

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT
CABINET PANEL**

WEDNESDAY 10 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 10:00



**COUNTER TERRORISM AND SECURITY ACT – FORMATION OF
PREVENT BOARD**

Report of the Director Community Protection (Chief Fire Officer)

Author:- Darryl Keen, Deputy Chief Fire Officer (Tel: 01992
507502)

Executive Member/s:- Richard Thake, Community Safety and Waste
Management

1. Purpose of report

1.1 To consider the gaps identified as part of a review following the enactment of various aspects of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (hereafter referred to as “the Act”), in particular, but not exclusively, items relating to the Prevent Strategy. The Paper is also intended to confirm that a Hertfordshire County Council Prevent Board will be formed which will comprise a representative from each Directorate to guide and monitor Prevent obligations for the County Council.

2. Summary

2.1 The Act places a number of duties and requirements on the County Council which have resulted in some initial steps to support compliance, for example Members will recall that on 13 July 2015 Cabinet formally established a Channel Panel for Hertfordshire as required by Section 36 of the Act.

2.2 A significant amount of guidance has been published in order to support organisations in the implementation of Prevent related duties but four key themes recur in the guidance; the use of appropriate risk assessment, the importance of partnership working, the need to ensure that staff are suitably trained and the need for robust policies particularly in relation to Information Technology.

2.3 In January 2016 the Hertfordshire County Council Strategic Management Board further considered the overarching control in relation to the requirements of the Act and has chosen to form a

Hertfordshire County Council Prevent Board. Terms of Reference are now being developed and the Board will meet shortly.

3. Recommendation/s

- 3.1 Cabinet Panel Members are asked to note the work underway across the Council to meet obligations in relation to the Act and in particular the formation of the Hertfordshire County Council Prevent Board.

4. Background

- 4.1 On 13 July 2015 Cabinet formally established a Channel Panel for Hertfordshire as required by Section 36 of the Act, this was the first, and most pressing, requirement of the Act. However the Act also places a number of other duties and requirements on Hertfordshire County Council.
- 4.2 One of the key points made throughout the guidance and legislation is that of proportionality. The available guidance also notes that much of the action required by the Act can be achieved through existing mechanisms and as such the formation of significant additional Prevent structures would be disproportionate with the specific exception of the now formally established Channel Panel and the soon to be established Prevent Board.
- 4.3 The duties identified within the Act include:
- establish or use existing mechanisms for understanding the risk of extremism
 - ensure staff understand the risk and build capabilities to deal with it
 - communicate and promote the importance of the duty
 - ensure staff implement the duty effectively
 - effective partnership working with other local agencies, eg. Police, health, etc.
 - information sharing
 - maintaining appropriate records
 - assessing local risk of extremism (including Far Right extremism)
 - demonstrating they are protecting children
 - developing clear protocols for visiting speakers
 - safeguarding policies that take account of policies and procedures
 - training staff to give them knowledge and confidence
 - ensuring there are robust ICT protocols that filter out extremist materials
 - school buildings must not be used to give a platform to extremists
- 4.4 It must be recognised that Prevent guidance and legislation does not place a significant number of new duties on Local Authorities, they

simply reinforce aspects of Prevent that are largely already covered by existing systems, policies or approach. The legislation simply places an expectation that in carrying out existing Hertfordshire County Council duties the Prevent aspect receives 'due regard'.

- 4.5 In mid-2015 a high level gap analysis was undertaken in conjunction with Hertfordshire County Council Legal in which the impact upon Hertfordshire County Council departments was considered in relation to the duties imposed by the Act. The gap analysis did not identify specific actions other than to suggest subject areas where some relevance to Hertfordshire County Council was likely along with the most obvious subject lead.
- 4.6 This paper therefore seeks to build on that initial analysis and proposes the formation of a lead officer group to ensure coordination and consistency of approach across Hertfordshire County Council.
- 4.7 **Prevent in Hertfordshire County Council so far**
- 4.8 A number of departments have already undertaken some form of Prevent awareness training. Whilst much of this has been delivered in line with nationally provided resources such as WRAP (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent) it has been delivered based upon a department/directorate assessment of risk/benefit rather than a corporate assessment or as a result of strategic direction.
- 4.9 The Prevent Board will therefore bring together representatives from Hertfordshire County Council directorates who have already had some involvement in Prevent activities in their areas. This group will be able to confirm the current situation within Hertfordshire County Council such that an analysis of any specific gaps can be confirmed and proposals developed around awareness for staff. Within Health and Community Services (HCS) for example, a small number of trainers have already received WRAP train the trainer input and will shortly be rolling this out to frontline staff. HCS has also developed a short Prevent iLearn package which may well be suitable to form the basic awareness for all staff. Some training for Elected Members will be provided as previously discussed at the Community Safety and Waste Management Panel.
- 4.10 In considering the requirements of Prevent it is essential to consider links/responsibilities in areas not directly under the control of Hertfordshire County Council. Links with key partners already exist which may well provide suitable routes to coordinate Prevent activities. It is proposed that one of these routes is through the County Community Safety Managers Group to ensure coordination with district partners and regular reporting to the County Chief Executives Coordinating Group will be undertaken along with internal reports to Hertfordshire County Council Strategic Management Board supported by an annual report to Members via this Cabinet Panel.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this proposal as the Board will be formed of existing service leads. Any organisational changes proposed by the Board will be the subject of separate financial analysis.

6. Equalities Implications

- 6.1 There are no equalities implications as a result of this proposal. Any projects proposed by the Board in the future will be the subject of individual equalities impact assessments and it is recognised that Prevent activities may be sensitive in nature of which the Board will have due regard.