

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF CABINET MEETING
– 16 MAY 2019**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report: Proposed Re-Organisation of Sunderland City Council's Pupil Referral Unit Provision

Author(s): Executive Director of Neighbourhoods

Purpose of Report: The purpose of this report is to request a decision on the proposals to re-organise Sunderland City Council's Pupil Referral Unit Provision (PRU) and to increase the number of commissioned places to be delivered at the re-organised PRU.

Description of Decision: Cabinet is asked to:

Note the responses to the pre-publication consultation and the responses received during the statutory representation period on the PRU re-organisation proposals

Consider the three related statutory proposals which are:

- 1) To discontinue (close) the Key Stage 1 Pupil Referral Unit, Tudor Grove Centre, Portland Road, Sunderland, SR3 1SS and the Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit, Pallion Centre, Waverley Terrace, Sunderland, SR4 6TA with effect from 31.08.19;
- 2) To alter the lower and upper age limit of the Key Stage 2/3 Pupil Referral Unit, Tudor Grove Centre, Portland Road, Sunderland, SR3 1SS from 7 – 14 years old to 4 – 16 years old with effect from 01.09.19; and
- 3) To enlarge / increase the capacity of the Key Stage 2/3 Pupil Referral Unit, Tudor Grove Centre, Portland Road, Sunderland, SR3 1SS by increasing the number of available places from 78 to 172 with effect from 01.09.19.

Under the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 the Authority may approve published proposals with or without modification, or may reject them. The Committee is requested to approve the three related proposals.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

This proposal will result in the following:

- Formalise management arrangements already informally operated across Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 provisions

- Facilitate increased sharing of resources, management efficiencies and shared practice between Key Stage 1 provision and Key Stage 2,3 and 4 provisions
- Facilitate the strengthening of existing Governing Body arrangements, with representation and expertise to be offered across all key stages
- Facilitate the establishment of a new PRU management structure, offering consistent leadership across all key stages
- Facilitate greater cross key stage working with increased interaction, where appropriate, between children attending PRU provisions from within the separate key stages
- Lead to greater facilitation of transition between key stages for the minority of pupils who remain in PRU provision for extended periods of time
- Provide consistency between PRU delivery and proposed accommodation strategy, given the requirement to establish a new permanent delivery site for Key Stage 1 full and part time PRU provision.

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

Retain existing organisation and management structures. However, it is considered that this will restrain efficiencies, shared practices and opportunities for joint commissioning and increased performance across all key stages that would result from the proposed re-organisation.

Impacts analysed;

Equality Privacy Sustainability Crime and Disorder

Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes

Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes

Is it included in the 28 day Notice of Decisions? Yes

PROPOSED RE-ORGANISATION OF SUNDERLAND CITY COUNCIL'S PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT PROVISION

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to request a decision on the proposal to re-organise Sunderland City Council's Pupil Referral Unit Provision (PRU) and to increase the number of commissioned places to be delivered at the re-organised PRU.

2. Description of Decision

- 2.1 Cabinet is asked to:

Note the responses to the pre-publication consultation and the responses received during the statutory representation period on the PRU re-organisation proposals

Consider the three related statutory proposals which are:

- 1) To discontinue (close) the Key Stage 1 Pupil Referral Unit, Tudor Grove Centre, Portland Road, Sunderland, SR3 1SS and the Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit, Pallion Centre, Waverley Terrace, Sunderland, SR4 6TA with effect from 31.08.19;
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- 3) To enlarge / increase the capacity of the Key Stage 2/3 Pupil Referral Unit, Tudor Grove Centre, Portland Road, Sunderland, SR3 1SS by increasing the number of available places from 78 to 172 with effect from 01.09.19.

Under the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 the Authority may approve published proposals with or without modification or may reject them. The Committee is requested to approve the three related proposals.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 Sunderland's Pupil Referral Unit provision is currently organised as three separate provisions. They are;

- Key Stage 1 (Full time and Part Time) – age range 4- 7
- Key Stage 2 and 3 – age range 7 - 14
- Key Stage 4 – age range 14 -16

- 3.2 Key Stage 1 (KS1) full time and part time provision was previously delivered from rented accommodation at Farringdon Primary Academy (Full time) and Valley Road Academy (Part Time). In 2018, following discussions with both academies, the decision was taken to relocate the provision to an alternative site in the City. In the absence of a more suitable alternative the decision was made to temporarily accommodate the entire Key Stage 1 Provision at the Tudor Grove Centre.

- 3.3 Key Stage 2 (KS2) and Key Stage 3 (KS3) PRU provision is also currently delivered at the Tudor Grove Centre.
- 3.4 Key Stage 4 (KS4) PRU provision is delivered from the Pallion Centre. The Pallion Centre was refurbished in 2013 to accommodate the PRU provision.
- 3.5 In October 2018 Cabinet agreed a proposal to refurbish the former New Bridge School at Springwell Dene. Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 PRU provision will be delivered from the re-furbished site from September 2019. Capital costs associated with the refurbishment are estimated at £1.4m.
- 3.6 In March 2019 Cabinet agreed to the sale of the Tudor Grove site to the North East Autistic Society, with the capital receipt generated through the sale of the Tudor Grove site allocated towards refurbishment costs at the Springwell Dene site.
- 3.7 Organisationally KS1 PRU operates as an individual provision reporting to its own Management Committee. The KS1 Management Committee is responsible for governance arrangements related to the provision.
- 3.8 While KS2 and 3 and the KS4 provision are identified as two separate provisions, they report to a single KS2 and 3 and KS4 Management Committee. The KS2 and 3 and KS4 Management Committee is responsible for governance arrangements related to the provision.
- 3.9 Places at the PRU are allocated on a commissioned basis with placements subject to approval by a local placement panel. Funding for placements is provided by the DfE through the High Needs Block.

4. Current Position

Consultation

- 4.1 In October 2018 Cabinet approved a proposal to commence the School Organisation processes required to re-organise the City's three PRU provisions into one single school.
- 4.2 A pre-publication consultation exercise took place between 25th January 2019 and 25th March 2019. The pre-publication consultation contained the Council's proposal to amalgamate the City's PRU provision. The legislation does not contain a single proposal of 'amalgamation'. Instead in this instance it is necessary to;
- Discontinue Sunderland's Key Stage 1 Pupil Referral Unit's registration from 31 August 2019;
 - Discontinue Sunderland's Key Stage 4 Pupil Referral Unit's registration from 31 August 2019
 - Alter Sunderland's Key Stage 2/3 PRU age range from 7-14 to 4-16, from 1 September 2019;
 - Increase the Capacity of the Key Stage 2/3 PRU provision from 78 commissioned places to 172 places.

4.3 Consultation was carried out with the following groups

- Parents of pupils attending the PRU
- Current staff
- Local schools and nurseries
- Trade Union Representatives

In total the Council received seven responses. All supported the Council's proposals. Responses are collated as Appendix 1 of this report.

5.4 The Council published notification of statutory proposals for the re-organisation of Sunderland's Pupil Referral Unity Provision and the associated proposed increase in capacity of the re-organised PRU on 27 March 2019. The four-week statutory notice period ended 24 April 2019. Statutory notices were published in the following places:

- Sunderland City Council's website
- The Link School (PRU) website
- The Sunderland Echo

Notices were also displayed at the entrances of all buildings used by the current PRU provisions.

5.5 In addition to the publication of notices the following groups were consulted with as part of this process:

- Parents of pupils attending the PRU provision
- Current staff
- Unions
- Local members
- The local Church of England diocese
- The local Roman Catholic diocese and
- The Secretary of State for Education.

5.6 The notice of statutory proposals was also provided to all schools in the City. The Council did not receive any responses to the notices. The full statutory proposals document is attached at Appendix 2

6.0 Next Steps

6.1 An Interim Management Committee was established to support the facilitation of the proposals contained within this paper. The Management Committee has now established a leadership structure for the re-organised PRU provision. Should these proposals be approved recruitment to that leadership structure will commence immediately.

6.2 Capital works at the Springwell Dene School site are programmed to be complete week commencing 8th July. Extended closure of the Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 PRU provisions has been agreed to facilitate the schools' move to the new site.

5. Reasons for the Decision

5.1 The proposal will result in the following benefits:

- Formalise management arrangements already informally operated across Key Stage 2, 3 and 4 provisions
- Facilitate increased sharing of resources, management efficiencies and shared practice between Key Stage 1 provision and Key Stage 2,3 and 4 provisions
- Facilitate the strengthening of existing Governing Body arrangements, with representation and expertise to be offered across all key stages
- Facilitate the establishment of a new PRU management structure, offering consistent leadership across all key stages
- Facilitate greater cross key stage working with increased interaction, where appropriate, between children attending PRU provisions from within the separate key stages
- Lead to greater facilitation of transition between key stages for the minority of pupils who remain in PRU provision for extended periods of time
- Provide consistency between PRU delivery and proposed accommodation strategy, given the requirement to establish a new permanent delivery site for Key Stage 1 full and part time PRU provision.

6. Alternative Options

- 6.1 Retain existing organisation and management structures. However, it is considered that this will restrain efficiencies, shared practices and opportunities for joint commissioning and increased performance across all key stages that would result from the proposed re-organisation. It is also noted that the Council has not received any objections from consultees to the proposals contained within this paper. Therefore, no alternative options are to be submitted for consideration at this committee.

7. Impact Analysis

Equalities – Proposals contained within this document have been subject to staff and union consultation. All decisions have been undertaken in a fair, equitable and transparent manner, and will not affect those groups who have protected characteristics under the general equality duty. The Equalities Assessment is attached as Appendix 3.

Sustainability – This project will ensure the continuation of PRU provision in the city. It will result in appropriate provision continuing, with enhancement, for those who require it and will provide a long-term solution to the current KS1 PRU accommodation shortfall.

8. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations

- 8.1 **Co-operative values** – At Annual Council in May 2015, it was resolved that the following statement be included in the Constitution to reflect the values of the “Co-operative Council”.

“Sunderland City Council is a co-operative council and in being so will act ethically in all its actions while adhering to and actively promoting its co-operative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. These values will underpin its decision making and actions.”

8.2 Financial implications

Whilst revenue savings are not yet quantified it is anticipated that the re-organised PRU will realise savings through rationalisation of external procurement (including Service Level Agreements) and premises costs.

Restructure of the PRUs senior leadership team will remove one of the two current headteacher posts and associated salary. However, it will also result in the creation of a Head of School post which will limit the immediate overall savings.

Increase of commissioned pupil numbers at the re-organised PRU will result in an increase in overall pupil funding.

Capital costs associated with the amalgamation and relocation to the Springwell Dene site have been estimated at £1.425m and it is included in the current approved capital programme.

8.3 Legal Implications

Throughout the process, from informal consultation to the publication of the statutory proposals, the Council has complied with the requirements of the applicable legislation (the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013) and has also adhered to the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance – Opening and Closing Maintained Schools, November 2018 and [Making Significant Changes \('Prescribed Alterations'\) to Maintained Schools, October 2018](#).

The Springwell Dene School site is located within two miles of the existing PRU delivery site, the Tudor Grove Centre. As a result, under the legislation there is no requirement to conduct a statutory consultation process to re-locate the provisions currently delivered at Tudor Grove.

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Pre-Publication Consultation Outcomes
Appendix 2 – Statutory Proposals
Appendix 3 – Equalities Assessment

10. Background Papers

[Cabinet - October 2018: proposed refurbishment of the former Springwell Dene School and relocation of the Link School \(Pupil Referral Units\) from the Tudor Grove Centre to the refurbished buildings](#)

