

Prevent Review: Summary of Responses to the Consultation

June 2011

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Introduction

Introduction

1. This document describes the consultation process that began on 10 November 2010 and ran for three months as part of the review of the *Prevent* strategy. It also summarises the responses to the consultation.

The Consultation Process

2. The consultation sought views and recommendations on the *Prevent* strategy from a wide range of delivery partners, opinion formers, community and faith groups and members of the public. Whitehall Departments also consulted their principle partners. Meetings were held with parliamentarians and local councillors, and focus groups were conducted to gauge the opinion of the general public.

3. Responses to the consultation were submitted via an online questionnaire available on the Home Office website, via a dedicated email and postal address, and a number of consultation events were held across the country. All contributions were considered as part of the review and the development of the new *Prevent* strategy.

4. Lord Carlile of Berriew QC provided independent oversight of the *Prevent* review. His role was to ensure the review had been properly conducted, that all views and options had been considered and that the review's final recommendations were fair and balanced. Lord

Carlile had access to background papers which informed the review and was sent working drafts of the consultation report and the strategy itself.

5. Lord Carlile spoke to Ministers and officials from across Government and met a wide range of other individuals and organisations during regional visits, including *Prevent* practitioners, community representatives and the police. He also sought to contextualise *Prevent* by talking to the UK's international partners on the work being taken forward in their countries. His preface to the *Prevent* review and strategy sets out his main conclusions.

The Responses

6. Over 400 written responses were received, and around 600 delegates attended the consultation events. A small number of focus groups were also held.

7. The consultation events generated constructive and informative debate on the successes and shortcomings of the previous strategy, and on what a new strategy should look like. Written contributions were wide-ranging and insightful. As a whole, contributions to the consultation represented an important part of the information considered in the process of developing a new strategy.

Online questionnaire

8. The online consultation questionnaire was available on the Home Office website from November 10 until December 17 2010. Respondents were invited to answer 13 questions, with Question 14 providing respondents an opportunity to make general comments. A list of the questions can be found at [Annex A](#).

9. 325 substantive responses were received via the online questionnaire. Levels of response to each of the 14 questions varied. Each of the 325 respondents completed at least one of the questions.

10. Respondents were not required to declare their location, profession or role, but the majority of respondents identified themselves as working within a specific sector or as members of the general public with an interest in *Prevent*. Of these, police and Local Authorities were by far the largest identifiable groups.

11. Other contributors included the full range of key statutory and non-statutory partners and members of the general public expressing an interest in *Prevent*-related issues. Responses were received from across England, Scotland and Wales.

Email and postal submissions

12. 78 responses to the consultation were received from individuals and organisations via email and post. A list of those who made written contributions is provided at [Annex B](#). Local Authorities were the largest identifiable group of respondents submitting responses in this way.

13. Of these responses, a number provided answers to some or all of the questions in the online questionnaire, or responded to the terms of reference for the review in their submissions. Other written submissions to the consultation did not answer specific questions, but set out a range of views on *Prevent* and related issues. Some submissions were in the form of studies

or reports undertaken previously and not specifically for the purposes of the *Prevent* review. Others took the form of research proposals, project evaluation reports, and papers providing information on past *Prevent* work.

Regional Events

14. 586 delegates attended eleven consultation events in Glasgow, Nottingham, Cambridge, Warrington, London, Taunton, Woking, Birmingham, Llandrindod Wells, Newcastle and Leeds. Delegates who participated in these events included a wide range of statutory and non-statutory partners. Local Authorities, the police community organisations and faith groups were the largest identifiable groups represented at the events.

15. At the events, approximately an hour was allocated for completion of five questions on key areas of *Prevent* strategy. Delegates sat in groups of between five and ten people, with participants mixed by sector and occupation. Each table was invited to provide a volunteer leader who was instructed to write a note of the discussion for each question. The discussion record forms provided the content for analysis of responses.

Focus Groups

16. Over the course of February 2011, a number of focus groups were carried out across the country in order to gauge public opinion on *Prevent*. This was designed to complement the large number of responses from *Prevent* practitioners and others familiar with the strategy.

17. The focus groups spoke to a total of 124 people. Eleven of the focus groups focused on the views of the general public, taking place in a variety of regional settings.¹ Thirteen smaller sessions sought the views of Muslim members of the public. These groups were composed of Muslims from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, but

¹ General public groups were held in York, Northampton, Rushden, Kingston, Bushey Heath, St Albans, Prestwich, Cardiff and Glasgow.

focusing specifically on individuals from Pakistan, Somalia, Yemen, Bangladesh and North Africa, between the ages of 18 and 44. Groups were held in Luton, Bradford, Leicester, London and Manchester.

18. In general, respondents agreed that a preventative strand of the UK's counter-terrorism strategy was critical. In particular, respondents wanted *Prevent* to:

- focus on all threats of violence, not just those from Al Qa'ida;
- build community resilience and cohesion as part of a long-term approach to defeating terrorism and extremism
- be run in parallel with tighter controls on, for example, immigration and better use of existing regulations and penalties to undermine radicalisers;
- focus on working in schools and with faith institutions;
- include a more effective communication strategy aimed more widely at the entire country and not just certain communities.

19. A full summary of the focus group responses is attached at **Annex C**.

Other Events

20. On 24 January 2011, a consultation event was held for MPs and Peers in the House of Commons.

21. On 9 February 2011, a consultation event for local councillors was held at Local Government House in London under the auspices of the Improvement and Development Agency.

Summary of Responses

Summary of Responses

22. The following is intended to provide a summary of responses received either in written form or captured in discussion record forms from the consultation events. Since submissions to the consultation were often provided in different formats, answering all, some or none of the questions asked in the online questionnaire, we have summarised responses based on the key themes and issues that emerged.

Prevent aims and objectives

23. The majority of all responses to the consultation were broadly supportive of the aims and objectives of the previous *Prevent* strategy. Responses voiced a range of concerns and criticisms but many of these were aimed at the implementation rather than at the overall strategy. Key concerns raised were that the strategy had not been clear enough and that the objectives were overly ambitious and had been open to misinterpretation. Respondents called for better guidance on how to implement the objectives at a local level. Better communication of the strategy was the other prominent issue raised in responses, touching on a theme running throughout the consultation of the need to address the perception that *Prevent* was a tarnished brand and unpopular within communities. The need for clearer outcomes and criteria for success in a new *Prevent* strategy also featured in a number of responses.

24. Another important issue raised by a large number of respondents was the narrow focus of the strategy which had created the perception that *Prevent* stigmatised Muslim communities. Indeed, one of the most referred-to changes to the strategy was the need to broaden it to include a wider range of threats.

25. There were mixed views as to whether *Prevent* should continue to, or indeed do more to, address grievances or build resilience. Some respondents were clear that these activities were an integral part of *Prevent*, however other respondents called for *Prevent* to focus more on supporting vulnerable individuals and less on grievances and resilience activities (which had in any case contributed to some of the confusion around the scope of *Prevent*). There was a split of opinion between those respondents who felt that more needed to be done to challenge terrorist ideology and others who believed that the Government should not be involved in this area.

Broadening of *Prevent* to include other threats

26. The overwhelming majority of respondents to the consultation supported the idea of expanding the scope of *Prevent* to include all forms of violent extremism, the term used in the question at the time. Many responses appeared to make no distinction between violent extremism and non-violent extremism, but event group discussions featured more consideration

of the distinction between the two. Some responses called for a clear definition of violent extremism and extremism to guide *Prevent* work in the future.

27. The threat from the extreme right was most often referenced after Al Qa'ida. Many participants identified the English Defence League (EDL) in this group. Some respondents viewed this threat as distinct from terrorism, but others saw no barrier to dealing with counter-terrorism and the EDL under the same *Prevent* strategy. A smaller number of respondents saw the threats from Northern Ireland-related terrorism and animal rights-related terrorism as areas *Prevent* should also address. There was a clear sense that many respondents thought that *Prevent* already addressed other forms of violent extremism, and indeed had been carrying out work to address groups like the EDL as part of *Prevent* activity. At the extreme end, some respondents believed *Prevent* should extend to gun and gang crime and wider violent protest.

28. It was widely felt that *Prevent* should tackle whichever threat is the most significant in a given local area. Some respondents viewed prioritisation primarily in local rather than national terms, with many calling for the flexibility to allow local areas to address local threats as they emerge. There was a mix of opinion between those who generally believed all threats should be equally addressed and those who saw including all forms specifically as necessary for presentational purposes - a way of avoiding the perception of targeting single communities.

29. Some respondents voiced clear concerns that expanding the scope of *Prevent* should not detract from work to address the main threat: Al Qa'ida-influenced terrorism.

30. Some responses also stressed the need for proportionality, protecting rights and freedoms, and for a targeted response based on intelligence.

Boundaries between *Prevent* and integration/cohesion

31. Responses on this issue were mixed and inconclusive, reflecting a degree of confusion about how a clearer distinction between *Prevent* and integration may work in practice. The question put online and to some event respondents originally asked for views on the proposal to "separate" *Prevent* and cohesion. However, initial responses at the early events (up to and including the event in Woking) raised significant concerns about separating the two areas of work, leading to a revision of this question at later events to "draw a clearer distinction". The aim was to enable discussions to focus on where the boundaries should be rather than on ideas of removing the concept of cohesion and integration from *Prevent*.

32. Slightly more online responses agreed to a clearer separation than disagreed, though a significant proportion remained non-committal. The majority of responses received via email or post that clearly answered the question agreed with a clearer separation. However, marginally more responses from the consultation events disagreed or expressed significant concerns around the concept of a clearer separation than agreed. Around half the responses were inconclusive.

33. There was a widespread perception amongst all responses that *Prevent* and cohesion are closely linked. Indeed, many responses were clear that cohesion and integration not only facilitates *Prevent* but is viewed by local practitioners as a way of overcoming community resistance to *Prevent*. Many practitioners felt that 'softer' cohesion activities prepared the groundwork for 'harder' activities with a stronger *Prevent* aim. Yet some respondents pointed out that while in its early stages *Prevent* needed to be accompanied by cohesion activities to facilitate engagement and partnership working, good relationships have been developed and a clearer distinction between *Prevent* and cohesion activities may now be beneficial. A concern that a clearer distinction between *Prevent* and cohesion activities would

make *Prevent* feel more 'securitised' emerged from a number responses.

34. Many responses focused on practical issues of resources and funding. A significant proportion of responses claimed clearer boundaries would bring needed clarity and focus in terms of objectives, funding and responsibilities. A number felt that cohesion work had been damaged by its association with *Prevent* and could be more effective in the future without the stigma of association with a security policy. However, there was some fear that cohesion activity previously delivered through *Prevent* funding would end due to cuts to Local Authority budgets. The need for good communication and cooperation to avoid duplication and ensure joined up working were highlighted in many responses.

Interventions

35. A number of respondents said they had experience working on *Prevent* issues with vulnerable individuals. There was more evidence of personal experience in intervention activity in responses from the consultation events than other responses. Types of intervention referenced by responses ranged from targeted, one-to-one interventions by intervention providers, mentoring and personal development schemes, and 'safe space' debates to broader community cohesion activities.

36. Channel featured heavily in responses relating to interventions. Comments were largely supportive, quoting some successes of the programme and supporting its continuation. Some responses pointed out its limitations, such as its "voluntary" nature, or difficulties around information sharing. Some responses called for a clearer definition of vulnerability and better risk assessment processes to aid referrals.

37. Many respondents underlined the importance of evaluation but pointed out the difficulty around it, not just for Channel but for interventions in general.

38. Understanding of the community and local issues was seen as important in order to secure the credibility and expertise to deliver interventions. It was suggested by a number of responses that an interventions approach should be tailored to fit the local area, and interventions developed with greater community involvement. While many responses thought it was reasonable to expect groups to sign up to a prescribed set of values (suggesting basic concepts of democracy, human rights or equalities), a notable proportion disagreed, citing credibility, expertise and a proven track record as more important factors. Regardless of their view, many respondents stressed the importance of holding organisations providing interventions (and in receipt of funding) to account.

39. Mainstreamed safeguarding was a recurring theme in responses, particularly those from the consultation events. Respondents discussed the need for *Prevent* work to be integrated into existing safeguarding mechanisms, or simply for the link between *Prevent* and safeguarding to be made more explicit.

40. The issue of interventions for other forms of violent extremism (again, the term that was originally used) was raised in some responses. A number of responses said that the existing referral and intervention processes were valid for non-Al Qa'ida-related terrorism, with Channel and interventions methods having been used effectively for extreme right-wing or Northern Irish-related terrorism cases in some areas. Other responses complained of a lack of necessary processes and methods to deal with a broader *Prevent* scope, and said that materials and systems would need developing.

Institutions

41. Schools, Higher and Further Education institutions, prisons, mosques and health establishments were cited most often in responses as the key institutions which the Government should be supporting. Many respondents stressed the particular importance of educational institutions and the critical role

teachers and other staff can play in *Prevent*. Schools were cited by most online respondents as the key institutions which the Government should be supporting, closely followed by universities and colleges, mosques and prisons. Schools were identified most frequently by event respondents as having a key role to play or requiring further support, followed by universities and prisons, colleges and health establishments. Health, prisons, mosques, and Higher Education were viewed by respondents who answered the question on this issue as key institutions for *Prevent*.

42. A number of responses identified a lack of engagement by some institutions, suggesting this was due to the perceived stigma around *Prevent*, a lack of awareness of the issues amongst staff, or a lack of obligation on institutions to engage.

43. Awareness-raising among staff within institutions was viewed by many respondents as an important element of Government support for institutions for the future, with the perception that more consistent and sustained efforts to increase awareness within institutions are needed. Workshop to Raise Awareness of *Prevent* (WRAP) featured in some responses, but many responses called for more to be done in this area. Some respondents were clear that raising awareness of the threat was not enough by itself, and that staff within institutions needed to be provided with the knowledge to identify and refer cases where appropriate.

44. Many responses were clear that Government support should be based on developing partnerships with institutions, which would allow for effective dialogue and information sharing. Some respondents believed that *Prevent* should be made a statutory responsibility in institutions, including HE and FE institutions. Integration of *Prevent* into safeguarding mechanisms was viewed as a possible way of gaining institutional buy-in. The need to provide institutions with funding in order for them to engage with *Prevent* was a theme of responses to this question.

Partnership working between local and central Government

45. Many respondents interpreted the question on what an appropriate balance between Local Authority and Government input for *Prevent* might look like as inviting comment on whether local government should have complete control over *Prevent*. The importance of local multi-agency partnerships was underlined in many responses, with some responses commenting that the question was flawed as it implied that only the Government and Local Authorities were responsible for delivering *Prevent*. A small number of responses felt that community groups and communities should be more involved in delivering *Prevent*.

46. There was a mix of opinion between those respondents firmly believing Local Authorities should be fully in control of both funding decisions and evaluation, with minimal support from the centre, and other respondents who were clear that Government should play a strong coordinating and supporting role, maintaining oversight and holding Local Authorities to account. The sharing of best practice was seen as a role for central Government, while information sharing in general was viewed as key to effective delivery.

47. Those supporting local control saw the need for an understanding of local issues for effective implementation of *Prevent* which they believe the Government does not have. Respondents were keen for the Government to allow flexibility for adapting the approach to *Prevent* at a local level. However, some responses expressed concern that Local Authorities would be unable to deliver *Prevent* due to cuts in their budgets and pointed out that Local Authorities would need appropriate levels of funding if they were expected to take on greater responsibility of *Prevent*. Other respondents raised concerns that the political affiliation of local councils could affect implementation of *Prevent*.

48. The general consensus was that a balance between the centre and local level would be required in the future, with many responses calling for funding to Local Authorities to be ring-fenced in future. Many recognised the need for the strategy to be driven from the centre, where there is an understanding of the national picture, and delivered locally where local issues are best understood.

Evaluation

49. An important theme throughout responses on this issue was that evaluation of *Prevent* activity had been difficult. Many responses also acknowledged that evaluation is important and should be a priority in the future. A number of respondents provided examples of evaluation methods they were aware of or had been involved in in the past.

50. Responses were broadly split between whether evaluation should be outcome or output/process focused. Many respondents suggested qualitative evaluation was more feasible than quantitative, since *Prevent* seeks to cause a behavioural and attitudinal change which is difficult to evaluate quantitatively. Some saw a role for central Government to develop quality standards against which activity can be measured within a performance management system. Others were clear that evaluation should be conducted at a local level. Taking a long-term approach to evaluation was suggested by several responses.

51. Many respondents provided suggestions for criteria against which success of *Prevent* activity could be measured, including: feedback from communities and community groups, quantitative process data (such as numbers involved in projects or referred by Channel, the number of WRAP sessions delivered, number of people receiving WRAP training) community tension monitoring, attitudinal surveys pre- and post-intervention, case studies, benchmarks against guidance and best practice set by the relevant Government Department. A minority of responses talked about contracting external

independent organisations to evaluate activity. Other responses said that local community safety partnerships already had evaluation and monitoring processes and tools in place, and suggested these should be made more of for *Prevent* purposes.

52. NI35, the previous Government's framework for measuring progress, received a mixed response. It was raised by some respondents as having been a useful measure for driving activity on *Prevent* within Local Authorities, while others felt it added another layer of red tape and had hindered activity. Some responses warned against becoming so overly focused on evaluation that productivity is hindered and called for a sensible balance for the future.

Other themes and issues

53. Additional themes and issues raised in written submissions for the consultation focused predominantly around the balance between maintaining security and protecting civil liberties, the need for transparency, the importance of being clear in a future *Prevent* strategy that it concerns a minority of individuals, not whole communities, and the negative portrayal of Muslims in the media.

54. A small number of responses raised concerns about other areas of counter-terrorism policy and legislation, such as so-called "stop-and-search" powers.

55. The third sector emerged from a number of responses as having an important role in *Prevent*, as did friends and family.

Annexes

Annex A: Questions posed by the online questionnaire

Question One

The aim of the previous *Prevent* strategy was to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism in the UK and overseas. The strategy sought to challenge and rebut violent extremist ideology, disrupt the activities of propagandists for terrorism and support those vulnerable to their messages. The strategy also sought to build community resilience to terrorism and to address real or perceived grievances which can be used by terrorists to attract people to their cause.

Are these aims and objectives right? Are there additional objectives that you would like to see in a revised *Prevent* strategy?

Question Two

In the past the *Prevent* strategy aimed to improve the 'resilience' of communities to the influence and messages of violent extremists. Work to build community resilience has not always been well focused, nor has it always addressed specific *Prevent* objectives.

Is the idea of resilience relevant to *Prevent*? What are the characteristics of a resilient community? Can Government help promote resilience?

Question Three

The most severe, current threat to our national security comes from international terrorism associated with and influenced by Al Qa'ida. Other forms of terrorism and violent extremism can also pose a threat to our communities. The Government is exploring the possibility of expanding *Prevent* to reflect these wider threats.

Should *Prevent* be broadened to address threats from other types of violent extremism? What other forms of violent extremism should it address? What sort of programmes and projects might help address them?

Question Four

In the past, the *Prevent* strategy has become associated with promoting community cohesion. Whilst important in its own right, activity in this area has not always made an impact on people who are vulnerable to violent extremism and is sometimes believed to have 'securitised' integration policies. The Government has therefore pledged to more clearly separate these two areas of work.

What are the consequences of separating these areas of work? If you deliver *Prevent* or cohesion/integration projects locally, what impact might this have on your programme?

Question Five

Supporting people who are vulnerable to violent extremism has been at the core of *Prevent*.

If you have direct experience of working on *Prevent* issues with vulnerable individuals, we would like to know how effective you think it was and how these interventions can be improved. We would be interested in hearing about any experience you might have of alternative intervention models.

Question Six

To support those that are most vulnerable to violent extremism and to move them away from terrorism, the previous Government funded interventions provided by a range of community organisations with a spectrum of views.

What, if any, criteria should the Government use to determine groups who receive funding for *Prevent*-related interventions? Should these groups be required to subscribe to specific values and views? What should those values and views be?

Question Seven

As part of the existing *Prevent* strategy, processes have been established to identify those at risk of becoming violent extremists.

How do you think the most at-risk individuals should be identified? Who might come into contact with vulnerable people?

Question Eight

The existing *Prevent* strategy supports institutions – e.g. prisons, schools, universities and mosques – in their efforts to combat the influence of violent extremists who may take advantage of their premises to propagate their message.

How can the Government best support these institutions? Which other institutions that have had problems with violent extremists should be included in the revised *Prevent* strategy? What kinds of support should the new strategy offer these institutions?

Question Nine

The presence of propagandists for terrorism remains a significant catalyst in the radicalisation process. The existing *Prevent* strategy seeks to disrupt their activity.

How can the Government, Local Authorities and community organisations work together most effectively to challenge terrorist propaganda and propagandists?

Question Ten

The *Prevent* strategy has applied across the country and all Local Authorities have some *Prevent* capability. Consistent with a desire for *Prevent* activity to be better targeted and more focused, the new strategy will follow a risk-based approach to allocating resources. Lower risk areas will receive fewer resources.

What criteria might be used to identify an ‘at-risk’ area? Is a risk based approach correct?

Question Eleven

In many areas of its work, the Government is committed to devolving more power and responsibility to the local level. *Prevent* has traditionally been delivered in partnership with Local Authorities with a strong degree of support and direction from central Government.

If Local Authorities were wholly responsible for delivering *Prevent*, with minimal input from the centre, how effective would this be and what kind of risks would it present? If *Prevent* was driven almost entirely by central Government, what kinds of problems and challenges would this present at the local level? What might an appropriate balance look like?

Question Twelve

Prevent in the past has been delivered in partnership with local communities and community organisations. It has sought to strengthen the ability of communities to resist the influence of violent extremist ideology. The Government believes that everyone in our society has a role in challenging extremism.

How can local communities most effectively help resist apologists for violence? Which organisations or groups of people should be working most closely with the Government and with other organisations at the forefront of work to tackle violent extremist ideology?

Question Thirteen

Work to prevent violent extremism is difficult to evaluate and outcomes can be hard to measure. However, it is important that the Government understands whether its policies are working and how they may need to be refocused to ensure value-for-money.

The review of *Prevent* will look at evaluation and monitoring. If you currently work in *Prevent*, you might consider your experience and think about how the Government can do this more effectively. If you have experience of evaluating and monitoring other programmes or policies, we would also be interested in your views.

Question Fourteen

We welcome your thoughts on all aspects of the *Prevent* strategy. If there is something you would like to add that has not been covered above, please use this box to submit your views.

Annex B: Individuals and Groups that Submitted Written Contributions

In addition to those who filled out the online questionnaire or attended a regional event, responses were also received via email or post from the following organisations and individuals.

This list does not include secondary submissions (i.e. documents not originally written or produced for the review but submitted for consideration), nor does it name those who have submitted a response in a personal capacity (apart from academics). Those who did so included members of the general public, community representatives, civil servants, police and Local Authority employees and research students.

Local Authorities and Councils

West Yorkshire Local Authorities
Watford Borough Council
Durham County Council
London Borough of Hackney
Wandsworth Council
Birmingham City Council
Welsh Local Government Association
London Borough of Camden
Newport City Council
London Borough of Newham
West Sussex County Council
Government Office for the South East
Sunderland City Council
Colchester Borough Council

Academics/Universities

Dr Dan Silk, University of Georgia
Dr Sarah Savage, University of Cambridge
Professor Alan Johnson, Edge Hill University
Dr Sara Silvestri, University of Cambridge/City University
Dr John Horgan, Penn State University
Dr Joanna Adler, Middlesex University
Professor Jonathan Githens-Mazer, University of Exeter
Professor Stuart Croft, University of Warwick
Dr Cheryl Simmill-Binning, Lancaster University
Professor Harris Beider, Coventry University
Rachel Briggs, Institute for Strategic Dialogue and RUSI
University of Sheffield

Police Forces

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary
Norfolk Constabulary
Durham Constabulary
Avon & Somerset Police
Police Authorities of Wales
West Midlands Counter-Terrorism Unit
North West Counter-Terrorism Unit

Criminal Justice

Her Majesty's Prison Service
London Probation Trust
Wales Probation Trust

Community and Religious Organisations

Ashram Housing Association
Council of Somali Organisations in Luton
MK Islamic Arts Heritage & Culture
GW Theatre Company
Iqra Project
Radical Middle Way
JAN Trust
Community TV
The Oxford Foundation
Community Security Trust
Board of Deputies of British Jews
Centre for Contemporary Ministry

Local Partnerships and Networks

Crawley Together Prevent Partnership
North Wales Regional Equality Network
Plymouth Community Safety Partnership
Rotherham Prevent Partnership
Lancashire Prevent Forum
Uniting Reading Management Group
Sheffield Silver Group
Civil Service Muslim Network's Board of Management

Other

Equality and Human Rights Commission
Institute for Strategic Dialogue
Liberty

Annex C:

Overall Responses from the General Public to Key *Prevent* Consultation Questions

1. The aim of the previous *Prevent* strategy was to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism in the UK and overseas. The strategy sought to challenge and rebut terrorist ideology, disrupt the activities of propagandists for terrorism and support those vulnerable to their messages. The strategy also sought to build community resilience to terrorism and to address real or perceived grievances which can be used by terrorists to attract people to their cause.

Are these aims and objectives right? Are there additional objectives that you would like to see in a revised *Prevent* strategy?

Audience expectations for *Prevent* aims and objectives were very much in line with Government intentions. Although their words did not match, how they detail what *Prevent* should be doing mirrored the key aims and objectives, with some small tweaks and clarifications. However, they commonly **added** one key aim: to develop the immigration process so that it works in the interest of *Prevent* activity.

2. The most severe, current threat to our national security comes from international terrorism associated with and influenced by Al Qa'ida. Other forms of terrorism can also pose a threat to our communities. The Government is exploring the possibility of expanding *Prevent* to reflect these wider threats.

Should *Prevent* be broadened to address threats from other types of terrorism? What other forms of terrorism should it address? What sort of programmes and projects might help address them?

In terms of focus, while Al-Qa'ida was acknowledged as the dominant threat (albeit reluctantly by Muslim audiences) there was a wide push from across audiences for *Prevent* activity to encompass other forms of terrorism and related activity. This was on the basis that:

- Wider activity would help reduce negative stereotyping of Muslims (an issue acknowledged by all but more likely to be raised spontaneously and with a high level of concern by Muslims) that arises when terrorism is associated exclusively with Al Qa'ida.
- There was a perception that other risks exist and preventative work should be maximised against all of these in the interest of both overall risk reduction and cost-efficiency (using

the same resources and activity to 'cast the net' as wide as possible).

- For *Prevent* to be fully successful, audiences perceived a need for community/societal shifts in terms of integration which requires 'action' from both general population and minority groups (although more from the latter) and activity that focuses on broader risk will help achieve this.

Other forms of terrorism and activity that the public believed should be addressed by *Prevent* include any potential 'terrorist' threat. In the focus groups, this was defined very widely to include all those intending harm (especially violence) to others as a means of delivering to a political or fanatical belief. For participants, this included all racist and extremist individuals and groups such as EDL, BNP, IRA, or those who use violence and fear to achieve their aims (animal rights, etc).

The sorts of programmes and projects that apply to this wider range are similar to those aimed at reducing the threat from Al Qaida, with prioritisation of institutions and individuals close to the specific risk group or issue.

3. In the past, the *Prevent* strategy aimed to improve the 'resilience' of communities to the influence and messages of terrorists. Work to build community resilience has not always been well focused, nor has it always addressed specific *Prevent* objectives.

Is the idea of resilience relevant to *Prevent*? What are the characteristics of a resilient community? Can Government help promote resilience?

Within the aims and activity of *Prevent*, building community resilience was felt to be highly relevant and key to success of the programme, as:

- This makes it more difficult for terrorists to grow support and get their message across.
- Vulnerability of individuals to terrorism is less likely to occur if they have a stronger sense of identity and support within their community.

A resilient community is felt likely to demonstrate the following:

1. Knowledge of the causes of terrorism
2. No tolerance of those who support terrorism
3. Provision of safe ways to discuss concerns or issues
4. Being culturally aware/informed and tolerant of rest of British society

Achieving this is perceived to require:

- Education to support all of the above
- Support/services to deliver to point 3
- Extensive cohesion and integration work within and amongst (for 'universal' tolerance):
 - Different cultural communities (within Muslim populations)
 - Different Islamic communities (following different strands of Islam)
 - The Muslim population as a whole
 - The wider public

Respondents often suggested education first, however, this is likely to be because it is easier to imagine than other activity or solutions. Indeed, discussion of these requirements by respondents indicates that each of these are equally important (as to some extent the strands of activity rely on or support each other).

As well as including community resilience within the programme, this was felt to be something that both Government and local delivery partners (organisations and local Government) should work to promote in order to raise awareness/interest and through doing so, increase the likelihood of success of *Prevent* work (by making the audience 'warm' to it).

However, although the benefits of community resilience and ways to achieving resilience are recognised, they are not considered to be at the forefront of respondent's minds. Widespread concern was raised about the ability to develop communities given that many respondents acknowledge the demise of community/sense of community in recent years. As such, careful consideration is required in terms of **how** community resilience and work around this is promoted.

4. To support those that are most vulnerable to terrorism and to move them away from terrorism, the previous Government funded interventions provided by a range of community organisations with a spectrum of views.

What if any criteria should Government use to determine groups who receive funding for *Prevent*-related interventions? Should these groups be required to subscribe to specific values and views? What should those values and views be?

The public felt it was important for groups and individuals to subscribe to specific views to ensure that 'money is well spent' and there is no abuse of the system. In light of this, it was felt that individuals and organisations should not only be vetted at the application stage but also monitored over time to ensure no changes had taken place which meant financial support was no longer relevant or appropriate. Most concern about subscribing to values came from some within the Muslim audience who felt that inappropriate organisations (those with views that stand counter to the aims of *Prevent*) had been successful in gaining Government funding in the last few years.

Respondents found it relatively difficult to articulate the specific values to which individuals and organisations should subscribe. Overall, however, their expectations include the following mix of spontaneous and prompted* suggestions:

- a) **Desire for integration** (mentioned more by second generation vs. first)
- b) **Open to multi-culturalism** (making efforts to mix people of different cultural backgrounds even if from same religion)
- c) ***Respect for democratic institutions and rule of law**
- d) **Respect for others**, including:
 - *Respect for other people's right to express their point of view without fear of violence or reprisal (although there were some reservations that this legitimises and tolerates those who incite violence and hatred)

- *Respect for individuals regardless of gender, race, religious belief or sexual orientation
- e) **Proven track record** in similar or complementary goals
- f) **Longevity** (as 'fly by night' organisations may simply be after resources)
- g) **Respected by others** (recognised)
- h) **Access** to at risk communities

Each of the above was considered important with no particular priorities evident although the first five (a to e) were most top of mind.

5. The existing *Prevent* strategy supports institutions – e.g. prisons, schools, universities and mosques – in their efforts to combat the influence of terrorists who may take advantage of their premises to propagate their message.

How can the Government best support these institutions? Which other institutions that have had problems with terrorists should be included in the revised *Prevent* strategy? What kinds of support should the new strategy offer these institutions?

The full range of institutions identified by the audience as important to the *Prevent* strategy included (in order of perceived overall impact):

- Schools*
- Single faith schools/madrassahs
- Religious centres, e.g. mosques*
- Media
- Community organisations
- Community centres/youth clubs
- Universities*
- Any other local meeting places
- Neighbourhood watch/parish councils (more general public)
- Prisons*

* Prompted within stimulus material but most also mentioned spontaneously

In terms of types of support, the public expected:

- Guidance on practice
- Guidance on and delivery of training where appropriate
- Input to and regulation of education strategies and content
- Regulation and monitoring (in terms of delivery to *Prevent* aims and objectives)
- Funding for activity (e.g. youth and adult cohesion, integration and/or development programmes)
- Complementary wider messaging activity (as detailed in section 6 below) in education and the media (this is not direct support but is seen to help create a more conducive environment for *Prevent* work by setting helpful 'norms' amongst the public, e.g. in terms of taking an anti-terrorist stance)

6. The presence of propagandists for terrorism remains a significant catalyst in the radicalisation process. The existing *Prevent* strategy seeks to disrupt their activity.

How can the Government, local authorities and community organisations work together most effectively to challenge terrorist propaganda and propagandists?

Tackling propaganda was felt to be extremely important and an area where 'little is happening currently'. Ideas put forward by respondents fell into three key areas as follows:

- **Education** within schools and amongst the general public on what propaganda is and how to recognise it.
- **Anti-propaganda communications** (across media and via a wide range of spokespeople) to directly challenge views, point out flaws publicly, provide guidance on how to challenge it and help build public solidarity against terrorist organisations/activity.
- **Tighter legislation/penalties** for supporting of terrorism.

Respondents felt that a wider, more national approach (e.g. through mainstream TV

programming and national newspaper titles) would help significantly. This would help with far reaching delivery but also (as mentioned in 5 above) help create a sense of mainstream/majority perception ('norms') that people can join in with.

7. The *Prevent* strategy has applied across the country and all local authorities have some *Prevent* capability. Consistent with a desire for *Prevent* activity to be better targeted and more focused, the new strategy will follow a risk-based approach to allocating resources. Lower risk areas will receive fewer resources.

What criteria might be used to identify an 'at-risk' area? Is a risk based approach correct?

The audiences agreed that areas would vary in their level of risk. Key factors considered to increase risk included the following:

- a) Separation from 'mainstream' society:
 - *Lack of integration
 - *Large numbers of Muslims living in a single area (noted more often by general public but also by some Muslims)
 - ***Patterns of settlement/creations of 'ghettos', increasing sense of isolation
- b) Deprivation factors
 - *Poverty
 - **Perceptions of lack of opportunity/employment
 - **Perceptions of a lack of ability to access resources
 - **Communities with lower education
- c) Identity and perception issues
 - **Perceptions of discrimination
 - **Lack of sense of belonging/British identity
 - Known presence of propagandists or international extremist links (not prompted but suggested spontaneously)
- d) Conflict within communities:
 - **Between those with moderate and devout/extremist views
 - Between first generation and other generations

Respondents agreed with the full list of factors presented to them. However:

- Those marked with an asterisk were also suggested spontaneously by respondents across both General Public and Muslim audiences (not by all respondents, but mentioned relatively consistently across sessions)
- Those marked with two asterisks were also suggested spontaneously by Muslim audiences (not by all respondents, but mentioned relatively consistently across sessions)

Order of importance was not consistent with respondents varying between a, b and c above as being most top of mind or key. Across audiences, however, d was generally less top of mind.

Many respondents also noted that these indicators are not 'hard and fast rules' so both the *Prevent* programme and communications in respect of it should support and illustrate understanding of this.

It was also widely felt that while relative risk of the area needed to be factored into allocation of *Prevent* resources, they also felt this should not be the sole determinant and other areas should not be ignored, as if this was known/made public:

- This would exacerbate the equality issue.
- This would be helpful knowledge to terrorists in planning their own activity (and who would then choose to focus on other areas).

8. *Prevent* in the past has been delivered in partnership with local communities and community organisations. It has sought to strengthen the ability of communities to resist the influence of terrorist ideology. The Government believes that everyone in our society has a role in challenging extremism.

How can local communities most effectively help resist apologists for violence? Which organisations or groups of people should be working most closely with the Government and with other organisations at the forefront of work to tackle terrorist ideology?

Resisting apologists for violence was felt to be through tackling propaganda (See 6 above) and the other activity outlined under community resilience (3 above) and supporting institutions (5 above). Audience perceptions of which organisations should be included are also outlined under 5.

In terms of which types of people should be working closely with the Government and other organisations in delivering *Prevent* work, the following were put forward as key:

- a) 'Respected people in the community', e.g.
 - *Imams
 - *Teachers (as they communicate with young people and parents)
 - *Community (local) police
 - Local Muslim business leaders
 - People that young people are likely to think of as 'cool' and able to relate to them
- b) Media (journalists, actors, programme makers, those who take part in current affairs programmes and documentaries)
- c) Government: local Government councillors, politicians, border control and immigration staff
- d) Cross cultural/neutral parties/peacekeepers, e.g. respected Islamic and other scholars (more Muslims but some GP)

Additionally for Muslims:

- e) In mosques, the governors and the chair of the mosque
- f) In schools, any dedicated liaison officers where they exist

Additionally for minority General Public:

- g) Reformed terrorists as 'they know all the ways they work'
- h) Possibly prison chaplains and imams when prompted (but some reservations)

* Prompted within stimulus material but most also mentioned spontaneously

All of the above were considered important but a, b and c were more likely to be mentioned spontaneously and earlier in discussion indicating they are most top of mind.

The public generally recognise that everyone in society has a role in challenging extremism through their perception that building tolerance and integration across UK society is central to *Prevent* work. However, this is not top of mind for the audiences and a conclusion that is reached after detailed discussion only. As such, there is more to understand in terms of what will really connect and motivate individuals from the wider public to get involved.

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