

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on 21st March 2019

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Subject:

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PREVENT STRATEGY IN THE BRADFORD DISTRICT

Summary statement:

This report outlines the approach to delivering the national Prevent strategy in Bradford district and highlights progress made in the last twelve months against the District Prevent Action Plan

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:
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1. SUMMARY

This report outlines the approach to delivering the national Prevent strategy in Bradford district and highlights progress made in the last twelve months against the District Prevent Action Plan

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On 22nd March 2018 the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2018 resolved that the progress on work undertaken in implementing the Prevent agenda in Bradford and its approach to supporting vulnerable people be acknowledged. That all Ward Councillors be informed of project work taking place in their wards before it takes place and that a progress report be presented in 12 months in relation to Bradford's new updated Prevent Programme.
- 2.2 Prevent is a distinct part of the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy CONTEST. It focuses 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.
- 2.3 In 2017 the UK was subject to five terrorist attacks in London and Manchester which killed 36 innocent victims and injured many more. In the twelve months following the Westminster attack the police and security services thwarted a further 12 Islamist terror plots. Over the same period, police were able to prevent a further four extreme right wing inspired plots. The terrorist threat is rapidly evolving, with much radicalisation taking place online. 'Low tech' attacks involving vehicles and knives are quicker to plan and deliver. The threat does not just come from organised terror groups but from 'lone actors' who, motivated by hate ideologies, work independently to carry out attacks.
- 2.4 Following the 2017 attacks, the Government ordered an independent review of the Counter Terrorism Strategy CONTEST of which the Prevent strategy is a part. The review found CONTEST to be well-organised and comprehensive. However, the review prompted a number of key changes, designed to disrupt terrorist threats in the UK earlier, to take account of the scale of the threat and the speed at which plots are now developing. Many of these changes were incorporated into the Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019, which has recently received royal assent Parliament.
- 2.5 The Act streamlines the process for referring an individual thought to be at risk of being drawn into terrorism under the Prevent programme to a Channel panel so that they can get the help and support needed to turn them away from radicalisation. In addition, new programmes to rehabilitate offenders under the Terrorism Act, re-enforcing safeguarding at the heart of Prevent and an enhanced response to the growing threat from far right extremism have all come out of the review.

- 2.6 The extreme far right is successfully tapping into political dis-engagement in society with a narrative of 'betrayal' and 'traitors' often focusing on MPs. There is a continued increase in internationalisation of ideas, tactics, money and collaborative working with the adoption of the 'free speech' narrative enabling the far right to deflect from their own extremism and attract a more mainstream audience. The far right has not gained significant traction in the district though individuals can be vulnerable to the on-line narrative.
- 2.7 Around 900 people of national security concern travelled from the UK to engage in the conflict in Syria and Iraq. Of these, approximately 20% have been killed in that conflict, and around 40% have returned to the UK. The vast majority of those returned are deemed to be of low security concern. It is assessed that many of the most dangerous individuals remain in Syria. The Home Secretary has made it clear that he will use all legal powers available to prevent the return to the UK of those who have travelled to support terrorist organisations abroad.

3.0 **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The Government has announced an Independent Review of the national Prevent programme which will commence by 12th August 2019 and report within 12 months of commencement. Critics have been calling for the review for some time. Due to the wide range of propaganda around the Prevent, the independent scrutiny is to be welcomed.
- 3.2 Bradford Council and partners have always sought to tailor the Prevent programme to the needs of the District's communities, providing grass roots projects to help build resilience and to ensure support is offered to vulnerable people. We have made significant efforts to engage both communities and elected members to build awareness of the programme and this has been welcomed by all.

3.3 **PREVENT IN BRADFORD DISTRICT**

Prevent Peer Review

- 3.3.1 In January 2018, Bradford Council became one of the first Prevent priority local authority areas to undertake the Home Office led Prevent peer review. The review looked at the Council's leadership and comprised interviews with over 30 key personnel across agencies, reviews of documentation and a community meeting.
- 3.3.2 The Peer Review Team assessment is that Bradford is generally delivering Prevent to a high standard. The team observed a range of innovative practice, strong partnership working and demonstrable leadership. Key strengths included:
- A strong appetite to succeed in this agenda
 - Partners having a good understanding of local risk and threat in Bradford
 - Many examples of excellent delivery in partnership at all levels
 - The Safeguarding narrative is prevalent and has a positive impact on communications and engagement
- 3.3.3 The Review Team also made a range of recommendations for improvement including:
- Improvements to Channel processes
 - More focused performance management
 - Greater effort to communicate the successes of the local Prevent programme

- Continued efforts on engaging women and detached youth work

3.3.4 As a result the CONTEST Board agreed a twelve month plan to deliver on the recommendations of the review. The completed plan was approved at the CONTEST Board in January 2019 and has been submitted to the Home Office.

Bradford Prevent Delivery

3.3.5 The programme in Bradford has been made transparent with local Prevent Delivery Plans being made available to the public. There has also been significant engagement with the local democratic framework via regular reports to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3.3.6 Elected members have been positive in attending Prevent training sessions in the district. This not only allows for elected members to contribute ideas on delivering Prevent but enables them to take a greater community leadership role and adds transparency and accountability to the local agenda. To date 41 elected members have attended training/awareness sessions with a further session planned in June 2019.

3.3.7 A series of community roundtable events are planned in 2019 and will be delivered to community audiences from across the district. This has proved a successful way to engage at a grass roots level. There are many misconceptions around Prevent and this provides a forum for community members to hear what actual delivery looks like on the ground.

3.3.8 Under the Prevent strategy the local authority and partners develop projects to reduce the risk of people becoming involved in terrorist activity. Funding for this work increased substantially in 2018/19 to £366,000 (from £142,000 in 2017/18). The full list of funded projects can be found at Appendix A. Most projects focus on education and in building resilience to extremist hate narratives. Some of the key work is listed below:

- **Mothers Against Radicalisation:** A six module programme is delivered to educate and support mothers on understanding the digital world and its impact and danger, safeguarding children and young people from online grooming and radicalisation. Mothers will also be equipped with the knowledge of the signs and symptoms of radicalisation and how to challenge and seek support. Over 70 women of different backgrounds have taken part in the programme this year with excellent feedback and a ripple effect into communities.
- **Bradford Hate Crime Alliance:** This project has been well regarded in the Prevent Peer Review and is centred on supporting individuals at risk of radicalisation through one to one mentoring and support. Encouraging critical thinking and linking individuals to appropriate support the project will work with 20 individual referrals on a regular one to one basis, 400 parents and 1,100 pupils through presentations at schools.
- **FutureProof – UK Youth:** The project up-skills youth workers to better support young people to stay safe, cope with uncertainty and build the life skills needed to engage with education, volunteering and employment. Youth workers will also be supported with identifying health and safety, safeguarding, grooming and radicalisation risks helping keep young people safe. 11 Youth Workers will deliver bespoke sessions to 110 young people across the district.

3.3.9 From the outset Bradford Council has prioritised education as one of the key foundation stones in the battle against extremism. The internet, and social media specifically, has opened up new ways to promote extremism and online radicalisation is identified as an area for priority response. In addition to the education projects listed below, the Prevent Education Officer has delivered a range of lessons which develop critical thought, understanding of citizenship, supporting tolerance and providing counter narrative to extremist ideologies to over 16,000 school students in the last twelve months:

- **Parentzone:** The Resilient Families Programme is an open access online training course, with support materials for parents, designed to explain the process of radicalisation, including what makes children vulnerable and how to prevent and respond to the risks of extremist messages. It targeted parents who are concerned and want to protect their children proactively. The programme has reached students and parents through engaging with 20 local schools.
- **Peace Foundation - Think Residential:** A leadership project for 14-16 year old pupils that gives them the skills to manage conflict in a peaceful way. The programme equips them to THINK critically and confidently about their place in society. In the process they develop skills, knowledge, and understanding around core values and beliefs allowing them to play a positive role in managing conflict at school.
- **Brave:** The project has delivered workshops to 12-18 year old pupils to identify the similarities between gang involvement, extremism and radicalisation. The workshop covered topics such as dispelling the myths of gang life and how young people can be resilient to violent extremism by linking to Far Right and Daesh examples and looking at recruiter techniques. The programme has been delivered to 6000 students in fifteen district secondary schools.

3.3.10 A key part of the Prevent strategy is the “Channel” safeguarding scheme. The local authority leads a panel of safeguarding professionals including police, social workers, NHS staff, schools and the justice system to identify those at risk of being drawn into terrorism, assess what the risk might be and then develop tailored support for those referred to them. This could range from mentoring to things like confidence building, managing stress or drug and alcohol programmes. Participation in Channel is voluntary.

3.3.11 Following the Peer review recommendations a ‘quality assurance’ assessment was made of our Channel processes in October 2018, involving peers from Manchester and Calderdale along with local safeguarding partners. This assessment found our Channel systems to be in order and made a number of recommendations which have proved useful as we seek to make continuous improvements.

3.3.12 Of the 394 individuals nationally who received Channel support, 179 (45%) were referred for concerns related to Islamist extremism and 174 (44%) were referred for concerns related to the right wing extremism. There was a 36% increase in the number of referrals for concerns related to right wing extremism in 2017/18 (1,312) when compared with 2016/17 (968), continuing the upward trend seen since 2015/16.

3.3.13 To support understanding of safeguarding processes and to help increase confidence in staff to recognise, respond and, where appropriate, to refer 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, over 20,000 staff in the District have received WRAP training.

- 3.3.14 The Prevent team across the Police and Council have developed a network of 'Prevent Champions' who will lead on the safeguarding function and be kept informed of current patterns of extremism. To date the network is functioning in Bradford Police and across schools. Training is currently being delivered in BMDC Adult Services to develop the network there and this will proceed to other areas of the Council.
- 3.3.15 The Council has developed an 'external speaker' policy around ensuring that any speakers on Council premises do not contravene the council's equal opportunities policies, incite racial or religious hatred or incite violence. This has been approved at CONTEST Board in October 2018.
- 3.3.16 The Prevent team has led a 'Digital Safeguarding' group which has set out the wide range of safeguarding risks online which exist for anyone with an on-line presence. We are seeking funding to develop a local platform that will provide up to date support and community safety advice for district residents needing guidance. It relates to a wide range of risks covering radicalisation but also sexual exploitation, fraud and extortion, mental health, privacy issues, gaming and mis-information
- 3.3.17 Guidance is being prepared for places of worship to support them in minimising safeguarding risks and keeping congregations safe. This will include advice on what to do if contacted by a far right group, how to respond to hate crime and where to access community safety support.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

- 4.1 There are no direct costs attributable to Bradford Council in relation to the engagement of the Prevent Coordination function.
- 4.2 A central government grant of £520,000 was made to Bradford Council in 2018/19 to fund Prevent work in the District. Of this £154,000 is supporting relevant posts, and their on-costs, including a Local Authority Prevent Co-ordinator, Prevent Engagement Officer, Prevent Education Officer and Administrative support for the delivery of Prevent work. The remainder of the funding supports delivery of projects which contribute to delivering key Prevent objectives in the District. Bradford has secured funding to deliver eleven projects in 2018/19 at a total cost of £366,000 (see Appendix A).
- 4.3 Partners across health, education, probation and the Police have dedicated resources to ensuring that 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 Following a review the structure has been amended this year with the CONTEST Gold and Silver group merging to form a CONTEST Board which provides strategic lead to the work in the District as well as operational direction. Both these groups rely on the input of strategic partners. Partners should be commended for the commitment and resources 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. Separate plans are in place for the delivery of this work
- 5.4 Links with CONTEST governance and the Council's Safer Communities Partnership have been strengthened with an annual report being delivered and a new performance framework agreed.

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.
- 6.2 The Channel scheme being 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.
- 6.3 The Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019 enables local authorities, in addition to the police, to refer an individual at risk of being drawn into terrorism for discussion at a Channel panel. At the moment, this power is only available to the police. To achieve this change, the Act amends sections 36 and 38 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

7.1.1 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.

7.1.2 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.

7.1.3 Partners across Bradford District work hard to engage communities in Safeguarding whilst at all times ensuring that any actions are in line with equality and diversity policies.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications apparent.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no Greenhouse Gas implications apparent

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.4.1 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

7.4.2 Prevent sits within the context of the District's Community Safety Plan and reports periodically to the District's Safer Communities Partnership. Tackling the threat to community safety and harmony is central to Prevent delivery in the district.

7.4.3 It is now proposed that an annual report will be presented on the work of Prevent to the Safer Communities Partnership.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

7.5.1 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.

7.5.2 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 mean that over time risk will vary across the district, 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. Prevent work, however, does take place widely across the district, for example, through education programmes in schools.

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None.

9. OPTIONS

Corporate 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.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.2 Appendix one – Prevent Projects delivered in 2018-19
- 11.3 Appendix two – Bradford CONTEST Governance Chart

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- 12.1 Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 22nd March 2018