

REPORT TO: Housing and Safer Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 16th September 2025

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Community Safety

SUBJECT: Counter Terrorism

WARD(S) Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the board on the role of Prevent and the work undertaken for the 2024/25 operating year and first quarter of 2025/26.
- 1.2 To update the board on the current actions HBC are taking in regard to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) the Board approves the action HBC is taking in regard to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Statutory Duties

Section 26 of the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) places a duty on certain bodies ("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".

- 3.2 The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, also known as Martyn's Law, introduces new legal duties for those responsible for certain public premises and events to improve preparedness and protection against terrorist attacks. This includes local authorities, who play a key role in implementation and oversight of the legal duties.

3.3 **Prevent**

Prevent is a national programme that aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It works to ensure that people who are susceptible to radicalisation are offered appropriate interventions, and communities are protected against radicalising influences.

3.4 As part of the Liverpool City Region, Liverpool City Council's Prevent Team work and engage with Halton and the other city region local authorities to support the delivery of Prevent as they are a Home Office funded area. Halton does not receive any dedicated or additional funding to deliver the required approaches.

3.5 The Emergency Planning Manager within the Community Safety & Protection service, is currently the Prevent lead and point of contact with the Home Office, supported at a strategic level by the Director of Community & Greenspaces

3.6 **Prevent Benchmarking Process**

Each benchmark reiterates key information set out in the Prevent duty guidance and illustrates how local authorities can put it into practice when fulfilling the Prevent duty.

3.7 These benchmarks do not constitute legal requirements and not satisfying a benchmark does not in itself mean that there has been a failure to fulfil the Prevent duty.

3.8 The Home Office tests out compliance with the benchmarks as part of its annual assurance programme to monitor the delivery of Prevent. The benchmarking process focus' on:

- multi-agency partnership group
- local risk assessment process
- partnership plan
- referral pathway
- training programme
- reducing permissive environments
- communications and engagement
- channel panel

3.9 Assessing either 'not met', 'met' or 'exceeded'.

3.10 The Home Office wrote to the Chief Executive Officer in May 2025 to advise Halton met all the criteria for the annual Prevent benchmarking exercise for 2024/25.

- 3.11 **Multi-agency Partnership Group**
Halton has a multi-agency Prevent Delivery Group (PDG) established which meets quarterly and all specified authorities are represented. The Director of Community and Greenspace Chairs the meeting.
- 3.12 **Local Risk Assessment Process**
The risk assessment template has been revised so that there is now a clear link from the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) to the risks detailed in the risk assessment.
- 3.13 **Partnership Plan**
The Prevent action plan has been updated and demonstrates a direct connection to the risk assessment and CTLP. The action plan is discussed at quarterly PDG meetings and is a live document.
- 3.14 **Referral Pathway**
There is an internal share point site that includes instructions for Council staff on how to make a Prevent referral. The national referral form is used, and referrals are directed to CTPNW and to social care if the individual is under 18 years.
- 3.15 **Training Programme**
There is an internal Prevent share point site available to all council employees containing links to the Home Office Prevent e-learning.
- 3.16 Management Team have recently agreed to add the Home Office Prevent Awareness Training to be mandatory for all Council Employees. Work is ongoing to add the training to the e-learning staff training portal to launch early autumn 2025.
- 3.17 A tiered training plan has been produced that sets out the different staff roles and levels of Prevent training required in the local authority, for example with frontline social care staff receiving more in-depth training such as the Home Office face-to-face training.
- 3.18 The Council is proactive in pursuing additional training opportunities available including training offered by the Liverpool Prevent team, Department for Education and Police who have presented to Members, Headteachers, Safeguarding Leads, Council Social Care staff and the Halton Refugee and Asylum Seeker multi-agency forum.
- 3.19 A Council Officer Prevent working group has been established to

audit Prevent activity across the local authority.

3.20 Reducing Permissive Environments

The Council has Prevent Duty Guidance available for staff working within the authorities' venues for hire. The venue hire guidance is available on the Council's share point page and circulated to venue management and staff.

3.21 The Prevent Lead is co-developing with the Council's Legal Services a front facing guidance document to be circulated to all licensed premises within the borough.

3.22 The Council's IT Data & Security Team have been working with Policing colleagues to ensure mechanisms to block access to terrorist related websites on the HBC IT network are in place for all users with a corporate log in, schools and public access IT such as libraries. The Council also has an appropriate IT acceptable use policy in place for staff with a corporate log in those accords to the requirements.

3.23 Communications & Engagement

A communication mechanism to circulate Home Office Prevent updates and training offers from Liverpool has been established with PDG members.

3.24 A counter terrorism Members awareness session was delivered in November 2024 in partnership with Liverpool City Council.

3.25 The Councils Emergency Planning Team incorporated Prevent on its annual awareness session for Members in July 2024 and a paper and presentation on Prevent was delivered to the Safer Halton Policy and Performance Board by the Prevent Delivery Group Chair in November 2024.

3.26 The Council Officer Working Group will capture any Prevent activity taking place across the borough and communications and engagement activity will be reviewed in line with this.

3.27 Partnership working with the Liverpool City Council and Police has resulted in increased engagement with schools, elected members, social services and community groups over 2024/25. Ongoing partnership working will ensure this continues.

3.28 Halton participates in Prevent awareness week each October in collaboration with Liverpool who leads and co-ordinates the overall programme for the city region.

3.29 Channel Panel

Channel Panel is a multi-agency safeguarding programme under the Prevent strategy, designed to support individuals who are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

3.30 A fully established Channel process is in place across Halton, Chaired by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care with the Executive Director Environment & Regeneration being Vice-Chair.

3.31 **The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025**
The Act often referred to as PROTECT is commonly known as Martyn's Law. It is designed to improve public safety requiring certain premises and events to prepare for potential terrorist attacks.

3.32 Purpose: -

- enacted in response to domestic terror attacks and inquiries like the Manchester Arena Inquiry.
- Aims to enhance protective security and organisational preparedness across the UK.

3.33 Scope: -

- Applies to public premises and events where large numbers of people gather.
- Establishes a tiered approach **standard duty premises** 200 – 799 people. **Enhanced duty premises/qualifying events** 800+ people

3.34 Requirements: -

- **Standard duty premises** must notify the Security Industry Authority (SIA), implement public protection procedures i.e. evacuation, lockdown, communication protocols; no physical upgrades are required.
- **Enhanced duty premises/events** must implement additional protection measures to reduce vulnerability and harm. Document procedures and designate a senior responsible officer individual and submit plans to the SIA.

3.35 Enforcement: -

- The SIA will act as the regulator providing guidance and support, investigate non-compliance, impose penalties (up to £18 million or 5% of global revenue and restrictions for serious breaches

3.36 An officer working group is established and chaired by Head of Service for Stadium and Markets. The objectives of Protect Duty working group are:

1. Deliver on the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act
2. Assessing the impact of the legislation on the Council
3. Explore the resource requirements based on the requirements.

4. Maintain oversight on all Statutory Protect Duty requirements
5. Work collaboratively on the Councils PROTECT action plan and situational risk assessment.

3.37 **Protect**

HBC has engaged on the offer from Counter Terrorism (CT) Police to deliver training for council employees. Facilitated by the Emergency Planning Team, a number of sessions have taken place including SCan Customer Facing which was attended by over 80 employees from across a number of services in the authority and SCan training for CCTV operatives.

- 3.38 Other services such as the Stadium & Leisure Services have also engaged directly with CT Police regarding advice and training for staff.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The new legislation will impact on local policy in terms of premises and events. This will be reviewed and relevant policies identified and amended.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None to Report

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence

Community Safety & Protection functions directly impact on generating a cleaner and safer Halton. How residents feel about where they live impacts on their behaviours and resilience contributing to strong, vibrant communities.

6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy

A safe Halton supports the business sector and economic growth.

6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families

The impacts are universal across all cohorts to facilitate safe environments for all accessing venues and events.

6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need

Community Safety response arrangements include supporting the Boroughs vulnerable residents in a major incident situation.

6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future

The team seeks opportunities in its working practice and procurement measures to support delivery of the Council's Climate Change Action Plan.

- 6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**
Community Safety response arrangements include supporting the Boroughs vulnerable residents in a major incident situation.
- 7.0 Risk Analysis**
- 7.1 Accountability and enforcement for PROTECT will be with the Security Industries Authority.
- 8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**
- 8.1 None to report.
- 9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 None to report.
- 10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**
- ‘None under the meaning of the Act.’