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**Prevent Strategy – Committee Briefing**

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*The Appendix to this report is not for publication as it contains exempt information of the description contained in paragraph 18 of Schedule 12A, Part 4 of the Local Government Act 1972*

**Reason for the Report**

1. During the meeting, Committee Members will received a briefing on the Prevent Strategy. In order to facilitate their preparation, this report provides an initial overview of the Strategy. Members should note that attached at **Appendix A** is a briefing note prepared by Cardiff's Prevent team providing Members with detailed insight into the Prevent Programme.
2. Members should note that **Appendix A** is exempt from publication.  
Members are requested to keep this information confidential, in line with their responsibilities as set out in the Members Code of Conduct and the Cardiff Undertaking for Councillors.
3. Members are reminded that under the Police and Justice Act 2006, this Committee serves as the Council's Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee with the purpose of reviewing decisions made or action taken in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions.

## Background

4. The UK Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy has been in place since 2003 and is known as CONTEST. The aim of the Strategy is 'to reduce the risk to the UK and its interests overseas from international terrorism, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence'<sup>1</sup>.
5. CONTEST has four elements:
  - Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
  - Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
  - Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
  - Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack
6. The Prevent strategy, published by the UK Government in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and to build resilience in communities through a variety of projects and civil society organisations.
7. The Prevent strategy has three strategic objectives:
  - Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.
  - Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support.
  - Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.
8. The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced the Prevent Statutory Duty which requires local authorities, schools, colleges, universities, health bodies, prisons, probation and police to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". Local authorities and their partners have

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<sup>1</sup> [Prevent - Elected Members handbook | London Borough of Hounslow](#) Accessed: 28 June 2021

a core role to play in countering terrorism at a local level and helping to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation. The roll out of the duty has been supported by specifically drawn guidance for each partner along with a dedicated training package<sup>2</sup>.

9. The Prevent Programme uses early intervention to protect individuals and communities from the harms of terrorism and looks to tackle the underlying causes of radicalisation. Prevent work also extends to supporting the rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism through the Desistance and Disengagement Programme<sup>3</sup>. Further information on the Prevent Delivery Model is included in **Appendix A**.
  
10. The Home Office oversees Prevent activity in local areas and shares management (with local authorities) of local Prevent co-ordinator teams. While national Government provides a framework, guidance, support and funding for Prevent, it is essential that local partners develop responses to tackling radicalisation that are tailored to their local area. The Prevent Strategy identifies local authorities as key partners for national government in responding to extremism and building resilience locally.

### **Channel Programme**

11. Channel is an early intervention safeguarding programme and an element of Prevent which provides bespoke support to children and adults identified as vulnerable to radicalisation before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.
  
12. Channel works like other safeguarding interventions, identifying individuals at risk through referral, assessing the nature and extent of the risk and then developing a support plan for the individual concerned. It takes a multi-agency approach,

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<sup>2</sup> [Prevent - Elected Members handbook | London Borough of Hounslow](#) Accessed: 28 June 2021

<sup>3</sup> The Desistance and Disengagement Programme works by providing tailored interventions which support individuals to stop participating in terrorism-related activity (desist) and to move away from terrorist ideology and ways of thinking (disengage). The programme aims to address the root causes of terrorism, build resilience, and contribute towards the deradicalisation of individuals.

involving a range of partners including the local authority, police, education, social services, health providers and others to tailor the support plan to the individual's needs.

13. The type of support available within the Chanel programme is bespoke and can include help with accessing other mainstream services, such as education or career advice, dealing with mental or emotional health issues, substance abuse, and theological or ideological mentoring from a specialist Channel Intervention Provider, working with the individual on a one-on-one basis. It is to note that Channel is a voluntary and confidential programme.

### **Scope of Scrutiny**

14. During the meeting, Committee Members will receive a briefing from the panel on the Prevent Programme, providing Members the opportunity to explore;

- The outline and workings of Prevent
- The local authorities role in Prevent
- How risk is determined and assessed
- How Prevent is managed locally
- Insight into the complaints and referrals system
- How members of the public engage with Prevent
- How community safety is managed and maintained
- How potential community tensions are addressed

15. To enable effective delivery of Prevent, the Home Office has produced a Prevent Duty Toolkit to facilitate local authority assessment of Prevent delivery in its local area; set against statutory requirements and best practice delivery. The toolkit sets out the following benchmarks for local Prevent delivery.

- I. The organisation has a local risk assessment process reviewed against the Counter Terrorism Local Profile.
- II. There is an effective multi-agency partnership board in place to oversee Prevent delivery in the area.
- III. The area has an agreed Prevent Partnership Plan.

- IV. There is an agreed process in place for the referral of those identified as being at risk of radicalisation.
- V. There is a Channel Panel in place, meeting monthly, with representation from all relevant sectors.
- VI. There is a Prevent problem solving process in place to disrupt radicalising influences.
- VII. There is a training programme in place for relevant personnel.
- VIII. There is a venue hire policy in place, to ensure that premises are not used by radicalising influencers, and an effective IT policy in place to prevent the access of extremist materials by users of networks.
- IX. There is engagement with a range of communities and civil society groups, both faith based and secular, to encourage an open and transparent dialogue on the Prevent Duty.
- X. There is a communications plan in place to proactively communicate and increase transparency of the reality / impact of Prevent work, and support frontline staff and communities to understand what Prevent looks like in practice.

16. The Prevent Duty Toolkit is available [here](#) and provides further background information on each of the key benchmarks expected of local authorities in delivering Prevent activity.

17. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny<sup>4</sup> (CFGs) and Local Government Associations (LGA) has produced guidance intended to assist Scrutiny practitioners understand some of the key features of national and local policy on extremism and terrorism, and how they, as scrutiny practitioners can support local efforts to combat threats and contribute to improvements. The guidance can be found [here](#).

18. The CFGs & LGA guidance sets out that scrutiny contribution towards the assessment of Prevent can be conducted through;

- Supporting and challenging the assessment of risk;

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<sup>4</sup> Formerly known as Centre for Public Scrutiny.

- Scrutinising Prevent and counter extremism local action plans, including the Counter Terrorism Local Profile;
- Monitoring and managing the authority's partnerships and relationships with formal and informal civil groups, and the public;
- Ensuring counter-extremism and Prevent work is mainstreamed across the Council's spectrum of policies.

### **Structure of the Meeting**

19. The Chair will move that this item be considered in a closed session, where members of the public will be excluded. Members will then receive a presentation from the witness panel who will provide an overview of the attached Appendix. This will be followed by an opportunity for Members to ask questions.

20. Forming the panel, will be; Councillor Lynda Thorne (Cabinet Member –Housing & Communities), Gareth Newell (Head of Performance and Partnership), Steph Kendrick-Doyle (Operational Manager – Prevent), Michelle Conquer (Chief Inspector) and representatives from Wales Extremism and Counter Terrorism Unit

21. Following their consideration, Members will then be able to decide what comments, observations or recommendations they wish to pass on.

### **Legal Implications**

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 the Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decision taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirements 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 taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (he) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

## **Financial Implications**

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/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is recommended to:

- i. Consider the information set out in this report and its subsequent appendices;
- ii. Consider the information provided by witnesses to this meeting;
- iii. Decide whether it wishes to relay any comments or observations to the panel and;
- iv. Decide the way forward with regard to any further scrutiny of this issue.

**Davina Fiore**

**Director of Governance & Legal Services**

**1 July 2021**