

**Thurrock Community Safety Partnership**  
**ACTION PLAN**  
**NI 35 – BUILDING RESISTANCE TO VIOLENT EXTREMISM**

Introduction

Thurrock is a safe place with a strong track record of partnership working, however community cohesion, as measured by NI1 – % of people who believe that people from different backgrounds get on well together is the lowest in the eastern region and one of the lowest in the Country at 54.03% compared to the national Average of 76.4%.

This Strategy and Action Plan sets out the Council's commitment in working together with partner agencies and our diverse 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 more harmonious places to live.

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

The Prevent strand is concerned with tackling the radicalisation of individuals, both in the UK and overseas, which sustains the international terrorist threat. The Government seek 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
- 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.

According to evidence from this country and from overseas it seems to suggest that there are some key interlocking factors that lead to violent extremism, which can be described as:

- An ideology which justifies terrorism by manipulating theology as well as history and politics;
- Radicalisers and their networks which promote violent extremism through a variety of places, 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 of course 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. Undermine extremist ideology and support mainstream voices.**
- 2. Disrupt those who promote violent extremism, and strengthen vulnerable institutions.**
- 3. Support individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment by violent extremists.**
- 4. Increase the capacity of communities to challenge and resist violent extremism;**
- 5. Effectively address grievances**

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

- 6. Developing understanding, analysis and information.**
- 7. Improving strategic communications.**

The threat from Violent Extremism is one that we all share and the solution therefore requires a response from all of the community. Nevertheless, Thurrock Council and its 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. Terrorists and violent extremists are criminals that undermine the common values which we all share.

### Aims and Objectives

This action plan seeks to develop Thurrock's approach to community cohesion, where people from all backgrounds feel valued, are able to contribute to and experience equal life chances in Thurrock. The council 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 (LSPs) 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 the responsibility of the local authority.

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 level 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, the effectiveness of their strategies and implementing them. 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 for Thurrock to the challenges set by NI 35.

This plan has been developed in line with local knowledge and the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP). It will require review and updating in line with any changes to the CTLP.

This action plan will be developed and implemented by the PREVENTING violent extremism board, chaired by the Head of Service for Public Protection and monitored by the CONTEST Steering Group and TCSP Strategic Board.



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