



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Cabinet

10 OCTOBER 2011

**CABINET MEMBER
FOR RESIDENTS
SERVICES**

Councillor Greg Smith

**LBHF & RBKC RESPONSE TO THE
GOVERNMENT'S REVISED PREVENT
STRATEGY**

Wards:

Seeking approval to develop a Prevent Programme in partnership with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the Home Office.

CONTRIBUTORS

DFCS
ADLDS

**HAS A EIA BEEN
COMPLETED?
YES**

**HAS THE REPORT
CONTENT BEEN
RISK ASSESSED?
N/A**

Recommendations:

- 1. That the Government's revised Prevent Strategy and its objectives be noted.**
- 2. That approval be given to work with the Home Office and RBKC to develop a Prevent Programme.**
- 3. That the Leader of the Council, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Residents Services, signs off the Council's Prevent Programme and use of any funding allocated to the borough for 2011/12 and 2012/13 by the Home Office.**

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Government's revised Prevent Review and Strategy was published on 7 June 2011. The Home Secretary has stated that Prevent will tackle all forms of terrorist ideology, confront non-violent extremism, make a clearer distinction between the Government's counter terrorist work and its integration strategy, and ensure effective and efficient use of taxpayers' money.
- 1.2. The Government has stated that the previous Prevent programme was flawed and it has given the following reasons:
 - It confused the delivery of Government policy to promote integration with Government policy to prevent terrorism
 - It failed to confront the extremist ideology at the heart of the threat facing the UK and in trying to reach those at risk of radicalisation
 - It inadvertently funded extremist organisations that Prevent should have been confronting
- 1.3. The aim of the revised Prevent Strategy is to prevent people from being radicalised and stop would-be terrorists from committing mass murder. Prevent forms part of the Government's wider strategy for countering terrorism in the United Kingdom referred to as CONTEST.
- 1.4. The Prevent strategy is guided by six principles:
 - Prevent remains an integral part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy.
 - Prevent will address all forms of terrorism (including far right) though Al Quaida and like-minded groups remain the greatest threat.
 - Prevent will tackle non violent extremism which can create an atmosphere conducive to terrorism or popularise views which terrorists exploit.
 - There is a clear distinction between prevent and integration strategies – the two cannot be merged together.
 - The new Prevent must do much better in evaluating and monitoring progress against a set of common objectives.
 - Public money will not be provided to extremist organisations that do not support the values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance of different faith groups.
- 1.5. The Prevent strategy has three objectives:
 - Respond to the **ideological** challenge of terrorism and of those extremist views conducive to it.
 - Prevent vulnerable **individuals** from being drawn into terrorism by expanding programmes to identify who they are and provide them with support.

- Do much more with the wide range of sectors and **institutions** where ideology, the ideologues and vulnerable people come together and where there are either risks of radicalisation or opportunities to prevent it – or both.
- 1.6. The Government has adopted the following definition of extremism: *“Extremism is 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. We also include in our definition of extremism calls for the death of members for our armed forces, whether in this country or overseas.”*
 - 1.7. The Government has stated that Al Quaida related extremism is the biggest threat facing this country and therefore Prevent activity must focus primarily on Islamist extremism for the time being.
 - 1.8. The Office of Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT), which is part of the Home Office, directs Prevent across central and local Government.
 - 1.9. OSCT has published a list of 25 priority areas based on different information and policing indicators of terrorist activity where it thinks Prevent work needs to be prioritised. OSCT has said that demographic information has not contributed to the calculation. LBHF, Westminster City Council and RBKC are included in this list as are 13 other London boroughs including Barking, Brent, Camden, Ealing, Hackney, Haringey, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Wandsworth.
 - 1.10. Ring fenced funding, in the region of £100,000, is to be made available in 2011/12 to each of the local authority priority areas for targeted project work and Prevent activity coordination.
 - 1.11. In addition, OSCT is also funding the role of a Prevent coordinator (up to £50,000 plus related on costs) in each of the priority boroughs to manage and coordinate local Prevent programmes and to act as liaison with OSCT and other local partners.
 - 1.12. OSCT have stated they will only approve funding for project work which directly targets vulnerable individuals and institutions as well as activities which tackle extremist ideology related to terrorism. OSCT have also said that they will not fund any general community engagement or integration work.
 - 1.13. OSCT has advised that the priority areas should expect to continue to receive funding for 2012/13 and so the priority areas have been advised to work on a two year Prevent programme.
 - 1.14. The cut off date for application for programme funding was the 16th September and OSCT will work with priority areas to co-design

projects to ensure they are aligned to the Prevent objectives. OSCT has indicated that priority areas will be able to review and adjust programme plans on an ongoing basis throughout the lifetime the funding period.

- 1.15. OSCT will monitor and evaluate all those areas in receipt of Prevent funding.

2. LOCAL CONTEXT

Our Position on Prevent

- 2.1. LBHF and RBKC have agreed to work on this agenda together. Both boroughs welcome the refresh of the Prevent Strategy and recognise the importance of the agenda and its desired outcomes. LBHF and RBKC also fully appreciate and support the need to address terrorism at its earliest 'preventative stages' and that local authorities have a role to play in that.
- 2.2. LBHF and RBKC believe that tackling terrorism related extremism is a long term issue which requires sustained activity. Whilst we welcome additional but short term funding being offered to LBHF and RBKC, the main focus should be on how public agencies operating in the area can make use of their existing services to tackle this issue.
- 2.3. LBHF and RBKC also welcome the amendment to more clearly address would-be terrorists from wider communities and ideologies, such as the Far Right, as well as the recognition that Prevent need not be restricted to borough boundaries and that partnership working with other local authorities will be necessary.
- 2.4. However, unease arises over the decoupling of preventing terrorism with the 'softer' elements of promoting integration and addressing perceived grievances. LBHF and RBKC see effective community engagement and building good community relations as integral to the long term success of Prevent. As such building good community relations will continue through existing channels and will not use any Prevent monies.

The need for an evidence based approach

- 2.5. LBHF and RBKC strongly believe that Prevent activity can only be successful if it's based on robust evidence in order to ensure that interventions are effectively targeted.
- 2.6. Due to the sensitivity and difficulty associated with intelligence gathering, we believe that the Police and wider intelligence community must lead on this.

- 2.7. However, future Prevent work will require closer working with the Police and further research in order to produce a more robust evidence baseline for targeted intervention work as the intelligence provided to LBHF so far from the Police and Home Office is considered insufficient to allow targeted projects.
- 2.8. Although OSCT, for quite legitimate reasons, has not released its reasoning for including LBHF and RBKC in the priority list, it has agreed to provide 'start-up' funding to all areas to carry out research.

The role of communities and faith groups in tackling extremism

- 2.9. LBHF and RBKC, as part of existing and mainstream community engagement, have developed good relations with our local Mosques and Muslim faith groups. Any future work on Prevent should be implemented in a way that doesn't jeopardise these connections.
- 2.10. LBHF and RBKC believe that Muslim individuals, groups and organisations are best placed to identify and challenge terrorism related ideology and activity with support from the wider community and public services.
- 2.11. Imams and Mosque leaders, because of their deep knowledge of the faith, their experience in religious teaching and mentoring and their knowledge of local communities, must be at the forefront of challenging any extremist ideology within their communities and institutions. Any intervention work to deradicalise individuals from extremist ideology or to disengage them from criminal activity will require the support, cooperation and credibility of local Muslim groups, Mosques and community leaders.
- 2.12. Even though the Prevent Strategy has been refreshed, we know from experience and feedback that Muslim communities have expressed serious concerns about, and an unwillingness to engage with, the previous Prevent strategy (even when external funding was available). The shift of Prevent towards 'harder' counter-terrorism activity away from 'softer' integration and cohesion may make engaging with Muslim communities and organisations even more challenging.

3. JOINT LBHF & RBKC RESPONSE

- 3.1. The Government has made public the list of the 25 priority areas it believes require particular attention for which it is actively offering ring fenced funding for targeted interventions. Given that the Government regards this as a serious issue, and at a time when it is reducing the overall revenue grant to Councils, there will be an expectation on LBHF and RBKC to respond. At the time of writing, all of the other 23 priority areas were intending to apply for Prevent funding

- 3.2. This report presumes the Government has sufficient and robust evidence that suggests LBHF and RBKC are at considerable risk in terms of Prevent. Although most of the evidence, for legitimate and sound reasons, is inaccessible to LBHF and RBKC, this report suggests we take as given and accept the principle that there is a problem that requires targeted intervention.
- 3.3. In light of what has been suggested earlier, LBHF and RBKC have applied for the maximum amount of Prevent funding available.
- 3.4. This report recommends that we continue to work closely with OSCT and the Police to design the necessary projects over the funding period, which is expected to extend into 2012/13.
- 3.5. To ensure that the risk is sufficiently lowered, the Metropolitan Police and the Home Office will need to play an active role by sharing intelligence and information with LBHF and RBKC in a timely manner and consistently and fully contributing to the overall coordination of Prevent activity at a borough level.
- 3.6. Local authority project work on Prevent should be proportionate and focused on reducing the overall risk of extremism. Once the risk level is reduced, any future lower level issues which might present themselves ought to be covered by the existing menu of interventions used in the councils. This report recognises the significant financial pressure on council services and what this might mean for those mainstream services being used to support vulnerable individuals

4. POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

- 4.1. As noted above, any limitations in the quality of the evidence base will limit targeting of interventions and hinder the overall effectiveness of projects. However, further research may help to mitigate this.
- 4.2. Also mentioned earlier, cooperation from local Muslim communities and organisations such as Mosques is likely to determine the success of any Prevent projects. Muslim communities have a key role in helping LBHF and RBKC in targeting the projects to the most appropriate individuals, promoting key Prevent messages and helping to rally support.
- 4.3. Muslim individuals and families have a particularly significant role in keeping an eye out for vulnerable individuals as well as challenging extremists and their negative ideology.
- 4.4. There is a need to be open with OSCT around managing their expectations in terms of how much LBHF and RBKC can realistically

achieve given the amount of time and resource available as well as the lack of a robust narrative about what best practice looks like. This is especially so considering that there is a lack of clear and useful guidance and any specific examples on the type of projects priority areas are expected to design and delivery.

- 4.5. Unfortunately, one of the barriers of the previous Prevent strategy was the poor intelligence sharing between the Police with the Council. If this proposal is approved, the Police and the Councils have agreed to work together to overcome this issue.

5. DELIVERY PLAN

- 5.1. The delivery plan document, which will also act as the application for funding, is currently being developed. As part of the funding criteria, OSCT will review and endorse the overall Prevent Delivery Plan before agreeing any funding.
- 5.2. OSCT has asked that delivery plans are built around an analysis of the vulnerabilities and threats and that actions and projects are designed so they mitigate these vulnerabilities and threats.
- 5.3. As such, Westminster City Council has developed a proposal asking for additional 'start-up' funding to carry out a Tri-borough research project. The analyses from the research project will support the implementation and ongoing iteration of the Prevent programme which should result in improved targeting.
- 5.4. A Home Office decision on precise funding allocations is expected by the 30th September. The delivery plan will cover a 18 month period; starting in October 2011 and ending in March 2013.

6. BI AND TRI-BOROUGH INTEGRATION

- 6.1. The programme management of Prevent in LBHF and RBKC will be managed through a single delivery plan and staff lead overseen by a Bi-Borough officer level steering group.
- 6.2. LBHF and RBKC will work with Westminster City Council on a 'two plus one' basis. In other words, Westminster City Council play a part in some of the project and front line activity however, overall coordination and governance of Prevent in Westminster City Council will be managed separately from the Bi-Borough arrangement. Westminster City Council will be invited to participate in any officer level meetings to ensure any necessary coordination and sharing of intelligence and learning.

- 6.3. If possible, Bi-Borough projects will be designed in a way which allows Westminster City Council to join at any time.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1. If this proposal is approved and once projects are initiated, the relevant risk register (corporate and project) will be updated and managed.

8. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. An equality impact assessment (EIA) has been undertaken by the Home Office and covers both strategy and local implementation.
- 8.2. It highlighted concerns about a disproportionate impact on religion and belief, and to some extent on race, as it targeted Muslims of South Asian/Middle Eastern and African descent.
- 8.2. The widening of Prevent to cover all forms of extremism should help to mitigate the negative impact on Muslims.
- 8.3. It is recognised that young people and in particular young men are more vulnerable to the risks associated with terrorism. Given that Al Quaida related terrorism represents the most significant threat facing the UK, there may continue to be a perception of disproportionate impact on young men under the revised strategy.

9. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

- 9.1. As set out in the report Hammersmith and Fulham has been invited to bid for funding for a Prevent Programme. The bid is due to be submitted and the Council is likely to receive an award in the region of £100,000 per annum for 2011/12 and 2012/13. Confirmation of the award is expected at the end of September and an appropriate amendment will be made to the revenue budget for the additional income and expenditure.

10. COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES)

- 10.1. There are no direct legal implications.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1.	Prevent Strategy	Pinakin Patel	FCS
2.	Equality Impact Assessment	Pinakin Patel	FCS
CONTACT OFFICER:		NAME: Pinakin Patel EXT. 5727	