



Home Office

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Homeland Security
Group
Home Office
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London
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Andy Frost
Service Manager for Community
Safety
Dorset Council

CC: Ian Grant, Programme Co-ordinator

9 May 2023

Dear Andy

Annual Prevent Duty Assurance 2022/2023

I am writing as the Home Office Regional Prevent Adviser for the South West region, covering Dorset.

Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015¹ places a duty on certain specified authorities - including all local authorities in England and Wales, and Scotland - in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. The Act states that the authorities subject to the provisions of the Act must have regard to the Prevent Duty guidance² when carrying out the statutory Prevent Duty. The full list of specified authorities subject to the provisions can be found in Schedule 6 to the Act.

As Regional Prevent Adviser/ Prevent Account Manager my responsibilities include ensuring that all local authorities within a region are meeting the statutory Prevent Duty.

As part of this, the Home Office completes an annual assurance exercise, which includes working with local authority partners to evaluate the extent to which they are meeting the Duty. This process normally includes asking the person with operational responsibility for Prevent within each local authority (i.e. the Prevent Lead or Prevent Coordinator) to complete a self-assessment using the Prevent Local Authority Performance Self-Assessment Tool within the Prevent Duty Toolkit³. This toolkit includes ten benchmarks and a set of performance criteria. The assurance process uses a scoring system based on a scale of 1-5. A score of 3 against a benchmark indicates that that Duty is being met,

¹ [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](http://legislation.gov.uk)

² [Revised Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

³ [Prevent duty toolkit for local authorities and partner agencies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

whereas a score of 1-2 indicates that statutory responsibilities are not being met, and a score of 4-5 indicates that the Duty requirements are being exceeded.

Once the Prevent Lead has considered their scoring, I would usually arrange a meeting with the Local Authority Prevent Lead to discuss why certain scores have been applied and may request evidence to support some scores. By the end of this process, we would expect to have a set of agreed scores for your area, and have identified up to three recommended actions, where necessary.

We recognise that every area is different, and that the threat and risk is variable, both in terms of its nature and scale. Our expectations of performance in lower threat areas may be different to a higher threat area where we would expect local authorities to have considered prioritising the delivery of the Prevent Duty, including having dedicated Prevent resource in place.

The scoring also reflects the requirements of the Duty as opposed to an in-depth evaluation of how effective your local authority is in reducing risks from radicalisation and terrorism. This is particularly true of Benchmark 5 given Channel is subject to additional assurance processes, through the Annual Assurance Statement (AAS).

Some benchmarks are more directly related to mitigating the threat e.g. benchmark 1 – *Risk Assessment*, whereas others are more tangential e.g. benchmark 9 - *Engagement*. Therefore, benchmark scores will not be equally important in terms of mitigating the threat, and the importance of meeting some benchmarks will be greater than others.

Please note that benchmark 5, in relation to your Channel Panel, has not been scored as part of this process as an assessment of Channel performance will now be linked to Channel observations, which are completed by separate Home Office Channel Quality Assurance Leads, who may also wish to draw on an assessment of AAS, which has only recently been issued to local authorities for completion.

We are aware that some scores may have decreased from last year despite there being no noticeable decline in performance. This reflects that the Regional Adviser network and performance process last year was new we have taken a more rigorous and consistent process to reviewing performance, including more routinely requesting evidence to substantiate scores.

Summary of Performance

In terms of your performance, overall Dorset Council is exceeding the requirements of the Prevent Duty in most areas and meeting them in some.

The following actions are recommended in order to assist you in responding to the outcome of this process, namely:

1. Utilise the recent Home Office Prevent Communications Toolkit to develop your Communications and Community Engagement Task & Finish Group work programme
2. Ensure that membership of the Prevent Partnership Board includes representatives from the relevant military establishments in the county
3. Ensure that mechanisms are in place for partners to work together to recognise and disrupt any issues or events promoting extremism within the county

I have attached a summary of your agreed scores as an annex to this letter. I would be very happy to discuss these scores in more detail with you, or your wider partnership.

Given that these scores also reflect the performance of your Local Prevent Partnership, I would encourage you to share these scores with your Prevent Delivery Group (PDG), with a view to including any actions resulting from this process in your Prevent Action Plan and report the outcome from this process with your local strategic governance group. In addition, I would encourage PDG representatives from specified authorities to make their senior leadership team aware of this assessment. Please note that we may wish to write directly to Chief Executives in future to ensure that they are aware of how your local Prevent Partnership is performing. As such, you may wish to share this overview with them.

I would like to thank Ian for engaging with this process, including completing and returning the self-assessment, and for their time in discussing their scoring with me. I appreciate that this can be an onerous process, though we know from the feedback we receive from local authorities that this process has been helpful in clarifying the requirements of the Duty, and identifying areas that may need additional attention. It has also been helpful in identifying areas of good practice, which we routinely share with other local authorities to support their own work to build full compliance with the Duty.

We look forward to continuing to work constructively and collaboratively with you over the coming year.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Andrew Williams.

Andrew Williams
Prevent Regional Adviser



| | Benchmark | Score 1-5 | Summary of scoring |
|---|--|-----------|---|
| 1 | Risk Assessment The organisation has a local risk assessment process reviewed against the Counter Terrorism Local Profile | 4 | <p>A Situational risk assessment is in place and refreshed annually on the back of the CTLP publication.</p> <p>The CTLP questionnaire is used to gather information from various Council departments and partners, which has been forwarded to CT Police.</p> <p>A summary of the risk assessment and delivery plan is taken to the Councils Senior Leadership Team and a separate report is taken to Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.</p> |
| 2 | Multi Agency Partnership Board There is an effective multi-agency partnership board in place to oversee prevent delivery in the area. | 4 | <p>There is a pan-Dorset Partnership Board in place, which involves all relevant partners who fall under the Prevent duty. Prevent & Channel champions within the local authority also meet on a regular basis. Dorset Council now provide Vice-Chair role for the Partnership Board.</p> <p>The Strategy is now agreed and driving work through Task & Finish Groups</p> <p>Council Portfolio Holder is involved.</p> <p>There is maybe a need to look at who from military/MoD is involved in the partnership</p> |
| 3 | Prevent Partnership Plan The area has an agreed Prevent Partnership Plan. | 4 | <p>A Delivery Plan in place based upon the CTLP and risk assessments. In the main actions fall to the local authorities and Police. 4 priority areas have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Development • Education • Community Engagement • Local problem-solving mechanisms <p>The Plan also includes CTLP recommendations.</p> <p>T&F groups are in place to deliver against priority areas.</p> |
| 4 | Referral Pathway There is an agreed process in place for the referral of those identified as being at risk of radicalisation. | 4 | <p>Dorset use the national referral form, which is publicised on websites and through training. There have been increased referrals over the past twelve months and more Channel Panels cases, but this has dropped off recently.</p> <p>The Council have investigated how wider safeguarding issues are addressed within Adults and Children's Services to ensure all referrals are received into the relevant service. This work will continue as the impact from the Independent Review recommendations are introduced nationally and any changes to statutory guidance.</p> |
| 5 | Channel Panel There is a Channel Panel in place, meeting monthly, with representation from all relevant sectors. | N/A | |

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|----|---|---|--|
| 6 | <p>Problem Solving Process There is a prevent problem solving process in place to disrupt radicalising influences.</p> | 3 | <p>Some structures in place to facilitate response to operational issues, such as local resilience forum & operational partnership co-ordinating groups, who understand community tensions and would be able to co-ordinate partnership actions in response to any issues.</p> <p>Mechanisms in place to ensure issues are shared with the relevant teams. This has been identified as a priority within the action plan and discussion are taking place with Neighbourhood Policing around addressing these issues.</p> <p>Prevent is more visible due to sharing of information with senior leadership team.</p> |
| 7 | <p>Training Plan There is a training programme in place for relevant personnel.</p> | 4 | <p>A training plan is being further developed with BCP.</p> <p>Mandatory Prevent training is a requirement for all LA staff and it is also included in induction. Take-up is monitored and completion rates are high.</p> <p>Using the HO online modules, rather than face to face training for the majority of staff whilst safeguarding leads will undertake other Channel & specialist training.</p> <p>Face to face training for Channel Panel members has been undertaken.</p> <p>Looking at what other members of staff need, particularly those without access to IT. DfE resources circulated to relevant staff.</p> |
| 8 | <p>Venue Hire and IT Policies There is a venue hire policy in place, to ensure that premises are not used by radicalising influencers, and an effective IT policy in place to prevent the access of extremist materials by users of networks.</p> | 3 | <p>Venue hire and IT policies are in place for Council buildings and public IT networks. Clauses written into leases and hiring policies for Council owned buildings.</p> <p>Contracts within Children's and Adults all have relevant clauses ensuring that Prevent is embedded into services.</p> |
| 9 | <p>Engagement Activity There is engagement with a range of communities and civil society groups, both faith-based and secular, to encourage an open and transparent dialogue on the prevent duty.</p> | 3 | <p>Through the Prevent Partnership there is some community engagement and also through the Councils' Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion work.</p> <p>A T&F Group has been created to look at this area of work. Plans in place to look at a possible week of action, looking at young people, online risks etc</p> <p>Elected Members are also briefed on Prevent and have an important role in community engagement. Engagement with Town & Parish Councils has also been undertaken.</p> <p>Safeguarding Board are looking at how they engage faith communities in wider safeguarding work.</p> |
| 10 | <p>Communications There is a Communications Plan in place to proactively communicate and increase transparency of the reality / impact of prevent work and support frontline staff and communities to understand what prevent looks like in practice.</p> | 3 | <p>A Communications Plan is being developed for the Prevent Partnership, and some Prevent specific Comms work is undertaken, but currently on an ad hoc basis. The communication plan will detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standing calendar of events for raising awareness of Prevent • Annual week of action in the autumn • Updated prevent webpages on the council sites • Updated intranet pages listing LA prevent leads in DC for advice and guidance • Development of a Prevent leads network for sharing advice and reviewing anonymised case studies • Updated programme of training, including face to face • Identifying target groups for engagement and upskilling on Prevent to enable a Trusted Voices approach identifying extremism • Continuation of the BCP/Dorset Prevent newsletter <p>The Council website contains details about Prevent and Channel, including details of how to refer issues of concerns.</p> |

Prevent Local Authority Performance Scoring Criteria

Benchmark 1 - Risk Assessment

The organisation has a local risk assessment process reviewed against the Counter Terrorism Local Profile

1. Local authority's Prevent leads uninformed about local threat of radicalisation and terrorism. CTLP not utilised and no local Prevent risk assessment process in place.
2. Prevent risk is described in broader, cross-partner risk assessments. Prevent partnership understanding is limited and relies solely on CTLP to understand risk.
3. Prevent activity is informed by a risk assessment, utilising the CTLP and local understanding. Risk assessment process is limited (e.g. low partnership engagement) and is not widely disseminated.
4. Prevent activity largely corresponds to local threat. Risk assessment process incorporates evidence from a combination of local knowledge, data and the CTLP. LA officers proactively work with police to develop the CTLP. Risk is presented to the Prevent partnership.
5. Risk assessment process clearly integrates all local risks as well as corporate risks such as the risks of not meeting the Prevent Duty. Relevant local partners of appropriate seniority are all aware of these risks and regularly discuss evolving threat and emerging issues. The assessment drives Prevent activity.

Benchmark 2 - Multi Agency Partnership Board

There is an effective multi-agency partnership board in place to oversee Prevent delivery in the area.

1. Little or no governance of Prevent.
2. Only single agency governance of Prevent.
3. Prevent is nominally overseen by a multi-agency group but rarely discussed.
4. Delivery against the Partnership Plan is clearly driven by a multi-agency group, with oversight of referral pathways and Channel. Some ad-hoc partnership work occurs with neighbouring local authorities.
5. There is an effective Prevent Partnership Board (including the use of existing multi-agency forums) driving delivery against the Partnership Plan and is established within the local authority governance structure. There is proactive involvement of a designated elected member and impact of Prevent work (including impact on local communities) is effectively monitored. Local authority Prevent leads share relevant information between Partnership Board and regional Prevent network meetings.

Benchmark 3 -

The area has an agreed Prevent Partnership Action Plan.

1. No Prevent action plan in place.
2. A Prevent action plan exists but is owned by a single agency with no link to risk assessments. Actions have no timeframes or owners and are not regularly reviewed.
3. Multi-agency Prevent plan in place which references recommendations from the CTLP or risk assessment. Actions are reviewed infrequently and owned by one or two individuals.
4. The multi-agency Prevent plan describes statutory obligations. All relevant partners are named and involved in its development. Actions are clearly linked to the risk assessment, have ambitious timeframes and are owned by a broad range of partners.
5. The action plan achieves all of the above and is overseen by the Multi Agency Partnership Board. Partners are regularly held to account for actions. The plan includes progress updates which are disseminated across the organisation and used to inform future delivery.

Benchmark 4 - Referral Pathway

There is an agreed process in place for the referral of those identified as being at risk of radicalisation.

1. No agreed local process in place for the referral of those who are identified as at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
2. The agreed local Prevent referral pathway is inconsistently applied and little understood by those likely to generate or receive safeguarding referrals. There are frequent delays with identifying Prevent concern and sharing information with relevant partners.
3. Information on the agreed local referral pathway is accessible to those likely to generate or receive safeguarding referrals. Prevent referral processes are not necessarily mainstreamed into regular safeguarding systems. Counter-Terrorism Police are immediately notified of all Prevent referrals for deconfliction.
4. Clear and agreed Prevent referral pathways are understood and utilised by those likely to generate and receive safeguarding referrals. The process complements and functions well with mainstream safeguarding mechanisms. Information on referral pathways is documented and easily accessible. Cohorts likely to generate and receive safeguarding referrals are proactively targeted for training on Prevent referral pathways.
5. Feedback is provided where appropriate to the referrer. Process aligns with mainstream safeguarding systems, ensuring a holistic approach to safeguarding needs. Individuals not supported through Channel are referred on to other multi-agency services where appropriate. The success of referral pathways is reviewed regularly using relevant data, with training plans adapted accordingly.

Benchmark 5 - Channel Panel

There is a Channel Panel in place, meeting monthly, with representation from all relevant sectors.

1. No named chair or deputy. A panel may exist but has not met for a significant period of time.
2. Panel meets occasionally. No terms of reference or other standard operating papers exist. Lack of clarity over the named chair and deputy. Partners rarely attend. Limited use of interventions. Cases not regularly reviewed at 6/ 12 months.
3. Named Channel chair but no deputy. Panel meets sporadically with representation from some partners. Interventions are tailored to the individual. It is sometimes unclear when cases are formally adopted or closed.
4. Panel has a named chair and deputy. Panel functions well and meets regularly with most partners in attendance. Intervention providers and other bespoke interventions are used appropriately. Panel systematically reviews closed cases at 6/12 months.
5. Channel chair and deputy are trained, independent from other Channel roles/ oversight measures, and part of the national network. Panel meets monthly and has clear TOR, uses risk assessment tools, commissions a range of holistic interventions. Accurate record keeping, cases systematically reviewed and timely submission of the annual Quality Assurance Statement.

Benchmark 6 – Prevent problem-solving process

There is a Prevent problem-solving process in place to disrupt radicalising influences.

1. No formal mechanism or strategy in place for identifying and disrupting radicalising influences, including individuals, institutions and ideologies present in the area.
2. Named leads exist but may have a limited understanding of the local risk and mechanisms for disrupting radicalising influencers. Any disruptions activity is solely managed by the police.
3. Established multi-agency mechanisms are in place to identify and disrupt local radicalising influences. Mechanisms align with and involve local police.
4. Local partners, such as local businesses and education establishments, are engaged in the process as required. Information sharing is consistent and effective, including ad-hoc insights provided to the Home Office. Mechanisms and tactics for disruption are tailored to the local need but may include responding to radicalisers who operate via recruitment in public spaces, out of school settings or one-off events.
5. All relevant local partners are fully aware of how to respond tactically to radicalising influences and are involved in the coordination and delivery of the strategy. Detailed and timely local insights are shared with the Home Office. All named leads are trained in disruptions and have suitable security clearance. Deputies are named.

Benchmark 7 – Training

There is a training programme in place for relevant personnel.

1. No Prevent training taking place.
2. Training exists only as signposting to e-learning and is voluntary. No record of those undertaking learning.
3. Suitably experienced trainers undertake face to face sessions which are proactively advertised to all relevant staff. Raw attendee numbers are collated. Links to E-learning are proactively circulated via internal communications. All relevant staff in the partnership and its commissioned services understand when and how to make Prevent referrals and where to get additional support.
4. Suitably experienced trainers undertake face to face sessions. Staff mandated to attend training based upon role in organisation. Training is offered to different teams and sectors (including education) and is successfully tailored to the audience. Records kept of attendance. E-learning targeted at relevant practitioners and attendees asked to retain evidence of completion. All local statutory partners understand when and how to make Prevent referrals and where to get additional support.
5. Strategies in place to identify those requiring training. Prevent training embedded in all staff induction programmes. Plan in place to identify and deliver training jointly with statutory partners, ensuring clear uniformity and reduction in mixed messages. Strategy in place to prioritise cohorts (using Prevent referral source data to justify where possible), upskill others to conduct training, and collaborate with key partners (CTP, Health, Probation). Prevent leads regularly engage with learning & development opportunities.

Benchmark 8 – Venue Hire and IT Policies

There is a venue hire policy in place, to ensure that premises are not used by radicalising influencers, and an effective IT policy in place to prevent the access of extremist materials by users of networks.

1. No regard to Prevent Duty evident in local authority's venue hire or IT policies.
2. Some regard to Prevent Duty evident in the venue hire guidance issued for council owned properties. However, mitigation measures have not been effectively communicated to staff responsible for taking venue bookings. Basic firewall in place for IT systems operating in council buildings.
3. Audit of council-owned venues undertaken to understand and identify risk. Clear policies created for council owned venue hire and included in contracting arrangements. Venue staff have a sound awareness of the local risks and threats. Firewall blocks terrorist content for council staff.
4. Venue hire policies in place for all publicly owned venues and staff responsible for bookings are trained on how to conduct appropriate open source due diligence checks. A directory of all publicly owned venues exists. Information on local risks and threats is shared

across agencies. Events are disrupted where risk and threat are identified. Firewall blocks terrorist content for council staff and IT provision for the public (libraries etc).

5. Information shared, in collaboration with partners such as counter-terrorism police, with all relevant venue staff on local risks and threats. Venue staff are aware of who to contact for additional support or information. Multi-agency tasking is in place to analyse issues and disrupt activity in partnership. Those responsible for other venues (parish councils, faith & community organisations, private sector companies) are encouraged to adopt similar policies. Firewall blocks terrorist content for publicly provided WiFi hotspots. The local authority report concerns to relevant national bodies (Home Office, Department for Education, NHS England).

Benchmark 9 - Engagement activity

There is engagement with a range of communities and civil society groups, both faith-based and secular, to encourage an open and transparent dialogue on the Prevent Duty.

1. No local Prevent-related community engagement taking place.
2. Some community engagement takes place on an ad hoc basis – such as in response to incidents – but no regular programme undergoing with a significant focus on Prevent, and no evidence of join-up with local partners.
3. Community engagement takes place at regular but infrequent standpoints, such as annual events and bi-monthly engagement with key groups. Engagement provides an opportunity for dialogue on Prevent with local citizens, including members of the public and key community figures such as school governors, faith leaders and youth workers. Consistent join-up with local partners, e.g. CSOs, to deliver engagement.
4. Basic engagement strategy in place, with community engagement taking place at regular, frequent standpoints – such as monthly engagement with key groups and two-three roundtable events per year depending on the area's unique circumstances. Strategy reviewed semi-regularly and some join-up with local partners to bolster approach. Prevent Advisory Group or similar permanent structure(s) in place but may not meet regularly and membership not fully representative of the local community. Occasional, ad hoc sessions with elected members. Evidence that engagement is leading to increased awareness and trust in Prevent or removal of other local barriers.
5. Bespoke engagement strategy in place and community engagement is fully embedded in business-as-usual Prevent delivery. Engagement spans community and elected members, and is regularly reviewed and refined to ensure it targets the right audiences and is impactful. Engagement through an established Prevent Advisory Group or similar permanent structure(s) that meets regularly (such as quarterly), allowing sufficient focus on Prevent and which is representative of the local community. Evidence that engagement is leading to significantly increased awareness and trust in Prevent, as well as other bespoke local objectives and/or removal of local barriers.

Benchmark 10 – Communications

There is a communications plan in place to proactively communicate and increase transparency of the reality / impact of Prevent work, and support frontline staff and communities to understand what Prevent looks like in practice.

1. No activity to illustrate local Prevent activity through local authority website, or other channels such as newsletters or social media. No other proactive communications activity.
2. Limited and sporadic activity (e.g. in response to specific incidents) on owned media channels containing reference to the Prevent programme, such as the local authority website, social media or newsletters. Owned media channels are kept updated with accurate contact details. No communications strategy in place and no other proactive communications activity taking place, such as media or resource development.
3. No communications strategy in place but evidence of regular proactive communications activity, such as monthly news stories on owned media channels such as newsletters, and quarterly development of comms materials such as case studies (where possible). Press opportunities are flagged with the Home Office comms team for support and some instances of proactive opportunities being highlighted – such as local achievements. Owned media channels have accurate contact details and detailed information about Prevent.
4. Communications strategy in place that works to set objectives (such as increasing transparency and awareness, or reducing inaccuracies about the programme). Opportunities for positive press are consistently shared with Home Office comms and reactive opportunities are flagged for support. Regular (e.g. monthly) publication of new materials and resources to owned channels, such as newsletters or on the Local Authority website. Owned media channels have accurate contact details and detailed, localised information about Prevent.
5. Extensive communications strategy in place, tailored to local objectives and audiences. Approach reviewed/ evaluated annually or more frequently where appropriate. Strategy is aligned with partners' activity with regular comms join-up, such as sharing each other's resources if applicable. Evidence of comprehensive and regular implementation, such as publication of information through owned media channels – such as statistics, and development of bespoke resources such as videos, where possible. Area volunteers to support national publications and regularly flags opportunities for proactive press to the Home Office.