

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

meeting date: TUESDAY, 9 APRIL 2024
title: PREVENT DUTY
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING
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1 PURPOSE

1.1 To receive information and updates relating to the Prevent Duty.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – To ensure that Ribble Valley remains a safe place to live.
- Corporate Priorities – To make people's lives safer and healthier and to ensure a well-managed council providing efficient services based on the identified customer needs.
- Other Considerations – To work collaboratively with partners to ensure we safeguard our most vulnerable residents.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 The overall aim of Central Government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK. Prevent remains one of the key pillars of CONTEST, alongside the other three 'P' work strands:

- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

2.2 The Prevent duty requires specified authorities such as education, health, local authorities, police and criminal justice agencies (prisons and probation) to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

2.3 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". To demonstrate compliance with the duty, specified authorities must demonstrate productive cooperation, in particular with local Prevent coordinators and other agencies, through existing multi-agency forums, for example Community Safety Partnerships.

3 LOCAL AUTHORITIES

3.1 All local authorities have a legal duty to deliver Prevent in their area and Local authorities are required to have multi-agency arrangements in place to effectively monitor and evaluate the impact of Prevent work and provide strategic governance.

- 3.2 Lancashire County Council produce a Prevent strategy and Action Plan (appendix 3) including Counter Terrorism Local Profiles. This is informed by situational analysis reports completed annually by district leads. Prevent work is coordinated centrally for Lancashire by colleagues based within Blackburn with Darwen Council Community Safety Team. All referrals for counter terrorism prevention activities are overseen and recorded by the Channel Panel coordinated by the central team. Each district has designated trainers.
- 3.2 The Lancashire Prevent Partnership provides a toolkit for authorities to ensure they meet the minimum standards of the Prevent Duty. The outcomes of a recent benchmarking activity can be seen below highlighting the current position of RVBC:
- Quarterly multi-agency group oversees the Prevent delivery – **Exceeded:** due to the involvement of senior officers and partner agencies in the delivery of the Prevent duty for the Ribble Valley.
 - Local risk assessment process - **Met:** local situational analysis is compiled in partnership with local agencies and informs the Lancashire Risk Assessment. Local risk assessment to be produced outlining the corporate risks of not meeting the duty.
 - Partnership Plan – **Met:** The annual district plan, including the role of partner agencies will be included in the Community Safety Partnership Strategy and Action Plan to meet this benchmarking criteria.
 - Referral pathway- **Met:** A clear process is in place for the council to respond to Channel requests and provide the relevant information to allow vulnerable individuals to be referred for support and intervention. Lower-level intervention is undertaken with youth people identified via the youth referral panel.
 - Training programme- **Met:** appropriate training has been identified and there is a clear plan to deliver this over the coming year. Training has also been offered to partners who may not access this via their own organisation. Training is an online offer that is free to all agencies linked to the Community Safety Partnership.
 - Reduced permissive environments- **Met:** Prevent related issues are discussed regularly at the Community Safety Partnership and the Youth Referral Panel to identify and mitigate any risks and provide prevention education. The public sector venue hire and IT policy is in place to monitor use buildings and IT systems.
 - Communications and engagement- **Met:** the council has a dedicated webpage to provide information relating to counter terrorism and training that can be accessed by anyone. [Counter Terrorism – Ribble Valley Borough Council](#) The council reposts all social media communications from emergency services including those relating to counter terrorism. The Partnership Officer regularly visits community activities to listen to concerns raised by the public relating to community safety. These concerns are reported to the Community Safety Partnership and discussed at local priorities meeting.

4. PREVENT PLAN

- 4.1 With the support of Prevent leads and others through the multi-agency group, all local authorities should lead in developing – alongside multi-agency partners – a Prevent partnership plan specific to the local authority to manage the risk of people becoming radicalised into terrorism in that area. This will help the local authority to comply with the Prevent duty,
- 4.2 Each district is required to produce an annual district plan informed by the local priorities. RVBC's Prevent District Plan has been updated and can be found in appendix 1. The previous plan is attached at Appendix 2, the original Prevent Plan dates back to 2015.

5. CHANNEL

- 5.1 'Channel' is multi-agency approach to protecting people at risk from radicalisation. It is a voluntary, confidential programme which provides support to people who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. It operates across the country through Local Authority-chaired multi-agency panels and is not any form of criminal or civil sanction. The aim of the programme is to safeguard people from the harm which radicalisation can cause, before they come to harm themselves or become involved in criminal behaviour that harms others.
- 5.2 At the point a vulnerable person is identified, a request is sent out to partners to gather information regarding any contact or recorded data held about the individual. RVBC has a process in place for the request to be shared with Heads of Service via the Prevent Lead. The request is time sensitive and must be responded to quickly.

6 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE / CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 Note the revised Prevent District Plan, 2024/25 at appendix 1 which will form part of the work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership. The previous District Plan can be seen in appendix 2.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

For further information please ask for Sarah Wells, extension 4506.