

## CABINET

11 July 2017

<b>Title:</b> Barking and Dagenham Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019	
<b>Report of the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion</b>	
<b>Open Report with Confidential Appendix 2</b> (Appendix 2 contains confidential information given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure)	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b> Yes
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<b>Accountable Director:</b> Matthew Cole, Director of Public Health	
<b>Accountable Strategic Director:</b> Anne Bristow, Strategic Director, Service Development and Integration	
<b>Summary:</b>  A new Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan has been developed by the Borough's multi-agency Prevent Strategy and Steering Group with oversight from the Community Safety Partnership.  The Strategy and Delivery Plan takes account of the Council's legal duties to prevent extremism and extremist violence. It follows the Local Authority Prevent Duty Guidance, Channel Duty Guidance and the Counter Terrorism Local Profile to put forward four local priorities with actions to deliver these within the lifespan of the Strategy. The priorities are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham.</li><li>• To develop links with the voluntary and community sector to empower them to support the local Prevent programme.</li><li>• To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation.</li><li>• To put in place mechanisms which prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.</li><li>• To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause.</li></ul> The Prevent Strategy sits alongside a wider range of strategies and priorities within the Council's broader cohesion agenda. 2017 will see the publication of an Equality and Diversity Strategy for the Borough and the development of a separate Cohesion Strategy.  The Prevent programme will be bolstered by a broader range of initiatives to build	

cohesion, support civic society, and develop the voluntary and community sector in the Borough. The Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will connect with these initiatives to ensure maximum reach and impact of Prevent activities and messages.

**Recommendation(s):**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- (i) Agree the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019 attached at Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Service Development and Integration, in consultation with the Community Safety Partnership and the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion, to review the Strategy and Delivery Plan considering new levels of risk in the borough and make appropriate changes in response.

**Reasons:**

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities (include local authorities, NHS trusts, schools and providers of certain services to those authorities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (known as the Prevent duty).

## **1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) has four key areas to address the threat from terrorism: Prevent, Pursue, Prepare and Protect.
- 1.2 The Prevent Strategy was published by the Home Office in 2011, its aim is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 1.3 The 2011 Home Office Prevent Strategy set three strategic objectives:
  - To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
  - To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
  - To work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.
- 1.4 In April 2015, the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) in the Home Office re-designated Barking and Dagenham a Prevent priority borough. The process of selection is restricted, but the criteria for selection is based on presence and/or activities of extremists and vulnerability of groups or institutions to extremism as identified by the Police.
- 1.5 The Borough's status as a Prevent Priority Borough provided funding from the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism for a Prevent Coordinator for Barking and Dagenham, who was appointed in August 2015. In addition to this, further funding

was secured from the Home Office for several Prevent projects taking place between 2015/16.

- 1.6 Prevent is a fluid and fast-moving policy area that is responsive to real world events. The current threat level for international terrorism in the UK has been classified as Severe since August 2014. London, as a diverse and large global city, has higher-levels of risk than other parts of the UK as London is a more natural target for extremist activities and acts of terror. Levels of local Prevent activity and levels of vigilance change to reflect the wider national and regional context.
- 1.7 Of particular concern and priority at a national level is to tackle Muslim extremism which has risen with the growth of extremist groups elsewhere in the world. Small parts of the Muslim community in the UK are not integrated into the wider British Society and radical views and activities are present in these isolated and segregated pockets. Channel referrals from universities, schools, and hospitals show that radical views are reaching young people. Radicalised British Muslims have travelled to Iraq, Syria, and Libya with the intent to join violent jihadist groups.
- 1.8 However, while there is a clear threat from Muslim extremism it is important that Prevent engages and works well with the Muslim community. Otherwise it can be viewed as a counter-productive policy and means of surveillance that results in mistrust and disengagement from a key part of society Prevent needs to work with. Therefore, other agendas such as community cohesion, integration and inclusion are important and relevant to Prevent and should guide how it operates at a local level.
- 1.9 Several recent UK terror attacks including the murder of Jo Cox MP, Westminster Bridge, Manchester, London Bridge, and Finsbury Park have put the national Prevent Strategy in the spotlight. It is therefore very important and timely to be updating and strengthening our approach.
- 1.10 Following recent events Cabinet should be assured that the robustness of the local Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will be reviewed to ensure that our risk-based approach is proportionate and appropriate with necessary actions/responses to deal with local and sub-regional issues.
- 1.11 Further reviews of the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan will likely be required during the life of the Strategy and Delivery Plan. On 21 July, using the Queen's Speech, the Government confirmed its intention to review its counter-terrorism strategy. While we await further developments on the future of Prevent and more detail about the approach the Government will take in the next Parliament, we will continue to deliver the Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan presented at Appendix 1.

## **2. Priorities and Objectives**

- 2.1 The four objectives of the local Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/19 are set out below (and are set out in more detail, along with specific actions and success measures, at Appendix 1).

## **2.2 Priority 1: To work in partnership to understand the risk of radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham**

To ensure that all young people, parents and carers, and staff in public and other services (e.g. local authority, schools, NHS, voluntary organisations) are aware of the potential issues around extremism and radicalisation in Barking and Dagenham and our local response. The areas of focus are:

- To increase the understanding of partners of the local threats and vulnerabilities in relation to extremism and terrorism.
- To ensure there is understanding of the Prevent strategy across the specified authorities identified by the 'Prevent Duty'.
- To increase the representation of faith and community groups at the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group.

## **2.3 Priority 2: To work with partners and residents to identify and address potential vulnerabilities related to extremism or radicalisation**

In implementing the Prevent Duty, we are ensuring that partners adopt a complete approach to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism. When a potential extremism or radicalisation issue is identified, we need to ensure there is compliance with the referral pathway and escalation process. Furthermore, we need to ensure that individuals/agencies/organisations involved in the referral are supported through the process to manage the concern or issue. Lastly, vulnerabilities related to the concern or issue need to be addressed through existing mechanisms or otherwise. The areas of focus are:

- To develop links with the voluntary and community sector to empower them to support the local Prevent programme.
- To develop an early intervention and identification process which raises potential concerns of extremism or radicalisation.
- To ensure that partners consider a complete approach when implementing the Prevent duty.
- To support partners to embed the Prevent Duty across all relevant organisations.

## **2.4 Priority 3: To put in place mechanisms that prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support**

The focus of this priority is to ensure that individuals who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorism are provided with comprehensive support. Where people are identified as at risk, we will assess the nature of that risk and develop appropriate support interventions in response. The areas of focus are:

- To continue to ensure that support offered by partners is appropriate for each individual.
- To ensure that information is shared between partners to address any concerns.
- To identify third sector capacity to increase the range of support available.

## 2.5 **Priority 4: To deliver a programme to limit and disrupt the activities of extremist individuals who seek to spread or incite violence for a political, ideological, racial or religious cause**

The Council has the statutory duty to work in partnership towards the reduction and prevention of crime. We will look at the range of tools and powers to address issues of extremist activities wherever they present.

In addition, we must continue to ensure that our staff are adequately supported to recognise extremist activity and associated material as part of detection when undertaking their day-to-day tasks within the community. The areas of focus are:

- To continue to respond to actions of those promoting violent extremism wherever it may present.
- To develop positive relationships with our community by using Prevent projects.
- To ensure that staff are aware of the actions of potential extremists or terrorists and know how to respond.

## 3. **Delivery of the Strategy**

- 3.1 Each action within the Delivery Plan has been assigned to the relevant senior officer of the relevant agency/partner. Once the programme of action is agreed, the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group will set target completion dates for each of the actions. This will give partners flexibility to re-prioritise actions in light of the current context and imperative to respond to those incidents and their aftermath.
- 3.2 Delivery of the Strategy will be monitored annually through the Community Safety Partnership. Separately, the Cabinet Member for Equalities and Cohesion will periodically review progress.
- 3.3 Implementation of the Strategy and Delivery Plan will be driven and managed by the Director of Public Health (whose remit covers Prevent and other aspects of community safety) with delivery capacity from the Borough's Prevent Co-ordinator, and with support from the Community Co-ordinator.

## 4. **Monitoring of delivery**

- 4.1 The Prevent Strategy and Steering Group, which is accountable to the Community Safety Partnership, is responsible for delivery of the Strategy. The Steering Group has representation from the Local Authority, Police, probation, health, education services and the voluntary and community sector all of whom share ownership of the Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- 4.2 There will be appropriate reporting to other key bodies (such as the Children's Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board, and Local Children's Safeguarding Board) for actions that cut across different remits and policy areas.

## 5. **Options appraisal**

- 5.1 Having an up-to-date Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan is crucial to meeting our statutory obligations, even more so following the discovery of extremist activities in

the Borough. For this reason, this report does not propose alternative options. Therefore, Cabinet is asked to agree the Strategy and Delivery Plan at Appendix 1.

## **6. Consultation**

- 6.1 In developing this Strategy and Delivery Plan there has been no formal consultation with stakeholders or residents.
- 6.2 Partner organisations involved in the Prevent Programme have inputted into the development of the Strategy through the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group.

## **7. Financial Implications**

The financial information is contained at Appendix 2. This information is confidential as it has been given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure.

## **8. Legal Implications**

Implications completed by Dr Paul Feild, Senior Governance Lawyer

- 8.1 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities (include local authorities, NHS trusts, schools and providers of certain services to those authorities) to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism (known as the Prevent duty).
- 8.2 The duty does not confer new functions on any specified authority. The term “due regard” as used in the Act means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.
- 8.3 The Prevent Duty Guidance in England and Wales, published under section 29 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Act, was issued to assist authorities to interpret the duty and develop local action plans. The Strategy and Delivery Plan attached at Appendix 1 follows that guidance.
- 8.4 Authorities will be expected to work in partnership with the organisations identified in the report with the common objective of advancing the Prevent duty and its agenda. The Home Office will have the power to review the delivery of this duty and the power to intervene if it considers it appropriate to do so. It will thus be a necessary part of the Borough’s strategy to ensure that it is being effective in the implementation and setting itself and its partners specific targets within its action plan compliant with the statutory guidance.
- 8.5 Cabinet should also note the Council’s duties under the Equality Act 2010 which are relevant to preventing isolation and exclusion, and ensuring cohesion and good relations between people of different characteristics.
- 8.6 In support of meeting the legal responsibilities outlined above it is critical that the borough has robust, compliant, and up-to-date policies and procedures some examples being:

- employment procedures for example whistle blowing and confidential reporting of extremist views
- measures to ensure prevention of facilities for radicalization, so that contracts, leases, letting, and license agreements ensure that Council properties are not used contrary to the Prevent Strategy and
- establish robust information sharing protocols and agreements

8.7 Finally, a key additional consideration is the safety and security of the teams working on the Prevent agenda, not only in terms of personal security but also the data held. It will be of the most sensitive nature with details of individuals and sources of intelligence. For example, intervention in safeguarding matters could place the team's operatives at greater risk of being in harm's way. Their safety, their clienteles' and integrity of data sources needs to be at the forefront of service planning. So the need to identify risk, the minimisation action, its implementation and entrenched best practice will be a clear and paramount managerial responsibility

## 9. Other Implications

9.1 **Risk Management** - The current threat level for international terrorism in the UK has been classified as Severe since August 2014. The threat level briefly moved to Critical immediately after the Manchester attack in May 2017. The threat-level highlights the importance of the Prevent agenda as the first line of counter-terrorism intelligence and prevention of extremism and radicalisation at local level.

The local Prevent Programme takes a risk-based approach. Following recent events and the heightened levels of risk at a regional and sub-regional level it is prudent to reflect on our approach to Prevent. For this reason, the report proposes that Cabinet delegates authority to the Strategic Director of Service Development and Integration, with the Community Safety Partnership, to review the Strategy and Delivery Plan considering new levels of risk in the borough and make appropriate changes in response.

Once that process is complete, the Strategy and Delivery Plan will be subject to usual monitoring and evaluation through the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group and Community Safety Partnership, the local bodies responsible for meeting the Borough's Prevent Duty.

9.2 **Staffing issues** - The local Prevent programme is managed by the Prevent Co-ordinator, a post funded by the Home Office. The Borough is working to secure further funding for additional Prevent-related posts to give extra capacity to the local Prevent programme.

In supporting the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy, the Council have been offered funding for a period of 12 months to employ a Community Co-ordinator. Their role will be to promote cohesion, develop an understanding of the drivers, prevalence, and wider harms of extremism in Barking and Dagenham, to share this knowledge with the Council and Home Office, and shape local strategies such as the Community Cohesion, Hate Crime and Prevent Strategies as well as the Borough Manifesto.

The Prevent Co-ordinator and Community Co-ordinator roles are considered distinct and complementary to each other and will therefore cross several work-streams.

Beyond the immediate staffing resources to deliver Prevent and related programmes, statutory guidance puts an expectation on local authority staff and its contractors to understand Prevent and to be able to recognise key signs of vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism. To meet this expectation relevant staff have completed awareness training and training about how to make referrals through the Channel programme. The training programme is ongoing to improve knowledge and awareness across the partnership.

**9.3 Corporate Policy and Customer Impact** - The Council has a clear vision of One borough; one community; London's growth opportunity. This vision also underpins the Prevent Strategy, which acknowledges that all sections of our community have a role to play in tackling extremism.

The Prevent Strategy has links and dependencies with several other key Strategies and plans as follows:

- Cohesion Strategy, a policy that is in development and will strengthen/complement our approach to Prevent, the Strategy will outline our approach to improving cohesion and community relations.
- Borough Manifesto, which sets out high-level aspirations to improve the borough and outcomes for its residents.
- Equality and Diversity Strategy, which outlines how we promote and advance equality, diversity, inclusion, and fairness.
- Culture Strategy, which outlines our approach to culture, heritage, and community events.
- Hate Crime Action Plan, which sets out our approach to tackle hate crime, bring perpetrators to justice and support victims and their families.

Prevent has been operating in a context of increasing islamophobia across the UK, and perhaps through targeting of Muslims Prevent has contributed to negative views about Muslims and Islam. Critics of the national Prevent Strategy have highlighted concern that the Prevent has fuelled islamophobia, infringed on human rights, disproportionately targeted Muslims, and led to mistrust between individuals and public authorities.

When carrying out prevent activities we should be cautious and sensitive to how Prevent is perceived by the Muslim community and ensure our approach is non-discriminatory.

Through Prevent projects we aim to build positive relationships with all parts of the community and present Prevent as a positive programme that all people can engage with and work with.

**9.4 Safeguarding Children** - The Prevent duty is relevant to the Council in respect of fulfilling safeguarding responsibilities in that there should be clear and robust safeguarding policies to identify children at risk. The grooming of children and young people for the purposes of involving them in extremist activity is child abuse and child protection procedures should be followed when there are concerns that a child is at risk of radicalisation or has already been radicalised.



In Barking and Dagenham, we follow guidance issued by London Councils in their LSCB Safeguarding Children from Extremism Report<sup>1</sup>. In addition, both Ofsted and the Department for Education provide separate guidance for schools which has been extensively used across Barking and Dagenham.

- 9.5 **Health** - The Prevent strategy provides support for health professionals to understand and identify factors that could suggest a child, young person or their family may be vulnerable to, or involved with extremism. The support is not exhaustive, and all or none of these factors may be present in individual cases. Furthermore, the presence of these factors does not mean that an individual is automatically at risk of exploitation for the purposes of extremism. The accepted view is that a complex relationship between the various aspects of an individual's identity determines their vulnerability to extremism.

Colleagues from North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT) and Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust (BHRUT) are already incorporated into the Prevent Strategy and Steering Group and are implementing the Prevent Duty.

There are established links with mental health teams including Home Treatment teams in providing support to the Channel Panel. There will be continued efforts to provide training to General Practices and associated colleagues over the coming year.

- 9.6 **Crime and disorder** - The Prevent Strategy falls under the remit of the Community Safety Partnership and is a key plank of the overall work being done in the Borough to keep residents safe. Prevent work depends on effective partnerships and productive co-operation. The Police play a prominent role in the local Prevent programme. The Community Safety Partnership is used to ensure effective co-ordination with the Police and other partners and effective co-ordination of all work related to crime and safety.
- 9.7 **Property and assets** - The strategy identifies the need to ensure extremist speakers are not provided with a platform to promote their rhetoric. Ensuring that there is a pathway to report any concerns of extremist speakers to the police will be key in ensuring this. In addition, work has already been completed in libraries to confirm that internet filtering on websites is in place and we have taken all reasonable steps to ensure such premises cannot be used to access extremist material.

**Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None**

#### **List of appendices**

- **Appendix 1:** Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan 2017/2019
- **Appendix 2:** Financial implications (confidential document)