

# Preventing Violent Extremism

## Learning and Development Exercise

**Report to the Home Office and  
Communities and Local Government**

October 2008



 **audit**  
commission

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# Executive Summary

- 1** The United Kingdom (UK), like many other countries, faces a severe and continuing threat from international terrorism. Preventing violent extremism (Prevent) and the terrorist acts that may follow is a long term challenge to be addressed at international, national and local levels. The government aims to prevent people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism through the Prevent component of the UK counter terrorism strategy.
- 2** Councils, police, youth offending teams, schools, further and higher education, local health services, probation, prison services and fire and rescue services are all key players in delivering Prevent locally. This is a new and evolving demand on local public service partners.
- 3** In October 2006, 70 councils in England received a total of £6 million from the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund (PVEPF) for partnership work with the police and other local services. A further £45 million will be provided to councils by the government between 2008 and 2011.
- 4** The Audit Commission and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) undertook a learning and development exercise (LDE) to draw out the learning from the first year of Prevent. We visited 15 sites to ascertain how local partnerships are responding to the challenge of preventing people becoming involved in or supporting violent extremism. We looked at what worked well and identified barriers to progress. Four themes emerged.

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## **5 Rationale for the strategic approach**

Councils and the police are developing their strategic approach to Prevent using existing partnership arrangements and established local working relationships.

- There is a mixed picture on the strategic approach to Prevent. This reflects the varying levels of confidence in how best to respond to the complex challenge of preventing violent extremism locally. Most councils position the Prevent approach within their cohesion strategy. This tends to focus on building resilience within communities rather than explicitly addressing the vulnerability of those who may become engaged in violent extremism.
- An agreed local narrative that confidently deals with the Prevent approach is needed as the first step to success. The narrative should tell the story of the place, describing the risks and priorities to be addressed through local Prevent strategies. Where councils and police have had direct experience of dealing with the impact of terrorism, the local narrative has evolved and the Prevent approach tends to be clearly described within the cohesion strategy. The local narrative is dependent upon sound understanding of the

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vulnerability of communities and individuals to violent extremism through effective information sharing by all partners.

- There is a wealth of Prevent experience concentrated in a small number of councils and police forces. It is vital that current knowledge and experience, as well as new learning, are captured, shared and acted upon.
- If the local narrative is to be effective, it is vital that faith leaders and trusted community leaders are involved. They encourage local participation and provide credibility and critical challenge. It is important that Prevent initiatives are owned by communities and voluntary organisations.

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## 6 Information sharing

There are significant opportunities to improve information sharing locally, regionally and nationally.

- Chief Executives, basic command unit (BCU) commanders and other partners are not being briefed effectively. They do not receive the information necessary to support effective decision making. This inhibits understanding of local vulnerability, making it difficult to determine the effectiveness of Prevent strategies and delivery of the local approach.
- There is potential for the regional government offices to support the Counter Terrorist (CT) Network<sup>1</sup> and Security Service in the production and dissemination of briefing products. Clearly defined information sharing protocols are required to enable the briefing of a wider audience. This should improve understanding of local vulnerability and encourage intelligence flows from local and neighbourhood levels. This in turn will improve the quality of the local Prevent response.
- Partnerships need to collect and process information from staff so that vulnerable individuals and communities can be identified.

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## 7 Partnership working

Visible and effective leadership, underpinned by strong formal and informal working relationships between key individuals in local partnerships, are vital components of a coherent Prevent approach.

- Councillors and other skilled and respected individuals within the local community are particularly important. Councils and the police need to involve them in the delivery of the Prevent approach.

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<sup>1</sup> The CT Network comprises the Counter Terrorist Command (CTC) in the Metropolitan Police; Counter Terrorist Units (CTUs) in Greater Manchester Police, West Midlands Police and West Yorkshire Police; and Counter Terrorist Intelligence Units (CTIUs) in Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Sussex Police, Essex Police, Derbyshire Constabulary and South Wales Police.

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- Engagement on Prevent between neighbourhood policing teams (NPTs) and front line council workers is inconsistent. NPTs and council staff need to be briefed and trained so they understand Prevent issues and are clear on their potential contribution to successful delivery.
  - The principles of the crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) model, adapted to include significant community engagement which is ‘globally aware’, could provide the basis for delivering a successful Prevent approach. Partnerships need to recognise the links between their local communities and similar communities elsewhere in the UK or abroad. They should develop an understanding of the impact day-to-day global events may have in their area.

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## 8 Assessing success

Assessing the success of Prevent activity is a significantly under-developed area. It is difficult to measure and define what works in preventing violent extremism.

- There is a lack of shared national and international research on what causes or contributes to individuals becoming violent extremists. This is needed to develop effective preventative measures.
- The Home Office and Communities and Local Government (CLG) need to distil the best national and international information available. Local partners need to share their combined knowledge about what works in preventing violent extremism. They can assess their prospects of success using a set of desirable characteristics identified by the LDE, taking account of the local context.
- The national indicator NI35, building resilience to violent extremism, needs to evolve to become more focused on the achievement of outcomes.

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# 1 Introduction and approach

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## The Prevent strategy and why it is important

- 9** The United Kingdom (UK), like many other countries, faces a severe and continuing threat from international terrorism. A very small minority seeks to harm innocent people in the pursuit of an ideology that causes division, hatred and violence. Preventing violent extremism and the terrorist acts that may follow is a long term challenge that needs to be addressed at international, national and local levels.
- 10** It is the role of government to have in place effective national security measures, which need to be under-pinned by local measures to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism. Councils, police, community groups, youth offending teams, fire and rescue services, schools, further and higher education, local health services, the UK Border Agency, probation and prison services are all key players in developing effective strategies and responses. This is a new and evolving demand on local public service partners. It needs to be owned by members of the local strategic partnerships (LSPs) and crime and disorder reduction partnerships (CDRPs).
- 11** To respond to the threat from international terrorism, the government has developed a counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST, which has the following four components:
- **Pursue** – to stop terrorist attacks.
  - **Prepare** – where an attack cannot be stopped, to mitigate its impact.
  - **Protect** – to strengthen overall protection against terrorist attacks.
  - **Prevent** – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremists.
- 12** In October 2006, 70 councils in England received a total of £6 million from the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund (PVEPF) to support partnership work with the police and other local services. The additional funding formed part of the resources received in support of local area agreements (LAAs) and was not ring-fenced. However central government placed a strong expectation on local authorities that the funding should be applied to achieve the outcomes set out in the PVEPF programme.
- 13** The strategic objectives for the PVEPF programme are ‘to develop a community in which Muslims in our communities:
- identify themselves as a welcome part of a wider British society and are accepted as such by the wider community;
  - reject violent extremist ideology and actively condemn violent extremism;
  - isolate violent extremist activity, and support and cooperate with the police and security services; and
  - develop their own capacity to deal with problems where they arise and support diversionary activity for those at risk.’
- 14** The government published its revised Prevent Strategy in June 2008 (Ref. 1). *This is supported by The Prevent Strategy: A Guide for Local Partners in England* (Ref. 2) for LSPs, councils, police and CDRP partners. It provides advice on a number of issues, emphasising the importance of council and police-led multi-agency arrangements for working with communities to ensure coordinated responses. Additional funding is being provided to local partners over the next three years to support Prevent approaches with communities that are at risk. Government departments reflect the

# 1 Introduction and approach

importance of local approaches to preventing violent extremism in their strategic plans.<sup>1</sup>

**15** The Prevent Strategy has five key strands:

- **challenging** the violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices;
- **disrupting** those who promote violent extremism and supporting the institutions where they are active;
- **supporting** individuals who are being targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism;
- **increasing** the resilience of communities to violent extremism; and
- **addressing** the grievances that ideologies are exploiting.

**16** The strands are supported by two cross-cutting work streams:

- developing understanding, analysis and information; and
- strategic communications.

**17** The Prevent strategy is based on the assumption that challenging and preventing violent extremism requires local public services to understand and empower all their communities. Reducing inequalities and tension, addressing all forms of extremism and building cohesive and resilient communities all contribute to the successful delivery of local Prevent approaches. This has been acknowledged in reports by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (Ref. 7) and by the government in its recent empowerment white paper (Ref. 8).

**18** The government expects local services to have arrangements in place to manage violent extremist risk and to measure the effectiveness of its Prevent approach.

**I** The National Community Safety Plan (Ref. 3), Children's Plan (Ref. 4), Local Government White Paper: Strong and Prosperous Communities (Ref. 5) and the Policing Green Paper (Ref. 6).

Nineteen LSPs have included National Indicator 35 (NI35) on building resilience to violent extremism in their LAAs. NI35 measures overall progress on the local Prevent approach by assessing the level of engagement and understanding local partners have of the local community; the strength of their partnership working; and the effectiveness with which strategies and plans have been implemented. The effectiveness of the local Prevent approach will be considered through Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) and the Assessments of Policing and Community Safety (APACS).

## Our approach

**19** During May, June and July 2008, HMIC and the Audit Commission jointly undertook a learning and development exercise (LDE), exploring the progress made by councils and police partners in developing programmes of activity to deliver Prevent. The aim was to identify 'what works, what doesn't and what looks promising' in respect of Prevent activities funded by both the PVEPF and partners' core budgets. It was not an inspection of the basic command units (BCUs) or councils visited.

**20** The Audit Commission undertook this work for CLG using advice and assistance powers. HMIC has a statutory role to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of policing in England and Wales through inspection of police organisations and functions; to provide advice to Home Office ministers, police authorities and chief constables; and to ensure good practice is spread.

**21** Our work focused on 14 councils and involved 15 BCUs. Site visits included Kirklees, Wycombe, Bradford, Leeds, Birmingham and Waltham Forest which all have first-hand



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experience of the impact of violent extremism. All sites visited have been assessed by the Home Office, CLG, police and security sources to have communities with a risk of vulnerability to violent extremism. They are all in receipt of PVEPF funding.

**22** The LDE teams were made up of HMIC and Audit Commission staff with experience and knowledge of counter terrorism, partnership performance and community cohesion. The teams undertook a pre-site analysis of documents, including strategies. They visited the council, police force and BCU in each area, holding interviews and focus groups with front line staff and managers, elected members, representatives of other partner agencies and community groups.

**23** We developed our approach to the LDE following two pilots and with input from CLG, Home Office and the Local Government Association (LGA). An advisory group of council chief executives and BCU commanders from the 15 areas has provided valuable input and challenge throughout the exercise.

**24** Our work focused on the:

- strategic approach to Prevent in local areas;
- effectiveness of partnership working, including sharing of information, resources and intelligence; and
- effectiveness of working with communities and other partner agencies.

**25** This report summarises our findings from the Prevent LDE and provides:

- examples of what works, and what looks promising, and case studies of good practice;
- information on barriers to the successful delivery of Prevent; and

- key learning points to support the development of the Prevent strategy.

**26** HMIC and the Audit Commission wish to thank all those individuals and organisations that contributed to the LDE at:

- Birmingham City Council and DI and E3 BCUs, West Midlands Police
- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council and Eastern Division, Lancashire Constabulary
- City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and Bradford South Division, West Yorkshire Police
- London Borough of Ealing and Ealing BCU, Metropolitan Police Service
- Kirklees Council and Kirklees Division, West Yorkshire Police
- Leeds City Council and City and Holbeck Division, West Yorkshire Police
- Leicester City Council and City BCU, Leicestershire Constabulary
- Luton Borough Council and C Division Luton, Bedfordshire Police
- Manchester City Council and North Manchester Division, Greater Manchester Police
- London Borough of Newham and Newham BCU, Metropolitan Police
- London Borough of Redbridge and Redbridge BCU, Metropolitan Police
- London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Tower Hamlets BCU, Metropolitan Police Service
- London Borough of Waltham Forest and Waltham Forest BCU, Metropolitan Police Service
- Wycombe District Council and High Wycombe LPA, Buckinghamshire BCU, Thames Valley Police

# 2 Findings: Rationale for the strategic approach

## Need for a local Prevent narrative to focus on vulnerability

“We need to have a story to tell; where we started and where we are going”

**Council chief executive**

**27** Our work suggests that, to be effective, partnerships need to have a locally agreed and shared Prevent ‘narrative’, which defines the extent of local vulnerability to violent extremism and sets out how the risks will be addressed. We found varying levels of clarity about what partnerships are trying to deliver in Prevent and how this links with cohesion or other local strategies. The main cause of this is the absence of relevant information to determine the extent of the local vulnerability to violent extremism.

**28** In some places we heard that the national narrative and the guidance from government departments is not always clear or easy to understand. The national context is described by a range of sources. A much clearer, fuller description from government, setting out the role of all departments would be helpful. Detailed guidance and prescription around delivery is not seen as useful as this can limit the ability of local areas to tailor their approaches to the local context and priorities.

**29** A number of sites described the journey they had undergone in developing their Prevent approach, from a response largely built into their cohesion strategy to one that is more explicitly expressed and focused on preventing violent extremism. The more explicit approach has tended to emerge following first hand local experience of terrorist operations, which in turn has required a more integrated response and closer working between local partners and the community.

**30** Our findings suggest that the steps to developing and agreeing a local narrative, which sets out the context, long term approach and vision of success in preventing violent extremism include:

- recognising the need for a local Prevent strategy, which is either separate from, or recognisable within, the community cohesion and sustainable community strategies;
- using and regularly re-assessing shared information and intelligence to understand the vulnerability of individuals, communities and institutions (such as colleges, schools and prisons) in the local area. This requires a good understanding of diverse communities and the impact of changes in demographics, new arrivals, foreign policy and international terrorism;
- drawing on the knowledge and skills of councillors, faith leaders and other respected community representatives to help identify areas of vulnerability to violent extremism;
- ensuring that the Prevent approach is not interpreted by partnerships and local people as simply an enforcement activity. Instead the broad Prevent responsibilities of local public services (especially those of neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management teams) and community and voluntary groups should be clarified;
- ensuring that existing plans and approaches mainstream relevant aspects of Prevent. In particular, Prevent approaches should feature in plans relating to safer and stronger communities, regeneration and economic development, and children and young people;

- agreeing joint council and police delivery plans for Prevent projects and activities, including contributions from community groups and the voluntary sector, that are proportionate to the local risk and jointly resourced; and
- exploring opportunities for wider information sharing across the UK, to promote better sharing of knowledge and experience with councils and police forces with similar local communities.

**31** The PVEPF is focused on the areas assessed by the government as most vulnerable to violent extremism. These are currently areas with a high Muslim population. This has the potential to alienate both Muslim communities, which may feel unfairly stigmatised, and non-Muslim communities, which may perceive an unfair distribution of local resources. To address this, the local narrative needs to explain what activity is taking place in the area and why. Councils and police need to keep the community informed about local Prevent priorities and the focus of their work.

**32** Embedding an effective Prevent approach will take time but it is vital for the delivery of a long term response to violent extremism. Local public services are developing their existing partnerships to foster community engagement and empowerment. Local partnerships are on a steep learning curve on this issue. The government needs to recognise this and should give them support, space, time and encouragement to come up with innovative and tailored local solutions. Some council and police interviewees commented that there is too much prescriptive national guidance, which erodes trust between the national and local levels.

## Key learning

**Government should ensure that the national narrative and roles of government departments are clear. The Prevent approach needs to take account of the local context. Partnerships should develop their local narrative to tell the story of the place, describing the risks and priorities to be addressed in local Prevent strategies. Local partnerships should be trusted to devise the right solutions, providing a common purpose and vision among partners and community groups.**

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## The approach to Prevent changes as a result of experience

“Prevent is ongoing work and it won’t ever stop. This is the start of a journey, not the end.”

### Council chief executive

**33** Preventing violent extremism is a fast-moving and complex challenge. It requires an awareness of the global, national and local context. Partnerships need to share intelligence and have strong and effective working arrangements. It is only now that local communities and community safety partners are beginning to understand the capacity, resources, skills, judgements and actions needed to deliver on the Prevent approach and to address the needs of vulnerable individuals or groups.

**34** Councils, the police and other local partners have existing structures and strategies that can help them to develop effective Prevent approaches, and are responsible for a range of important outcomes, all of which are relevant to Prevent. These include sustainability and cohesion, crime reduction, wealth and employment, educational attainment, regeneration, reducing inequalities and

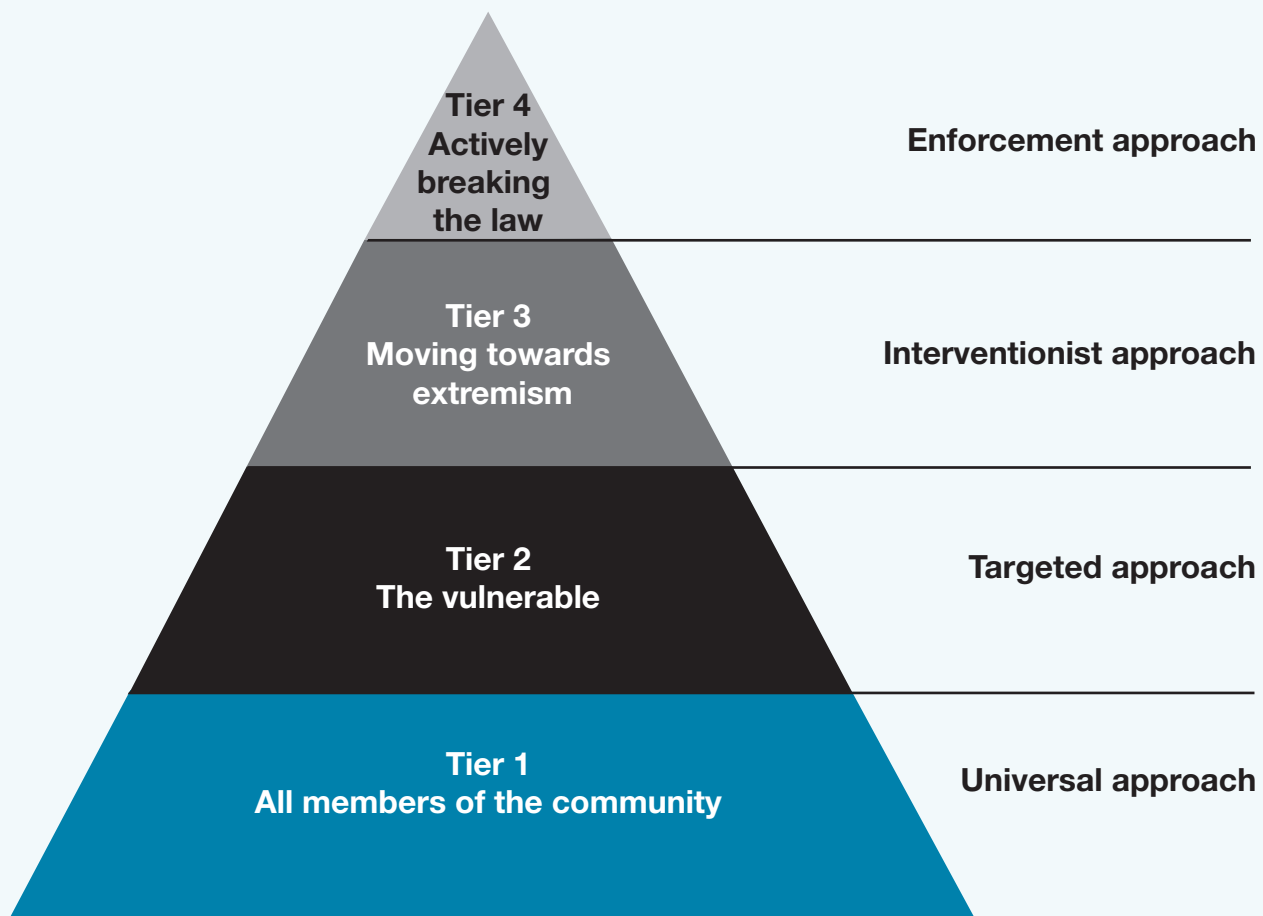
## 2 Findings: Rationale for the strategic approach

promoting equality of opportunity in housing and access to local services.

**35** The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has developed a strategy and delivery plan on Prevent for the police service (Ref. 9), which was launched in April 2008. It contains a four-tiered delivery framework for the police, and their partners shown at Figure 1.

The delivery of this ACPO strategy is supported by additional funding in the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) for 2008/11. In year one, the 24 forces assessed to have the highest level of vulnerability to violent extremism (including all the sites visited during the LDE), will receive government funding to recruit BCU staff to support local Prevent activity.

**Figure 1**  
**Tiered model of intervention to address Prevent**



ACPO Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan

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**36** Most areas we visited are focused on mainstreaming their Prevent approach into sustainable community strategies and community cohesion plans, improving access to universal services and promoting social inclusion (Tier 1 in Figure 1). Some are dealing with those at the lower end of vulnerability (Tier 2). However, most councils and police services are not yet providing tailored support, through targeted Prevent approaches, to people who are at risk of, or are moving towards, extremism (Tier 3).

**37** Where there have been terrorist incidents or arrests of individuals suspected of terrorism, local partners and the communities affected have had to learn about violent extremism and develop their response very quickly. First hand experience has had a direct impact on the development of the local approach to preventing violent extremism.

**38** As a consequence, these areas have made preventing violent extremism a more visible and explicit strategic priority. Partners' engagement with, and understanding of, local communities has grown quickly. In turn, this has encouraged greater cooperative working and information sharing, giving partners a wider appreciation of what makes people and communities vulnerable to violent extremism.

**39** It is absolutely vital that these experiences are shared widely with other areas that may face similar issues in the future. Councils in receipt of PVEPF tend to have heightened levels of awareness to local vulnerability, but vulnerability levels in local communities can change quickly. Areas that are not currently in receipt of PVEPF may not perceive themselves to be at risk of violent extremism. These areas need to be capable of recognising and anticipating the potential for rapid change, particularly due to national and international events.

### **Key learning**

**The first hand experience of a small number of partnerships in dealing with the direct impact of violent extremism has produced valuable learning and insight. They have addressed complex and difficult operational, cultural and organisational issues together.**

**The Home Office, CLG and ACPO should distil the learning from these areas to help other partnerships to learn from their experience. In particular, the Home Office Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU) could identify how local narratives develop in response to changing circumstances.**

**The Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) play a key role in supporting improvement in local public services and could usefully contribute to the distillation and sharing of learning.**

## 2 Findings: Rationale for the strategic approach

### Case study 1

#### Waltham Forest

##### Learning from events

In August 2006, as part of the police operation Overt, 24 people were arrested in relation to an alleged plot to detonate a series of homemade liquid explosives on passenger aircraft flying from the UK. Nearly half of the people arrested were from Waltham Forest.

Since the arrests, the council and the BCU have worked together to reassure local people, ensuring that the events do not impact negatively upon the confidence and security of the Muslim community. A number of measures have been put in place to build resilience and reduce the risks of tension in the community including:

- launching a high profile communications campaign with a letter from the council leader, signed by all party leaders, key partners and the faith communities published on billboards and in the local media immediately after the arrests;
- bringing the Community Cohesion Task Group together with partners from the council, health services, police, colleges and schools, representatives from the faith and local community groups, and business and voluntary sectors to deliver an action plan on preventing violent extremism;
- developing a one community campaign around the slogan '225,000 people, One Community' which emphasises the positive message that Waltham Forest is a tolerant and cohesive place; and
- working with the Institute of Community Cohesion to map local communities and identify risks faced in relation to youth disengagement and extremism.

The council, police and partners learned quickly from the events surrounding the plot. This has been reflected in a Community Cohesion Contingency Plan to respond to future critical incidents. They developed their capacity, skills and approach to preventing violent extremism based on a good understanding of vulnerable and at risk communities. Prevent is now one of the top priorities in the new Community Cohesion Strategy and is integrated fully into the Sustainable Communities Strategy which sets out the vision and sense of identify for Waltham Forest.

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## Early problems with Prevent funding are being addressed

“Government did not initially listen or think through how they were allocating funding. Community groups viewed the funding as ‘tainted’ and ‘insensitive’”

### Council director

“Funding has been helpful but guidance arrived four months later. The PVEPF grant has downsides – what do you say to other communities who ask why all the money goes to Muslims?”

### Council chief executive

**40** The level of government funding for Prevent has increased from £6 million in 2006 to £45 million for the period between April 2008 and March 2011.

**41** The 14 councils we visited had received over £1.7 million from the PVEPF. This funding supported schemes to address those who may have been close to becoming vulnerable and broader schemes aimed at building bridges between communities. All PVEPF schemes aimed to help communities build resilience to violent extremism.

**42** Most areas invested the early PVEPF into projects to engage and involve people from Muslim communities. The areas we visited have been successful in increasing the awareness and understanding of Prevent among partner agencies, community and voluntary groups. The majority of the PVEPF activities have helped Muslim communities to engage in cohesion activity, particularly that involving young people and women. Examples of PVEPF projects include:

- developing young Muslim leaders, ambassadors and community champions;
- Islam awareness programmes for council, police, primary care trust, voluntary and community sector frontline staff;
- workshops to empower Muslim women;
- culture, citizenship, faith and identity activities with Muslim communities;
- capacity building for faith institutions and leaders;
- establishing faith forums, networks and societies for engagement, trust-building and debate with local community leaders from the Muslim community;
- appointing programme coordinators to manage Prevent projects and funding; and
- research into the social, economic and demographic profile of Muslim communities in order to identify areas of vulnerability, future needs and challenges.

## 2 Findings: Rationale for the strategic approach

### Case study 2

#### Birmingham City Council

##### Funding Prevent initiatives

Birmingham City Council involved their partners and local communities when they allocated their £525,000 PVEPF. Eleven Prevent projects were funded to build capacity within communities to tackle violent extremism.

The eleven projects were brought together under the four main themes of Reclaiming Islam, Media, Women, and Young People. Some examples of the initiatives include:

- Working with madrassahs (schools where theology or religious law is studied) to help broaden the provision of citizenship education. The focus was to provide children with a deeper understanding of citizenship and the inter-relationship between their faith and the communities in which they live. Seventy-two madrassahs' staff have been trained in teaching and delivering the Islamic syllabus. Over 300 children and partners have been involved in capacity-building focus groups to learn what local public authorities do and to understand their role in helping to create just, fair, safe and cohesive communities for everyone.
- Working closely with the ten largest mosques between July 2007 and March 2008 to improve governance and management systems, and to build capacity and professionalism.
- Developing the Young Muslim Leadership programme. This includes projects to help young people develop their skills and confidence. The project built understanding, and equipped young people with the theological arguments to counter extremist ideologies, dispel misapprehensions and develop their role as citizens and leaders.
- Establishing an imams' (prayer leaders) training project to ensure that imams not only connect with other parts of society but build confidence and capacity to engage effectively with all members of the Muslim community, particularly young people looking for answers to questions on their religious identity. The imams' training is now being devised as a formal programme of education, potentially at Master's degree level, at a major university in the city.
- Through the Journey of the Soul project, reconnecting imams with young people as mentors, teachers and credible voices in countering the arguments of violent extremists by focusing on spirituality. This helped to promote young people's confidence in themselves, their religious identity and their culture.
- Strengthening the role that women play within their communities through the Muslimah in Action Steering Group. The group developed an action plan to address a variety of issues that affect the Muslim community and how women could play a part in local priorities and decision making. A women's conference was held in May 2008 to take this work forward.



**43** We found that the 2007/08 PVEPF funding was allocated to councils very quickly. Some councils commented that there was insufficient and late guidance on how to use the funds. They said there was little time for effective consultation with community groups and the voluntary sector. Furthermore, there was a lack of up-to-date community intelligence or mapping of areas of vulnerability on which to focus resources. This resulted in a reactive, short term approach. The PVEPF funds were generally directed to the maintenance of existing projects, schemes that were about to go live anyway, or projects to improve community engagement and cohesion.

**44** Outcomes were mostly measured by monitoring spend against budget and the timeliness of the completion of projects. We found few performance or success measures to judge the outcomes and achievements from the PVEPF projects.

“Funding is spent on officials and is not getting down to grass roots – there needs to be accountability and visibility about how the money is spent”

#### **Youth committee**

**45** Concerns over the allocation of the first year of PVEPF have been recognised by government. Recent changes to the government grant and three year area-based funding settlements for councils provide the opportunity for longer term, flexible and more sustainable work on preventing violent extremism.

**46** Learning from the Pathfinder year is emerging. All involved in the LDE at national and local levels have demonstrated enthusiasm for applying the learning. Councils and police have recognised this is an opportune time to take stock. They are now adopting a more considered approach to planning and implementing their longer term Prevent work.

#### **Key learning**

**Partnerships have a full year experience of the Prevent agenda and have delivered a range of projects and initiatives within their local areas. The experience gained should be used to plan, prioritise and allocate funding to new approaches that fit within the community strategy and are sustainable in the long term.**

**Some frontline workers such as youth outreach workers, community wardens and neighbourhood policing teams have been able to deliver local projects, and establish regular meetings with local people, by applying relatively small amounts of money flexibly. Partnerships need to ensure that this flexibility and use of devolved budgets continues, avoiding overly bureaucratic administrative processes that can slow progress and inhibit creativity.**

## 2 Findings: Rationale for the strategic approach

### Clear commissioning arrangements help achieve value for money in Prevent activity

“We don’t have the resources to tackle this (Prevent) in its entirety. We need to be realistic about what we can do”

#### Council chief executive

“The project finished when the funding stopped and young people were left without anything to replace it. Projects and funding need to be sustainable for more than one year”

#### Community group

“We are still learning. I can see the theory behind it but it must be about the local council, police and community groups working together”

#### BCU chief superintendent.

**47** In addition to PVEPF, partners can access a wider range of resources and funding for Prevent activity, as summarised in the government’s *Guide for Local Partners* (Ref. 2). They include over £18 million for Prevent policing in 2008/09, as well as a further £3.5 million for youth offending teams in 2008/09 and 2009/10. Capturing and using the knowledge and skills of front line staff, neighbourhood policing teams, safer neighbourhood teams, community, business and voluntary groups is essential in devising the best local and neighbourhood solutions to preventing violent extremism.

**48** As the early PVEPF funding had to be committed quickly, some councils and police are only now considering how to commission, procure and performance

manage Prevent activities in the most efficient and effective way.

**49** In the first year of PVEPF funding, the cost of administering projects was disproportionately high. Councils used existing procurement processes to allocate funding, which created difficulties with partner agencies, voluntary sector and community groups. Councils had insufficient time to develop joint procurement arrangements. Negotiations on how to allocate funds were particularly protracted in two tier areas.

**50** There was limited knowledge within community groups and the voluntary sector about how the 2007/08 PVEPF funds were spent. These groups wanted more transparency on the strategic decisions made by councils and police partners in selecting Prevent projects for funding. This created sensitivities and tensions. In a few instances this resulted in a lack of buy-in to early Prevent projects from some community and faith groups.

**51** The process for releasing PVEPF funding was seen as overly bureaucratic. In some cases, funding was not released to community groups and partner agencies until projects had been completed. This meant that there were insufficient resources to fund basic requirements such as meeting rooms and administrative support.

**52** Since the first year of PVEPF, some areas have been developing more robust processes for commissioning and performance managing Prevent projects. Changes to central funding arrangements have helped to ensure the sustainability of longer term projects. Councils are now better able to plan and align Prevent funding with their medium term financial planning process and service plans.

**53** Areas that are further ahead are starting to use existing structures such as the LSP and CDRP to direct and oversee Prevent activity. For example, in Tower Hamlets a Prevent governance and commissioning structure has been established for allocating and monitoring project funding. It is recognised that Prevent commissioning decisions need to be under-pinned by a sound understanding of at-risk communities.

**54** Community, faith and voluntary groups are becoming more aware of the funding process. They are being invited to submit tenders for projects, and there is a more open and transparent evaluation and selection process. As a result, councils and the police have a better understanding of the activities undertaken by community and voluntary groups. It also means that local partners are exploring wider options for delivering Prevent. Community groups said that they feel more involved and consequently more signed up to the Prevent approach.

**55** In some areas, for example in London and the North West, councils are working together in alliances, pooling resources and running projects collectively. Projects are being sustained by integrating work with existing community based projects. The focus is on community involvement and empowerment.

**56** Where commissioning arrangements are being developed or are in place, the performance management of Prevent projects is starting to improve. Projects have clear milestones, targets and output measures. In some cases these are set out in a specification or service level agreement. Prevent boards or LSPs are taking responsibility for performance monitoring projects, holding partners, community and voluntary groups to account for delivery. However, these developments are not evident everywhere.

**57** Our interviews suggested that partnerships can improve the value for money from their prevent work through:

- the use of a jointly owned risk assessment process and local narrative to direct Prevent funding;
- the development of a rigorous process for evaluating bids, selecting from a range of providers including community, business and voluntary groups;
- the pooling of available local resources to deliver Prevent activities, drawing on the skills and capacity of front line staff from the council, and neighbourhood policing teams, as well as from community, faith, business and voluntary groups;
- the coordination of all sources of external funding to assist in preventing violent extremism, including those relating to funding for neighbourhood renewal, youth offending teams and police community support officers (PCSOs);
- the integration of Prevent funding requirements within council and police medium term financial plans, budgets and service plans; and
- the development of performance measures and monitoring arrangements to evaluate outcomes and achievements from Prevent, which assess value for money.

### **Key learning**

**All partnerships need to make best use of Prevent funding, ensuring value for money from the projects and activities. This should be a joint effort, working within clear commissioning arrangements. Maintaining funding so that it is available through the LAA rather than ring-fencing it encourages the mainstreaming of Prevent activity. This means Prevent funding should be included in council and police medium term financial plans.**

# 3 Findings: Information sharing

## Mechanisms for information sharing on Prevent are under-developed

“We are some way off having an adequate approach to sharing information and data within the partnership”

### BCU inspector

“I get nudges (about local counter terrorism issues from the police), but what am I supposed to do with that?”

### Council director

“We cannot expect to proceed on the basis of ‘trust me’”

### Council chief executive officer

“The BCU are more than willing to share information but feel we are working in a vacuum”

### BCU commander

**58** During the LDE, councils and police made it clear that lack of information sharing inhibits an effective local Prevent approach. There are significant opportunities at national and local levels for information sharing to be improved. Councils, local police, counter terrorism (CT) intelligence specialists and other agencies struggled to demonstrate a systematic information sharing process for Prevent purposes, whether at a strategic level or within front line service delivery.

**59** In particular, information held by the Security Service and police CT specialists in Special Branches (SBs), or the CT Network, is not being shared consistently. This is information that contributes to the assessment of vulnerability of local areas.

It is not shared to a level that would allow key individuals to make informed decisions on the local Prevent strategy. Only a third of chief executives and BCU commanders have had access to, or have been briefed on, specific data about the extent of local extremism or vulnerability. Our work did reveal that engagement and information sharing between the CT Network, SBs, local BCUs and councils is *beginning* to develop, although not yet within a systematic and universal plan.

**60** We found examples of information being shared to produce neighbourhood profiles in support of neighbourhood policing. Information about the level of tension in local communities is also shared in some areas. However, we also found that CDRPs lack a clear process for mapping their communities and identifying vulnerability to violent extremism. There is currently no recognised suite of information sources that should be used by local partners specifically in relation to CT, unlike that available in existing guidance for CDRPs (Ref. 10).

**61** Council chief executives and BCU commanders agreed that effective information sharing between partner agencies is fundamental to the development of a shared understanding of vulnerability (of both individuals and of the community) to violent extremism. They said that, without this understanding, it would be difficult for partners to determine and implement effective and coordinated strategies. Handling sensitive material is not new territory for councils that already routinely handle confidential material relating to the protection of children and young people.

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## Key learning

**There is a need for all organisations engaged in Prevent to develop a more trusting and business-like relationship within agreed protocols, to ensure that material that can be shared is given the widest circulation among key individuals who need to know it.**

**The understanding of communities would be assisted by a more structured approach to mapping communities. Home Office, CLG and ACPO could assist in developing a list of relevant information sources.**

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## Improving information sharing to develop an understanding of vulnerability

**62** An important principle of information sharing in a CT context is ‘need to know’. This means not only protecting information from unauthorised disclosure, but also ensuring that individuals and partner organisations can access the information necessary to undertake their role effectively. Safeguards are needed so that all agencies use and keep information securely. However, a large number of interviewees felt that they could be trusted with more sensitive information. Our work suggests that a new philosophy of ‘need to share’ is required in this current environment.

**63** There is a key role for the CT Network to collect, analyse and coordinate the distribution of briefing material at ‘restricted’ level across a wider circulation than at present. This could be overlaid with other locally held data such as that relating

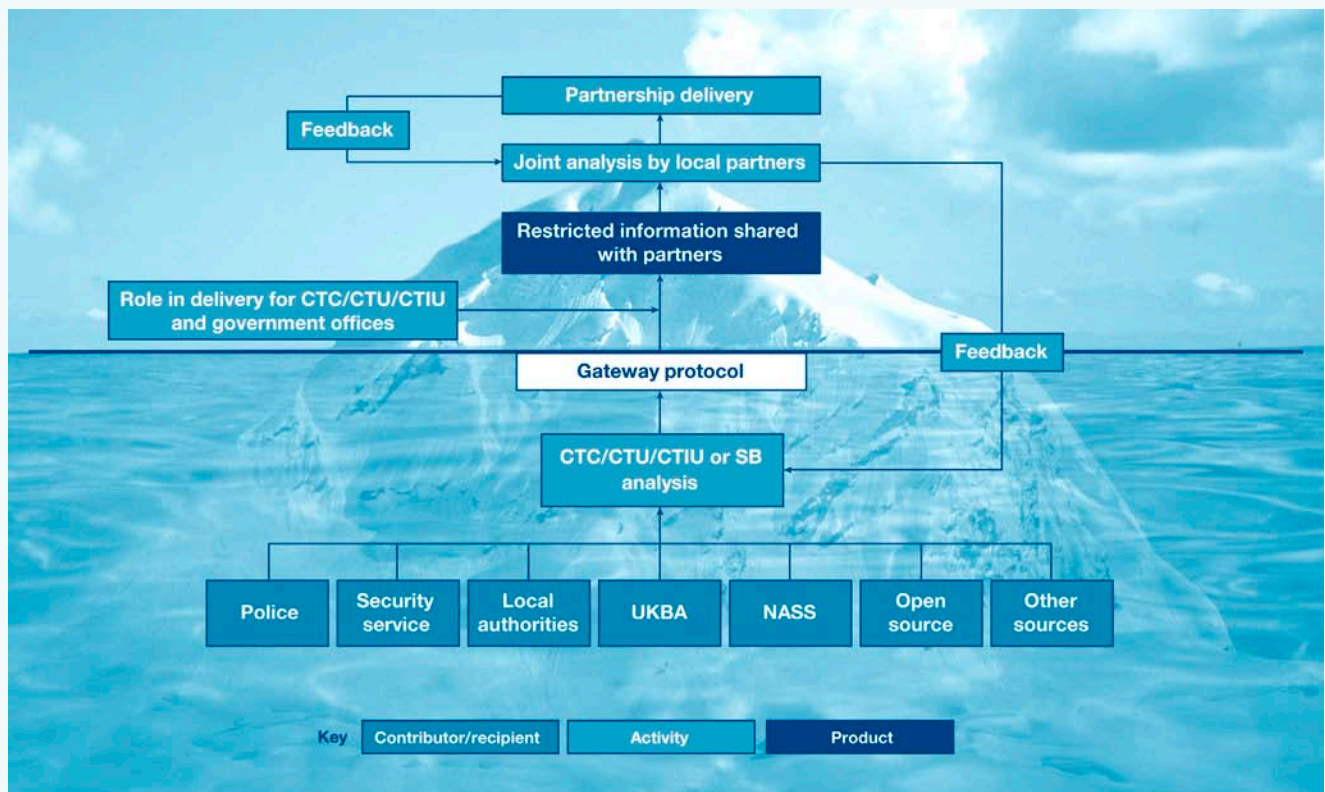
to employment, education, health care, demographics and decent homes standards, to identify areas that could be vulnerable to those that encourage violent extremism. Greater Manchester Police Counter Terrorism Unit (GMP CTU) has already started doing this and the Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) is developing a similar approach. In August 2008, the key government agencies working on Prevent distributed a briefing pack through regional government offices to BCUs and councils. This pack had a ‘restricted’ circulation and is known as the Central Prevent Analysis product. This material provides generalised assessments to aid understanding of violent extremism and more products are being prepared for distribution.

**64** The requirement for information on Prevent is evolving and there is a need to manage the immediate and long term expectations of local partnerships. The CT Network is not resourced to provide the comprehensive products sought by police and councils across the country and it is inevitable that their focus will be upon priority areas. There is also a potential role for Special Branches (SBs) to help provide restricted products for local LSPs. Government, local partnerships and police forces in particular, will need to consider the resourcing of those units tasked to produce Prevent material.

**65** The ‘iceberg’ information sharing model at Figure 2 is a possible way forward. It shows how the intelligence and information that is collated by CT Network and SBs could pass to the local partners engaged in Prevent work through a gateway.

# 3 Findings: Information sharing

**Figure 2**  
**Information sharing model**



“The aim of the Protocol is to ensure there is a framework of control in place for mitigating significant risks (in handling information)”

### Protocol for partnership information handling

**66** The gateway forms part of an information sharing protocol (ISP), which sets out what information will be circulated, who will be able to see it, how it will be handled and what it will be used for. ISPs already exist in relation to crime and disorder. Similar protocols are in place and being used effectively by youth offending teams, in child protection work, and in multi agency public protection arrangements. The Security

Service and ACPO are in the process of developing a model for information sharing arrangements.

### Key learning

The difficulties around information sharing hamper local efforts and do not encourage trusting relationships to be developed by key individuals in councils and police. The Security Service, ACPO and regional government offices, in consultation with the LGA, need to develop an agreed structure for information sharing, at an appropriate level, between police, councils and other partners, perhaps based on the above model. This would ensure a consistent level of information sharing across the country.

## Case study 3

### Greater Manchester

#### Information sharing

Greater Manchester Police CTU working with the Security Service is responsible for the coordination and collection of terrorist intelligence to produce a regional threat analysis. The CTU has produced a regional profile of the threat from violent extremists and, using information from that document, a list of vulnerable areas prioritised according to assessments of risk.

The CTU is building on this work by developing Counter Terrorism Neighbourhood Problem Profiles (CTNPPs) for each of the BCUs within its force area. One has been completed in full to date. This incorporates publicly available data together with Security Service and police intelligence. The material is analysed and the findings detailed within problem profiles, produced at 'secret' and 'restricted' levels.

Before they are issued, the intelligence products are subject to review by a Gateway Protocol process within which contributors agree the content of the profile and the extent of dissemination. Council staff deployed within the CTU act as critical readers for the restricted products prior to their distribution and advise where, within councils, they could be most effectively used. This approach provides assurance on how the intelligence product will be used.

This approach builds upon data and analytical assets already being used by relevant CDRPs to map and understand crime trends and to tackle other issues within communities. The CTU is also supporting other forces in the region in their preparation of CTNPPs.

Although this initiative is still in its relative infancy, within Greater Manchester information has been shared at a 'restricted' level with identified heads of key services in line with the Protocol. This has provided a better understanding of local vulnerability and guidance on how Prevent initiatives should be focused.

## Securing meaningful information on Prevent to support local understanding and decision making

**67** Identifying the factors that make someone vulnerable to becoming involved in violent extremism is the first step towards anticipating and addressing the issue. There was a common view that there is insufficient information about what causes a person to become a violent extremist.

**68** Some indicators are included in the *Guide for Local Partners* (Ref. 2) together with a reading list of related publications. But there was a view that central government (the Home Office and CLG in particular), together

with the Security Service, could usefully provide more succinct information based upon case studies or academic research that would aid local planning.

**69** There needs to be an understanding among council and police front line staff of the sort of information that is required. Some interviewees (including police officers) expressed the view that they need to understand better what information would be relevant. This suggests the need for improved briefing and guidance to front line council and police staff.

**70** We found considerable scope for more effective information sharing and stronger

# 3 Findings: Information sharing

analytical capability. We found a few instances where information held by councils was not being shared with the police because of concern about how that would be interpreted by the local community. Our community interviews revealed that some local people were suspicious about how intelligence and information shared between police, councils and partners is being used.

- 71** More needs to be done to build trust and confidence between agencies and local communities. This means creating an environment in which ‘softer’ intelligence about seemingly minor matters is routinely gathered and shared.
- 72** Front line police, neighbourhood policing teams and council officers have day-to-day routine contact with local people. This type of interaction and engagement offers a sound basis for developing open, mutually supportive discussions about vulnerability. Some of the best local information may be gathered at neighbourhood level by the street cleaners, wardens and housing officers. They may see or hear things that are a departure from the normal routine, but may not understand the relevance to violent extremism or know who to pass it on to in the most effective way.

## Key learning

**Front-line staff employed by councils, police and partner agencies have a crucial role to play in engaging key individuals within communities. Partnerships should consider providing them with the generalised information about local vulnerability that can be shared through existing mechanisms. Including members of the community in developing information sharing arrangements could help to build trusting relationships with councils and the police.**

“I’m not sure that all the staff fully understand what they have been asked to do (in gathering information) and what the end purpose is”

**BCU chief inspector**

“If the police don’t share, how can offender managers get engaged on CT issues?”

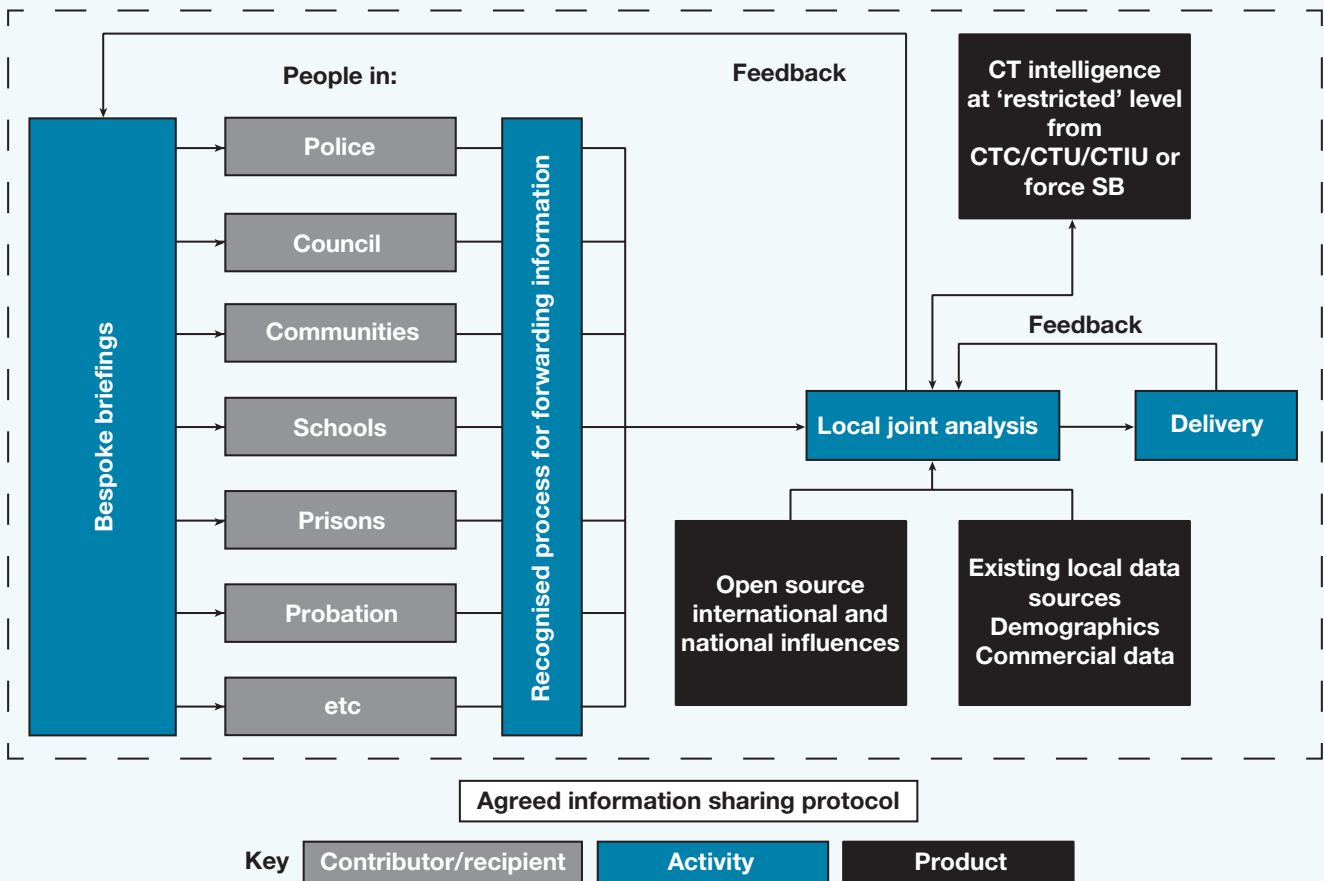
**Council Youth Offender Services manager**

- 73** Our work suggests that partnerships need to develop more coordinated and consistent systems for collecting and making sense of the information available locally. This would ensure all available information is considered when determining local vulnerability.
- 74** In 3 of the 14 sites visited, police officers and staff worked together within councils and shared information effectively. In the GMP CTU there is a seconded council officer who considers information from the council perspective and then ensures that it reaches those who can use it to best effect. In other places, co-location of police and council staff for day-to-day purposes is cited as a real benefit in developing closer working relationships. In Kirklees, the council and police are developing a joint approach to improving information exchange and data analysis.
- 75** Local analysis also needs to take account of the implications of national and international events and community links. This is particularly important in places where community members are in close contact with their peers and individuals of influence in other countries. In some places local decisions are very much affected by the views of this wider community. There is a need to establish reliable information flows between councils and police forces serving similar communities across the UK.



**76** The model at Figure 3 demonstrates the top of the ‘iceberg’ in more detail outlining how information could flow from and among local partners. At its heart is a joint analytical capability to produce information to brief local staff.

**Figure 3**  
**Information flow amongst local partners**



**Key learning**

Partnerships should assess their local arrangements for collecting and analysing information against this model. In particular partnerships need to ensure that staff are clear about how to forward relevant information to the right place, and understand how that information will be used.

# 3 Findings: Information sharing

## Vetting should not present a barrier to effective information sharing

“The strength of trust, personal relationship and communication (between individuals) is absolutely key”

### BCU commander

- 77** Some interviewees raised concerns about the protective marking of material (for example ‘secret’ ‘confidential’ or ‘restricted’) and the associated vetting levels assumed to be required to access this material. The current approach was seen to be excessive. This is an inhibitor to effective information sharing in some places. The advisory group suggested that there would be merit in the Home Office, CLG, police and councils reviewing whether the current document marking and vetting is appropriate and allows key individuals appropriate access to the information they need to deliver their responsibilities under Prevent.
- 78** The Government Protective Marking System (GPMS) grades material based upon the estimated harm that unauthorised disclosure would cause to the national interest. It defines the personnel, physical and electronic security measures that must be adopted for handling the material. One safeguard includes the vetting of individuals, which provides assurance as to the integrity of those who are given authorised access to sensitive information.

**79** Our work found differing levels of understanding about, and an inconsistent approach being adopted by police and partners to, the vetting of individuals. Of the 14 councils visited, 8 had vetted staff at senior level and 11 out of 15 BCU commanders were vetted under ‘national security’ procedures. In some places, there was a lack of understanding about the levels of vetting required before individuals can be allowed access to protectively marked material.

**80** Vetting individuals takes time and costs money. Only a very small number of key individuals should require the national security vetting process needed to work within the intelligence community (‘Security Check’ or ‘Developed Vetting’). The level of vetting checks required to see secret material on an occasional basis is the government ‘Baseline Personnel Security Standard’, which may be met by enhancing existing employment checks.

**81** Vetting should therefore not be seen as a specific impediment to sharing information. The key issue is what information is required to undertake each role effectively. This should be defined within the information sharing process described above.

### Key learning

**Local partnerships should consider defining the vetting levels required for key roles, to ensure that vetting is undertaken appropriately and not excessively. This could help to build more confident and trusting relationships with information providers and help the flow of information.**

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## Dealing with counter terrorist operations

“The crisis response required (to a CT incident) took our relationship to a new level of cooperation..... a much stronger partnership has developed”

### Lead council member

“Everyone was shocked and surprised it happened here. This is not the sort of place where (we thought) it would happen”

### Council chief executive

**82** Learning from the Wycombe, Waltham Forest and Newham LDE sites has demonstrated the value of having clear arrangements to deal with a CT operation, particularly dealing with information sharing. The immediacy of a situation where the police make a terrorist related arrest or search premises, requires absolute clarity over the roles of all partners. Most of the sites we visited have had experience of CT operations within their communities, often with associated national or international media attention.

**83** These incidents require close cooperation and information exchange between police, the council and other key partners, to mitigate the impact locally. This is known informally as ‘consequence management’. One chief executive described an incident in their area as a ‘wake up call’ that prompted action, built relationships and identified steps that could be taken to prevent a repetition. This experience was replicated in a number of sites.

**84** The nature and circumstances of CT operations will vary significantly. Rapid decisions have to be made about the disclosure of information to key individuals from the council and other agencies, so that they are able to plan and deliver the required partnership response.

**85** All places we visited had consequence management arrangements in place that were recognised and understood by key individuals. Where key individuals outside the police service were briefed in advance of police action, they were confident that sufficient operational information was shared to allow them to contribute effectively. One BCU commander who had briefed councillors about impending CT operations on a number of occasions, said that confidentiality had been maintained by all parties and that a high degree of trust and cooperation existed in that partnership.

**86** A BCU superintendent who used the established Independent Advisory Group (IAG) after a local CT operation told us ‘*Over time it became apparent that the IAG was not fit for (this) purpose... this has since improved considerably with representation from a much wider range of individuals*’.

**87** The Police Prevent Team on behalf of ACPO has produced a *BCU Commanders Guide for Counter Terrorist Operations* (Ref. 11). The LGA is developing a booklet for councillors to support them in dealing with the impact of violent extremism and the subsequent consequence management.

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# 3 Findings: Information sharing

**88** The ACPO guide draws upon the views and experiences of BCU commanders who have had responsibility for local policing during high profile CT operations. It provides advice on the steps that BCU commanders can take before, during and after the operation in working with partners to maintain public confidence. This includes establishing a communication strategy, developing contingency plans for the release of arrested persons and maintaining day to day policing and community safety activity.

## **Key learning**

**The current terrorist threat means that any chief executive, councillor or BCU commander may find a CT operation developing in their area at very short notice. Those who have lived through the experience advise strongly that partnerships need regularly to re-assess their readiness for this eventuality. Local partnerships should ensure that the learning from experiences elsewhere is incorporated in their consequence management arrangements.**

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

## Adapting existing partnership models could provide the basis for delivering success on Prevent

**89** Partnership working through CDRPs has been a key factor in improving community safety in local areas. A statutory framework of minimum standards for CDRPs came into effect on 1 August 2006. The standards are based on six hallmarks of effective partnership (Ref. 10) working, which are:

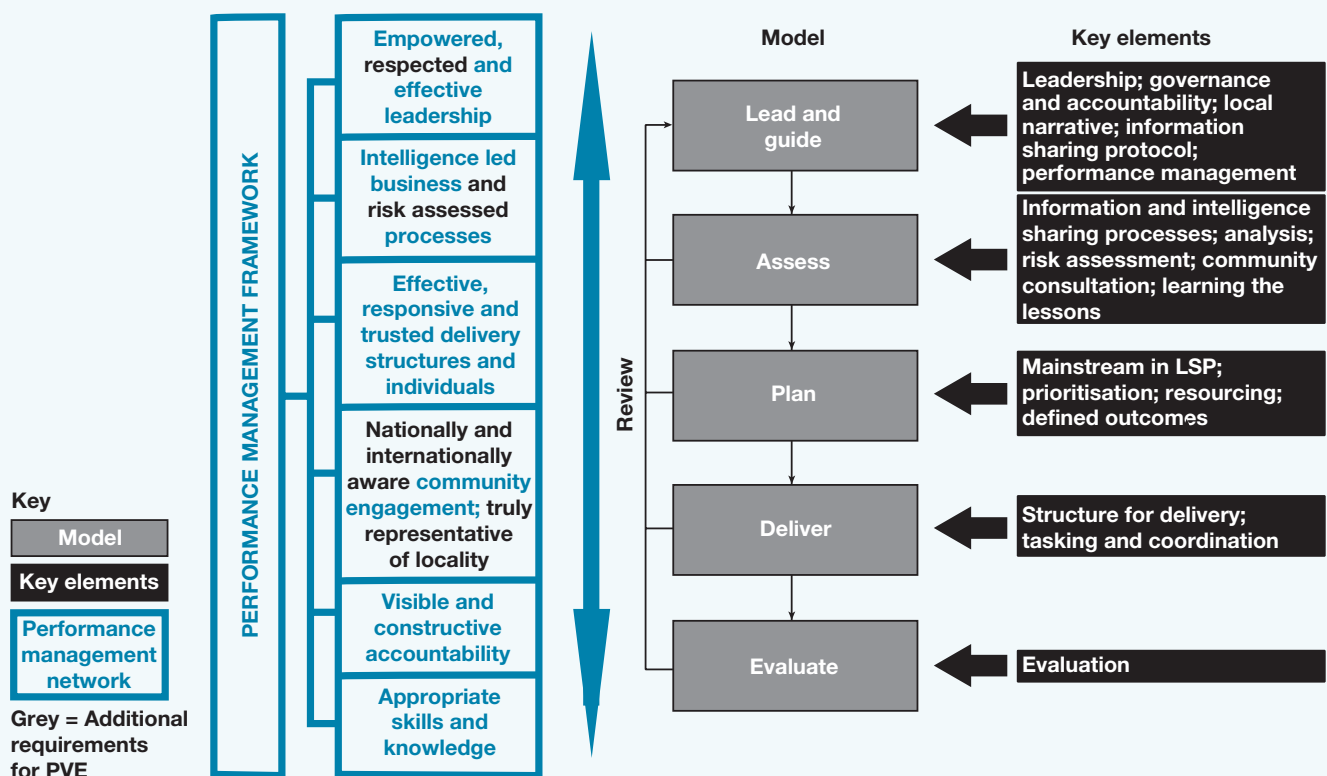
- empowered and effective leadership;
- intelligence-led business processes;
- effective and responsive delivery structures;

- engaged communities;
- visible and constructive accountability; and
- appropriate skills and knowledge.

**90** The model at Figure 4 is an adaptation of the existing guide for partnership working within CDRPs. The model highlights the enhanced performance management framework against which local partners can assess how well they are delivering their Prevent approach.

**91** This report has already considered the implications of Prevent work for intelligence-led business processes and visible and constructive accountability. This chapter addresses the four remaining hallmarks.

**Figure 4**  
**Partnership model**



Source: based upon *Delivering Safer Communities: A Guide to Effective Partnership Working*, PCSD Home Office

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

## Key learning

The adapted CDRP partnership model could provide a good basis for delivering success in preventing violent extremism. The model is a performance management framework that could be adopted by any local partnership or individual organisation, on a voluntary basis.

## Effective and empowered leadership

### Organisational and partnership leadership – developing trusting formal and informal working relationships

“Personal relationships and trust between partner agencies is essential. The existing structures create the environment in which Prevent can be overlapped (with other strategic priorities).”

### Council director

**92** At all sites, interviewees felt that strong relationships between key individuals at various levels within partner agencies and the community were crucial for a successful Prevent approach. Trust and confidence enables better communication, advice and shared resources. There are three organisational levels where strong relationships are essential:

- at a strategic level; including the chief executive, lead councillors, force senior officers, the local BCU commander and key community leaders;
- at a tactical level; including council neighbourhood managers, NPT inspectors and local community representatives; and
- at the delivery level; including front-line council staff, NPT officers and individual community members or groups.

**93** Trust and confidence between key individuals within partner agencies and within communities takes time to develop. Changes to staff with Prevent responsibilities inhibit the development of strong and trusting relationships. In considering the deployment of staff in such posts, partner agencies should balance the aspirations of individuals with the need for stability in working relationships. Given the importance of building strong relationships, local partners need to consider how to retain staff responsible for the delivery of the Prevent approach. This is particularly important in respect of those staff dealing with the individuals most vulnerable to violent extremism.

### Political leadership

“There is clear political (cabinet member) and officer (chief executive) leadership within the Council on Prevent”

### Council director

**94** At some sites, council leaders and councillors provided visible leadership and made clear to their communities that they personally endorsed the local approach. Examples were given of councillors providing community leadership for sensitive police operations requiring the cooperation of the community. In these cases, the police consulted and acted on councillors’ advice on the sensitive handling of an incident.

**95** Councillors have a key role to play in the development of the local narrative. They are well placed to ensure that the narrative addresses the shifting concerns and expectations of the community. They also have a role in communicating the Prevent approach to local people.

**96** In one case, councillors led the dialogue with local people during a CT operation, successfully minimising the potentially negative community reaction to police action. Briefing councillors fully can encourage engagement and aid understanding of the extent of local vulnerability. This, in turn, can determine the strategic and financial approaches adopted by the council.

### **Key learning**

**More could be made of the leadership role of council leaders and councillors in the Prevent agenda. There is scope to increase support and help councils to build their capacity in respect of Prevent activity. This could strengthen their understanding of and engagement with local communities and help to develop the confidence of councillors when making funding decisions.**

### **Role of the Police Authority**

**97** Police Authority members demonstrated a generally high level of interest and involvement in preventing violent extremism. This was particularly apparent in areas served by Counter Terrorism Command (CTC) and Counter Terrorism Units (CTUs), where Police Authority members have been engaged in the development of the national CT Network since its inception in 2006/7. The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) published *Counter Terrorism: The London Debate* in February 2007 (Ref. 12), which analysed the views on terrorism and counter terrorism of over 1,000 people living in London. It produced 73 recommendations for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and advice to government and other agencies. In Manchester, the Police Authority Community Engagement Team has a programme of engagement, consultation,

and information and awareness-raising sessions with targeted sections of the community, planned in collaboration with police, councils and other partners.

**98** The Association of Police Authorities (APA) has drafted guidance that will be made available shortly to police authorities on the performance management and scrutiny of CT activity undertaken by forces. The guidance should enable police authorities without direct experience of violent extremism to develop their local approach.

### **Working with respected faith and community leaders**

“This (inter-faith) project will not identify the next terrorist, but it will break down barriers and lead to stronger communities”

### **Community volunteer**

**99** There is a need to engage credible and respected local faith and community leaders who can counter the violent extremist ideology. Their engagement in developing the local Prevent strategy was commonly identified as vital.

**100** A number of PVEPF projects have focused on building multi-faith engagement. In some cases, this has built upon inter-faith work already in place. Initiatives have included a local Church of England vicar speaking at a mosque and an imam speaking at a church. Mosque and church open days and invitations to religious festivals at which communities learn about each others' faith are popular. In some cases, this work has resulted in bringing imams together from differing schools of thought within Islam.

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

**101** Councils and the police at the LDE sites place great value upon individuals within communities who are knowledgeable about the Prevent approach and who can provide advice on effective community engagement. A number of PVEPF projects focused upon building the capacity and capability of leaders within the Muslim community. For example, the Ealing Faith Volunteering Project provided a range of activities to promote role models and skills development among a mixed group of Muslims and non-Muslims. We found examples of acknowledged and respected leaders providing leadership within faith communities. These leaders came from a variety of places ranging from the local community to much further afield, including the countries of community origin. Faith leaders have condemned violent extremism and they could usefully be engaged in supporting the other strands of the Prevent strategy.

**102** At all levels (strategic, tactical and front line delivery) it is important that local partnerships identify influential and respected individuals who can provide sound advice and galvanise support from within the community. It was commented that the relationship with community representatives needs to be ‘challenging, not cosy’.

## Key learning

**The drive and energy of statutory partners is vital to deliver Prevent effectively. Visible, effective leadership and strong formal and informal working relationships between key individuals in the council and police are needed. Local partnerships need to involve and empower councillors, faith leaders, and skilled and respected individuals within the local community.**

## Effective and responsive delivery structures

**Prevent is core business and needs to be clearly identified within mainstream service delivery**

“The police, partners and community need to be more engaged in the decision making process ... for future plans and funding”

**Assistant chief constable**

“The strength of joint working around crime and disorder and cohesion serves the Prevent approach well”

**Deputy chief executive**

**103** Preventing violent extremism is an issue that will be with us for years to come. It is a complex challenge for local and national leadership alike, and needs to be part of the mainstream work of partner agencies. Areas visited in the LDE have considered whether the Prevent approach should be a stand-alone programme of work or integrated into mainstream council and policing activity, including community cohesion.

**104** Different approaches have developed, based on local need and circumstances. Some sites incorporated the Prevent approach fully within existing partnership structures, while others have introduced separate and specific structures:

- The West London Alliance, encompassing six boroughs, coordinated the bid for PVEPF funding and oversaw the use of the funds within the boroughs.



- The West Midlands Prevent Board helped partners, including Birmingham City Council and the CTU, to develop a shared understanding and focus.
- The Association of Greater Manchester Authorities formed a Prevent steering group to allocate PVEPF funds on a priority and risk basis. It includes both police and council representatives.

**105** The LDE sites have accumulated knowledge and built up confidence about their approach to Prevent. They have reflected on their early approaches, learned from direct experience of the impact of violent extremism in their areas and changed their approach to cohesion as a result. There was a consensus that Prevent activity can be mainstreamed into community cohesion activity, but with a clearly defined and specific focus to tackle violent extremism. Some described this as a ‘cohesion plus’ or ‘cohesion with a hard edge’ approach.

**106** Beyond the LDE sites, some believe that the Prevent approach should be a stand-alone programme linked to, rather than mainstreamed in, the cohesion agenda. The experience of the LDE sites suggests that the rationale for adopting this approach would need to be carefully considered by local partners when developing their local Prevent narrative. A stand-alone Prevent programme would need to be explained and communicated to local people very carefully.

**107** It is important that partnerships that are new to the Prevent agenda start to learn from those places with direct experience of violent extremism in developing their local narrative. A CT incident within a community should not be the primary catalyst for the

adoption of a ‘cohesion plus’ or ‘cohesion with a hard edge’ approach. Nor should it be assumed that existing cohesion strategies can simply have Prevent bolted on to them. This gives rise to the risk that the crucial early stage, when partnerships develop the necessary understanding, relationships and capability to address violent extremism, is missed.

**108** Partnerships need to understand the factors that can lead to violent extremism flourishing locally, before determining how well placed they are to deliver the Prevent agenda. Using existing structures or programme boards can help to ensure that all partners agree a common purpose and vision on preventing violent extremism. For example, Redbridge has established a Prevent Board under the community safety theme of the LSP. This approach ensures that there is effective governance, accountability and performance management for the delivery of the Prevent approach locally.

**109** Partnerships need to determine the right approaches and structures for delivering Prevent locally. To be successful there needs to be engagement between partner organisations and key individuals at all levels. Our work showed that the following steps are proving useful in developing the local approach:

- identifying a group to undertake the functions of a local ‘Prevent Programme Board’, led by the council and forming part of its corporate governance and scrutiny arrangements. The Programme Board members should be drawn from the council, police, community groups and voluntary sector. The Board’s role is to govern, commission and performance manage longer term Prevent projects and activities that are directed to areas of vulnerability;

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

- using existing delivery mechanisms, such as the LSP, CDRP, sustainable community strategies and community cohesion plans to mainstream the Prevent approach into local policing and community safety priorities; and
- working with regional government offices to explore opportunities to increase capacity and skills through cross-border working and collaboration, and sharing expertise, resources and learning on Prevent.

## Key learning

**The LDE took place at sites with high levels of awareness of the impact of violent extremism. Partnerships have changed their approach after experiencing violent extremism. Other places that have not yet developed their local narrative and approach to Prevent have a lot to learn.**

**All partnerships need to demonstrate proactive leadership to ensure that the local Prevent approach is clearly identifiable. Using established structures such as the LSP and CDRP or creating a separate programme board enables all partners, including community and voluntary groups, to govern, commission and performance manage local Prevent responses in the most effective way.**

## Need to involve the right partners to deliver Prevent

“A huge personal commitment is necessary and a willingness to experiment within a supportive corporate framework”

## BCU superintendent

- 110** The national CT Network needs to be acknowledged as a key partner by police

and councils. The CT Network’s role in Prevent is being developed through the implementation of the ACPO Strategy (additional resources are provided through the CSR) and the refreshing of CONTEST by the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (OSCT) within the Home Office. Even within the police service, direct engagement between the CT Network and BCUs was patchy at best in places. The introduction of Counter Terrorism Intelligence Officers (CTIOs) to provide the link between CT intelligence and neighbourhood officers was described as a significant step forward.

- 111** We found that preventing violent extremism is seen largely as a police and council issue at present, although there was recognition that other key partners need to be identified and engaged. Guidance issued to local partners in June 2008 (Ref. 2) identified that other public services, such as those delivering education, youth justice and culture, also have a role to play.
- 112** A lack of effective local links with prisons and probation services was cited as a significant issue in many places. It was noted that these links need to be developed at a local level to provide information about vulnerable individuals within the local community who are known to the criminal justice system. Sites with local prisons commented that the movement of offenders can make interventions more difficult with those who are potentially vulnerable.
- 113** Regional government offices have variable levels of engagement with councils on Prevent. In most places, their role in coordinating and disseminating guidance from CLG and supporting local areas was recognised as making a valuable

contribution particularly in the early days of the PVEPF funding. This includes active participation in strategic meetings, spreading good practice and advising on PVEPF expenditure. Guidance from CLG (Ref. 13) on roles and responsibilities in the local performance framework as part of the new LAAs, provides the opportunity for a clearer structure for engagement and coordination at local level.

### **More to do to make best use of front line staff to deliver Prevent using neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management**

“There is no way we could have achieved what we did without an effective neighbourhood policing model (referring to post incident engagement with communities)”

**BCU superintendent**

**114** Good neighbourhood policing and management is a major asset in Prevent. There was a widely-held view that more needs to be done to increase the skills of NPTs and front line council staff. The areas for attention include the identification of community tension or unusual behaviour and making sure that staff know how to share information in the most effective way. NPTs and front line council staff identified the need to be properly briefed and trained on the composition of local cultural and faith communities so that they can engage with them effectively.

**115** The 2006 Audit Commission report *Neighbourhood Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour* (Ref. 14) highlighted the importance of engaging and involving frontline workers

in addressing crime and disorder. The LDE found that some places, for example Bradford, have realigned neighbourhood staff and policing teams to allow for closer joint working on a geographic basis.

**116** Engagement between NPTs and council officers delivering front line services is inconsistent. Prevent is a relatively new strategic demand on partner agencies. It will need time to embed and to become part of their usual business. There were a few examples of close liaison, but these tended to be based upon individual relationships developed over time or through working on a common problem, rather than a structured and systematic process of engagement.

**117** NPT engagement with the community is being progressed via key individual networks (KINs)<sup>1</sup> and established community partnership forums although these do not appear to discuss issues such as Prevent. There is scope to improve the effectiveness of the NPTs in respect of their engagement with local council front line workers and with local communities. Where possible, NPTs should form part of a coordinated neighbourhood management structure with councils and other local agencies.

**118** In some places, NPTs have not been provided with sufficient briefings or awareness-raising on extremism or terrorism in general. Some officers commented that they do not have the time to develop the local engagement necessary to build trust and confidence. The fallback position adopted in a number of places is to refer all community engagement on Prevent, or with the wider Muslim community, to one or two specific individuals. It is important that NPT

**I** A KIN is a network of local people that is used by local police to gain the thoughts, views and opinions of the public on a wide range of issues.

## 4 Findings: Partnership working

officers have sufficient capacity for effective local engagement.

**119** Police community support officers (PCSOs) were identified as a key part of the neighbourhood policing approach. In particular, there were examples of PCSOs who are from, and live within, the local Muslim community, actively contributing to building engagement and understanding. While central funding of PCSOs is being maintained, there is lack of clarity in some places about how locally resourced posts will be funded in the future.

**120** Front line staff from other partner agencies also need to understand Prevent issues and identify their potential contribution. In most places, briefing and awareness training has yet to be extended to front line staff outside the community safety team.

### Key learning

**Staff in the partner agencies, but in particular front line council staff and NPTs, need to be briefed and trained so that they can understand Prevent issues and identify their potential contribution to the local approach.**

### Case study 4

#### Kirklees

##### Effective work with neighbourhood policing teams

Shortly after the London Bombings on 7 July 2005, there was international, national and local interest in Dewsbury following the announcement of Mohammed Sadiq Kahn's name (one of the bombers) and his links with Dewsbury.

The NPT played a pivotal role in providing reassurance patrols in Saviletown and Thornhill Lees where London based investigation teams were conducting house searches in predominantly Muslim areas. Officers outside the division were also briefed to make them aware of community tensions and provide local contacts to deal with any issues arising.

Close liaison was maintained with community mediators, local councillors, and Kirklees Council officers. A ring-round and key message system was implemented at divisional/district level, which was used to disseminate key messages to the community, but most importantly was used to combat rumours and wild speculation. This reassurance approach and a joint communication strategy was scrutinised on the ground by members of the UK Muslim Safety Forum, who felt that the Kirklees response was good practice.

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## Good community engagement is vital to deliver Prevent

### Bridging gaps in communities

“The Council, police and all agencies need to bridge gaps in communities and not isolate or alienate any vulnerable group, of any age, race or faith.”

### Focus group of community members

- 121** Successful community engagement, working effectively to build trust and confidence with disparate groups, requires time and resources. There was an overwhelming view within the LDE areas that the local Prevent approach cannot be prescribed by government.
- 122** Trust between partner agencies and community representatives was frequently cited as the key ingredient but ‘this is hard won and easily lost’. In terms of CT, there are a number of key risks to maintaining community confidence, such as the approach adopted to managing relationships when making arrests and the transparency of the evidence base for arrests and convictions.
- 123** There is also a need to develop trusting relationships with key people in the community so that they feel able to notify partners quickly if an issue emerges abroad which may affect the local community.
- A successful example related to the conflict between groups in Somalia. There was potential for unrest in a community in the UK. Early notification to police from within the community and a joint approach, with an increased level of policing, prevented local problems.
- 124** Key community representatives, locally respected Muslim scholars, consultative groups and external advisers are used in most sites, both formally and informally, to test the Prevent approach and to gauge the mood of the community. In Waltham Forest, the Community Cohesion Task Group has representatives from the council and the third sector. It includes networks such as the Faith Communities Forum, the Community Consultative Group and the Asian Women’s Network. The Task Group is a forum through which key messages are shared across the community and feedback is received.
- 125** Joint assessments undertaken to inform the Prevent strategy should also include an overview of international events, which may provide useful background material. There is a role here for government and the Security Service to share more information and analysis relating to international issues that may improve the understanding of the scale of the problem in a particular council area. Intelligence material should be assessed for relevance to specific local UK communities and where possible, made available to the appropriate BCUs and councils.

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

## Case study 5

### Wycombe

Empowering Muslim women: The Muslimah – make a difference

The Muslimah project was set up to establish a greater role for Muslim women following the counter-terrorism raids in High Wycombe. It aimed to deliver a tailored programme drawing on principles rooted in the Islamic faith, to empower Muslim women to become more active as citizens, to promote an inclusive message to younger generations and challenge the cultural barriers that prevent Muslim women from having a voice in issues affecting their lives.

One hundred and twenty-seven women and girls attended twelve workshops comprising four sets of three sessions. The sessions covered: Proud to be a Muslimah; Mother and Daughter Relationships and Education and Mother's Role.

The project sought to address a number of areas, but in particular created a safe environment using workshops, role plays and case studies to discuss and tackle the issues surrounding extremism, radicalisation and the impact that these have on the whole Muslim community.

A number of key issues were identified from the workshops, including the representation and voice of Muslim women and girls within their own community, the limited knowledge and awareness of the rights given to women and the external perceptions of Islam. Since the workshops, the Muslim women and girls that participated have felt more confident and empowered to act as role models in encouraging interaction and inter-faith dialogue in schools, mosques/Islamic centres and local councils.

### Key learning

**Partnerships need to understand how their local communities may be influenced by links with other communities in the UK and abroad. This needs to be reflected in the local narrative. Partnerships also need effective relationships with key people in the community who can share information about the local impact of issues emerging elsewhere.**

### Understanding what communities are doing for themselves on Prevent

“The more we can bring community members to the fore, the more powerful the message”

#### Council chief executive

- 126** Some community members commented that preventing violent extremism is perceived as the council, police or government doing things *to*, rather than *with* the community. While early funding through PVEPF allowed relatively limited community consultation, the assurance of funding for the next three years should allow time for more structured engagement.

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**127** Some of the most effective Prevent initiatives are led by local community members with support from partner agencies. This helps give greater credibility to, and ownership of, joint Prevent delivery plans. We heard a strong message that partners need to understand what communities are doing for themselves and help sustain that community activity.

**128** Young people and women are a key audience for Prevent. A focus on embedding Prevent in youth engagement, for example, through safer schools partnerships (SSPs) and women's groups could provide long term benefits, helping to build strong and resilient communities. Existing mechanisms, such as the reporting system around *Every Child Matters* (Ref. 15) for the abuse of children and young people, could form the basis for engaging with professional groups such as teachers and youth workers.

**129** Members of the community we met were willing to engage with and support Prevent activity. Understanding existing networks within mosques and community groups is vital if partnerships are to engage effectively.

**130** Sharing information between agencies about key individuals within communities avoids duplication of effort and increases opportunities for networking on common issues. Some interviewees expressed reservations about 'self appointed community representatives' who were not trusted by the community. There is a dilemma for partnerships in developing the most productive community linkages. A number of sites reported the significant value of KINs in developing strong individual relationships between police officers and members of the community.

**131** It is important that police, councils and other partners understand what communities are doing for themselves, providing focused support to assist communities to become more resilient.

### **Key learning**

**Local partnerships need to understand, capture and draw on the work that the community is doing for itself as part of an effective local Prevent approach. Effective engagement with respected members of the local community assists with this. Councils and police need to ensure their relationships with key community members remain current and relevant. This includes engaging with new people emerging as respected community leaders, and particularly with young people.**

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

## Case study 6

### Luton

#### Working with communities

Working in partnership with the Islamic Cultural Society, the Council used PVEPF funding on two projects working directly with and involving the Muslim community.

- The Ambassadors for Islam project worked with a group of 24 young Muslims to build understanding and equip them with the theological arguments to counter extremist ideologies. The project aimed to dispel misapprehensions and develop the participants as citizens, leaders and positive role models, so that they can become ambassadors for mainstream Islam.
- The Muslim education forum – the Changing Voices project enabled young people to explore and debate identity, citizenship and political and social issues in a safe environment. The project worked with two theatre companies and three local schools. It delivered interactive performance and discussion sessions to 800 pupils. This was followed by the distribution of a citizenship resource pack to all Luton High Schools.

Both projects have built capacity and awareness within the Muslim communities to help tackle the causes of violent extremism at a local level. They have also raised awareness and understanding of Prevent from all sections of the community. In particular, the training and education received by the participants of the Ambassadors for Islam has enabled them to challenge the opposition to the project by a small group holding extreme views.

### Using the right language to empower communities on Prevent

“People are worried about saying the wrong thing and being labelled as racist”

#### Council chief executive

“Switching language from ‘extremism’ to ‘community resilience’ causes confusion. The key thing is about who the words come from – if they come from a respected religious or community member they will have more impact than if it comes from a government minister”

#### Council director

**132** We found a wide range of sensitivities and differences of views between elected members, police officers, council staff and community groups about the language used when addressing preventing violent extremism. In one interview the term ‘violent extremism’ itself upset a member of the community. In some places, senior partnership managers expressed concern about the impact that language could have on the community. In other places, there was a preference for plain speaking so that issues could be dealt with openly rather than being avoided or disguised as something else.



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- 133** Where Prevent is mainstreamed within community safety and community cohesion activities, the language is more focused on ‘citizenship’, ‘safer and sustainable communities’, ‘sense of belonging’, ‘tolerance’, ‘resilience’ or ‘empowering communities’. In other places where the Prevent approach is a distinct programme of activity, or is identified explicitly within cohesion plans and sustainable community strategies, the term ‘preventing violent extremism’ is used and understood widely at all levels.
- 134** In the places where language is not seen as a major concern, it was evident that a common vision and purpose had been agreed with communities. It focused on the outcomes that Prevent activity seeks to achieve. In these places, partners talk about ‘creating a peaceful, prosperous area without fear of intimidation or terror’. They promote the message that counter-terrorism in the UK is aimed at criminally motivated individuals, and does not seek to criminalise innocent individuals or communities.
- 135** Sensitivity to language means that not all local public services are fully addressing Prevent in their local plans for fear that using more direct language may exacerbate community tensions. The key issue for partnerships is to establish what is most appropriate locally, accepting that, inevitably, not everyone will be content with the result. This can be done through established consultative arrangements such as inter-faith groups, KINs and local surveys.
- 136** Local sensitivities on the use of language are influenced by national and international factors. Interviewees suggested that discussions with local communities on the Prevent approach have been adversely affected by the language used by government and the media on foreign policy matters, terrorist attacks in the UK and abroad and the launch of the PVEPF fund.
- 137** Difficulties still exist within communities where English is not the first spoken language. Some sites identified influential local people who spoke little English and were consequently seldom heard. Where NPTs have developed effective links with the community, the language barrier is less of an impediment.
- 138** The Home Office Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU) has circulated guidance (Ref. 16) on the use of language. It would be helpful if the government could take the views of local partnerships into account when determining the best way to communicate Prevent policies. This would provide opportunities for councils and the police to involve local communities in contributing to the development of national thinking around the use of language.

# 4 Findings: Partnership working

## Case study 7

### Blackburn with Darwen

#### Effective use of language

The council and police have been proactive in using the right media and language to keep communities informed. This has helped to create a level of trust and understanding about responses to local and national events. Examples of the activities undertaken include:

- Holding public meetings for local communities to raise concerns and receive information from the police on the responses to events such as at Forest Gate and Glasgow airport. These events have enabled local communities to discuss with the council and police how Blackburn would respond to any similar event in the future.
- All Community Together (ACT) Now, which has brought over 400 people together from different communities, cultures and faiths in a safe environment to discuss issues around terrorism.

Each of these approaches has been supported by staff trained in the appropriate use of language in the context of Prevent work.

### Key learning

**Great care is needed with the language used when engaging with local communities on Prevent issues. The effective use of language can be a bridging mechanism, helping build greater trust and understanding. But language can also be a barrier to success. Local partners need to understand what sort of language is most likely to secure progress on the Prevent agenda.**

### Having a strategy to engage communities and media on Prevent

- 139** Some councils and police forces identified the need for a joint communications strategy for internal and external audiences, setting out the local approach to Prevent and why it has been adopted. There was common agreement that the strategy should be clear on the language to be used and should set out the procedure to be followed in the event of a local incident. The communications strategy needs to be kept up to date

to ensure it remains fit for purpose in a constantly changing environment.

- 140** All sites identified the need to ensure that local media were properly briefed and understood the purpose of local Prevent activity. This was particularly the case in those places that had experienced intense international media interest in high profile terrorist incidents.
- 141** For example, when dealing with the media in July 2007, Kirklees police and the council developed jointly agreed key messages about local priorities. The consequence management group agreed the most appropriate spokesperson to talk to the media. Conversely, in another site, the lack of a coordinated strategy led to mistrust within the community as messages to the media from the police force were released before key individuals were briefed. A series of media skills workshops was undertaken in Birmingham to provide representatives of the Muslim community with an understanding of the

media, helping to develop skills in speaking publicly on behalf of the local community. This initiative was described as very useful in enhancing the capacity of the local community to project positive messages.

**142** Most areas have a communication strategy either focused upon Prevent or linked to wider cohesion work. The LDE showed that it is important to identify the most effective channels of communication to different sections of the community especially where, for language or cultural reasons, members of the community may not read local newspapers, posters or leaflets. In Leicester, there is a multicultural advisory group led by the editor of the local paper, promoting positive community relations and cohesion using the media. Alternative means such as using announcements through places of worship or local radio are useful. In Wycombe, the inclusion of the local media

in a communications forum has assisted in a broader understanding of media handling (see below). In Ealing, the websites administered by the council and police are linked and give clear details of a wide range of positive activity in the borough.

**143** A process for communicating rapidly with key individuals within communities (e.g. ring-round, telephone tree, email, text messaging) as part of a clear communication strategy can minimise speculation, rumour and mistrust and aid the delivery of key messages.

### Key learning

**Effective community engagement is vital to delivering a local Prevent approach. Local partners should have a communications strategy to provide local communities and media with a clear understanding of the purpose and nature of Prevent activity in their area.**

## Case study 8

### Wycombe

#### Muslim Communications Forum

The Muslim Communications Forum was established following Operation Overt, which had a significant impact on the local community in High Wycombe.

The initial response to Operation Overt showed that statutory bodies had a limited understanding of the structure of the local Muslim community. This led to them sometimes dealing with contacts with limited influence and failing to understand the conflicts that existed within the community and between the mosques in High Wycombe.

A Muslim community and diversity officer spent time learning more about the individuals, organisations and institutions within the Muslim community, identifying where and why conflict existed. Muslim institutions also identified a nominated institutional head, religious lead and nominated spokesperson.

Since establishing the Forum, complex and sensitive issues on relationships and extremism have been discussed between senior representatives and the police. The Forum has also been developed to take account of the views of Muslim women and young people.

The police and the Muslim community see the Forum as a good Prevent initiative as it helps local people in understanding roles, responsibilities and approaches. There are plans to develop the Forum so that it becomes a focal point which is representative of the Muslim community and involves partner agencies.

## 4 Findings: Partnership working

### Schools are a vital link to the community on Prevent and need to be better engaged

- 144** We found inconsistent levels of engagement and awareness of Prevent in schools, colleges and higher education institutions, largely due to the nervousness of staff in using the term ‘preventing violent extremism’, which was seen as potentially unhelpful when used with pupils. There was also concern as to how the community might view the passing of information to police about children who might be vulnerable to becoming involved in violent extremism. A toolkit to help schools contribute to the prevention of violent extremism was published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) in October 2008 (Ref. 17).
- 145** Effective school involvement programmes have the potential to reduce the vulnerability of young people to extremism. In Bradford, projects are run through schools and resource centres for young people to explore and tackle violent extremism. A common approach was to emphasise the importance of faith and citizenship-based activities in promoting understanding between communities. This was seen as a step towards developing more cohesive communities, which in turn would aid the Prevent agenda without being specifically about violent extremism. Projects included producing a DVD to explore inter-generational views of the local community; linking mainstream schools with madrassahs to develop citizenship activities; and holding workshops to explore the differences between faiths.
- 146** A number of the schools projects visited were in place before PVEPF funding was made available. In Kirklees, a school twinning project has been in place for a number of years, linking schools that are culturally and ethnically diverse (see below). An alternative approach adopted in a few school-based projects dealt directly with violent extremism. In a number of sites, a play entitled ‘One extreme to another’, addressing issues of Muslim and right-wing extremism, has been used in schools and within youth projects to initiate discussion about extremism.
- 147** Some sites have already identified the importance of involving schools when dealing with issues such as knife and gun crime and gangs. They have plans to increase the police presence through the Safer Schools Partnership (SSP) scheme. This approach was seen as capable of encompassing the Prevent approach, but based upon an existing programme to build relationships between police and young people.
- 148** Where SSP officers are in place there was concern about the lack of effective briefing of school staff on Prevent issues. This includes ensuring that staff know about the characteristics that may help to identify individuals vulnerable to violent extremism.

## Case study 9

### Kirklees

#### Schools Twinning Project

The Kirklees School Twinning Project links schools which are culturally and ethnically diverse. The aim of the programme was to raise cultural and religious awareness, understanding and promote community cohesion.

The project has been very successful in creating learning opportunities, increasing awareness, and in bringing children from different ethnic backgrounds together. It has provided a real opportunity for children to increase their knowledge and understanding about the diverse nature of communities in Kirklees and to think differently about themselves and about people who are perceived as 'different'.

Impact of the Twinning Project has included:

- a greater understanding of each others culture and religious beliefs;
- the realisation that despite the ethnic diversity there are many similar interests such as sport and leisure;
- new friendships being forged and in many cases maintained; and
- changed attitudes, perceptions and challenging stereotypes.

Outcomes are best summarised by comments from a child who participated, 'I learnt that I could work with all sorts of other people, and that just because you think something it doesn't mean that it is true in reality.'

### Key learning

**A long term approach to Prevent requires engagement with young people, particularly in educational establishments. Partnerships should review and prioritise the implementation of programmes focusing upon young people, in particular SSP, police officers and other youth services in areas with identified vulnerability.**

## 4 Findings: Partnership working

### Using the Channel Project to involve communities in Prevent

- 149** The Channel Project (Channel) seeks to intervene in the lives of people who may be vulnerable to the message of violent extremism and whose behaviour raises concerns, bringing them to the attention of the police or other agencies. These individuals may not have committed any criminal offence but information is received, sometimes from community members, about their activities. This might include accessing terrorist websites, frequently talking about taking violent action or other negative behaviours. Channel seeks to provide a mechanism, within a strictly defined process, for individuals or groups to be supported and diverted from violent extremism.
- 150** Channel is structured around two key processes. These are a risk assessment of an individual's vulnerability to becoming violently extreme, and an individual's influence on others. The focus is on preventing radical beliefs escalating to violent extremism and not on preventing individuals, groups or places from expressing radical or extreme views or behaviour. If the risk assessment suggests that an intervention is required to prevent a person or group moving towards violent extremism, then police, statutory partners, councillors and appropriate local community leaders will consider what community interventions are available and appropriate in each case.
- 151** Channel was trialled in two places and is now being rolled out across more sites. It was described by those running the scheme in one area as a high risk strategy. It has the potential to result in mistrust and suspicion. At another site where Channel was being developed there was resistance from council officers and community members who had doubts about the approach and the process for referrals. Learning from the Channel schemes to date is limited and a full evaluation is being conducted by the Home Office together with ACPO.
- 152** Early indications from our discussions with those who have had close dealings with Channel, are that it presents significant opportunities to divert vulnerable individuals away from violent extremism. Channel enables individuals who have concerns about people in their community to pass information about their concerns, in the knowledge that there is a range of multi-agency interventions that will be considered. It is important to build in safeguards to ensure accountability and to maintain community confidence, even though they may be costly and time consuming.
- 153** One of the key strengths of the Channel approach is that it promotes the active engagement of community members. However, it was also commented that, to be effective, Channel needs to be built on existing community and partner relationships. It is not a mechanism for developing those relationships.

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## Appropriate skills and knowledge

### Developing the skills and capacity to deliver Prevent

“We need intelligent officers with an understanding of faith issues”

#### NPT inspector

**154** Many sites make good use of the skills of key individuals who can effectively engage with communities on Prevent. These are typically individuals with deeper training, cultural or religious experience, or with language skills. In some places, they are supported by police and council staff who can provide specialist advice about faith, culture and engagement with communities.

**155** However, it was apparent in a number of places that there is an over reliance on these individuals to deliver across the breadth of the Prevent agenda, both within councils and BCUs. The positive relationships being built between these individuals and the community appear to be at the expense of enabling all staff members to confidently engage with all local communities. This was particularly clear in the interviews with some NPTs. In one place, when asked about engagement with local mosques, a group of neighbourhood policing staff agreed that “PC ..... does that”. All interactions with the local mosques took place through one Muslim officer. Although this officer was highly skilled and effective, members of the NPT were not building the necessary knowledge and relationships with the local Muslim community.

**156** Contingency arrangements should be in place in the event that key staff are not available. NPTs and frontline council

services need to have the resilience to prevent undue pressure being placed on a few key staff in this very challenging area of public engagement.

### Key learning

**Local partnerships should consider creating a specialist team and sharing resources to provide more capacity to direct and deliver the Prevent approach. Over-reliance on a few key individuals can be avoided by ensuring engagement by all members of NPTs and front line council services.**

### All staff need to be aware of Prevent so that it forms part of core business

“We have not engaged well with the BCU”

#### Council officer

**157** There is little evidence of briefing material being used by agencies to ensure a common understanding among front line staff that contributes to a shared approach. In a few places, as part of consequence management arrangements, shared and agreed material is provided to ensure that police and council staff have the same message relating to a local CT event.

**158** Understanding of the local Prevent approach and the background to violent extremism is variable among both front line council staff and police officers. There is a need to ensure that staff understand that their role in neighbourhood policing and neighbourhood management includes identifying the unusual and maintaining the flow of information from within the community. Front line staff need to be reassured that the information they provide is valued. This could be achieved by an effective feedback mechanism.

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## 4 Findings: Partnership working

**159** Many forces are now putting in place Counter Terrorism Intelligence Officers (CTIOs) who are closing the loop in the flow of information between the intelligence community and NPTs. These officers are CT specialists. They generally form part of the BCU intelligence structure and act as a conduit for passing information to and from the CT Network. In most places, they also have a role in briefing police officers, police staff and, in some places, key individuals within partner agencies, on terrorism.

**160** Joint briefing or training of NPTs and front line staff from other partner agencies could help establish relationships, provide a common level of understanding about an area's vulnerability and support closer joint working on Prevent. There were only a few examples of this happening and, in most cases, these were ad hoc events rather than part of a sustained programme.

**161** Operation Nicole is a table top exercise developed by the ACPO Police Prevent Team. It provides opportunities for police and community members to role play their response to a CT arrest within their community. This initiative was referred to at a number of sites. It was seen as a useful mechanism for improving understanding of police operational planning among community members. It also provides the police with a better appreciation of the impact that their operations have on local people.

### Key learning

**Preventing violent extremism is a subtle and complex issue that needs to be mainstreamed into service delivery. Partnerships need to ensure that all staff have an awareness of Prevent so that it becomes part of core business, encouraging more effective information flows at a local and neighbourhood level.**



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# 5 Findings: Assessing success

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## Success in Prevent is difficult to define and measure – a significantly under-developed area

“Finding ways of sharing learning and experience from pathfinder work is very important”

**Council chief executive**

**162** There is a lack of knowledge in some partnerships of how Prevent activity works, what success will look like in the long term and how it can be measured. We found that many sites had yet to implement a process to measure long term effectiveness or to define success.

**163** The relatively small sums of money for PVEPF funding in 2007/08 did not justify the creation of complex performance management systems by local public service partners. However, as the funding provided during CSR 2008/11 has been significantly increased, it is important that a structured process is put in place to evaluate the impact of the Prevent approach.

**164** Councils and police recognise the need to assess the effectiveness of Prevent and their contribution to building cohesive and resilient communities. They have long experience of demonstrating outcomes from the use of resources. In the first year of PVEPF, quantitative input measures were used to evaluate activities, such as the number of participants at events and whether projects were completed on time and within budget.

**165** We found examples of local partnerships using external consultants or academics to undertake more detailed assessments.

These include:

- an evaluation of the effectiveness of a PVEPF programme including an assessment of organisational structures, workshops, surveys and interviews. It concluded that the attitudes of participants had changed following their involvement in the programme; and
- an evaluation of PVEPF funded projects limited to interviews with those engaged in the development and delivery of the programme. It did not assess the effectiveness of the programme itself through participant interviews.

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## There is a lack of shared research and knowledge on what works in preventing violent extremism

**166** Local partners lack the necessary understanding of the factors that contribute to a person becoming a violent extremist. The Guide for Local Partners (Ref. 2) provided some indicators under the title ‘Understanding Radicalisation’ and acknowledged that there is no single profile of a violent extremist or of a pathway to radicalisation. The Central Prevent Analysis briefing issued in August 2008 identified some of the main factors that drive the radicalisation process.

**167** A number of academics have researched the factors that influence individuals towards violent extremism or that create the environment in which violent extremism can flourish. Cardiff University has developed a ‘situational model’, to define what factors ‘push’ individuals away from their community and ‘pull’ them towards violent extremism (Ref. 18). One author suggests that terrorism is caused by the

# 5 Findings: Assessing success

complex interplay of forces operating at three different levels; personal disaffection, an enabling group and a legitimising ideology (Ref. 19).

- 168** There is a need for the current national and international knowledge and academic findings to be made available to local partners in a user-friendly form. It could help partners train staff to recognise the complex factors that indicate a potential vulnerability.
- 169** Interviewees identified the need for central guidance that can be adapted to the local environment, providing a consistent approach. A suite of diagnostic indicators would be a useful start to help assess success (for example, surveys, incident reporting and local consultation) but, crucially, this needs to be put in context through the local narrative. This links directly to earlier comments on sharing information to understand local vulnerability.
- 170** There is a role for the Home Office and CLG to commission research that can link the factors that contribute to radicalisation with a suite of potential characteristics available to local partners. In the next year, CLG plans to undertake a comprehensive national evaluation of local Prevent work.

## Key learning

**The Home Office and CLG should commission and distil the best local, regional, national and international information (including academic research), on the causes of violent extremism and provide this to local partnerships.**

## Measuring progress on Prevent

- 171** National indicator 35 (NI35 – Building resilience to violent extremism) has been adopted by 5 of the 14 areas we visited as a priority target in the LAA. Two sites have adopted it as a local indicator in the first year. NI35 guidance acknowledges that it is difficult to measure outcomes directly. The indicator assesses the standard of local areas' arrangements to build resilience to violent extremism. Councils and police will be required to report performance which will be considered as part of the CAA and APACS frameworks.
- 172** CAA will place an emphasis on how well councils and their partners are delivering their priorities. By having a strong local Prevent narrative and an agreed partnership approach, LSPs should be able to demonstrate their awareness of the issues that they face relating to preventing violent extremism and the measures they are taking locally to minimise risks. CAA will focus primarily on outcomes and the prospects for improvement.
- 173** There were mixed views about the value of NI35. Some felt it provided clarity about expectations. Others commented that it was too rigid and mechanistic to measure performance effectively and to target funding. Their concern was that the four strands are measuring the Prevent delivery process rather than assessing the outcome. There was also a view in some places that, in adopting NI35, councils were labelling the local Muslim community as being a problem and vulnerable to violent extremism.

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**174** During the LDE, some measures were suggested that might help local partners to monitor progress and which could complement the use of NI35:

- whether the local narrative, agreed by partners and the community, describing the local vulnerability to violent extremism is up to date, complete and reflects most recent international and national influences;
- the effectiveness of specific interventions for those individuals at risk of extremism;
- the increasing capacity, capability and resilience of communities;
- the extent to which local people think they can influence local decisions;
- the extent to which Prevent projects draw on the work of the community and how public service partners learn what communities have done for themselves;
- the increasing engagement with communities to identify those vulnerable to ideologies including educated and prosperous individuals as well as relatively deprived people; and
- the extent to which different forms of extremism that exist in other faiths, religions and groups (i.e. not only the Muslim community) are recognised and addressed.

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## Assessing the prospects of success in Prevent work – desirable characteristics

**175** During our work, it was suggested that the prospects of success can be assessed by the extent to which partnerships display a number of desirable characteristics, including:

- effective information collection is undertaken within partner agencies and information is properly shared;
- partners have established effective monitoring arrangements for Prevent initiatives;
- indicators that reflect community confidence and engagement have been reviewed and incorporated into the Prevent approach, for example the reporting of hate crimes;
- the views of participants engaged in specific Prevent projects are sampled through interviews, workshops or questionnaires;
- wider community views on Prevent are obtained through public surveys (for example, Birmingham will be including Prevent questions in a survey of 8,000 households for their LAA);
- the views of a Prevent community consultative group comprising respected faith and secular members are regularly sought and inform the Prevent approach; and
- peer reviews of projects in neighbouring areas or those with similar community or cultural backgrounds are undertaken.

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# 5 Findings: Assessing success

**176** These characteristics should be tailored to take account of the local context and should draw on the factors that contribute to violent extremism. In any future assessment of local performance, government and regulators need to be mindful of the local context when making comparisons across areas within CAA or APACS.

## **Key learning**

**The process measures in NI35 may help partnerships in the early stages of developing their local Prevent narrative and responses. The Home Office and CLG should use information on the causes of violent extremism and the desirable characteristics set out above to evolve NI35 so that it becomes more focused on the achievement of outcomes. Any measures applied to Prevent need to be understood and set in the context of the local narrative.**

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## **Model for assessing success and what works in Prevent**

**177** We found that the evaluation of Prevent outcomes was generally seen as a bolt-on rather than a systemic process to support improvement. Including evaluation within a structured cyclical process should help to drive improvement and learning. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has Principles for Best Practice in Clinical Audit, which may provide a model on which to build an evaluation regime (Ref. 20). At Figure 5 is a possible model which has been adapted to demonstrate the key steps:

- starting with clarity about what needs to be done, including the success criteria;
- through an assessment of what is happening;
- into a mechanism to analyse and review how things need to change; and
- leading to a change in approach.

**Figure 5**  
**Assessing success**



**Key learning**

Local partners need to ensure that assessing the success of the local Prevent approach is embedded in their partnership structures.

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# 6 | Taking Prevent forward

- 178** Feedback from the councils, police and local partners that we visited as part of this exercise confirmed that it has provided a useful opportunity to take stock and learn about approaches and experiences from other local areas in receipt of PVEPF funding.
- 179** The chief executives and BCU commanders who joined the advisory group to inform the development of the LDE approach and provide challenge and advice have been invaluable to this exercise. The group has accumulated knowledge and experience about what works in this challenging area of activity. They have developed their relationships across regions and are sharing ideas about taking this forward at national and local levels. All agreed that there is a need to share the knowledge of this group so that all areas can benefit from their experience.
- 180** The LDE has also provided the Audit Commission and HMIC with information about the national policy and local delivery contexts, which we can use in our development of Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). It has helped us to build our respective capacities in respect of the Prevent agenda. We are now identifying how we can ensure that the Audit Commission's CAA Leads are able to build the consideration of Prevent into the first year of CAA.
- 181** HMIC will be undertaking an inspection of all police forces in England and Wales during late 2008 and early 2009. It will assess the progress of police forces in implementing measures that support the seven strategic objectives outlined within the *Police Prevent Strategy and Delivery Plan*. This will include an assessment of capacity and capability building, the identification of good practice, and the use of CSR funding allocated to support police Prevent activity.
- 182** The new performance framework for the police, APACS, will be introduced in 2008/09. HMIC will be able to take account of the learning about what works well as it undertakes assessments in future. Similarly, the Audit Commission will consider how the LDE can inform the approach to the assessment of Fire and Rescue Services.
- 183** It is early days and there is a lot more for local public services to do to come to terms with this agenda and support those who are vulnerable or at risk of violent extremism. The LDE has shown that the steps being taken already in the sites visited need to be considered by all councils and police in receipt of the PVEPF.

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- 184** The LDE has also highlighted and shared the learning from those areas with first hand experience. The nature of the challenge and the global context for this threat also means that, despite sound efforts by all, an incident might still occur. Should this happen, effective consequence management is critical. The LDE has found some sound arrangements for consequence management that can be adopted by others now. All partnerships need to take this learning on board to minimise the risks that they face locally.
- 185** Prevent cuts across all the priority outcomes within LAAs and sustainable community strategies including safer, stronger and cohesive communities, addressing inequality, meeting housing needs, supporting families and the well-being of children and young people. This underlines the need for the Prevent approach to be 'everybody's business' within mainstream local public services. The partnerships that recognise this are making progress on bringing the local communities alongside them to help deliver the Prevent agenda.
- 186** A key message from the LDE sites was that government needs to become less interventionist and more supportive of local solutions. This means that partnerships, government departments and regulators will all need to rely more on local performance management arrangements and frameworks based on local priorities.
- 187** Learning what communities are doing for themselves is vital. We discovered that there is more for local public services to do in engaging and empowering communities and community leaders to deliver on Prevent. Partners such as the fire and rescue services, youth services and higher and further education need to become more closely involved in delivering the Prevent approach locally.
- 188** The LDE has strengthened existing relationships and fostered new ones among senior officials across the regions. It has opened up a dialogue with Security Service about improving information sharing and has prompted all involved to take stock, considering how their individual contributions fit together.
- 189** This joint endeavour between HMIC and the Audit Commission was made possible by the high levels of commitment and cooperation shown by the local areas involved. We wish to extend our thanks to all involved.

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# Appendix 1 – Key themes followed during the LDE

- 1 What have the council, police and partners set out to deliver to prevent people becoming involved in, or supporting, terrorism or violent extremism?

*We are looking to learn from councils and the police what works well and what doesn't work in delivering a cohesive and strategic approach to Prevent alongside and within other key strategies. We are looking for good examples of:*

- Local Prevent approaches adopted by councils, police and partners based on local risk and detailed community knowledge.
- Specific local Prevent plans funded by PVEPF funding or risk-based action plans to support delivery of the 'Prevent' objectives.
- How Prevent activity can be prioritised in strategies and plans.
- How the council's and police wider strategies and plans can contain specific actions to help develop a community in which all are welcome and accepted; and how Prevent can become a component of other plans and strategies such as:
  - Sustainable Community Strategy;
  - Local and Multi Area agreements;
  - Strategies for:
    - Community Safety;
    - Community Cohesion;
    - Engagement and consultation;
    - Communication and media;
    - Education, skills and employment;
    - Children and young people; and
    - Regeneration, deprivation and economic development.

- 2 What local Prevent initiatives and actions have been delivered and their outcomes?

*We are looking to learn from councils, police and partners what works well and what doesn't work in gathering Prevent knowledge and intelligence, delivering Prevent actions and initiatives, in day-to-day working and working with others and within the community. We are looking for good examples of:*

(a) Prevent knowledge and intelligence

- How to develop and share good quality community knowledge, mapping and analysis (including the use of any Prevent 'vulnerability indices' or equivalent) and how to keep knowledge up to date and share it within and across partner organisations.
- Information currently shared with councils/police/ other partners and examples of any gaps/barriers in information sharing.
- Improving Prevent understanding and engagement with Muslim communities.
- How councils, councillors and partners are developing their own knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism, and of the national and local Prevent objectives.

(b) Delivering Prevent actions and initiatives

- How to create strong links between identified local need and targeting of Prevent initiatives, based on local risk and detailed knowledge of local communities.
- Specific local community initiatives and actions to develop a community, in which Muslim people are integrated, welcome and accepted.



- Targeted local initiatives and actions to promote shared values to support and nurture civic and theological leadership, and develop capacity and skills in Muslim communities.
  - How Prevent initiatives are specifically supporting young people, children in need of protection, women and the most vulnerable communities and individuals.
- (c) Prevent in day-to-day working
- How managerial and political leadership, capacity and structures can be used and adapted to deliver Prevent.
  - Developing knowledge, ownership, engagement, responsibility and accountability for Prevent.
  - How Prevent objectives can be mainstreamed in day-to-day service delivery.
- (d) Prevent - working with others
- How the council, police and partners enable efficient, routine, appropriate and mainstreamed sharing of community knowledge, intelligence and reports across CDRP and other partners.
  - How to develop and support working relationships at all levels in delivering Prevent – in the LSP, with the local police and other partners to improve awareness of the role of counter terrorism staff.
  - Effective joint leadership, capacity and structures and shared working arrangements, resources and processes to address Prevent (for example between BCUs, neighbourhood police and the council).
  - How and where shared working arrangements and processes can work to engage other key partners in Prevent.
- How working flexibly and beyond local boundaries can help address the Prevent agenda.
  - Joint consequence management plans, exercising and shared learning.
- (e) Prevent - within the community
- How effective community work can be facilitated by the council, police and partners to raise awareness of Prevent in the local community and improve knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism among the whole community.
  - How to help communities isolate violent extremist activity, encourage support and cooperation with the police and security services; and to develop the communities' capacity to deal appropriately with problems where they arise and support diversionary activity for those at risk.
  - How to develop effective engagement of local faith and community leaders, role models, networks and forum in the Prevent agenda.
  - Promoting Islamic awareness among Muslim communities and local communities more widely.
  - Developing a shared understanding that racism and extremism are unacceptable.
  - Helping Muslims identify themselves as a welcome part of a wider British society and are accepted as such by the wider community.
  - How to encourage and support networks for at risk and vulnerable groups within local communities.
  - Positive media and communication to support cohesion and Prevent.

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# Appendix 1

## (f) Prevent – using the PVEPF funding

- How dedicated funding can be used effectively to support wider Prevent activity.
- The process for community consultation and engagement when determining the suitability of PVEPF funded initiatives, and the mechanism to ensure that the allocation of funding was founded on effective use of information.
- How the council ensures effective monitoring processes are in place for oversight (e.g. audit arrangements, whether PVEPF funding is ring-fenced or aggregated with other funds, performance framework and link to outcomes).
- Whether the distribution of PVEPF funding could be improved.

## 3 What has the council (with partners) learned from its Prevent work to help drive future work?

*We are looking to learn from police and councils what works well and what doesn't work in learning from the evaluation of local Prevent initiatives and using this to drive plans for future work. We are looking for good examples of:*

- How identified barriers have been overcome and how knowledge of the extent and impact of gaps and any remaining barriers affects delivery.
- How to ensure the sustainability of current and future Prevent capacity and plans.
- How best to evaluate evidence of success in local Prevent initiatives in the wider community and in mainstreaming Prevent to ensure maximum impact and value for money from Prevent (PVEPF) funding.
- Looking beyond local boundaries to learn what works in Prevent.

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# Glossary of terms

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
AP	Association of Police Authorities
APACS	Assessments of Policing and Community Safety
BCU	Basic Command Unit
CAA	Comprehensive Area Assessment
CDRP	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
CLG	Communities and Local Government
CONTEST	Government CT Strategy
CSR	Comprehensive Spending Review
CT	Counter Terrorist
CT Network	Comprises CTC, CTUs and CTIUs
CTC	Counter Terrorism Command
CTIO	Counter Terrorist Intelligence Officer
CTIU	Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit
CTU	Counter Terrorism Unit
DCSF	Department for Children Schools and Families
GMP	Greater Manchester Police
GPMS	Government Protective Marking Scheme
HMIC	Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
IDeA	Improvement and Development Agency
ISP	Information Sharing Protocol
KINs	Key Individual Networks
LAA	Local Area Agreement
LDE	Learning and Development Exercise
LGA	Local Government Association
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
NASS	National Asylum Seekers Service
NCTT	(ACPO) National Community Tensions Team
NI	National Indicator
MPA	Metropolitan Police Authority
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
OSCT	Office for Security and Counter Terrorism (Home Office)
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism
PVEPF	Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund
RICU	Research, Information and Communications Unit
SB	Special Branch
SSP	Safer Schools Partnership
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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