

Title of meeting: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date of meeting: 15th February 2023

Subject Preventing Violent Extremism Strategy

Report by: David Jones, Deputy Director (Interim), Adult Social Care

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full council decision: No

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the Local Authority's plans to meet the Prevent statutory duty.

2 Recommendation

The Health and Wellbeing Board to endorse:

- 2.1 To support the continuation of Prevent delivery at current levels to meet the local authorities' statutory obligations under Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Prevent strategy is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the national counter terrorism strategy, covers all forms of extremism and has three strategic objectives:
- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
 - Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate support; and
 - Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address
- 3.2 Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed responsibilities on "specified authorities" in the exercise of their functions to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This became a legal requirement on the 1st of July 2015¹. Specified

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

authorities include the local authority, criminal justice, including prisons, education sector, health and social care and the police.

- 3.3 In complying with the duty, all specified authorities should demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation in their area. The guidance identifies sector specific duties with three themes throughout:
- a. Effective leadership - those in leadership positions to have mechanisms to understand the risks, ensure staff have the capabilities to respond to risk, communicate and promote the importance of the duty and implement the duty effectively.
 - b. Working in partnership - demonstrate evidence of productive co-operation, in particular with local Prevent co-ordinators, the police and local authorities, and co-ordination through existing multi-agency forums, for example Community Safety Partnerships.
 - c. Appropriate capabilities - ensure frontline staff have the training and skills to be aware of Prevent, how to challenge the extremist ideology and be able to support people who may be exploited by radicalising influences.

4 Local Authority delivery performance benchmarks

- 4.1 The Home Office have designed the following benchmark to enable local authorities² and their partners to assess Prevent delivery in their local area against statutory requirements and best practice delivery.

This includes a requirement to produce an annual self-assessment and action plan based upon the local counter terrorism risk profile.

- a) The organisation has a local risk assessment process reviewed against the Counter Terrorism Local Profile.
- b) There is an effective multi-agency partnership board in place to oversee Prevent delivery in the area.
- c) The area has an agreed Prevent Partnership Plan.
- d) There is an agreed process in place for the referral of those identified as being at risk of radicalisation.
- e) There is a Channel Panel in place, meeting monthly, with representation from all relevant sectors.
- f) There is a Prevent problem solving process in place to disrupt radicalising influences.
- g) There is a training programme in place for relevant personnel.
- h) 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.
- i) 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.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-toolkit-for-local-authorities-and-partner-agencies>

- j) 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.

Home Office Assessment 2022

- 4.2 The Home Office assesses Prevent operational delivery and Channel practice in Portsmouth to be strong, with aspects highlighted as national good practice. The current service provides expertise and support to stakeholders and the Channel Panel in managing cases.
- 4.3 The partnership working with other local authorities on developing policies and sharing best practice has been deemed particularly effective. Good feedback received from Prevent training and community engagement with groups and individuals are also positively noted.
- 4.4 There is a well-attended and effective Prevent Delivery Board which oversees delivery in Portsmouth and creates a Prevent Partnership plan. A revised training, communication and community engagement plan are in development in partnership with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Prevent Board.

Annual Assurance Statement

- 4.5 In addition, the Home Office now require the completion of an annual assurance statement in relation to the Channel Panel and the Prevent Duty. This will be completed each year by the Channel Panel chair, in conjunction with standing channel panel members. The assurance documentation linked to the Prevent Duty is currently produced by the Hidden Harm Coordinator, Charlie Pericleous, and Education Officer, John Webster.

Documents to be produced/updated on an annual basis include:

1. Action plan
2. Situational risk assessment
3. Corporate risk assessment
4. Venue hire/speaker policy
5. Training plan
6. Community engagement strategy
7. Communication strategy

5. Project Orpheus

- 5.1 The Prevent team sought external funding opportunities and was successful in October 2018 in securing 3.5 years funding for the EU Interreg Orpheus project. The total 3.5-year funding for the project, which included costs for the two posts was €522,692, with the EU contributing 60% (€331,615) and the City Council contributing 40% (€221,077). The funding for the Orpheus project ceased in December 2022.

- 5.2 Project Orpheus works with other coastal cities and universities within France, Belgium and Netherlands to develop online and offline methods to build resilience to radicalisation within young people. The project has focused on strengthening online safety measures, including tackling misinformation, and has developed a prevention model for violent extremism.
- 5.3 Locally, over 240 young people have received online awareness and resilience training; over 110 have participated in safe space activities; frontline workers have received relevant training on managing difficult discussions and online safety. Each of these cohorts have delivered their targets in increasing awareness and confidence. In addition, over 500 staff received Prevent training in 2022. The link to the Orpheus website is here: orpheusproject.eu.
- 5.4 The Orpheus project has been highlighted as a national good practice LGA case study - please see link - [Project Orpheus: Building resilience to online extremism in Portsmouth | Local Government Association](#)

6. Current Arrangements in Portsmouth

- 6.1 Portsmouth established a Prevent Delivery board in 2015 and has representatives from the specified authorities:

Local Authority (to represent relevant departments)
Youth Offending Team
Health
Education representation (to represent schools, FE & HE)
Regional Prevent FE/HE lead
Portsmouth University
Portsmouth Channel Chair
Probation
Community Rehabilitation Company
Police

Staff

- 6.2 Prevent is a statutory duty and Rachael Roberts and David Jones (Interim), provide the strategic lead. Operational delivery is currently strong, however is reliant on the Hidden Harm Coordinator and Hidden Harm Education Officer posts, who were initially funded by the Home Office and are now currently funded via an EU external grant and a 40% contribution from the Community Safety portfolio reserves. This external funding ended in December 2022.

Education support

- 6.3 Support has been given to education settings since the Prevent Duty became legislation in 2015. A dedicated Education Officer has increased the capacity for delivery and focussed support since 2017. Schools regularly request training for whole teams or specific groups such as senior leaders or the governing body. Schools also know there is a point of contact for advice on vulnerability or

increasing children's resilience to radicalisation. A quarterly newsletter is produced so that relevant updates and signposting to best practice is shared across all settings.

7. **Channel and Safeguarding**

The Channel process, including the Channel panel, is part of the Prevent strategy. The Channel process is a multi-agency safeguarding approach to identify and provide early support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism or violent extremism. Channel works by partners jointly assessing the nature and the extent of the risk and where necessary, providing an appropriate support package tailored to the individual's needs. The three key stages of Channel are:

- i. Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism or violent extremism.
- ii. Assess the nature and extent of risk; and
- iii. Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Channel addresses all forms of violent extremism. Referrals can come from a wide range of individuals and partners and could include youth offending teams, social services, health, police, education and local communities. If appropriate, a multi-agency panel is convened to provide appropriate support and intervention.

A monthly Channel panel is established in Portsmouth and has been recognised by the Home Office for its effective multi-agency approach to ensure positive outcomes for those referred and those that are adopted as cases. This is currently chaired by David Richards, MASH manager in children's social care.

8. **Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP)**

A Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) is an assessment of risk that informs planning and delivery locally. The CTLP is presented to the Prevent Delivery Board by Counter Terrorism Policing South-East (CTP-SE) on an annual basis. A version that is approved for wider circulation is then sent out to Portsmouth Prevent Board partners. The CTLP recommendations and identified risks are used to form the basis of the Portsmouth Prevent Delivery Plan. The Prevent Board and action plan identify broad themes that could lead to inter-authority partnership work across Hampshire and the South-East.

9. Integrated Impact Assessment

As this report is an update on current arrangements for the Prevent Strategy a IIA is not required.

10. Finance Comments

- 10.1 It is acknowledged that the Prevent team obtained external funding for this area in the past. Some of these funds may roll forward to support 2023/24, however, unless new sources of external funding are secured, continued activity would need to be covered from PCC's existing budget allocations.
- 10.2 The final funding requirement for 2023/24 should be understood by year end. In preparation for 2023/24 Finance are highlighting the potential need to locate budget; the assistance of other Directorates may be required to resolve any budget shortfall.

11 Legal Comments:

- 11.1 As indicated in the body of the report, section 26(1) of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the Act") places a duty upon "specified authorities", in exercising their functions, to "have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This is referred to as the "Prevent Duty".
- 11.2 The City Council is such a "specified authority" in accordance with Schedule 6 of the Act.
- 11.3 The Home Office has issued statutory guidance to authorities regarding the Prevent Duty under section 29 of the Act. Under section 29(2) of the Act, authorities must have regard to that guidance in carrying out the duty.

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 Signed by: David Jones, Deputy Director (Interim), ASC - Portsmouth City Council

Appendices: No appendices

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
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The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/
deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: