

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP (LSP) - UPDATE

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the work of the LSP and in particular current activities to deliver NI 35 – Preventing Violent Extremism. The paper is split into three sections. Section 1 will begin by providing some context for the work including a brief overview of the national framework. Section 2 will follow and will provide further elucidation on local initiatives and some of the key activities being pursued in Slough. Finally section 3 will detail current performance levels and the future work planned to help Slough achieve the targets set for 2011.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is requested to resolve that the report be noted.

3. Background

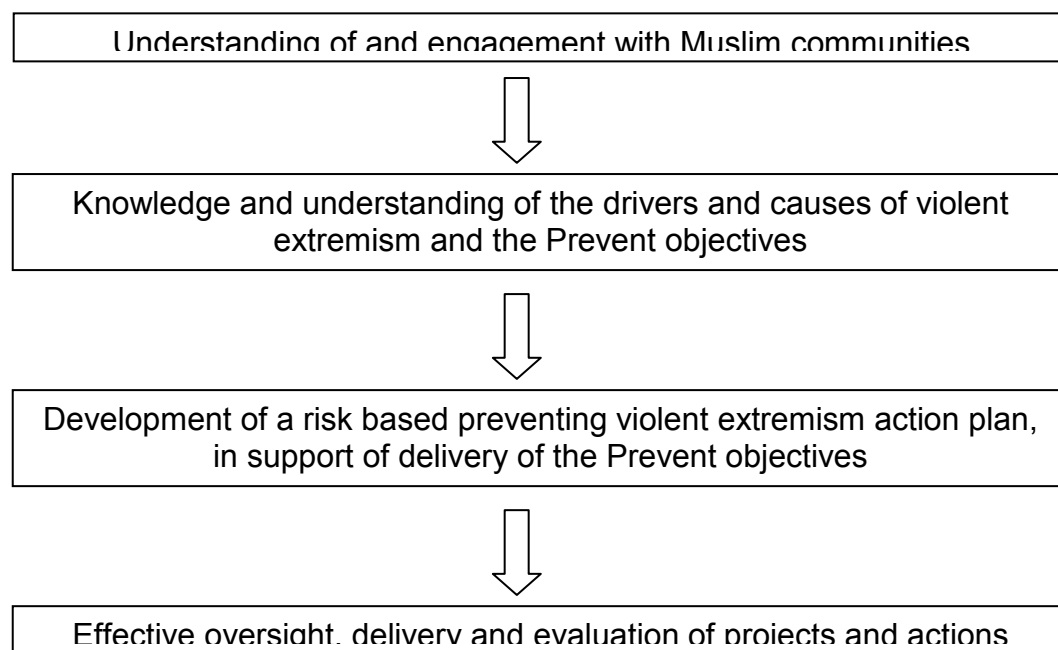
The Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) agenda forms one part of the UK Government's wider counter terrorism strategy, 'CONTEST'. Active since 2003, CONTEST involves four main 'work streams' namely Pursue, Prevent, Protect, and Prepare (HMG 2009). PVE forms part of the Prevent work stream, the main concern of which is 'stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism' (HMG 2009: 55).

The PVE delivery strategy paper states that '[t]he most severe terrorist threat currently comes from individuals and groups who distort Islam to attempt to justify murder and their attacks on our shared values' (HMG 2008: 3). The paper outlines 6 six key priorities for 'preventative' work:

- Undermine extremist ideology and support mainstream voices
- Disrupt those who promote violent extremism, and strengthen vulnerable institutions
- Support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists

- Increase the capacity of communities to challenge and resist violent extremists
- Effectively address grievances
- Developing understanding, analysis and information and improving strategic communications

These high level priorities have been translated into a national indicator which every local authority has to report on. National Indicator 35 requires local authorities, working in conjunction with partners (Police, schools, YOTs, Third Sector etc) to build resilience of local Muslim communities to withstand and actively work against violent extremism. The framework of NI35 measures the performance of local authorities against four separate, yet inter-related criteria.



Performance is measured using a self assessment format with local authorities scoring themselves from 1-5 against the criteria above (1 being poor and 5 being excellent)

An important facet of the national work is the explicit focus on targeting the Muslim community. From the initial PVE strategy launched in 2007 through to more recent updates in 2009 – the need to focus PVE activities on the Muslim community has been repeatedly stated. Indeed, the funding formula used to determine the level of grant that a Local Authority area will receive is linked to the size of the local Muslim population with greater population concentrations receiving larger funds. The rationale for this is two fold. Firstly there is a claim that the single biggest threat from violent extremism originates from within a small section of the Muslim community. As the Prevent Strategy makes clear

The most severe terrorist threat currently comes from individuals and groups who distort Islam to attempt to justify murder and their attacks on our shared values...The Prevent strategy sets out how we are addressing this threat to improve the security of the UK in the long term

Secondly, it is argued that whilst other forms of violent extremism remain a problem (animal rights, white supremacists etc) – there are other streams of work that are addressing these.

4. The Local Picture

NI35 and the LAA

Given the importance of PVE for the LSP, NI 35 features amongst the list of the Partnership’s key priorities as reflected in the Local Area Agreement. The table below shows the baseline for Slough and the three year target as reflected in the LAA.

Indicator Ref	Baseline	2008/9 target	2009/10 target	2010/11 target	Named Partners
*NI 35 Building resilience to violent extremism.	Average: 2.3	Average: 2.9	Average: 3.3	Average: 4.2	*Slough Borough Council
	Part 1 - 3	Part 1 - 3	Part 1 - 3	Part 1 - 3.25	Thames Valley Police
	Part 2 - 2	Part 2 - 2.5	Part 2 - 3	Part 2 - 3.5	
	Part 3 - 2	Part 3 - 3	Part 3 - 3.5	Part 3 - 5	
	Part 4 - 2	Part 4 - 3	Part 4 - 3.5	Part 4 - 5	

Governance and Management

The governance structure currently employed follows a bifurcated model with both a Management Group and wider SAVE Steering group. The former has overall responsibility for day to day activities including developing a risk based action plan, communication strategy and ensuring partnership engagement. The Management group is comprised of senior officers from within and without Council and includes the Chief Executive of the Council and TVP’s LPA Commander. The SAVE Steering group provides a wider forum for managing the SAVE agenda and includes representation from a number of local Third sector partners. Whilst lacking the decision making capability reserved for the Management group, the steering group plays an important advisory and consultative role which informs some of the decisions made.

The work of SAVE is brought under the remit of the Community Cohesion Delivery Group of Slough’s LSP.

Periodic update reports are taken to the PDG, the CDRP (Safer Slough Partnership) as well as the LSP Board.

Funding allocation

Funding for SAVE comes primarily from the Area Based Grant. Following a CLG formula which linked the total amount due to the size of the Muslim population, Slough received £145,000 in year one (2008/09). A further amount of £173,000 was secured for year 2 (2009/10) with a final allocation of £195,000 due in year 3 (2010/2011).

5. Delivery

The general focus for the Prevent in Slough work has been to address the four criteria listed on page 2. However it is important to note here that whilst the aforementioned criteria adopt an almost sequential pattern – delivery against these has not been similarly linear. In other words, SAVE has not sought to deliver all activities relating to criterion 1 in the first year before moving on to address the others in subsequent years.

Rather, given that delivery against the LAA is stretched over a three year period, SAVE has adopted a more sophisticated approach that attempts to both meet the overarching objectives but also localised priorities. This approach is particularly important as whilst there is a national framework that must be adhered to – delivering a project as complicated and sensitive as PVE must ensure that local nuances are taken into account and local need identified and met. Following this approach, the Prevent work in Slough has sought to focus attention on

- Support projects that engage Muslim women and Muslim youth
- Build capacity amongst the mosques and with mosque leaders (including Imams)
- Developing a shared vision that clearly articulates how the community of Slough is united in its fight against Violent Extremism
- Ensure active partnership engagement to support Prevent delivery
- Widen the participation of less engaged groups and individuals

Within this some of the notable projects that have been delivered over the past two years includes

- Mapping of the Muslim Community – delivered by the Change Institute, this project provided a detailed analysis of the local Muslim community including size, ethnic profile, sectarian affiliations etc. The report also provided research into the feasibility of establishing a town-wide association of Muslim organisations.
- Youth/Women’s Forum – Work to establish a Muslim Youth Forum and Muslim Women’s Forum is progressing. The former has now been established and recruitment is underway for a dedicated Muslim Youth Worker to help oversee activities.
- MOSAIC – Work with schools has been an important avenue to deliver on the youth element of the SAVE work plan. A notable project currently being delivered in a number of Slough schools is MOSAIC. A national project which has the backing of Prince Charles, this project aims to raise aspirations within young Muslims through using high profile and successful Muslim role models.
- The Channel Project – a project being delivered by Thames Valley Police but with partner involvement, the Channel project attempts to identify and provide Support for Vulnerable Individuals (SVI). An interim panel has been established to over see the work and make a judgement on support packages for referrals and a co-ordinator to oversee the project has recently been appointed.

- SAVE Conference – held on 24th March 2010 this marked the first event of what is intended to be an annual gathering. The event gave a chance to the SAVE partnership to showcase the work that had been done and allowed communities to raise questions and concerns they had. A number of workshops were held giving an opportunity to local stakeholders to engage in the work of SAVE and have a direct input into a number of key projects including the Visioning workstream and the emerging SVI agenda.
- Slough Visioning – led by Slough Equalities Commission, this strand of work has the aim of developing a shared vision amongst Slough's communities about what the town stands for in response to Violent Extremism. A key facet of this work is its attempts to engage a host of communities and capture views beyond the Muslim community.

In addition to the above a number of individual events have been held including

- Parenting Programme – Working with family Action Slough parenting courses were run targeting Muslim parents and hosted in Muslim venues. The nationally established family links model was used and adapted to include references to Islamic teachings. Recognised as national good practice.
- Summer Holidays 2009 Radio RSL – giving local young Muslims a chance to run and local radio station.
- Images of Elsewhere Theatre Company – 5 workshops delivered at Baylis Court and East Berkshire College to develop script for play about a Muslim girl who's brother is arrested for terrorism.
- Hear My Voice – a summer camp for Muslim girls involving poetry, arts and sports
- Eid Event – daytime event with the aim of engaging Muslims that have not yet participated in the PVE work
- Madrassa Development and Training – building on the Mosque training on the first year – this body of work focused on training Muslim Imams on how to engage and meet the needs of second/third generation Muslims.
- Radical Middle Way – cultural event – RMW are a national outfit supported by CLG. They hosted an event in Slough as part of the national tour and included scholars, artists, speeches and music.

The focus for activities over the course of 2010-2011 is to build on some of the work already completed and will include

- Training and awareness raising – a tailored training programme will be developed and delivered to raise understanding of Prevent and to improve the capacity of local agencies to better engage the Muslim community.
- Resources have also been allocated to improve the engagement with the Muslim community and in particular the work SAVE does with Third sector partners.

- Evaluating the impact of SAVE – a project has been commissioned that will formally assess the impact of SAVE and the various projects that have been delivered. It is important to note here that assessing the impact of a project such as SAVE in terms of outcomes secured is problematic. To measure the extent to which a community is resilient enough to withstand and prevent ‘violent extremism’ is an extremely difficult task. The factors influencing violent extremism are complex and varied. To effectively deal with these (and questions remain as to whether this is entirely possible) would take a long-term commitment and certainly something which goes beyond the lifespan of the LAA.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this report was to both provide some clarity on the work of SAVE, the national framework driving the agenda and how the SAVE partnership have sought to implement this agenda locally. The report also provides some clarity on the governance framework being used to manage PVE and the funding settlement for the three years up to 2011. Finally the report sheds light on some of the notable projects that have been delivered by SAVE over the preceding two years and the work planned for 2010-2011.