

## PART H – PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM

### INTRODUCTION

Prevent and Channel protect the most vulnerable in our society and prevent them from being drawn into terrorism. Channel panels are there to ensure that individuals receive the support they need in a timely manner to guide them away from such activity.

The **Counter-Terrorism and Security Act**, approved in March 2015, contains a duty on specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is also known as the Prevent duty. The act ensures that law enforcement and intelligence agencies have the powers they need to help keep the country safe from the threat posed by terrorism and hostile state activity.

In June 2018, a new **Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act** was introduced to the House of Commons and received Royal Assent on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019. The act updates and closes gaps in existing counter-terrorism legislation to ensure that it is fit for the digital age and reflects contemporary patterns of radicalisation.

The Act enables local authorities, in addition to the police, to refer an individual at risk of being drawn into terrorism for discussion at a Channel panel. Previously this power was only available to the Police. To achieve this change, the Act amended sections 36 and 38 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2015. This will streamline the process of referring individuals by removing some of the existing administrative burden on local authorities and the police and ensure that at risk individuals can be supported in a timely manner.

The Government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST has the overall aim to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK, its citizens and interests overseas, so that people can go about their lives freely with confidence. There are four pillars to the CONTEST strategy;

- Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks
- Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack

### PREVENT

PREVENT is a key strand of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. Its main objective is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. The revised [Prevent Duty Guidance](#) came into force on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. The [Prevent Duty Toolkit](#) is available to support local authorities.

The Prevent duty requires local authorities, along with other specified authorities to help prevent the risk of people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and sits alongside other safeguarding duties to protect people from other harms for example substance abuse, involvement with gangs and exploitation. The duty helps to ensure that people who are susceptible to radicalisation are supported as they would be under safeguarding processes.

The PREVENT duty guidance outlines three objectives to:

1. Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism
2. Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation

### 3. Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate

Prevent is a multi-agency strategy and not solely a Police initiative. It is important everyone works together to disrupt those who promote violent extremism and identify people who are susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention. Prevent focuses on reducing the influence of radicalisers on susceptible audiences and takes a partnership approach to disrupting radicalisers.

Prevent operates in the non-criminal space. This means that individuals who are referred to Prevent can be supported to move away from terrorism, rather than being criminalised. This multi-agency process is called 'Channel'. Prevent intervenes early by identifying people who are susceptible to radicalisation and providing support to those suitable for intervention. Where the police assess a radicalisation risk following a Prevent referral, a Channel panel will meet to discuss the referral, assess the risk and decide whether the person should be accepted into Channel. Once accepted, the panel agree a tailored package of support to be offered to the person.

It is important to note that Prevent applies to violent extremism across all groups. Tackling radicalisation relies, to a certain extent, on the vast majority of people who reject violent extremism and are determined to challenge it.

Prevent is **not** about spying on people or stigmatising and criminalising individuals and/or communities. It is about working with communities to identify individuals who may be susceptible to being drawn toward a path of violent extremism. Our aim is to provide support to such individuals to divert them away from violent extremism before they commit any criminal acts.

Experience has shown that results are best achieved through:

- Partnership working and community engagement;
- Understanding the challenge and its context;
- Developing an effective action plan;
- Managing risk;
- Tracking progress and evaluating success;
- Sharing learning.

PREVENT is included within the Council's safeguarding remit. Through awareness and partnership working, PREVENT seeks to safeguard and support vulnerable individuals and protect communities. You can find further information about the PREVENT duty for England and Wales [here](#).

## **ACT – ACTION COUNTERS TERRORISM**

[ACT](#) provides information on the many factors that can make someone vulnerable to radicalisation and gives information on the signs of radicalisation, behaviours and vulnerabilities and what to look for.

## **CHANNEL**

CHANNEL is a key element of the PREVENT strategy. It is a multi-agency approach designed to protect people at risk from radicalisation. It is a voluntary, confidential, early intervention programme that supports people who may be at risk or being drawn into terrorism.

CHANNEL is a voluntary, confidential, early intervention programme that supports people who may be at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It aims to protect and divert people away from the risk they face before illegality occurs.

CHANNEL uses existing collaboration between local authorities, statutory partners, the police, and the local community to:

- Identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
- Assess the nature and extent of that risk;
- Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Taking part in Channel does not go on someone's criminal record and will not negatively impact future education or career prospects. It means an individual can receive the right support to move away from extremism and may also include help with mental health, substance misuse, education or career advice and mentoring.

## KEY DEFINITIONS

- **'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. Also included in the definition of extremism is calls for the death of members of our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas;
- **'Interventions'** are projects intended to divert people who are being drawn into terrorist activity. Interventions can include mentoring, counselling, theological support, encouraging civic engagement, developing support networks (family and peer structures) or providing mainstream services (education, employment, health, finance, or housing);
- **'Non-Violent Extremism'** is extremism, as defined above, which is not accompanied by violence;
- **'Prevention'** in the context of this work means reducing or eliminating the risk of individuals becoming involved in terrorism. Prevent includes, but is not confined to, the identification and referral of those at risk of being drawn into terrorism into appropriate interventions. These interventions aim to divert vulnerable people from radicalisation;
- **'Safeguarding'** in this context is the process of protecting vulnerable people from crime, abuse or from being drawn into terrorist related activity;
- **'Terrorism'** (UK definition as given in the Terrorism Act 2000) is defined as an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes with or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat must be designed to influence the Government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purposes of advancing a political, religious, or ideological cause;
- **'Terrorist Related Offences'** are those (such as murder) which are not offences in terrorist legislation, but which are judged to be committed in relation to terrorism;
- **'Vulnerability'** in this context describes the condition of being capable of being injured; difficult to defend; open to moral or ideological attack. Within Prevent, the word describes factors and characteristics associated with being susceptible to radicalisation.

## REPORTING CONCERNS

If there are concerns for an individual's immediate safety please call 999.

A referral to Lincolnshire Police Prevent team can be made [online](#).

The national police Prevent advice line can also be called to share concerns in confidence with specially trained officers and for advice on next steps on 0800 011 3764.

Anyone who is referred to Prevent is assessed to see if they are suitable for specialist support through Channel and a referral can be made [online](#)

Please report all concerns or action taken to the Safeguarding Lead Officer or the PPASB & Licensing Services Manager.

## **VENUE HIRE & EXTERNAL SPEAKER POLICY**

### **Introduction**

City of Lincoln Council (the Council) is committed to creating an environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect and where diversity is valued.

This policy details the Council's approach to ensuring that we protect our staff, elected members and our community whilst following legislation that we are responsible for upholding.

### **Legal Context**

Local authorities operate in a complex legal environment so it is vital that all individuals involved in the venue hire and external speaker process, including the speakers themselves, understand the legal framework and context that governs this area.

Examples of some of the relevant areas of law are given below.

- Prevent Duty contained within Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Prevent Duty states that authorities in the exercise of their functions must have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"
- Private rights – people are entitled to protection from harassment, defamation and unlawful breach of their human rights, as well as from unfair treatment under equality law, health and safety law and data protection
- Criminal law – hate crimes, harassment and breach of the peace and terrorism all come under criminal law
- Public law – freedom of speech and some duties under the Equality Act are captured under public law

### **Objectives**

The Council is expected to ensure that publicly owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views. The Council must not allow its venues to be used by those whose views would draw people into terrorism.

The objectives of this policy are:

- To provide an environment where freedom of expression and speech are protected whilst balanced with the need to ensure that our community is free from harm and that incitement to hatred is never acceptable
- To provide a supportive, inclusive and safe environment for staff, elected members and the community
- To provide clearly defined and effective procedures to ensure that the law is upheld

- To provide clear instructions for organising an event with external contribution or using one of the Council's venues

### **Freedom of speech and expression**

This section details the Council's expectations around freedom of speech and expression.

- Freedom of speech and expression are basic human rights that are protected by law
- The Council has a duty to ensure the safety and welfare of staff, elected members and the community.
- The freedom to express views needs to be balanced with the need to secure freedom from harm for staff, elected members and communities
- The Council wants to ensure that all of our events, activities and initiatives are safe, without risk to the Council or wider community, and are within the law

### **Hiring an External Venue for Council Events**

The Council has a duty to ensure that when hiring an external venue for events that Council organisers, volunteers and any participants involved in the organisation of the event are protected from radical and extremist views.

The external venue must not provide a platform for extremists and must not be used to disseminate extremist views. The external venue must not allow its premises to be used by those whose views would draw people into terrorism.

The Council reserves the right to cancel the booking at a Council venue if it finds that the venue is in breach of the law.

### **City of Lincoln Council Venue Hire**

External clients hiring a Council venue will be made aware of this policy and that the Council will not permit its accommodation to be let:

- for political rallies or demonstrations which incite hatred or violence or any breach of criminal law and/or spread hatred and intolerance
- for purposes which are illegal i.e. be they forbidden by law or unauthorised by official or accepted rules
- for functions attended by people whose presence may cause civil unrest or division within the community
- to an organisation or individual which has been banned by law

The Council reserves the right to cancel any booking where it considers:

- such events may be contrary to the interest of the general public or contrary to any law or act of Parliament
- bookings may also be subject to consideration from the police to ensure the safety of the community is assessed against the request for a venue booking

- users of the premises may do something that may cause or pose a risk of loss, damage or significant expense to the Council or harm the reputation of the Council

City of Lincoln Council is committed to creating a community which is safe and inclusive, where facilities and activities are available to diverse groups of people having access to similar life opportunities, knowing their rights and responsibilities and where local institutions act fairly.

To this purpose, no individuals or groups will be denied the opportunity for access to local authority managed properties unless there is a justifiable reason to do so within the spirit of this policy.

### **External Speakers**

The Council expects external speakers to act in accordance with the law and not to breach the lawful rights of others.

Set out below are some of the Council's expectations. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list of unacceptable conduct by external speakers.

The Council reserves the right to not permit an external speaker to speak at or attend an event, to refuse to permit an event and/or to halt an event at any time if it reasonably considers there may be a breach of this policy or of any legal obligation.

During the course of the event at which he or she participates the speaker must not:

- act in breach of criminal law
- incite hatred or violence or any breach of criminal law
- encourage or promote any acts of terrorism or promote individuals, groups or organisations that support terrorism
- spread hatred and intolerance
- discriminate against or harass any person or group on the grounds of their sex, race, nationality, ethnicity, disability, religious or similar belief, sexual orientation or age
- defame any person or organisation
- raise or gather funds for any external organisation or cause without express permission of the Council