

Report to:	TOURISM, RESOURCES AND ECONOMY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Paolo Pertica, Head of Visitor Services
Date of Meeting	19 November 2015

COUNTER TERRORISM REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide some background information for the Tourism, Economy and Resources Scrutiny Committee with regards to the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) and the new Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, following a request from Members at the September meeting of the Committee. The report will also provide an update on the activity undertaken by Blackpool Council and its partners in relation to the statutory duties placed upon them by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Act, particularly under the 'Prevent' strand of the CONTEST strategy. Information on how Blackpool Council will ensure that these statutory duties are met is detailed within sections 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 5.6 and 5.7 of this report.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To consider the background information and the update on the activity undertaken by Blackpool Council in order to meet its statutory duties under the new Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to and identify any further areas for scrutiny as appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure that Blackpool Council meets its statutory duties under the new Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and, in partnership with the other specified authorities, takes action to prevent terrorism, protect its citizens and infrastructure from terrorism and, in the event of an attack, minimise the impact and recover as quickly as possible, as well as pursuing those responsible.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2.1 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

N/A

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is: *"Safeguard and protect the most vulnerable and create safer communities and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour."*

5.0 Background Information

5.1 CONTEST is the UK's Counter Terrorism Strategy. The revised version of this strategy was published in 2011 and, more recently, the CONTEST annual report for 2014 has been published which can be found via the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/contest-uk-strategy-for-countering-terrorism-annual-report-for-2014>

There are four main strands to the Counter Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) as follows:

Pursue: investigation and disruption of terrorist attacks;

Prevent: working to prevent people becoming radicalised and subsequently engaging in, or supporting, terrorism and extremism;

Protect: improving protective security to prevent a terrorist attack, for example on Critical Infrastructure and Crowded Places; and

Prepare: working to minimise the impact of an attack and to recover from it as quickly as possible.

5.2 The Protect and Prepare strands of CONTEST are part of the day to day business of the duties of the Risk and Resilience Officer (formerly the Emergency Planning Officer), who links into Lancashire Constabulary's Counter Terrorism Security Advisor (CTSA) and the Lancashire Resilience Forum (LRF). The Risk and Resilience Officer is also the single point of contact for Lancashire Constabulary if any issues arise with regards to terrorism. The Officer sits on the Prevent Delivery Managers Group, which has been established for several years. This group now coordinates Prevent activity for the County and reports to the County's Local Authority Chief Executive Group.

5.3 Additionally, within the Adult Social Care Division the Designated Safeguarding Manager for Adults has some responsibilities to enable the Council to deliver on its responsibilities and duties in relation to the Prevent Strategy. These responsibilities are concerned with preventing at-risk adults becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism through radicalisation into terrorist ideologies. The Designated Safeguarding Manager for Adults acts as the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for the Local Authority engagement with the area Channel Panel for Adults, and the Interim Principal Social Worker for Children Social Care acts as the Single Point of Contact for Children's Services. (See paragraph 5.6.5).

5.3.1 The way in which Prevent and Channel will be delivered may overlap with the implementation of the wider safeguarding duty the Local Authority has for both Children and Adults at risk.

5.3.2 The new statutory duties for Local Authorities are concerned with the Prevent strand of the CONTEST strategy. This strand has three specific objectives as follows:

- Respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat posed from those who promote it,
- Prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- Work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed.

5.3.3 The Prevent work is coordinated by the pan-Lancashire Prevent Delivery Managers Group which reports to the Lancashire Chief Executive Group. Blackpool Council Corporate Leadership Team has established a Prevent Delivery Group to ensure its responsibilities as a Specified Authority under the new legislation are fulfilled.

5.4 **Current Threat Levels** (correct as of 5 November 2015)

5.4.1 The government has categorised five different terrorism 'Alert States' since August 2006. These are as follows:

- Low: An attack is unlikely
- Moderate: An attack is possible but not likely
- Substantial: An attack is a strong possibility
- Severe: An attack is highly likely
- Critical: An attack is expected imminently

The current UK threat level for international terrorism is: **SEVERE**. The current threat level for Northern Ireland-related terrorism is **MODERATE** in Great Britain.

5.5 **New Statutory Duties**

5.5.1 On the 1 July 2015 the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 came into effect. The Act places a duty on Specified Authorities to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.” Guidance was published in March 2015 regarding Channel (see section 5.6) and the requirements for agencies, including Local Authorities, to protect vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism. The Specified Authorities, as identified in the Act, are as follows:

5.5.2 Local Authorities, Police, Prisons, Young offender institutions, Providers of probation services, Schools, Colleges, Universities and NHS bodies. Specified authorities must:

- Assess risk of radicalisation in their area or institution
- Develop an action plan to reduce this risk
- Train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism
- Work in partnership with other partners
- Establish referral mechanisms and refer people to Channel
- Maintain records and reports to demonstrate compliance

5.5.3 With regards to the inspection and oversight of the above tasks, the implementation of these statutory requirements will be inspected. The Home Office will oversee compliance, gather data from specified authorities and issue direct guidance where there is evidence of non-compliance.

5.5.4 The expectations in relation to Local Authorities are as follows:

- Coordinate Prevent using multi-agency groups
- Assess risk of at-risk adults and children being drawn into terrorism using Counter Terrorism Local Profiles (CTLP)
- Develop an action plan to reduce risk to identified vulnerable groups
- Identify and train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism
- Refer identified vulnerable adults and children to Channel where there is an evidence base of risk factors
- Establish a responsible booking policy for public venues
- Refrain from working with extremist organisations (including Elected Members)

5.6. Channel

Channel is a multi-agency approach to protecting people at risk from radicalisation. Channel uses existing collaboration between local authorities and statutory partners to:

- identify individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism
- assess the nature and extent of that risk
- develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned

5.6.1 Channel is focused around safeguarding children and adults who may be at risk of being drawn into committing terrorist-related activity. Channel uses early intervention to protect and divert people away from the risks they face *before* the threat from extremism and violent extremism is posed.

5.6.2 Channel is a key element of the Prevent strategy. Section 37 (5) of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires Channel panels to be chaired by the responsible Local Authority. Members of the panel must include the responsible Local Authority and the Police for the relevant Local Authority area. However Local Authorities have the principal responsibility in their areas. The Local Authority Chair and the Police will be present at each panel alongside other members, as determined by the panel (section 37 (4)). Other members might include children and adults social care services and the NHS in particular.

5.6.3 Local authorities must ensure a multi-agency panel exists for their area and must also chair that panel. Local Authorities may decide to run panels in conjunction with more than one Local Authority and, in such cases, the authorities can determine between themselves who should chair the meeting. Panel members and the Chair must be satisfied that the combined panel is fit for purpose and that it will effectively manage the vulnerability and risks associated with cases supported through the Channel programme. The Lead Authority is always the authority in which the individual resides.

5.6.4 The Chair of the Channel Panel is responsible for:

- Having oversight of all cases in their area
- Ensuring that the appropriate representatives are invited to each meeting as panel members
- Establishing effective relationships across statutory agencies to ensure effective co-operation over information sharing and attendance at panel meetings
- Establishing the appropriate support plan for identified individuals by using the expertise of the panel and ensuring that consent is sought from the individual before that plan is put in place

- Ensuring that risks of persons being drawn into terrorism are identified and are referred to the appropriate agencies for action.
- Ensuring that individuals or organisations on the panel carry out their elements of the support plan so that an effective support package is delivered.

In Lancashire a county wide Channel Panel meets on a regular basis. Blackpool Council is currently represented on this panel by the Designated Safeguarding Manager for Adults and the Children’s Safeguarding and Review Service Manager.

5.6.5 The authority should consider that by being represented on this panel it is already discharging this particular duty. The current delivery model of three neighbouring authorities (Lancashire, Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool) working in conjunction is an effective means of delivery with Lancashire Constabulary.

5.7 How is Prevent delivered across Lancashire?

Within Lancashire it has been agreed by the Local Authority Chief Executives Group that Prevent work will be coordinated by the County’s Prevent Delivery Managers Group which meets quarterly. The Risk and Resilience Officer represents Blackpool Council on this group.

5.8 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

List of Appendices:

None

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 The Council must ensure that it implements these new statutory duties as highlighted in paragraph 5.6.2 and 5.6.3.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 Whilst work is underway to assess the options for the best way to train staff to recognise radicalisation and extremism, it is highly likely that a report will be submitted during November 2015 to the Corporate Leadership Team asking them to approve the following:

- Mandatory e-learning course for all staff developed by the National Policing College with regards to Channel Awareness.
- Attendance to the Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP3) for those staff working with people who may be vulnerable from being drawn into terrorism.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility under Equality Law, known as “Public Sector Duty” to examine and analyse the impacts on equality issues on all related decisions. This is set within the context of our overarching requirement under Equality law, as a designated public authority to have “due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different (defined) groups.

8.2 These requirements have been foremost in planning for this new duty and we have involved the Equality and Diversity Manager in the development of our approach. He will be a member of the task and finish group established to support the specified authorities to progress this work, particularly with regards to Prevent work required. It is particularly important that implementation of this new duty does not undermine community relations or stereotype people because of religious or other affiliation.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 The Home Office has made available £10,000 of funding for non-priority local authorities to assist with the implementation of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. A report has been submitted to the Corporate Leadership Team for approval to apply for the funding, which must be spent by the 31 March 2016. Options on how this funding can be spent are being discussed, which include the potential for pooling this funding with other neighbouring local authorities to maximise any benefit, for example in relation to commissioning training.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 Please see paragraph 9. In addition, law and practice relating to Human Right will be protected at all times whilst carrying out the required activity to implement the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 N/A

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None