

# Information for County Councillors

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To:	All County Councillors

## Preventing People from Being Drawn Into Terrorism: Training and Awareness for Members

### The Background

Terrorist activity can happen anywhere and anyone can be targeted. Popular opinion is that in a rural, relatively safe County like Somerset, this type of thing simply doesn't happen. However, since July 2015 there has been 22 prevent case management referrals in the Avon and Somerset Force area, 2 of which were from Somerset.

The County Council has a key role to play in preventing people from being drawn into extremist and terrorist activity. Vulnerable people can be susceptible to being radicalised by individuals or organised groups and Somerset is no exception to the risk.

In February 2015, the Counter Terrorism and Security Act was introduced to reduce and prevent the threat of terrorism across the Country. This Act means that the County Council now has statutory duties for making sure that we give due regard to Preventing radicalisation and terrorism in all our activities. We also have a lead role in making sure that our key partner agencies ('specified authorities') are embedding these duties appropriately.

A significant aspect of embedding duties is to make sure that all front line staff and Elected Members (as a minimum) are trained to be aware of Prevent and the routes by which concerns about groups and/or individuals can be escalated. There are two methods of training:

1. There is now a comprehensive e-learning module available on the Learning pool. This is open to all Members and is accessed easily by smart phones, tablets as well as computers.
2. Face to face Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) which can be made available to all Members upon request.

## **What is Prevent?**

Prevent is one of the strands of the National Contest (Counter Terrorism) Strategy aimed to '*stop people becoming terrorists or supporting violent extremism*'. The focus is Safeguarding. Being able to spot the signs of concern that a vulnerable individual has been exposed to radicalisation and know how to refer and support these individuals appropriately

## **What is Channel?**

Channel is the route by which individuals who have been referred for possible radicalisation concerns are assessed for levels of risk and are assigned a support plan or intervention. The training will also cover Channel because this is also a new statutory duty placed upon the County Council and other key partner agencies.

## **How have we prepared for these new duties in Somerset?**

Somerset County Council has a leadership role to not only embed the duties internally within SCC but also help our partner agencies be aware of what they need to do and how. There is a multi-agency Somerset Prevent Board who meet every 6 months to share good practice and share information about how to tackle extremism and radicalisation locally and work to a multi-agency Somerset Prevent Plan.

## **The Strategy**

The Somerset County Council Prevent Strategy is found in Appendix A

For partner agencies who also have duties under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015), Somerset County Council has produced an all-encompassing toolkit. This is quite a large document that has been designed as a reference point for individual tasks such as risk assessment guidance and example policy inserts. This can be made available upon request.

## **Where are we now?**

To date, the main work for embedding the duties has focussed upon schools, primarily due to the new Ofsted requirement in the area of Prevent. This has provided schools with the opportunity for training and given them the confidence that they are ready for inspection.

Policy development, producing advisory tools for partner agencies and strategic planning work has also been a priority.

It is now time to begin the training for Somerset County Council staff and Elected members. To access the e-learning please log on to the Member's area of the Learning Pool or simply follow the link here:

<http://somerset.learningpool.com/course/view.php?id=519>

For more information  
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