

# Cheshire East Council

## Cabinet

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<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> October 2016
<b>Report of:</b>	Steph Cordon - Head of Communities
<b>Subject/Title:</b>	Prevent Duty & Channel Duty Progress Report
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Cllr Paul Bates, Communities and Health

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### 1. Report Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises for Cabinet our responsibilities under the Prevent Duty Guidance (2015), the Channel Duty Guidance (2015). The report also covers what we are doing in Cheshire East and Sub Regionally with Cheshire West and Chester, Warrington and Halton Borough Councils.
- 1.2 As background, there is a national strategy produced by Central Government called Contest. Its aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. A key part of this is called Prevent which is about tackling the ideology behind extremism, preventing people from being drawn into terrorism and working with sectors and organisations at risk of radicalisation.
- 1.3 The legislative context for Prevent is under Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which places a duty on certain authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. Cheshire East as a Council is defined as being one of the authorities that this applies to. Effective Councils are defined in the guidance as those that work with their local partners to protect the public, prevent crime and promote strong integrated communities.
- 1.4 In Cheshire East, the work of the Community Safety Partnership is the vehicle utilised to pull together the multi-agency group that is needed. In addition, close working arrangements are in place with the two Local Safeguarding Boards for Adults and Childrens Services. Work to develop a sub-regional approach to effectively and efficiently use our resources has also started and we now have a Pan Cheshire Prevent Group, and a Pan Cheshire Prevent Strategy – Preventing vulnerable people from being drawn into extremism (appendix 1).
- 1.5 The legislation requires us to ‘give due regard’ which means that we should place an appropriate weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when we consider all the other factors relevant to how we carry out our usual functions. All Councils also have to establish a Channel Panel which

is multi-agency and looks at individuals who are nominated as being at risk of being drawn into terrorism and how to provide advice and support.

1.6 The key for us in fulfilling our Prevent & Channel duties is how to ensure that we:

- embed Prevent into mainstream activities
- build resilience to extremist ideologies within our communities
- safeguard those who are most vulnerable to the messages of extremists

Our local Multi Agency working and Pan Cheshire working will ensure we fulfil these duties aligned with our wider safeguarding roles.

## **2. Recommendation**

2.1. That Cabinet note the:

- (i) collective progress to date thanking partners for their involvement, support and contributions;
- (ii) responsibilities these duties place upon the Council;
- (iii) Pan Cheshire Prevent Strategy and express support for this

## **3. Other Options Considered**

3.1 The Prevent and Channel Duties are legal requirements and therefore other options have not been considered.

## **4. Reasons for Recommendation**

4.1 To update on progress in carrying out statutory duties under Prevent and Channel both locally and Sub Regionally.

4.2 To receive the Pan Cheshire Prevent Strategy – Preventing vulnerable people from being drawn into extremism (appendix 1).

## **5. Current Position**

5.1 Working with partners, careful consideration has been given to ensuring that we take a measured and proportionate response to this issue. There is a desire for this to be discussed and some actions agreed at a sub-regional level to ensure both an appropriate response and to reduce duplication of effort. A Prevent Chairs group has recently been established to do this and currently this group's focus is:

- A standardised Information Sharing Agreement for local Channel Panel use;
- a Pan Cheshire Prevent Strategy;

- and sharing practice learning

5.2 In Cheshire East we have focused on training and awareness raising to enable people to spot any potential signs and to know where to signpost people at risk of being drawn into extremism. A training programme for front line staff is now in development for implementation later in the year. Work will progress then for information materials for adults, children, young people, carers / parents. A One Minute Guide for Safeguarding in Education Settings is already in place for schools and training has already been provided for designated safeguarding leads in our schools, colleges and education settings.

5.3 The attached Pan Cheshire 'Preventing vulnerable people from being drawn into extremism strategy' is attached at appendix 1. The strategy provides a short summary of the Home Office strategy and then:

- explains Terrorism
- explains Prevent
- explains Extremism
- explains Radicalisation
- covers the Local Authority duties
- explains what is already happening in Cheshire
- sets out Our Pan Cheshire Vision
- identifies some of the signs of radicalisation
- identifies how to report any concerns or suspicions
- and Governance and Accountability – through our Safer Cheshire East Partnership

We then have a Cheshire East Prevent Action Plan, which is our work plan and is structured around three priorities:

- To embed Prevent into mainstream activities
- To build resilience to extremist ideologies within our communities
- To safeguard those most vulnerable to the messages of extremists

The focus of the action plan is to ensure we embed Prevent into day to day practice, and to raise awareness of the Prevent & Channel Duties. Once we have embedded this work we will then plan to review what is working well, what needs to improve, to ensure continued development / improvement.

## **6. Where are we up to with establishing our Channel Panel?**

6.1 The first Channel Panel in Cheshire East was held in January 2016. The Panel are currently focusing on developing its collective practice, which includes collaborative / collective working to ensure that together we deliver the responsibilities under this duty for our residents.

6.2 The Panel meets bi monthly to undertake its functions. Part 1 of the meeting focuses on the Prevent Strategy duties. Part 2 of the meeting is the Channel

Panel itself where support considerations for those at risk or who are vulnerable are considered.

## **7. Wards Affected and Local Ward Members**

7.1 The Prevent & Channel duties apply across the whole borough.

## **8. Implications of Recommendation**

### **8.1 Policy Implications**

8.1.1 Currently policy implications are not evident, as the work of the Prevent & Channel progresses policy implications may become evident; this will be kept under review both locally and through the Pan Cheshire Chairs group.

### **8.2 Legal Implications**

8.2.1 Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a Prevent duty on central bodies (listed in schedule 6 of the guidance eg local government, police, health and social care, education, criminal justice) in exercising their functions to have due regard for the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. Authorities subject to the provision must have regard to this guidance when carrying out the duty.

8.2.2 The Home Office oversees the Prevent activity in local areas and will monitor the duty with Councils. Councils have the responsibility of working with partners to protect the public, to prevent crime and to promote strong and integrated communities.

8.2.3 The Channel guidance was issued under section 36(7) and 38(6) of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to support panel members and partners of local panels. It sets out a duty on local authorities and its partners to support people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

The channel programme uses a multi agency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- Identifying individuals at risk;
- Assessing the nature and extent of that risk;
- Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individual concerned

8.2.4 The success of the programme is dependent on the co-operation and co-ordination of partners' activities with individuals and families to reduce vulnerability and risk of radicalisation in partnership.

### 8.3 Financial Implications

- 8.3.1 Prevent and Channel Duties require the council to chair, administer, co-ordinate support arrangements and development plans and to report on progress in line with local governance requirements. The predominant financial implications are officer time.

### 8.4 Equality Implications

- 8.4.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) provides an active assessment to ensure consideration is given to any unintended consequences for any specific characteristic groups through the implementation of the Prevent and Channel work. This assessment is in place.

### 8.5 Rural Community Implications

- 8.5.1 From our work to date there are no apparent Rural Community implications to identify at this stage, this will be monitored by the Multi Agency Group.

### 8.6 Human Resources Implications

- 8.6.1 Workforce awareness and training along with operational practice support are the main implications here of the Prevent & Channel Duties. The Multi Agency Group has prioritised this work, and now has a training strategy in place which will ensure support for front line workers to appropriately raise any concerns about vulnerability to radicalisation through identified referral pathways.

### 8.7 Public Health Implications

- 8.7.1 We consider that the delivery of the Prevent Strategy and Channel Panel duties would have no specific adverse health implications for our population. The Multi Agency Group will review closed cases each 12 months to identify any specific learning. This would inform the panels practice, and more broadly the prevent action plan.

## 9 Risk Management

- 9.1 **Reputational for Council** – the Council has a lead role in relation to Prevent and Channel duties, and is dependent on its partners to ensure our collective responsibilities are delivered well. We have a number of multi agency forums that demonstrate successful collective working to safeguard vulnerable individuals and groups, and therefore feel this risk is mitigated.
- 9.2 **Level of Risk in relation to radicalisation** – The Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP), is a document held by Cheshire Police's Counter Terrorism unit.

The risk is monitored at a Senior Chief Executive level and through the Safer Cheshire East Partnership (SCEP).

- 9.3 **Analysis of Patterns** - Channel Panel will report annually to SCEP and both local Safeguarding Boards, on the panel's activity. These reports will include information on panel referral numbers & panel case numbers, age profile, location profile, and any themes / trends whilst retaining confidentiality at all times. Outcome data on the effectiveness of our multi-agency partnership work will also be covered. Such work will mitigate risk for all parties, and ensure continuous learning from our practice to occur effectively.

## **10 Access to Information/Bibliography**

- 10.1 Prevent Strategy – HM Government 2011

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf)

- 10.2 Channel Duty Guidance – Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism – HM Government 2015

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/425189/Channel\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_April\\_2015.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf)

- 10.3 Revised *Prevent* Duty Guidance: for England and Wales – HM Government July 2015

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/445977/3799\\_Revised\\_Prevent\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_England\\_Wales\\_V2-Interactive.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_England_Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf)

## **11 Contact Information**

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