

Public Document Pack

Meeting Supplement

Schools Forum

Chris Tomes (Vice-Chair), Isabel Cooke, Joolz Scarlett, Sarah Cottle, Andrew Morrison, Neil Dimpleby, Eddie Neighbour, Catherine Page, Tim Fettes and Ben Bausor

Thursday 14 December 2023 2.00 pm

Virtual Meeting - Online access & on [RBWM YouTube](#)

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The following papers have been added to the meeting's agenda as they were not available for publication when the notice of meeting was issued.

Supplement

Item	Description	Page
5	2024-25 Schools Formula Funding Consultation outcome and DSG Budget update Forum to consider the report.	3 - 20

By attending this meeting, participants are consenting to the audio & visual recording being permitted and acknowledge that this shall remain accessible in the public domain permanently.

Please contact Laurence Ellis, Laurence.Ellis@RBWM.gov.uk, with any special requests that you may have when attending this meeting.



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Report Title:	2024-25 Outcome of the School funding consultation & DSG budget update
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No – Part I
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Amy Tisi
Meeting and Date:	Schools Forum 14 December 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Lin Ferguson – Executive Director of Children’s Services Tracey Anne Nevitt – Finance Business Partner
Wards affected:	All



REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Schools Forum with an update on the outcome of the Schools Funding consultation, the 2024-25 early years funding, approve elements of the central school services block and the de delegation rates for 2024-25..

1. DETAILS OF RECOMMENDATION(S)

RECOMMENDATION: That Schools Forum notes the report includes:

- The outcome of the schools funding consultation for comment.
- De delegation service rates for approval (maintained school representatives).
- Update on the Early Years Funding announcement for 2024-25 to note.
- Central Schools Services expenditure update to approve.

2. REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S) AND OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Options

Table 1: Options arising from this report.

Option	Comments
Schools Forum to note the contents of the report and comment and signify support for the school consultation outcome. To approve central budgets and de delegation for 2024-25. This is the recommended option.	Compliance with ESFA Schools Operational Guidance and School Finance Regulations
Do nothing. This is not recommended.	The failure to use relevant financial information to understand the position of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Background

- 1.1 The Schools Funding is received through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and is split into four blocks. Each with its own formula to calculate the funding to be distributed to each local authority:
 - Schools Block - funds mainstream primary and secondary schools through the school formula, and growth funding for new growing schools / bulge classes.
 - High Needs - funds places in special schools, resource units and alternative provision, and top up funding for pupils with Education & Health Care Plans (EHCPs) in all settings including non-maintained, independent and further education colleges.
 - Early years – funds nursery schools, nursery classes in mainstream schools, and early year’s settings in private, voluntary and independent (PVI) sector through the free entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds.
 - Central Schools Services Block (CSSB) – funds services provided by the local authority centrally for all schools, such as the admissions service.
- 1.2 The information within this report reflects the most up to date information at the time of writing.
- 1.3 In July 2023, the government announced the provisional Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) per pupil funding allocations for 2024/25. This announcement included the Schools formula funding, the Central School Services Block (CSSB) and High Needs. The provisional allocations were reported to the Schools Forum in November 2023.
- 1.4 The Early years block 2024-25 hourly rates and estimated funding were announced on and sent to local authorities on the 29th November 2023. Details are contained within Table 4 and table 5 of this report.
- 1.5 The DSG settlement is due to be sent out to Local authorities in mid December 2023. A report summarising the settlement will be sent to Schools Forum members in January 2024.
- 1.6 The DSG must be deployed in accordance with the conditions of grant and the latest School and Early Years Finance (England) regulations. Detailed guidance is contained within the various operational guidance documents issued by the Education Funding and Skills Agency (ESFA). The latest operational guidance can be found at the following [link](#)

2 Key Implications

Outcome	Unmet	Met	Exceeded	Significantly Exceeded	Date of delivery
Schools Forum to note the contents of the report and vote on delegation and CSSB budgets.	No engagement by the Schools Forum. No support for de-delegation services supported by maintained schools in recent consultation	Schools Forum vote on delegation and support outcome of consultation.	Schools Forum engage with the process providing insight into the impact on RBWM schools of the funding formula	Schools Forum engage with the process providing insight into the impact on RBWM schools of the funding formula	18 December 2023.

4. RBWM Schools Funding Formula Consultation outcome

Responses to the consultation

- 4.1 In 2024-25 as in previous years, each local authority is to continue to set a local schools funding formula, in consultation with schools. In a report to the schools forum on 16th November 2023 RBWM proposals for consultation were agreed. The consultation was sent out to all RBWM Primary and Secondary schools on 20th November and closed on the 1st December 2023.
- 4.2 RBWM received 25 responses to the consultation. This equates to 42% of the mainstream schools.
- 4.3 For each question included in the consultation a summary and brief analysis of the results with schools feedback is set out in appendix B.

5. Analysis of the Consultation Results.

- 5.1 The consultation was on an individual school basis with a total of 25 schools (42%) responding. This is a similar level to last year at 26 (43%) schools and a significant improvement on the 2022-23 response rate of only 20%.
 - 5.1.1 The proposal to retain the minimum funding guarantee at 0.5% for mainstream schools was supported by 92% of respondents. The continuation of the capping and scaling to fund the minimum funding guarantee (MFG) was supported by 64% of respondents. 16% voted 'unsure' based on cost and 20% voted no. The schools against this approach were all from the primary sector with comments mainly focused on the view that the funding should directly link to pupils and this adjustment should be no longer be undertaken.

- 5.2 The third question relating to the 2nd year increase to the sparsity factor asked respondents to support one of 4 options. Option 1 at 10% minimum increase received the most support at 64%. Option 2 at 16% and Option 3 for Sparsity formula funding at National Funding Formula (NFF) in full received 12% (3 schools). The main reasons schools stated for not increasing the allocation over 10% is the impact on funding to the other schools
- 5.3 The application of any headroom question gave respondents a number of options to choose from. The most supported option was option 1 at 52%, targeting the headroom to all 4 formula factors where currently funding is below NFF. The four factors are Lump Sum, Basic entitlement, Mobility and EAL. Options 2 and 3 both received 20% of the support for headroom application. Those schools selecting options two and three state the need to protect the impact on pupil data particularly EAL.
- 5.4 Question 5 of the consultation asked maintained schools if they supported changes to the de delegation and the partial de delegation of the school improvement service to cover the loss of grant funding. Of the maintained schools who responded 60% supported the de delegation of School Improvement from 2024-25. 1 maintained school voted No and 5 (33%) voted unsure. Some schools felt that although the service was vital they are concerned about the sustainability of the service and pressure on school budgets.
- 5.5 In January 2024 RBWM will complete and submit the schools funding formula allocations to the ESFA. The final allocations will be based on the October 2023 census data and where affordable incorporate the outcome of the schools funding formula consultation detailed above.

6. De delegation

Table 2 Maintained Schools De delegation:

	DATA	Unit Rate	Estimate	Unit Rate	APT		APT
		2024-25	2023-24	2023-24	2022-23		
		£	£'000	£	£'000	£	£'000
Primary							
School Improvement	Pupil	20	128	0	0	0	0
School Contingency	Pupil	12	77	15	97	15	103
Staff costs.	Pupil	15	96	25	160	25	171
Behaviour support (added to SEMH)	IDACI	0	0	0	0	50	21
Secondary							
School Improvement.	Pupil	20	16	0	0	0	0
School Contingency.	Pupil	0	0	0	0	0	0
Staff costs.	Pupil	15	12	25	20	25	18
		329		277		313	

- 6.1 Table 2 details the de delegation over the last two years and the proposal for 2024-25. 60% of the maintained schools that responded to the schools’ formula funding consultation have supported the de delegation of school improvement.
- 6.2 As per the guidance on Schools Forum roles and responsibilities, the maintained school forum representatives are required to vote on the de delegation unit rates annually. The proposed rates for the new financial year 2024-25 are listed in the table 2 above.

7. Central School Services Budgets

- 7.1 In Accordance with Schools Forum guidance the forum is to be informed of elements of the Central School Services Block budgets.
- 7.2 Section A of the table below lists the proposed central spend for 2023-24. Under Schools Forum powers and responsibilities Schools Forum members are requested to approve the draft 2024-25 base budgets listed in section A.
- 7.3 Section B lists the historic elements funded by the ESFA annually. This section is for information only.
- 7.4 Table 3 Elements of the CSSB:

	Budget 2023-24 £	Budget 2024-25 £	Note
Section A			
Central Spend			
Places in Independent schools - non SEN pupils	16,000	7,530	No placements within the last 3 years
Admissions team	186,120	193,310	Excludes RBWM recharges
Servicing Schools Forum	1,900	1,900	Excludes RBWM recharges
Section B			
Contribution to Combined Budgets - Central Block funded			Approved pre April 2013
Information and Advice Service	24,490	19,590	ESFA 20% reduction each year.
Early Help Social Work	42,640	34,110	ESFA 20% reduction each year.
Educational Psychologist service	42,640	34,110	ESFA 20% reduction each year.

8. Early Years Funding Notification

- 8.1 On the 29th November the ESFA published the outcome of the Early Years Funding consultation and updated the operational guidance relating to 2024-25

Early years funding. Included in the announcement are the funding rates for each local authority for both existing and new early years entitlements.

- 8.2 Table 4 below details the current and new local authority hourly rates for each entitlement. The local authority hourly rates are to fund the provider hourly base rates, supplements (e.g. deprivation), Special Education needs inclusion funding to providers (SENIF) and central expenditure.
- 8.3 In January 2024 RBWM will consult with the Schools Forum and RBWM early years providers on proposals to set the provider funding rates for the financial year 2024-25. A timeline has been sent to all RBWM early years providers along with links to the latest ESFA announcements.
- 8.4 Table 5 in this report compares the illustrative funding 2024-25 to the current early years block 2023-24. The PTEs (part time equivalent) included in the table are from ESFA estimates.

Table 4: Early Years Local Authority Funding Rates.

Local Authority Hourly rates.	Early Years Block:			
	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25	
	£	£	£	
	RBWM	RBWM	National Average	Note
Under 2's.	N/A	12.52	11.22	Sept 2024 onwards
2 year olds.	6.87	9.23	8.28	
3 + 4 year olds.	5.61	6.53	5.91	

Table 5 Early Years Block Funding

<u>Early Years Block</u>	2023-24 DSG Census PTEs	2024-25 ESFA Estimate PTEs	Notes
<u>Entitlements</u>			
Under 2's	N/A	267	22 weeks PYE
2 year olds	156	682	
3 + 4 year olds:			
Universal	2,298	2,998	
Additional	861	861	
<u>Early years Funding</u>	£'000	£'000	Part year funding
Under 2's	N/A	1,903	
2 years old	610	3,590	
3 + 4 year olds:			
Universal	7,349	8,554	
Additional	2,756	3,208	
MNS Supplementary	478	585	
EYPP	40	N/K	
DAF	34	N/K	
	11,267	17,840	

9. FINANCIAL DETAILS / VALUE FOR MONEY

- 9.1 The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is an annual ringfenced grant. All proposals within this report are within the DSG grant funding and comply with the Operational Guidance 2024-25.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 There are no potential risks directly arising from this report. The proposals are within the RBWM Dedicated Schools Grant ring fenced funding.

12. POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 12.1 Equalities. Equality Impact Assessment is shown below in Appendix A. The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the council to ensure that when considering any new or reviewed strategy, policy, plan, project, service or

procedure the impacts on particular groups, including those within the workforce and customer/public groups, have been considered. It has been assessed that there are no Equality Impact risks arising from this report. Link to Equality Impact Assessments.

- 12.2 Climate change/sustainability. There are no climate change/ sustainability risks arising from this report.
- 12.3 Data Protection/GDPR. There are no data protection/ GDPR risks arising from this report.

13. CONSULTATION

- 13.1 The annual schools funding consultation was sent to all RBWM schools on 20th November 2023.
- 13.2 Financial reporting including the Dedicated Schools Grant is regularly provided to the RBWM commissioners and the Achieving for Children Board.

14. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 14.1 There is no timetable for implementation arising from this report. Annual schools' formula funding consultation process with the Schools Forum to comply with the School and Early Years Finance regulations.

15. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 15.1 This report is supported by the following background documents:
- Schools revenue funding operational guide 2024-25
[:https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2024-to-2025/schools-operational-guide-2024-to-2025](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pre-16-schools-funding-local-authority-guidance-for-2024-to-2025/schools-operational-guide-2024-to-2025)
 - [Schools Forum Powers and Responsibilities.](#)
 - [School Finance Regulations](#)
 - [Early years Operational Guidance 2024-25.](#)

16. APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Equality Impact Assessment.
- Appendix B – Results of the Schools Formula Funding consultation

17. Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent	Date returned
<i>Mandatory: Statutory Officers (or deputies)</i>			
Elizabeth Griffiths	Executive Director of Resources/S151 Officer		
Emma Browne	Director of Law, Strategy & Public Health/ Monitoring Officer		
<i>Deputies:</i>			
Andrew Vallance	Head of Finance (Deputy S151 Officer)		
Jane Cryer	Principal Lawyer & Deputy Monitoring Officer		
<i>Mandatory: Procurement Manager (or deputy) - if report requests approval to go to tender or award a contract</i>			
Lyn Hitchinson	Procurement Manager		
<i>Mandatory: Data Protection Officer (or deputy) - if decision will result in processing of personal data; to advise on DPIA</i>			
Samantha Wootton	Data Protection Officer		
<i>Mandatory: Equalities Officer – to advise on EQiA, or agree an EQiA is not required</i>			
Ellen McManus-Fry	Equalities & Engagement Officer		
<i>Other consultees:</i>			
<i>Directors (where relevant)</i>			
Stephen Evans	Chief Executive		
Andrew Durrant	Executive Director of Place		
Kevin McDaniel	Executive Director of Adult Services and Health (DASS)		
Lin Ferguson	Executive Director of Children's Services and Education (DCS)		

Confirmation relevant Cabinet Member(s) consulted	Cabinet Member for Children's Services & Education	
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REPORT HISTORY

Decision type:	Urgency item?	To follow item?
For information	No	No
Report Author: Tracey Anne Nevitt, Finance Business Partner, AFC		

Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix A

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk



1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	Dedicated Schools Grant
Service area:	Schools
Directorate:	Children's Services

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal:

- What are its intended outcomes?
- Who will deliver it?
- Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?

The intended outcome of the proposal is to provide Schools Forum with an updated on the school responses to the funding consultation. This is not a new proposal and is a requirement to inform Schools Forum of the financial position of the Dedicated Schools Grant and to consult on annual de delegation and CSSB budgets.

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees?

- If No, please explain why not, including how you've considered equality issues.
- Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)

No.

The school's formula funding proposals do not directly impact on pupils and other stakeholders.

If 'No', proceed to 'Sign off'. If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

<p>Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff</p>
<p>Stakeholders will not directly be affected by the proposals included within this report.</p>
<p>Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) disproportionately represented? For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?</p>
<p>There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic.</p>
<p>What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has/will equality considerations be taken into account? • Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?
<p>Schools Forum is actively engaged throughout the Schools Formula budget setting. Final schools' formula allocations are submitted to the ESFA for checking and validation.</p>
<p>What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment? Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.</p>
<p>Not Applicable</p>

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state 'Not Applicable'

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age	The reported grant does impact on pupils within this protected characteristic; however, as school funding is on a formula basis impact has already been considered within previous reports and decision-making processes	Yes	Not Applicable
Disability	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not applicable	Not Applicable
Sex	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Race, ethnicity and religion	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Pregnancy and maternity	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Marriage and civil partnership	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Armed forces community	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
Children in care/Care leavers	There is nothing in the report which is considered to impact on this protected characteristic	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it? For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group
Not Applicable
Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this? <ul style="list-style-type: none">For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.
Not Applicable
How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the future? See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.
Not Applicable

6. Sign Off

Completed by: Tracey Anne Nevitt	Date: 06.12.23
Approved by: Louise Dutton	Date:

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

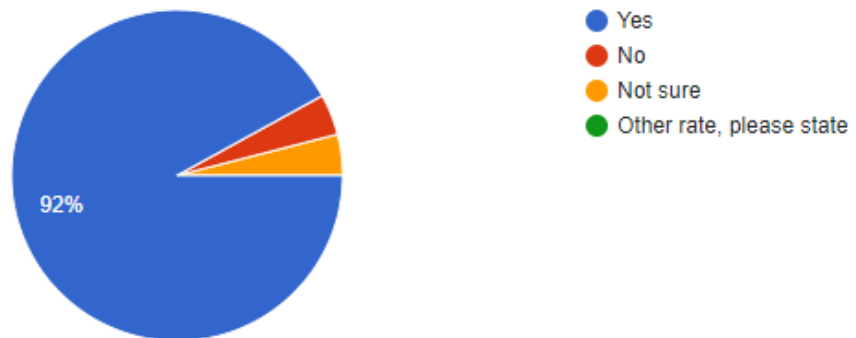
Reviewed by:	Date:
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Appendix B

Schools Formula Funding Consultation

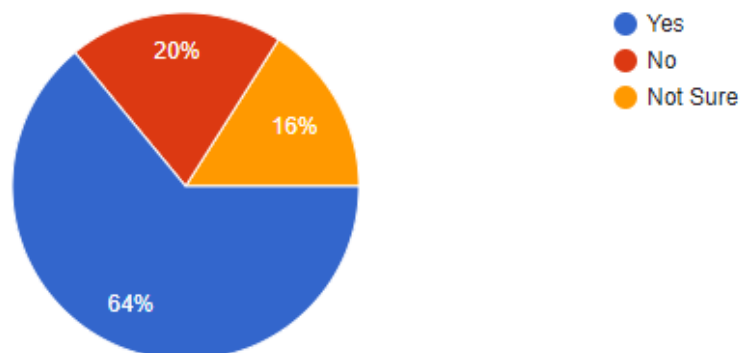
Question 1 - Do you agree that the Minimum Funding Guarantee (MFG) top up should remain at +0.5% for mainstream schools only? The allowable range is 0.0% to 0.5%. In 2023-24 the total MFG cost is £19,942 which was received by 2 schools. The cost of MFG varies from year to year depending on data changes to individual schools

25 responses



Question 2 - Do you support the capping and scaling of school budgets to fund the minimum funding guarantee as in previous years?

25 responses

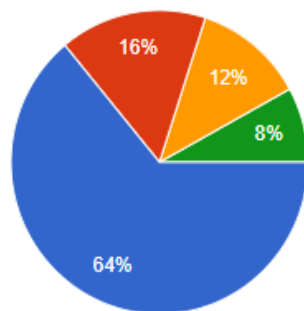


Question 3 - The Sparsity factor introduced into the RBWM local formula for the financial 2023- 2024 is currently funded at the minimum unit rate. Depending on affordability, RBWM proposes to increase the Sparsity unit rate. For 2023-24 only 7 schools qualified for this element of funding. The estimated cost to increase to the full NFF rate is between £160,000 to £200,000.



Which level of increase do you support for 2024-25?

25 responses

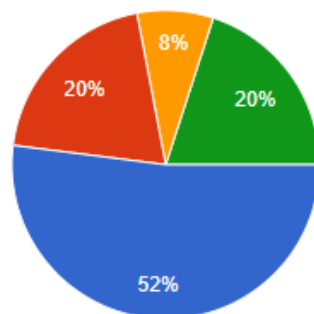


- Option 1 - Minimum 10% movement closer to NFF (minimum movement towards NFF as per guidance). Approx £18,000 based on 2023-24 data.
- Option 2 - Up to 20% increase in the base rate from the 2023-24.
- Option 3 - Up to the full NFF rate including ACA?.
- Option 4 - Other rate, please state

Question 4 - Do you support the proposal that positive or negative headroom resulting from Census data updates should be adjusted via school lump sum, Basic entitlement, EAL and sparsity? All 4 formula factors are currently below the NFF rates in the 2023-24 formula



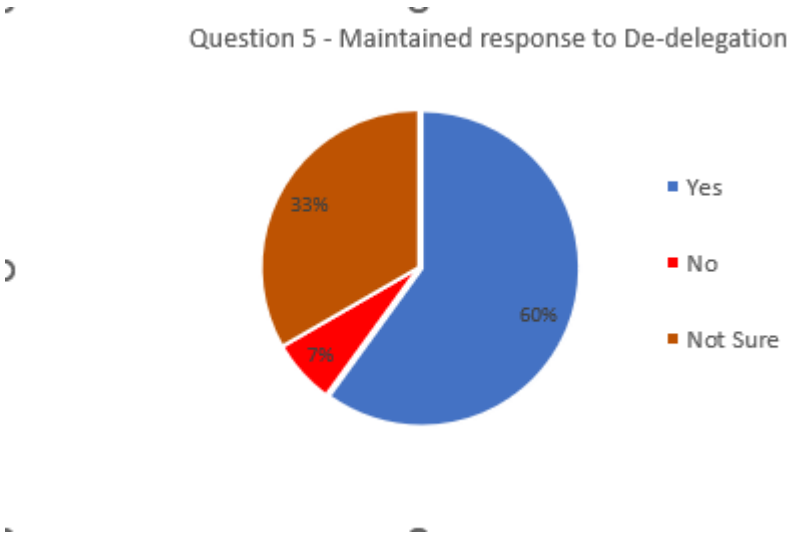
25 responses



- Option 1 - Lump Sum, Basic Entitlement, EAL and mobility.
- Option 2 - Lump Sum & Basic entitlement.
- Option 3 - Other, please state with reasons
- Option 4 - Not sure

Question 5 - *Do you support the de delegation of School Improvement services from the schools formula, partly funded by changes in other de delegated service unit rates?*

Maintained Schools responses:



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