

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

THE PREVENT STRATEGY AND PROGRESS IN SLOUGH

1. **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Neighbourhoods and Community Services (NCS) Scrutiny Panel with an update on the Prevent Strategy and actions undertaken in Slough.

2. **Recommendation**

The Panel is requested to note the progress being made on the Prevent Strategy and consider how Slough Borough Council (SBC) could offer additional support to counter-terrorism efforts.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

Prevent is explicitly targeted at safeguarding people, ensuring that extremist messages are confronted and protecting communities from the threat of extremism, radicalisation and terrorism. Given this remit, it supports the following SJWS priority:

- Protecting vulnerable children

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

Prevent's focus is on reducing extremism and radicalisation, it also provides support for the delivery of the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives.
- Slough will be an attractive place where people choose to live, work and visit.

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

There are no financial implications to the content of this report.

(b) **Risk Management**

Recommendation	Risk/Threat/Opportunity	Mitigation(s)
That SBC's work is not properly aligned with efforts from partner organisations	Early warning signs or intelligence of interest to all sides is missed at the stage when remedial action can be taken	Appointment of a Prevent Coordinator at SBC and equivalent positions in other organisations. SBC has also appointed a Prevent Education Officer due to start late March; this further strengthens the work of Prevent within all aspects of the Education Sector.

(c) **Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

The Prevent Strategy is part of SBC's responsibilities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, as outlined in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (Section 26).

(d) **Equalities Impact Assessment**

The production of this report has not required an EIA. Equalities legislation and SBC policy on the matter is assessed in all areas of Prevent's work.

5. **Supporting Information**

Introduction – The Prevent Strategy

- 5.1 The Prevent Strategy is now an established part of local Government work, and is supported by the Home Office. The Strategy is an initiative explicitly designed to provide practical help and guidance to the public in order to stop people becoming terrorists or offering support to proscribed terrorist organisations. Its focus is on all forms of extremism and supports SBC's efforts to ensure that community cohesion is at the heart of the authority's actions.
- 5.2 As well as local Government, a range of institutions are involved in supporting Prevent's actions. The Strategy is based on close relationships between the police, schools, universities, prisons, religious institutions, health services, children's services, community groups and charities as well as other parts of the local community. Given this, the role of the Prevent Co-ordinator is pivotal in ensuring that the efficacy of SBC's work is maximised.

- 5.3 Through actions such as community roundtable events in conjunction with the Home Office, the setting up of the Prevent Advisory Group and regular community engagement. This has initiated conversations with communities to challenge behaviours which threaten the cohesiveness of Slough. The Channel Panel (a multi agency panel, involving a range of stakeholders) to manage, discuss and deliver support to individuals who are targeted by extremists who radicalise them for their own purposes, the Prevent Strategy aims to deliver targeted interventions.

The Slough context

- 5.4 Slough has had a Prevent Coordinator since September 2015; the role is to provide support to the local authority in delivering the Prevent Strategy. The main focus of this role is to work with individuals, community groups, faith institutions, education, and health, Police, to oversee and manage Prevent projects.

SBC's actions to date

- 5.5 As of 2017/18 funding has been provided to recruit a Prevent Education Officer (PEO) to work in the Education Sector. The PEO will start late March. To date a number of engagement activities have been delivered in the Education Sector, e.g. delivery of Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP), Prevent briefings, this also includes sessions to parents (two session so far). The Slough Prevent Advisory Group (SPAG) meets on a bi-monthly basis and has recently invited the Home Office, Head of Engagement to discuss the future developments of Prevent following the terrorist attacks in 2017. Also the visit of Faith Matters to discuss the rise of hate crime and Islamophobia incidents following the terrorist attacks. The SPAG is chaired by the community and the Prevent Coordinator provides support to this group and provides the means for the two way conversation between the community and the Home Office/SBC.

Likely future developments

- 5.6 The Panel is asked to consider how either the Panel itself or Councillors in general could offer more support to Prevent. As one example, the Prevent Coordinator would like to brief not just the panel but all elected members in relation to Prevent.
- 5.7 The partnership work with Thames Valley Police (TVP) at a strategic level via the Prevent Board, locally the TVP Prevent Officers and Partners who sit on the Channel Panel all contribute to achieving the progress and success of Prevent in Slough.

6. Comments of Other Committees

This report has not been considered by any other SBC Committees.

7. Conclusion

The success of Prevent is based upon strong partnership work. It is imperative elected members are briefed and kept abreast of developments. It is important to distinguish between 'perception' and 'reality'.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - Prevent leaflet (more available on SBC website)

'B' - Channel leaflet (more available on SBC website)

9. **Background Papers**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-strategy-2011>