Ipsos MORI

Browne Jacobson Shared Services Survey of Local Authorities
Topline Results
07 January 2011

- 5 minute telephone survey of senior local authority officers in England.
- Fieldwork conducted between 29 November and 17 December 2010.
- Results are based on 150 interviews (76 corporate level and 74 service head level).
- Quotas set for local authority type and council position (corporate/ service head split).
- Where results do not sum to 100%, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of 'don't know/ not stated' response categories.
- An asterisk (*) indicates a value of less than 0.5% but not zero.
- Please note that some figures are displayed as numbers rather than percentages where the base is small.
- Data is unweighted.

Q1.   **Local government in England faces many challenges in the coming years. To meet these challenges, which, if any, of the following models do you think your authority might adopt as a future means of service provision?**
Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Collaborative working/shared services between public sector bodies	98
Joint venture arrangements with private sector partners	78
Outsourcing services on a service by service basis	85
Large scale outsourcing/transformation	35
None of these	-
Don't know	-

Q2.   **Does your authority currently share any frontline services [e.g. recycling collection or housing] or "back office" functions [e.g. human resources or legal office] with any other local authorities or local public bodies?**
Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Yes – frontline services (only)	12
Yes – "back office" functions (only)	21
Yes – both	56
No	11
Don't know	1

Q3.   **For which frontline service areas does your authority currently share services?**
Base: All who currently share frontline services (102)

	%
Environment	45
Social care	37
Housing	23
Transport	19
Education and learning	18
Building Control/Planning	9
Leisure/Cultural Services	8
Revenues and Benefits	8
Customer Services	3
Fraud/Internal Audit	1
Other	10

Q4a **Is your authority considering sharing any further <u>frontline services</u> in the future?**
Base: All who currently share frontline services (102)

	%
Yes - in the next 6 months	22
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	47
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	25
Yes - in more than 2 years	1
No – remain the same	4
No - decrease	-
Don't know	1

Q4b **Is your authority considering sharing any <u>frontline services</u> in the future?**
Base: All who do not currently share frontline services (48)

	%
Yes - in the next 6 months	27
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	40
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	17
Yes - in more than 2 years	2
No	13
Don't know	2

Q4. **Combined:**
a) Is your authority considering sharing any further <u>frontline services</u> in the future? .
b) Is your authority considering sharing any <u>frontline services</u> in the future?
Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Yes - in the next 6 months	23
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	45
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	23
Yes - in more than 2 years	1
No	4
No – remain the same	3
No - decrease	-
Don't know	1

Q5. **Which frontline service areas, if any, would your authority consider sharing in the future?**
Base: All who would consider sharing / sharing further frontline services (138)

	%
Environment	70
Social care	34
Housing	33
Transport	32
Education and learning	25
Leisure/Cultural Services	8
Revenues and Benefits	8
Building Control / Planning	6
Customer Services	2
Other	13
Don't know	6

Q6a. **Is your authority considering sharing any further 'back office' functions in the future?**
Base: All who currently share back office functions (115)

	%
Yes - in the next 6 months	30
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	37
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	23
Yes - in more than 2 years	4
No – remain the same	3
No - decrease	1
Don't know	3

Q6b. **Is your authority considering sharing any 'back office' functions in the future?**
Base: All who do not currently share back office functions (35)

	N
Yes - in the next 6 months	13
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	7
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	11
Yes - in more than 2 years	-
No	3
Don't know	1

Q6. **Combined:**
a) Is your authority considering sharing any further 'back office' functions in the future? .
b) Is your authority considering sharing any 'back office' functions in the future?
Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Yes - in the next 6 months	32
Yes - in the next 6 – 12 months	33
Yes - in the next 1 – 2 years	25
Yes - in more than 2 years	3
No	2
No – remain the same	2
No - decrease	1
Don't know	3

Q7. **Thinking about the total budget savings from all sources that your authority is planning in 2011/12, what percentage do you hope to achieve through shared services, if any?**
Base: All who would consider sharing / sharing further frontline services or back office functions within the next two years (146)

	%
Up to 5%	41
Between 5-10%	22
Between 10-15%	10
20% or more	8
None	1
Don't know	18

Q8.   **To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?**
       Base: All respondents (150)

		Strongly agree %	Tend to agree %	Neither agree nor disagree %	Tend to disagree %	Strongly disagree %	No opinion %
a)	**Shared service arrangements between public organisations are attractive but hard to deliver**	37	40	8	13	3	-
b)	**Shared services promise a lot but deliver little**	9	17	13	43	17	1
c)	**The long term rewards from shared services justify the short term challenges**	41	43	9	5	2	1

Q9.   **What do you think is the <u>biggest</u> barrier, if any, to delivering shared services in the local government sector?**

       Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Political/public opposition	28
Difficulty in trusting partner organisations	8
Lack of a collaborative culture	7
Cultural/political differences	7
Loss/concerns about loss of sovereignty/autonomy/control	7
Resistance from staff/unions	6
Difficulty in reaching acceptable agreements/organisation being territorial	5
Risk averse culture	4
Complexity of governance arrangements	3
Difficulties in agreeing shared budgets	3
Complexity of service level/legal agreements	3
Lack of financial resources	2
Restructuring/reform fatigue	1
Level of organisational and structural change needed	1
Leadership capability	1
Concerns about loss of openness and accountability	1
Other	11
None	1

Q10.   **And finally, would you be happy to be attributed as having taken part in this survey? Your responses will remain fully confidential.**
       Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Yes	71
No	29

QA.   **Position**
       Base: All respondents (150)

	%
Corporate	**51**
Chief Executive	13
Deputy Chief Executive	8
Chief Finance Officer	17
Corporate other	13
Service Head	**49**
Environment	15
Social Services	13
Leisure	20
Service Head other	1

QB.   **Authority type**
       Base: All respondents (150)

	%
County Council	9
London Authority	9
District / Borough Council	53
Metropolitan Borough Council / Unitary Authority	29