

PREVENTING RADICALISATION

Radicalisation involves persuading others of a world view that rejects society and encourages the use of violence to change society.

The *Prevent* programme is part of the national counter-terrorism strategy and involves identifying individuals being radicalised and drawn into terrorism or violent extremism, and working with those individuals – on a voluntary basis – giving them support and guidance to turn them to a different path.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a statutory duty on local authorities such as South Gloucestershire Council to assess the risk of radicalisation in their local area and to take appropriate action in response to that risk.

At this moment in time (end of the 2016/17 financial year) the national threat level from terrorism is 'Severe', meaning a terrorist attack is highly likely. South Gloucestershire is classed as a low-risk area. As such it receives no Home Office funding to deliver its *Prevent* work. However that does not mean there is no risk in South Gloucestershire.

A *Prevent* Board for South Gloucestershire co-ordinates work between key organisations operating locally. There is a formal relationship between the *Prevent* Board, the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board which includes the Council's Strategic Safeguarding Service Manager being a member of the *Prevent* Board. The *Prevent* Board's detailed Annual Report is presented each year to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board.

In the previous year the local focus for *Prevent* had been largely about ensuring appropriate processes and training were in place. During 2016/17 we built on this basis, working with local communities in order to raise understanding, and to deal with tensions including those related to faith and race. Key actions in the year included:

- Amending the Channel Panel process to better co-ordinate input from health services
- Meeting with leaders from a range of faiths to discuss how we can work together to improve tolerance and diversity in the community using faith groups as anchors.
- Linking to ongoing engagement mechanisms including South Gloucestershire Equality Forum and the South Gloucestershire Race Equality Network
- Establishing a network of key community contacts in Patchway and Filton who are aware of / share information in the community of, *Prevent*
- Extending training in the national Workshop To Raise Awareness of *Prevent* to a range of voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations, with particular emphasis on those working with vulnerable young people,
- Verifying that sufficient safeguards and auditing policies are in place to prevent public internet facilities in libraries and One Stop Shops being used for extremism or radicalisation in order to help protect vulnerable individuals.
- Trialling the use of the Breakthrough mentoring service as an intervention provider, working with an individual at risk of extremism.
- Giving a further 250 Council staff detailed (Workshop To Raise Awareness of *Prevent*) training, bring the total to 442.

The Ofsted inspection of South Gloucestershire carried out in November / December 2016 concluded that “Local professionals, including school staff, have received training in identifying children and young people at risk of radicalisation. The head of safeguarding is a member of the council’s steering group for ‘Prevent’. A range of agencies refer to the ‘Channel’ panel, although none have met the threshold for discussion in this forum. Screening by the head of safeguarding ensures that vulnerable children who are referred receive appropriate services. Schools have access to appropriate resources to support them in their ‘Prevent’ duty.”

No resident in South Gloucestershire was identified as being radicalised in 2016/17.

Looking to 2017/18 *Prevent* priorities will be to:

- develop a comprehensive and integrated programme to improve community cohesion
- raise awareness within communities and organisations of lone actors
- continue monitoring tensions and hate crimes, including extreme right wing graffiti/stickers on street furniture & walls.
- assess the impact of refugees and asylum seekers housed locally and establish regular communication with them.
- continue to roll out of Prevent awareness/WRAP training.
- contribute to a comprehensive regional communications strategy for *Prevent* to help improve understanding of the process and its reputation.