

**REPORT TO:** Safer Policy and Performance Board

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

**DATE:** 14 September 2021

**PORTFOLIO:** Community Safety

**SUBJECT:** CONTEST Strategy – “PROTECT” Aims and Objectives.

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To inform Board Members about the work of the Counter Terrorism Policing North West (CTPNW) in relation to the Protect strategy, what the CT threat looks like and our duties and functions within the Council to deliver a Protect Strategy across Halton.
- 1.2 To inform Board Members of current arrangements in Halton to support the CONTEST Strategy.
- 1.3 To inform Board Members of activity happening on a Pan-Cheshire footprint.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Board considers the information presented and raises any questions of interest or points of clarification following the presentation.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 **CONTEST** is the name of the Government’s counter-terrorism strategy; its most recent iteration was published in 2018. The strategy identifies Islamist terrorism as the principal terrorist threat to the UK, with extreme right-wing terrorism a growing concern. CONTEST identifies four key elements in response.

These are: • **Pursue** • **Prevent** • **Protect** • **Prepare**.

- 3.2 Jointly they aim to identify terrorists, prevent people from becoming terrorists, protect society from terrorist attacks, and mitigate the impact of attacks when they occur. While local authorities may have a role in all these elements, the focus for this guidance is on the Prevent strand. Prevent places a statutory duty on certain specified authorities, including

councils, to “have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” as per the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. ‘**Protect**’ is part of the UK’s 2018 counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST.

### 3.3 **Protect** has three objectives in CONTEST:

Under the CONTEST strategy, **Protect**’s objectives are to:

- Detect and deal with suspected terrorists and harmful materials at the border;
- Reduce the risk to and improve the resilience of global aviation, other transport sectors and critical national infrastructure most at risk to terror attack;
- Reduce the vulnerability of crowded places, specific vulnerable groups, and high profile individuals; and
- Detect and prevent terrorist access to and use of materials of concern, knowledge and information that could be used to conduct attacks.

Local authorities already undertake considerable work alongside wider partners to assess and mitigate against the risks of terrorism at and around venues and for particular events. More broadly, local authorities, along with many other organisations, will also assess and mitigate against a range of risks as part of existing legislation to keep communities safe.

### 3.4 The purpose of **Protect** is to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack in the UK or against our interests overseas. Its aim is not to reduce the threat of terrorism (which is the task of Pursue and Prevent), but rather our physical vulnerability to terrorist attack.

### 3.5 There is no currently no legislative requirement to consider or implement security measures at publicly accessible locations. However, there are many reasonable and appropriate measures which can be - and often already are - undertaken by organisations who operate at such locations. These include: • Having security plans and procedures to react and respond to different threats which are understood by all staff and regularly exercised; • Having simple and freely available training and awareness courses in place as part of new staff and refresher training programmes; and • Employing simple security measures (such as door locks, roller shutters) for crime prevention and anti-social behaviour, which may also be used in response to other security threats.

### 3.6 The recent consultation considers how we might use legislation to enhance the protection of publicly accessible locations across the UK from terrorist attacks and ensure organisational preparedness.

3.7 The presentation pulls together the different strands of activity across Halton and Cheshire, to show how we are meeting our responsibilities under the Protect agenda.

#### 4.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 **None**

#### 5.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### 5.1 **Children and Young People in Halton**

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the health, safety and well-being of young people.

##### 5.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

**None**

##### 5.3 **Healthy Halton**

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

##### 5.4 **A Safer Halton**

The Community Safety Service as a universal service impacts on the Health, safety and well-being of the residents of Halton.

##### 5.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None

#### 6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

None

#### 7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None

#### 8.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.