

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Meeting with Cabinet Member, Health and Communities****21 October 2014****Report of the Strategic Director, Health and Communities****BETTER BUSINESS REGULATION UPDATE****1. Purpose of the report:**

To inform the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities of progress made to support local businesses in partnership with other regulators as part of the 'Better Business Regulation' (BBR) initiative (formerly known as Better Business for All) and to seek approval to provide some interim financial support for a D2N2 wide health and safety advisory service.

2. Information and analysis

- 2.1. As previously advised, the Better Business for All initiative was established by the Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO); part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and is currently being rolled out across the country. The main objective of the programme is to bring together local and national regulators with businesses and business representatives within the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) to encourage a better working relationship and a more embracing approach to achieving regulatory compliance. In this way it is anticipated that local authorities can support local businesses to grow by improving confidence and reducing costs of compliance.
- 2.2. Derbyshire Trading Standards Service has taken a lead role within the D2N2 region and is hosting a Programme Coordinator to support the developing relationship. Good progress has been made with engaging local business leaders and business sector representatives and a number of work-streams have been agreed. One of which is 'Communication' and a decision has recently been taken to rebrand the initiative within D2N2 as 'Better Business Regulation' (BBR) rather than Better Business for All as it is felt that this is more meaningful to local businesses.
- 2.3. Another work-stream was to respond to local business concerns about the perceived burden of complying with health and safety legislative requirements. In response to these concerns, the Trading Standards Division supported a South Derbyshire District Council initiative, on behalf of the partnership, to provide free health and safety advice to local businesses within the D2N2 region. The service was promoted and accessible through the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce as a key partner within the 'Better Business' initiative and to seek to alleviate any business concerns or reticence about approaching the regulator direct.

- 2.4. The service was launched towards the end of 2013 and promoted throughout the first three months of 2014. The original intention was to run the project for six months and to provide advice to 100 local businesses. However, there was less of a demand for the service than anticipated, although advice has been provided to some 45 local businesses. The main objectives of the project were agreed as follows to seek to:
1. Reduce the cost burdens to business of health and safety (and where appropriate) other red tape.
 2. Improve health and safety standards in the D2N2 region's businesses.
 3. Improve the understanding of the specific areas of health, safety and other laws which are causing undue burden to business based on objective evidence.
 4. Understand the best ways to engage with businesses in order to help deliver regulatory duties.
 5. Improve trust between the business community and regulators.
- 2.5. An evaluation of the project is contained in the Appendix to this report which concludes that local businesses valued access to a source of free advice and support to help them comply with regulatory requirements. An attempt to quantify the value of the advice received in terms of compliance costs avoided has been made and a figure of between £33,000 and £75,000 was determined. Views are being sought from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills as to whether this is an appropriate conclusion from an internal evaluation of the project. Other findings from the project evaluation are that a significant proportion of local businesses were indeed reticent about approaching their local authority regulator for fear of the potential consequences; ie that they might be exposing themselves to significant compliance costs and/or sanctions for non-compliance.
- 2.6. It is also of interest to note that most businesses that participated in the project did so following a face-to-face dialogue with the officer from South Derbyshire who was providing the service, rather than as a result of responding to a newsletter, website, letter or e-mail promoting the availability of the service. In addition, businesses much preferred talking to an individual rather than being referred to a website for advice or to written advice in the form of a letter or advisory leaflet. Finally, local businesses would welcome a process whereby they could informally challenge advice or instruction from local regulators on the interpretation of the requirements of the law.
- 2.7. A summary of the conclusions drawn from the project are listed below with reference to the project objectives.

Objective 1- Reduce the cost burdens to business of health and safety (and where appropriate) other red tape.

- 1.1. *The project has successfully delivered an estimated saving of between £33,000 - £75,000 in the costs of regulatory compliance to the cohort of client businesses.*
- 1.2. *Based on client feedback, the service reduced perception of regulatory burden in 80% of cases.*

Objective 2 - Improve health and safety standards in the D2N2 regions businesses.

- 1.3. *The project has delivered demonstrable improvements in 28 businesses across the region.*
- 1.4. *Based on client feedback the service delivered improvements in workforce safety and wellbeing improvements in 80% of cases.*

Objective 3 - Improve the understanding of the specific areas of health, safety and other laws which are causing undue burden to business based on objective evidence

- 1.5. *The majority of requests for service were in relation to health and safety enquiries. This is entirely predictable given that the service was marketed as being a free advisory service specifically in relation to health and safety compliance. However fire safety, food safety, building control, planning and environmental law were all also areas which businesses sought advice on.*
- 1.6. *The evidence from the project suggests that in the majority (67%) of cases the regulatory burden is self-imposed rather than as a consequence of third party pressures.*
- 1.7. *The greatest demand is for a competent health and safety practitioner to provide a critical friend review of businesses policies and procedures.*
- 1.8. *The next greatest demand is for starter business help – namely providing practical assistance to businesses who have no health and safety processes what so ever.*
- 1.9. *In many instances where businesses required topic specific advice, the businesses operator needed the help of the advisor to navigate their way to a solution through the extensive available on-line advice.*
- 1.10. *In many cases the costs of providing a health and safety solution was not a burden, however the time and costs incurred in finding an appropriate solution was.*
- 1.11. *13% of the client group sought advice in relation to perceived burdens following directions from third parties. 9% of advice to clients was as a result third party directions which were considered to be unnecessarily burdensome*
- 1.12. *11% of the client group sought advice in relation to perceived burdens following directions from regulators. 9% of advice to clients was as a result of regulatory directions were considered to be unnecessarily burdensome.*

Objective 4 - Understand the best ways to engage with businesses in order to help deliver regulatory duties

- 1.13. *It was clear from the project that businesses will not willingly and openly speak with regulators to obtain specific information about how to comply with regulatory requirements. The businesses in the cohort had an almost universal aversion to speaking to their regulator. This aversion is because of a fear that the regulator would either take formal action against the business if it was deficient or imperfect in the way it was handling a given regulatory matter, or because the business operators feared that opening the door to a regulator would invite more detailed scrutiny of other aspects of their business.*
- 1.14. *In the businesses who sought basic advice or peer review, their overriding sense of uncertainty with regulatory compliance meant that the business would not seek advice from regulators because of the perception that the regulator would always find something wrong. The perception of the business operator in many such instances was that inviting contact with the regulator could have dire consequences particularly for fledgling and small businesses and for those operating on tight margins.*
- 1.15. *Businesses made it clear that they did not want to use passive means of accessing information such as on-line resources, which are perceived as being too generic to be of use or require too much investment of time to get sufficiently bespoke information.*
- 1.16. *The subjectivity of much regulation leads to inevitable disagreements between businesses and regulators as to what is specifically required to discharge a particular legal requirement. Businesses in the cohort felt that they could not challenge a regulators decision even when they felt certain it was wrong. Many of the businesses were either unaware of the means of challenging a regulatory officers decision (such as corporate complaints, Ombudsman, the Independent Regulatory Challenge Panel, Food Safety rating appeals). However, even when businesses were aware of these means to challenge a decision there was a deep reluctance to use these formal process due to a fear that the regulator would seek some form of retaliation through enforcement of other statutory requirements.*

Objective 5 - Improve trust between the business community and regulators

- 1.17. *Businesses want to be given clear direction about exactly what they need to do by their regulators. Regulators will often not recommend specific products or providers as they do not want to be seen to be promoting one product or provider over another. However businesses want to be given clear direction and certainty about exactly what their regulators want from them. Regulators will need to find a middle way if they are to deliver a more business orientated regulatory service.*
- 2.8. The Better Business Regulation Steering Group believe that this has been a worthwhile project and that whilst demand for the service has not been as great as originally anticipated, those business that participated have overwhelmingly benefited from the service. The annual cost of delivering the service is estimated by South Derbyshire District Council to be £42,000 based on a cost of £24,500 for the duration of the project (see paragraph 2.11 in the Appendix to this

report). A minority of business also indicated that they would be willing to contribute to the cost of the advice. A presentation has been given to the Chief Executive of D2N2 LEP who has received the report and is supportive of a BBR bid to the LEP for funding to support the continuation of the service as part of the Growth Hub which will provide a range of support to local businesses from April 2015. To contribute to the continuation of the current offer of free health and safety advice, the Cabinet Member is asked to agree an allocation of £5,000 from the existing funding identified to support the Better Business Regulation programme.

3. Financial Considerations

The Better Business Regulation partnership has previously identified a sum of £49,000 to support a Programme Coordinator to support the development of a closer working relationship between local businesses and regulators within the D2N2 region. The Coordinator is now in post with an anticipated total salary with on-costs and associated expenditure, to the end of March 2015, of approximately £36,000. This leaves sufficient surplus to contribute to the cost of continuing the offer of the current health and safety advisory service.

4. Other considerations:

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered; prevention of crime and disorder, equality of opportunity, legal, human resources, environmental, health, property and transport considerations.

5. Background papers

CabCo reports: 'Support for local businesses – Reducing Regulatory Burdens'; 9th July 2013 and 'Better Business for All initiative'; 17th June 2014

6. Key Decision:

No

7. Call-in:

Is it required that call-in be waived for any decision on this report?

No

8. Officer's recommendation:

That the Cabinet Member, Health and Communities notes the report and agrees to providing £5,000 from the existing Better Business Regulation funding to support the continuation of a free health and safety advisory service to local businesses.

David Lowe
Strategic Director
Health and Communities

Appendix - Health and Safety Advice Service - Project Evaluation Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1. With support from the Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO), local regulators within the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire region (D2N2) – primarily trading standards, environmental health and fire authorities – have been working with the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce (DNCC), Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) colleagues to promote a better working relationship between local businesses and local regulators. A variety of themes have emerged from this joint work under the Better Business for All project branding.
- 1.2. As well as ensuring a level playing field by protecting the public from the minority of rogue or negligent traders who have no regard for the law, local regulators play a vital role in supporting business to get it right first time and thus support economic growth. Derbyshire Trusted Trader Scheme and the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme are two excellent examples where local regulators support and promote good business compliance.
- 1.3. Never the less, a recent survey¹ by DNCC suggests that their members believe that meeting regulatory requirements costs an average £46,000 per year and 29% of businesses surveyed believe that 'regulations' place them at a competitive disadvantage.
- 1.4. A recent national survey of business leaders², identified that businesses spend an estimated 5.7 staff days per month dealing with the specific aspects of regulatory compliance covered by the survey. 91% of businesses reported using some form of external support, which in the case of micro and small companies is most likely to come from friends and peers.
- 1.5. One of the main issues that local businesses identified in the DNCC survey is with health and safety legislation.
- 1.6. There is plenty of anecdotal evidence which suggests the underlying cause of this perception within the business community. Various this includes;
 - Excessively burdensome interpretation of health and safety legal requirements by regulators;
 - Suppliers claiming their products as being the quick fix to comply with health and safety requirements;
 - Excessive or unnecessary demands being made by third parties (such as major clients and contractors on smaller businesses) under the guise of health and safety compliance.
 - Excessive or unnecessary demands by insurers in relation to policy conditions.
 - 'Goldplating' of health and safety requirements by private sector health and safety advisors
- 1.7. All of the existing evidence relating to the perceived burdens to the business community are based on these anecdotal reports, but there is little in the way of

¹ DNCC Business Survey, March 2013

² Business Perceptions Survey, NAO/BIS May 2014

objective evidence. Without this objective evidence, any strategies to seek to address the perceived burdens will be based on assumptions, and likely to fail.

- 1.8. In order to bridge this evidence gap, regulators in local authorities in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire collaborated with the Chamber to run a dedicated health and safety project.
- 1.9. The scope of the project was *“To provide direct ‘without prejudice’ workplace health, safety and welfare advice to businesses in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire to support local business growth and maximise cost effective regulatory compliance”*
- 1.10. The objectives of the project were to;
 - *Reduce the financial and cost burdens to business of health and safety (and where appropriate) other red tape;*
 - *Improve health and safety standards in the D2N2 regions businesses;*
 - *Improve the understanding of the specific areas of health, safety and other laws which are causing undue burden to business based on objective evidence;*
 - *Understand the best ways to engage with businesses in order to help deliver regulatory duties;*
 - *Improve trust between the business community and regulators.*
- 1.11. The deliverables we sought from the project were;
 1. *To have positively contributed to cost effective health and safety improvements in up to 100 businesses in the D2N2 region based on the post project perceptions of both the business client and the H&S specialist providing the service;*
 2. *To have quantified the savings made by the participating businesses in either money and /or time in complying with H&S law as a result of the project;*
 3. *To have obtained first hand, objective evidence from all participating businesses of the greatest burdens presented to them by regulation;*
 4. *To have obtained opinions from participating businesses about how the regulatory burdens can be minimised;*
 5. *To have developed a series of case studies highlighting 1) the direct benefits of this service and 2) evidence of regulatory burdens / benefits;*
 6. *To produce a project evaluation report for submission to Committee, the local Chamber of Commerce, the D2N2 LEP and BRDO;*
 7. *If appropriate, to have developed a phase 2 workplan to further develop the project with a view to bidding for external funding support;*

2. Summary of the Project Delivery Mechanism

- 2.1. The project sponsors were the D2N2 Chamber of Commerce, Derbyshire County Council and South Derbyshire District Council.
- 2.2. Research by the Chamber had identified that 35% of businesses would welcome the opportunity to have ‘without prejudice’ discussions with regulators, in other words the opportunity to discuss either specific or general compliance issues with no risk of a resulting intervention by the regulator.

- 2.3. The regulatory community generally welcomes the opportunity to discuss compliance issues with businesses. But regulators will often stop short of guaranteeing no intervention because in many instances they are under a statutory duty to act where a significant risk or legal non-compliance is discovered. There is also a fear in the regulatory community that they may very well face civil litigation or claims of maladministration if harm results from their not applying the law.
- 2.4. An experienced IOSH (Institute of Safety and Health) qualified health and safety advisor was seconded from a local authority to deliver the project. The advisor has a number of years' experience working as both a private sector consultant and as a local authority health and safety regulator.
- 2.5. Requests for the services of the advisor were made to the Chamber helpline (0844 225 4089). In order to maximise the contact with the business community, the service offered was entirely client led. The brief given to the advisor was to offer advice and practical support in whatever manner the client requested. No limit was placed on the size or type of the client business, the scope of the requests accepted, the number of requests made or the time devoted to the request by the advisor.
- 2.6. Following the referral, the advisor made initial contact with the client to clarify their requirements and to determine the best way to deliver the services they needed. Basic information about the client was obtained (location, number of employees, business sector, etc.).
- 2.7. The delivery of the service generally required the advisor to pay a visit to the clients operational site(s), followed by a report. In many instances, the client requested further subsequent visits or advice in relation to other matters.
- 2.8. On the completion of the service to the client, the advisor requested feedback in the form of a questionnaire from the business operator. The information in the questionnaire sought to obtain specific information in relation to the project objectives and deliverables, namely;
 - Did the service reduce the perceived red tape burden on the business;
 - Did the service save the business money;
 - Did the service improve the safety and wellbeing of the workforce;
 - In the businesses opinion how could the regulatory burden be reduced whilst maintaining safety standards;
 - What would improve the trust that businesses have in regulatory services.
- 2.9. On the completion of the service, the advisor was also directed to complete a questionnaire. The information sought the advisors opinion on;
 - What area of regulation was the client business finding to be particularly burdensome;
 - Was this burden, in the advisors opinion, unreasonable;
 - Was health and wellbeing at the business improved as a result of the service;
 - The costs of providing the service;
 - What lessons could be learned.
- 2.10. Marketing of the service was clearly important in order to maximise uptake and ensure that a sufficient cohort of businesses were involved. Various marketing routes were utilised including;

- A press release from the Chamber at the launch of the service;
- Advertising of the service through various websites including the D2N2 Chamber and the participating local authorities;
- Direct email promotion to at least 6000 businesses on databases held by the partners;
- Promotion of the service within the economic development services of partner local authorities;
- Quarter page adverts in three consecutive publications of 'In Business', the Chambers own bi-monthly magazine for the business community;
- An advertising flier was published and supplied to local authorities to promote the service as well as being used in face to face contact with potential clients;
- Face to face promotion of the service at 7 local business seminars consisting of an estimated 500 plus local business participants.

2.11. The total cost of the delivery of the service over 7 months was calculated as £24,500.

3. Project Delivery Mechanism

- 3.1. Over the 7 month duration of the project a total of 45 requests for services were received.
- 3.2. The highest uptake of the service was in South Derbyshire, Derby and Chesterfield.
- 3.3. The highest uptake of the service was in the leisure, food and professional services sectors and in the micro and small businesses sectors. Nearly 50% of the client businesses had 10 employees or less (see Appendix B)
- 3.4. The greatest demand for the service was in January and February 2014. This followed intensive face to face marketing of the service by the advisor in local business seminars. After February the marketing of the service was reliant on more passive marketing channels (websites, email and magazine adverts). There was a noticeable reduction in take-up of the offer at this point.

4. Project Outcomes

Demand for Service

- 4.1. The overall demand for the service was lower than anticipated. A proxy target of an interaction with 100 businesses was set. By 30th July 2014, 45 businesses had been provided with a service. The highest volumes of enquiries occurred immediately after the H&S Advisor had spent time visiting business forums in the region providing face to face promotion of the service.
- 4.2. The majority of reasons given by the clients for using the service were (in order) following the direct promotion of the service to them by the Advisor at business forums, following referral from a local authority economic development advisor and following a recommendation from a business associate. The passive, electronic forms of promotion (website, emails) did not generate significant interest in the service.

Feedback from Clients

- 4.3. Despite persistent efforts to persuade clients to provide feedback, only 15 feedback responses were returned by the client group.

- 4.4. In response to the question, “Did the advice you receive reduce the burden of red tape”, 12 clients (80%) responded ‘Yes’, 2 (13%) responded ‘No’ and one did not answer.
- 4.5. In response to the question “In financial terms, how much benefit do you think you got from the service”, 9 clients (60%) confirmed that they had financially benefitted and the other 6 did not respond. Of the 9 clients who stated they thought they had benefitted financially the range of estimated savings was £400 - £4,600, the average saving per business was £1,660 and the total savings were £15,000.
- 4.6. If the savings from the businesses who answered this question were reflected across the whole client cohort then the estimated savings to the business community is £75,000.
- 4.7. In response to the question “Did the advice directly benefit the safety or wellbeing of your workforce?”, 12 clients (80%) responded ‘Yes’ and 3 clients (20%) responded ‘No’.
- 4.8. In response to the question “Would you pay for this service?”, 6 clients (40%) responded ‘Yes’ and 9 clients (60%) responded ‘No’.
- 4.9. A graphical summary of the client feedback is provided in Appendix B.

Client Comments

- 4.10. Client feedback comments are contained in Appendix A. The interpretation of the feedback comments are;

The reductions in red tape derived from the service

- Enabled businesses to have clarity and confidence in the decisions they were making;
- Mythbusting and jargon busting;
- Offered practical and inexpensive solutions to problems on the shopfloor;
- Provided a resource which embryonic businesses simply did not have the time to do;
- Challenged and changed regulatory decisions;
- Enabled businesses to prioritise the importance of different regulatory demands;
- Enabled the business to get to the right contacts within the regulatory administrations.

Clients opinions about ways to reduce burdens, but maintain standards

- Regulators to provide advice without any threat of sanctions;
- Provision of an updating service offering simple advice about new laws;
- Regulators to provide direct and specific advice about solutions, with less subjectivity or generality;
- Regulators should offer definitive advice and not change their minds;
- An informal opportunity to challenge decisions, independent of the regulator.

Clients opinions about ways to improve trust in regulatory services

- Provision of ‘without prejudice’ visits;
- An informal opportunity to challenge decisions independent of the regulator;
- Face to face contact to develop personal relationships;

- Practical compliance advice, rather than legal terminology;
- Confidence that the regulators priority is not about raising revenue;
- Use business language, not regulator language.

Feedback from Health and Safety Advisor

- 4.11. The Advisor completed a post service evaluation for each of the clients with whom he considered he had offered a sufficiently thorough service from which to form a clear opinion. In total he completed 33 responses.
- 4.12. In response to the question, “What form of regulation was the business finding to be excessively burdensome?” the Advisor provided the responses in the following table. In many instances the information sought by the client cut across a number of different regulatory areas and therefore the number of enquiries in the second column exceeds the total number of clients who contacted the service;

Type of Regulation the Client Sought Guidance on	Number of Enquiries	% of Cohort
Health and Safety	28	85%
Fire Safety	9	27%
Food Hygiene / Safety	9	27%
Building Control	4	12%
Planning	2	6%
Quality Management Systems	1	3%
Environmental	1	3%

- 4.13. The advisor was asked to classify the specific nature of health and safety support requested. The table below provides a summary of the broad classifications of the nature of the service which he was asked for. In many cases the request covered a number of topic areas.

Nature of the Enquiry	Number of Enquiries
Start up advice or help for clients with no H&S policies or systems	8
Peer review of existing policies and risk assessments	14
Working at height	3
DSE assessments	1
Provision of training	3
Structural elements	8
Infectious disease control	1
Qualifications necessary for the delivery of H&S related services	3
Electrical safety	2
Manual handling	3

Guarding	1
Noise	3
Management systems (i.e implementing policies)	2
Gas safety	2
Lone working	1
Lift safety	1

- 4.14. A significant proportion of the enquiries were from either start up businesses, from existing businesses which had no basic policies or procedures relating to health and safety, or from businesses who were seeking independent verification that they were on the right track.
- 4.15. In response to the question “What Agency was responsible for the perceived burden”, the Advisor reported that for 22 of the clients (67%) the burden was based on their own perceptions of what was necessary to achieve legal compliance; for 5 of the clients (15%) a specific requirement had been imposed on them by a regulator; and for 6 of the clients (18%) they had been directed by a third party to implement a specific requirement which they found burdensome.
- 4.16. In the case of the 6 businesses who had been directed to implement a specific requirement by a third party; 2 had been directed to carry out specific works by their builder, 2 had been directed to carry out specific activities by their insurance company, one as a requirement to meet the conditions of a Charter (i.e a quality system) and one had been directed to carry out specific activity by a professional institute.
- 4.17. In response to the question “In your view, was the burden unreasonable?”, the Advisor only responded to those perceived burdens which had been as the results of a direction from a regulator or third party. He reported that of the five directions from regulators, four were in his opinion unnecessarily burdensome. Of the six directions from other third parties, four were in his opinion unnecessarily burdensome.
- 4.18. In response to the question “Has health and safety improved at the business as a result of the service?” the Advisor reported that after the delivery of the service he had seen clear evidence of improvements at 28 (85%) of the businesses.
- 4.19. The average estimated time the Advisor reported providing services to each client was 2.25 days (approximately 17 hours).
- 4.20. Of the 33 clients for whom the Advisor produced a post service feedback he was asked to estimate the predicted financial saving to the business as a result of the implementation of his services. He did not predict the saving where the client had already given their own estimate. Based on relatively conservative estimates, the total saving to the clients (i.e. in addition to that stated in paragraph 4.5) as a result of the project was £17,900. This equates to an average saving per client of £716.

5. Project Conclusions

Objective 1- *Reduce the cost burdens to business of health and safety (and where appropriate) other red tape.*

- 5.1. The project has successfully delivered an estimated saving of between £33,000 - £75,000 in the costs of regulatory compliance to the cohort of client businesses.

- 5.2. Based on client feedback, the service reduced perception of regulatory burden in 80% of cases.

Objective 2 - Improve health and safety standards in the D2N2 regions businesses.

- 5.3. The project has delivered demonstrable improvements in 28 businesses across the region.
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Objective 3 - Improve the understanding of the specific areas of health, safety and other laws which are causing undue burden to business based on objective evidence

- 5.5. The majority of requests for service were in relation to health and safety enquiries. This is entirely predictable given that the service was marketed as being a free advisory service specifically in relation to health and safety compliance. However fire safety, food safety, building control, planning and environmental law were all also areas which businesses sought advice on.
- 5.6. The evidence from the project suggests that in the majority (67%) of cases the regulatory burden is self-imposed rather than as a consequence of third party pressures.
- 5.7. The greatest demand is for a competent health and safety practitioner to provide a critical friend review of businesses policies and procedures.
- 5.8. The next greatest demand is for starter business help – namely providing practical assistance to businesses who have no health and safety processes what so ever.
- 5.9. In many instances where businesses required topic specific advice, the businesses operator needed the help of the advisor to navigate their way to a solution through the extensive available on-line advice.
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Objective 4 - Understand the best ways to engage with businesses in order to help deliver regulatory duties

- 5.13. It was clear from the project that businesses will not willingly and openly speak with regulators to obtain specific information about how to comply with regulatory requirements. The businesses in the cohort had an almost universal aversion to speaking to their regulator. This aversion is because of a fear that the regulator would either take formal action against the business if it was deficient or imperfect in the way it was handling a given regulatory matter, or because the business operators feared that opening the door to a regulator would invite more detailed scrutiny of other aspects of their business.
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was that inviting contact with the regulator could have dire consequences particularly for fledgling and small businesses and for those operating on tight margins.

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- 5.17. Objective 5 - *Improve trust between the business community and regulators*
- 5.18. Businesses want to be given clear direction about exactly what they need to do by their regulators. Regulators will often not recommend specific products or providers as they do not want to be seen to be promoting one product or provider over another. However businesses want to be given clear direction and certainty about exactly what their regulators want from them. Regulators will need to find a middle way if they are to deliver a more business orientated regulatory service

Document Control

Version	Date of Issue	Author(s)	Brief Description of Change(s)
1	11 Sept 2014	MH	First Issue
2	18 Sept 2014	MH	Following comments from partners