

**Report of Chief Officer Community Safety**

**Report to Director of Environments and Housing**

**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> May 2015

**Subject:** Prevent Support Officer

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The Prevent Strategy is an integral part of the UK's national strategy to deal with terrorism. The strategy aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
2. Leeds is a Prevent priority area, as designated by the Home Office. This means that the local authority is in receipt of a grant to employ a Prevent Coordinator to lead on the development of a citywide approach to tackling the key threats and vulnerabilities identified. The local authority, as well as a range of other sectors, now have a statutory requirement to have '*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*'.
3. This report seeks approval to create and recruit a Prevent Support Officer post in order to further the local authority's efforts on Prevent and provide support to schools and other sectors with implementing the Prevent Duty.

## **Recommendations**

### **The Director of Environments and Housing is asked to:**

- To approve the creation and appointment of a new Prevent Support Officer.

### **1 Purpose of this report**

**1.1** This report seeks to increase support to the Prevent Coordinator by adding:

- 1 x Prevent Support Officer

**1.2** The creation of this post will provide additional capacity within the local authority to support the delivery of the national Prevent strategy and support a range of sectors with the implementation of the Prevent Duty as outlined in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.

### **2 Background information**

**2.1** Leeds is a Prevent priority area, as designated by the Home Office. Under the new Counter Terrorism and Security (CTS) Act 2015 the local authority, as well as a range of other sectors, now have a statutory requirement to have '*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*'.

**2.2** Currently, the local authority employs a Prevent Coordinator to lead on the development of a citywide approach to tackling the key threats and vulnerabilities identified, and to help sectors with implementation of the Prevent Duty as described above.

### **3 Main issues**

**3.1** The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places an expectation on the council to deliver against the Prevent agenda and furthermore, support a range of agencies and sectors to fulfil their obligations on Prevent.

**3.2** The Duty upon local authorities includes:

- Ensuring frontline staff has a good understanding of *Prevent*, are trained to recognise vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and are aware of available programmes to deal with this issue.
- The expectation on local authority staff to make appropriate referrals to the Channel scheme and ensure that Channel is supported by the appropriate organisation and expertise.
- Ensure that publicly-owned venues and resources do not provide a platform for extremists and are not used to disseminate extremist views.
- Additionally, the local authority will be expected to support a range of out-of-school settings that are currently not regulated under education law.

**3.3** The above represents a great challenge for the local authority considering the volume of such settings in the city. In addition to these, there is still a great deal of work needed to be done with faith institutions and communities in the city to ensure that vulnerable individuals are safeguarded from being drawn into terrorism.

**3.4** The creation of the additional post will enable the local authority to better meet the needs as described above and meet the requirements of CTS Act 2015.

**3.5** A Job Description has been developed (attached at appendix 1).

#### **4.0 Workforce Implications**

**4.1** The staff employed will be required to undergo the appropriate vetting procedures via the Home Office.

**4.2** Training will be required initially to familiarise the staff member with Prevent training delivered throughout Leeds. This will be provided in-house at no cost.

**4.3** A Job Description has been developed and put through the Job Evaluation process which has determined the post at SO2 grade. The posts will be offered on a 12 month fixed term basis, with continuation being dependent on the Home Office providing additional funding.

#### **5 Corporate Considerations**

**5.1** Creating capacity within Safer Leeds will contribute towards the section's ambition of working in partnership to keep communities safe.

## **6.0 Consultation and Engagement**

6.1 Consultation with the CONTEST Gold Group chaired by the Director of Environments and Housing has taken place at a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The creation of this post was agreed by all at the meeting.

6.2 Discussions have also take place with the Home Office who have agreed to pay for this post through the Prevent Coordinator grant agreement.

## **7.0 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

7.1 Leeds City Council is an Equal Opportunities Employer and Leeds City Councils Equal Opportunities Policies are set out in the City Council's Local Conditions of Service. As an employee all employees are required to adhere to these policies.

## **8.0 Council policies and City Priorities**

8.1 The Prevent service plays a pivotal role in helping to keep the City safe and achieve its ambition to become the best city to live and work in the UK. In addition, it also plays a crucial role in creating cohesive, stronger, and resilient communities.

## **9.0 Resource**

9.1 The cost to employ a SO2 Prevent Support Officer with on costs amounts to £34,222 per annum including on-costs. It has been agreed that the costs for this post will be funded via the Prevent Coordinator grant funded through the Home Office. There will be no expense to Council budgets.

## **10.0 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

10.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

10.2 Current Council Recruitment and Selection policies will be adhered to throughout the recruitment process.

## **11.0 Risk Management**

11.1 Potential reduction in Home Office grant could put this post at risk. However, this is unlikely given the current nature of the threat from terrorism. The post will be advertised on a fixed term basis subject to continuation funding from the Home Office.

## **12.0 Recommendations**

12.1 The Director of Environments and Housing is asked to:

- To approve the creation and appointment of a SO2 Prevent Support Officer

## **13.0 Background documents**

13.1 Prevent Duty Statutory Guidance

13.2 Home Office funding confirmation

13.3 Job Description