

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet Member for Communities

Date of Meeting:	20 July 2015
Report of:	Steph Cordon Head of Communities
Subject/Title:	Preventing Violent Extremism
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Les Gilbert

1. Report Summary

- 1.1 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act became law on 16 February 2015. The Act places a statutory duty on Councils to have “due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism”. This is known as the Prevent Duty. The Act allows the Secretary of State to issue directions to Councils if they are not satisfied that they are complying with the Prevent Duty.
- 1.2 Councils are also required to establish Panels to identify and support those felt to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorist activity. This is called Channel and the guidance for this came into effect on 1 July 2015.
- 1.3 As a Council, the lead for Prevent already rests with the Community Safety Partnership. This is chaired by the Head of Communities. They meet on a quarterly basis and have Prevent as a standing agenda item. The Chairs of the Community Safety Partnership, Adults Safeguarding Board and Children’s Safeguarding Board have also agreed that preventing terrorism and extremism is something that involves all three Boards. Specific safeguarding policies have been drawn up to address this issue.
- 1.4 The three key strands of the Prevent Strategy which we are working to are:
 - i. Challenging the ideology that supports terrorism and those who promote it
 - ii. Protecting vulnerable individuals; to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support, and
 - iii. Supporting sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation

- 1.5 The Channel Panel will be chaired by the Head of Children's Safeguarding and will assess the extent to which identified people are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The Panel will establish a plan of support to reduce that person's vulnerability. If necessary, the Panel can consider referring a person to a health or social care provider even if it does not think that a plan of support is necessary.
- 1.6 It is proposed that the Channel Panel will immediately follow on from the Child Sexual Exploitation Operations Group due to the possible links between the issues. Additional organisations will be invited based on the needs of the individuals. This will be kept under review and the first Channel Panel is scheduled for 20 July 2015.
- 1.7 The Council will need to ensure that we do not allow any of our Council owned buildings to be used to promote extremist views. We have already provided filters on our computers available in our libraries to ensure access to extremist websites is blocked. Working with partners on our Community Safety Partnership and Channel Panel we will need to ensure that they do not promote any extremist views. Importantly, we will need to ensure that when we commission any work with external organisations that the principles of Prevent are included in any legal agreements.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees to:
 - i. The Community Safety Partnership continuing to lead on the Prevent Duty on behalf of the Council
 - ii. The Channel Panel being established and chaired by the Head of Children's Safeguarding
 - iii. That the Council give consideration to the use of its own buildings to ensure that they do not promote extremist views as set out in paragraph 1.7.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure that the Council has due regard for its responsibilities under the Prevent duty including Channel as set out in the legislation and guidance of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

4. Wards Affected

4.1 All

5. Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Ward Members will be encouraged to report any concerns into the relevant referral routes for Prevent which could be through the Police or internally with officers of the Council.

6. Policy Implications

- 6.1 The Community Safety Partnership will lead on the Prevent Strategy. All commissioning activity will need to have due regard for the prevention of terrorism.

7. Implications for Rural Communities

- 7.1 There is a need to ensure that we identify all potential sources of being drawn into terrorism and extremist activity in our rural communities. There is a common misconception that this relates solely to terrorism. However, a common form of extremism is animal rights and this could have a real impact on the rural economy and communities.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 The costs for delivering the Prevent Duty at a local level are seen as being in the region of £4,000 - £40,000 depending on the scale of the issue. At present, we have a commitment from the police to deliver Train the Trainer sessions for our staff and partners of CSP. This will enable them to train others and so this would be officer time. We have been given free promotional material such as posters to display in community venues including schools, libraries, further and higher educational establishments. So the expectation is that the resources needed will be fairly limited.

9. Legal Implications

- 9.1 There are no legal implications of this approach.

10. Risk Management

- 10.1 Any potential risks have been considered, it's not possible to provide a full reassurance around mitigation as it is anticipated that the more work we commit to identifying those at risk of being drawn into terrorism will mean that more individuals will be identified. However, action plans for support

through Channel will mitigate some of the risk if people wish to engage. If they don't, we will need to refer into other elements of the counter terrorism agenda such as Pursue.

11. Background and Options

- 11.1 Further details of the legislation for the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 201 and the Prevent Duty and Channel Duty Guidance can be sourced on: www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance and https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425189/Channel_Duty_Guidance_April_2015.pdf

12. Access to Information

- 12.1 The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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