

REPORT TO: Safer Policy and Performance Board

REPORT OF: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

DATE: 14 September 2021

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: CONTEST Strategy – “PREVENT” 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 Prevent strategy, what the CT threat looks like and our duties and functions within the Council to deliver a Prevent 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: That

- 2.1 **The Board consider the information presented and raise 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 rightwing terrorism a growing concern. CONTEST identifies four key elements in response.

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

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.

3.2 For local authorities, a key element of the Prevent programme is on safeguarding and supporting individuals who might be vulnerable to radicalisation – the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. The counter-extremism strategy is aimed at protecting communities as a whole from a broader set of harms beyond terrorism, including hate crime and intolerance, and promoting ‘fundamental values’ including democracy, the rule of law and individual liberty.

3.3 **Prevent** has three objectives in CONTEST:

- Tackle the causes of radicalisation and respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism.
- Safeguard and support those most at risk of radicalisation through early intervention, identifying them and offering support.
- Enable those who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

3.4 The statutory guidance provides detailed information about the exact nature of the Prevent duty, and the organisations to which it applies.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on certain bodies to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Bodies subject to the Prevent duty are expected to take a risk-based approach to how they do so.

The Government’s strategy to meet this duty focuses on all forms of terrorism and extremism.

3.5 The relevant sectors and organisations are:

- Local Government (including all councils, but not combined authorities)
- Criminal Justice (including probation providers, and prison and Young Offender Institution (YOI) governors)
- Education and Childcare (including education providers)
- Health and Social care (including NHS trusts)
- Police (including chief officers of police and police and crime commissioners).

In relation to local government, the guidance notes the statutory requirements under the legislation for establishing a Channel panel to offer support to those at risk of radicalisation and sets out that risk assessment, planning, collaboration and training are important activities for councils to

undertake with a mind to fulfilling their responsibilities under the Prevent duty

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