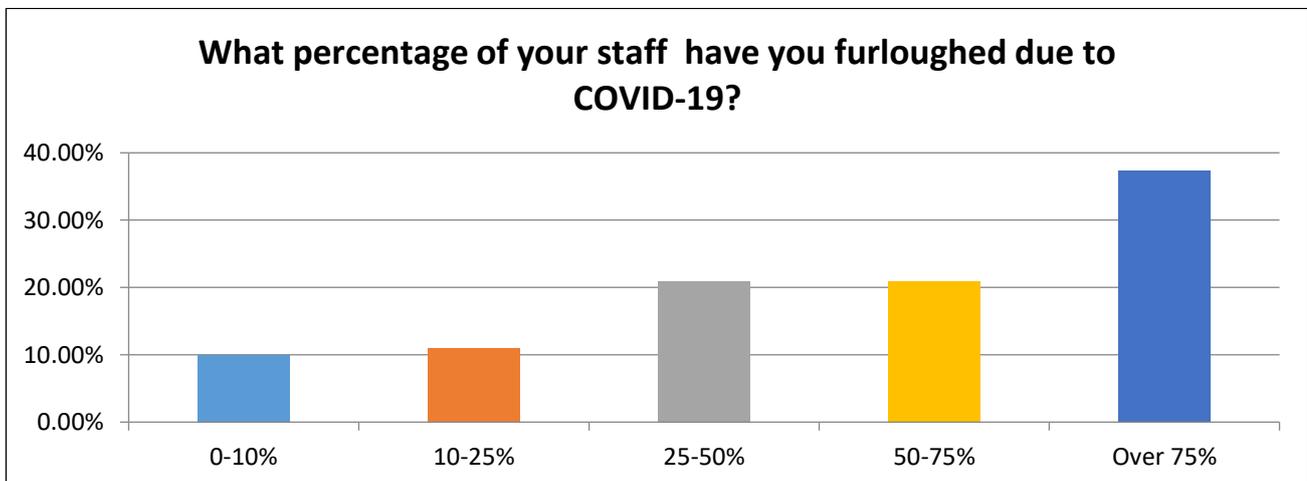
### 7.1 Direct impact on staffing levels

190 organisations responded to the question on their numbers of paid employees, giving a total of 1,751 full time staff (10.7 on average) and 1,826 part-time staff (10.3 on average) represented. 51 per cent of respondents said they were experiencing a small, direct impact on staffing levels caused by Covid-19 (illness, quarantine, caring responsibilities) with less than 10 per cent of employees not working. At the other end of the spectrum, 22 per cent of organisations were experiencing a 75 per cent drop in staffing caused directly by Covid-19. When you correlate these percentages with actual staffing numbers, an estimated 912 staff out of a pool of 3,587 are currently unable to work (25 per cent across the cohort).



### 7.2 Furloughing staff

57 per cent of 194 respondents had furloughed staff, with a further four per cent considering it within the next month. Of those organisations furloughing staff, the majority had furloughed a significant proportion of their workforce.

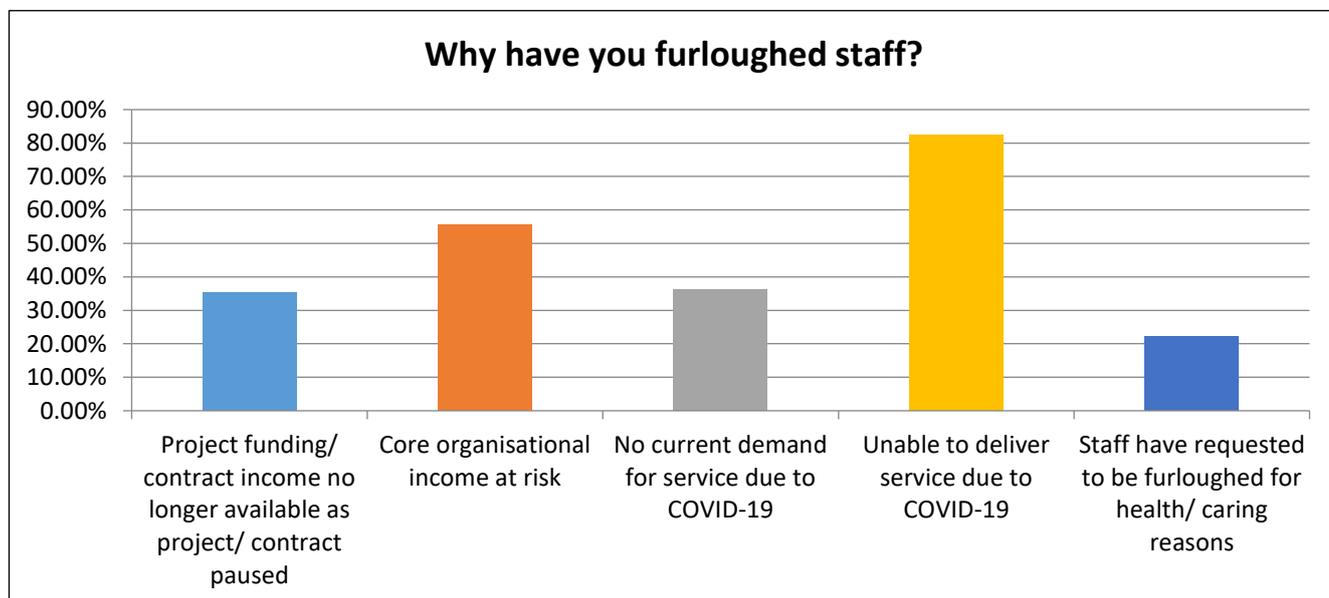


Correlating these percentages with staff numbers, of the 2,392 employees across 112 organisations that have furloughed staff, around 973 or 41 per cent of the combined workforce is currently furloughed.

Combining the estimated numbers of both those unable to work and those on furlough, 53 per cent of the workforce (1,885 employees from a workforce of 3,587) is not currently operational. This reduction in resource is significantly impacting upon the sector’s ability to deliver services.

Using the Third Sector Trends Study 2016, the number of FTE jobs in the VCSE sector was 37,500<sup>3</sup>. If we were to apply the same proportions of staff unable to work or furloughed across the VCSE sector in the North East, this would equate to **19,875 employees currently not operational**.

The most common reason for furloughing staff is being unable to deliver services due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, and the second most common reason is to reduce core expenditure as a response to core income being at risk. A number of organisations (22 per cent) have supported staff requests to be furloughed for personal reasons.



The majority of organisations (63 per cent) are topping up the 80 per cent of staff wages covered by the government’s Job Retention Scheme to ensure their furloughed staff are receiving their full salary.

### 7.3 Anticipated reduction in workforce numbers in the next 6-12 months

While a third of respondents anticipate reducing staffing levels due to a loss of income in the medium term, 26 per cent said they felt they will not need to, and the majority (42 per cent) aren’t sure at this point. For those anticipating a reduction in staff numbers, the average estimate contracting teams by 37 per cent, or around 1,327 employees from a cohort of 3,587.

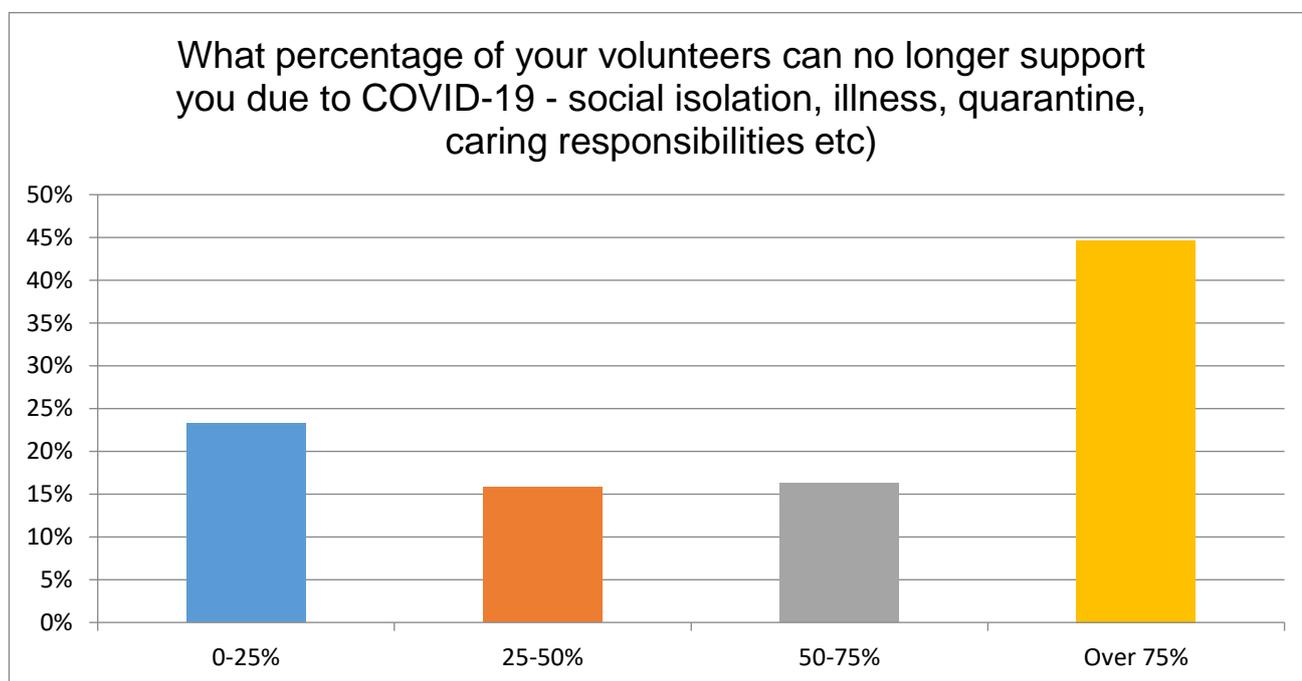
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.communityfoundation.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Third-Sector-Trends-in-North-East-England-2017-1.pdf> Pg. 15

If we used the Third Sector Trends Study 2016 data of 37,500 of FTE jobs in the VCSE sector across the North East, and applied a similar proportion of staffing numbers reducing across the sector, this would equate to **13,875 redundancies**.

#### 7.4 Volunteers

93 per cent of survey respondents stated they use volunteers. Compared to paid staff, a much greater proportion of volunteers are directly impacted by the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, with 45 per cent of organisations stating that more than 75 per cent of volunteers are unable to support them due to social isolation, caring responsibilities, illness etc. This is likely to reflect the increased average age of volunteers<sup>4</sup> Only 19 per cent of organisations have successfully recruited new volunteers within this period.

The reduced volunteer resource, combined with the reduction in staff capacity, has dramatically impacted on the VCSE sector's capacity to deliver services since the end of March.



<sup>4</sup> <https://data.ncvo.org.uk/volunteering/demographics/#by-age>

## 8. Beneficiaries and services

This section of the survey sought to identify the type of work areas and beneficiaries served by respondent organisations. This gives us the ability to split the data according to different beneficiary groups and work areas, helping us track whether Covid-19 restrictions were having a greater or lesser impact on particular types of organisation and their beneficiaries. In terms of work areas, organisations could select up to three main areas and the responses were:

Health and wellbeing	53.16%	143
Community development	29.00%	78
Ageing and supporting older people	21.93%	59
Sport and recreation	17.84%	48
Advice/advocacy/benefits	15.99%	43
Volunteering	14.87%	40
Disability	13.75%	37
Skills and training	13.75%	37
Arts/culture/heritage	12.64%	34
Social care	11.15%	30
Employment	9.29%	25
Environment	7.06%	19

Carers	5.95%	16
Rural	5.58%	15
Faith	3.72%	10
Funding and organisational support	3.35%	9
Sustainable development	3.35%	9
Digital/technology	2.23%	6
Substance misuse	2.23%	6
Animal welfare	1.86%	5
Transport	1.49%	4
Community energy	1.12%	3
Criminal justice	0.74%	2

Organisations were also asked if they targeted services at a particular group of individuals (they could select up to three):

Open to a cross section of the general public with no specific focus	46.47%	125
Young people	23.05%	62
Children	21.56%	58
Older people	20.07%	54
People with mental health issues	16.73%	45
Families	14.50%	39
Disabled people including those with a learning disability/autism	13.38%	36
People with a long term health conditions	12.64%	34
We support organisations	9.29%	25
Gender specific	7.44%	20
Drug and alcohol dependency	3.35%	9
BAME individuals and communities	2.23%	6
Refugees and asylum seekers	1.86%	5
LGBTQ	0.37%	1
Prisoner families, offenders, ex-offenders	0.37%	1

## 8.1 Impact on beneficiaries

An overwhelming 82 per cent of respondents stated that social distancing measures have had a significant impact on their ability to deliver services. Of those, 39 per cent have not been able to operate at all.



When this answer is correlated with data on the annual number of beneficiaries (reduced to represent the April to June quarter), we get a sense of the impact of lockdown on beneficiary numbers. Across 269 organisations, the total number of beneficiaries and the level of impact are:

Service delivery impact	Number of beneficiaries impacted	% of total
Not been able to operate at all	161,631	42%
Significantly reduced	185,321	48%
Slightly reduced	28,980	7.5%
Not reduced at all	9,315	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>385,347</b>	

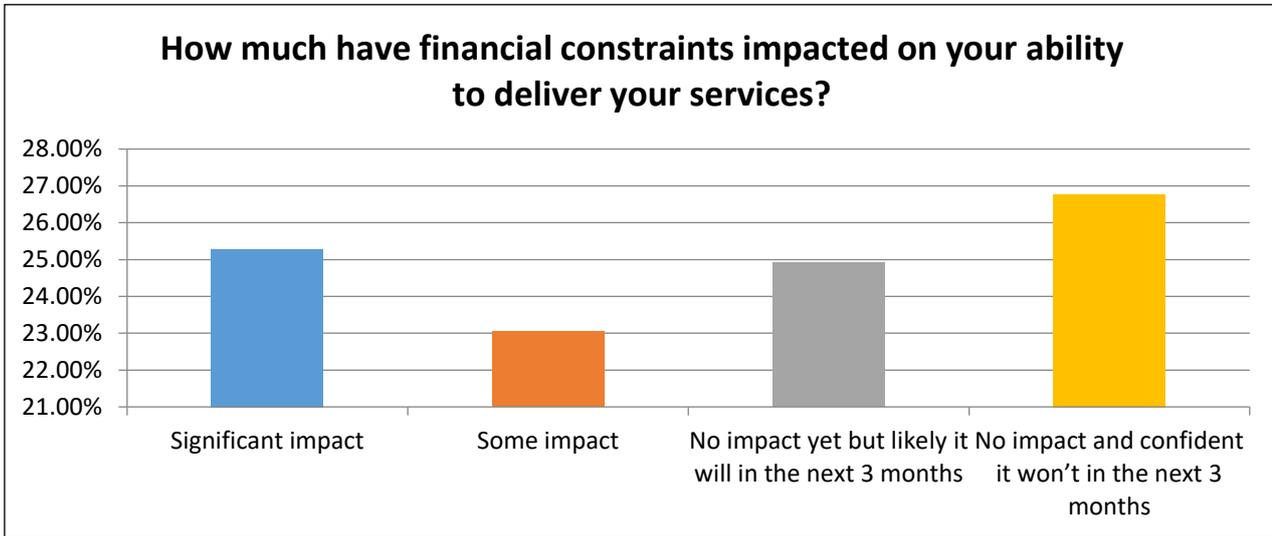
That is almost **400,000 individuals** that are no longer receiving, or receiving a significantly reduced service from 269 VCSE organisations, which is 90 per cent of all beneficiaries served by respondents.

If we were to aggregate this against the 7,200 VCSE organisations operating in the North East region, even taking account of beneficiaries being counted more than once across organisations, the figure would be truly staggering.

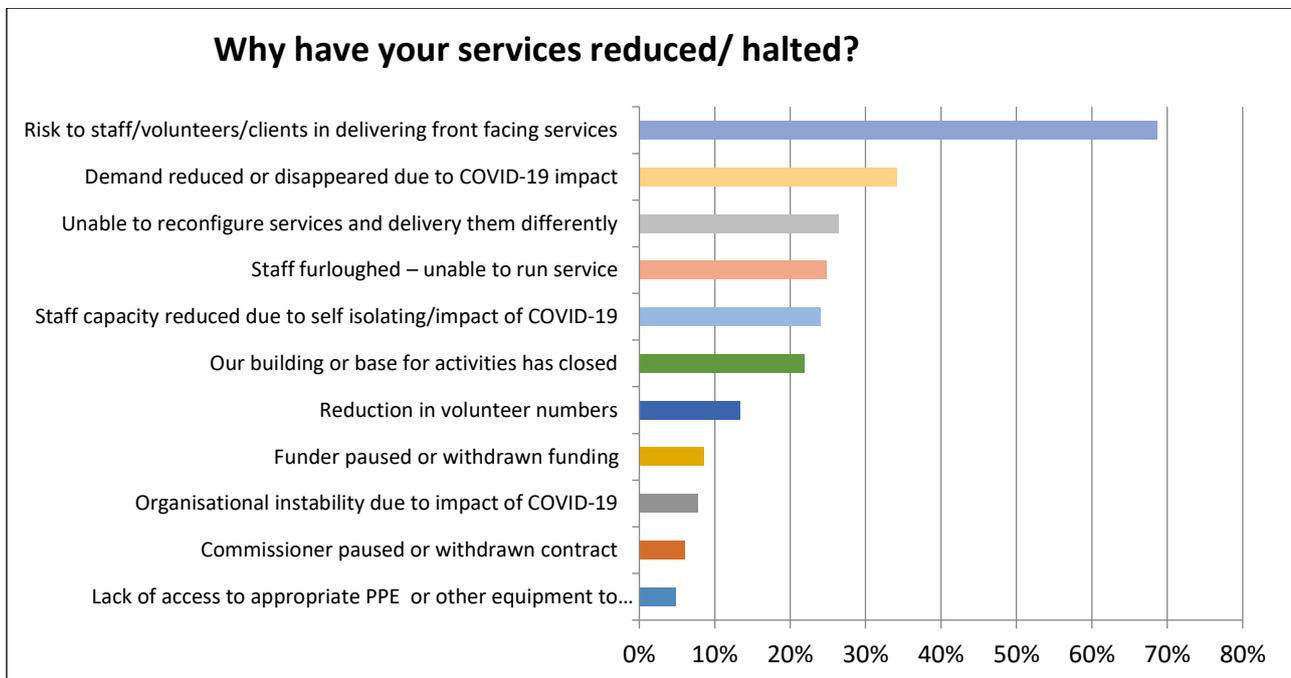
This data also reflects the answers to the question, '*Approximately what percentage of your service users/beneficiaries' needs will be unmet due to the financial or social distancing impact of COVID-19?*', to which the largest proportion of respondents (40 per cent) stated more than 75 per cent of beneficiaries would be impacted.

## 8.2 Exploring the factors behind impact on services and beneficiaries

Some of the impact on services has been financial, due to a loss of core income or the pausing of project or contract income with which to deliver services to beneficiaries. Earlier we outlined that 56 per cent of organisations furloughing staff had done so to control costs in relation to reduced income.



In the next question we explored the reasons behind services being halted or reduced in more detail, with the following responses (organisations could tick all that applied):



It appears that adhering to social distancing measures, making it impossible for organisations to deliver frontline services, is the most significant reason for the reduction in service delivery. It is positive to see that the impact on services due to inflexibility from funders or commissioners is small.

### 8.3 Digital service delivery and digital exclusion

#### Reconfiguration of services

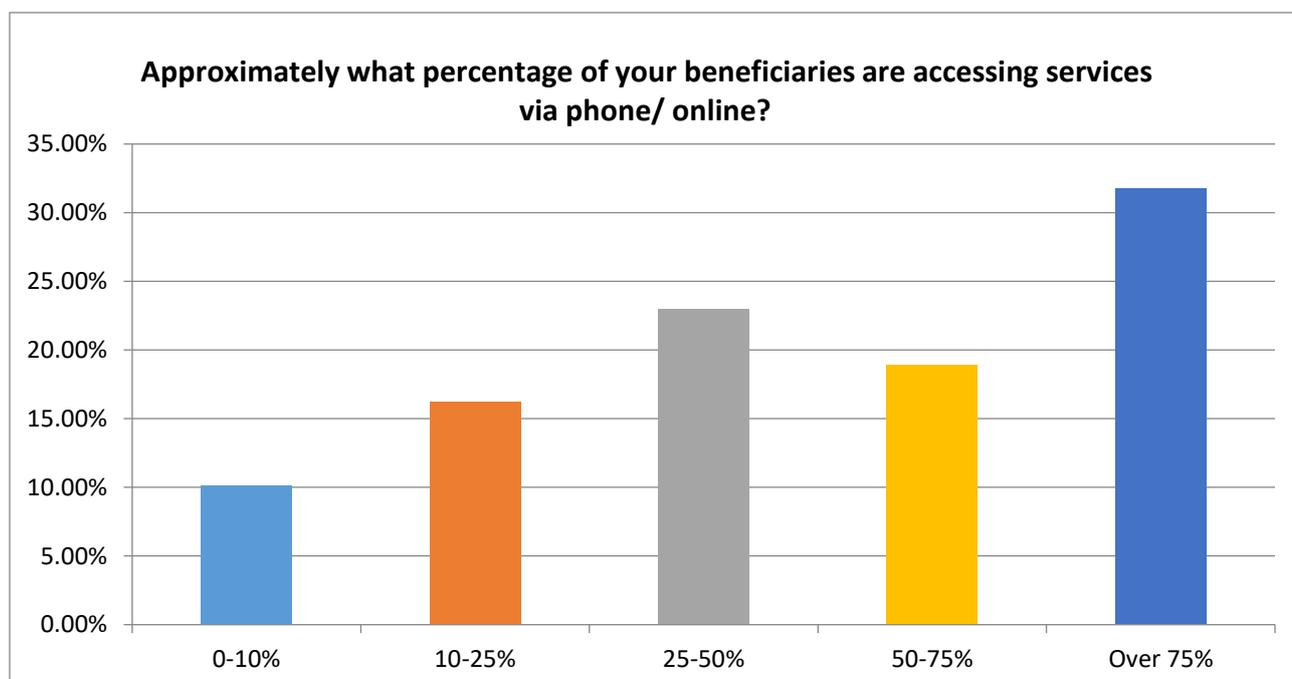
Where sector organisations cannot deliver face to face services during lockdown and the implementation of UK-wide physical distancing measures, where possible, mode of delivery has moved to telephone and digital services. Of those that answered, 54 per cent of respondents indicated they've been able to do this. However, 28 per cent of respondents said they've been unable to reconfigure services for the following reasons (respondents could choose more than one):

Lack of staff/volunteer resource	15%
Lack of digital know-how and access to digital tools/IT equipment – staff/volunteers	13%
Lack of digital know-how and access to digital tools/IT equipment – beneficiaries	23%
Lack of appetite from beneficiaries	11%
Lack of access to phones	5%
Lack of contact information for beneficiaries	4%
Other	58%

Of the 58 per cent that answered 'other', 53 per cent stated they were unable to reconfigure services due to their building/facilities being closed, or it was not relevant or appropriate for them to do so.

#### Access to services

Around a quarter of respondents (26 per cent) stated that less than 25 per cent of service users were accessing services by phone or online.



When asked the main reasons for people not accessing services this way, 70 per cent reported barriers experienced by services users, with 49 per cent citing a lack of digital know-how and access to digital tools and IT equipment, and a further 21 per cent citing a lack of access to telephones.

24 per cent reported a lack of digital know-how and access to digital tools and IT equipment by staff or volunteers, and a further 14 per cent said a lack of staff or volunteer time was a barrier.

Other issues raised included the cost of data or internet access, being overwhelmed by other priorities such as caring responsibilities, and confidentiality and safety (for example, with women and children being subject to domestic violence).

#### 8.4 Reconfiguring services and support offered in response to COVID-19

This open text question received 206 responses we've summarised into the following themes:

Can't reconfigure services/have closed	10%
Delivery of activity packs/information to service users	6%
Use of emails, e-bulletins and/or telephone to deliver services	19%
Use of digital/online to delivery services	36%
Other examples of offline services - including delivery leaflets, postal contact and information distribution.	4%
Still using face to face but with social distancing measures	4%
Adapted to focus on food delivery/storage/shopping	9%
We're supporting other organisations/local authority	2%
Other/miscellaneous - including increasing or reconfiguring support for volunteers, working more with partners to deliver, currently re-evaluating business plan and/or strategy, redesigning courses and recruitment of learners	15%

#### 8.5 Unmet needs analysis

We asked respondents to share any concerns they have about the unmet needs of particular beneficiary groups, either because of services being reduced, or the direct or wider impact of the pandemic lockdown. 178 organisations (41 per cent of the survey sample) responded to this question, with some clear themes emerging;

- Children and young people – 17.5%
- Older people – 15.7%
- People with disabilities, including learning disabilities – 10.8%
- All – 9.6%
- Those who are vulnerable or socially isolated – 7.2%
- People with no internet access/digital skills – 6.6%
- People with mental health needs – 5.4%
- Families – 4.8%
- Carers – 2.4%

A wide variety of needs were identified, which is unsurprising given the complexity of the situation and the variety of organisations that took part in the survey.

Some needs were organisation-specific and only mentioned once, but there were a number of common themes. Most frequently mentioned were:

- **Social contact, interaction and support**

This was mentioned nearly twice as often as the next most common theme. It covers a lack of general social contact and the informal support networks that come with meeting in person. Unmet health needs are recorded separately (see below).

- **Access to information and advice**

Multiple needs were raised within this broad area, including a lack of equipment/data/connectivity for online resources, a lack of digital skills, information not in the correct format or language, a lack of trust in information sources, and a lack of access to normally available benefits/financial advice.

- **Mental health support**

Mental health was listed several times as an unmet need without further detail. Where expanded upon, it was linked to social isolation, rural isolation and a lack of stimulation, as well as the support requirements of people with mental health conditions.

Other unmet needs commonly identified, in order of frequency:

- Practical support (access to food/shopping/medicines)
- Access to face to face/121 support - this was generally mentioned in relation to service users, groups mentioned included those with addiction issues and language barriers
- Activities
- Physical health and exercise
- Access to open space
- Financial difficulties for service users
- Support for people with disabilities
- Access to arts and culture

## 9. Funders and commissioners

In this section, VCSE organisations were asked how well funders and commissioners had responded to being flexible about project outputs/outcomes and timescales when organisational delivery had been impacted by the pandemic lockdown measures.

### 9.1 Funders

Generally, funders were considered responsive to the situation, with 65 per cent of respondents rating their flexibility as good or very good. Meanwhile, 21 per cent had mixed experiences and only two per cent rated them as bad or very bad.

Several funders were praised for being flexible, understanding, approachable, helpful, supportive and responsive. Other funders, albeit fewer, were criticised for a lack of contact, lack of clarity, asking too much, being too slow to respond or closing programmes. A concern of many respondents was the need for information about funding in the future post-Covid.

Some example comments included:

***“Our funders have been extremely supportive and communication has been excellent.”***

***“In the short term our funders are prepared for alternative outcomes. However, they are uncommitted about any further funding or future funding.”***

***“Good response generally. Still some funders in the NE have directly forwarded money to known recipients but not opened it up to a wider offer. There needs to be more focus now on post-Covid resilience funding.”***

***“Difficult to contact as staff on furlough or working from home.”***

A number of funders were mentioned several times for particularly good practice: Ballinger Charitable Trust, National Lottery Community Fund, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the Virgin Money Foundation, County Durham Community Foundation and the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland.

### 9.2 Commissioners

Although commissioner’s flexibility wasn’t rated as highly as funders, 52 per cent rated commissioners as generally good or very good, 18 per cent had mixed experiences, which was broadly in line with the figure regarding funders, and one per cent reported bad experiences. Various commissioners were said to be understanding, flexible and responsive. Others however were criticised for a lack of contact and for cancellation of contracts. Comments included:

***“We are working very well with our local authorities in connection with changes we have made to services etc.”***

***“It is important that contracts are kept in place so that services can retain key/trained/experienced staff and the core of organisation so that work can begin immediately or services can be pivoted in the short term.”***

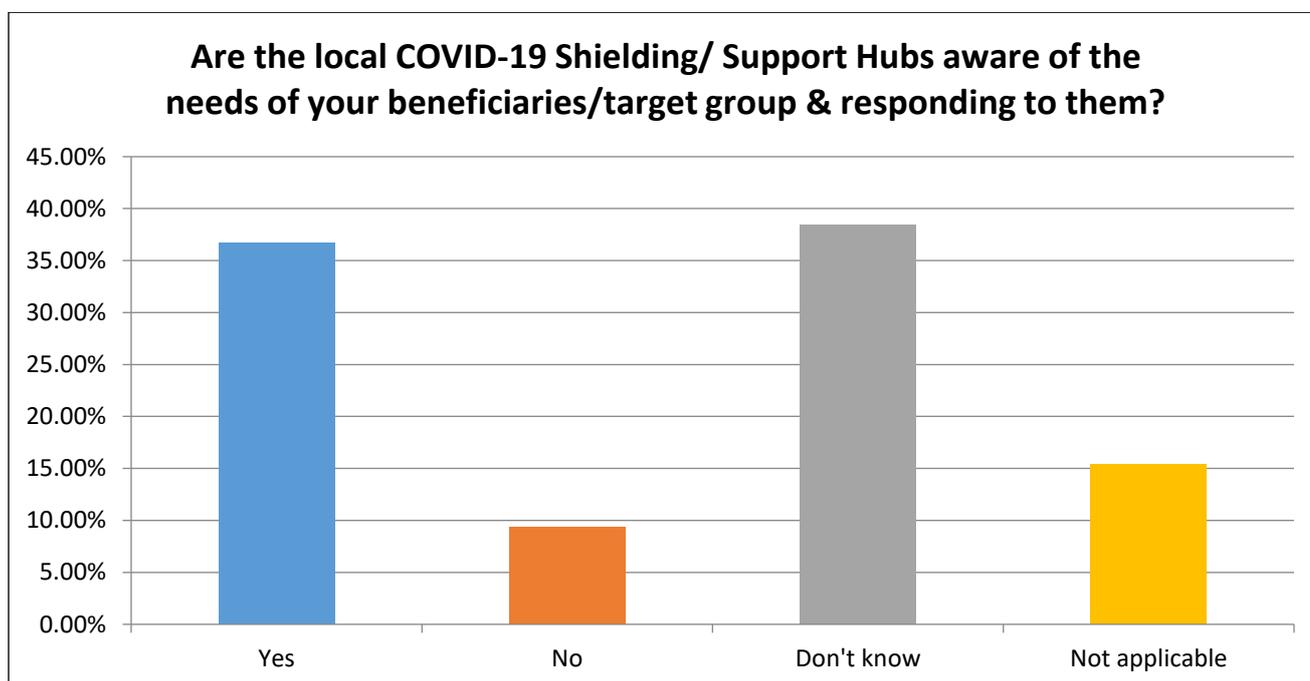
***“Most things have just been cancelled outright.”***

Commissioners that received several positive comments were Durham County Council Public Health Team, Co. Durham Clinical Commissioning Group, Middlesbrough Council Learning Disabilities Team, Newcastle Council Public Health Team, and South Tyneside Council.

## 10. Covid-19 emergency response mechanisms and VCSE engagement

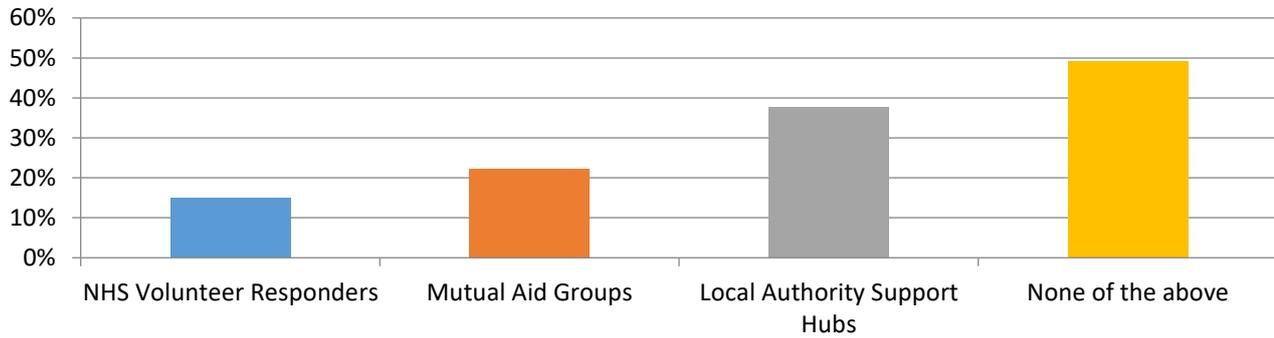
The final section of the survey covered VCSE sectoral awareness of, and engagement with, Covid-19 emergency response mechanisms. 64 per cent of the organisations surveyed stated they were collaborating/working in partnership with local authorities and other partners to support the local response to Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions. A similar percentage (62 per cent) were aware of local Covid-19 shielding or support hubs established by local authorities.

However, when it came to a view on whether the Covid-19 hubs were aware of and responding to the needs of their beneficiaries/target groups, the picture was more mixed:



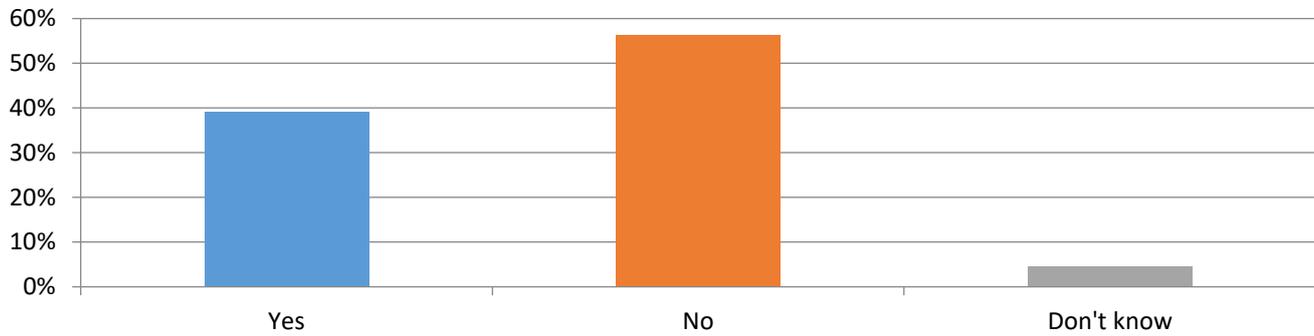
Awareness of the various other sources of support for individuals directly affected by Covid-19 appears to be high, with 75 per cent of respondents indicating they'd made referrals for support across the three options (they could select more than one). Local authority Covid-19 hubs were the most popular place to refer individuals to. However, 49 per cent of organisations said they'd made no referrals and their comments indicate that for many, the question wasn't applicable, either because they don't support individuals needing additional Covid-19-related support, or due to a lack of contact with beneficiaries because facilities are closed or there is reduced staff capacity.

**Are you making referrals for individuals requiring support into NHS Volunteer Responders/ Mutual Aid groups/ Local Authority Support hubs?**



Finally, 39 per cent of organisations were receiving referrals from health and social care or from local authority staff managing the Covid-19 response, with 94 per cent able to meet demand and manage the referrals being received. More than half of respondents had received no referrals from health and social care or local authority staff.

**Are you receiving referrals to support local people at risk of COVID-19 from health & social care or LA staff involved in managing the COVID-19 response locally?**



## **11. Further considerations**

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents had the opportunity to provide any further comments or thoughts. 70 comments were made and can be grouped into the following themes (number of comments). We've provided a sample comment for each theme.

### **Current support lacking/system unfair (20)**

*"Unable to claim Small Business Grant fund because we receive charitable relief on property and not small business rates relief."*

*"We've had no support from the start"*

### **Income dried up/unable to provide service/meet demand (14)**

*"As centre is closed and we can't do fundraising events we've lost all funding from donations. We still have bills to pay to maintain centre, but running low on funds to do so."*

*"...at max capacity and demand continuing to rise. Without funding to recruit to meet this increasing demand we will not be able to support all those who need us."*

### **Safeguarding and support for beneficiaries (5)**

*"Coming out of lockdown will be very difficult without protecting our staff and our residents."*

*"...significant impact on our beneficiaries, many of whom already felt isolated...Much of our caseload that was settled before the outbreak is now in crisis or unsettled with more intensive support needs, which has greatly increased workload for staff and volunteers."*

### **Access to future funding and support/where to go**

*"As a digital heritage organisation, we envisage funding being harder to obtain after lockdown as we won't be seen as a priority,"*

### **Stress/worry (4)**

*"...this has been a time of huge stress and worry about the organisation, beneficiaries, staff, volunteers and trustees. The contact I've had with others is very similar."*

### **Information overload/fragmented approach (3)**

*"...we have struggled a little with trying to raise awareness of what we are able to offer and help with as there is also a little fragmentation within the area we are based with lots of smaller groups doing their own thing and it has been difficult to collaborate at times..."*

*“From a personal point of view, I think there is information overload at times where support for every group of potential beneficiaries is made available in one communication. Grouping of potential beneficiaries into relevant ‘clusters’ eg. young, elderly, self employed etc, may make for ‘easier reading’.”*

### **Fear of closure**

*“I worry that some of us will go under or be affected in a very long-term way.”*

### **Other concerns/comments included:**

- An inability to plan ahead/mitigate for similar future events
- A desire to move into a recovery planning phase and concerns around that in terms of social issues
- An offer of IT support or premises to others that may need it

There was also a handful of positive/hopeful responses and thank yous to VONNE and the wider sector for the survey and Covid-19 support –

*“There is a real positive at the moment in that many individuals and groups are working really well together across sectors with a common goal. A real pleasure to be part of that. Long may it last!”*

*“Thanks! Good to know you are still there working for us all in these uncertain times, who knows what our collective future is. Stay safe.”*

*“Virgin Money Foundation and Community Foundation have delivered a number of remote workshops, meetings and masterclasses which have been very informative and practical. They have also kept me engaged and not feeling so isolated and worrying about whether I am on the right track for my organisation.”*

*“We feel that our local infrastructure organisation Northumberland CVA has supplied timely and appropriate advice. We hope all our fellow VCS colleagues come out of this pandemic safe and well and that we can all work together to build up the sector.”*

## Appendix 1: Respondent organisations

111 (Sunderland) Squadron ATC  
1407 (Newton Aycliffe) sqn RAF Air Cadets  
2nd Herrington Scout Group  
2nd Newton Aycliffe Guides  
2nd Wideopen Scout Group  
4th Chester le Street Scouts  
700 Club  
89th Sunderland Scout Group  
Acle Scout Group  
Acomb Volunteers Support Network  
(Northumberland)  
Action Foundation  
Action Station South Tyneside Limited  
Acumen Community Buildings Ltd  
Adapt (NE)  
Addictions North East  
Age Concern Tyneside South  
Age Concern Tyneside South  
Age Uk County Durham  
Age UK North Tyneside  
Age UK North Yorkshire & Darlington  
Age UK Sunderland  
Alexa's Animals Dog Rescue  
Alice House Hospice  
Allied Resource Community (Middlesbrough Tools  
Workshop)  
Alnmouth Parish Council  
Alnwick Young Peoples Association/ Gallery Youth  
Alzheimer's Society  
Amble Development Trust  
Angels of the North  
Annfield Plain Food Bank  
Anxious Minds  
Arts 4 Wellbeing  
Ashington & District Male Voice Choir  
Ashington Salvation Army 'Top Tots'  
Ashington Veterans and Elders Institute  
Auckland Youth and Community Centre Ltd  
Autism In Mind  
B Active N B Fit Community interest company  
Baby Bereavement Support Group  
Back on the Map  
Backworth Miners Welfare  
Bacmans community Ltd  
Balkwell Community Welfare Association  
Bamburgh Research Project Limited  
Barnard Castle Girlguiding  
Barnardos  
Being Woman  
Bell View (Belford)  
Belmont Community Association  
Belmont Parish Hall Association  
Berwick Animal Rescue Kennels  
Berwick Community Trust  
Berwick Stroke Club  
Bethany City Church  
Birtley Community Partnership  
Blackhill Community Association  
BLISS=Ability  
Blyth Tall Ship  
Bowes Preschool  
Bowmen of Backworth  
Briardale House Youth & Community Projects Ltd  
BRIC  
British Red Cross  
Broomley Grange  
Bullion Community Resource Centre  
Burnmoor Cricket,LawnTennis & Football Club  
Butterknowle Village Hall Association  
Butterwick Hospice Care  
Byers Green Village Hall Community  
Cake and Company  
Calmer Therapy  
Carers Federation  
Carers Northumberland  
Carers Trust Tyne and Wear  
Carrshield Village hall and arts and craft centre  
Castletown community association  
Change 4 Life Sunderland  
Changing Futures north east  
Changing Lives  
Charles Young Centre  
Charltons Community Centre  
Children North East  
Choices4Growth  
Christians Against Poverty  
Churches Together South Tyneside  
Citizens Advice County Durham  
Citizens Advice Newcastle  
Citizens Advice Northumberland  
Citizens Advice Sunderland  
City Hearts global  
Clervaux Trust  
Cleveland Ironstone Mining Museum

Code4000  
Communities Together Sunderland West  
Community and Voluntary Action Blyth Valley  
Community Campus  
Community Food and Friendship Blyth  
Community Peer Mentors - Police Crime  
Commissioners Office  
Community Stepping Stones CIC  
Community Sustainability Services  
Contact Morpeth Mental Health Group Limited  
Coping with Cancer North East  
Cornerstone Supported Housing and counselling  
County Durham Community Foundation  
Craft Together Community Interest Company  
Creative Minds - North Star Counselling CIC  
Creighton Memorial Hall  
Crookham Village Hall  
Crossman Hall AKA Holy Island Village Hall  
Cullercoats Men's Club  
Cullercoats Methodist Church  
Cultural Creatives CIC  
D2 Youth Zone  
Darlington Association on Disability  
Darlington Credit Union  
Darlington Mind  
Darlington School Sport Partnership  
Deaf Awareness: NE  
Dene Valley Community Transport  
DERIC Youthbus Project  
Derwentside Mind  
Diabetes UK North of England Regional Team  
Dimensions  
Disability North  
Durham County Carers Support  
Durham Students' Union  
Durham Wildlife Trust  
Earsdon & Wellfield Community Association  
Easington Lane Community Access Point  
East Bedlington Community Centre  
East End Youth & Community Centre  
East Northumberland Cats Protection  
Eastfield Community Projects  
Elders Council of Newcastle  
Ellington and Lynemouth Darby and Joan club  
Emmaus North East  
ESCAPE Family Support  
Escape Intervention Services Ltd  
Family Action  
Family Gateway  
Fans Museum  
Ferryhill indoor bowls club  
Festival of Thrift  
First Step  
Flash Company Arts Ltd CIC  
Footprints in the Community  
Foundation  
Foundation Futures  
Foundation of Light  
Frade  
Framwellgate Moor Youth & Community Centre  
Friends Action North East (FANE)  
Friends Of Gallagher Park  
Friends of Holywell Dene  
Friends of LV50  
Friends of Red House Ramble  
Friends of Ridley Park  
Friends of West Park Jarrow  
Fulwell Community Library  
Gainford Village Hall  
Gateshead & South Tyneside Sight Service  
Girlguiding Northumberland  
Glendale Gateway Trust  
GOLD (Growing Older and Living in Darlington)  
Grace House  
Greater Morpeth Development Trust  
Greggs Foundation  
Grindon Church Community Project  
Grindon Parish Hall  
Grindon Young Peoples Centre  
Groundwork NE & Cumbria  
Haltwhistle Partnership  
Hard of Hearing Organisation  
Hartlepool Art Studio Ltd  
Hartlepool Carers  
Hartlepool Chinese Association  
Hartlepool Food Network  
Hartlepool People  
Hartlepower  
HDFT  
Headway Arts  
Healthwatch Darlington  
Healthwatch North Tyneside  
Healthworks  
Heart Support  
HED Mind  
Heddon on the Wall Parish Council

Helix Arts  
Hemlington Linx Detached Youth Work Project  
Herrington flower club  
Hetton New Dawn Group  
Hexham Community Church  
Hexham Town Council  
Holder House Garden CIC  
Home-Start Teesside  
Houghton le Spring and District Piping Society  
Houghton le Spring Residents  
Hudsa  
Hylton CCC  
I.M.P.A.C.T NORTHEAST CIC  
Include 'In' autism  
Independent Advocacy North East  
Inspire South Tyneside  
International Community Organisation of  
Sunderland (ICOS)  
Jack Drum Arts CIC  
Jarrow Sea Cadets  
JET Jobs Education & Training  
Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust  
Karbon Homes  
Keep Washington Tidy  
Key Enterprises  
Kilmanrock Road Children & Young People Family  
Resource Centre  
KLSA CIC  
LD:NorthEast  
Leading Link  
Leg of Mutton Allotment Association  
Life Kitchen Social  
Linskill and North Tyneside Community  
Development Trust  
Linton Village Hall  
Liverton PCC  
Longbenton with Killingworth Rotary  
Longbenton Youth Project  
Longhoughton Community and Sport Centre  
LOUD ARTS CIC  
Marriage Care UK (Tyneside office)  
Matfen Village Hall Committee  
Mathew Ridley Memorial Hall  
MEA Trust and Peoples Kitchen  
Meadow Well Connected  
MFC Foundation  
Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind  
Middleton & Todridge Village Hall  
Middleton and Teesdale Silver Band

Middleton in Bloom  
MIND Active  
Minsteracres Retreat Centre  
Moorsholm Memorial Hall  
More Than A Run  
Moving On Durham  
N E Land Sea and Air Museum  
NCDC  
NDAS (Northumberland Domestic Abuse Service)  
Neville Community Association  
Newcastle Chamber Music Society  
Newton Aycliffe Youth Football Club  
Newton on the Moor & Swarland Parish Council  
NHCT  
NIWE Eating Distress Service  
North East Churches Acting Together  
North East Environment Network (trading as  
OASES)  
North East Homeless  
North East Pensioners Association  
North East Sport  
North NE Active Partnership  
North of England Refugee Service  
North Shields Heritology Project  
North Shields Photographic Society  
North Shields Polytechnic Club  
North Star  
North Tyneside Art Studio  
North Tyneside Citizens Advice  
North Tyneside Employees Credit Union  
Northern Learning Trust  
Northern Synod of the United Reformed Church  
Northumberland CVA  
Northumberland VCSE  
Northumberland Wildlife Trust Ltd  
Northumbrian Citizens Advice  
Oasis Community Housing  
PACT House Stanley  
Pallion Action Group  
Parkhead & Wansbeck Powersports  
Pathways 4 All  
PeerTalk  
Pennywell Neighbourhood Centre  
People and Drugs Ltd  
People Painting for Health and Leisure  
Phoenix Detached Youth Project  
Pioneering Care Partnership  
Play@cotherstone

PNE Enterprise  
Ponteland Community  
Pricklepad Hedgehog Hospital  
Queens Hall Arts  
Rape Crisis Tyneside & Northumberland  
Reaching Out Across Durham (ROAD)  
Recyke y'bike  
Redby Community Association  
Redcar & Cleveland Voluntary Development Agency  
Redcar VIP Group  
Redhouse & District Community Association  
Reviving the Heart of the West End  
Richmond Fellowship  
Rickleton Residents Association  
Royal Victoria Trust  
RVS Northumberland  
Scarth Memorial Hall  
Shilbottle Community Hall  
Shoot your mouth off cic  
Sight Service  
Silksworth Youth and Community Centre  
Slaley Parish Council  
Smart Works  
SNCBC  
Someone Cares  
South Hetton & Dust community associations  
South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - charity  
Southwick Village Green Preservation Society  
Sported  
Springboard  
Springboard Hetton Hub  
Springfield Community Association  
Springwell Village Community Venue  
St Aidans Community Partnership  
St Andrews Church, Benton  
St Bernadette Club  
St George's Fatfield  
St John's Church Hall  
St Mary Magdalene Church Prudhoe  
St Mary's Island Wildlife Conservation Society  
St Mary's Barnard Castle Parish Hall Association  
ST MARY'S CENTRE (A.M.B.C.) LIMITED  
St. Cuthberts Church Hall  
Stanley Indoor Bowls Centre  
Stanley Town Council  
Streets Ahead for Information  
Stroke Association

STSFT  
Summerhouse Village Hall  
Sunderland & North Durham Royal Society for the Blind  
Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre  
Sunderland Carers Centre  
Sunderland Community Action Group  
Sunderland Green & Open Spaces Forum  
Sunderland Maritime Heritage  
Sunderland Millfield Salvation Army  
Sunderland North Community Business Centre  
Sunderland Parent Carer Forum  
Sunderland People First  
Sunderland Pride  
Sunderland Students' Union  
Sunderland Mind  
Sunshine Co-operative CIC  
Teal Farm Residents Association  
Tees Valley Chinese Community Centre  
Tees Valley Durham and North Yorkshire Neurological Alliance  
Tees Valley Wildlife Trust  
Tees Valley YMCA  
Teesdale Day Clubs  
Teesdale School  
Teesdale Visually Impaired Club  
Teesside Samaritans  
Tenants Activities Group (TAG)  
The Barnes Institute SR6 7BY  
The Box Youth & Community Project  
The Bungalow Partnership  
The Cabin Project (MHC)  
The Cedarwood Trust  
The Charlie & Carter Foundation  
The Hearth Centre  
The Hub of Wishes  
The Junction Foundation  
The Key  
The Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company  
The Legend of Skippy  
The Link (Redcar) CIC  
The Listening Post / DACYM  
The Net North Shields  
The Parish of North Wearside  
The Salvation Army  
The Sanctuary @ Shildon  
The Tiny Lives Trust  
The Wilson Centre (Long Newton)  
Tyne & Wear R D A Limited

Tyneside Outdoors  
U3A Blyth  
Ulgham Village Community  
United Response  
Upper Teesdale Agricultural Support Services  
Useful Vision  
Versus Arthritis  
Veterans in Crisis Sunderland  
Voda  
VOLSAG  
Walking with the Wounded - North  
Wallsend Children's Community  
Wallsend Kinship Carers  
Washington Community Food Project  
Washington Cricket Club  
Washington Mind  
Ways to Wellness  
WEA  
West End Women and Girls Centre  
Whickham Volunteer Library Association  
Whippet Up CIC  
Williby Roc's CIC  
Winston Village Hall  
Wolviston Village Association  
Woodhorn Charitable Trust  
WWT Washington Wetland Centre  
YMCA North Tyneside  
Young Asian Voices  
Youth Almighty Project  
Youth Focus North East

## **Appendix 2: Full list of comments on funders and commissioners**

### **Any comments about particularly good or bad funders?**

#### **Good**

Area Action Partnerships have been particularly approachable and flexible.

Ballinger was quick off the mark and most supportive followed by a number of local, regional and national funders. All have been very helpful and supportive

Lottery has been very supportive. Local commissioners at Northumberland County Council have also been supportive.

Community Foundation Northumberland - Excellent very understanding.

Everyone seems to have been very understanding, and have allowed funding and work to continue.

Funders appear to be doing their best to keep organisations informed, working to the same uncertainties as everybody else.

Funding has been provided through government schemes within advertised timescales.

Gateshead Council ESF delivery team have been very accommodating.

Good response generally. Still some funders in the NE have directly forwarded money to know recipients but not opened it up to a wider offer. There needs to be more focus now on post-Covid resilience funding.

Lottery is main funder and wholly understanding of, and accommodating of our funding requirements.

Made contact to explain flexibility about dates/start times.

Majority excellent.

National Lottery have been excellent at reassuring groups about their grant spends and how they can support. Ballinger have been great at fast turn around and easy access of emergency funding. CDCF have been great at having two themes to funding to recognise the need not just emergency but also survival.

Our funders have been extremely supportive and communication has been excellent.

Our local authorities have been very good.

Our main funder is Sport England. They have been exceptional; quickly coming forward to state that our funding was secure and that they were prepared to be flexible on KPIs and work programmes so that we could respond to Covid-19. They have also confirmed our funding for 2021-2022 earlier than was planned.

Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Dulverton Trust, Virgin Money Foundation have all been great.

Postcode Community Trust - proactively emailed to say grant was now completely unrestricted and could be used however was needed; reporting conditions also lessened.

Relationships with funders are strong, understanding and supportive.

Sunderland City Council have told us they are happy to wait for reports and outcomes and possibly extending funded projects. Gentoo Aspire have also done this for us as reporting on a project was due.

Support has been very good.

The Community Foundation (Northumberland and Tyne & Wear) have reduced SMART objectives for a specific project from three in number to one and extended the period for completion of the project by a year.

The Jack Brunton Charitable Trust saved us in March and the Yapp Charitable Trust will keep its promise for July. Small amounts but great attitude.

The lottery has been excellent in getting in touch with advice and reassurance.

There seems to be a genuine desire to get funding to groups as soon as possible.

They have been excellent.

They have been proactive in contacting us.

They understand our challenges and have been very flexible with us.

#iwill/AoC/Pears have been excellent

### **Bad**

Difficult to contact as staff on furlough or working from home.

Funding paused. No contact made by ACE. Replaced with emergency funding at much lower level.

I have not heard from funders.

Lack of clarity from some, others have referred to loss of contract.

NCC promised me a £500 grant on 8 April - I am still waiting two weeks later - had to use my own personal money.

No support from any funders in NE.

Not really any information coming through on revised project outputs/extension of delivery/risk to anticipated income.

Of three outstanding applications for grants for improvement work on our village hall, one turned us down flat and we have not been able to contact the other two.

The government's grants appear unrelated to actual or potential loss and this means that resources are not necessarily being well targeted.

There are no opportunities for young people's funding.

We have still been required to submit EOY reports to release next funding streams, so far no response to our contingency plans. Also no other contact or correspondence from other funding providers.

We were in receipt of funding from Youth Investment fund as our main income and this was ending in April 2020. However, all our new applications were put on hold with funders such as Paul Hamlyn Foundation as they are not accepting new applications.

### **Mixed/neutral**

Big nationals like Paul Hamlyn and Tudor been great and very supportive offering additional support, funding and access to other resources. Also, local funders like Ballinger Trust been very quick to respond at grass roots as usual which is good. Virgin Money Foundation also responded quickly. Disappointed in the lottery, where is the government money and why is it not open for bids yet, too slow. Also Newcastle City Council response is

poor, asking for monitoring to be completed at same time (at first), and making you justify how you can still use Newcastle Fund in lockdown, not supportive and appear to not know what they are doing. However not public health they have been supportive.

Do not know outcome yet - still looking for sources.

Even a negative outcome is helpful.

I have not had any advice on grants available apart from a possible reduction in the building rates which I am about to apply for.

In the short term our founders are prepared for alternative outcomes. However, they are uncommitted about any further funding or future funding.

Mixed response...would be more helpful if funders didn't stall processes. Some government depts. very mixed.

Most are good - some have not made decisions (yet!) - some work 'on hold' as funders not willing to (fully) support on-line delivery and want money held till groups can restart.

Most grant funders have been excellent at being flexible and lifting restrictions. Local authority not so good - no contact at all.

Most grant funders have been incredibly responsive. But, local authority paused contract.

NLHF very flexible about current projects (the problem is closing applications to those submitted and the pipeline).

Probably limited by government-imposed constraints themselves.

Smaller and grant funders have been excellent - flexible and supportive. ESF and National Lottery (BBO) less so - they make the right noises but no firm commitment to relaxing time scales etc.

Some funders are being incredibly understanding - keeping the application and reporting process proportionate and accepting the organisation is needing to focus all attentions on service delivery and support. So many different potential funders - it would have been good if they could all have "banded" together, had one basic application form etc. thus reducing their and our workloads. Some funders application forms and requirements have been overly onerous.

Some have stopped our funding, others have been very flexible and supportive.

There has been some vanity funding but I would hope that funders see this as a longer term journey (a minimum of two years).

## **Any comments about particularly good or bad commissioners?**

### **Good**

as above...NLHF one of the good, ESFA the opposite.

DCC Public Health and Durham CCG have been very understanding and flexible.

Delayed payments of grant when we couldn't meet deadlines for submission

Excellent.

Extensions have been in place since the start of Covid-19, and have been so flexible and open to new ideas.

Middlesbrough Council (Learning Disabilities) have continued their average monthly payment - a lifesaver.

South Tyneside Council have been very flexible and supportive.

There seems to be a genuine desire to get funding to groups as soon as possible.

They have been supportive of our plans to readjust to meet current situation.

Very flexible, responsive and excellent communication.

We are working very well with our local authorities in connection with changes we have made to services etc.

### **Bad**

Most things have just been cancelled outright.

No correspondence as yet.

No information on impact post Covid-19.

We were working with commissioners to become commission compliant - now on hold.

Some commissioners have asked for an avalanche of information, sometimes the same information many times.

It is unclear if they are using it or justifying its collection to demonstrate their activity.

### **Mixed/neutral**

CCG - Very good. LA - Very bad.

Do not know where to get help.

It is important that contracts are kept in place so that services can retain key/trained/experienced staff and the core of organisation so that work can begin immediately or services can be pivoted in the short term.

Public health good Newcastle city council bad.

So far this has been mostly positive, but there is a concern for the future.

Some project funding going ahead, some not.

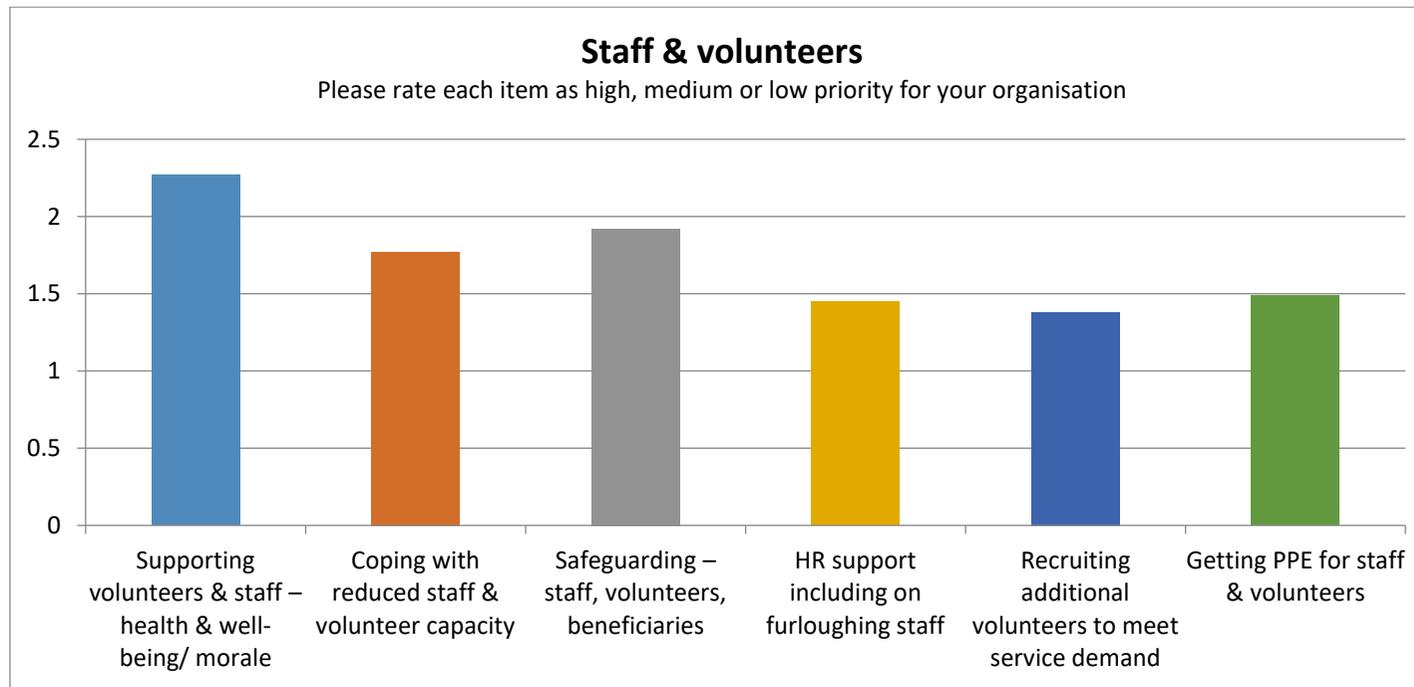
We're waiting for definite information on future funding.

### Appendix 3: In depth analysis of organisation current and future needs

#### What help does your organisation need over the next two months?

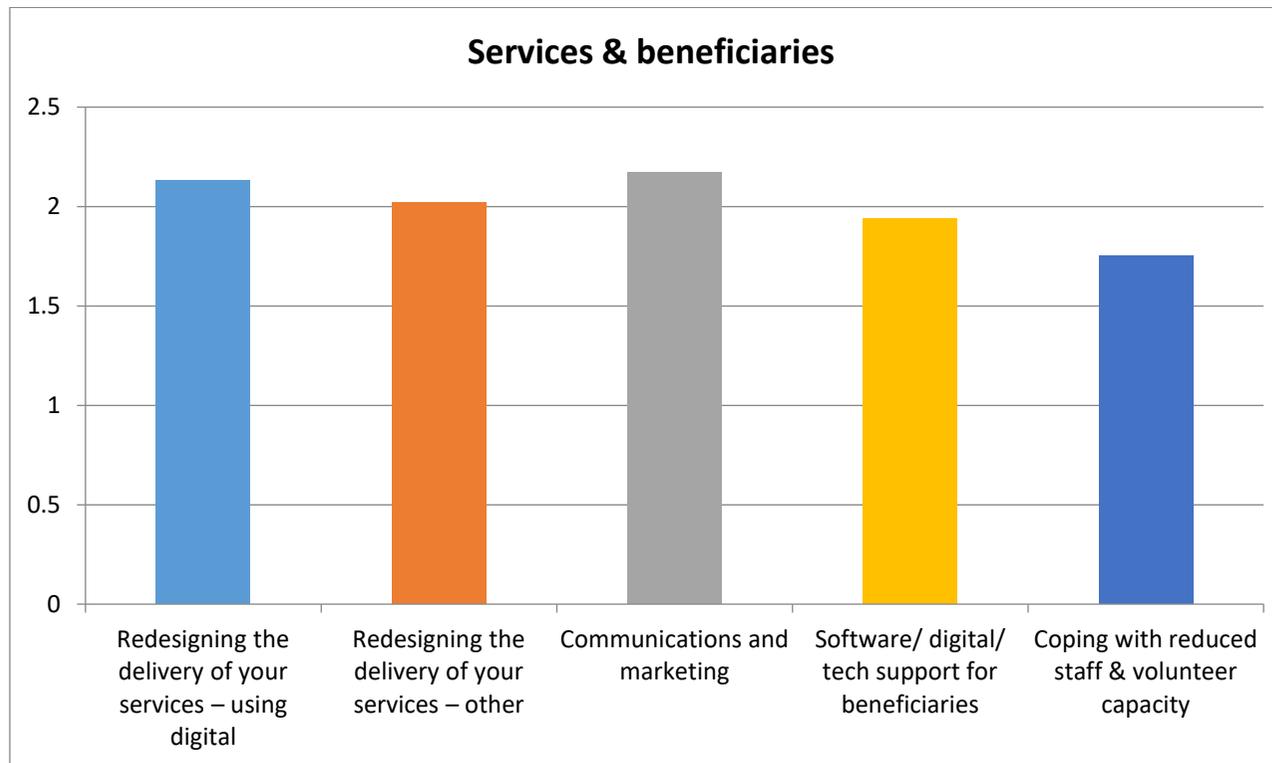
##### Staff and volunteers

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
Supporting volunteers/staff – health, wellbeing and morale	49%	160	28%	90	23%	74	324	2.27
Coping with reduced staff and volunteer capacity	24%	79	28%	90	48%	155	324	1.77
Safeguarding – staff, volunteers, beneficiaries	33%	107	26%	85	41%	132	324	1.92
HR support including on furloughing staff	12%	40	20%	65	68%	219	324	1.45
Recruiting additional volunteers to meet service demand	7%	22	25%	80	69%	222	324	1.38
Getting PPE for staff and volunteers	15%	49	19%	60	66%	215	324	1.49



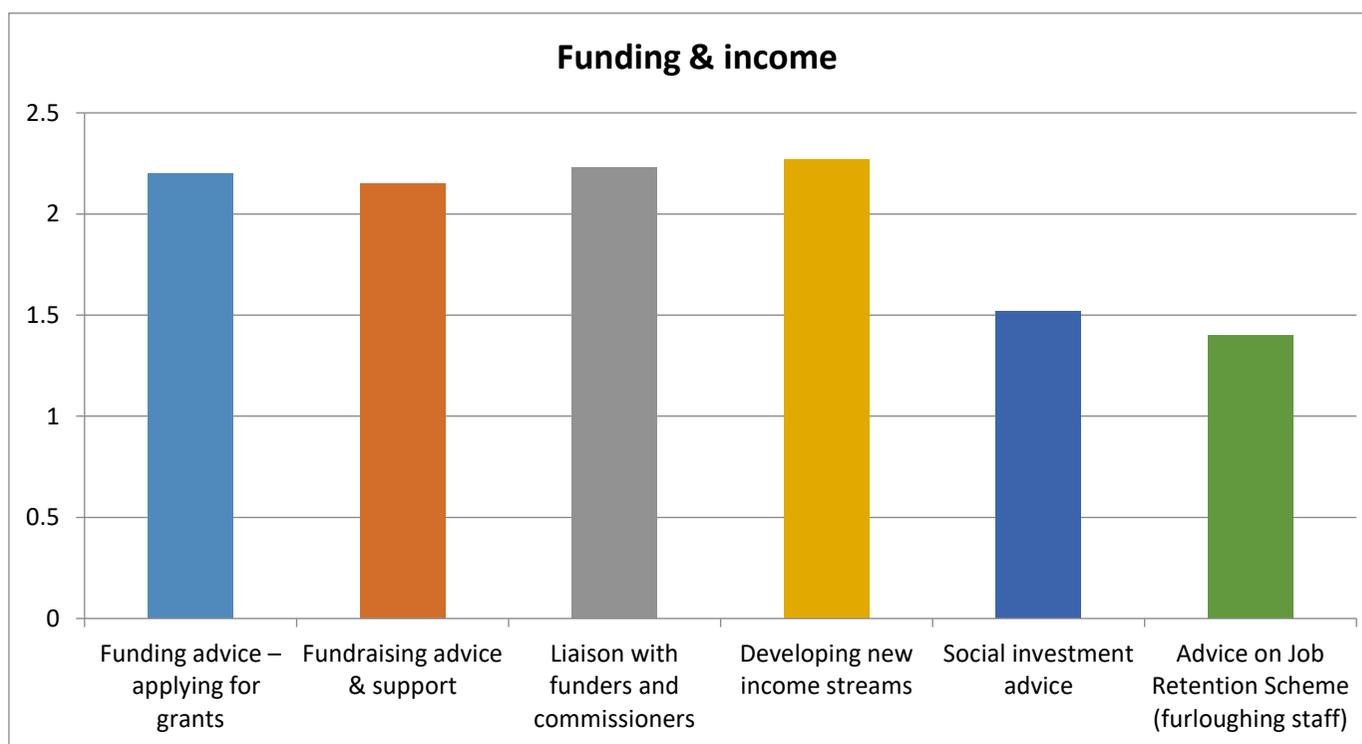
## Services and beneficiaries

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Redesigning the delivery of your services – using digital	45%	145	24%	77	31%	102	324	2.13
Redesigning the delivery of your services – other	37%	120	28%	92	35%	112	324	2.02
Communications and marketing	42%	137	32%	104	26%	83	324	2.17
Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries	35%	112	25%	81	40%	131	324	1.94
Coping with reduced staff and volunteer capacity	22%	70	31%	102	47%	152	324	1.75



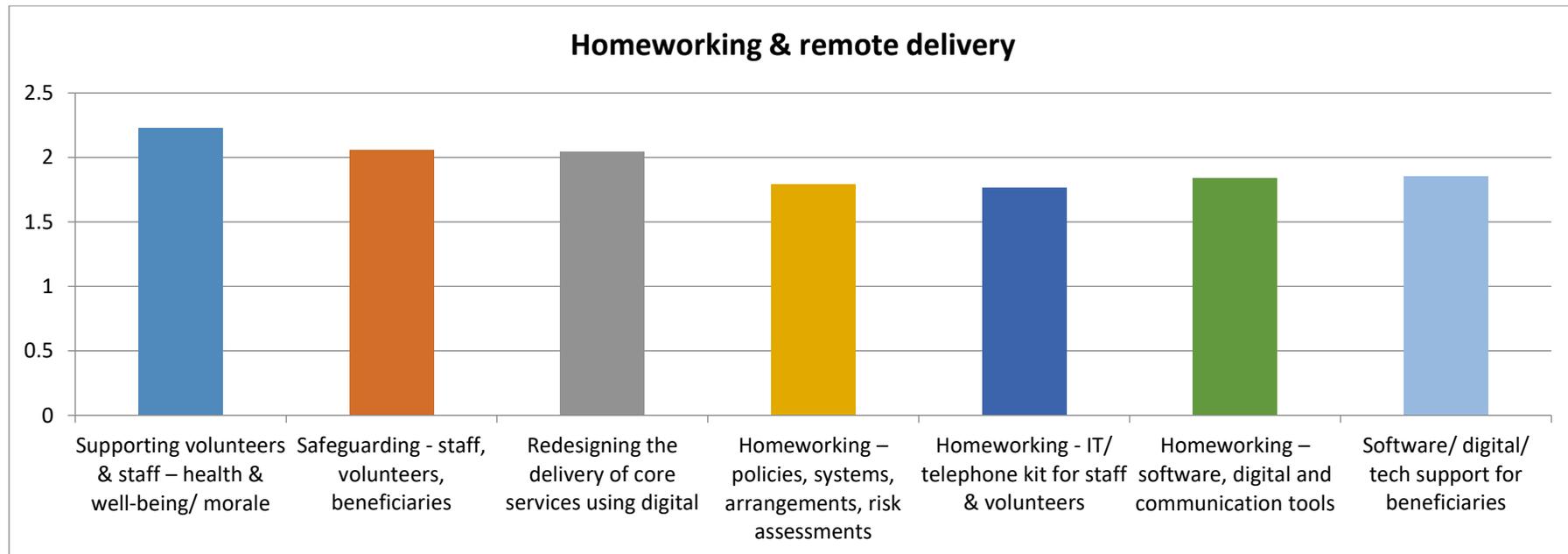
## Funding and income

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
Funding advice – applying for grants	46%	148	29%	93	26%	83	324	2.2
Fundraising advice and support	42%	137	30%	97	28%	90	324	2.15
Liaison with funders and commissioners	46%	149	31%	99	23%	76	324	2.23
Developing new income streams	52%	170	23%	73	25%	81	324	2.27
Social investment advice	15%	49	21%	69	64%	206	324	1.52
Advice on Job Retention Scheme (furloughing staff)	11%	37	17%	55	72%	232	324	1.4



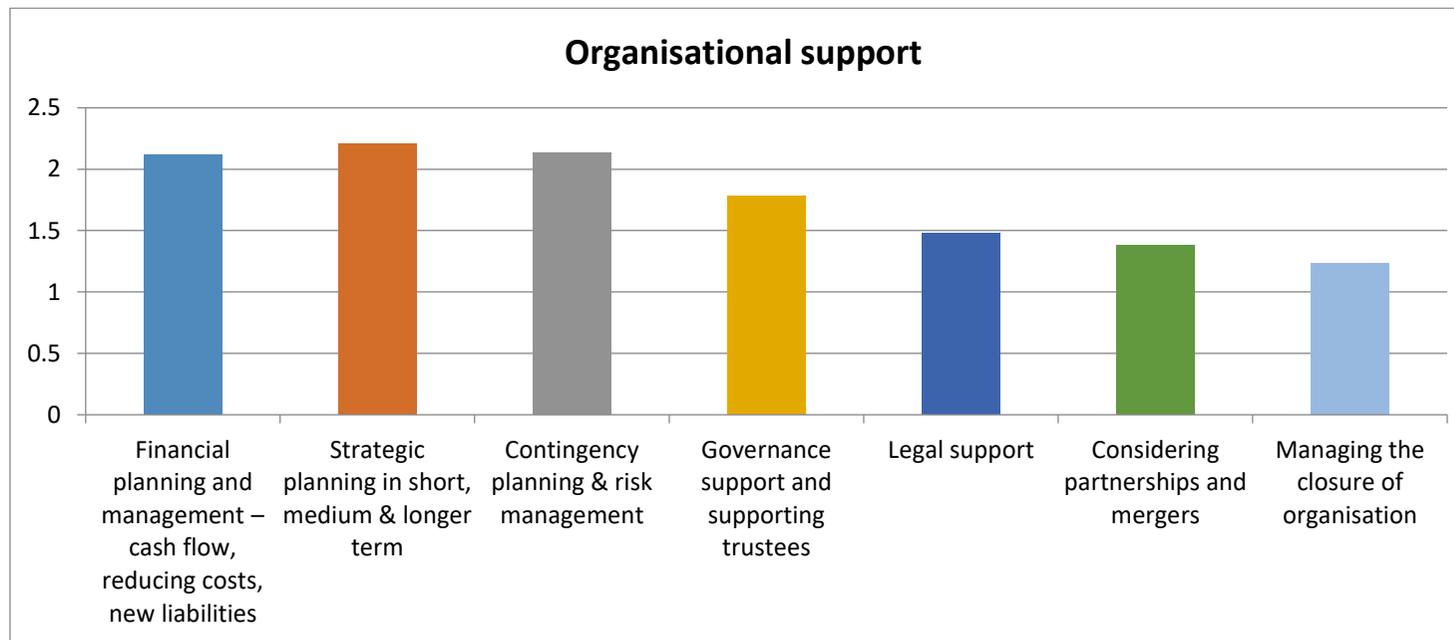
## Homeworking and remote delivery

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Supporting volunteers/staff – health, wellbeing and morale	48%	157	27%	86	25%	81	324	2.23
Safeguarding – staff, volunteers, beneficiaries	40%	129	26%	84	34%	111	324	2.06
Redesigning the delivery of core services using digital	40%	128	25%	81	35%	115	324	2.04
Homeworking – policies, systems, arrangements, risk assessments	24%	79	31%	99	45%	146	324	1.79
Homeworking – IT/telephone kit for staff and volunteers	27%	86	23%	75	50%	163	324	1.76
Homeworking – software, digital and communication tools	30%	98	24%	77	46%	149	324	1.84
Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries	31%	101	22%	72	47%	151	324	1.85



## Organisational support and development

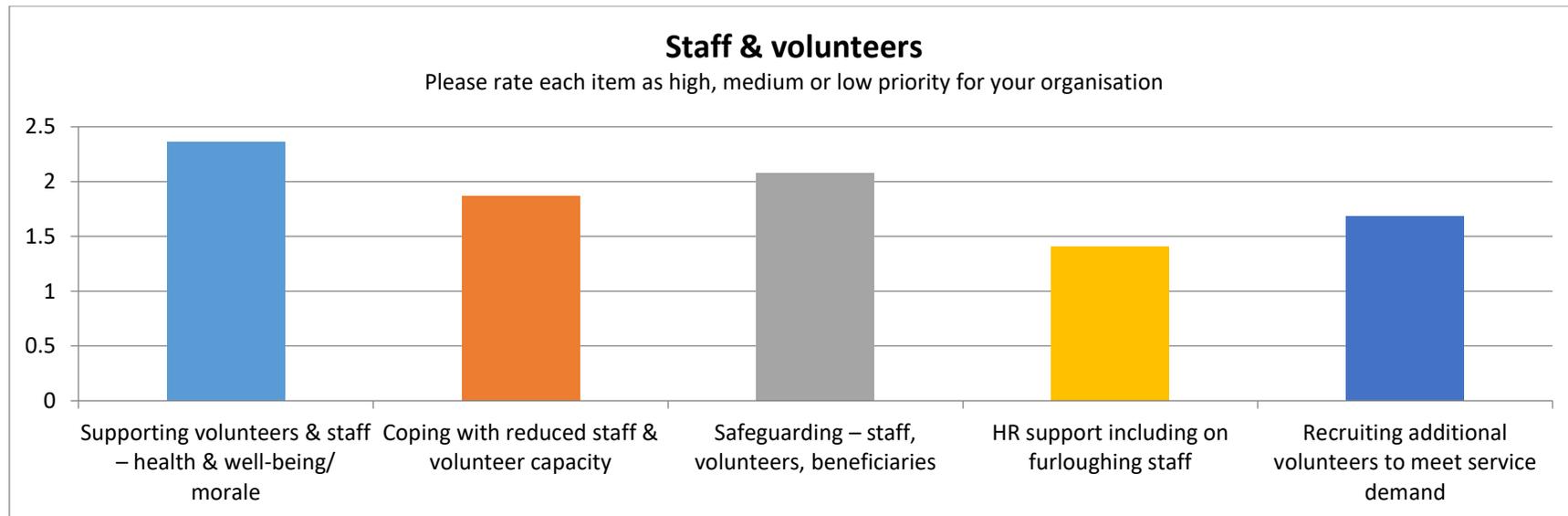
	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Financial planning and management – cash flow, reducing costs, new liabilities	40%	131	31%	101	28%	92	324	2.12
Strategic planning in short, medium and longer term	42%	137	37%	119	21%	68	324	2.21
Contingency planning and risk management	37%	120	39%	127	24%	77	324	2.13
Governance support and supporting trustees	20%	64	38%	124	42%	136	324	1.78
Legal support	10%	31	29%	93	62%	200	324	1.48
Considering partnerships and mergers	7%	24	23%	75	69%	225	324	1.38
Managing the closure of organisation	6%	18	12%	39	82%	267	324	1.23



## What help do you anticipate your organisation needing in the recovery period post Covid-19?

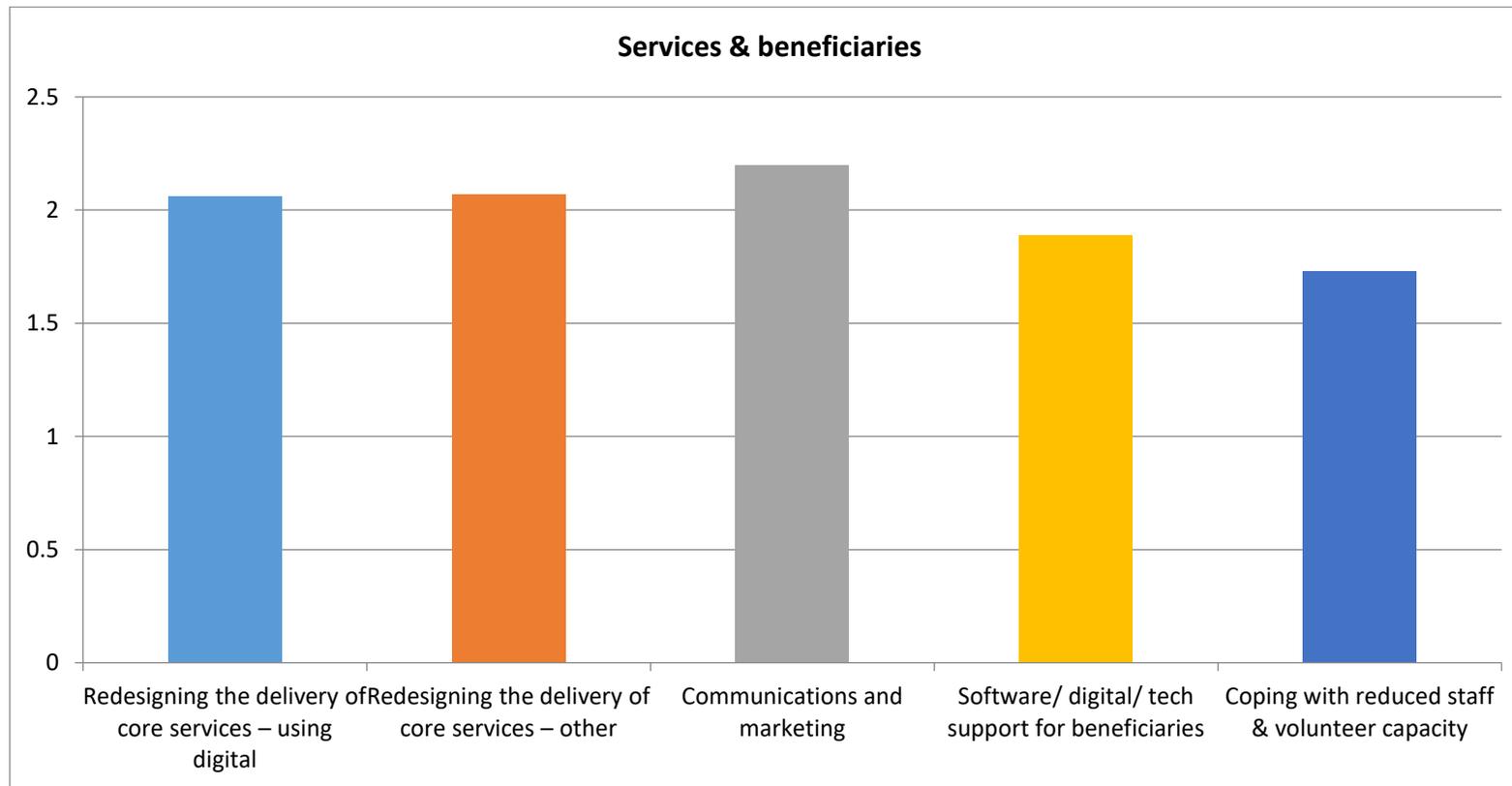
### Staff and volunteers

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
Supporting volunteers/staff – health, wellbeing and morale	54%	155	29%	83	17%	50	288	2.36
Coping with reduced staff and volunteer capacity	25%	71	38%	108	38%	109	288	1.87
Safeguarding – staff, volunteers, beneficiaries	38%	110	31%	90	31%	88	288	2.08
HR support including on furloughing staff	10%	30	20%	59	69%	199	288	1.41
Recruiting additional volunteers to meet service demand	17%	49	34%	97	49%	142	288	1.68



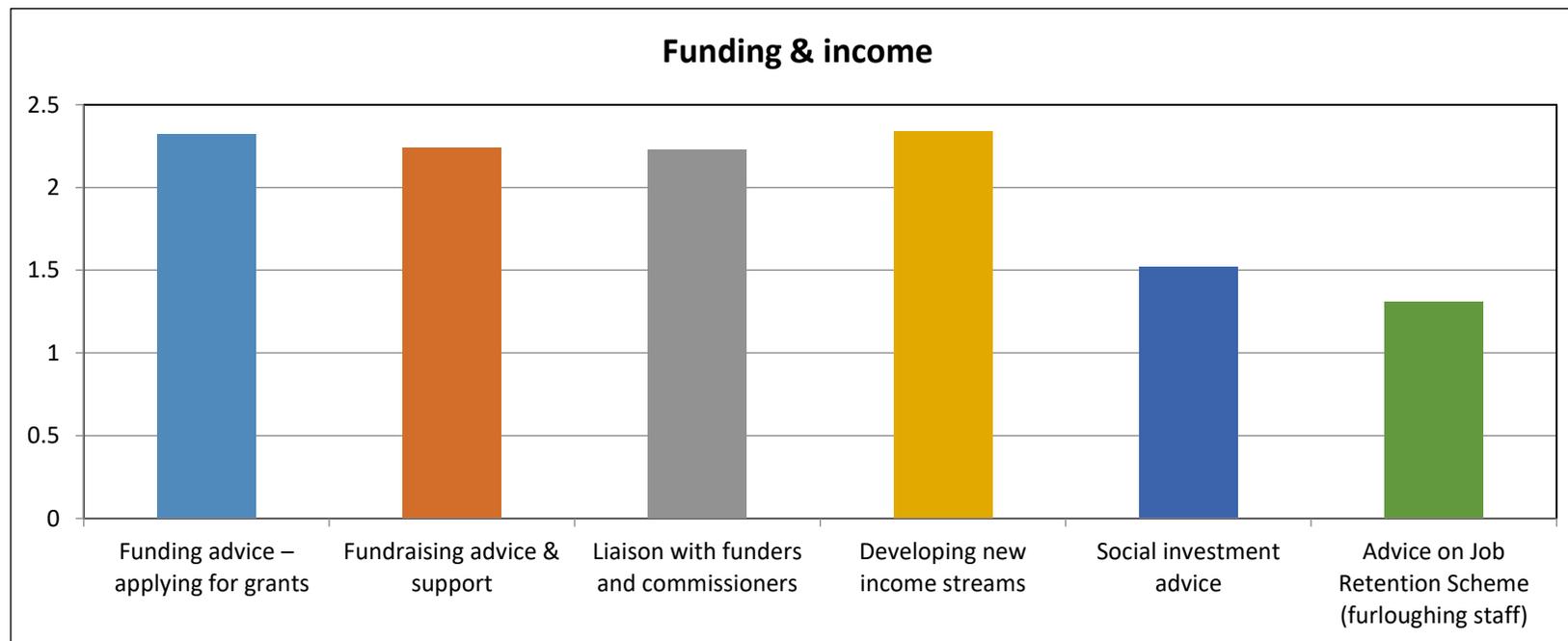
## Services and beneficiaries

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
Redesigning the delivery of core services – using digital	39%	111	28%	82	33%	95	288	2.06
Redesigning the delivery of core services – other	38%	110	31%	88	31%	90	288	2.07
Communications and marketing	41%	119	38%	108	21%	61	288	2.2
Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries	31%	89	27%	78	42%	121	288	1.89
Coping with reduced staff and volunteer capacity	19%	56	34%	98	47%	134	288	1.73



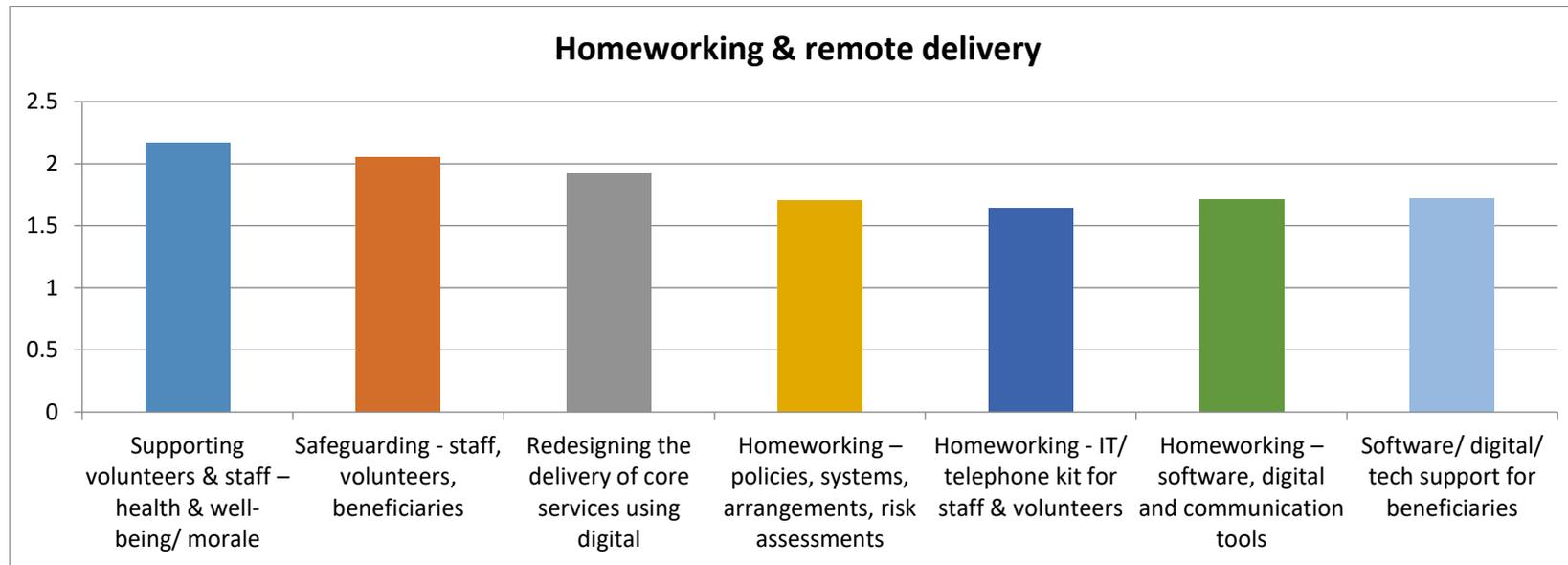
## Funding and income

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Funding advice – applying for grants	53%	154	25%	72	22%	62	288	2.32
Fundraising advice and support	48%	137	29%	83	24%	68	288	2.24
Liaison with funders and commissioners	47%	135	29%	84	24%	69	288	2.23
Developing new income streams	54%	155	26%	75	20%	58	288	2.34
Social investment advice	15%	44	22%	62	63%	182	288	1.52
Advice on Job Retention Scheme (furloughing staff)	7%	19	18%	52	75%	217	288	1.31



## Homeworking and remote delivery

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Supporting volunteers/staff – health, wellbeing and morale	45%	131	26%	74	29%	83	288	2.17
Safeguarding - staff, volunteers, beneficiaries	39%	113	27%	77	34%	98	288	2.05
Redesigning the delivery of core services using digital	32%	92	28%	82	40%	114	288	1.92
Homeworking – policies, systems, arrangements, risk assessments	21%	60	29%	83	50%	145	288	1.7
Homeworking - IT telephone kit for staff and volunteers	20%	58	24%	69	56%	161	288	1.64
Homeworking – software, digital and communication tools	22%	64	26%	76	51%	148	288	1.71
Software/digital/tech support for beneficiaries	25%	72	22%	62	53%	154	288	1.72



## Organisational support and development

	High		Medium		Low		Total	Weighted Average
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Financial planning and management – cash flow, reducing costs, new liabilities	45%	130	31%	88	24%	70	288	2.21
Strategic planning in short, medium and longer term	47%	134	33%	96	20%	58	288	2.26
Contingency planning and risk management	38%	110	38%	108	24%	70	288	2.14
Governance support and supporting trustees	22%	62	39%	113	39%	113	288	1.82
Legal support	11%	31	28%	82	61%	175	288	1.5
Considering partnerships and mergers	10%	30	22%	62	68%	196	288	1.42
Managing the closure of organisation	6%	18	13%	37	81%	233	288	1.25

