

TITLE OF REPORT: PREVENT Review – Final Report

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Summary

Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee agreed that its review for 2015/16 would focus upon the Prevent agenda – which is one of four key elements of the UK Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST).

The Committee has received a significant amount of evidence as part of the Review to help scrutinise the arrangements the Council and its partners have in place in order to support the delivery of the Prevent agenda within Gateshead. The Review focused on raising Committee's awareness and understanding of how Prevent is currently being delivered in order to help identify potential service gaps, areas of duplication and/or opportunities to work more effectively.

Following a series of evidence gathering sessions, this report analyses the key issues presented throughout the review and suggests recommendations to be implemented to help build upon, and strengthen, our existing approach to Prevent.

1 Introduction

1.1 This is the Final Report of the Community Safety Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee's review into Prevent. The Committee took the decision to focus their review for 2015/16 on Prevent following consultation with Councillors and partner agencies (and to tie in with the introduction of new legislation to prevent individuals being drawn into extremism). It has been prepared on behalf of the Committee and sets out the key findings and emerging themes identified within the evidence gathering sessions.

2 Background / Context

2.1 As a brief reminder for members, the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) has overall responsibility for the strategic direction of work in relation to international terrorism contained within the Government's CONTEST Strategy.

2.2 The third CONTEST Strategy was published in 2011 and highlighted activity in relation to four key themes: *Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare*.

- **Pursue** is the theme of the counter-terrorism workstream that aims to stop terrorist attacks in the UK and against our interests overseas. Northumbria Police are wholly responsible for the delivery of activities conducted under this work stream.

- **Prevent** aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Preventing terrorism will mean challenging extremist ideas that are conducive to terrorism or are shared by terrorist groups. There is a clear distinction between Prevent work and the Government's programmes to support integration.
- **Protect** aims to strengthen our protection against terrorist attacks in the UK or against our interests overseas, and so reduce vulnerability. One of the Protect objectives is to improve protective security for crowded places.
- **Prepare** aims to mitigate the impact of a terrorist incident where it cannot be stopped. This includes work to bring a terrorist attack to an end, and to recover from its aftermath.

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015

- 2.3 An Extremism Task Force (ETF) was established by the Prime Minister in June 2013 following the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich and subsequent attacks on a number of Mosques in parts of the country. The work of the Extremism Task Force culminated in the introduction of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act legislation, which received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015.
- 2.4 The objective of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act is to reduce the risk of terrorism and includes a wide number of measures designed to:
- Prevent individuals from travelling abroad to commit terrorist related activity;
 - Disrupt the ability of terrorists, or those suspected of terrorist related activity, to return to the UK;
 - Enhance the ability of UK law enforcement and intelligence agencies to monitor and control the actions of those in the UK that pose a threat; and,
 - Combat underlying ideology that feeds, supports and sanctions terrorism.
- 2.5 Section 21 of the requires specified authorities (including local authorities, the police, prisons, providers of probation services, schools, colleges, universities and others) to have "*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*". The specified authorities subject to this duty are those judged to have a specific role in protecting vulnerable people and/or national security and in fulfilling the duty, all authorities are expected to participate fully in work to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.

Local Governance Arrangements

- 2.6 The CONTEST agenda sits under the remit of the CONTEST Board with support from the Prevent, Protect and Prepare Group. This multi-agency Group focuses on addressing issues associated with counter-terrorism and was established in 2011. The CONTEST Board has strong links to the Community Safety, Safeguarding Adults and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.
- 2.7 A range of partners are actively engaged in this area of work including: a range of internal services from Gateshead Council, Northumbria Police (both Central Area Command and Special Branch), Gateshead Housing Company, National Probation Service, Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company, Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group, Gateshead College, South Tyneside Foundation Trust and intu.

3 Methodology

3.1 As a reminder, the review focused particularly on:

- The arrangements the Council and partner agencies have in place to meet the Duty and to assess whether they meet best practice.
- The national guidance, its implications for the future of the service and our capacity to respond
- Whether there are service gaps, areas of duplication or opportunities to work more effectively and efficiently.

3.2 In order to achieve the outcomes listed above, a series of evidence gathering sessions were organised, each one with a specific theme/focus. Sessions were designed in a way that allowed the Committee to hear evidence from a range of services and partners which are currently supporting the roll out of the Prevent agenda in Gateshead.

Evidence Gathering Session 1: Setting the Scene

3.3 The first evidence gathering session provided a comprehensive overview of the Prevent agenda with a particular emphasis on outlining the national legislative context and framework, details of regional work being carried out in respect of Prevent agenda as well as a synopsis of the local activity undertaken within Gateshead. This included details of the partner agencies and service involved, our achievements to date and future plans pertaining to the implementation of the Act over the next 12 months.

The following services/organisations presented evidence to the Committee:

- Community Safety: Care, Welling and Learning – Gateshead Council

Evidence Gathering Session 2: Process of Radicalisation

3.4 The second evidence provided a detailed and holistic overview of the work that is undertaken by Special Branch – Northumbria Police. This session explored the background context to Prevent, how any vulnerable person can be targeted and exploited to carry out terrorist activity, the work currently being undertaken by Police to promote Prevent across partners and services as well as details on the Chanel process. Brief information was also shared in relation to the Local Counter Terrorism Local Profile (including volume of Prevent referrals received to date) as well as setting out the role/remit of the Counter Terrorism Security Advisors. In addition, brief information was also shared with the Committee on the nature, and extent of the threat in Gateshead linked with Prevent and the use of the Vulnerable Assessment Framework.

The following services/organisations presented evidence to the Committee:

- Northumbria Police – Special Branch

Evidence Session 3: Partnership Working

3.5 The third evidence gathering session set out the local context in relation to the partnership working that is currently being undertaken in Gateshead linked to the Prevent agenda. Committee heard presentations of the proactive and innovative work that is undertaken by local educational establishments in order to raise awareness of Prevent with young people as well as the role played by health colleagues in relation to preventing radicalisation. This included details

of how teachers, governors and students are all training in WRAP as well as setting out the referral processes that have been established to raise concerns with Northumbria Police and Gateshead Council.

The following services/organisations presented evidence to the Committee:

- Gateshead College
- Safeguarding Children: Care, Wellbeing and Learning – Gateshead Council

3.6 As a brief reminder for members, the partnership has delivered a wide range of activity to address Prevent within Gateshead and includes, but is not limited to:

- Supported roll out of Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) and Train the Trainer Training. In Gateshead, we have Home Office accredited trainers across a range of partners and services, who are responsible for delivering training across the Borough.
- Undertook 8 WRAP sessions since April 2015 – which equates to 129 frontline staff being made aware of the Prevent agenda. This brings the total number of Council and partner agency staff who have been trained in Gateshead to 345 since last year. A full timetable of further training for 2015/16 is included within the LSCB Training Directory – and further sessions will be arranged to take place in 2016/17.
- Toolbox talks have previously been provided to colleagues based within Waste Services, Grounds Maintenance and Fleet Management.
- A number of tailored briefings have been presented to all Designated Safeguarding Leads within Gateshead schools and childcare providers in order to make them aware of the new legal duty associated with educational establishments. Further sessions are planned to take place next year.
- Worked closely with Counter Terrorism Security Services to minimise the potential risk to local sites deemed to be at risk of terrorist activity.
- Established a Community Tensions Framework to identify and manage potential issues within and between communities – which includes a dedicated Response Group across Council and partner agencies.
- Gateshead College have developed a Prevent Policy and Training Package for staff and students providing an overview of the Prevent legislation, risks of radicalisation and process to be followed should concerns be identified.
- Community Safety / Gateshead Housing Company commissioned GemArts to undertake engagement work with young people in 2 local schools linked which focused on challenging stereotypes and hate crime awareness.
- Practice Guidance Note is currently being developed to support Social Care professionals in identifying potential vulnerability to radicalisation, accessing suitable support and making onward referrals, as necessary.
- Established greater links to Resilience and Emergency Planning processes to ensure that we have a co-ordinated response to terrorist activity.
- Representatives from Community Safety are part of the Regional Prevent Working Group established by Northumbria Police to share best practice and ideas across the Northumbria locality.

4 Headline Findings

4.1 Committee has received a great deal of evidence and information as part of this Review. It is clear co-ordinated and partnership-orientated arrangements are in place to meet the statutory responsibilities, outlined in the national Prevent Duty

Guidance, whilst in some areas, particularly in education, it was clear that the actions delivered in Gateshead could be seen as best practice.

- 4.2 There were no significant gaps identified in the current arrangements, although members felt it prudent that a self-assessment should be undertaken on regular basis to ensure that we continue to have strong and robust processes in place to safeguard those at risk of being drawn into extremism and to demonstrate that, as a Council, we are proactive in addressing future challenges.
- 4.3 Some slight concerns were expressed in relation to the following areas:
- Capacity of partners and Council services to continue to train practitioners in order to raise the profile of Prevent – particularly with even fewer resources at their disposal – but conveyed the need for continued partnership working in the future;
 - Perceived lack of understanding and appreciation of all community and faith groups in Gateshead has the potential to restrict community cohesion and destroy confidence in local services;
 - Greater challenge of negative and/or false stereotypes linked with terrorism (particularly with children and young people);
 - Lack of general awareness of the local terrorism context within communities and neighbourhoods (and potentially amongst frontline practitioners), and
 - Lack of awareness of Channel and Vulnerability Assessment Framework.
- 4.3 The review did identify a potential opportunity to utilise the work developed by Gateshead College to cascade awareness to a wider range of recipients (e.g. exploration of how these tools could be used in primary and secondary schools as well as with local community and residents groups).

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The following recommendations are proposed for this Review and to provide a more structured framework, these recommendations have been aligned to the 3 themes identified in the national Prevent Duty Guidance: *Leadership, Working in Partnership and Capabilities*.

Leadership

- Undertake a robust Self-Assessment to ensure appropriate activity has been developed in relation to responsibilities outlined in Prevent Duty Guidance – and to remain proactive in addressing future challenges/issues.
- Ensure all departments and/or services in Gateshead Council have a clear awareness of their role and responsibilities in complying with Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- Briefing sessions are arranged to ensure local Councillors understand about the nature of risk in their local area and the work being done to address any identified risks.
- Ensure that Gateshead Council utilises its full authority and legitimacy to challenge narratives of radicalisers and extremists, puts forward positive alternatives and works closely with local communities to condemn activities of individuals who misrepresent extremist views.
- Ensure strategic and operational links are made to relevant partnerships and Boards including: the Community Safety Board, the Local Safeguarding

Children's Board, the Safeguarding Adults Board, Youth Crime Management Board and others, where necessary (e.g. MAPPA).

Working in Partnership

- Undertake a programme of targeted activity in order to challenge negative stereotypes (particularly with children and young people).
- Greater dissemination of key messages contained within the CTLP (Counter Terrorism Local Profile) in order to raise the profile of the localised context to Prevent and to support the risk assessment process.
- Continue to proactively share knowledge of possible community tensions across Council services and partner agencies to ensure all concerns can be reviewed, and actions to address issues can be implemented, in a timely and effective manner.
- Formalise Gateshead Council processes in relation to Channel to ensure all Prevent referrals are reviewed in a consistent and structured way.

Capabilities (including Training and Use of Council Resources)

- Continue to undertake training sessions in relation to WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) and/or utilising suitable training materials (e.g. use of online resources, toolbox talks etc) to upskill staff/practitioners.
- Ensure that a plan is in place to train targeted staff groups around:
 - understanding Prevent and the Council's duty;
 - recognising risk/vulnerability of being drawn into violent and non-violent terrorism – and the consequences of it;
 - how to challenge extremist ideology; and
 - how to respond and refer to services, when risk is identified.
- Develop appropriate guidance and literature on the Prevent agenda.
- Support schools to understand their role around the new Prevent duty; equip them with tools to assess compliance; encourage them to embed Prevent into safeguarding policies and have a Preventing Extremism Policy in place.
- Consider wider elements of Prevent (e.g. ensuring that organisations who are currently contracted to work with/for the Council are not engaged in any extremist activity or disseminate extremist views).

5.2 The recommendations identified above are set out in Appendix in pictorial form.

5.3 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) Comment on the contents of the report;
- (ii) Approve the Final Report and agree draft recommendations (set out in Section 5.1);
- (iii) Submit the report to Cabinet for consideration and approval;
- (iv) Agree to receive a six-monthly update in relation to the progress made against delivering the draft recommendations.

