

Renewal Action Plan Business Support Evaluation: Appendix B

Spend on RAP Business Advisors April 2021 to August 2021.

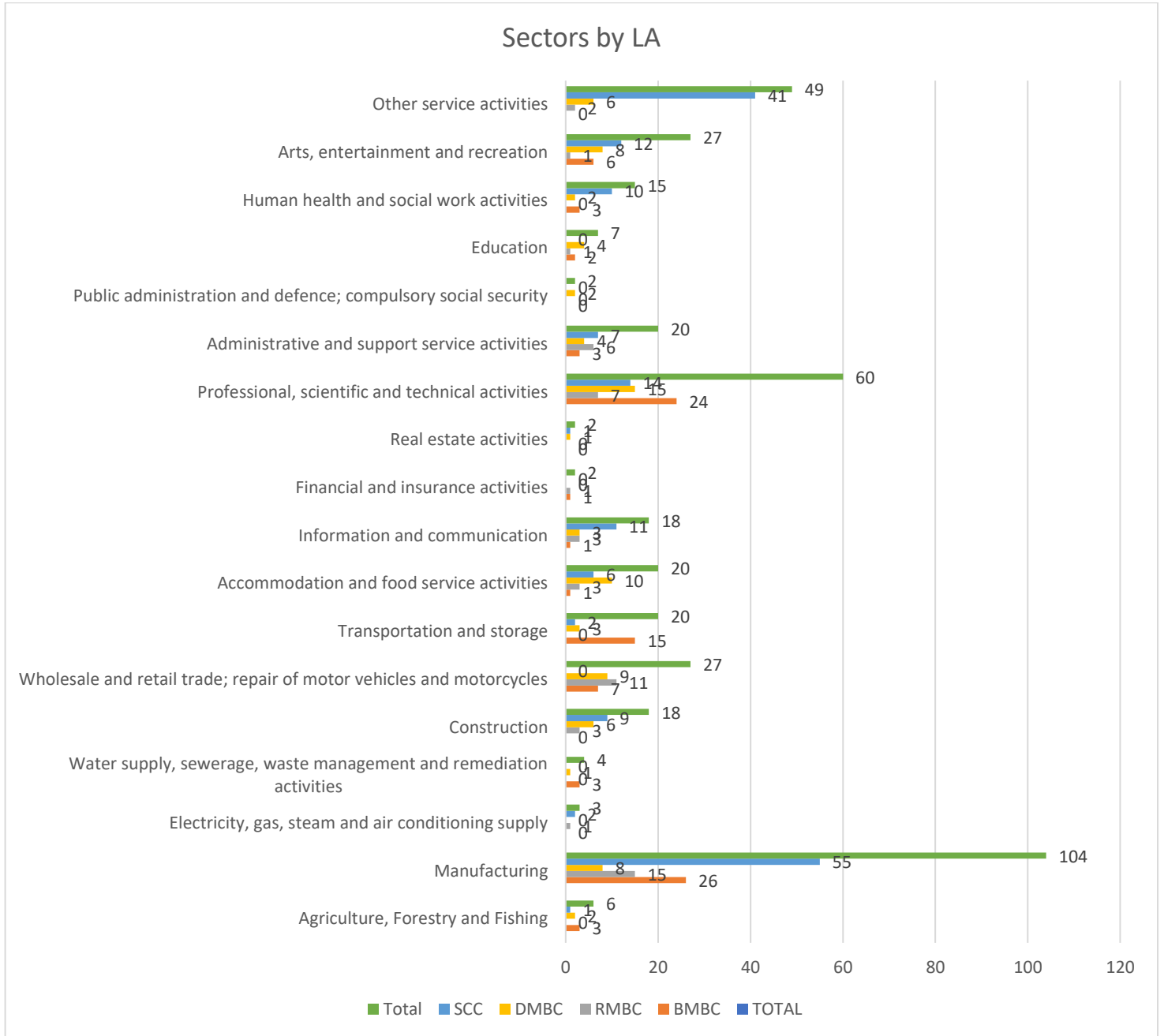
	April	May	June	July	August	Total
BMBC	£ 8,601.03	£ 16,335.85	£ 11,139.66	£ 11,552.24	£ 11,768.00	£ 59,396.78
DMBC	£ 13,237.18	£ 17,915.13	£ 16,913.44	£ 13,355.95	£ 10,578.76	£ 72,000.46
RMBC	£ 9,540.73	£ 11,150.59	£ 12,047.27	£ 7,767.79	£ 15,175.47	£ 55,681.85
SCC	£ 13,588.37	£ 21,529.27	£ 12,927.85	£ 11,627.21	£ 10,432.16	£ 70,104.86
Total	£ 44,967.31	£ 66,930.84	£ 53,028.22	£ 44,303.19	£ 47,954.39	£ 257,183.95

Notes:

1. LA breakdown of spend not available at time of report writing. The total spend for September 2021 is £49,552. This gives a year to date total of £306,735.95.
2. The budget for this activity is £794,848 per annum based on 16 advisors each being allocated £49,678.
3. Profiled spend for the remainder of the year is forecast at £568,311.
4. Projected underspend is £226,537.

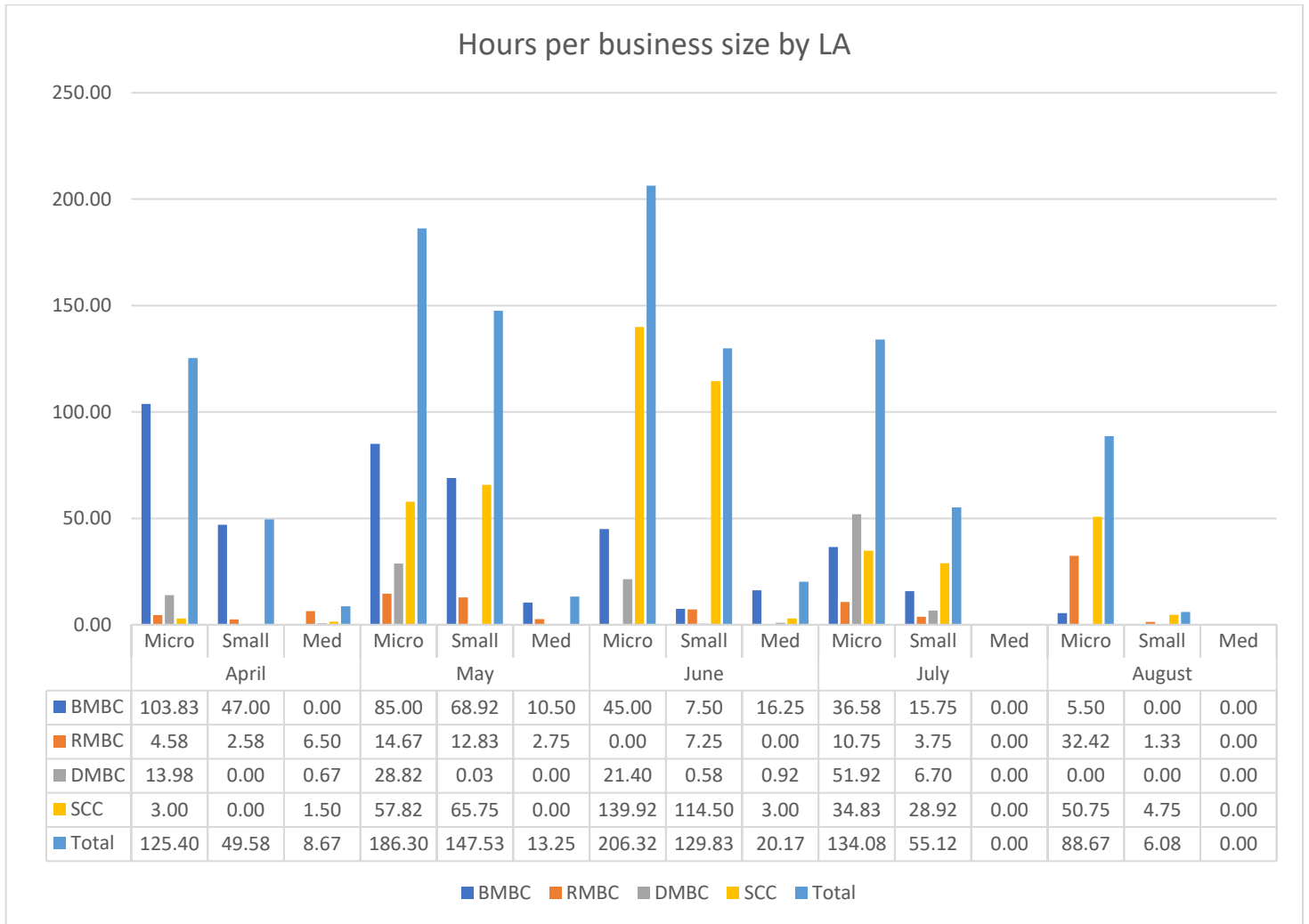
Renewal Action Plan Business Support Evaluation: Appendix B

Sector support provided by Local Authority

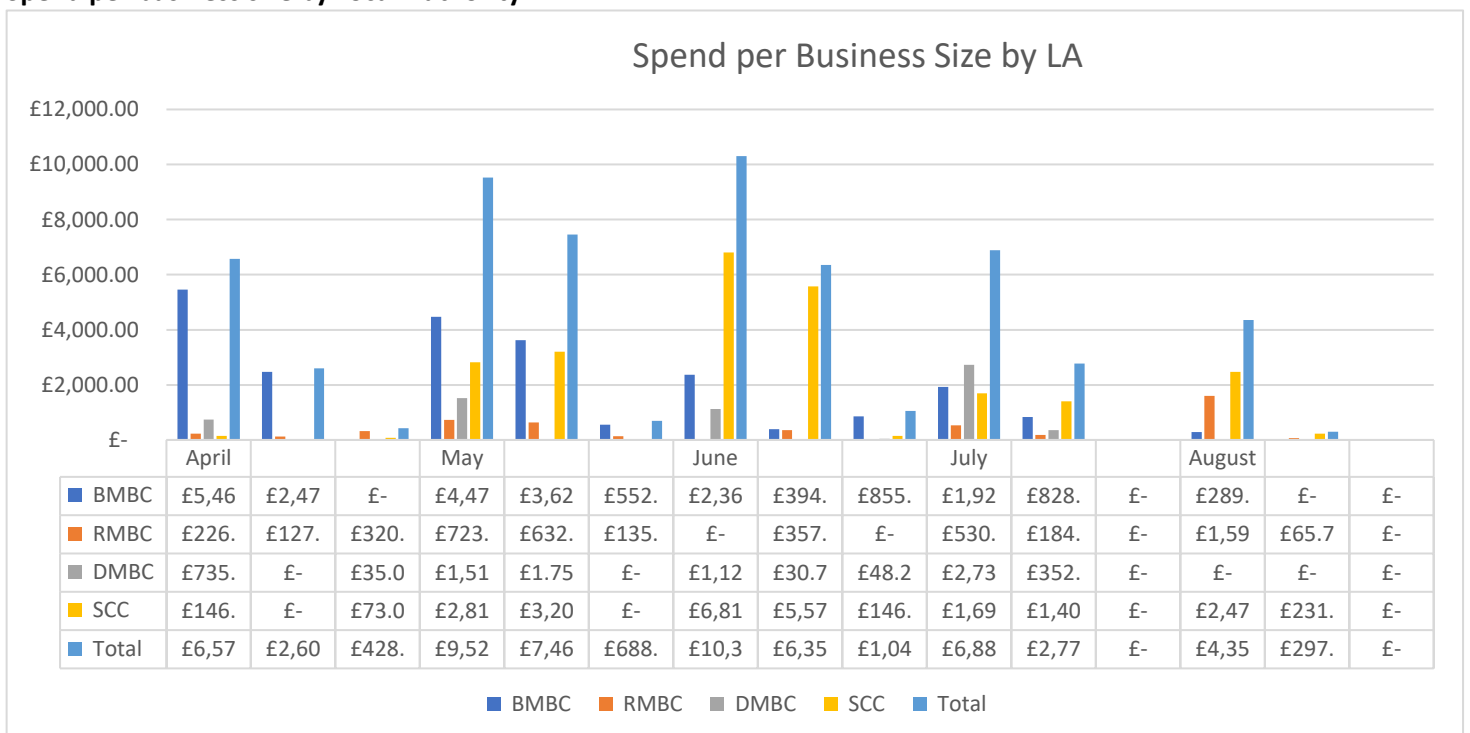


Renewal Action Plan Business Support Evaluation: Appendix B

Number of hours of support per business by Local Authority



Spend per business size by Local Authority



Renewal Action Plan Business Support Evaluation: Appendix B

Renewal Action Plan Priority 2, Stage 1 – Deployment of Business Advisors embed in LA teams.

Feedback from Partners and Advisors - Barnsley

Barnsley have played to each advisor's strengths and specialisms and have targeted businesses that are looking to grow, innovate, increase productivity, and create jobs.

Advisor support has ranged from a phone call to 2-3 days in a business looking at business improvement techniques such as LEAN and assisting with applications for productivity grants. One advisor has reported that 95% of their RAP portfolio is manufacturing businesses.

The advisors work closely with the Skills and Access to Finance Advisors (who have a regional remit) where appropriate.

Intelligence is captured through Evolutive, BMDC's CRM system and Advisor timesheets.

Referrals

- 50% from BMDC
- The remainder are made up of referrals from Barnsley Business Innovation Centre (BBIC), and from Advisors in the other districts
- Via the Advisor's own consultancy business and referred to the relevant advisor in the other districts if not Barnsley based

Enterprising Barnsley (EB) has been in operation since 2016 and develops and manages a variety of programmes that support businesses of all size and sector including the Business Productivity Grants which are managed by 4 employed key account managers.

Two examples were cited to demonstrate where RAP Business Advisors are used according to their specialisms e.g., for manufacturing and retail.

The RAP Advisors are also delivering against the targets for Productivity Grants and the Digital Innovation Grants and have picked up a portfolio of approx 125 businesses who have been hard to reach.

Feedback from Partners and Advisors - Sheffield

Sheffield has a slightly different model in that business stock is informally split across the 4 Advisors thus:

- Advisor A – 70% med-small (up to 100 employees)/30% micro
- Advisor B – mainly large up to 250 employees
- Advisor C – micros
- Advisor D – mix of all sizes of business

One of the Advisors also contributes to the regional provision of AFCOE Access to Finance advice.

Officers were keen to emphasise that the recruitment of RAP Advisors was based on supporting businesses to survive the pandemic and support them through the recovery phase. The activity brought Business Sheffield and Invest Sheffield together to support all sizes and sectors in Sheffield.

The Sheffield City Council team have shared a list of the business support available in Sheffield which the Business Advisors must all be aware of. Officers impressed the benefits that the RAP Business Advisors bring with their specialist knowledge is valuable and raised concerns that directly employing advisors as part of the council team would dilute the level of expertise they bring to the region's businesses.

Renewal Action Plan Business Support Evaluation: Appendix B

An example of this expertise in practice was demonstrated during a recent Growth Hub team meeting where a RAP Business Advisor shared an in depth understanding of the business challenges and opportunities and has already made 6 referrals to the Peer Networks programme.

Feedback from Partners and Advisors – Rotherham

Officers advised that at the start of the pandemic the decision was taken to align the council's limited resources with the Growth Hub model.

The authority team believe that RAP Business Advisor activity has been invaluable. It has demonstrated that the level of expertise and knowledge that a RAP Business Advisor, with specialist knowledge and experience, can deliver in 2 days far outweighs what can be achieved employing a permanent member of staff on a salary that would command less knowledge and be 'pulled' into other aspects of council workstreams therefore diluting business support.

Evolution is used by RAP Business Advisors to capture intelligence which in turn is fed back to the Growth Hub in a monthly activity sheet to support Advisor timesheets. The amount of information is minimal capturing company name, size and sector and the type of engagement, e.g. phone call or face to face meeting, rather than outcomes or meaningful information to support development of future programmes.

Feedback from Partners and Advisors – Doncaster

Doncaster have focussed on recovery support and deployed their RAP Business advisors to work with businesses applying for recovery grants. A target of 45 new businesses per month across 4 advisors is in place for grant support and referrals to other schemes where applicable.

To date, Doncaster has had 280 expressions of interest and have dealt with a further 43 that have now been declined/withdrawn. The RAP advisors are dealing with all of these. Out of these there are 104 applicants that are in contract now with a commitment of £455k of which £253k has already been paid out.

In other parts of the council, a template is used by key account managers to record discussions with businesses and this could be easily adapted for use by RAP Advisors. As with the other LAs, advisor activity is recorded on a CRM which is fed back to the GH via RAP Advisor activity sheets and Advisor timesheets missing the opportunity to catch and disseminate intelligence to inform future business support.