

STRICT EMBARGO: WEDS 11/06/08

Councillors & Local Authorities rate charities highly for public service provision - but doubt Compact

- The majority of Councillors and Local Authority staff rate charity provision of public services at least on a par with a Local Authority's own
- Around 3 in 5 rate charity provision of public services over delivery by companies
 - Scarce a quarter think Compact has made a big difference

58% of Councillors and 50% of Local Authority staff think “charities are able to deliver public services as cost-effectively as local authorities”, respective figures rising to 63% and 59% when comparing charitable ability in this area with that of companies - according to figures out today (*see attached summary slides*).

Leading not for profit sector think tank and research consultancy nfpSynergy's inaugural **Local Authorities Monitor** conducted an online survey of a representative sample of 460 Councillors and over 420 Local Authority staff – from CEOs to those working in PCTs, social care, housing and education, plus finance and corporate divisions - investigating Local Authorities' shifting attitudes and behaviour towards charities in England & Wales, notably vis-à-vis service provision.

However, only 25% of Councillors and 24% of Local Authority staff think “the local government Compact has made a big difference to our relationship with charities” – the vast majority claiming ignorance on the issue, or that it has made no difference one way or the other. Interestingly, a massive 73% of Councillors and 80% of Local Authority staff think “charities should be able to campaign to change the policies of local government relevant to their work”.

On average, within their own particular specialisms, Local Authority staff estimate the percentage of services provided by the voluntary sector to be 14% (26% private; 67% public).

nfpSynergy's researcher, Lindsay Sutherland, said:

“Charities should be encouraged by the positive attitude of the majority of Councillors and Local Authority staff re their ability to deliver public services – not least when compared with the ability of companies or, indeed, Local Authorities themselves. They should take note of the public sector's own clear doubts about the efficacy of the Compact, and its willingness for a charity to have the right to challenge policies that hamper work.”

- ends -

MEDIA INTERVIEWS: To interview nfpSynergy's Lindsay Sutherland about the significance of these latest findings or the Local Authorities Monitor itself, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

- **nfpSynergy**

nfpSynergy (www.nfpsynergy.net) is the UK's *only* think-tank and research consultancy dedicated to the charity sector and not for profit issues. It provides ideas, insights and information to help voluntary and community organisations thrive in an ever-changing world. Regularly harvesting the social and charity-related views of public and parliament, media and business - not to mention not for profit organisations themselves - nfpSynergy has a vast and ever-growing knowledge pool from which to extract and deliver insights.