

SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING – THE BEACON PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT, KIDDERMINSTER BASE

DELEGATION TO CABINET MEMBER WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR EDUCATION

Background

1. The Wyre Forest area was identified as needing additional Alternative Provision places and a new Alternative Provision Free School provided by the Rivers Church of England Academy Trust, Unity Academy, will be opened from September 2023.
2. The Kidderminster site of the Beacon PRU will therefore have far fewer children – only children sent by the schools directly for short term exclusions and these can also be picked up by the new academy. This will potentially lead to the Kidderminster PRU being unviable to remain open.
3. As the Statutory Guidance is silent on the closure of a maintained additional PRU site, the Local Authority is minded to follow best practice and adopt the statutory process for Prescribed Alterations when closing a maintained additional site. This includes the publication of the Public Notice of the proposal to close the Unit, a four-week representation stage and then the decision.
4. The CMR agreed to the publication of the Public Notice of the proposal to close the Kidderminster base of the Beacon Referral Unit, and the subsequent non statutory consultation period of 4 weeks.
5. As the consultation has now been completed, a decision on whether to close the Kidderminster site is now required. An existing delegation allowed for the initial stages of following the best practice process but does not cover the specific decision regarding the closure of The Kidderminster Base of the Beacon Primary PRU.
6. In the interests of expedient conduct of Council business I therefore authorise the Cabinet Member for Education to take the decision on behalf of the Cabinet acting as the Executive in relation to the proposal to close the Kidderminster site of the Beacon PRU.

Dated: 18 July 2023

Signed: Simon Geraghty

Leader of the Council
