

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 28 September 2017.

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Subject:

Update on delivery of the Prevent Strategy in the Bradford District

Summary statement:

This report outlines the requirements of the statutory Prevent Duty and progress towards the Prevent Action Plan for the District

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Portfolio:

Safer and Stronger Communities

Overview & Scrutiny Area:

Corporate

1. SUMMARY

This report will describe the approach taken to delivering the Government's Prevent Strategy in Bradford District since Prevent became a statutory requirement in July 2015.

It will describe the practical measures in place to help build resilience in our communities to those who promote extremism, hate and violence.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Extremism, particularly violent extremism, is one of the most serious challenges facing society today. It has the potential to not only manifest itself in physical attacks on people and places, but to isolate individuals and create a breakdown in relationships between communities.

2.2 The *Prevent* strategy, reviewed by the Government in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. Prevent is a distinct part of the CONTEST Strategy focusing on early intervention through strategies which reduce the likelihood of individuals supporting a violent extremist ideology or becoming terrorists. The aim of the *Prevent* strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from all forms of terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It sits within the 'non-criminal' area of preventative work.

2.3 The 2011 *Prevent* strategy has three specific strategic objectives:

- respond to the **ideological** challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- prevent **individuals** from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- work with sectors and **institutions** where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

2.4 Prevent has always had a focus on far right extremism but this has increased, particularly since the murder of a sitting MP by a far right extremist last year.

2.5 The UK terror threat level was increased from 'Substantial' to 'Severe' on 29th August 2014. This was a result of the growth of 'so called' Islamic State (Daesh) across Syria and Iraq and the small but significant numbers of UK citizens joining others across the world in travelling to join this Terrorist group.

2.6 In February 2015 the Counter Terrorism and Security Act received royal assent and significantly made Prevent a statutory duty for Local Authorities, the Police, Prison/Probation Services, Further and Higher Education, Schools and the Health Sector.

The Act places a duty on these specified authorities to have 'due regard', in the exercise of their functions, to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The Prevent Duty came into force as of 1st July 2015.

2.7 The term "due regard" as used in the Act means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. Preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism also requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups.

2.8 The government has defined extremism as: "*vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. It also include in the definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces*".

- 2.9 Events in Syria and Iraq mean that Daesh is under severe pressure and the numbers travelling to join this movement have diminished significantly. Authorities are preparing for the range of scenarios in which UK residents, including children, may return to the UK. Those returning can expect to face prosecution should it be evidenced that they have been involved supporting terrorist organisations.
- 2.10 The changes in the Syrian conflict have encouraged Daesh and like-minded terror groups to place a renewed emphasis on terrorist attacks across the globe. England has seen terror attacks in London and Manchester this year, perpetrated by those claiming loyalty to Daesh or like-minded groups. In addition, a terror attack took place at Finsbury Park, London, perpetrated by a far right extremist.
- 2.11 There have been sporadic visits to Bradford by far right groups over recent years. These groups distort facts, seek to offend and provoke and promote hate across our communities. Events held by far right groups have been very poorly attended and almost exclusively by people from outside this District. They have been very largely ignored by all in our communities and District residents should be commended for this.
- 2.12 This was evidenced by the recent demonstration by the 'English Defence League' in Keighley on Saturday 2nd September 2017. Despite the intended provocation by the EDL this event actually did a lot to bring communities and partners together. Thanks goes to all those in Keighley and beyond who volunteered their time to help ensure hate did not win – especially to those who have given up part of their time with family and friends during Eid celebrations.
- 2.13 This year will see a 'Community Dialogue' project being run across a number of neighbourhoods. Using dialogue the programme will seek to resolve and transform conflict in communities and undermine the hate-based rationale used by extremist groups, such as the English Defence League, to recruit and radicalise.
- 2.14 A Police study, in 2016, highlighted a link between mental health and Prevent referrals. Chief Constable Simon Cole, who is in charge of the Prevent programme nationally for the Police said "There would appear to be, from the work we have been doing, a link to people who are vulnerable around mental health." The police study of 500 cases dealt with by Channel, an anti-radicalisation scheme, found that 44% of the individuals involved were assessed as being likely to have vulnerabilities related to mental health or psychological difficulties. Possible disorders include depression and anxiety, through to psychosis.
- 2.15 There is significant demand from parents and schools for support in building resilience to different extremist narratives. This is especially the case where support is provided with internet safety training. Viewing habits are changing rapidly away from broadcast television with increasing use of on-demand streaming services and social media, especially among children. More than two fifths of eleven year olds have a social media profile (despite the fact that all major social media platforms have a minimum user age of thirteen). More information on programmes to support parents and schools is available (see section 3.9)
- 2.16 The issue of extremism, and how best to prevent it, is a complex, emotive, and highly debated one. Locally, organisations have worked very hard to build a successful approach to this work. For example, Bradford Further Education College have tailored an approach which has won support from both staff and students. Recognising extremism as hate motivated the College has taken care to ensure efforts to safeguard are targeted at vulnerable individuals rather than broader communities of people providing examples where parts of the media have been guilty of this stereotyping. The College has sought to develop a set of 'UNITED' values which raise awareness of diversity and develop critical thinking skills.
- 2.17 Bradford Council and partners have sought to tailor the Prevent programme to the needs of the District's communities, providing projects across the District that all in our communities find

useful and valuable. There has also been significant effort to increase the transparency of the programme (see section 3.8).

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Prevent Delivery in Bradford District:

3.1 There is a common desire to rid the District of all forms of extremism. Over the last two years (2015/16 and 2016/17) over 4800 staff across wide range of agencies have received the basic safeguarding training package to help protect vulnerable people against radicalisation. In the same time period our project work has engaged 5128 people, including many young people, to help build awareness and resilience to the different extremist narratives.

3.2 In response to the requirements of the Prevent Duty support has been provided to the six 'specified authorities' to develop their own Prevent Plan. Collectively, these plans form the District Prevent Action Plan 2015-17 (see appendix one). This approach broadens accountability and ensures effective partnership contribution. The key themes of safeguarding, education, transparency, challenging extremist narratives and community engagement remain our top priorities.

3.3 Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism both physically or on-line is a Safeguarding issue. Prevent has been included in District Safeguarding procedures through both the Adults and Children/Young Peoples Safeguarding Boards. Concerns around radicalisation are reported through existing organisational safeguarding procedures just as they would be for other safeguarding concerns around maltreatment or abuse. Reports on the requirements of the Prevent Duty have been delivered to both the Districts Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards.

3.4 Bradford Council facilitates the Channel support scheme which provides support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by identifying individuals at risk; assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned. Participation in Channel is completely voluntary.

3.5 To support understanding of safeguarding processes and to help increase confidence in staff to recognise and respond to concerns around extremism, training is available to staff through the 'Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent' (WRAP). Using actual UK case studies of extreme right-wing and Daesh extremism the course explores factors which may contribute to an individual's susceptibility to a terrorist ideology. Feedback strongly indicate that WRAP is an easy to understand and non-alarmist method of raising awareness of Prevent. To date, nearly 15,000 staff in the District have received WRAP training

3.6 The internet has opened up new ways to promote extremism. It has also made it more difficult to identify, and support those at risk. The Counter-Terrorism Internet Referral Unit removes around 1,000 items of material from a range of extremist groups from the internet each week, and this is a trend that is continuing. Engaged and computer-savvy parents and families are critical to addressing the risk present online in their homes. Cyber safety training has wider benefits and supports safeguarding over a number of areas.

3.7 Prevent is most effective when public services have the confidence to deliver, and when communities trust and are engaged in the approach being taken. Internet safety training, for example, has been welcomed across our communities as has much of our project work that helps build resilience (see 3.9). The risk of being drawn into extremist activity is a vulnerability in the

same way that some are at risk of exploitation by others. Engaging the person at risk, and all those around them, in an open and honest way is vital to success.

3.8 Bradford has sought to increase transparency and accountability of Prevent work and has made all the District's Prevent Action Plan available on the Council website. These can easily be accessed via an internet search. In addition, Bradford has, for several years, run a 'Community Reference' group whereby communities are consulted on Prevent delivery. Finally, Prevent is regularly scrutinised through local political structures via the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Group.

3.9 Funding for project work from the Home Office (Office for Security and Counter Terrorism) has been made available since 2012. Over the last five years Bradford has delivered seventeen projects. The focus has been strongly on safeguarding, building resilience, education and in engaging communities. Some examples are provided below along with the numbers :

- 1) **On-line Resilience Project** - Education on internet safety relating to extremist related narratives is essential. There is a need to support schools and parents with awareness and a range of skills in dealing with on-line extremist narratives. These include:
 - Exploring internet as a vehicle for unregulated propaganda
 - Understanding conspiracy theories and having a balanced approach
 - The power and reach of social media
 - Personal safety on-lineThis programme was delivered to 1615 students across 15 schools and received excellent feedback.
- 2) **Community Support Project** - A community led initiative to mentor young people at risk of radicalisation and extremism. This programme offers and provides support to at risk individuals who do not meet the Channel threshold. Bradford Hate Crime Alliance has worked with individuals who have been referred through Prevent Safeguarding, school or community referrals providing a relevant and effective support package to each individual. This programme has provided support to 208 people in both group and individual one to one support sessions.
- 3) **Supplementary School programme** -The programme has delivered training to Madrassah leaders and teachers to recognise extreme ideologies and the processes used to justify their cause. The training supports delegates to understand the signs that someone may be being manipulated or radicalised and know how to intervene and where to seek support. In addition, the programme will increase understanding for students of how extreme ideologies do not represent true Islam. There has been a high demand for this programme and it has been extended to run again later this year. The programme has already been run in seven supplementary schools to 235 students alongside a training input specifically for teachers.
- 4) **Choices then and Now** - learning from the past has proved a really valuable way to help contextualise and understand current issues. This programme, developed by the Peace Museum UK in Bradford, looks at many aspects of World War One and encourages dialogue and debate with students. It was delivered by 153 trainee teachers as part of their teaching practice and has had wide coverage across Bradford schools. Choices then and Now has been selected to go on the Home Office Prevent 'National Good Practice Catalogue' and is being delivered in a number of local authority areas across the country, (refer to website: <http://choicesthenandnow.co.uk/>)

3.9 The Role of West Yorkshire Police

3.9.1 The North East Counter Terrorism Unit (NECTU) works in conjunction with West Yorkshire Police and partners to provide support with all aspects of terrorism related activity within Bradford. The NECTU Prevent team seek to safeguard individuals, families and communities from the threat of terrorism whilst deterring individuals and groups who seek to cause harm to communities. There are a number of dedicated officers who are based within the Bradford district and who are deployed against an annual assessment of the Counter Terrorism risks facing the District.

3.9.2 Bradford District Police works together with Bradford District Metropolitan Council, the North East Counter Terrorism Unit and a range of other partners. The district has recently invested heavily in a joint partnership analytical hub enabling a joint analytical function leading to effective tasking to tackle Organised Crime Group activity.

Bradford District Police have recently recruited a number of Stronger Communities Engagement Officers who are co-located within Bradford Metropolitan District Council, this team has quickly established strong links within Bradford Communities which have already proved very beneficial when the District has experienced heightened tensions; e.g. as a result of protests initiated by the English Defence League or when speakers of concern have spoken at events. As a result of these positive relationships the officers have been able to work across communities providing bespoke policing interventions whilst reassuring the general public at large. This has meant that the negative impact of these potentially damaging incidents upon the District has been minimised.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no direct costs attributable to Bradford Council in relation to the engagement of the Prevent Coordinator function.

4.2 A central government grant of £85,000 is made available annually to Bradford to fund a Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator and support for the delivery of Prevent work.

4.3 Bradford Council can also apply for funding to deliver projects which contribute to delivering key Prevent objectives in the District. Bradford has secured funding consistent with other local authority areas in the region and delivered seventeen projects over the last five years.

4.4 Partners across health, education, probation and the Police have dedicated resources to ensuring safeguarding processes are in place and, where appropriate, that education services seek to steer people away from extremism and towards a more cohesive society

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

5.1 Governance - Local delivery of the strategy is overseen through the Bradford CONTEST governance mechanism, see **appendix two**. The structure involves partnership at all levels with a wide range of agencies needed to ensure that we successfully deliver CONTEST in Bradford and the Prevent Strategy within this.

5.2 The CONTEST structure is led by the Gold group which provides strategic lead and direction to the work in the District. The CONTEST Silver group provides operational lead and both these groups rely on the input of strategic partners. Partners should be commended for the commitment and resource they have dedicated to making this structure an effective one.

5.3 Two strands of the CONTEST Strategy Protect and Prepare deal with emergency planning, civil contingencies and business continuity. The Bradford District Contest Gold Group has a strategic overview and oversees risk management.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

6.1 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 puts the Prevent programme on a statutory footing and makes delivering the Channel scheme a legal requirement. Specifically, the Act:

- Creates a new duty on certain bodies to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The duty will apply to bodies including local authorities, the police, prisons, providers of probation services, schools, colleges, and universities.
- Allows the Secretary of State to issue guidance to those bodies on how the duty should be fulfilled.
- Gives the Secretary of State power to direct a body to take certain action, which would be used to enforce compliance where the Secretary of State is satisfied that the body has failed to discharge the duty.

The Channel scheme becoming statutory has:

- required local authorities to ensure a multi-agency panel exists and chair the panel;
- required the panel to develop a support plan for accepted cases and signpost to other support where cases are not accepted;
- ensured consent is sought prior to support being provided;
- placed a duty to cooperate on panel partners;
- required partners to pay due regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
- allowed the Secretary of State to indemnify intervention providers that provide ideological/ theological support for the Channel programme.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Despite the increased emphasis on far right extremism, the Government believes the main threat to UK is through terrorism inspired by Daesh or groups with a similar ideology. Threat conditions can change very quickly but the context which shapes Prevent delivery is focused where risk actually exists. This is evidence based and not influenced by propaganda or media reporting but using the information that is available across agencies. Partners across Bradford District work hard to engage communities in Safeguarding.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The Government approach to Prevent is to look at the security of the nation from the threat of terrorism that may arise from within the UK or from internationally inspired ideologies.

At present the work around countering terrorism will continue for the foreseeable future. Within Bradford the approach taken has been to develop close relationships with key public agencies and safeguarding bodies in order to position them to take forward the agenda as part of mainstream activity in future years

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no Greenhouse Gas implications apparent

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

The Prevent Strategy for Bradford District is central to reducing the threat of terrorism and extremism through a partnership structure engaging a wide range of agencies including West Yorkshire Police.

Prevent sits within the context of the District's Community Safety Plan and reports periodically to the District's Safer and Stronger Community Partnership.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Terrorism has an impact on human rights, in particular the rights to life, freedom, respect and expression. Terrorist acts can destabilise Governments, undermine civil society, jeopardise peace and security, threaten social and economic development, and can affect the strength and resilience of our communities.

The Prevent Strategy provides a means for developing our partnership arrangements and ensuring we build resilience in the community and put in place effective counter terrorism measures.

7.6 TRADE UNION

There are no trade union implications apparent

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

The nature of patterns of extremism in the District means that certain wards are more prone to extremist activity, whether this is extreme right wing, Islamist or other.

This will impact on the levels of engagement required to mitigate any emergence of extremism and can change over time.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the delivery of Prevent Work across Bradford district and make any recommendations for further consideration.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee acknowledge the progress on work undertaken in implementing the Prevent agenda in Bradford and its approach to supporting vulnerable people.
- 10.2 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee acknowledge this report and the intended direction for Prevent in the district.
- 10.3 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes any suggestions for raising awareness of Prevent across Bradford District
- 10.4 A report is presented in twelve months' time giving a progress update.

11. APPENDICES

Appendix One – Bradford District Prevent Delivery Plans:

District Prevent Plan – Local Authority

District Prevent Plan – Police

District Prevent Plan – Health

District Prevent Plan – Schools

District Prevent Plan – Further/Higher Education

District Prevent Plan – Probation

Appendix Two – Bradford CONTEST Governance Chart

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS