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**To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee**

**Date: 8th February 2017**

**Subject: Prevent Strategy**

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**1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To brief members of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on the Prevent programme in Coventry

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee are requested to consider the issues raised in the report and forward any recommendations to the appropriate Cabinet Member

**3 Information/Background**

- 3.1 The Prevent Duty was established in July 2015 as part of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act and in particular Section 26 which came into force on 1 July 2015. It outlines the duty for public bodies to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. Schedule 6 confirms that all schools are covered by the requirements (whether maintained or independent are specified authorities for the purpose of the act). This report outlines these requirements and the implications of the Prevent Duty, the key actions which have been taken to support implementation and proposals for further action.
- 3.2 The Prevent Duty states that the requirement to have due regard to the risks of radicalisation to support extremism is part of the wider safeguarding duties of public bodies and should be incorporated within their main resources.
- 3.3 The Prevent Duty is closely associated with supporting local communities resist the threat of violent extremism. It is overseen locally by both the Community Safety Partnership and by both of the Local Safeguarding Boards
- 3.4 A briefing note on The Prevent Duty in Schools was received by the Education and Children’s Services Scrutiny Board at their meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016. The Scrutiny Board appreciated the work of officers on Prevent.
- 3.5 The Scrutiny Board questioned Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Members and officers on the following:
- Training in Coventry
  - Partnership working
  - Faith organisations
  - Monitoring training
  - Work with Universities

3.6 The Board also sought clarification that all schools had received quality training.

3.7 The Board resolved that:

- The Scrutiny Board considered the report and requested that the Cabinet Member congratulate officers and continue to work with partner organisations and agencies in the city
- Data regarding the number of schools delivering prevent training be made available
- Officers monitor the quality of the training where we can gain access to the material

#### **4 Prevent Duty requirements**

4.1 Essentially the Prevent Duty is based on the principle that recognising that children, young people and adults can be vulnerable to exploitation and radicalised to support and engage in violent extremism is one part of the safeguarding duties of the local authority – and is therefore part of the overall duty of care.

4.2 There key duties of the Duty for the Council are to:

- Promote local partnerships
- Identify local risks
- Develop actions to mitigate those risks
- Undertake training staff in the organisation to understand the risks and the support that is available
- Ensure the safe and effective use of resources eg ICT use

4.3 In addition to the general responsibilities for the Local Authority there are a number of specific expectations placed upon schools, including;

- Assess the risk of children being drawn into developing extreme/radical views.
- Demonstrate that they are safeguarding children and young people from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies.
- Ensure that their safeguarding arrangements take into account the policies and procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- Make sure that staff have training that gives them the knowledge and confidence to identify children at risk of being drawn into terrorism, and to challenge extremist ideas which can be used to legitimise terrorism
- Ensure children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in school.

#### **5 Local Response to the Duty**

5.1 A large part of the response to the Duty has been to provide training and awareness within the Council, local community sector, health sector and schools in the City.

5.2 During 2015 the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit hosted a number of events for all schools to attend and be briefed on the local context and requirements.

5.3 Between October 2015 and January 2017, and the appointment of the Prevent Co-ordinator, further training has been available. During that time 51 schools have been directly trained by the Co-ordinator, with over 1,000 staff attending. 98% of attendees reported that they had a better understanding of how Prevent fits into their day to day job following this training.

5.4 Training has been delivered through the Council corporate training programme for wider staff groups such as, social care, early years, health practitioners and foster carers.

- 5.5 A number of events have been organised involving the voluntary and community sector through work with Voluntary Action Coventry, Valley House and Mind. In addition we have worked with the inter-faith forum and community networks to raise awareness of the Duty, and this engagement with communities forms a continuing priority. The principal form of training is based on the Home Office model known as the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent. The key aspects of the course are:
- Raising awareness of the Prevent Duty
  - Offering opportunity to discuss vulnerabilities of young people to radicalisation
  - Identification of behaviours suggesting vulnerabilities
  - Consideration of the risk
  - Appreciation of the support that is available and how to access that support
- 5.6 It is important to emphasise that the training provided locally confirms that Prevent is concerned with all forms of extremism that might lead to terrorism, including domestic extremism, such as extreme right wing activity. The training includes material and case studies that illustrate the different forms of extremism and how Prevent applies to all. In addition local community initiatives such as Upstanding Neighbourhoods have started work in the City, seeking to engage local people in promoting alternative narratives to extremist dialogue. To date this has involved giving training to just under 40 local people and will aim to build up local campaigns developed and delivered by Coventry communities.
- 5.7 To support agencies an illustrative Prevent Safeguarding Policy has been prepared and available through the Safeguarding Board website. Included within this policy guide is further information on signs associated with vulnerability and guidance on what to do if there is concern around the risk of radicalisation and the support that is available. The Duty asks staff to have regard to the whole safeguarding assessment of individuals, their emotional, behavioural and physical circumstances in considering risks. Additional guidance around the requirements was provided through “Safeguarding and Radicalisation” event hosted by the joint Safeguarding Board in April. This event looked at:
- National best practice
  - Local threat and risk
  - Local action and resources
- 5.8 The Government have required all areas to establish a Channel Panel. This is a multi-agency group, led by the Local Authority. Its principal aim is to provide a safeguarding support to individuals who may be at risk of radicalisation. The key aspects of the Channel Panel are that:
- It is based on informed consent, so that the person knows and agrees to their consideration by the Panel.
  - It is concerned with pre-criminal activity and involves agencies in providing a range of safeguarding responses to individual needs
  - Its activity can include identifying mainstream service requirements; identifying and enabling access to community resources; allocation of a specialist mentor to work with the individual.
  - Agencies use the existing safeguarding referral processes to refer issues for consideration by Channel.
- 5.9 The Government does not publish local information on the numbers of referrals to Channel Panel. However, nationally, it has reported that 80% of cases referred exit the Channel programme with a reduced risk of radicalisation.
- 5.10 A local Prevent Steering Group, comprised of the agencies covered by the Prevent Duty meet regularly to review and priorities partnership actions.

5.11 The principles of the Prevent Duty are clearly outlined in support of the Equality Act – ‘Extremism’ is defined in the 2011 Prevent strategy “as vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs.”

**6 Other useful background papers;**

- The Prevent duty - Departmental advice for schools and childcare providers (June 2015)
- Promoting fundamental British values as part of Spiritual, Moral, Social and Culture (SMSC) in schools - Departmental advice for maintained schools (November 2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (July 2015)

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