

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 3 October 2024

Report of the Director of Strategy and Transformation

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Corporate Priorities:
Caring for the vulnerable;

Prevent Strategy 2024/26

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Brief Summary

This report sets out the Prevent Strategy 2024/26 which has been updated to meet the requirements of the Counter Terrorism Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to approve the Prevent Strategy 2024/26, as set out at Appendix 'A', for implementation across the county council over the next two years.

Detail

Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 states that local authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. Lancashire County Council therefore has a statutory role to play in countering terrorism at a local level and helping to safeguard individuals at risk of radicalisation.

In 2020 Cabinet approved the previous Prevent Strategy. This was due to be refreshed in 2022 but the timeline was extended until the Government had released the updated Counter-terrorism (CONTEST) Strategy, Prevent Duty Guidance and the 34 recommendations from the independent review of Prevent. The key changes in the updated Prevent Strategy are that it incorporates all of these recent national updates.



Prevent is one of four pillars that forms the Government's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST 2023) and it has 3 objectives:

- 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.

The first two objectives are relevant to Lancashire County Council, with lead responsibility of the third sitting with Prisons and Probation Services. Within the Strategy the first two objectives have been underpinned with five priorities and state what successful delivery of each priority will look like.

The five Priorities within the Strategy have been developed using requirements set out in the Prevent Duty and Prevent Duty Guidance. As the fifth priority suggests, success can only be achieved in collaboration with colleagues from across a range of Services. The Prevent Strategy is supported by an Action Plan which sets out ways in which the county council will embed Prevent and achieve success against each priority.

Progress will also be monitored through an Annual Prevent Performance Framework (Benchmarking) process, this will be assessed both internally to the council and externally by the Home Office. Furthermore, Prevent Awareness e-learning completions, bespoke Prevent Training delivered by the Corporate Counter Terrorism Team, and Prevent Referrals will be monitored via Key Performance Indicators.

The Prevent Strategy set out at Appendix 'A' will be published internally on the county council's intranet website. The 2020/22 Prevent Strategy was not published externally, and this will also be the case with the 2024/26 Strategy as it is deemed to be exempt from publication for the reasons stated below.

If approved, the Prevent Strategy is intended to be in place between 2024 and 2026 with annual reviews to assess progress based on current reporting processes.

Appendices

Appendix 'A', which is deemed to be in Part II and exempt from publication for the reasons set out below, is attached to this report. For clarification it is summarised below and referenced at relevant points within this report.

Appendix	Title
Appendix 'A'	Prevent Strategy 2024/26

Consultations

N/A



Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

Legal

As a public authority, the county council has specific responsibilities under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty which includes the requirement to publish a Prevent Strategy and review the county council's compliance with the legislative requirements.

Financial

Actions within the Prevent Strategy and associated Annual Performance Plans will be contained within the existing financial envelope.

Equality and Cohesion

Effective implementation of the Prevent Strategy and associated Annual Performance Plans should contribute positively to meeting the three general aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty and particularly the general aim of fostering good relations between groups which share protected characteristics and those which do not share them.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
None		

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

Appendix 'A' - Exempt information as defined in Paragraph 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The report contains information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime. It is considered that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

