

TUESDAY 15TH MARCH, 2016**REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITIES AND PUBLIC HEALTH****COUNTER TERRORISM AND SECURITY ACT 2015****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

PURPOSE

To secure Council approval to adopt the proposed Prevent Strategy 2015-2017 and the underpinning action plan both contained within appendices A and B.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members approve the proposed Prevent Strategy and action plan, noting that Cabinet have previously considered the report at its meeting of the 14th January 2016 and recommended it for approval by Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 12 February 2015.

The Act introduced a number of measures relating to terrorism:

Part 1 introduced D provisions to impose temporary restrictions on travel;
Part 2 covers measures related to the investigation and prevention of terrorism;
Part 3 relates to the retention of relevant internet data;
Part 4 introduced measures related to the aviation, shipping and rail networks;
Part 5 of the Act introduced measures that are intended to reduce the risk of an individual being drawn into terrorism.
Part 6 makes amendments to the Terrorism Act 2000 in relation to insurance against payments made in response to terrorist demands, and port and border controls;
Part 7 covers other general and miscellaneous provisions related to the introduction and operation of the Act.

This report focuses on Part 5 of the Act, which introduced a general duty on authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. It also requires County Councils, in two-tier areas, to form a panel to assess and support individuals who are vulnerable to being drawn into extremism. The District Council is required to co-operate with such panels (and the police) in the carrying out of their functions.

The National Prevent Strategy has three objectives:

1. respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it;
2. prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support ; and
3. work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

The new strategy also provides a definition of extremism in the context of Prevent.

“Extremism is vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values; including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas”

The Prevent strategy was explicitly changed in 2011 to deal with all forms of terrorism and with non-violent extremism, which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism and can popularise views which terrorists then exploit. It also made clear that preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups. And the strategy also means intervening to stop people moving from extremist (albeit legal) groups into terrorist-related activity.

Our Prevent work is intended to deal with all kinds of terrorist threats to Tamworth. The most significant of these threats nationally is currently from terrorist organisations in Syria and Iraq, and Al Qa’ida associated groups, but terrorists associated with the extreme right also pose a continued threat to our safety and security. The white supremacist ideology of extreme right-wing groups has also provided both the inspiration and justification for people who have committed extreme right-wing terrorist acts.

The Home Office has developed a DVD-based facilitated training package for delivery across the public sector to enable workers to recognise and refer those who are vulnerable to radicalisation. This training package is known as WRAP (Workshop Raising Awareness of Prevent). There is a requirement that this training be delivered by existing staff in partner agencies including the Council who have the requisite training themselves. Due to capacity issues both in the Council and with partner agencies this approach is not sustainable. The Home Office have provided a one off grant of £10K for this financial year to each local authority for local initiatives within the Prevent arena. The proposal is to develop an e learning package to provide the training which will also provide the necessary sustainability.

The Council is expected to adopt a risk-based approach to delivering the Prevent Duty. The Prevent Duty guidance issued by the Secretary of State suggests that local delivery should be underpinned by three key elements: effective leadership, working in partnership and appropriate capabilities.

The Prevent Duty guidance states that those in leadership positions are expected to:

- Establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of radicalisation;
- Ensure staff understand the risk and build the capabilities to deal with it;
- Communicate and promote the importance of the duty; and
- Ensure staff implement the duty effectively.

The Local Authority already has a number of processes in place to make sure that it has an awareness and understanding of the risk of radicalisation in its area:

- The Chief Executive receives a copy of the Counter-Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) and any specific risks relating to Tamworth will be shared directly with the Chief Executive.
- The Authority is represented on the Staffordshire Prevent Board by the Head of Community Safety and Development and receives updates through this forum.

Section 36 of the Act requires each upper tier local authority to ensure that a panel (known as the Channel Panel) is in place with the function of assessing the extent individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Channel is a multi-agency approach, led by Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council with Staffordshire Police, to provide support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity.

Channel seeks to:

- Establish an effective multi-agency referral and intervention process to identify vulnerable individuals;
- Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity;
- Provide early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face and reduce vulnerability.

It is known that violent extremists exploit vulnerabilities in individuals to drive a wedge between them, their families and their communities. As a minimum there must be information evidencing a concern that the individual is either moving towards support for terrorism, or an attraction to terrorism or a vulnerability to radicalisation.

In line with other safeguarding processes Prevent is everyone 'business'. The process is, 'notice' a member of staff has concern about an individual in relation to radicalisation, 'check' are there any reasons for the change in behaviour, 'share' discuss with Prevent/safeguarding lead or other colleague, 'refer' , if staff still has concerns contact Staffordshire Police Prevent Team

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

Due to the legislative order the Council is restricted into any alternative methods of meeting our legal requirements under the Act.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

A training programme for all members and staff can be met by the 'one off' Government grant of £10k received this financial year

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

The Prevent programme is a legal requirement under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 places a "duty" on the Council to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent crime and disorder in its area.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The strategy will be subject to review 2017.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Included in executive summary

REPORT AUTHOR

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Cabinet 14th January 2016

Counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST) (HM Government)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counterterrorism-strategy-contest>

CONTEST, UK strategy for countering terrorism: annual report for 2014 (HM Government)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contest-ukstrategy-for-counteringterrorism-annual-report-for-2014>

Prevent Strategy 2011 (HM Government)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventstrategy-2011>

Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/6/contents>

Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (HM Government)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-dutyguidance>

Channel guidance (HM Government)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channelguidance>

APPENDICES

Appendix A Prevent Strategy 2015-2017
Appendix B Prevent Delivery Plan 2015