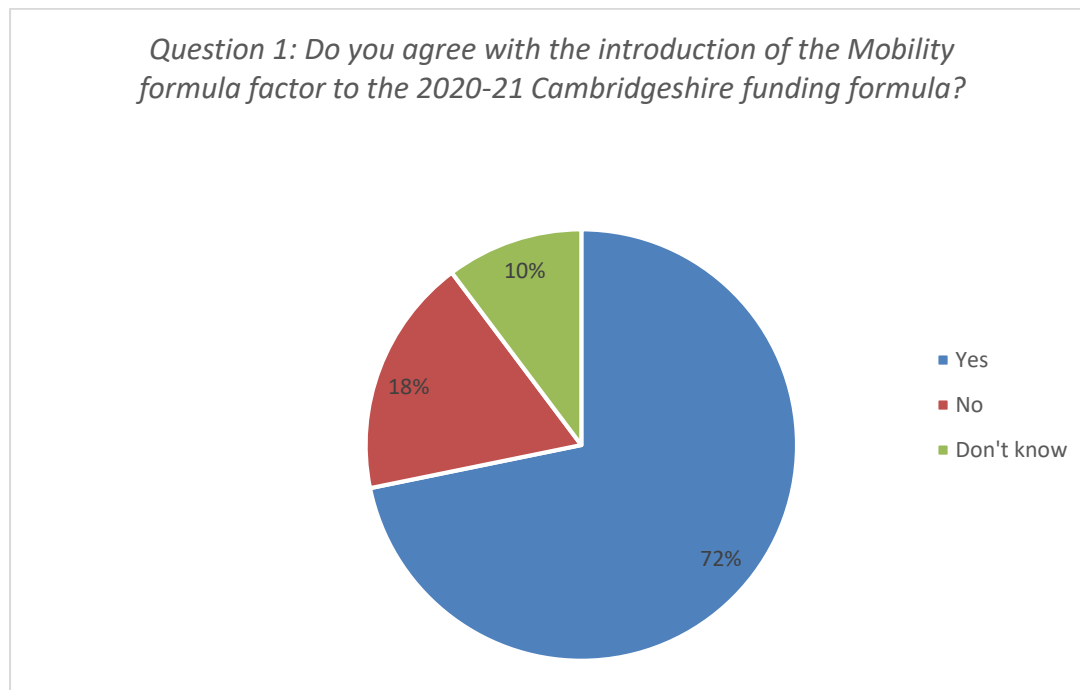


School Funding Consultation 2020/21 - Survey Results (as at 16th December 2019)

A total of 117 responses were received by the revised closing date of Friday 13th December. The information below analyses the responses in more detail and **Appendix 1** provides the full detail of all of the narrative responses where comments were requested.

Question 1: Do you agree with the introduction of the Mobility formula factor to the 2020-21 Cambridgeshire funding formula?

In response question 1, the vast majority (72%) agree with the introduction of the Mobility formula factor. Just over a quarter of respondents do not know or disagree with this introduction (28%).



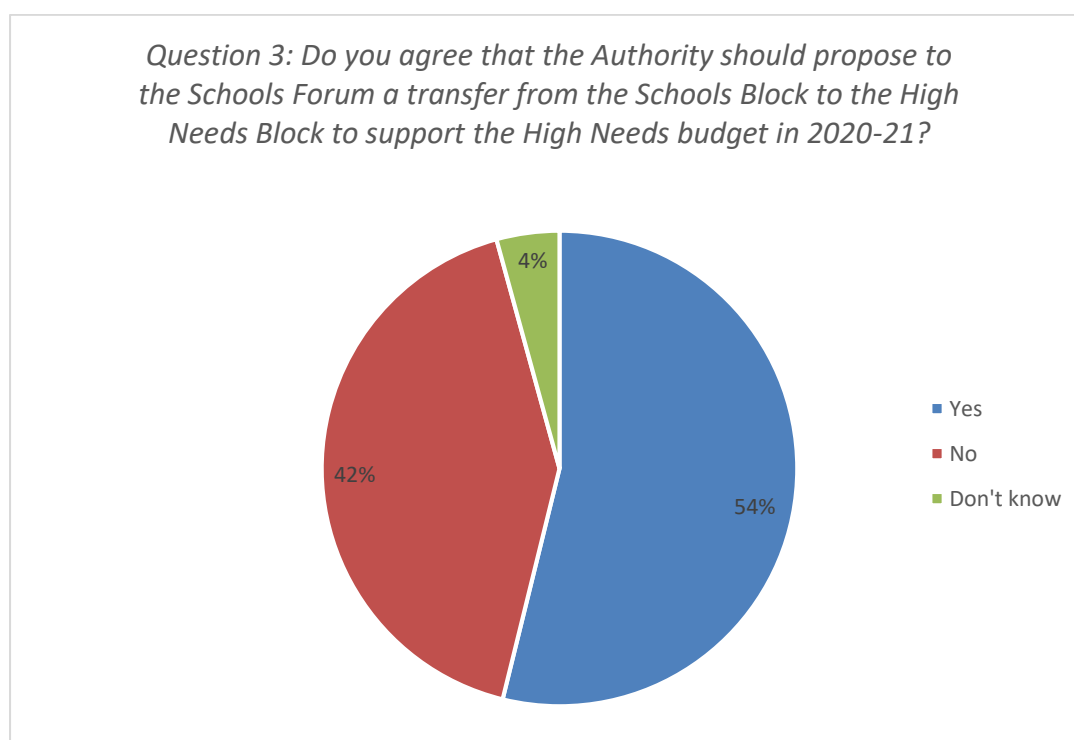
Question 2: If not, please explain why?

A number of responses stated that there was not enough information on how the mobility factor would work and the impact for individual schools. Other answers suggested a lack of understanding of the purpose of the mobility factor.

Further details were subsequently provided in the frequently asked questions document which was circulated to all schools.

Question 3 Do you agree that the Authority should propose to the Schools Forum a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support the High Needs Budget in 2020-21?

In regards to question three, a narrow majority (54%) of respondents agreed with the idea that the Authority should propose to the Schools Forum a transfer from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to support the High Needs budget in 2020-21. However, a significant proportion of respondents disagreed with this (42%).



Question 4: Do you have an alternative proposal for how the local area should respond to the accumulated deficit on high needs, reaching a balanced position over the medium term of 3 years?

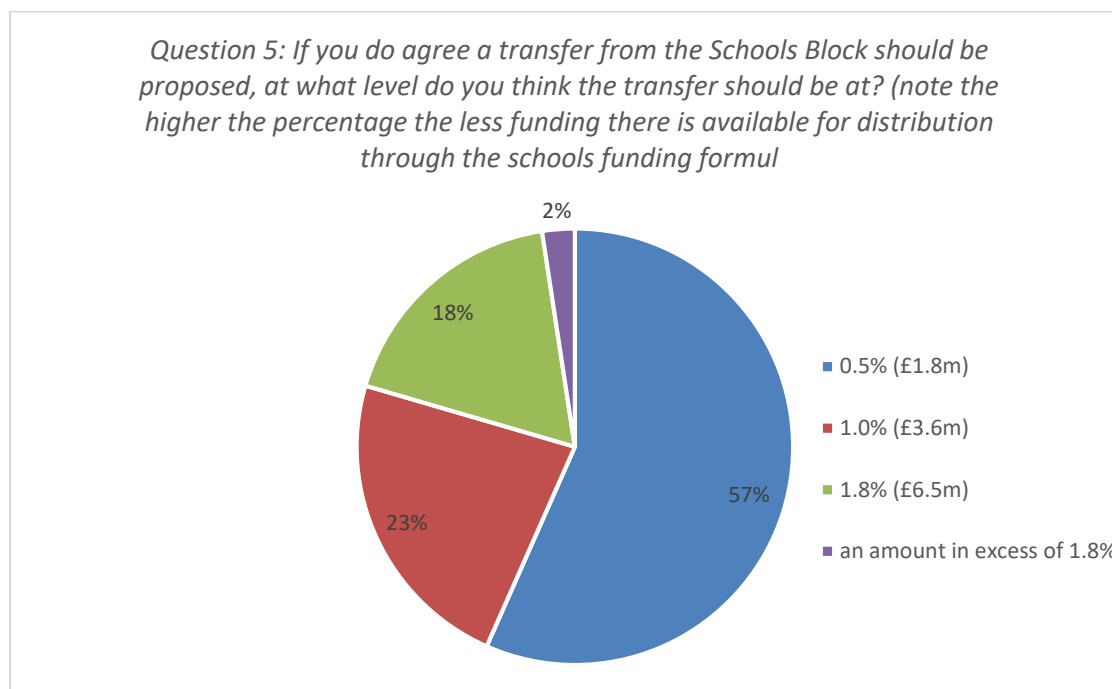
There were a wide range of responses to this question, including:

- Continued lobbying government and DfE for appropriate high needs funding levels.
- Clawback funding from schools with excessive balances.
- Review of current funding levels and/or processes for allocating funding.
- Greater controls on spend.
- Capital investment to increase capacity.
- Use of other council resources.

There were also a number of more general comments about the current pressures schools are facing and that any transfer would increase this yet further.

Alongside this there were also some comments that the workstreams being developed by the SEND recovery board need to be accelerated in order to deliver savings as soon as possible.

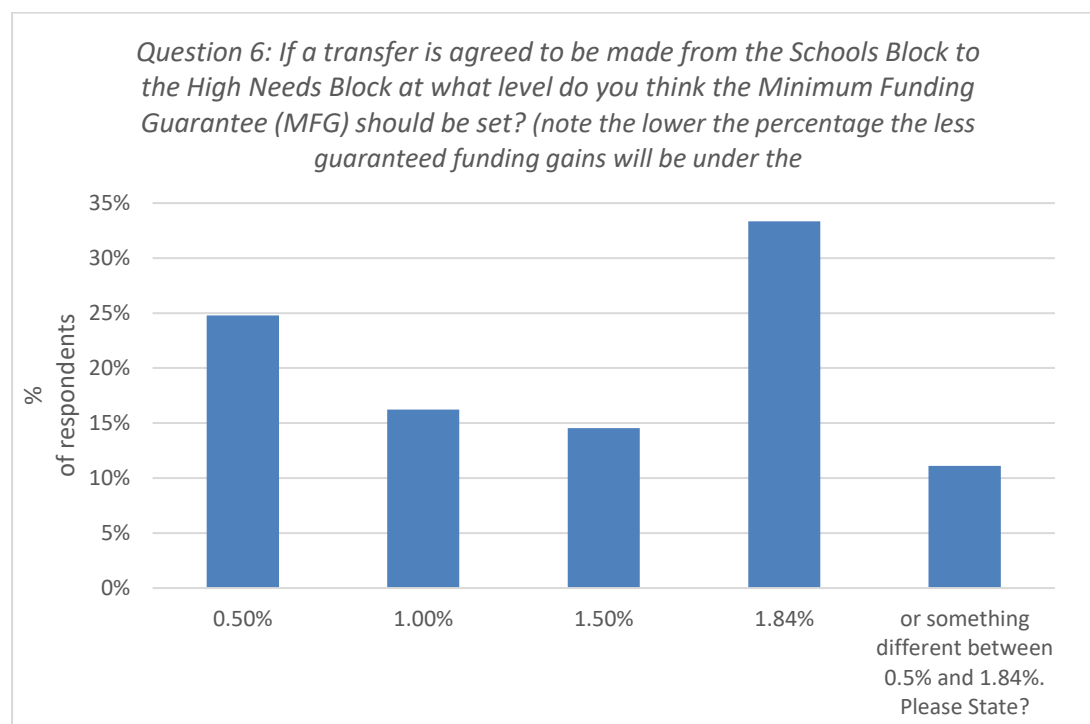
Question 5: If you do agree a transfer from the Schools Block should be proposed, at what level do you think the transfer should be at? (note: the higher the percentage the less funding there is available for distribution through the schools funding formula for Cambridgeshire)



Of the respondents who agreed that a transfer from the schools block should be proposed (57%) felt that the transfer should be at 0.5% (£1.8m). An amount in excess of 1.8% was the least favoured option with only 2% of respondents choosing this option.

Question 6: If a transfer is agreed to be made from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block at what level do you think the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) should be set? (note the lower the percentage the less guaranteed funding gains will be under the formula)

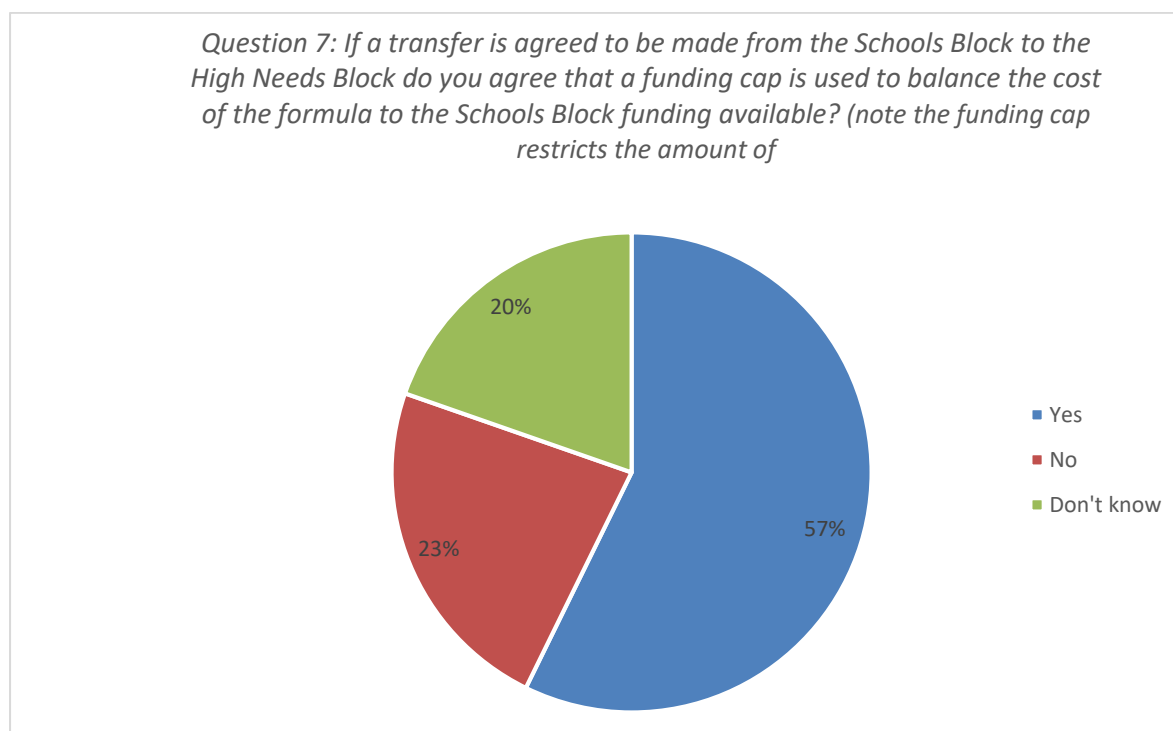
As part of question 6, respondents could either select a minimum funding guarantee (MFG) or state an alternative value between 0.5% and 1.84%. A minimum funding guarantee of 1.84% was the most popular choice amongst respondents with 33%. The second most popular choice was 0.5%, with 25% respondents selecting this level of MFG. Fewer respondents (11%) chose a different value between 0.5% and 1.84%. Though no specific value was stated amongst the comments, some felt it was not appropriate (i.e. to SEN schools) or disagreed with having the transfer in place.



Question 7: If a transfer is agreed to be made from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block do you agree that a funding cap is used to balance the cost of the formula to the Schools Block funding available?

(note the funding cap restricts the amount of any funding gains of those schools above the level at which the funding cap is set)

In regards to the funding cap being used to balance the cost of the formula to the schools block funding available, over half of respondents agreed (57%). However, almost half of respondents did not know or disagreed.



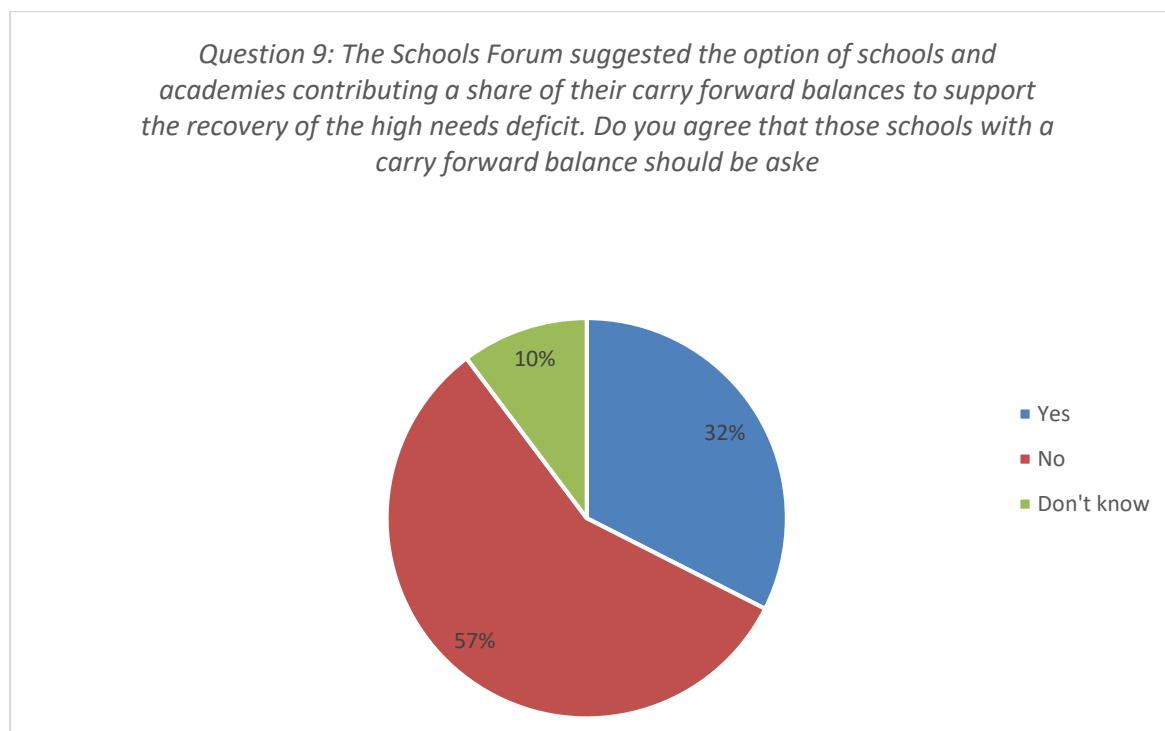
Question 8: If not the use of a funding cap, how do you think the Schools Block should be balanced, for example reducing AWPU values, reducing other factors in the funding formula, or potentially requesting approval from the Secretary of State not to apply the Minimum per Pupil Funding Levels?

A number of comments supported seeking approval from the Secretary of State to disapply the MPPL's.

Several responses supported the proposal of reducing the basic entitlement / AWPU amounts to spread any potential impact across all schools.

Although the majority of responses recognised the overall issue of affordability some did not appear to understand the interrelationship between the various factors and also the fact that the funding has been capped at a national level in previous years.

Question 9: The Schools Forum suggested the option of schools and academies contributing a share of their carry forward balances to support the recovery of the high needs deficit. Do you agree that those schools with a carry forward balance should be asked to make contribution to help repay the high needs deficit?



In response to whether or not schools with a carry forward balance should contribute to repaying the High Needs Deficit, the majority (57%) of respondents disagreed with the idea that schools with a carry forward balance should contribute.

Questions 10 & 11: If not, please explain why? If you do agree what do you think would be a reasonable contribution?

A range of responses detailed the reasons as to why schools are holding balances and how these varied due to individual school circumstances.

A number of people noted the range of balances being held and suggested that a % could be used to support the pressures, whereas others were strongly opposed to the idea.

Following discussions at Schools Forum the intention is to circulate a questionnaire to all schools requesting further information in respect of the balances being held and their intended purpose.

Question 12: Do you have any initial comments on the potential impact at individual school level of possible proposals to reduce top up funding levels for mainstream and units and to reduce Behaviour, Attendance and Inclusion Partnership funding as set out in paragraph 49 of the consultation document?

A number of responses highlighted the potential impact on the most vulnerable young people and those with the highest levels of need.

There were also a number of references to the current levels of funding being insufficient to meet need in some instances.

The potential knock on impacts of schools being unable to meet needs resulting in increased costs elsewhere was also given as an example of unintended consequences.

Others noted the potential disproportionate impact on smaller schools.

Question 13: Do you have any comments in respect of the proposal to increase the lump sum for Primary and Secondary schools to help equalise the impact on schools of the broadband costs being passed onto schools due to the reduction in the Central Schools Services Block as set out in paragraph 50 of the consultation document?

A large proportion of responses were in support of this proposal on the basis of fairness and equity across all schools.

However, some responses did not feel it was necessary and the lump sum should remain unchanged.