

**REPORT TO:** Education & Children's Services Committee

**MEETING DATE:** 10 June 2025

**BY:** Executive Director – Education & Children's Services

**SUBJECT:** Prevent in East Lothian

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## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide information and assurance to Committee about our local processes around Prevent.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- (i) Note the content of the report.
  - (ii) Note the confidence in our multi-agency processes to support people who may be susceptible to radicalisation.

## **3 BACKGROUND**

### **CONTEST and Prevent**

- 3.1 The overall aim of the national counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, is to reduce the risk from terrorism to the UK, its citizens and interests overseas, so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence. Prevent remains one of the key pillars of CONTEST.
- Prevent: To stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
  - Pursue: To stop terrorist attacks.
  - Protect: To strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack.
  - Prepare: To mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.
- 3.2 The aim of Prevent is to stop people from being drawn into supporting terrorism or becoming terrorists. Prevent also extends to supporting the rehabilitation and disengagement of those already involved in terrorism.

## **Objectives of Prevent**

- 3.3 The objectives of Prevent are to:
- Tackle the ideological causes of terrorism.
  - Intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation.
  - Enable people who have already engaged in terrorism to disengage and rehabilitate.

## **Local processes**

- 3.4 East Lothian adheres to the Prevent duty guidance for Scotland (2024) which identifies a range of practical actions to enable Local Authorities to work with partners to meet their statutory duties in responding to Prevent concerns.
- 3.5 The Chief Social Work Officer is the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for Prevent and provides local leadership and co-ordination of activity related to Prevent. They are the key contact for staff to discuss their concerns about an individual who is considered susceptible or potentially susceptible, to being drawn into terrorism. NHS Lothian's Director of Public Protection is the Prevent SPOC for health staff. East Lothian Council and NHS Lothian also have a deputy SPOC who can be contacted in the absence of the SPOC.
- 3.6 When a concern is identified, this is discussed with the SPOC or deputy SPOC in the first instance. Staff out with East Lothian Council or NHS Lothian can also contact the SPOC as required.
- 3.7 The SPOC works in close collaboration with the Prevent Delivery Unit East (PDUE), a specialist team of officers dedicated to the delivery of Prevent functions for Police Scotland. On receipt of a concern, the SPOC will speak with the PDUE to jointly agree whether the information warrants a Prevent referral. The SPOC will arrange for the person with concerns to complete a National Referral Form and ensure this is submitted to a specialist Police Scotland Prevent referral portal and Police begin initial intelligence gathering.
- 3.8 If the situation remains suitable for Prevent it is then allocated to the PDUE who will begin an assessment. If appropriate, the PDUE will issue a formal notification to the Local Authority via the SPOC. This notification is the gateway to convene a Prevent Multi-agency Panel (PMAP) which is arranged and chaired by the Local Authority.
- 3.9 East Lothian's Service Manager for Justice and Mental Health is the dedicated PMAP chair, and they become involved once the formal notification is received from the PDUE.
- 3.10 If a situation does not proceed to a PMAP, the individual can still be supported by relevant agencies in a suitable alternative framework. This could include other measures of protection. Individuals can be re-referred to the SPOC at any time if there is new information to be considered.

## **Prevent Multi-agency Panel (PMAP)**

- 3.11 It is East Lothian Council's responsibility to convene, chair and provide administrative support to the PMAP process. Membership of the PMAP must include people with suitable decision-making authority to direct identified support, resources and interventions as required. Core membership includes the PMAP chair, The Local Authority SPOC, Police Scotland (PDUE) and the NHS Lothian SPOC. Additional attendees will be invited depending on the age and circumstances of the individual being discussed. Members and invitees have a duty to attend each PMAP and must send a representative should they be unable to attend.
- 3.12 The PDUE completes a Prevent Assessment Framework (PAF) which outlines a number of areas and factors to be considered in assessing the risk of susceptibility. Prior to the PMAP, attendees receive the referral, the PAF, the agenda and the confidentiality statement.
- 3.13 The first task of the PMAP when all information is shared, is to agree whether or not an individual should be adopted into Prevent. If a person is adopted into Prevent, the PMAP will agree who will seek suitable consent from the person and their parents (if appropriate) as it is a voluntary process. This consent must be granted before any support is offered and people under the age of 18 can be offered support if their parent provides consent.
- 3.14 PMAP attendees have a responsibility to work collaboratively with the chair, SPOCS and each other to support the mitigation of risk. Additionally, they must ensure that their agency is aware of their statutory responsibility to adhere to Prevent guidance.
- 3.15 For individuals who are adopted under Prevent and who provide consent, the PMAP will agree what actions are required to support the reduction of risk and to support the person to move away from activity that may increase their susceptibility to radicalisation. The PMAP will review the circumstances and progress of the actions on a four-weekly basis until the risks have been addressed and the case can be closed. Once a case is closed there is a further review at six and 12 months to ensure that concerns have not returned. Situations can be re-referred at any point in the process.
- 3.16 The experience locally is that PMAP members are solution focussed and work well together to identify and address presenting risk. Members use their skills and knowledge and take ownership of the actions required in the support plan as required. Members are confident about the local process and will seek advice from the Home Office advisors for Scotland as appropriate. Members regularly seek to expand their own knowledge around counter-terrorism, ideology and radicalisation with regular attendance at national development sessions and conferences. The Home Office Prevent Advisor for Scotland has observed an East Lothian PMAP and provided positive feedback about the local processes.

### **Training and awareness raising**

- 3.17 It is mandatory to complete the Prevent E-learning module for all East Lothian staff. It is important that all staff feel confident in identifying

concerns that may indicate a susceptibility to radicalisation and that they know to contact the SPOC for initial discussion. While some staff will require a deeper understanding of radicalisation, the most important thing people can do is share any identified concerns with the SPOC who will direct future action required.

- 3.18 The experience locally is that staff are increasingly alert to the Prevent agenda and the SPOC will continue to issue communications to ensure staff in all settings are aware of who to contact.
- 3.19 The Prevent working group will continue to implement the Prevent duty guidance for Scotland, identifying areas for development and ensuring there is tight leadership and oversight as the national landscape for Prevent progresses at pace.
- 3.20 The success of existing processes and effective working relationships between statutory partners places East Lothian in a strong position and ready to respond when anticipated additional national guidance is introduced.

#### **4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no policy implications to this report.

#### **5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1 The subject of this report does not affect the wellbeing of the community or have a significant impact on equality, the environment or economy.

#### **6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Financial – None
- 6.2 Personnel – With the profile of Prevent increasing, all statutory partners are exploring how to build resilience and capacity in this area.
- 6.3 Other – None

#### **7 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None

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