

**Report of the Chief Constable to the Chair and Members
of the Operational Policing Panel
21st July 2011**

**Executive & Presenting Officer: Mr Sean White, Assistant Chief Constable
(Crime & Operations)**

Status: For approval/information

Prevent Strategy Update

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Prevent is one of the four components that make up the Government's national counter-terrorism strategy (CONTEST). These are:
- Pursue to stop attacks
 - Prepare where we cannot stop an attack, to mitigate its impact
 - Protect to strengthen our overall protection against terrorist attacks
 - Prevent to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists and violent extremists.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the Prevent work currently taking place within Cleveland Police.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

3. Reasons

- 3.1 The Prevent strategy has three key objectives, as follows:
- Ideology - Respond to the ideology challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.
 - Individual - We will prevent people being drawn in to terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support.

- Institutions - We will work with institutions where there are risks of radicalisation.
- 3.2 The new Coalition Government has reviewed the Prevent Strategy and in June 2011 the Home Secretary, Theresa May, presented the new strategy to the House of Commons. The old Prevent strategy was described as being flawed and failed to confront the extremist ideology at the heart of the threat the UK faces. It confused the delivery of Government policy to promote integration with Government policy to prevent terrorism. To avoid confusion the name Prevent will remain. The Executive Summary is attached as Appendix 1. The full strategy is available from:
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/counter-terrorism/prevent/prevent-strategy/prevent-strategy-review?view=Binary>
- 3.3 Prevent will address all forms of terrorism but continue to prioritise according to the threat they pose to our national security. The allocation of resources will be proportionate to the threats we face. At present our resources and efforts will be focused on Al Qa'ida, its affiliates and emergence of Extreme Right Wing groups.
- 3.4 Strategic and Force action plans are currently being reviewed to reflect the new objectives of the Prevent strategy. Each of the BCU Commanders will also review and adapt the local delivery action plans accordingly.
- 3.5 The Strategic CONTEST Group, chaired by Assistant Chief Constable (Crime & Operations), oversees the activity of the four District Silver Groups. This is attended by all Silver Group Chairs, District Commanders, National Offender Management Service, Fire Service, Primary Care Trust and the Strategic IAG Chair.
- 3.6 Officers across the Force area and partners have received the Trust Your Instincts and the Operation Fairway DVD. All Neighbourhood Policing Teams have received the training package "Workshop to Raise Awareness to Prevent", and delivery to partner agencies is ongoing including Education, Council and housing agencies
- 3.7 Strong partnerships have been maintained and developed with the Prison Services, National Offender Management Service and other institutions assisted by Special Branch and partners. We are working with these organisations together with Special Branch to promote Prevent awareness.
- 3.8 Local delivery is managed by the Silver CONTEST Groups. These are chaired by senior Local Authority members. The department Community Engagement Sergeant sits on all four Silver Groups, which are also attended by a counter terrorism officer from Special Branch. The Silver Groups are responsible for the multi-agency delivery of the four District Prevent Action Plans. The local delivery plans reflect local risk and requirements.

- 3.9 The Force now has one Counter Terrorism Local Profile which is split into the four Districts to identify threats and vulnerability within their respective locations. BCU Commanders and Local Authority leads have been briefed on this.
- 3.10 The new Prevent strategy is being promoted throughout the Force with development days and briefings for all officers and staff. Prevent updates and literature for use by Officers is posted on the Communities and Partnerships webpage.
- 3.11 There has been an increase in the number of referrals made to the overt prevent team this year which is part due to the promotion of the Prevent agenda through partnership work. These referrals are risk assessed and addressed through a multi-agency approach identified by the individuals needs.
- 3.12 'Understanding our Communities in a social, cultural and religious context' booklets have been updated for all four districts.
- 3.13 Middlesbrough and Stockton Local authorities have had funding drastically reduced and there are limited opportunities for funding projects.
- 3.14 Work in the area of internet safety is being constantly reviewed. Internet safety lessons have been delivered to over 250 children at the "Festival of Flight" day in March this year. Officers from the overt Prevent team attend schools and discuss terrorism and its effects with students in secondary schools. School firewalls are tested and advice given regards future security and monitoring abilities. "Staying Safe on the Internet" training is being given to officers to deliver in schools across the region.
- 3.15 Newly promoted officers and officers on leadership and development courses are having an input regards the new strategy and prevent awareness.
- 3.16 The overt Prevent Team has excellent links with Special Branch and other Force Prevent teams in the region. In May the Force held a Regional Prevent meeting. The event was attended by all Regional Forces, Stoke on Trent Community Resilience Team, ACPO Prevent Delivery Team and the North East Counter Terrorism Unit (NECTU). The event show cased a number of new initiatives and Cleveland was put forward as a pilot force for a Prevent Community Engagement project run by ACPO.
- 3.17 The Sergeant and PC in the Communities and Partnerships team are 100% CSR funded.
- 3.18 Two Operations led by ACPO have been requested for the promotion of Prevent across the Force and with our Partners. They are Operation Archer, a consequence management exercise, and Operation Hindsight, an intervention exercise based around a Counter terrorism incident.

- 3.19 "Resistance" was a drama production around the radicalisation of two young people, one with an Extreme Right Wing view and the other an Anti Western/War view point. The play was shown to over 3000 students and raised the awareness of Prevent through out the Higher education system.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

4.2 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

There are no diversity or equal opportunities implications arising from this report.

4.3 Human Rights Act

There are no Human Rights Act implications arising from this report.

4.4 Sustainability

The Community Engagement role is a funded post. Many of the initiatives rely on continuing funding, although as far as possible, sustainability in the form of long term community cohesion is built in.

4.5 Risk

There are some risks in Prevent work. It is an agenda that can be met with suspicion, and there are some negative perceptions within the Muslim community and also in the wider community. There are also issues of right wing extremism in the Cleveland area, and this also needs to be considered when planning Prevent initiatives.

- 4.6 Occasionally, issues are exposed that are at odds with mainstream culture, and can be perceived as inappropriate. When these issues are highlighted, they are discussed at appropriate forums and mechanisms put in place to address any future implications. For example, literature available at two recent events has caused some concern, although not in relation to violent extremism. The issues were cultural and religious in nature, and related to how these were represented in handouts and pamphlets available at the two events.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Terrorism is a key concern for our local communities especially the Muslim community. Negative media coverage of Prevent has impacted on delivery, so it is vital that the trust of the local community is sought and maintained. A clear focus should be continued.

- 5.2 We are now in stage two, namely the implementation of Prevent and this will be followed by mainstreaming Prevent in day to day policing.
- 5.3 A vast amount of effort has resulted in a positive response to implementing Prevent into Partnership activity.
- 5.4 A holistic and partnership approach is required to ensure long term solutions are found to local problems.

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