

Business Planning and Transport Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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Title:	Overview of Prevent Delivery
Report of:	Sara Sutton: Director Public Protection & Licensing
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Public Protection – Cabinet Member for City Highways
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for All
Report Author and Contact Details:	Mark Chalmers x6032 mchalmers@westminster.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the work that is undertaken to deliver the Prevent Strategy within Westminster.
- 1.2. Updates on Prevent delivery have also been provided to the Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny committee.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1. The Committee are asked to consider the contents of this report and provide any necessary feedback.

3. Background

3.1. Introduction

- 3.1.1. Prevent forms one part of CONTEST, the Government's counter-terrorism strategy. CONTEST is based on 4 areas of work:
- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
 - Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
 - Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack
 - Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- 3.1.2. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, in all its forms. Prevent works at the pre-criminal stage, using early intervention to encourage and empower individuals and communities to challenge extremist and terrorist ideology and behaviour.
- 3.1.3. Extremism takes many forms including: animal rights extremism, right-wing extremism, Northern Ireland related extremism and Islamic extremism. Whilst Prevent is concerned with all types of extremism, Prevent work is prioritised according to the risks that we face. This means that the work delivered in Westminster is to address local needs and vulnerabilities and may be different to what is being done elsewhere in London or the UK.
- 3.1.4. From the 1st July the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed a statutory duty on local authorities and other bodies to have "due regard for the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" in the exercise of their functions.
- 3.1.5. Westminster's Prevent Team and the projects that it commissions are funded through a grant agreement with the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism within the Home Office.

3.2. Threat

- 3.2.1. At the time of writing, (16 October 2017) the level of threat the UK faces from international terrorism is severe; meaning that a terrorist attack is highly likely. As has been seen in the UK and across Europe, attacks can happen at any time and any place without warning.
- 3.2.2. As well as being a potential terrorist target, Westminster is a Prevent priority area and has one of the higher levels of Islamic and domestic extremist activity in London. In terms of the resident population, the primary threat is in relation to Islamic Extremism and the Extreme Far-Right. However, Westminster's high profile sites and areas of high footfall attract a full range of extremist groups or individuals who would seek to use the City as a platform for protest or other activity.

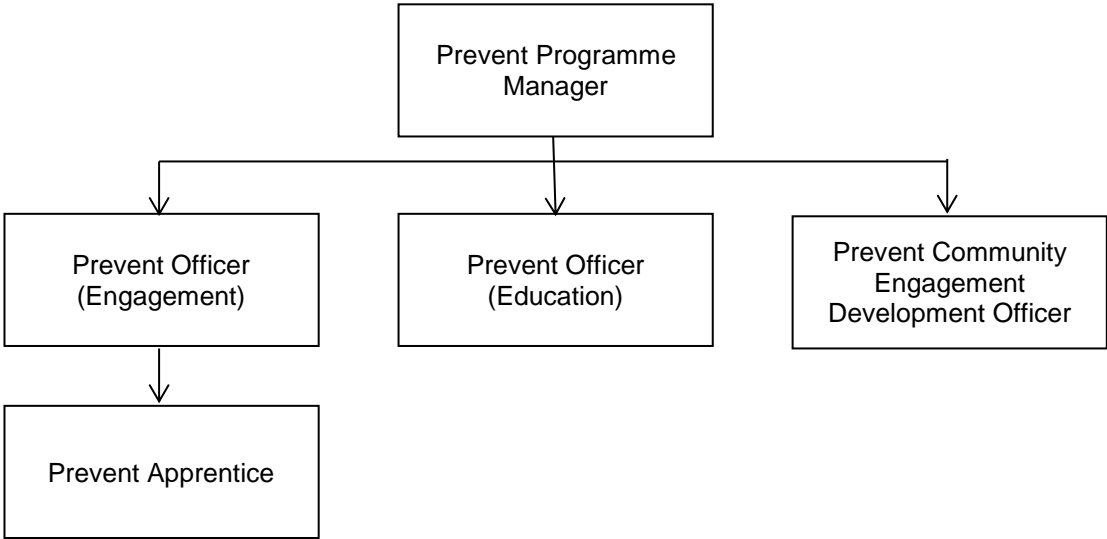
3.3. Prevent work in Westminster

3.3.1. The objectives of the Prevent Strategy are to:

- Respond to the ideological challenge we face from terrorism and aspects of extremism, and the threat that we face from those who promote these views.
- Work with institutions where there are risks of radicalisation to be addressed.
- Provide practical help in order to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.

3.3.2. The delivery of Prevent is led by local authorities. In delivering the strategy in Westminster, staff work closely with a wide range of sectors and institutions; these include but are not limited to: education, criminal justice, faith, charities and government departments, in addition to community organisations.

3.3.3. Westminster’s Prevent Team currently consists of four full time equivalent members of staff and an Apprentice. All staff are on 12 month fixed term contracts or Internal Temporary Transfers. The team sits within Community Safety in Public Protection and Licensing.



3.3.4. Local delivery of the Prevent Strategy is threat led and focused on local needs and vulnerabilities. As is evident from recent media reporting, it is important to consider that vulnerability to radicalisation and extremism is not limited to any particular part of Westminster’s diverse communities. As such, much of the work of the Prevent Team covers the whole of the City, for example projects that are available to all educational institutions. Vulnerability to radicalisation and extremism is very rarely seen in isolation and those individuals are often vulnerable to other harms, such as involvement with gangs or forms of exploitation. In terms of specific projects, every effort is made that these are made available to individuals and communities that will most benefit from that intervention.

3.3.5. Westminster's Prevent Team works with institutions, communities and individuals that include people of all ages.

3.4. **Governance**

3.4.1. The Council's Executive Management Team provides oversight in relation to the delivery of CONTEST and receives updates on a quarterly basis. Each strand is overseen by a delivery group, which in relation to Prevent is the Tri-Borough Prevent Steering Group.

3.4.2. Delivery of Prevent is sovereign in Westminster but the team maintains a close working relationship with the Bi-Borough (LBHF & RBKC) Prevent Team. The shared steering group is a recognition that many of the services and partners that the teams work with operate across borough boundaries.

3.4.3. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Local Safeguarding Adults' Board both have a statutory role in the oversight of safeguarding processes across the City. Quarterly updates on training and safeguarding are provided to the relevant LSCB sub-groups.

3.4.4. Counter terrorism is a priority for the Safer Westminster Partnership and therefore updates are also provided to this strategic multi agency group on a regular basis.

3.4.5. Quarterly monitoring reports are provided to the Home Office, as the funding body. This includes output measures in relation to staff and projects.

3.5. **Delivering Prevent in Westminster's Communities**

3.5.1. Engaging with Westminster's communities and also the voluntary and community sector forms a key part of the Prevent Team's work. Many of the individuals or families who would benefit most from Prevent projects are from our hardest to reach communities. Furthermore, in order to effectively deliver these projects, it is necessary to partner with local community organisations and groups.

3.5.2. Westminster Prevent Team commission a range of projects in order to support and empower Westminster's communities. These projects are designed to address the Prevent Strategy objectives (above) but often also address wider needs and vulnerabilities. A selection of these are described below.

3.5.3. A Prevent parenting programme has been commissioned over the last three years. In addition to self-referring to the parenting programme, parents can be put forward for participation by support services. Furthermore, the Prevent Team conduct community engagement visits and attend parent coffee mornings in schools to raise awareness of the parenting programme and invite interested parents to sign up to take part.

- 3.5.4. The programme is an adapted version of the Race Equality Foundation's 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' course. Over the past year, we have delivered 9 series of this programme to 122 parents across Westminster. The programme seeks to aid parents in building stronger relationships with their children by developing their current parenting approaches and equipping them with new skills, tools and techniques to use within their homes. In addition to exploring issues around radicalisation the programme considers a range of challenges of concern to Westminster's parents and families, including: gangs, internet safety, hate crime, balancing competing cultural expectations and British Values. The programme also works to raise parents' awareness of behavioural changes that may indicate that young people are in need of support, and of the availability of local support services and how to access them.
- 3.5.5. Feedback from parents has been overwhelmingly positive. In a focus group following completion of the programme, one participant stated that *'This course is changing me and making me a better mother, my kids are happier and their behaviour is improved in school. I hope everyone in our communities has the chance to take part in this'*.
- 3.5.6. Whilst the parenting programme has always been available to both mothers and fathers, participants have been overwhelmingly female. Therefore this year, a project is being developed called Fathers for Futures. The objectives of the project are similar to those of the parenting programme, namely to improve the confidence, parenting skills and awareness of Fathers in relation to the vulnerabilities experienced by their children. However, a key part of the project will be to proactively engage with local fathers to encourage participation on the course.
- 3.5.7. Youth engagement, outside educational settings, was previously identified as within the Prevent programme and was a key area of focus for the team last year. As part of our work to address this we developed a Gangs and Radicalisation Project, which reached 92 young people across four local youth projects. We partnered with the youth projects to deliver sessions for young people aged 16-24. The project recognises that the same vulnerabilities that can lead to young people joining gangs - like isolation, frustration and lack of purpose - can also make them more of a target for extremist views. The young people were first given a chance to discuss and explore their grievances. They then had the chance to listen to the stories of people, who have turned to gangs, crime or extremism as an answer - and the negative impact that's had on their lives. They then also learned the impact that such life choices had on their families, for example by listening to someone who lost her son fighting in Syria.
- 3.5.8. Following this year's terrorist incidents the prevent team worked with the London Network on prevent related matters, providing guidance on Pan-London areas of focus. They also enhanced local engagement based on need and areas of concern, delivering reassurance activity as required.

3.6. Delivering Prevent in Westminster's Educational Institutions

- 3.6.1. A set of training packages for Westminster's educational institutions have been developed and delivered over the last two years. This training includes an overview of Prevent and the safeguarding measures available to help support individuals at risk of radicalisation or extremism. Versions are available and have been delivered to educational settings from Early Years to universities.
- 3.6.2. Since April 2016 the Prevent Team delivered training to over 1800 staff in 53 institutions. The product has been adapted a number of times based on changes in legislation and on feedback. Overall, the feedback throughout the year has been very positive.
- 3.6.3. Much of the support and training provided to the Higher and Further Education Institutions in Westminster is delivered by the two pan-London HE/FE Prevent Co-ordinators. The Prevent Team locally have worked closely with them and assisted with providing support, advice and training to this sector. With a dedicated officer working across educational institutions, the intention is to improve our links with this sector.
- 3.6.4. A series of pages are available on the Council website have been built in order to provide information on Prevent. This includes a suite of projects, lesson plans and guidance documents that have been put together for educational institutions.
- 3.6.5. A number of projects are also commissioned to support schools in the delivery of Prevent locally.

3.7. Safeguarding vulnerable individuals

- 3.7.1. Through the Channel and wider Prevent safeguarding processes, we continue to work closely with different Council departments and agencies to support and safeguard individuals potentially vulnerable to extremism or radicalisation.
- 3.7.2. We are currently developing a new integrated referral process with Children and Family Services to ensure those with the necessary skills, knowledge and experience are able to efficiently review and manage referrals on vulnerable young people. This will include a social worker embedded within the prevent team.
- 3.7.3. The Prevent Team deliver workshops to staff in order to raise awareness of Prevent. They also provide support and advice to departments around the other requirements of the Prevent duty. Training has been delivered to members of staff from Council departments, contractors and other external partners.

- 3.7.4. When delivering training on Prevent, whether to frontline staff or teachers in institutions, an emphasis is placed on the importance of a proportionate response to something that gives cause for concern; encouraging staff to use their professional judgment and to follow their existing safeguarding referral processes. In the case of children or young people, this is through their designated safeguarding lead and in to Access to Children's Services. For adults, it is in to Adult Social Care.
- 3.7.5. Channel is a statutory early intervention multi-agency process designed to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into violent extremism and/or terrorism. Channel works in a similar way to other safeguarding partnerships such as case conferences for children in need. Channel is a pre-criminal process that is designed to support vulnerable people at the earliest possible opportunity, before they become involved in illegal activity.
- 3.7.6. Engagement with the Channel process is voluntary and for a young person would require parental consent.
- 3.7.7. Each Channel Panel is chaired by the Council's Head of Community Safety. Permanent membership of the panel includes officers from Children's and mental health services. Alongside this, other multi-agency partners, including all those involved in any specific case, are brought together to collectively assess the risks in relation to an individual and decide whether a support package is needed. If the panel feels that an individual would benefit from support; a bespoke package of support will be tailored for that individual, based on their particular needs and circumstances.
- 3.7.8. Numbers of Prevent referrals are not published at a local level.

3.8. Challenges

- 3.8.1. Short-term funding, year on year, causes significant problems in relation to the recruitment and retention of staff. It also limits our ability to build and establish longer term projects and pieces of work.
- 3.8.2. Prevent delivery needs to be responsive to a rapidly changing threat picture.
- 3.8.3. Until recently the Prevent Team only consisted of two members of staff, this presented significant challenges in terms of both capacity and resilience. Newly recruited staff will remedy this challenge in the short to medium term.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Mark Chalmers x6032
mchalmers@westminster.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Nil.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Nil.