

## HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### Decision Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	13 December 2022
<b>Title:</b>	Annual PREVENT Report
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Adults' Health and Care

**Contact name:** Graham Allen

**Tel:** 03707 795574

**Email:** Graham.allen@hants.gov.uk

#### Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this annual report is to provide information and assurance on:
  - the County Council's delivery of the Prevent duty and responsibilities hosted within Adults' Health and Care;
  - delivery of the County Council's Channel Panel responsibilities; and
  - notable local events and national highlights over the last 12 months since the last Prevent Annual Report was presented to Cabinet.

#### Recommendations

2. That Cabinet notes this update on Prevent activity in Hampshire, including the work being undertaken by the County Council and its partners in the management and mitigation of issues related to duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and the Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019.
3. That Cabinet receive a further update in 12 months' time.

#### Executive Summary

4. The UK's security services continue to counter terrorist risks and threats at home and to UK interests overseas, with global events impacting the domestic terrorism landscape and leading to growth in hate crime incidences in some communities, resulting in increased demand for Prevent services.
5. The move to radicalisation in the online space has continued, likely exacerbated by the increase in online activity as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Whilst this has potentially increased the risk of people being drawn into terrorism it has also presented opportunities for community-led initiatives in Hampshire to build strong support networks and develop resilience in preventing and responding to terrorist threats.
6. The County Council has robust internal and external arrangements to ensure compliance with its Prevent duties. These have been evaluated by the Home

Office's Office for Homeland Security and have been judged to be meeting or exceeding expectations. The County Council continues to mainstream Prevent across its business through strengthened governance and senior leadership. Leadership and governance is also provided externally through the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board, which has progressed the Prevent agenda in Hampshire through the Board's sub groups in close partnership with stakeholders, Portsmouth City Council, Southampton City Council and the Isle of Wight Council.

7. The County Council has applied the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) created by Counter Terrorism Police South-East to the development of a multi-agency Situational Risk Assessment and incorporated it in the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board's multi-agency action plan and sub group workplans.
8. The County Council and its partners have responded effectively to an increase in the volume and complexity of Hampshire Channel Panel referrals and there is good multi-agency engagement in Hampshire Channel Panels. Once again the County Council demonstrated full compliance with the Home Office's Office for Homeland Security's Annual Assurance Statement for Channel.
9. Nationally, the County Council has continued to follow and contribute to inquiries and is awaiting the further publications from the Manchester Arena Enquiry, the publication of the Government's consultation on the Protect Duty, and the publication of the Independent Review of Prevent.
10. A confidential briefing has been provided to the Leader and Deputy Leader in advance of this report being brought to Cabinet.

### **Contextual information**

11. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 created a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism. This duty applies to all public bodies (local authorities, police, NHS, schools, further and higher education providers, probation, prisons and youth offending services). The duty also applies to private providers supplying public functions, for example in the education sector. Prevent interventions are focused in the 'pre criminal space'. The lead responsibility for Prevent sits with local authorities.
12. The ongoing importance of this agenda has been highlighted in Hampshire by the protests at Farnborough Airport in February and July 2022 by Extinction Rebellion. Sticker and graffiti (stickers are placed in usually prominent public spaces in support of a particular ideology/belief/group) continues to be reported across the communities in Hampshire, and the correlation between hate crime and extremism remains under close investigation. In April 2022 Extinction Rebellion joined forces with Just Stop Oil to block the oil terminals at Hythe and the Hamble. Also, within the pan-Hampshire area in July 2022 a 15-year-old boy from the Isle of Wight appeared in court charged with a terrorism offence.
13. Prevent services across Hampshire continue to be called upon to respond to the impact of global and national events on local communities. It is recognised

that global events impact the domestic terrorism landscape and lead to a growth in hate crime incidences in some communities, leaving some individuals and groups feeling exposed and unsafe. Consequently, there is also an increased demand for support to those who are identified as being vulnerable to radicalisation. The correlation between hate crime and extremism remains under close investigation.

14. It is anticipated that this will continue to require a response from the wider strategic Prevent partnership led by Hampshire County Council to support the work already started to build strong and resilient communities. The Council's ability to engage with communities and the wider safeguarding partnerships is crucial in the delivery of the Prevent duty to prevent those vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism from being radicalised.
15. At the time of writing, the threat level of International Terrorism to the UK is 'Substantial'<sup>1</sup>, meaning that a terrorist attack is 'likely'.

### **Covid-19 Pandemic**

16. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to be felt in Hampshire, as it does throughout the whole of the UK. Those consequences previously identified remain relevant, with others emerging as circumstances allow:
  - The increase in time spent online has likely increased the risk of some people being drawn into terrorism through exposure to extremist narratives. For example, extremists have used apocalyptic narratives in referring to the pandemic encouraging supporters to take extremist action;
  - Conspiracy theories initially related to COVID-19 have further developed in focus with some now including seemingly non-related COVID-19 themes such as anti-establishment and right wing ideology;
  - Misinformation and disinformation about COVID-19 and the vaccines are increasingly present in populist narratives to further the idea that the 'elite' are controlling and abusing the 'people' in an attempt to undermine societal and community cohesion;
  - Gaming platforms are increasingly being used as social media platforms with encrypted chat rooms where terrorists can recruit, radicalise and raise funds through the use of crypto currency. Video games are sometimes altered to promote terrorism.
17. Many of the community-led groups initially established at the height of the pandemic continue to provide support to those at risk of radicalisation, reducing social isolation and a sense of injustice and thereby promoting a sense of belonging and community cohesion.
18. Hampshire's community focus is supported by the county's Community Safety Network, and close joint working with District Council partners and Hampshire Constabulary has enabled proactive messaging to be shared with communities in Hampshire.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/terrorism-national-emergency>

## **PREVENT arrangements within Hampshire County Council**

19. The **Prevent team** is hosted the Adults' Health and Care Department and comprises 1.6 FTE and 1 FTE business support resource. Additionally, there is 1 FTE 12-month post to support the work of the **Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board**. The team facilitates compliance with the statutory duties and responsibilities placed upon the County Council and supports the Prevent Delivery Group, Partnership Board and **Channel** arrangements, outlined below.
20. The County Council's **Prevent Delivery Group** meets quarterly and includes senior representation from each County Council department. It focuses on strengthening the organisational approach with respect to leadership, workforce capability, awareness, partnerships and information sharing. It is chaired by the Director of Adults' Health and Care and since its formation last year, has served to mainstream Prevent across the County Council's business. Key achievements over the last 12 months include:
  - completion of the County Council's Prevent e-learning by over 95% of the total workforce;
  - further development of staff guidance on the Prevent duty and how to respond to Prevent concerns following a trauma-informed safeguarding approach;
  - promotion of the National Referral Form referral pathway for all Prevent referrals, including how to recognise signs of radicalisation;
  - delivery of additional briefings and training to staff, including senior leaders at the Hampshire Leadership Network, across all directorates at each Departmental Management Team detailing the Prevent duty and how it impacts on each service area;
  - development and publication of a bespoke training package for frontline staff in Adults Health and Care and Children's Services;
  - review an update of the HCC communications strategy to support consistent and sensitive communications between the council and communities/partners;
  - publication of a number of awareness-raising factsheets on terrorism-related specific risks and themes.

## **Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board**

21. The **Board** is a multi-agency forum with close links to the Hampshire Community Safety Strategy Group, the Hampshire Safeguarding Adults Board and the Hampshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Further work is underway through these groups to build stronger community safety partnership links. An example of this would be District Council community safety input into the planning of the counter-terrorism local profile.
22. The Board meets virtually on a quarterly basis and sets the overarching strategy and multi-agency action plan. The plan focuses on the following three strategic areas:
  - Engagement and Awareness
  - Information Sharing

- Disrupting radicalising Influences
23. These areas reflect those used by Counter Terrorism Policing South-East (CTPSE) and specific actions are informed by the CTLP, as well as national developments from the Home Office's Office of Homeland Security. The CTLP provides local and national data on Prevent and highlights emerging risks and themes. The Hampshire Prevent Partnership works closely with CTPSE, which produces the CTLP, to improve the relevance and accuracy of local data within it.
24. A Core Group meets bi-monthly in addition to the Board to provide oversight of the action plan's implementation. Specific actions are delivered through thematic sub-groups. The sub-groups are:
- Communication
  - Communities and Engagement
  - Education
  - CTLP
- The priorities for each subgroup are agreed by the Hampshire Prevent Partnership and seek to mitigate those risks and themes identified in the CTLP and the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board's action plan.
25. Key achievements of the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board over the last 12 months year include
- embedding the Prevent referral pathway across the Hampshire area;
  - implementation of the Training Strategy and Communication Strategy;
  - development of an assurance framework for partners;
  - development of an Autism/Neurodiversity and Prevent Strategy;
  - publication of a Situational Risk Assessment;
  - completion of the Office of Homeland Security's Benchmarking Exercise.
26. In April Hampshire County Council submitted the Prevent Duty Benchmark 2021-2022 to the Office of Homeland Security at the Home Office using their given template. This demonstrated that the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board and Hampshire County Council are either meeting or exceeding the required standards for the delivery of Prevent in Hampshire. The Office of Homeland Security noted the high standards in Hampshire considering that it is an unfunded Prevent area.

## Channel

27. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 introduced the **Channel** process to provide multi-agency, tailored support to people identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism. The level of risk and nature of support is considered by the multi-agency Channel Panel. Risks related to terrorism are owned by counter terrorism police, with support provided by the wider Prevent partnership in the Channel Panel and delivered to the individual assessed to be at risk of radicalisation.

28. Statutory guidance requires a Channel Panel to be held monthly. However, due to the increased volume and complexity of referrals, the County Council currently leads a Channel Panel every two weeks, which has significantly increased the workload of the Prevent team and impacted on the workload of the social work teams across the county.
29. Panel meetings are held virtually and are well attended by multi-agency partners. Support is provided to a range of adults and children with varying ideologies and backgrounds. Due to the security and sensitivity of Counter Terrorism intelligence, this annual report does not include details on referrals into Hampshire over the last 12 months. However, it is worth noting that Hampshire Channel referrals have increased by 70% for the period 01.01.2022 – 30.09.2022 when compared to the same time period in 2020.
30. The Hampshire Channel Panel adopts a risk based / trauma-informed safeguarding approach and supports an holistic model of support. In order to address concerns relating to radicalisation, the Panel also assesses other needs – for example housing, education, support for parents, domestic abuse. In many instances families/individuals are in crisis, and Hampshire Channel supports the engagement of the wider Prevent network to mitigate and minimise vulnerability to radicalisation through its individual support planning.
31. It is through the support of the Prevent partnership in Hampshire that the Panel is able to achieve successful outcomes together with those referred to the Hampshire Channel Panel. At an operational level the Panel members not only support organisations in Hampshire to deliver interventions to individuals, but also identifies strategic need which is then addressed by the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board.
32. In January 2022, the County Council submitted its Annual Assurance Statement for Channel to the Home Office demonstrating full compliance.

### **Notable Events for Hampshire County Council in the last 12 months**

33. In February 2022 Extinction Rebellion protested against the use of private jets at Farnborough airport.
34. In April 2022 Extinction Rebellion joined forces with Just Stop Oil to block the oil terminals at Hythe and the Hamble. A statement from Extinction Rebellion said that the protest at the Fawley Oil Refinery was in solidarity with the workers who were underpaid.
35. In July 2022 Extinction Rebellion protested at Farnborough Airport, on the opening day of the Farnborough Airshow. This protest focused on climate change and its effects on children.
36. Stickers and graffiti continues to be reported across the communities in Hampshire and appear to be motivated by various ideologies - for example anti-state.

### **Key National Highlights**

37. Inquiry hearings for the Manchester Arena Independent Public Inquiry began in September 2020. Volume Two of its report will be published in November

2022. This focuses on the preparedness of the emergency services to respond to a marauding terrorist firearms attack and to deal with the events after the attack.

38. Project Starlight published its findings on the prevalence of domestic abuse related incidences within Prevent referrals. The report concluded that there is a 'striking prevalence' of domestic abuse in the lives of those referred to Prevent as being vulnerable to radicalisation.
39. In the year ending 30 June 2022 there were 203 arrests in the UK for terrorism-related activity. Of these, 44 were convicted of terrorism-related offences.
40. A man was charged with treason after allegedly plotting to kill the late Queen with a loaded crossbow on Christmas Day 2021.
41. In summer 2022 Leeds Libraries supported the Drag Queen Story Hour. Whilst the event was held successfully, one group protesting was a far-right white nationalist group.

### **Climate Change Impact Assessment**

42. Hampshire County Council utilises two decision-making tools to assess the carbon emissions and resilience impacts of its projects and decisions. These tools provide a clear, robust, and transparent way of assessing how projects, policies and initiatives contribute towards the County Council's climate change targets of being carbon neutral and resilient to the impacts of a 2°C temperature rise by 2050. This process ensures that climate change considerations are built into everything the Authority does.
43. This report does not detail specific projects or initiatives that can be assessed using the County Council's climate impact assessment tools but rather provides an annual assurance update on delivery of the Prevent duty. Consequently, no Climate Change assessment has been undertaken.

### **Conclusion**

44. The County Council continues to deliver the requirements of the Prevent duty and is compliant with the Channel Duty guidance. The County Council, with its partners, will continue to adapt its approach to respond to the impact of global events and manage the increase in demand for Prevent support, including the increase in volume and complexity Channel referrals. Hampshire County Council will keep under review the resources and, in particular, specialist resources deployed in maintaining our duties in respect of Prevent and Channel, given the increased activity seen in this area.
45. Hampshire County Council will continue to fully support the work of the Hampshire Prevent Partnership Board, providing leadership and governance alongside its partners. The key strategic priorities of the Board will be delivered through the Board sub-groups, the aims of which are to engage our communities and to raise awareness about the impact of radicalisation of individuals who are subject to the growing threat of extremist ideologies in Hampshire.

46. The County Council will take note of the publication of key national documents and together with partners will implement any relevant recommendations or requirements in a timely manner and with a focus on keeping Hampshire communities safe.

**REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Strategic Plan**

<b>Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:</b>	yes
<b>People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:</b>	yes

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>	
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015	2015
Counter Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019	2019
Channel Duty Guidance 2020	2020

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p><b>The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)</b></p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:**

### **1. Equality Duty**

- 1.1 The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
  - Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
  - Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.
- 1.2 Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:
- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
  - Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
  - Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

### **2. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

As this is annual update there is not a requirement for an Equality Impact Assessment.