

Report of the Strategic Director of Place to the meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny to be held on 27th June 2023

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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 the Bradford district and highlights progress made in the last fifteen months against the District Prevent Action Plan.

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Portfolio:
Safer and Stronger Communities

Overview & Scrutiny Area:
Corporate

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY:

Equality objectives

Objective 1

We will lead the Council and the District in an open, visible and accountable way with zero tolerance for discriminatory behaviour

Our District Prevent Plan is shared across the district and published on the Council's Safeguarding Website. The Counter Terrorism Local Profile is also shared with partners on an annual basis. The work of the Prevent team is accountable to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and we report back to them annually.

Objective 2:

We will work proactively to ensure that our workforce (at all levels) reflects the communities we serve and support all staff to achieve their full potential.

Staff are regularly sent on Home Office, CTU and LA training to keep up to date with new materials and findings that relate to our work.

Objective 3

We will encourage all service areas to better understand our communities. We will actively engage with our communities to help people participate in decision-making processes, to improve the services we provide, and to enable more people to take part in the life in the District.

We hold roundtable events across Bradford to get the views of the community regarding our work. We also liaise regularly with Ward Officers and Area Coordinators to better understand the issues in our communities. We have a Prevent Partnerships network, as well as a bi annual Prevent Advisory Group to help us to improve our services. We actively encourage feedback to our training and projects and we consider this carefully when making decisions about future Prevent work.

Objective 4

We will design, commission and deliver services that are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the needs of people and communities. We will 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. We will aim to contract and commission locally wherever possible so that we can support our local economy. This will help us build a local supply chain connected to its wider social responsibilities and offering high-quality employment and training opportunities to local people, while delivering equitable services that are value for money.

We engage with communities and use information from the local CTLP, neighbourhood policing teams, schools and community groups, Prevent Partners and the Prevent Advisory Group to ensure that the services, projects and resources we deliver respond to the needs of our communities. We ensure that we meet with groups beforehand to assess additional needs and also take feedback to assess how well these have been met.

Whenever possible, we use local projects that can support the local economy and best know the needs of the local people.

1. SUMMARY

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

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 At the meeting on 10 March 2022 the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved that:

- This Committee requests that a further report be presented in 12 months, which also focuses on outcomes delivered from projects.
- That the findings of the Independent Review of the National Prevent Programme, be presented to this Committee, when they are available.
- The Committee expresses its concern in the delay relating to the findings of the Independent Review of the National Prevent Programme and the committee requests that they are informed of the reasons for the delay.

2.2 A report was written for the March 2023 meeting but due to the very recent publication of the Independent Review, it was decided to postpone this meeting until June 2023 when these could be considered in more depth.

2.3 The first recommendation above is included in the appendices attached to this report and the outcomes are clearly listed. They are also discussed later in this report in 3.9.7.

2.3 The findings of the Independent Review were published on 8th February 2023. The link to the full report and the Government response is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-prevents-report-and-government-response>

The Prevent Coordinator has also provided a briefing note which looks at the main points and recommendations and has added this document to the appendices, as the whole report is very lengthy. The Home Office has offered to deliver a briefing online to elected members in Bradford, to give an update on the Independent Review and the work that is being taken forward to meet the recommendations of the Review.

2.4 The feelings of the Committee were communicated to the Home Office after the last meeting. The Home Office were unable to give a reason for the delay as it is being conducted independently. The Committee were advised to contact the review team directly with any queries.

2.5 The following report is an update on the Prevent work that has been undertaken over the last fifteen months, how it meets the threats in our district and the impact that this work has had. It also addresses our plans for future Prevent work.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1** The [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#) contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent duty.
- 3.2** Locally the work of Prevent is driven by the District Counter Terrorism Local Profile and is focused on addressing vulnerability through education and awareness raising. The response is not focused on gender, ethnicity or any particular ideology but rather the threat and risks that have been identified by the Counter Terrorism Police and how we can best respond to those risks on a District level.
- 3.3** Additional information about Prevent can be provided on request, including the Prevent Duty, the District Counter Terrorism Local Profile, the roles and responsibilities of the Prevent Team, The District Prevent Plan, the Bradford Prevent Advisory Group Terms of Reference.
- 3.4** The extreme over reliance on the online space, especially by the young, continues to have a considerable impact on the risk from extremists and radicalisation. The vast majority of extremist groups continue to utilise the online space to spread hate, conspiracy theories and mistrust between communities. Groups engage in chatrooms and use games, memes and conspiracy theories to attract new support from an increasingly younger audience.
- 3.5** Many of our referrals and queries are increasingly referencing concerns about young people quoting online misogynistic influencers and being introduced to more dangerous viewpoints after following them. Our work in the coming year will address some of these concerns via projects and individual training.
- 3.6** 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 due to difficulties in society, peoples' additional needs and mental health concerns, narratives associated with free speech, conspiracy theories and those with mixed, unclear and unstable ideologies.
- 3.7** Mixed, unclear and unstable ideologies are increasingly a focus in our queries and Channel referrals. These don't specifically look at one particular extremist ideology but have elements that pick and choose from a variety. They tend to involve those who work on their own and are not specifically aligned to one group. Those who are influenced by these are often those with additional needs.
- 3.8** The Independent Review of the National Prevent Programme has recently been published. The Bradford Prevent team has fully participated and we have attached the outcomes found and the recommendations given by William Shawcross and his team. There are 34 recommendations, all of which the Government has accepted.

- 3.9** The Home Office are still working on the measures that will be implemented to meet the recommendations from the Review. An online briefing by the Home Office for Bradford elected members, has been offered. This will give an update on the Independent Review, what has been done so far and what is planned for the future.

PREVENT IN THE BRADFORD DISTRICT

Bradford Prevent Delivery

- 3.9.2** Bradford Council and partners have always sought to tailor the Prevent programme to the needs of the District's communities and the ever developing risks they face. We are committed to engaging grass roots projects wherever possible to help build resilience and to ensure support is offered to vulnerable people of all ages and backgrounds to meet these risks. We continue to make efforts to engage communities and elected members and to build awareness of and engagement in the Prevent programme across the district.
- 3.9.3.** Bradford Prevent have tailored the Prevent programme to meet the ever growing risk from online extremism across all ideologies, including newly emerging risks such as LASIT and MUUI. Projects, training and support are very mindful of these ever developing risks and their potential impact on our district.
- 3.9.4** 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 and Prevent training offered to elected members. We have also introduced a Prevent Advisory Group who meet twice a year. This is made up of representatives across the district. It includes youth workers, EMAR ambassadors, former police officers and community workers. We share information on or current Prevent work and strategy and seek advice and input on future work, as well as discussing Prevent related issues.
- 3.9.5** Elected members have been positive in attending online Prevent training sessions. 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. Our last training was on 20th September with 25 attendees and our next is planned for 19th July.
- 3.9.6** We have held 4 community roundtables since our last Overview and Scrutiny in Bradford West, Bradford South and Bradford East and Shipley. These events are organised in partnership with the Area Coordinator's Office and include local and voluntary community organisations, faith establishments and local residents. 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 delivery actually looks like on the ground. We have had good attendance at these and some great ideas and connections as a result. We are planning for some of our projects next year to have more of a community focus, as a consequence of these roundtables.

3.9.7. Under the Prevent strategy the local authority and partners develop projects to reduce the risk of people becoming involved in terrorist activity. Funding granted for the 2022/23 period was £296 372. 60 and we were awarded the full amount of what we bid for. Most projects are community and education based, focusing on the key risks in our district. Some of the key work is listed below:

Bradford Hate Crime Alliance: This project is centred on supporting individuals at risk of radicalisation through one to one mentoring and support. It works with those who are at risk of radicalisation but who do not meet Channel criteria. It encourages critical thinking and links individuals to appropriate support.

Key objectives: Providing support and reassurance quickly to those with vulnerabilities that may be vulnerable to radicalisation but may not meet Channel criteria.

Outcomes: The project encourages critical thinking and supports individuals with conflicted thoughts to consider their views in light of the counter narratives. Those referred had time and opportunity to work on their opinions and misconceptions in a safe space, with an experienced professional for guidance. Their feedback and the feedback of those living/ working with them suggests that a feeling of trust and confidence was built between mentor and mentee that enabled difficult subjects to be discussed and misconceptions to be challenged. This mean that the vulnerable people were not left alone to get worse before help was offered.

Supplementary Schools Against Radicalisation: Bradford district has over 100 madrassah's with many thousands of our young people attending 5 or 6 days per week. The project supports Imam's/teachers with the skills to coherently challenge the Daesh narrative, essential in building resilience in young people and the confidence/knowledge to seek appropriate support.

Key objectives: To give young people, parents and madrassah staff the skills to have discussions around difficult and often complex topics in a safe environment, in order to build resilience to the Daesh narrative.

Outcomes: The project has led to greater engagement with some Muslim communities in Bradford and greater trust in the Prevent programme from some groups who are usually wary. Those engaging in the project have had space to discuss issues that concern them, in a safe space. The project has also encouraging critical thinking and those involved now have the skills to check the authenticity of sources and interpretations and are able to use theological examples to dispel extremist narratives.

Oddarts- Blame and Belonging is an interactive forum theatre performance and workshop using professional actors and specialist facilitators to explore key issues around radicalisation. This performance focuses on the adult influencer, female radicalisation and Islamaphobia. It explores people inspired by the extreme 'far right' and also Daesh.

Key objectives: Giving young people the opportunity to explore and discuss key extremist issues in a safe environment. The drama helps to visualise how these things may manifest in their own lives.

Outcomes:

Those involved say they have a greater understanding of the processes and meaning of radicalisation, as well as an understanding of the vulnerabilities, triggers and warning signs associated with radicalisation.

The workshops and discussion have encouraged improved critical thinking and communication skills and enabled all involved to hold challenging conversations about hate and extremism. Having a safe space and the mechanisms to do this has given them the tools to face up to hate speech and radicalisation should they come across it in their everyday lives.

Manningham Mills Project- The project will deliver to local community settings following a community activity, such as boxing class, football training, arts and crafts, fitness session and cultural based activity, etc.

Key objectives The Project will work with young people to steer them away from extremist ideas, empowering young people to explore alternative methods of raising grievances, objections and protest within the rule of law and not rely on individuals or groups peddling a dangerous and violent agenda. The focus will be to engage with the white working class communities, as these are seen as particularly vulnerable to far right grooming.

The project led to greater engagement with some white working class communities who we had not previously specifically targeted. These communities were either unaware or wary of Prevent, so it was a useful way to connect with them and means that connection in the future with roundtables and future projects will hopefully be easier.

The workshops and discussion encouraged discussion in a safe and supportive space. This encouraged those involved to open up about their issues and concerns and made it easier to suggest methods of dealing with these that were in the law so that they did not rely on those peddling an extremist agenda.

3.9.8 Funding granted for the 2023/24 period is £361 250.20. This is an increase on last year and includes Prevent staff and also projects that are education and particularly community based and look at the key risks identified in our district. We are continuing with many of the projects above and will also work with Bradford Peace Museum on their Propaganda Past and Present project, as well as an additional Oddarts project- Mixed Up, which looks at Mixed, Unclear and Unstable ideologies, an emerging theme. We also have a new project provider, Minus violence. Their project looks at the links between domestic abuse/violence and extremism and comes highly recommended. With a bigger push on community work, we are delighted to be working more with QRTS Merit, who are leading on a community based project that educates families on the dangers of extremism.

- 3.9.8** Prevent is viewed with suspicion in Bradford by some people. It helps to use home grown projects where possible and we always try to do that. Continued use of some projects also helps us to build up trust across communities. Our projects continually get great feedback and are highly valued.
- 3.9.9.** 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. Online radicalisation is identified as an area for a priority response. In addition to our funded projects, the Prevent Education Officer delivers sessions that develop critical thought, an understanding of citizenship, support tolerance and provide counter narratives to extremist ideologies. She has also continued to develop the Prevent Champions Network and delivered numerous sessions to staff and students to educate on Prevent and Prevent related issues. There will be a focus next year on upskilling safeguarding education staff, so that they can speedily deliver new resources, information and training for schools and educational establishments.
- 3.9.10** 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. Of those who received Channel support, there is still a relatively even balance in the types of extremism sited, including ERW, Daesh and MUUI. Due to the small numbers of participants and the voluntary nature of Channel, it is not possible to give local detail on Channel referrals. The possibility of being identified may discourage some people from participation.
- 3.9.11** To support the 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 an adaptation of the ‘Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent’ (WRAP). The Prevent team have trained staff this year across the District including in schools, NHS staff, safeguarding staff- including in Safeguarding Week, Housing staff, Probation staff, SCIL staff, SORM staff, DV staff, Environmental Health staff, Ward Officers, Council wardens, the Stronger Communities team, children’s home staff, staff working with asylum seekers and refugees and also elected members. They have also provided Prevent related training in critical thinking and how to deal with risks online to community champions across the district, elected members, ward officers, refugee and asylum staff and members of the public in community roundtables. Feedback strongly indicates that WRAP is an easy to understand and non-alarmist method of raising awareness of Prevent and that Prevent related training is extremely popular and seen as very relevant.
- 3.9.12** The Prevent team continue to developed the network of ‘Prevent Champions’ who lead on the safeguarding function and be kept informed of current patterns of extremism. This is already established in education and the Police but has now developed across the Local Authority and other agencies across the district.

Representatives are provided with detailed Prevent related information to disseminate to their teams and extra training.

- 3.9.13** The Prevent team have also provided training at a number of specialist conferences this year including the Adult Safeguarding conference, the Bradford Hate Crime Conference. We are also providing information during Refugee and Asylum week in local shopping centres.
- 3.9.14** The Prevent team had sessions in libraries across the district in the Summer months of 2022, promoting the work and the message of Prevent across the District and engaging with the public on Prevent related issues. This provoked a lot of interest.
- 3.9.15** The Prevent team have also provided specialist training to trainee GPs, staff and students at Mencap and also those working with Housing, particularly those in hotels across the district. We have plans in place to deliver training to refugees and asylum seekers in hotels on the dangers of extremism, particularly on the internet.
- 3.9.16** In May 2023, the Home Office evaluated local performance of the Prevent Duty. A score of 3 represents a position where the duty is met, a score of 1-2 indicates that statutory responsibilities are not being met and a score of 4-5 signifies requirements are being exceeded. We were awarded the following:

1	Risk Assessment	5
2	Multi Agency Partnership Board	5
3	Prevent Partnership Plan	5
4	Referral Pathway	5
5	Channel Panel	5
6	Prevent problem-solving process	3
7	Training	5
8	Venue Hire and IT Policies	5
9	Engagement activity	4
10	Communications	4

We are very pleased with the evaluation. It reflects the hard work of the Prevent team this past year.

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 £361 250.20 was made to Bradford Council to fund Prevent work in the District for 2023/24. Of this, £212 450.20 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 7 projects in 2023/24 at a total cost of £148 800.

- 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. 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.

- 5.2** 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.

- 5.3** 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. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications apparent within the context of the report.

7.2 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

There are no Greenhouse Gas implications apparent within the context of the report.

7.3 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

7.3.1 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

7.3.2 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.

7.4 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

7.4.1 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.

7.4.2 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.

7.5 TRADE UNION

There are no trade union implications apparent in the context of the report.

7.6 WARD IMPLICATIONS

7.6.1 The nature of patterns of extremism 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 throughout the year. We hold quarterly roundtables, meetings with Ward Officers and Area Coordinators and a wide variety of Prevent project sessions, in the community and particularly in schools.

7.7 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

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

7.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

There are no implications apparent within the context of this report.

7.9 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESMENT

There are no implications apparent within the context of this report.

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

11.1 Appendix one – Prevent Projects delivered in 2022-23

11.8 Appendix two- Briefing note on the Independent Review of Prevent

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee minutes 10th March 2022