



## FEEDBACK NEWSLETTER

### Introduction:

As part of the work to support families in Nottinghamshire, linked to the Best Start in Life agenda and supporting financial resilience, the Best Start Strategic Partnership tasked the Life Chances Group to explore provision of baby banks in Nottinghamshire.

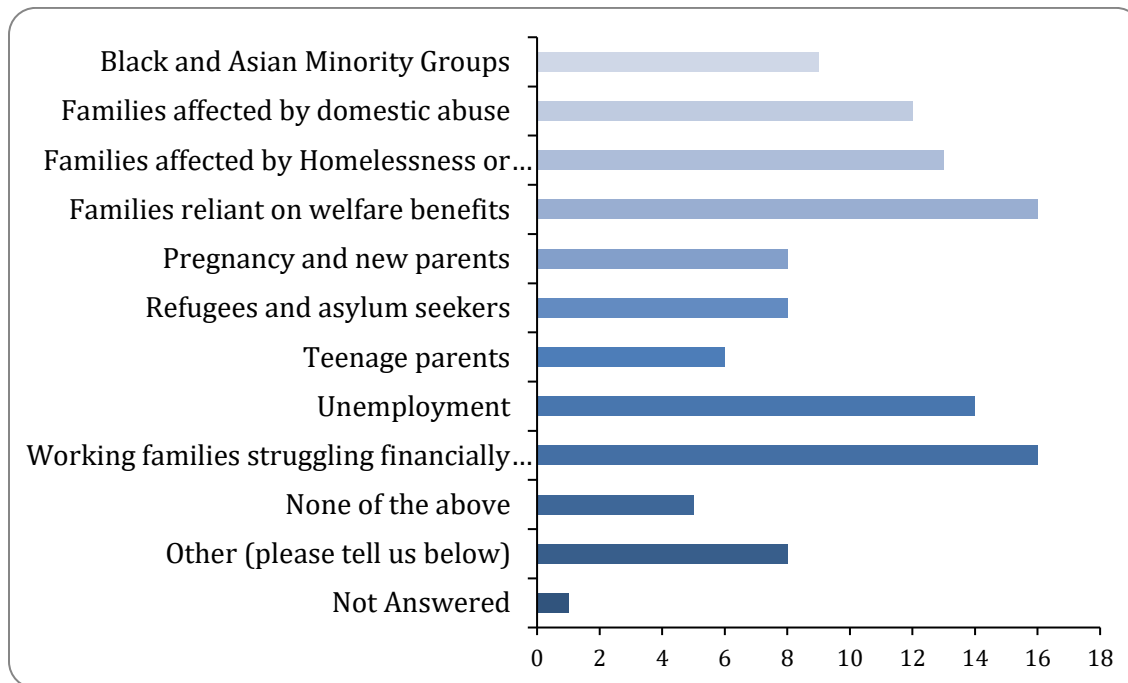
The consultation ran from 22/01/2024 to 01/03/2024 on Nottinghamshire County Council's Citizen Space platform and received 29 responses, from stakeholder organisations such as food banks, food clubs, community groups and parish councils, located in every district apart from Ashfield.

Many thanks to everyone who took time to consider and complete the consultation, which will help with plans to support the voluntary and community sector to develop this important element of financial resilience and environmental support. This newsletter provides feedback of the insight gathered and a separate meeting has now been held with a potential partner in Ashfield.

| Option              | Total |
|---------------------|-------|
| Ashfield            | 0     |
| Bassetlaw           | 3     |
| Broxtowe            | 3     |
| Gedling             | 5     |
| Mansfield           | 6     |
| Newark and Sherwood | 10    |
| Rushcliffe          | 5     |
| Nottingham City     | 3     |
| Not Answered        | 0     |

**Targeting groups with specific vulnerabilities:**

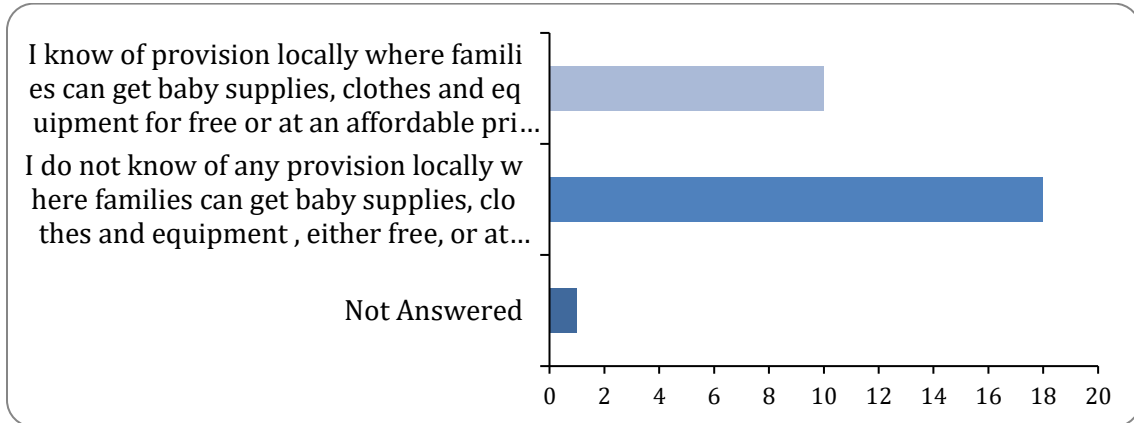
There were 28 responses to question, with a good spread of priority groups. Most respondents confirmed they are working with families reliant on benefits/who are struggling financially.



| Option  | Total | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| <b>Black and Asian Minority Groups</b>                                    | 9     | 31.03%  |
| <b>Families affected by domestic abuse</b>                                | 12    | 41.38%  |
| <b>Families affected by Homelessness or using supported accommodation</b> | 13    | 44.83%  |
| <b>Families reliant on welfare benefits</b>                               | 16    | 55.17%  |
| <b>Pregnancy and new parents</b>  | 8     | 27.59%  |
| <b>Refugees and asylum seekers</b>  | 8     | 27.59%  |
| <b>Teenage parents</b>  | 6     | 20.69%  |
| <b>Unemployment</b>   | 14    | 48.28%  |
| <b>Working families struggling financially e.g. debt</b>                  | 16    | 55.17%  |
| <b>None of the above</b>  | 5     | 17.24%  |
| <b>Other (please tell us below)</b>                                       | 8     | 27.59%  |
| <b>Not Answered</b>   | 1     | 3.45%   |

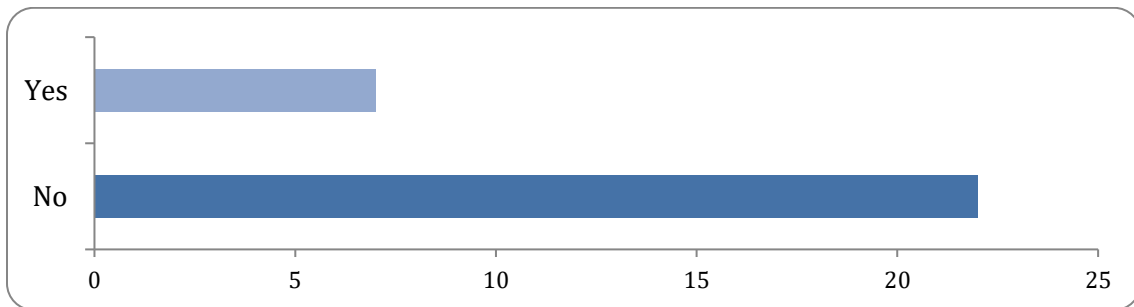
### Current knowledge of where families can get support with free / low-cost baby items:

62% of respondents did not know where families could go to get free or low-cost baby items, with 35% advising that they did know.



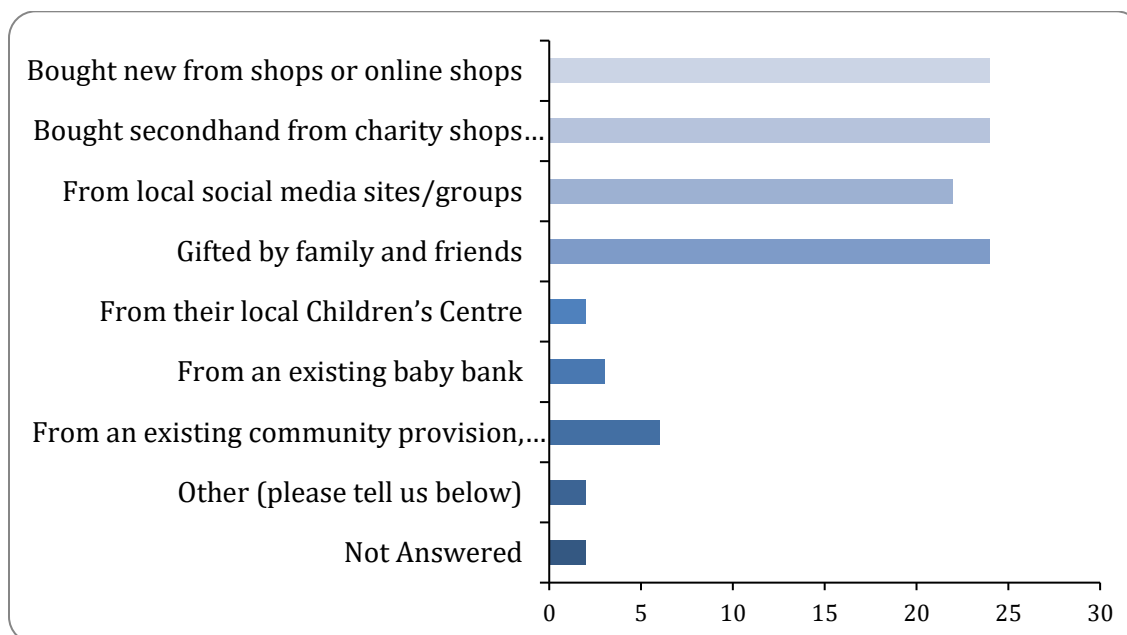
This resulted in making us aware of at least two more baby banks within the city/county.

### Do you know of any baby banks in your local area?



This matched our initial mapping, showing very limited and in many places a lack of provision, with many areas relying on baby banks from outside of the county to support when they were able.

### Sources of supply for local parents/carers of their baby clothes, supplies and equipment:

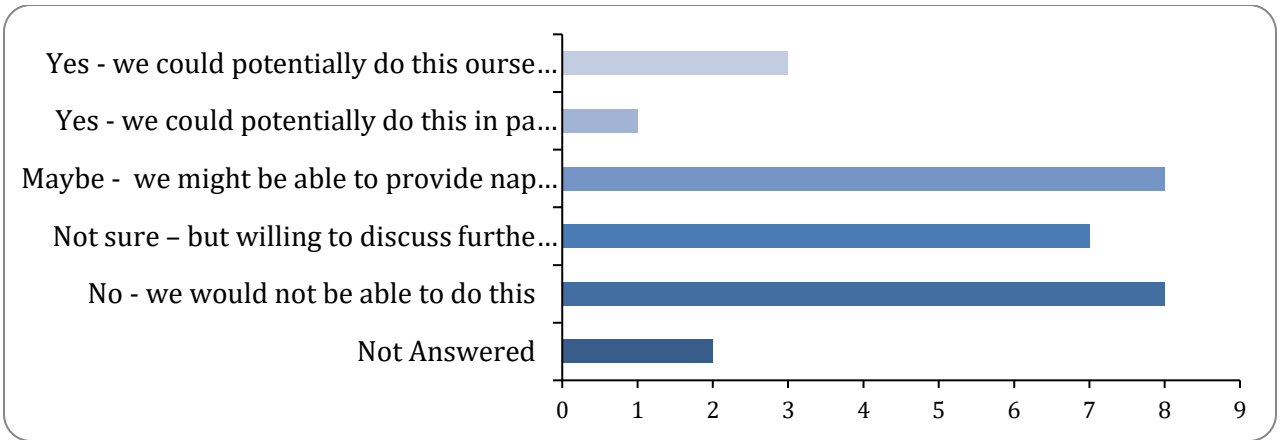


It was interesting to see that online and instore shopping scored equally and that local social media sites were well-used, showing the growing interest in recycling in communities, especially with young parents who may have concerns around climate change and “green” issues as well as the financial benefits that free-cycling brings.

Many Children's Centres (evolving into Family Hubs over the next few years) already have a clothes rail with baby clothes available for parents to help themselves to, but the survey showed that this was not widely known amongst other support organisations, therefore a list is being produced advising which Children's Centres currently offer this service and will be on Notts Help Yourself in due course.

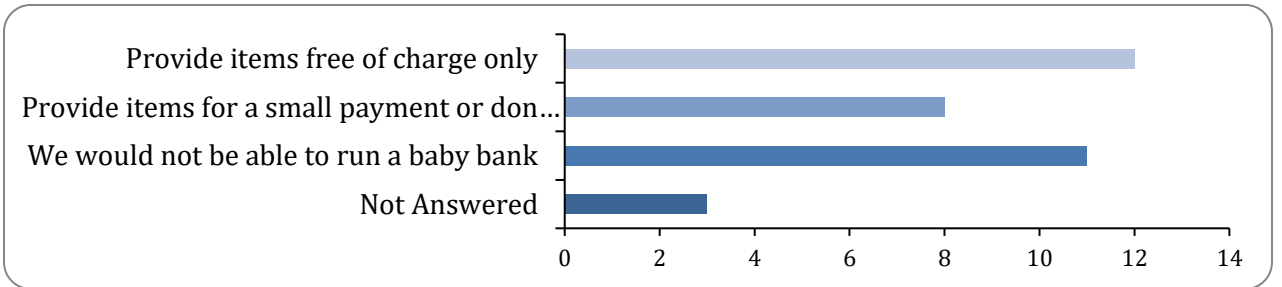
### Willingness to develop a baby bank in their local area:

Four groups were keen to progress with developing their plans for a baby bank provision and a further 15 (52% of respondents) keen to explore feasibility further. This is in addition to 2 other organisations who have made contact separately but prompted by the consultation.



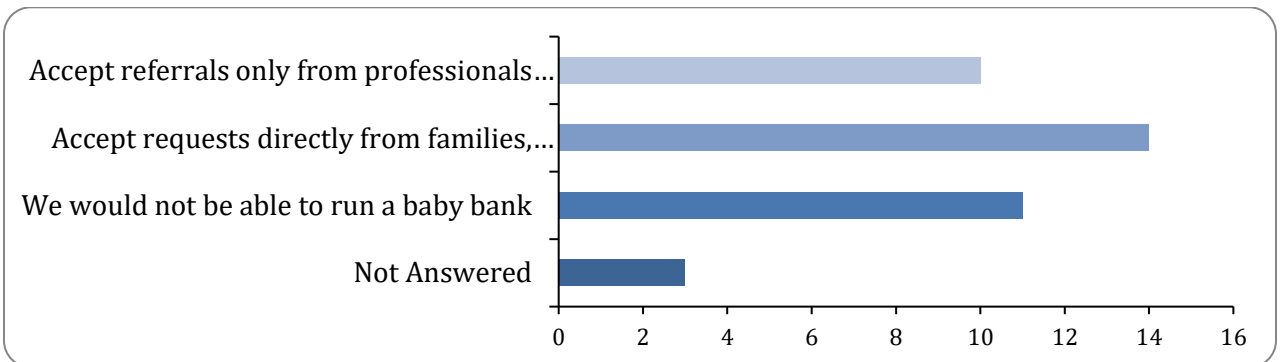
**Charges:**

We asked about whether items would be available free of charge or whether a small charge would be levied. 41% felt that items should be free of charge, with 28% of respondents stating that a small donation or payment would be acceptable.



**Referrals:**

There were 26 responses to this question, with the respondents being evenly split as to whether they would only accept referrals from professionals or whether they would also accept direct reflect from parents.



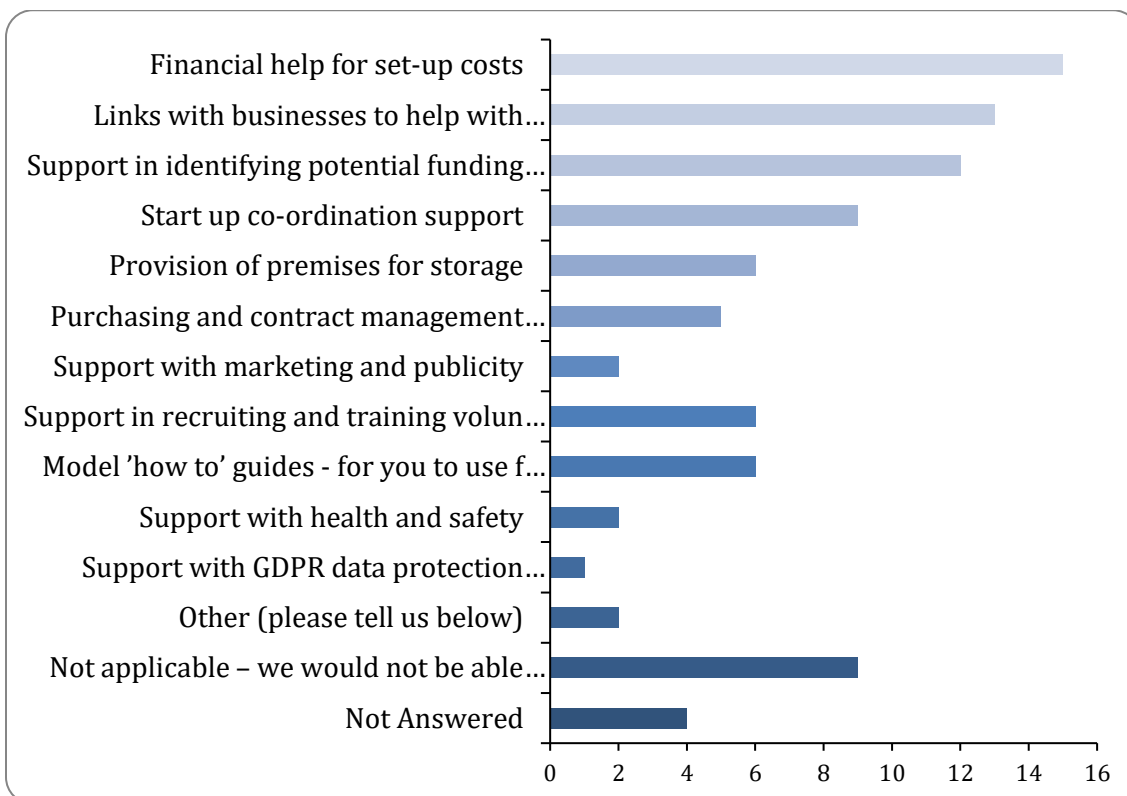
### Age range supported:

When asked of the age they would focus their baby bank on, most respondents (45%) said they would have supplies for babies and children under 5.

| Option  | Total | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| <b>Just focus on new babies (up to 3-months-old)</b>                  | 2     | 6.90%   |
| <b>Have supplies and equipment for babies under one year old</b>      | 6     | 20.69%  |
| <b>Have supplies and equipment for babies and children under five</b> | 13    | 44.83%  |

### Type of support needed:

We asked what support organisations would need to establish a baby bank. Unsurprisingly, financial help for setting up costs and support in applying for funding were the top priorities, followed by support in linking with businesses for supplies and to encourage corporate sponsorship.

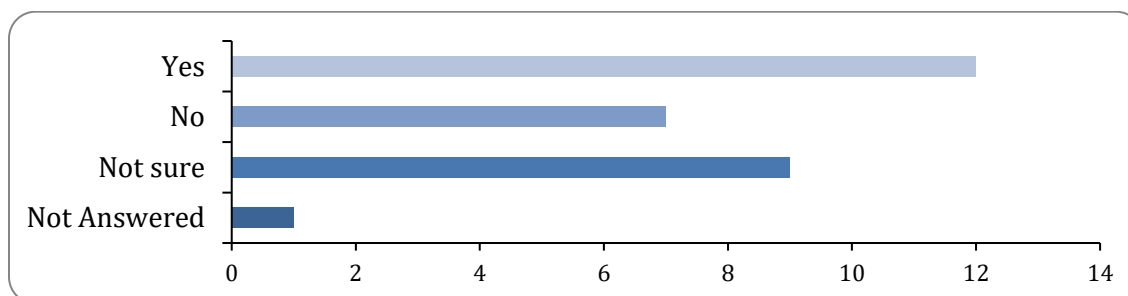


| Option  | Total | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| <b>Financial help for set-up costs</b>              | 15    | 51.72%  |
| <b>Links with businesses to help with donations</b> | 13    | 44.83%  |

|   |    |        |
|---|----|--------|
| <b>Support in identifying potential funding sources and writing funding bids</b>    | 12 | 41.38% |
| <b>Start up co-ordination support</b>   | 9  | 31.03% |
| <b>Provision of premises for storage</b>  | 6  | 20.69% |
| <b>Purchasing and contract management with suppliers eg for new baby mattresses</b> | 5  | 17.24% |
| <b>Support with marketing and publicity</b>   | 2  | 6.90%  |
| <b>Support in recruiting and training volunteers</b>                                | 6  | 20.69% |
| <b>Model 'how to' guides - for you to use for your policies and procedures</b>      | 6  | 20.69% |
| <b>Support with health and safety</b>   | 2  | 6.90%  |
| <b>Support in cash handling processes</b>   | 0  | 0.00%  |
| <b>Support with GDPR data protection guidance</b>                                   | 1  | 3.45%  |
| <b>Other (please tell us below)</b>   | 2  | 6.90%  |
| <b>Not applicable – we would not be able to set up a baby bank</b>                  | 9  | 31.03% |
| <b>Not Answered</b>   | 4  | 13.79% |

### Staff and Volunteers:

We asked whether organisations would be able to provide staff and volunteers to undertake the day to day operation of a baby bank and most (41%) felt that they would be able to, however 31% weren't sure. This ties in with feedback from other organisations/services who report that finding volunteers continues to remain a challenge.



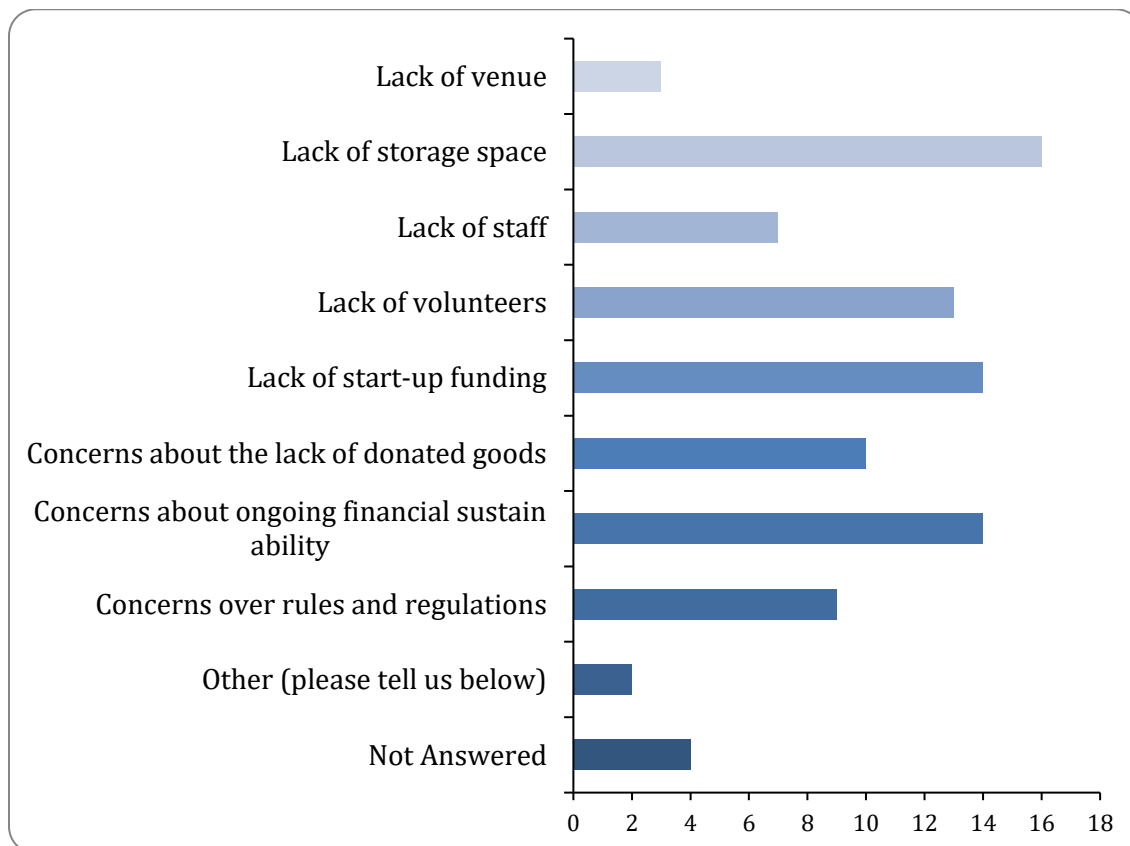
### Barriers to establishing a baby bank:

There were 25 responses to this part of the question, with lack of storage space being the main challenge. This chimes with feedback at both a local and national level.

Lack of start up funding and concerns about ongoing financial sustainability were the next two major concerns, so ensuring potential VCS organisations are aware of the various sources of funding and offering support in writing funding applications is an area

to develop. One of the respondents is a CVS so it will be useful to explore their willingness to draft up funding guidance specifically for baby banks.

A recent webinar from the Baby Bank Alliance in which a speaker from Get Grants gave lots of information and guidance, has helped raise awareness of a much wider range of potential funders. See: [Get Grants | Grant Fundraising Consultancy](#)

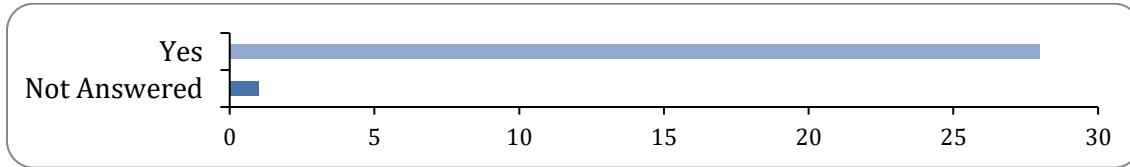


| Option  | Total | Percent |
|---|-------|---------|
| Lack of venue                                   | 3     | 10.34%  |
| Lack of storage space                           | 16    | 55.17%  |
| Lack of staff                                   | 7     | 24.14%  |
| Lack of volunteers                              | 13    | 44.83%  |
| Lack of start-up funding                        | 14    | 48.28%  |
| Concerns about the lack of donated goods        | 10    | 34.48%  |
| Concerns about ongoing financial sustainability | 14    | 48.28%  |
| Concerns over rules and regulations             | 9     | 31.03%  |
| Other (please tell us below)                    | 2     | 6.90%   |
| Not Answered                                    | 4     | 13.79%  |



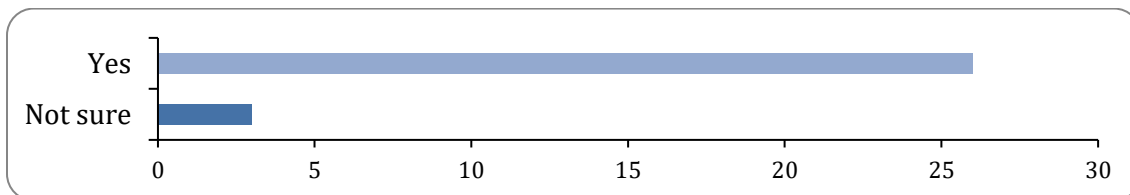
### Promotion:

97% of the respondents said they would you be willing to help promote a baby bank if there was one local to their area



### Networking:

The questionnaire asked whether a network of baby bank provision across Nottinghamshire and surrounding areas would be beneficial for families and organisations, with 90% of respondents agreeing that this would be useful. There were 29 responses to this part of the question.



### Conclusions:

The consultation received a good level of response from across the county and confirmed initial assumptions that there was very little provision in Nottinghamshire itself (although the city of Nottingham is better served), but that several VCS organisations were already considering whether they could expand their provision to incorporate baby supplies and equipment, mindful of the ongoing cost of living challenges.

Storage was a major barrier, however several organisations are keen to explore a more limited and less bulky option of “baby bundles” which would be easier to store than larger items such as cots and push chairs.

Finance was another challenge faced by respondents, so cascading funding information from the Baby Bank Alliance could be a useful support, as could exploring whether a template funding bid, with links to relevant data sources to make the case to potential funders, would prove useful and should be explored further.

Sharing information between referral services and VCS organisations could be useful, linking up sources of support for families as well as building a stronger network amongst these organisations themselves as they strive to support families be financially and environmentally resilient.

### Next Steps:

- Share the findings of the consultation with relevant parties, including feeding back to the Life Chances for Children and Families Group and the Nottinghamshire Best Start in Life Strategic Partnership.
- Draft an Action Plan for the Task and Finish Group to work through.
- Make contact with those organisations who have expressed an interest in progressing to develop baby bank provision, to offer support.
- Undertake some engagement with families to gather their views on baby banks.
- Contact potential corporate donors of items to stock in baby banks.
- Publicise the Baby Banks Alliance to potential baby bank organisations in Nottinghamshire.
- Work on a template funding application.
- Identify pump priming funding to support initial costs, if possible.