

Children, Sport and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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Title:	Overview of Prevent Delivery
Report of:	Senior Accountable Officer
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Public Protection
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	City for Choice
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to outline the work that is undertaken to deliver the Prevent Strategy locally, with a particular focus on how this is done to safeguard Westminster's children, young people and families.
- 1.2. Updates on Prevent are also regularly provided to the Public Protection Policy and Scrutiny committee.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1. Consider whether the current work programme is sufficient.
- 2.2. Consider gaps in delivery and areas for future activity.

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 the 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 its commissions are funded through a grant agreement with the Office for Security and Counter-terrorism within the Home Office.

3.2. Prevent work in Westminster

- 3.2.1. 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.
- 3.2.2. 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.

- 3.2.3. Westminster's Prevent Team currently consists of a Prevent Programme Manager and a Prevent Officer: Engagement. The team sit within Community Safety in Public Protection and Licensing.
- 3.2.4. Local delivery of the Prevent Strategy is focused on the threat picture and 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.
- 3.2.5. Westminster's Prevent Team works with institutions, communities and individuals that include people of all ages. This report is limited to those areas of work that are relevant to the remit of this Committee.

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

- 3.3.1. 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.
- 3.3.2. 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.
- 3.3.3. A Prevent parenting programme has been commissioned over the last two 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.
- 3.3.4. The programme is an adapted version of the Race Equality Foundation's 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' course. Over the past year, we have delivered 4 series of this programme to 57 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.

- 3.3.5. 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'*.
- 3.3.6. The Prevent Team have also delivered a 'Creating Stronger Communities' project, in response to the outcome of a consultation from some of the City's hard to reach communities. This is a project that responds to the social needs of Muslim women. In addition to radicalisation, the women identified issues including gangs, substance misuse and domestic abuse as ones that they were concerned about and wanted more information on. The project aimed to raise participants' awareness and understanding of those issues, so they felt better equipped to respond to them. CSC was delivered in partnership with a range of local agencies and service providers, who the Team worked with to develop half day workshops exploring each of the themes. Throughout the project, participants' confidence to discuss and consider challenging and sensitive topics was built upon; so that upon its completion, they not only felt able to apply the information and knowledge they had obtained through participating in the project within their own homes and families, but also to disseminate it within their communities and social networks. Some attendees are now being supported by services in light of disclosures they made in sessions. Feedback from participants and practitioners alike has been excellent and further workshops have been requested by those who participated in the project.
- 3.3.7. Youth engagement, outside educational settings, has been identified as a current gap within the Prevent programme and will be a key area of focus for the team over the next year. The team have applied for funding to commission a number of projects that will be focused on safeguarding and empowering Westminster's young people. It is hoped that these will be delivered in partnership with the Integrated Gangs Unit and also local third sector providers of youth activities.

3.4. Delivering Prevent in Westminster's Educational Institutions

- 3.4.1. A set of training packages for Westminster's educational institutions have been developed and delivered over the last 15 months. This training includes an overview of Prevent and the safeguarding measures available to help support individuals at risk of radicalisation or extremism. There are versions for primary, secondary and early years settings.
- 3.4.2. In the last financial year the Prevent Team delivered training to over 1500 staff in 51 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.

- 3.4.3. 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.
- 3.4.4. A series of pages 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.
- 3.4.5. A range of projects were also commissioned to support schools in the delivery of Prevent locally. One of these projects is a workshop that seeks to challenge prejudice and build critical thinking skills in an age appropriate way. These workshops have been delivered to 891 pupils in 7 local primary and secondary schools. The secondary workshops also give an opportunity for open discussion of potentially controversial topics. In feedback, one teacher said *“They will be less likely to judge. Brilliant workshop, thank you! All the children were engaged.”*

3.5. Safeguarding vulnerable individuals

- 3.5.1. 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.
- 3.5.2. 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.
- 3.5.3. 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.
- 3.5.4. Engagement with the Channel process is voluntary and for a young person would require parental consent.
- 3.5.5. Each Channel Panel is chaired by the Council’s Head of Community Safety. Safeguarding leads from within Child Protection and Children’s Services also sit on the panel. 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.

- 3.5.6. As the Team have done more training and raised awareness amongst staff and the community, there has been an increase in safeguarding referrals that is reflected nationally. Numbers of Prevent referrals are not published at a local level.
- 3.5.7. In a recent Ofsted report, following the inspection of Children and Young People's Services in the City, the work of Westminster Prevent and Children's Services was commended: "*Children and young people at risk of radicalisation... are protected through a range of excellent initiatives.*"

3.6. Mainstreaming Prevent through Council Services

- 3.6.1. The Prevent Team regularly provide briefings to Council services, including Children & Young People's Services, in order to raise awareness of the Prevent Duty and the Team can provide advice and guidance on ensuring compliance with that duty.
- 3.6.2. 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 duty. Training has been delivered to 449 members of staff from Council departments, contractors or other external partners.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Mark Chalmers x6032
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APPENDICES:

For any supplementary documentation; especially from external stakeholders or documents which do not fit this template.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

This section is for any background papers used to formulate the report or referred to in the body of the report.