

Epping Forest Local Strategic Partnership

National Indicator 35 – Building Communities Resilient to Violent Extremism

Action Plan

Introduction

This Strategy and Action Plan sets out the Local Strategic Partnership's commitment in working together with partner agencies and our local communities in developing, implementing and monitoring programmes that relate to the objectives of the National Prevent Strategy. These in turn, will contribute to making our communities safer and harmonious.

This document has been produced in response to the Government's counter-terrorism strategy known as CONTEST, and to meet the National Indicator (NI) 35, which all local authorities are expected to report against, from April 2009.

The Prevent strand of the CONTEST strategy is concerned with tackling the radicalisation of individuals, both in the UK and elsewhere, which sustains the international terrorist threat. The Government seeks to do this by:

- tackling disadvantage and supporting reform by addressing structural problems in the UK and overseas that may contribute to radicalisation, such as inequalities and discrimination;
- deterring those who facilitate terrorism and those who encourage others to become terrorists by changing the environment in which the extremists and those radicalising others can operate; and
- engaging in the battle of ideas by challenging the ideologies that extremists believe can justify the use of violence, primarily by helping Muslims who wish to dispute these ideas to do so.

Evidence from this country and from overseas seems to suggest that there are some key interlocking factors that lead to violent extremism:

- an ideology which justifies terrorism by manipulating theology as well as history and politics;
- radicalisers and their networks who promote violent extremism through a variety of institutions and media;
- individuals who are vulnerable to the messages of violent extremists;
- communities, which are sometimes poorly equipped to challenge and resist violent extremism; and
- grievances, some genuine and some perceived, and some directed very specifically against government.

It is the understanding of the above factors that has led to the development of the objectives of the National Prevent strategy. They are:

1. To undermine extremist ideology and support mainstream voices.
2. To disrupt those who promote violent extremism, and strengthen vulnerable institutions.
3. To support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.
4. To increase the capacity of communities to challenge and resist violent extremism;
5. To effectively address grievances

In addition to these key objectives there are two strategic enablers:

1. developing understanding, analysis and information; and
2. improving strategic **communications**.

The threat from violent extremism is one that we all share and the solution therefore requires a community response. Nevertheless, we and our partners recognise that in the current threat context, our Muslim communities could be particularly vulnerable to illegal or radicalising influences. It is therefore imperative that we work closely with our Muslim and non Muslim communities to formulate a proportionate and supportive response. Terrorist and violent extremists are criminals that undermine the common values which we all share.

Aims and objectives

This action plan seeks to develop our approach to community cohesion, where people from all backgrounds feel valued, are able to contribute to and experience equal opportunities. The Local Strategic Partnership and its partners constantly strive to create a safer and more inclusive place regardless of race, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

The objective of the action plan is to ensure that the core principles of inclusive and cohesive communities are safeguarded within the context of managing any possible threat from violent extremism. All partners will continue to follow and promote this approach.

National indicator 35

NI 35 is a new national indicator from 2009/10 which requires Local Strategic Partnerships to assess the standard of a local area's arrangements to evaluate the effectiveness of 'Prevent' related work programmes – i.e. building resilience to violent extremism. Prevent is one of four strands to the UK's broad counter-terrorism strategy. Its high level aim is to stop people becoming or supporting violent extremists. Reporting on NI 35 is a district level responsibility.

NI 35 has 4 key targets which require local authorities to deliver on:

1. Understanding of, and engagement with, Muslim communities;
2. Knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism and the Prevent objectives;
3. Development of a risk based preventing violent extremism action plan, in support of the Prevent objectives and;
4. Effective oversight, delivery and evaluation of projects and actions.

The 4 key targets above will be ranked 1 – 5 in terms of delivery, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest. The main aim of NI 35 will be to measure overall progress by assessing the levels of engagement and understanding that local partners have of the local community, the strength of their partnership working and the effectiveness of their strategies. NI 35 will also be part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process that closely examines the effectiveness and delivery of services provided by a local authority.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

There is an expectation from Central Government that a local partnership group will be established to take forward the Prevent Strategy. This group should possess the skills, knowledge and interest in community engagement and cohesion which will be needed to produce the local strategy and action plan to meet NI 35. Four steps have been outlined in national guidance to help deliver the programme of action:

- a. Establish, co-ordinate and task a Prevent Partnership Group;
- b. Understand the challenge through strategic assessment;
- c. Address the local challenge with a targeted programme of actions and;
- d. Evaluate and review annually.

ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan below has been produced as an initial response to the challenges set by NI 35.

**Epping Forest District Local Strategic Partnership
NI 35 action plan – building resistance to violent extremism**

| NO. | ACTION (Key Target Criteria) | MILESTONES | TIMESCALE | LEAD/ DELIVERY PARTNERS | OUTCOMES | PROGRESS |
|-----|--|---|--|-------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. | Map Faith Groups & BME Communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key groups • Establish contact with key leaders • Complete Police Community Profiles • Effective process for identifying new migrants to the area | February 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC/LSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have named leads • Know where the BME groups are • Understanding of faith and BME communities • Gaps in information identified | Local Neighbourhood profiles are an on-going process |
| 2. | Engage and build positive relations with faith communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope all service provision to faith communities and migrants • Continue to work with Faith communities in the District via Inter-Faiths Forum • Islamic Awareness Conference | <p>February 2010</p> <p>On going</p> <p>April 2010</p> | Essex Police / EFDC/LSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive partnership working • Faith communities actively contribute to community planning and actions • Timely and considered partnership intervention in the event of an incident • Improved perception of community cohesion amongst all parts of the community • Consultation methods appropriate to diverse communities • Credible and meaningful community based data from BME communities (qualitative & quantitative) | |

| NO. | ACTION (Key Target Criteria) | MILESTONES | TIMESCALE | LEAD/ DELIVERY PARTNERS | OUTCOMES | PROGRESS |
|-----|--|--|------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| 3. | Achieve understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver presentations to LSP and key partners (staff) • Deliver presentations to communities (including business communities) • Effective utilisation of Multi-Faith Forums • Process to identify and evaluate incidents that may impact upon local faith communities • Develop and implement a robust tension monitoring system | April 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleagues from BME communities are key players in partnership working • Understanding priorities from mutual perspectives through role reversal • Widen representation from BME communities on the EFDC Hate Crime Panel (and other CDRP thematic groups as communities deem appropriate) • Better understanding amongst partners and communities of the risk factors relating to violent extremism • Reduction of identified risks • Avoidance of community tension | |
| 4. | Through appropriate training, develop capacity of key individuals to understand and deliver the Prevent Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key individuals identified and presentations and workshops delivered as appropriate • Both within partner agencies and with the communities | April 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC/LSP/CDRP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmed training and workshops (including reviewing and evaluation) • Greater awareness of and more effective ability to deliver the Prevent agenda | |

| NO. | ACTION (Key Target Criteria) | MILESTONES | TIMESCALE | LEAD/ DELIVERY PARTNERS | OUTCOMES | PROGRESS |
|-----|--|---|---------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| 5. | Risk assessment of impact of violent extremism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify communities potentially at risk from extremist activity • Identify public places potentially at risk from extremist activity • Identify public events potentially at risk from extremist activity • Counter Terrorism Local Profile produced and analysed | February 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop plan with key areas (e.g. M11, M25, Central Line, Gas pipe line) • Completed risk assessment • Change management action plan | |
| 6. | Deliver balanced messages of violent extremism with mainstream messages that proportionately reflect the diversity and cohesiveness of the local Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications Strategy and action plan for the delivery of NI 35 within the District to include better use of information technology | March 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC/LSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Comprehensive consultation plan • Feedback on data to communities and Partnerships • Better process for appropriate information sharing • Better awareness and understanding of Faith and BME groups and the Prevent agenda amongst the wider community • Better awareness and understanding of the Prevent agenda within Faith and BME communities | |

| NO. | ACTION (Key Target Criteria) | MILESTONES | TIMESCALE | LEAD/ DELIVERY PARTNERS | OUTCOMES | PROGRESS |
|-----|--|--|--------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| 7. | Ensure the most likely to be targeted or recruited to violent extremism have access to mainstream key messages and information and are signposted to services. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the skills and role of faith leaders and partner agencies to combat, reject and challenging extremist ideology. | March 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To enable those most likely to be targeted to challenge • Identify groups most vulnerable or exposed to these messages | |
| 8. | Communications are tailored to the diverse needs of the communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase understanding of the PREVENT agenda across faith boundaries • Increase awareness of world faiths' perspectives on public services | March 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing messages of violent extremist ideology with information that reflects the cohesiveness and diversity of the EFDC communities • To enable people to live an active and pro active life in a cohesive and diverse community that values and respects cultural differences | |
| 9. | Establish suitable governance arrangements for delivery and evaluation of NI 35 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish appropriate delivery group membership and working arrangements • Establish role of LSP, CDRP and other partnership groups • Establish buy in from partners and communities | January 2010 | Essex Police / EFDC/LSP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective, sustainable delivery of action plan • Ownership by partners and communities • Reporting of NI35 targets by EFDC on quarterly basis • Identifying Officers for the above | |