

Delivering Prevent – Responding To Learning

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Introduction

Over the summer a number of reviews took place which sought to draw out learning and emerging practice on the delivery of activity to prevent violent extremism. Though each review had a different focus, together they provide a useful package of learning material upon which local partners can draw and which will inform the Government's approach to Prevent.

Findings from the Learning and Development Exercise carried out by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Audit Commission were launched on Friday 7th November. Additionally, a mapping exercise was carried out by BMG on behalf of Communities and Local Government, which gathered data on the projects and evaluation activity that had been carried out as part of the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder Fund; Lord Patel completed a review which looked at the delivery of 'whole community approaches' to preventing violent extremism; and a team of Whitehall officials conducted visits and workshops in a number of local areas over the summer to inform our understanding of the local delivery of Prevent and its challenges.

A copy of the Learning and Development Exercise and the BMG mapping report have been published and can be found on the Communities and Local Government website. Copies are also available in delegates' conference packs.

There are a number of common themes which run through all these reviews, which are drawn together below. Some of those themes require action from national Government, some from local partners, many from both. Work is already underway to address some of the key issues identified and strengthen the delivery of the Prevent agenda. This work will continue to develop and will be delivered on a cross-Departmental basis.

Importantly, even where work is clearly national in scope, we will work with key local and regional partners (and bodies such as the LGA and the APA) to deliver the changes necessary to strengthen delivery of the Prevent agenda.

Key Themes

All the reviews reflected common issues and themes identified by the research and visits that have taken place. This represents feedback not just from local authority partners and police colleagues but from a range of public bodies, from councillors and from communities themselves.

These issues and themes can be grouped into eight key areas which will inform work that central Government takes forward, in conjunction with local partners:

- **Communications:** improving two-way communications, including development of a clearer core narrative and support for local partners to develop a local vision and narratives that reflect local context and the needs and agendas of different partners.
- **Information and intelligence sharing:** supporting the development and implementation of effective information and intelligence sharing protocols and arrangements at a local level.
- **Practical support:** developing a greater level of practical advice and products for local partners, including reviewing/developing training programmes and products.
- **Prioritisation and resources:** strengthen criteria for prioritisation and allocation of all funding and resources across Prevent.
- **Assessing Prevent:** review/improve/develop evaluation and outcome and output measures locally.
- **Partnership working and engagement:** encourage and support strong partnership working and provide advice on reviewing community engagement and/or assessing the effectiveness of it.
- **Embedding Prevent:** provide clarification and support on mainstreaming the delivery of Prevent locally.
- **Central capability and governance:** review and improve governance, including clarifying roles and responsibilities of central partners to support local delivery.

Important work is already underway across these themes. Other strands of work will take longer to develop and will be delivered in the course of 2008/9 and beyond.

Communications

The Local Delivery Advisory Group (LDAG) met for the first time in October and brings together experts from across the fields of local government, policing, education, housing and the Third Sector to advise the Communities Secretary and Home Secretary on the development and delivery of the Preventing Violent Extremism agenda. Along with the monthly circulation of a cross-Government newsletter to local partners, these are two ways in which we have sought to strengthen communications. Officials from a range of Government departments have also completed a series of regional visits or events to discuss the Prevent agenda with the full range of local partners. Today's national conference is also important in this respect.

We are in the process of developing a Prevent communications strategy and narrative in support of local level communications. The Research, Information and Communication Unit (RICU) will be working with a number of local areas to help them develop their approach to communications and their articulation of how Prevent fits with other key local issues.

Information and intelligence sharing

To facilitate effective sharing of information about the vulnerabilities in their communities between the police and their partners, the Association of Chief Police Officers is developing a process and guidance which can be tailored to local circumstances to improve the quality and flow of information.

Information flows have already started to increase in the distribution of key thematic information held centrally to local partners – this has included restricted papers on the threat level, on the violent extremist message and on key denominational groups. We will continue to review and improve the sharing of information between central and local partners, as well as between local partners.

Practical support

Central Government currently works with the IDeA to deliver support through a network of peer mentors to local authorities. The peer mentors are currently working with seven local areas. The IDeA also provide a 'community of practice' web portal on the Prevent agenda which allows members to post documents, links and questions and share best practice (www.communities.idea.gov.uk).

We have invested in the capacity of the Government Offices who continue to provide a first point of contact and a key source of expertise for local areas.

The guidance for local partners launched in June provides a clear articulation of our expectations for local partners and more recent guidance from the LGA, on the work of councillors and on working with community groups, has provided a sector-led perspective on these key issues. These two documents can be found at www.lga.gov.uk.

The expansion of programmes like the Channel Project is helping to provide local partners products to support particular elements of the Prevent agenda, whilst we have commissioned research to strengthen the current evidence base for community-based interventions to prevent violent extremism, drawing on learning in a number of parallel policy areas.

Training packages and products are being developed by partners such as Youth Justice Board and the National Offender Management Service, whilst OSCT are coordinating the development of further products centrally for use by partners across sectors. DCSF have recently developed and are rolling out their toolkit for schools *Learning Together to be Safe*.

Centrally, we will continue to support networks and mechanisms for sharing best practice and we will continue to develop training tools and products which help local partners better deliver this agenda.

We have listened to practitioners and have heard their call for greater support on Prevent and greater clarity about where to turn for help, and we intend to develop a real centre of excellence, readily accessible to them, and will work with the LDAG to get this in place early in 2009.

Prioritisation and resources

Funding for local authorities in support of work to Prevent Violent Extremism is currently delivered on a three year basis against clear criteria. Moving forward, central Government will seek to strengthen the coordination of funding streams across Government and to focus on those areas of the strategy which are least developed.

The mapping report of the Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder fund, completed by BMG, sets out which objectives of the Prevent strategy have been least represented in the Pathfinder work and therefore which need further development locally and greater support nationally. Moving forward we will ensure that there is a cross-Government approach to funding which provides resources where they are most needed.

Assessing Prevent

Measuring work to Prevent Violent Extremism remains a difficult and challenging issue. We will continue to build on the process outlined in National Indicator 35, against which all local authorities must report, and APACs 63 which is a key diagnostic indicator for all police forces. This will include commissioning work to strengthen our approach towards evaluation and building on existing local work to better define measurement against NI35.

Importantly, the Learning and Development Exercise has provided important learning for both the Audit Commission and HMIC and this will help inform the development of the Comprehensive Area Assessment – which will include consideration of how all local areas are taking forward work to prevent violent extremism.

Partnership working and engagement

Multi-agency working is key to effective local delivery. As the June guidance made clear, a partnership group needs to be clearly tasked to take forward local action on Prevent. We continue to support local partners in building the right local partnerships, with broad representation, reporting into a strategic body such as the LSP or CDRP. Local communities need to be engaged actively in the partnership and in the development and implementation of Prevent programmes of action.

We have also deepened and broadened our own approach to engagement with Muslim communities and have established key groups like the Local Delivery Advisory Group, the Young Muslims Advisory Group, National Muslim Women's Advisory Group and the regular meetings with Muslim faith and community leaders.

The national indicator, NI35, seeks to ensure community engagement is at the centre of this agenda and we are supporting the deepening of this engagement through sharing research into Muslim communities with local partners. We will continue to work closely with local partners to ensure we create links with important agendas such as Community Empowerment and Community Cohesion.

Embedding Prevent

Work to Prevent Violent Extremism is embedded in the local performance framework and is making progress in being established as a core part of local business. The Prevent agenda is also included in key documents such as the National Community Safety Plan 2008-11 (2007) and the Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures (2007) as part of core business.

Many local partners are seeking to build frontline awareness and ensure they consider how their broader work can have an impact on Prevent. We will continue to support this work, to develop best practice and to provide practical tools and examples to partners.

Central capability and governance

The guidance for local partners delivered in June 2008 set out a cross-Government view of our expectations for local partners. Annex G of that guidance sets out the role of central Government departments.

We will build on this to further strengthen the coordination and governance of the Prevent agenda.

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