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PREVENT STRATEGY – BRIEFING REPORT

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. As part of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee 2015-16 Work Programme, agreed at Committee in September 2015, the Committee requested a copy of the Prevent Strategy as part of its scrutiny of the wider partnerships that Education are involved with. This report provides the Committee with a briefing on the Prevent Strategy for Cardiff Council and its Partners, for consideration and comment.

**Background**

2. The Committee agreed to include this item in its work programme, as a result of the Members' consideration of the report on progress made in addressing Estyn Recommendation 4 in July 2015. Members were informed that *"Strong 'Prevent' partnerships continue in Cardiff, both in mainstream schools and in Higher and Further Education. Education staff are key players on the Cardiff CONTEST (Counter Terrorist) Board and Channel Panel, and play an active part in reducing vulnerability around extremism Those partnerships also include Welsh Government, Home Office, Estyn, South Wales Police and the Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorist Unit (WECTU). The Home Office Prevent Co-ordinator works within Cardiff Local Authority and acknowledges the commitment shown by the education sector in Cardiff on the Prevent Agenda"*.
3. The Committee subsequently wrote requesting a more detailed report on the Prevent Strategy to be presented to this Committee.

## Issues

4. The key objectives of the Prevent strategy are:
  - To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it;
  - To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate support; and
  - To work with a wide range of sectors and institutions (including education, faith, health and criminal justice) where there are risks of radicalisation which need to be addressed.
  
5. The key elements of the Prevent Strategy are:
  - Robust governance at local and national levels
  - Cardiff Delivery Plan
  - Working with partners
  - Training.
  
6. There also a number of Prevent projects which include:
  - GOT (Getting On Together) – secondary schools & primary Schools
  - Understanding Neighbourhoods
  - Young Leaders programme
  - Families Against Stress & Trauma (FAST)
  - Open Source Communication, Analytics & Research (OSCAR).
  
7. Members may also be aware of the document published by the Local Government Association “Leading the Preventing Violence Extremism Agenda – a Role Made For Councillors” which highlights that Councillors perform a very important role that is essential to the successful delivery of Prevent programmes (copy attached at **Appendix A**). The ability of Councillors to connect directly to their constituents gives them the means to forge strong links between local authorities and community groups. They can also link the community with the police, youth services, education, health and prison and probation services.

## Scope of the Scrutiny

8. This report enables the Committee to review, assess and comment of the Prevent Strategy. In particular Members may wish to consider whether the Strategy addresses the requirements of the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales as set out in **Appendix B:**

- **Partnerships** - Develop a long-term vision and translate it into measurable objectives; local authorities should establish or make use of an existing local multi-agency group to agree risk and co-ordinate Prevent activity; we expect local multi-agency arrangements to be put in place to effectively monitor the impact of Prevent work;
- **Risk assessment** - We expect local authorities to use the existing counter-terrorism local profiles (CTLPs), produced for every region by the police, to assess the risk of individuals being drawn into terrorism. This risk assessment should also be informed by engagement with Prevent co-ordinators, schools, registered childcare providers, universities, colleges, local prisons, probation services, health, immigration enforcement Youth Offending Teams and others, as well as by a local authority's own knowledge of its area. We would expect local authorities to incorporate the duty into existing policies and procedures, so it becomes part of the day-to-day work of the authority.
- **Action plan** - With the support of co-ordinators and others as necessary, any local authority that assesses, through the multi-agency group, that there is a risk should develop a Prevent action plan. This will enable the local authority to comply with the duty and address whatever risks have been identified. These local action plans will identify, prioritise and facilitate delivery of projects, activities or specific interventions to reduce the risk of people being drawn into terrorism in each local authority. Many of these projects and activities will be community based.

- **Staff training** - Local authorities will be expected to ensure appropriate frontline staff, including those of its contractors, have a good understanding of Prevent are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of available programmes to deal with this issue.
- **Use of local authority resources** - In complying with the duty we expect local authorities to ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. This includes considering whether IT equipment available to the general public should use filtering solutions that limit access to terrorist and extremist material.
- **Other agencies and organisations supporting children** - A range of private and voluntary agencies and organisations provide services or, in some cases, exercise functions in relation to children. The duty applies to those bodies, which include, for example, children's homes and independent fostering agencies and bodies exercising local authority functions whether under voluntary delegation arrangements or via the use of statutory intervention powers. These bodies should ensure they are part of their local authorities' safeguarding arrangements and that staff are aware of and know how to contribute to Prevent-related activity in their area where appropriate.
- **Monitoring and enforcement** - In fulfilling its central monitoring role (section D of the Guidance) the Home Office can (and already does) scrutinise local Prevent action plans, project impact and overall performance. It will also consider work with local authority 'peers' to provide targeted assistance and help authorities develop good practice.

## **Way Forward**

9. Carl Davies (Home Office Prevent Co-ordinator) will present the Prevent Strategy, and will be available to answer any questions Members may have.

## **Legal Implications**

10. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Committee reviews the information presented at the meeting, and provides any recommendations, comments or advice to the Prevent Co-ordinator.

**MARIE ROSENTHAL**

**Director of Governance and Legal Services**

**6 January 2016**