

Report for:
ACTION/

Item Number: 14

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	Home Office Prevent Peer Review Findings and Recommendations
Responsible Officer(s)	Mark Wiltshire, Director for Housing and Safer Communities
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Portfolio(s)	Councilor Camadoo
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be considered	15 th October 2019
Implementation Date if Not Called In	n/a
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	Prevent Strategy, Home Office, extremism, Counter Terrorism

Purpose of Report: To consider the outcomes of the Home Office Prevent Peer Review which took place in March 2019 and consider the report recommendations. Where appropriate, endorse our observations in relation to their findings.

1. Recommendations

1.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- Notes the positive outcomes of the report
- Endorses the observations within Appendix 1 which will form a reply to the Home Office

2. Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 2.1 The Prevent Duty came into force in July 2015 and requires specified authorities, including local authorities and schools, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. It is recognised that Peer Reviews can present a valuable body of learning in order to raise standards and indicate the degree of compliance in Council services.
- 2.2 The Ealing Council Prevent Team and their partners committed a considerable amount of effort in order to expose the reviewers to the breadth of good practice being employed and this has been reflected in a very positive report.

- 2.3 Setting out a measured response to the Home Office underlines our continued commitment to improvement but properly sets expectations concerning recommendations that we may feel are already in place or are impractical.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Prevent Peer Review took place on the borough between the 5th-7th March 2019. As a Home Office priority borough, Ealing receives funding for staffing and the delivery of projects and as such is expected to deliver a risk mitigation strategy to a high standard.
- 3.2 The Prevent Peer Review programme is a sector led-improvement model which aims to evaluate Prevent delivery structures and processes in a local authority with a view to developing recommendations for improvement and promoting best practice. The programme has been developed by the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) to support local authorities deliver the Prevent Duty.
- 3.3 Prevent peer reviews are not an inspection of a local authority or their partners. They are offered with the aim of addressing challenges and accelerating practical improvement in delivering Prevent. The reviews emphasize self-assessment and utilising the peer review team to provide practical improvement, rather than summarising current and past performance of Prevent Duty implementation.
- 3.4 Statutory guidance published in March 2015 outlines what is required of specified authorities under the duty. (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445977/3799_Revised_Prevent_Duty_Guidance__England__Wales_V2-Interactive.pdf) Specific areas of activity for local authorities include:
- **Risk assessment** – assessment of the risks of radicalisation in the local area leading to action planning and creating an action plan to address aforementioned risks.
 - **Partnership working** – including establishing or making use of existing multi-agency partnerships to drive Prevent work. This needs to include the relevant local specified authorities where appropriate and oversee the action plan and risk assessment.
 - **Training** – ensuring appropriate frontline staff are trained to spot the signs of radicalisation and know what action to take.
 - **Use of resources** – ensuring publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for those whose views may draw people into terrorism. Councils should also provide guidance and support for other organisation within their areas to ensure that they do not inadvertently provide platforms for those seeking to radicalise vulnerable people.
- 3.5 A list of 10 benchmark forms the basis of prevent peer reviews. It includes seven statutory obligations from the Prevent Duty and three in line with best practice. It is used flexibly to consider implementation and improvement in 10 key areas of effective Prevent delivery in local authorities.

3.6 The report summarises in very complimentary terms the work delivered on the borough and states the following:

- The embedding of Prevent in safeguarding is a clear and valuable thread running through all Prevent delivery in Ealing. This approach is aligned with the strategic vision and values of the Council and provides a strong foundation for all Prevent work in the borough. It is the basis of the strong community engagement in Ealing and builds trust across communities. It underpins Channel referrals and associated training so practitioners are clear that all safeguarding referrals go through one safeguarding route. It supports cross-agency and cross-team working by bringing all partners together under one clear objective.
- There is exceptional leadership and understanding of Prevent objectives from the Leader of the Council and the senior leadership team. This sets a strong direction for staff across the Council as well as statutory and community partners. This leadership is then supported by very high quality delivery by the Prevent Team whose work is well regarded by partners.
- While much of the Team's work is to a very high standard, their community engagement is to be particularly commended as setting a high standard which others in the network could learn from. Ealing has strong relationships with communities and very good reach into most of the key communities. The Prevent Advisory Group in Ealing (PAGE) and Mosque Advisory Group are integral to this engagement. This engagement, funding local grass roots providers, has empowered strong local voices to speak supportively about Prevent. This again builds trust in communities and supports Prevent delivery.
- Another area of strength is their disruptions of radicalising influences which has been achieved by smart use of local levers, such as licencing policies, as well as strong community engagement to explain reasons for disrupting events and ensuring community support.

4. Financial

4.1 There are no financial implications in this report. Ealing Council continues to be funded through a Home Office Grant Agreement for this work.

5. Legal

5.1 The Prevent Strategy was first published by the Government in 2011 and led by three specific strategic objectives.

5.2 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) places a duty on the Council and other "specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

5.3 The Council must have regard to the statutory guidance when carrying its functions.

5.4 The report underlines the high level of compliance of the Council in relation to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

6. Sustainability Impact Appraisal

- 6.1 Sustainability in delivery is assured through Home Office Grant funding but is reliant on the risk profile of the borough, Government budgetary priorities and good governance at a local level.

7. Risk Management

- 7.1 Risk management issues are addressed through the conditions of the local grant agreement. A national risk assessment for Prevent is published by the Home Office.

8. Community Safety

- 8.1 The current Prevent delivery plan contains actions that are designed to link with Ealing's Community Safety Plan. It is prepared in consultation with Borough Police representatives to ensure its compatibility to the local Policing Plan.

9. Links to the 3 Priorities for the Borough

- 9.1 The aims and objectives of the national and local Prevent strategies link directly to the community safety aspects of the three priorities.

10. Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

- 10.1 In publishing the Prevent Strategy as part of the UK Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST), the Home Office has ensured that it is compliant with all Equalities and Human Rights legislation.
- 10.2 Any partner organisation or agency we work with needs to comply with the Home Office 'values' policy which recognises the need to respect universal human rights, gender equality, equality of opportunity, democracy, the rule of law, respect for religions and freedom of speech.

11. Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

- 11.1 The Prevent Team is already in place to deliver this work and is fully operational.

12. Property and Assets

- 12.1 None

13. Any other implications

- 13.1 None

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – Peer Review recommendations response matrix.

15. Background Information

15.1 Relevant documents:

- The UK Counter Terrorism Strategy – CONTEST
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/contest>
- The Prevent Strategy 2011
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Mark Wiltshire	Head of Regulatory Services			
Justin Morley	Head of Legal Services (Litigation)		18/9/19	5

Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	
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