

PREVENT DUTY: Preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
Briefing
April 2015

Prevent Duty

Prevent is part of the Government's counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The *Prevent* strategy addresses all forms of terrorism and prioritises according to the threat posed to national security. The strategy has three main objectives:

- Objective one: Ideology - respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism;
- Objective two: Supporting vulnerable people - prevent people from being drawn into terrorism; and
- Objective three: Work with key sectors and institutions - address risks.

The new legislation received Royal Assent in February 2015 and will be reviewed regularly.

The police undertake an annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) which outlines the threat and vulnerability from terrorism-related activity within a specific area. The CTLP is a restricted document and only discussed with Chief Executives. Oxfordshire is assessed as a low risk area.

Key aspects of the legislation

The new legislation increases local authority (and other specified authorities) responsibilities to prevent radicalisation across the three Prevent strategy objectives, especially in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children. In two tier areas, county and district councils will need to agree proportionate arrangements for sharing the assessment of risk and for agreeing local action plans. The County Council is the responsible authority for the Channel Panel (with the Police) – more information below.

The guidance proposes that local authorities should establish or make use of an existing local multi-agency group to agree risk and coordinate Prevent activity. Strategic oversight of Prevent will be held by the Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership (OSCP), which already oversees the Channel Panel. Whilst OSCP will have this oversight role for Prevent county-wide, each individual organisation will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the specific requirements of the duty which includes:

- Providing appropriate training for staff (and elected members) to understand what radicalisation means, why people may be vulnerable to it, how to spot the signs and how to report a potential referral to the Channel Panel;
- Not providing a platform for extremists through allowing them to hire publicly-owned venues or enabling them to access public resources to disseminate extremist views;
- Not working with organisations who are engaged in any extremist activity or espouse extremist views;
- Maintaining appropriate records to show compliance with responsibilities and provide reports when requested; and
- Having effective information sharing procedures in place that are proportionate and comply with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Oxfordshire Safer Communities Partnership is the strategic group for Prevent countywide with local delivery through the four district Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).

Channel Panel – safeguarding those vulnerable to radicalisation

The Channel Panel is a key part of our work to prevent terrorism through supporting those who may be vulnerable to violent extremism by assessing the nature and extent of the potential risk and, where necessary, providing an appropriate support package tailored to an individual's needs. Channel is about safeguarding individuals at risk. It is about early intervention to protect and divert people away from radicalisation and terrorism.

Channel is a multi-agency approach to protect people from risk of radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between the County Council (adults and children's services, youth offending service), district council (community safety partnerships), police, health sectors (NHS and Clinical Commissioning Group CCG) and probation services to:

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

As Oxfordshire is a low risk area, there is no regular standing Channel Panel. Once a referral has been made the panel meets every 4-6 weeks to provide early intervention to protect and divert the individual(s) away from radicalisation.

Through its Chairman (Dave Etheridge) the panel regularly reports to the Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council and to the relevant Local Policing Area (LPA) Commander in Thames Valley Police on Channel referrals.

Making a referral to Channel

If you are concerned about any adult or child who you think may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism please contact your local children's or adult safeguarding team in the usual way.

A clear process is in place to ensure that the right people are referred to the Panel. If a referral is made, an assessment is carried out by the South East Counter Terrorism Unit (SECTU) to ensure it is not malicious and the individual is suitable for the Channel process. A support plan is put in place which is formally reviewed every 6 months. The Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Oxfordshire's Channel Panel referrals is **Shaun Greenough - SECTU Channel Coordinator** Mobile: 07900 709126 or email: preventreferrals@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Training

There is an on-line training package that can be completed by all staff to raise their awareness about Channel: http://course.ncalt.com/Channel_General_Awareness

There is also a 'train the trainers' event for safeguarding leads in organisations to enable them to train their frontline staff in spotting the signs of radicalisation and making a referral. This training is called Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) – more information is available from TVP's Prevent team.

If you have any general queries about prevent you can email them here: Prevent@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

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