

South Wales Chamber Survey Results – Q3 2011

Each quarter, the South Wales Chamber undertakes an employer survey throughout South Wales. This survey covers a substantial amount of small businesses and large businesses. Businesses are asked to answer questions on themes such as;

- Home sales and orders
- Export sales and orders
- Employment prospects
- Investment
- Recruitment difficulties
- Cash flow
- Confidence
- Price pressures

This particular survey, which was undertaken in Quarter 3 2011, contained additional questions added by the Regional Learning Partnership. These questions were designed to find out details about themes such as the structure of the workforce, use of Welsh language, skills shortages, how employers advertise vacancies and also the qualification levels of current staff.

This agreement will be in place for a period of 1 year, and will hopefully give members of the RLP an insight into the needs, confidence and day to day life of businesses within the region. In the present economic climate, it is vital that any issues or concerns businesses might have are accurately represented so they can best inform the development of regional and national economic policy.

South West Wales Response Rates

Total South West Wales Responses – 93

Swansea - 78

NPT - 11

Pembrokeshire - 1

Carmarthenshire - 5

Due to low response rates for this quarter, the analysis has been undertaken to a South West Wales level instead of featuring a county breakdown



RECRUITMENT

Within the survey, a number of questions were asked of employers regarding their current approaches to recruitment, and their recent experience with the advertisement of vacancies.

Of the businesses within South West Wales who have tried to recruit staff during the period, 39% (31) have tried to recruit new staff.

The methods by which employers advertise and promote their vacancies was another question asked within the survey. This was felt to be useful in light of a perceived declining market share for Job Centre Plus nationally.

63 businesses within South West Wales responded to this particular question, and the results show that 48% (30) use Job Centre Plus to advertise and promote their vacancies.

The results also show however, that 49% (31) also rely on 'word of mouth' to fill any vacancies; with 25% (16) using Online Sites, and 22% (14) local press.

Of those who have advertised vacancies within this three month period, 92% (59) have advertised between 0 and 5 vacancies. Only 3 businesses (5%) have advertised between 6 and 10 available vacancies; 1 employer between 11 to 15 vacancies; and 1 employer over 16 vacancies.

SKILLS

Questions on employees skills featured within the survey. This is an area which we may possibly expand, should we receive sufficient and increasing response rates to future surveys.

Employers were asked if they thought they're current workforce had the skills and qualifications required to undertake their roles?

Of the 76 businesses within the region who responded to this question, 67% did agree that this was the case. 33% however did not think their employees all had the necessary qualifications or skills.

29% of employers who responded (22) thought that they had experienced skills shortages within the local labour market. 36% (27) disagreed, and 35% (26) thought this was not applicable to them.

Of those who had experienced skills shortages within the labour market in South West Wales, the skills deficiencies highlighted included - lack of initiative (56%); adaptability & flexibility (43%); literacy (35%); and problem solving skills (34%).

ADVICE & TRAINING

Where employers go to for advice and training was included within the survey. This is a section of limited question, which should we receive sufficient and increasing response rates, we can look to expand in future surveys possibly.

Of the 69 employers within the region who responded to the question of where they prefer to receive help and advice from to address any skills concerns or barriers, the majority with 25% preferred to go direct to training providers.

Whilst 17.5% sought advice from local colleges, 16% preferred to seek advice from Welsh Government officers. Only 10% of those questioned, sought advice from local government, and 9% from higher education institutions within their region.

Of all the respondents, 23% stated that they sought advice and training from 'other sources', to those listed above.

76 employers responded to the question on whether they offer Work Based Learning opportunities to young people, with 60% saying yes, and 40%, no.

Of those who responded yes, 54% stated that they offered in-house training, and 33%, modern apprenticeships. 22% offered 'Skill Build', and 4%, the 'Foundation of Modern Apprenticeships' (FMA).

The second survey will be issued during late November, into December 2011, and should there be a more substantial response rate, these results will then be incorporated within the Data Maps & Tables functionality within the Regional Learning & Skills Observatory, early in 2012.

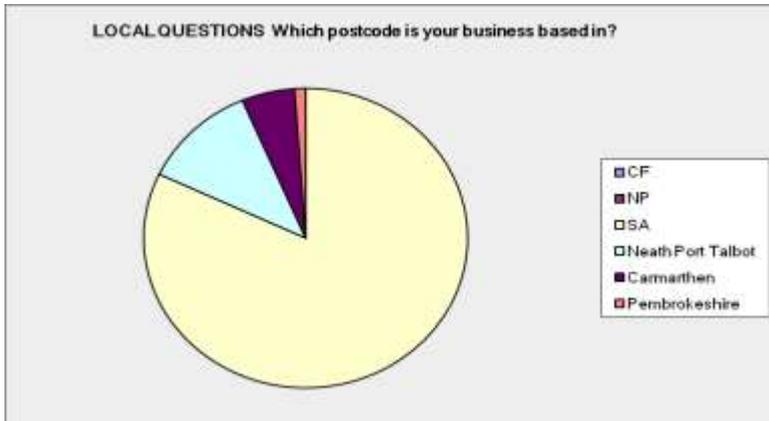


APPENDIX

Survey Results

Local Questions

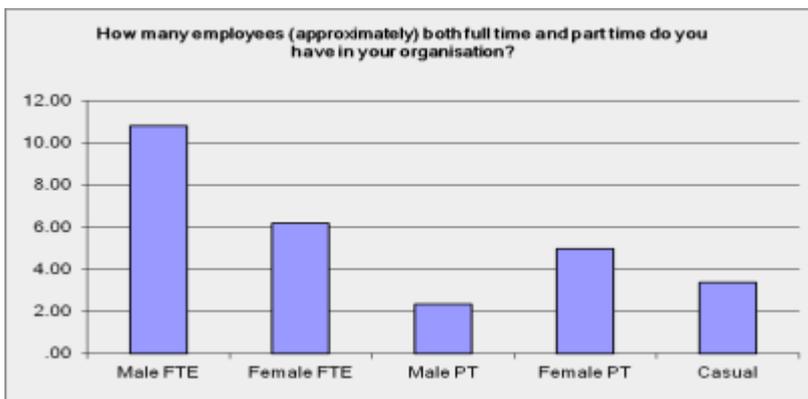
1) Which postcode is your business based in?



*future surveys to a county breakdown and not postcode

Your Business

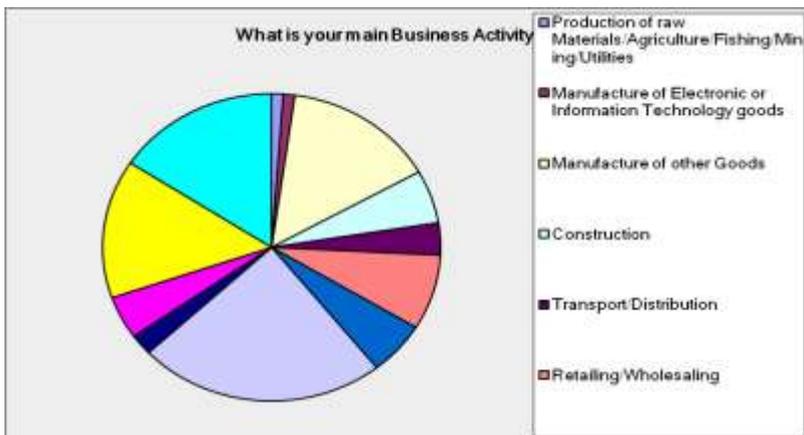
5) How many employees (approximately) both full time and part time do you have in your organisation?



6) How many employees do you have in the following age groups (approximately)?

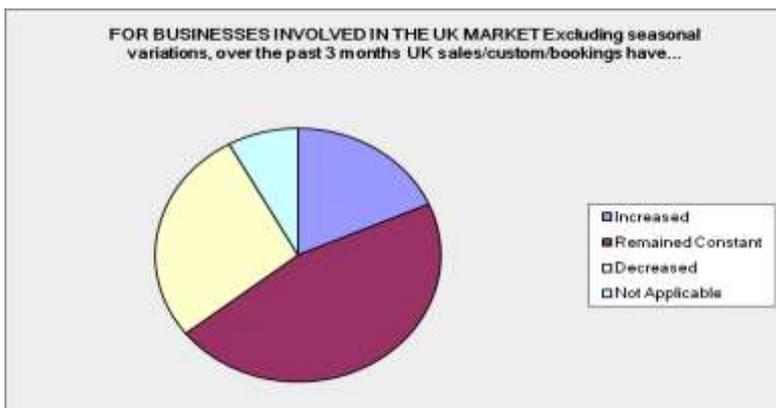


7) What is your main Business Activity?

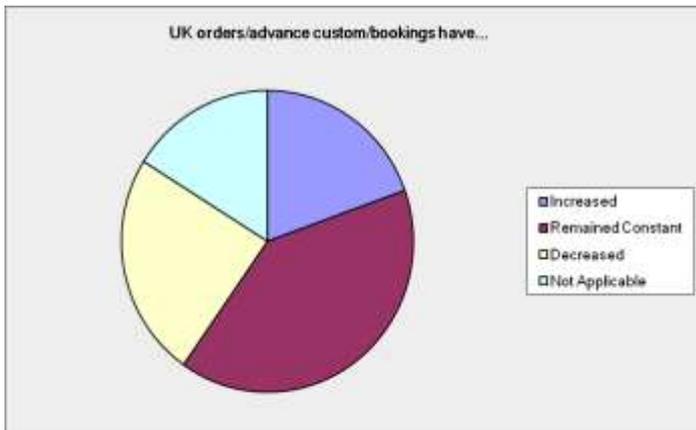


FOR BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN THE UK MARKET

8) Excluding seasonal variations, over the past 3 months UK sales/custom/bookings have...

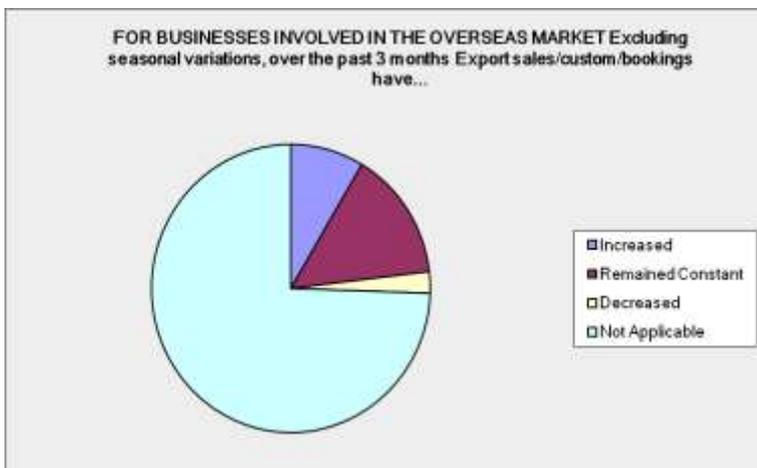


9) UK orders/advance custom/bookings have...

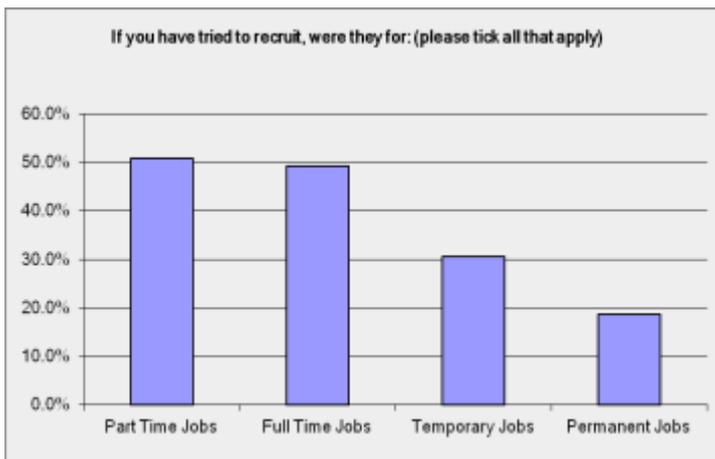


FOR BUSINESSES INVOLVED IN THE OVERSEAS MARKET

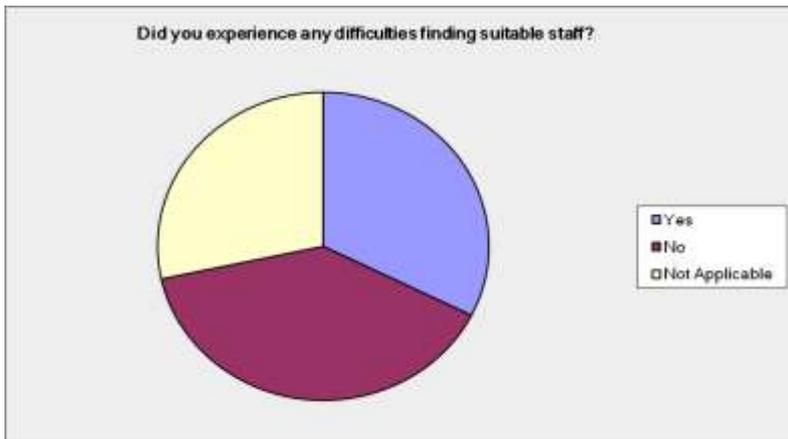
10) Excluding seasonal variations, over the past 3 months Export sales/custom/bookings have...



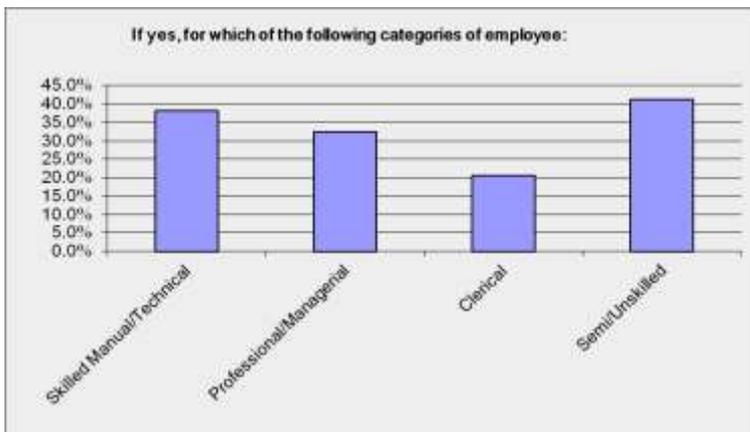
11) If you have tried to recruit, were they for: (please tick all that apply)



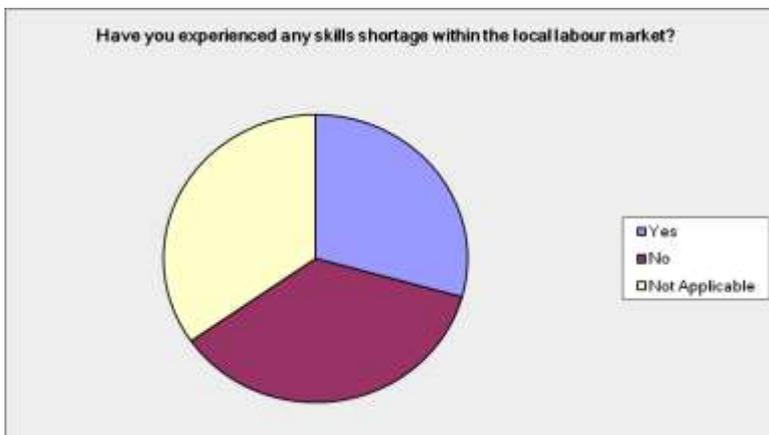
12) Did you experience any difficulties finding suitable staff?



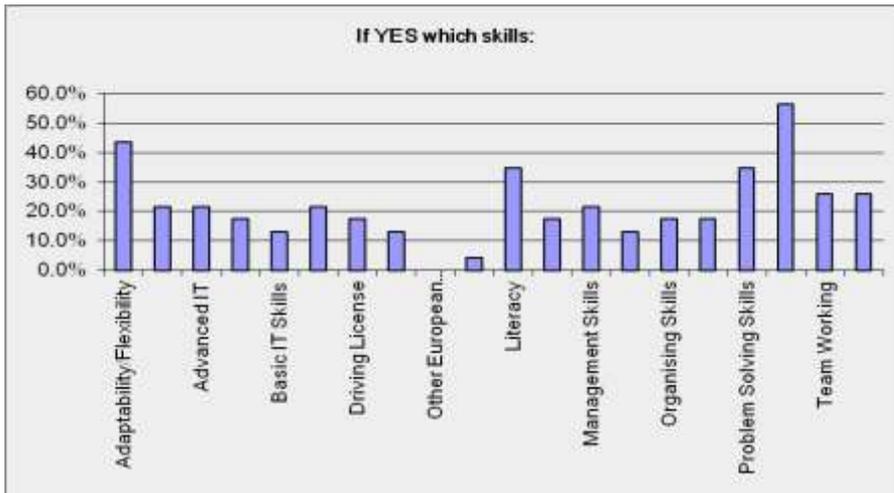
13) If yes, for which of the following categories of employee:



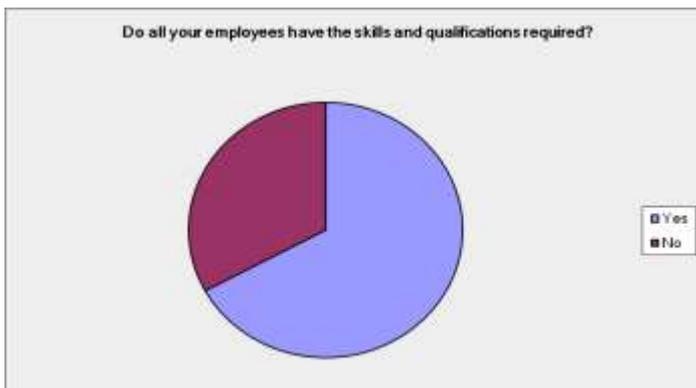
14) Have you experienced any skills shortage within the local labour market?



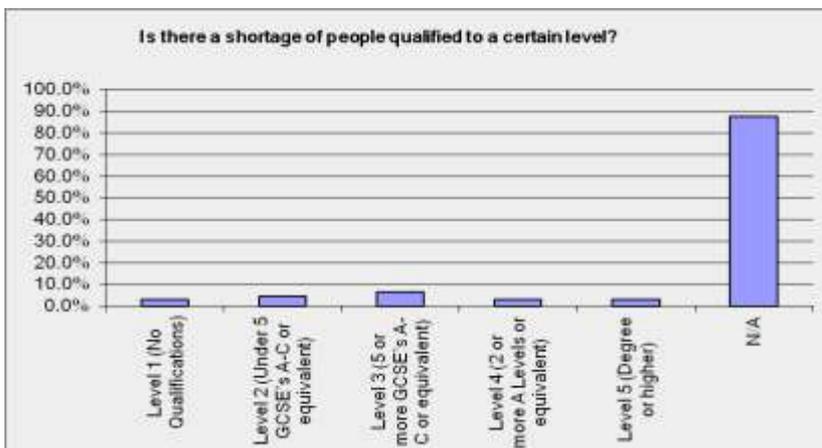
15) If YES which skills:



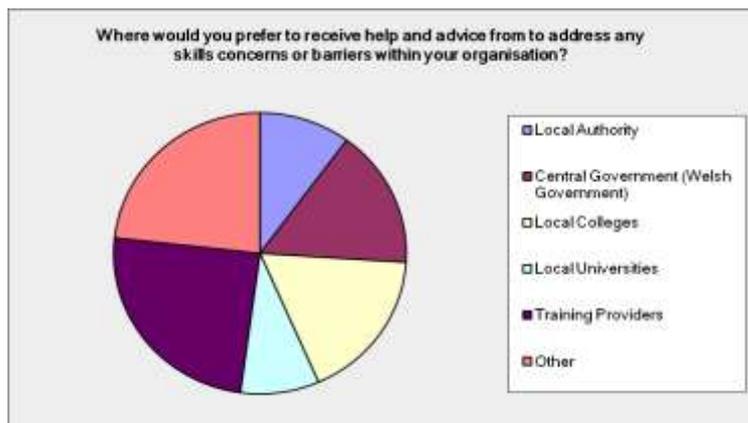
16) Do all your employees have the skills and qualifications required?



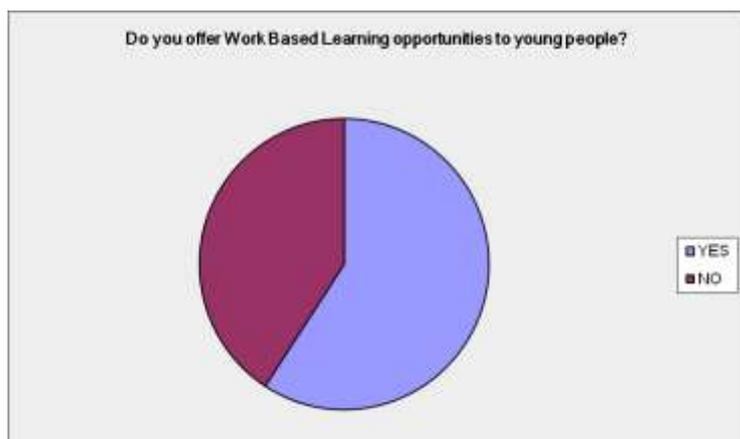
17) Is there a shortage of people qualified to a certain level?



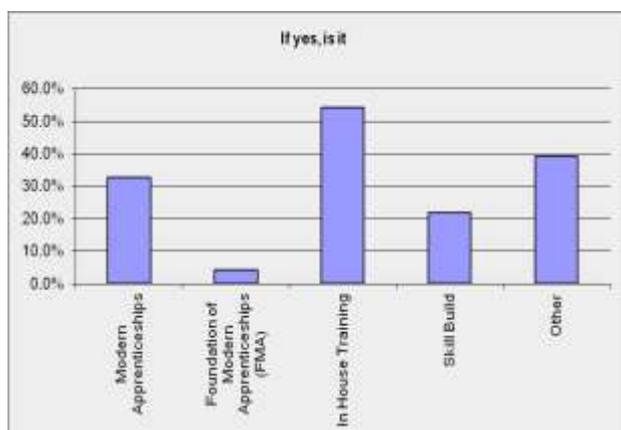
18) Where would you prefer to receive help and advice from to address any skills concerns or barriers within your organisation?



19) Do you offer Work Based Learning opportunities to young people?



20) If yes, is it



CASHFLOW

21) Over the past 3 months has your cashflow

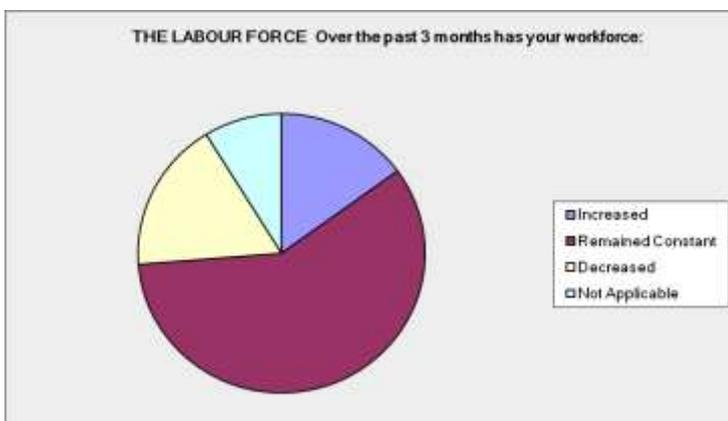


22) Export orders/advance custom/bookings have...

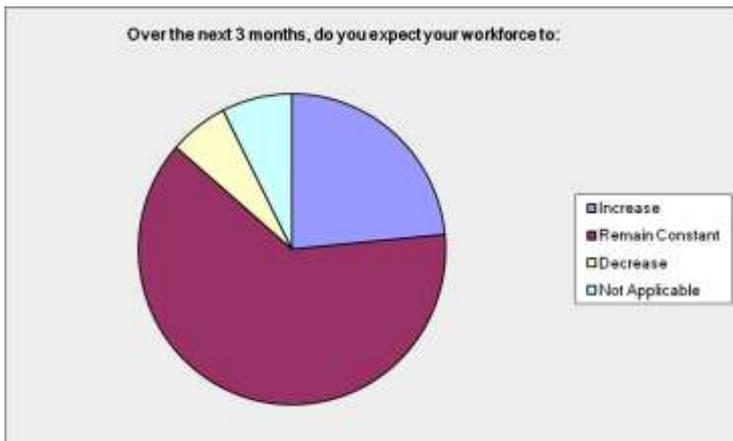


THE LABOUR FORCE

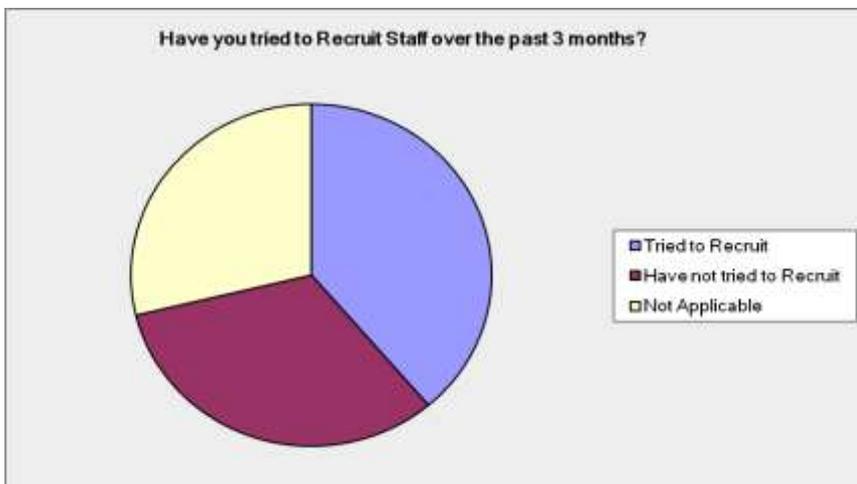
23) Over the past 3 months has your workforce:



24) Over the next 3 months, do you expect your workforce to:



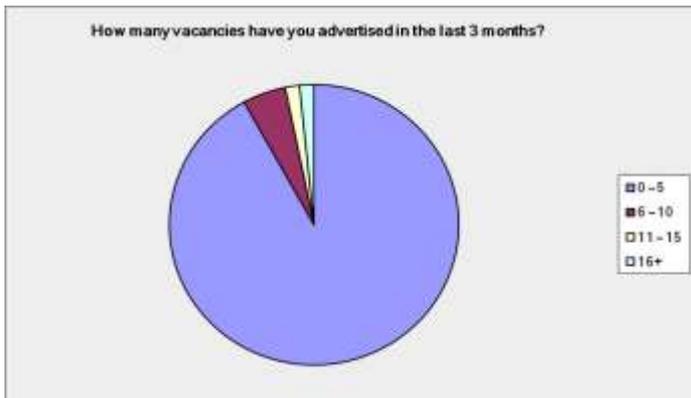
25) Have you tried to Recruit Staff over the past 3 months?



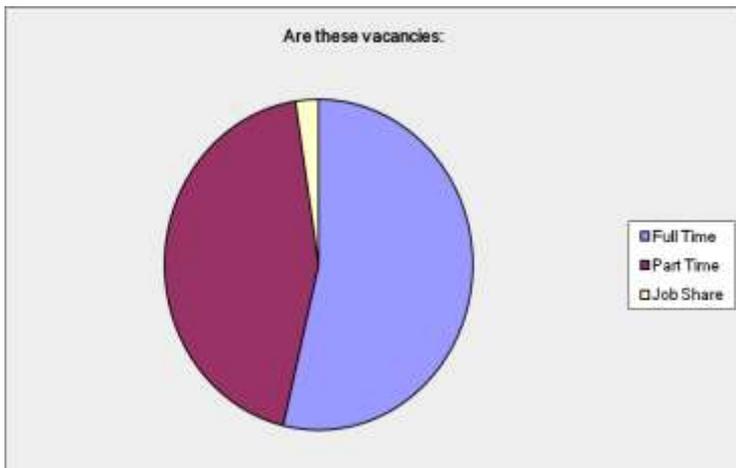
26) Where do you currently advertise your vacancies?



27) How many vacancies have you advertised in the last 3 months?

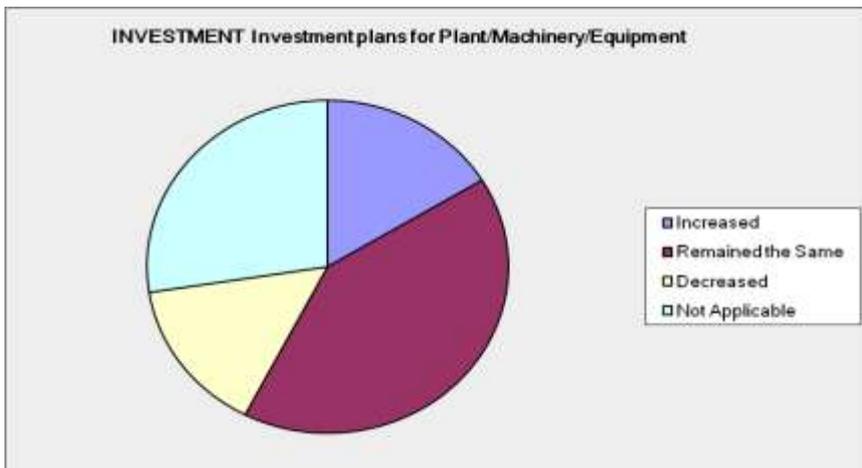


28) Are these vacancies:



INVESTMENT

29) Has Investment plans for Plant/Machinery/Equipment



30) Investment plans for Training

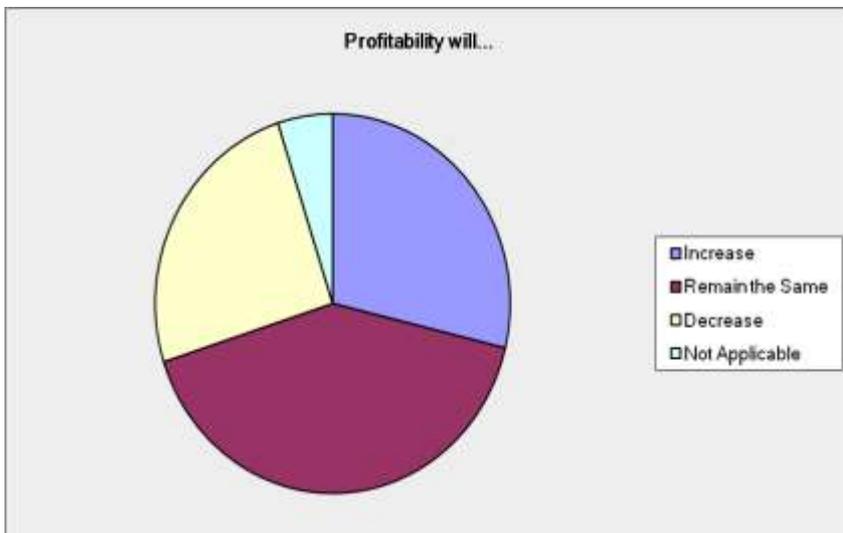


BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

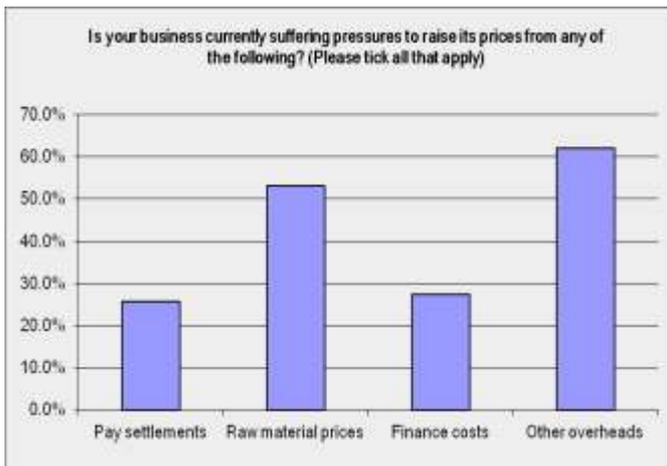
31) Do you believe that over the next 12 months Turnover will...



32) Profitability will...

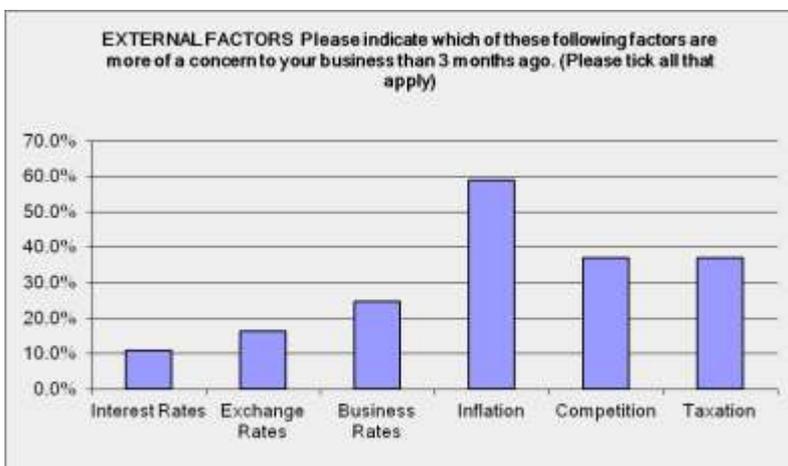


33) Is your business currently suffering pressures to raise its prices from any of the following? (Please tick all that apply)



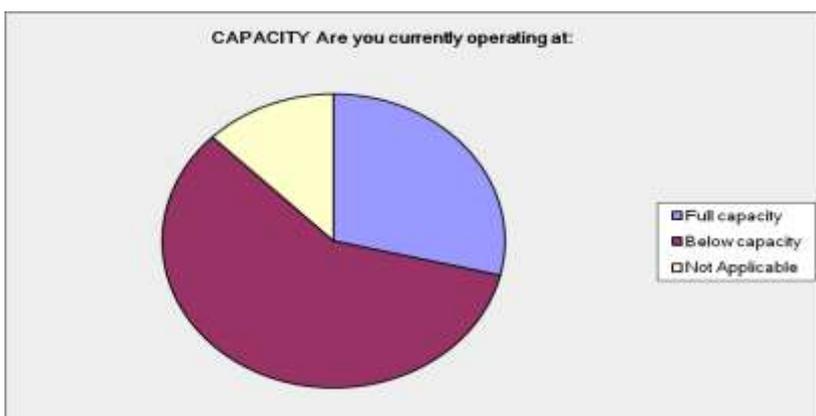
EXTERNAL FACTORS

34) Please indicate which of these following factors are more of a concern to your business than 3 months ago. (Please tick all that apply)



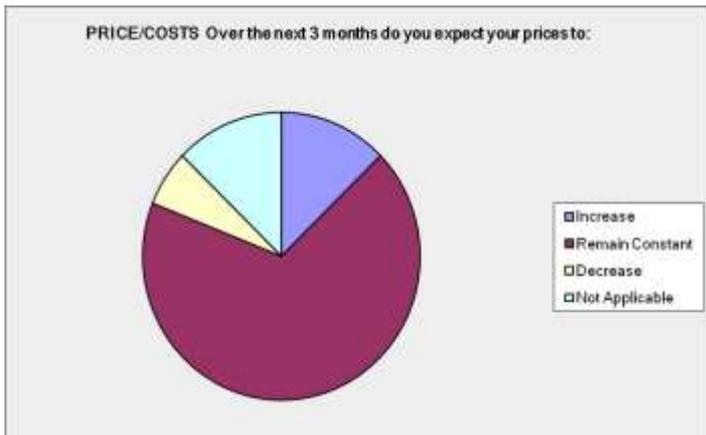
CAPACITY

35) Are you currently operating at:



PRICE/COSTS

36) Over the next 3 months do you expect your prices to:



WELSH LANGUAGE SKILLS

37) How important is the use of Welsh Language Skills within your organisation?

