

Report of the Strategic Director Place, to the meeting of Bradford West Area Committee to be held on 22nd September 2022

Subject:

Progress report on the work of the Prevent Team in the Bradford West Area.

Summary statement:

This report outlines the progress made in the last twelve months in the Bradford West Area in delivering the national Prevent strategy against the District Prevent Action Plan

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EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

The 18 and under age group is the one where the risk of radicalisation and extremism is the highest and the majority of Prevent referrals relate to this age group. Extremist groups still focus most of their activity online and this increases the risk to this age group still further, due to their engagement online. The pattern for referrals and Channel cases to have long term mental health issues or specific learning needs, continues. This has, of course, been exacerbated by issues concerning Covid and the home based nature of work in recent years. This pattern is very much evident in Bradford West.

The Council's Prevent programme makes a positive contribution towards the **Council's Equality Objectives.**

Visibility, leadership and accountability- we publish our Prevent Plan for the District on the Bradford Safeguarding page for the District to see. We also consult with the Prevent Advisory Group about Prevent related issues in the District, as well as listening to the views of those across the District in our quarterly Roundtables and via our Prevent Champions network. We champion Bradford Shared Values in all our training.

Workforce-our Prevent team reflects the Bradford community that we serve and comprises of those who know the areas well.

Community: we are always consulting with local areas to find out the issues that concern them from a Prevent perspective. We recently held a Prevent Roundtable in Bradford West and made some new connections to expand our training further. We meet with the Bradford West Area Office regularly to gain greater insight into local issues and better understand the community there. Wherever possible we try to ensure that the services we commission are local, so we can support the local economy.

Services: We will design, commission and deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities. We provide information about services in a range of accessible formats so that people know what services are available to support them and how to access them.

1.0 SUMMARY

This report outlines the progress made in the last twelve months in the Bradford West Area in delivering the national Prevent strategy against the District Prevent Action Plan.

2.0 BACKGROUND

At the Bradford West Roundtable on 2nd August 2022, the Prevent Team agreed to feedback to the Bradford West Committee on the work of Prevent in the Bradford West District and its impact.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Extremist groups continue to utilise the online space to spread hate, conspiracy theories and mistrust between communities. The use of memes, conspiracy theories and Apps such as TikTok are attractive to a particularly younger audience and have been used to attract new support.

Self- initiated terrorism continues to be a risk, due to the low sophistication of the methods used and the ease at which things can be planned. The continued isolation and suspicion amongst some individuals, makes the potential for such attacks high. This is not linked to any particular ideology and very much taps into suspicion over minority communities, narratives associated with free speech, conspiracy theories and those with mixed, unclear and unstable ideologies.

The Independent Review of the national Prevent programme is due to be published. Bradford Prevent has fully participated and welcomes hearing the results.

3.0 FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

There are no direct costs attributable to Bradford Council in relation to Prevent engagement.

A central government grant was made to Bradford Council in 2021/22 to fund Prevent work in the District. This supports the following relevant posts and their on-costs-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 4 projects in 2021/22.

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

4.0 RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Governance - Local delivery of the strategy is overseen through the Bradford CONTEST governance mechanism. The structure involves partnership at all levels with a range of agencies needed to ensure that we successfully deliver CONTEST in Bradford and the Prevent Strategy within this. Partners should be commended for the commitment and resources they have dedicated to making this structure an effective one.

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.

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.

5.0 LEGAL APPRAISAL

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 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.

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.

6.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

None

6.1. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

None

6.2. 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 the West Yorkshire Police.

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

6.3. 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.

6.4. TRADE UNION

None

6.5. WARD IMPLICATIONS

The nature of patterns of extremism in the District mean that over time risk will vary across the district and the different ideologies that are a risk will also vary. 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. We hold quarterly roundtables, meetings with Ward Officers and a wide variety of Prevent project sessions, particularly in schools.

6.6. AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS

Activities outlined in the report contribute to priorities within the area ward plans and will be reported to area committees on an annual basis.

6.7. IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

None

7.0 NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

8.0 OPTIONS

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

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

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.

10.0 APPENDICES

Appendix one- Roles and responsibilities of the Bradford Prevent team

Appendix two- Bradford Prevent training undertaken in the Bradford West area.

11.0 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None