

<b>Scrutiny Committee:</b>	Overview & Scrutiny Board (OSB) – Crime and Disorder Committee
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	11 March 2021
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Progress Report Extremism &amp; Prevent</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Sarah Pinnock - Prevent Coordinator - Luton</b>

## Purpose

1. This report will provide an overview on the progress of the Community Safety Partnership priority of Extremism/Prevent. It will also inform the Crime and Disorder Committee of the direction of travel for the next funded cycle 2021/2022.

## Recommendations

2. The Crime and Disorder Committee are recommended to note the report and to:
  - (i) Note and support the ongoing delivery of the Prevent and Channel programmes in relation to protecting vulnerable individuals from being drawn into terrorism or supporting terrorism
  - (ii) Provide feedback or recommendations in relation to measures being taken to tackle extremism

## Report

### 3. Current Context

Luton remains an area where there is an enduring and stable risk of radicalisation and for the 11<sup>th</sup> year in succession the local authority has been designated a priority Prevent area using Home Office metrics. Luton remains the only funded area within the Eastern Region.

Whilst the Luton extremism picture continues to outstrip our neighbouring authorities, for 2021/2022, the case for Luton/Bedfordshire to be viewed as a formal area of cooperation was submitted and accepted by the Home Office.

This is a positive and practical move and whilst it does not assume any additional extension of Luton's Prevent Duty responsibilities as these will remain with each specified authority, it will allow the Luton Corporate Prevent team to increase areas of cooperation and coordination with Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough local authorities (LA) in the following areas:

- i. Geographically it will bring us into line with the existing Channel delivery model and mirrors both the Police force and CONTEST areas. Prevent is one of the four elements of CONTEST, the government's counter terrorism strategy. Prevent aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism and provides practical help to prevent individuals from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.
- i. Provides additional strength and rationale to the emerging governance arrangements for the Pan Bedfordshire Prevent Board (led by Luton but with representation from both LA's.)
- ii. Opens up the potential for greater cooperation between the three LA's in terms of professionals training, interventions and community dialogue. This latter point is crucial as the structure and timetable for the Independent Review of Prevent becomes clearer
- iii. Increase our responsiveness to emerging threats. Whilst Prevent activity continues to focus in the areas of early intervention and safeguarding, the Covid 19 Pandemic has increased the awareness across the Prevent network of the volume of extremist content moving to online platforms and unregulated messaging forums.
- iv. Improve our collective understanding of trends over time, utilising the annual Channel and Prevent Programme data published by the Home Office – **see Appendix 1** and police owned data, which we as a trusted partner have access to. Whilst the Channel information has not been disaggregated down to LA area, it does allow a collective understanding of where the Eastern Region sits within the context of both near neighbouring regions and across the UK as a whole.

The Eastern Region Special Operations Unit (ERSOU) will continue to be local allies both in terms of their counter terrorism policing activity and in terms of the cooperation with Luton through the regional and local Prevent policing structures and activities. They will retain oversight of extremist activity and Subjects of Interest (SOI's) with support from local policing on the more high profile individuals of concern.

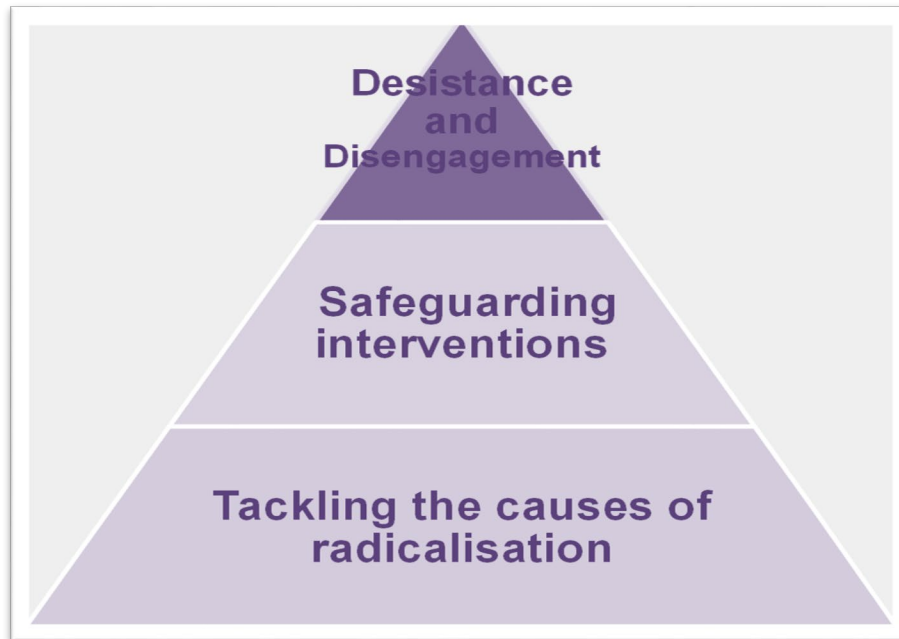
### Current Context and Direction of Travel

As part of the annual reassessment process for funding the Local Authority is required to submit a situational analysis as a contribution to the Home Office and other partner agency data used to assess the risk within a given area.

Following the combined risk and counter terrorism assessment, Luton submitted a detailed Prevent and Channel Programme proposal for 2021/2022. This submission was completed in October 2021 and funding support has now been confirmed for 2021/2022.

The broad profile of activity is organised along the lines set out in the diagram below:

## **Prevent/Extremism Delivery Model:**



Desistance and Disengagement (DDP) – is one of the existing Prevent theme areas that sits in the local Prevent funded space. DPP has a focus on exploring the rehabilitation opportunities to work with Luton individuals who have been involved in terrorism or terrorism-related activity and reducing the risk they pose. The Prevent lead is part of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Executive Board, which has oversight of this area but where specific activity is covered by other agencies.

### Direction of travel for 2021/2022

At a local level, this should see an increase in the collaboration of local Prevent approaches with other elements of CONTEST and support the broader operational and strategic work of MAPPA concerning these individuals. Prevent in Luton will seek to use the learning/ understanding of the circumstances around these offenders to inform more community based resilience programmes.

Safeguarding Interventions - The work of the Pan Bedfordshire Channel Panel provides the broad framework for the support and casework management of those deemed the most vulnerable to radicalisation, across age ranges and communities. The monthly panels and casework are managed by Luton and have continued to operate throughout the Covid 19 pandemic. They continue to address issues across the extremism spectrum. Luton/Bedfordshire data is fed into the Home Office to inform the regional data which is published annually.

Despite the challenges of Covid, activity this year continues to focus on (i) improving the consistency and range of support to individuals referred to Channel; (ii) implementing quality assurance measures to drive the operational practice at Panel; (iii) and finally continually seeking to support, encourage and identify community

interventions. This latter point is crucial for a long term and sustainable approach to extremism in Luton. The ambition is that this will evolve alongside more formalised interventions, such as bespoke 1:1 ideological engagement where this is appropriate.

## Direction of Travel for 2021/2022

Comparatively Channel referrals are smaller compared to other forms of local safeguarding concerns. However, we continue to refine our own understanding of trends and drivers that push individuals into this space, some of which overlaps with other Community Safety Partnership priority strands. The expectation is that we will use this local knowledge to not only support the national overview of Prevent but also identify trends and cross overs that are local and pertinent to us.

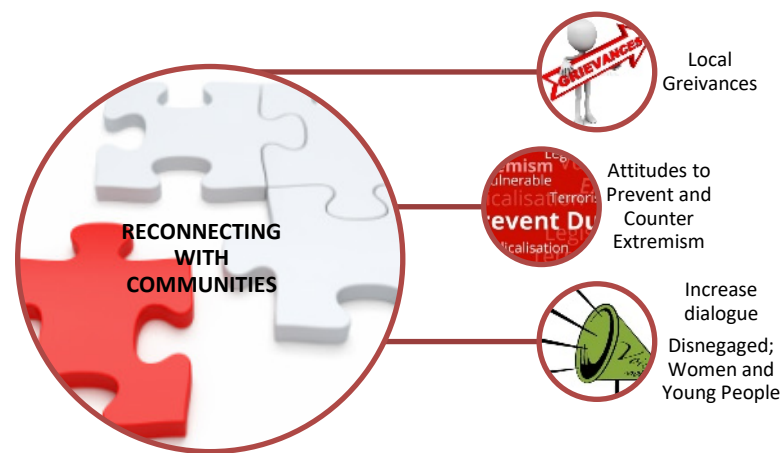
The Channel Duty Guidance (reissued in November 2020) will also be a prominent development during the coming year as it provides a checklist to quality assure local Channel performance and compliance. Expectations on this how this will work has already been received by Luton and will form a core operational activity for Luton as the lead authority and will be reported to the Home Office. Progress will be monitored through the Community Safety Partnership Executive and Prevent Board.

## Tackling the cases of radicalisation

During 2020/2021, this continues to be the broadest area of activity as it encompasses the efforts to support both community and professional partners' activity regarding extremism. The presence of known extremists and subjects of interest remains the dominant Luton extremism risk factor but by no means the only issue of local consideration. The threat picture in Luton continues to evolve represented by other emerging risks alongside existing risk factors.

A key theme has been to gain a better understanding of any causal links of place or theme and any vulnerabilities to extremism that may exist. Prevent programme activity whilst disrupted by Covid 19 has continued to support local schools, specific groups and faith institutions to work with their constituent groups.

Online training and courses, focussed community based mentoring and insight from Prevent research projects continue to be used to explore the specific cluster themes under development. An example below:



## Direction of Travel for 2021/2022

This can be charted as a number of questions that require significant attention during 2021/2022:

- What ignites and sustains these attitudes/ behaviours that lead individuals towards radicalising influences?
- How do we work collaboratively to mitigate the real risk posed from the presence of extremists within and outside of our locality
- Where are the critical points of intervention for internal services?
- How can we secure/ encourage real community dialogue within the Independent Review year?
- How do we build trust and understanding within Luton on this agenda?

Luton based projects have submitted their 2021/2022 programme proposals based on the **Theory of Change Approach** (sometimes called a Logic Model or Results Framework.) It is a way to map out and present the steps that lead defines project activities to the changes it seeks to achieve. From our perspective, it helps to connect a project to the wider goals and objectives of Prevent.

To create a theory of change, proposed projects have been asked to identify several key project elements:

- **Problem** – what is the problem that your project is trying to solve?
- **Audience** – who are the key target groups that you will be engaging?
- **Activities** – what activities will you conduct to address the problem?
- **Outputs** – what will be the immediate, measurable outputs of your activities? (E.g., how many people will receive your services or participate in your activities?)
- **Outcomes** – what short and medium-term changes will result from your project? (e.g. improved knowledge, increased resilience, increased awareness)
- **Impact** – what is the long-term change that you see as your goal? This should reflect and connect with the overall goal and objectives of Prevent.

## Proposal/ Option

4. It is proposed that the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee considers this report and:
  - (i) Provide any feedback on the Extremism priority theme
  - (ii) Provide any specific feedback or recommendations regarding Channel or Prevent Programme delivery

Appendix (if any)

5. Appendix 1 – Home Office Data 2019 – 2020 Prevent Referrals and Prevent Programme

## List of Background Papers - Local Government Act 1972, Section 100D

6. None