

**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

21 April 2022

**Counter Terrorism & Security Act 2015 –
Prevent Update**



Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to present the Safer Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update of the Safe Durham Partnership's progress in meeting the statutory duties contained within the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and an update on partnership working.

Executive summary

- 2 There is a statutory responsibility to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". This report provides an update on the latest government strategy and guidance alongside highlighted areas of Prevent activity directly linked to Durham County Council and the Safe Durham Partnership.

Recommendation

- 3 Members of the Committee are asked to note information contained within this report and presentation.

Background

- 4 At its meeting held on 9th July 2021, the Committee agreed its work programme to include an item on Counter Terrorism. Information within this report and presentation is linked to the Safe Durham Partnership Plan strategic priority “Prevent Strategy: Countering terrorism, radicalisation and violent extremism.”
- 5 Regular updates have been provided to the Safer Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee since new statutory duties were placed on local authorities in 2015 in relation to Prevent. The most recent update was in February 2020.
- 6 Reports have outlined the UK Counter Terrorism Strategy (Contest) and its objectives, which are:
 - (a) Pursue - To stop terrorist attacks (the remit of the police and security services)
 - (b) Prevent - To stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists
 - (c) Prepare - Where we cannot stop an attack, to mitigate its impact
 - (d) Protect - To strengthen our overall protection against terrorist attacks
- 7 The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed Prevent on a statutory footing and requires all specified authorities to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Local Authorities and their partners therefore have a core role to play in countering terrorism at a local level and helping to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.
- 8 The current threat level for the UK has reduced from Severe to Substantial as of 22 February 2022 meaning that an attack is likely.
- 9 The three Prevent objectives as in the revised Prevent Guidance (June 2018 as required in Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015) are:
 - (a) Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.
 - (b) Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support.
 - (c) Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

- 10 The presentation attached in Appendix 2 will provide members with further information on activity at a National, Regional and Local Level and will be delivered by Andy Bailey, Partnerships Team Leader, Durham County Council and a representative from Durham Constabulary.

Main implications

Crime and Disorder

- 11 Information with this report aims to contribute to the strategic objective of Counter Terrorism within the Safe Durham Partnership plan.

Conclusion

- 12 The attached presentation provides an update and opportunity for Members to comment on activity by the Safe Durham Partnership in meeting the requirements of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and delivery of the strategic objective within the Safe Durham Partnership Plan.

- 13 Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- Counter Terrorism and Security Act – Prevent Update – Safer and Stronger Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 17 February 2020
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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places Prevent on a statutory footing and requires Durham County Council to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

Finance

None.

Consultation

None.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

A Policy Equality Statement has been prepared by the Home Office. It has been assessed that the policy is compliant, where relevant, with Section 149 of the Equality Act, and that due regard has been made to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations.

Human Rights

None.

Climate Change

None.

Crime and Disorder

Counter Terrorism is a strategic objective of the Safe Durham Partnership and therefore, crime and disorder is the main focus of the report.

Staffing

The local authority has provided training for practitioners to become familiar with the new statutory requirements in terms of recognising and referring those vulnerable to radicalisation. It has also set up single points of contact for a multi-agency Channel Panel.

Accommodation

None.

Risk

None.

Procurement

Corporate Procurement has been briefed on the implications of the duty.