

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Wills,
Executive Director for Environment and Economy**

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	31 October 2017
Subject:	Annual Prevent Review Report

Summary:

This paper provides an update on Prevent activity in Lincolnshire during 2016/17, as a result of changes to the Counter-Terrorism Bill 2014 and the introduction of the Government Counter-Extremism Strategy 2015 and the new responsibilities placed upon Local Authorities.

Actions Required:

Members of the Public Protection & Communities Scrutiny are invited to consider and comment on the report and highlight any recommendations or further actions for consideration.

1. Background

The Government agreed there was a need to legislate in order to reduce the terrorism threat in the UK. On 29 August 2014, the independent Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC) raised the UK national terrorist threat level from SUBSTANTIAL to SEVERE and this remains the case today. This means that a terrorist attack is “highly likely”. In the context of this heightened threat, the Bill was designed to strengthen legal powers and capabilities to disrupt terrorism and prevent individuals from being radicalised in the first instance. The changes came into effect on 1 July 2015.

The threat level changed briefly to CRITICAL following the Manchester attack (remained in place for five days) and the Parsons Green Tube attack (remained for three days). Whilst there was no direct impact or connection to Lincolnshire, we were kept fully informed throughout this and other terror related activity through briefings provided by colleagues in Special Branch

The Prevent strategy, part of the Government’s wider counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST, seeks to deal with those individuals and groups promoting division and hatred, and with the factors that predispose individuals or groups to respond to terrorist ideologies. The original strategy was reviewed in 2011 in order to separate out the community based integration work from the more direct counter-terrorism activities. Under Prevent, public sector organisations are subject to a duty to

prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This duty was recently placed on a statutory footing by the Counter-terrorism and Security Act 2015, together with guidance setting out how different sectors should play their part in implementing the strategy on a multi-agency basis. In Lincolnshire, those statutory agencies are:

- Lincolnshire County Council
- Lincolnshire Police Service
- Lincolnshire Probation Service (both National & CRC)
- Health (LCHS, LPFT, ULHT)
- Youth Offending Service
- City of Lincoln Council
- East Lindsey District Council
- North Kesteven District Council
- South Holland District Council
- West Lindsey District Council
- Boston Borough Council
- South Kesteven District Council
- Lincolnshire Fire & Rescue
- Just Lincolnshire
- SW Lincs CCG (working on behalf of all Lincs CCGs)
- National Offender Management Service – E. Mids Prisons
- East Midlands Special Operations Unit (EMSOU) – Special Branch
- Lincolnshire Universities & Colleges
- HLNY (Humberside, Lincolnshire & North Yorkshire Community Rehabilitation Company)
- *Addaction Lincs*

The threat to the UK from terrorism is complex and ranges from lone actors carrying out relatively simple but deadly attacks, to sophisticated networks plotting more coordinated activities. MI5, the Police Service and partners have together, stopped 18 terrorist plots in Great Britain since mid-2013, including five since the Westminster attack in March 2017. At any one time MI5 and the police are

conducting around 500 active international counter terrorism investigations involving 3,000 subjects of interest. In addition to this, there are around 20,000 individuals who have been subjects of interest in previous terrorism investigations.

The government introduced PREVENT in 2003. It is one of the four themes that make up CONTEST, the Government's post-9/11 Counter-Terrorism Strategy. It is intended to stop vulnerable people becoming radicalised, joining extremist groups and carrying out terrorists activities.

The programme was expanded greatly in the wake of the 2005 London bombings, with almost £80 million spent on 1,000 schemes in the six years after the attacks.

Over the years the programme has evolved as the terror threat changed. While al-Qaeda was considered the main threat at first, now the policy is aimed at combating Daesh (Islamic State) and the pull of militants in Syria.

Within this overall framework the Prevent strategy has three objectives. It will:

1. Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
2. Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and,
3. Work with a wide range of sectors and institutions (including education, faith, health and criminal justice) where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

The current Prevent Strategy addresses all forms of terrorism and non-violent extremism. It makes clear that preventing people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism requires challenge to extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism and are shared by terrorist groups, and intervention to stop people moving from extremist groups into terrorist-related activity.

However, this does need to be balanced against the rights of individuals to express themselves and although it remains committed to protecting freedom of speech, preventing terrorism will mean challenging extremist (and non-violent) ideas that are part of a terrorist ideology. Indeed much of the work being done with groups and/or individuals has focussed upon simply defining the legal framework to those holding extreme, but not illegal views.

Project Dovetail:

In April 2016, the Home Secretary announced a series of pilots around the country where Local Authorities were to receive additional funding and resources by taking a full leading role in PREVENT, with a clear and acknowledged move away from Criminal Justice. There are a small number of pilots underway, though none in our region, and there will be announcement expected shortly about the adoption and national roll-out of this new governance. Of the £22m national funding in this area, £4m has been diverted into ensuring the success of this pilot programme. The Home Office has also issued new Channel interventions funding arrangements. These agreements will detail how these new funds are intended to be used flexibly,

for activity or costs which take place alongside, and support other Channel interventions, and should be linked to vulnerabilities which have been identified. This could lead to better interactions with local Community Volunteer Sector or third sector organisations providing interventions.

The national roll out of Project Dovetail has been approved by ministers with the decision that this will take place on a regional basis. Our understanding is that the East Midlands Local Authorities will become Dovetail sites in Spring 2018. LCC Officers are working within the East Midlands collaboration to ensure a fair and safe distribution of resources and responsibilities.

Channel:

The Channel programme, part of the Prevent strategy, is a multi-agency programme co-ordinated by the Police to identify individuals vulnerable to radicalisation and direct them towards appropriate support. It was first piloted in 2007, and was rolled out across England and Wales in 2012. It focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The latest Channel guidance states that the programme consists of three elements:

1. Identifying individuals at risk;
2. Assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and
3. Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals involved.

In delivering the programme, the Local Authority and Police work with agencies including the NHS; Social Workers; Educational Institutions; Youth Offending Services; Immigration & Boarder Agency; Housing Services; Prisons; and Probation Services.

Following an initial referral, an assessment of vulnerability is made using a framework built around three criteria:

- Engagement with a group, cause or ideology;
- Intent to cause harm; and
- Capability to cause harm

This assessment informs decisions on whether an individual needs support and what kind of support package might be appropriate.

Channel aims to stop people moving from extremist groups, or from extremism, into terrorism. Association with organisations that are not proscribed and that espouse extremist ideology is not, on its own, reason enough to justify a referral to the Channel process. If professionals determine that someone attracted to the ideology of such groups also exhibits additional behavioural indicators that suggest they are moving towards terrorism then it would be appropriate to make a referral to Channel.

Lincolnshire Prevent Strategy

It is important to note that whilst the Prevent duty outlines the requirements placed upon Local Authorities and its partners, it has allowed for the freedom to develop individual processes appropriate to each area, reflecting both risk and demographics.

Following the inception of the new Prevent strategy, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) was asked to devise a strategy to build resilience to extremism

within communities. This strategy has not yet been realised and instead the work of the DCLG has focused on the issue of integration, including the following:

- Promoting shared aspirations, values and experiences, including supporting national Inter-Faith Week;
- Helping people realise their potential, for example by funding community based English language teaching;
- Helping people take part in local and national life and decision making, by funding Youth United to provide places for young people in organisations, such as the Scouts Association, Girl-guiding UK, Army Cadets, Volunteer Police Cadets and St John Ambulance;
- Promoting faith and the freedom to pray, supporting faith groups in a wide range of activities.

For Lincolnshire, key projects are as follows:

- Engagement & Diversity Awareness

The LCC Prevent Officer has developed and is delivering Prevent training which is linked to community cohesion and integration to town and parish councils, community groups and organisations, such as the Volunteer Centre Services workshops.

- Community Cohesion Action Plan

City of Lincoln Council has lead on this agenda and ensured that there is now a full Community Cohesion Action Plan in place for the City; this focuses on issues such as the integration of students and migrant workers, tackling hate crime and the integration of the new mosque.

- Community Cohesion Practitioner Group

The group is made up of practitioners from NHS, Local Authority and 3rd sector organisations. It has been developed to enable these organisations to come together to share information and best working practices across Lincolnshire. It aims to bring organisations together and seek joint working opportunities when working with communities.

- Community Collaboration Project

The Community Engagement Team is supporting the delivery of a three year, county wide, Community Collaboration Project (ending 31st March, 2020). Two team members (one covering the North of the county and one the south), will be working with partners and communities to develop and deliver collaborative activities; these may include supporting communities with emergency planning, facilitating the delivery of local community training or activity that will enable communities to sustain themselves. Building and maintaining strong relationships with and between organisations across the county (such as public sector bodies, Town & Parish Councils, charities and voluntary & community groups) will be critical to the success of the project.

- Supplementary schools

The Community Collaboration Officers (CCO) are working in partnership with the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Education Team and the City of Lincoln Council to support the Supplementary schools and their central forum. The CCO's are building relationships with the different ethnic minority groups by offering such support as; helping the schools achieve the Bronze Award standards for supplementary schools (Safeguarding, Policies and general organisation). By supporting the schools, we build a stronger relationship which enables us to identify 'informal community leaders' across the cultural boundaries. The Prevent Officer and CCO manager will form part of the Supplementary schools forum which further promotes partnership working across the County.

- Lincolnshire Prevent Conference

The first event took place on Thursday 10th March 2016 at the Showroom. During the day we heard from a range of national speakers and workshops exploring community cohesion and integration. It was an informative and interactive day, designed to provoke and encourage debate. The next event will be held on 1st November 2017, again with speakers looking at the role of community engagement within Prevent. Speakers such as, Suleman Nagdi MBE DL who is from Leicester who is a committed volunteer and an advocate in the community for over 25 years. He will be speaking about the importance of community engagement within Prevent. There will also be a range of other speakers, such as Professor Dominic Symonds, Director of Research for Lincoln School of Fine and Performing Arts, University of Lincoln, speaking about 'Welcoming Voices' a project building social cohesion through the arts.

Counter-Terrorism Local Profile:

"Counter-Terrorism Local Profiles (CTLPs) have become an essential part of Prevent partnership working. They aspire to make relevant information available to all partners to help them target activities and resources as effectively as possible. CTLPs help to achieve this by outlining the threat, vulnerability and risk from extremist activity relating to terrorism within a specific geographical area, providing partners with a practical and consistent approach to sharing counter-terrorism related information.

The CTLP has been written specifically for local partners and Counter Terrorism leads to inform their local Prevent programme of action, taking into account learning from the last twelve months and looking forward to the coming year and beyond. It seeks to give guidance to partners so that they can work together using the strategic information provided to tackle extremism and terrorist-related activities in Lincolnshire. This is a core part of the local counter-terrorism strategy and sharing information and effective local partnerships remain crucial elements of implementing that strategy". (Introduction, Counter Terrorism Local Profile 2016, Lincolnshire).

The CTLP aims to:

- Develop a joint understanding amongst local partners of the threats, vulnerabilities and risks relating to terrorism and non-violent extremism where it creates an environment conducive to terrorism;
- Provide information on which to base local Prevent programmes, initiatives and action plans, and present recommendations to deal with any identified risks and vulnerabilities;
- Support the establishment of Prevent activity as business-as-usual in local partner agencies, and to embed confidence around the new Prevent duties;

- Provide all counter-terrorism partners in Lincolnshire with the strategic information they need to provide a targeted and proportionate use of shared resources, and to encourage the continued sharing of information to everyone's mutual advantage;

The fact that Lincolnshire remains a low risk area is something we are mindful of, but, not complacent about.

National picture:

The UK is a high-priority target for Islamist extremists and they pose a significant threat to our country and to our interests and citizens abroad. Despite the current main focus on terrorism originating from Syria and Iraq, the threat of terrorism also emanates from other parts of the Middle East and regions such as North, East and West Africa, South and South East Asia.

The majority of terrorist attack plots in this country have been planned by British residents. There are several thousand individuals in the UK who support violent extremism or are engaged in Islamist extremist activity. British nationals who have fought for extremist groups overseas continue to return to the UK, increasing the risk of terrorist attacks. Using skills acquired overseas, they may organise attacks under direction from outside the UK, or on their own initiative, or they might radicalise others to do so. While the majority of returners will not mount attacks in the UK, the large numbers involved mean it is likely that at least some of them will attempt to do so.

Groups like Daesh make full use of social media and modern communication methods to glamourise their horrific acts and inspire others to commit them. Once inspired, an individual might decide to conduct an attack in the name of Islam without any prior signs of radicalisation. Simple, self-organised attacks by UK-based Islamist extremists have increased and are inherently harder to detect than more complex and ambitious plots. (Source: MI5 National Website, 2017)

Extreme Right Wing

International

The neo-Nazi movement has collided with the hipster subculture originating in Germany to form a group of mainly male youths, smart and modern in dress, but bandanas stitched with Nazi slogans. Media has dubbed the fiery mix of Nazi-hipsters “nipsters.” The new recruits of the far-right movement have taken to YouTube, Tumblr, Instagram, and other social media, as the ‘hipsterfication’ of the neo-Nazi movement has gained more support among youths in Germany. However, they don't own the term “nipster” on the web – there they have to share the name with Asian hipsters, fans of masculine breasts, and less prominent groups that identify with it. Their relevance to Generation X is becoming ever more powerful.

Nationally

Nationally we face a threat from extreme right-wing groups, who share an ideology based on intense hostility to minorities and a belief that violence between ethnic and religious groups is inevitable. Alongside antisemitism and racism, hostility to Islam has become a common element of these groups. Right-wing terrorism is behaviour and action motivated by a variety of ideologies and beliefs, including anti-communism, neo-fascism, neo-Nazism. This type of terrorism has been, to date, sporadic with little or no international cooperation. Modern radical right-wing terrorism first appeared in Western Europe in the 1980s and it first appeared in Eastern Europe following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

These right-wing terrorists aim to overthrow governments and replace them with nationalist or fascist-oriented regimes. The core of this movement includes neo-fascist skinheads, far-right hooligans, youth sympathisers and intellectual guides who believe that the state must rid itself of foreign elements in order to protect its rightful citizens.

National Action is the first UK right wing organisation to be proscribed as a terror group. It was founded in 2013, but became one of the country's most notorious hate groups in 2016 after pulling a series of disturbing stunts and demonstrations. Their posts on social media endorse and encourage extreme violence against ethnic minorities, people they perceive to be 'race traitors', the Government, and any other authority figures. They believe that Britain will soon see a 'race war' – with National Action taking a central role in it.

Counter-terrorism detectives have arrested 11 suspected members of a banned neo-Nazi group amid fears of a possible plot to target individuals. Officers made the arrests across England and Wales in a series of co-ordinated raids as part of efforts to thwart National Action. A counter-terrorism chief said the neo-Nazi group was being treated as seriously as those committed to jihadist acts of terrorism.

An order banning the neo-Nazi group *National Action* is to be widened after officials identified two aliases for the movement. Scottish Dawn and NS131 (National Socialist Anti-Capitalist Action) will be proscribed as terrorist organisations from 29th September 2017. National Action became the first extreme right-wing group to be banned under terrorism laws in December 2016. An order laid in Parliament on 29th September 2017 means National Action cannot operate as Scottish Dawn or NS131, which have been identified as alternative names the group has used.

PREVENT Training & Development:

Training and briefings to frontline staff and the voluntary sector continues to be delivered in a rolling programme accessible (and free) to all agencies. The demands from schools for staff briefings has increased dramatically since the PREVENT Duty was introduced, and more latterly since recent attacks. The take up of Prevent awareness training since the introduction of new duty placed responsibility upon Local Authorities has increased enormously, with requests for

bookings from both statutory organisations, community groups and those groups not covered by the Duty, such as Town and Parish Councils, is now core business. During the last twelve months, partners have worked collectively to create a suite of training and awareness courses, from brief online awareness to a more personalised approach, dependent upon the role and need of the organisation or individual.

Since January 2016, over 100 front facing Prevent awareness briefing sessions have been delivered by the Local Authority Prevent Officer, which have included staff at schools and academies, local authorities and community groups. There has been an attendance of 1176 people at these sessions. An on-line training session has also been developed for non-public facing Lincolnshire County Council staff and delivered via Lincs 2 Learn.

2. Conclusion

The challenge the new legislation presents to Lincolnshire County Council still remain those of performance, training and awareness, and associated resources. Resources are being committed through existing staffing structures with demand absorbed by the Community Engagement Team who are developing a community cohesion approach. This team is currently exploring what Town and Parish Councils can offer in relation to delivering training and awareness alongside existing training delivery. Additionally, the team is working closely with the City of Lincoln Community Cohesion Steering Board and a number of third sector organisations, including Just Lincolnshire who is ideally placed to support this area of work. Work with District Councils to identify local forums with a similar remit and focus is also ongoing.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

N/A

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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