



Title of report: Four Ps – Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare

Meeting: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Tuesday 11 November 2025

Report by: Joint report by Vicky Leader, Prevent Lead and Channel Panel chair and Kayte Thompson-Dixon, Community Resilience Manager and Prevent Board/Protect & Prepare Board Chair, with contribution from Counter Terrorism Policing team for Pursue.

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

All Wards

Purpose

The committee to consider and review the response to Prevent, which is a legal responsibility for public bodies. This report advises of Herefordshire Council's response alongside other key agencies whose responsibility it is to identify and support vulnerable individuals at risk of radicalisation, challenging extremist ideology and disengaging people from terrorist activity.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) Scrutiny receive and note the response to Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare within Herefordshire.**
- b) The committee is asked to make any recommendations, or suggested actions, in connection to the report.**
- c) The committee may wish to note progress on governance and assurance, and to support continued partner engagement in training, exercises and data-led improvements ahead of Martyn's Law implementation.**

Key considerations

1. The UK's counter-terrorism strategy; CONTEST¹ has four main workstreams known as the 4 Ps. These are summarised below.
 - Prevent: The purpose of PREVENT is to stop people from becoming drawn into or supporting terrorism. This includes countering terrorist ideology and challenging those who promote it; supporting individuals who are especially vulnerable to becoming radicalised; and working with sectors and institutions where the risk of radicalisation is assessed to be high.
 - Pursue: The purpose of Pursue is to stop terrorist attacks by detecting, prosecuting and otherwise disrupting those who plot to carry out attacks against the UK or its interests overseas.
 - Protect: The purpose of Protect is to strengthen protection against a terrorist attack in the UK or against its interests overseas and so reduce their vulnerability. The work focuses on border security, the transport system, national infrastructure and public places.
 - Prepare: The purpose of Prepare is to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack where that attack cannot be stopped. This includes work to bring a terrorist attack to an end and to increase the UK's resilience so we can recover from its aftermath.

Prevent

2. Further information and detail for learning about Prevent can be found on <https://actearly.uk>. There includes wider information about Prevent, spotting the signs of radicalisation, along with a referral helpline and various resources such as videos and case studies.
3. A statutory requirement for the Local Authority within the Prevent Duty is to have a multi-agency Channel panel. The function of panel being to safeguard and support an individual who is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Panel meets monthly and includes representatives from the local Policing team, Probation, Health (including mental health), Youth Justice Service, Education, Get Safe team/Children's Services, Adult's Services, Housing, DWP.
4. The counter-terrorism policing team lead on the referrals into Channel following making a section 36 decision after a Prevent referral and completion of a Susceptibility Assessment. The panel makes the decision to adopt a case. Adoption means that the panel have considered the assessment which determines the extent to which the individual is being drawn into terrorism, have assessed the vulnerability and considered that a plan within the Channel space is needed to reduce this susceptibility. If panel decide to adopt, then a multi-agency support plan is devised once consent is gained, and this is reviewed on a monthly basis through panel. This can include the support from a Home Office approved Intervention Provider who offer mentoring support to assess or challenge ideological, theological or fixated thinking through structures sessions. In addition, currently there is a pilot in operation which allows for the support of a Home Office approved Practical mentor (there are a limited number), who can work closely with individuals that require support to develop positive protective factors, promote social integration as well as challenging attitudes, behaviours and beliefs.
5. National data for Prevent is published annually in December. The chart below shows the latest data for April 2023 – March 2024 (published in December 2024²)

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-strategy-contest-2023>

² [Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2023 to March 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

Chart to show the National Prevent data across England and Wales for April 2023 - March 2024

Total Prevent Referrals	Progressed to Channel Panel		Referrals Adopted at Channel Panel	
6922	893	13%	512	57%

Prevent Referrals - age known	Aged 11-15		Aged 16-17	
6884	2729	40%	892	13%

Prevent referrals - gender specified	Males		Females	
6906	6114	89%	792	11%

Vulnerability present but no ideology or counter-terrorism risk		Extreme Right-Wing Ideology		Islamist Extremism Ideology	
2489	36%	1314	19%	913	13%

6. The reason for the referrals varies with the outcome of the greatest number of referrals being vulnerability identified but no ideology or counter-terrorism risk (36%). This was followed by Extreme Right-Wing concerns (19%) which has been consistently higher than Islamist Extremism concerns for the last four years.
7. Referrals that don't progress to Channel Panel are managed by the counter terrorism policing team and are not overseen by the Prevent Lead. Appendix 1 shows the flowchart that has been agreed for children and young people within Herefordshire and ensures the right level of signposting is in place. The police undertake appropriate signposting to ensure the right level of support is in place, which may include a Get Safe risk assessment (if not already completed.)
8. For referrals that progress to Channel panel but are not adopted, the flowchart at Appendix 1 also shows the agreed process for children and young people within Herefordshire. To ensure there is the right level of support, the panel always consider referrals to Early Help (if the family are not already open to Children's Services) and consent would be gained from the family to proceed with an Early Help Assessment, which would serve to inform next steps in support for the young person and bring together a 'Team around the Family.' Other avenues of support would also be considered by the panel and appropriate signposting given.
9. Regional data for Prevent is also published annually in December. The chart below shows the latest data for April 2023 – March 2024 (published in December 2024³)

³ [Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2023 to March 2024 - GOV.UK](#)

Chart to show the Regional Prevent data within the West Midlands for April 2023 - March 2024

Total Prevent Referrals	Per Million Population	Progressed to Channel Panel		Per Million Population	Adopted at Channel Panel		Per Million Population
835	140.3	88	11%	14.8	55	6.6%	9.2

10. Out of the 9 counter terrorism regions, the West Midlands region received the highest number of referrals per million population, however the West Midlands region came joint 4th lowest region (with East Midlands) for referrals discussed at Channel panel per million population.
11. Local data for Herefordshire is unable to be presented to the scrutiny committee or to the wider public domain. The data is official sensitive category, and information is always shared with vetted audiences and professionals with a need to know with legitimate reasons. We need to avoid Prevent information being used for nefarious purposes by individuals.
12. Both extreme right-wing and islamist extremism are relevant concerns within Herefordshire as highlighted by the national data. Extreme right wing (ERW) ideology or Right-wing Extremism (RWE) is where violence is used to preserve a race, identity, culture or country from what is perceived to be a severe or immediate threat to their existence. We know that ERW are generally organised by informal online communities which promote international links. **Islamist extremism ideology** is based on the threat or use of violence to establish a strict interpretation of an Islamic society. It is the primary domestic terrorist threat in the UK, accounting for approximately 67% of attacks since 2018 (Contest - The UK's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, 2023).
13. Since 2023 the PREVENT Board sat within the Children and Young People's Directorate and this included the PREVENT Lead role which chaired the monthly multi agency Channel Panel. The chairing of the PREVENT Board at this time sat with the Director of Children's Services. Herefordshire were failing to fulfil Prevent duties prior to Children Services taking this over. Identified concerns included the multi-agency group not working effectively together, there was no clear delivery plan and therefore Herefordshire Council could not provide assurances to the Home Office.
14. Since the transfer of the lead role to Children's Services it has been significantly improved with good partnership involvement, engagement and commitment. A multi-agency PREVENT Delivery Plan is in place. An annual self-assessment benchmarking process was undertaken with the Home Office in January 2025 which highlighted that all areas of the PREVENT Duty were being met, with one area noted as exceeding (referral pathway) (see appendix 2).
15. The Home Office letter to Herefordshire following the Annual Prevent duty Assurance Process 2024/25 highlights as follows: *"The Council has continued to drive and coordinate the Prevent Board and has started to develop its oversight and governance capabilities. There is still a need to encourage all partners to be more proactively involved in a range of partnership activity over the next 12 months. The new Prevent Lead for the Council has continued to develop the solid base created by their predecessor. The Prevent Lead has reviewed and refreshed the partnership action plan based on the latest risk assessment. The partnership has addressed or is making good progress with addressing the recommendations made last year. It is acknowledged that the partnership's development of its understanding of how to use the referral data to review training and delivery means that in this domain it is evidencing that it is delivering to the higher level of exceeding the minimum requirements of the duty."*
16. In May 2025 Prevent moved to the Community Resilience Team as part of the wider remit of this new team. The children's service named lead for Prevent remains in place working alongside this team. This has enabled the work to sit more holistically alongside the broader Community Safety agenda and the Protect and Prepare workstreams. Members of the Prevent Board include

representatives from Health, Education, Police, Adult's Services, Probation, Further Education and the Youth Justice Service.

17. The Partnership Delivery plan has been updated further to the Counter-Terrorism Local Profiling (CTLP) event held in Herefordshire in February 2025. This is an annual multi-agency event that is police led but requires the organisation of the Local Authority in terms of ensuring appropriate attendance from all partners. The event shares information about national, local and regional terrorism threats and trends are presented to all relevant stakeholders. These events have been held within Herefordshire to date but starting from next year this will be joined up with Worcestershire.
18. This Partnership Delivery Plan is unable to be shared with the scrutiny committee or in the public domain due to this being official sensitive category data and not wishing to expose any wider processes or tactics being used by the Prevent partnership to reduce the risk of terrorism within Herefordshire. The plan addresses the presenting risks identified for Herefordshire from CTLP and identifies actions for all partner organisations that sit on the Prevent Board to progress for the year as part of their assurance to the Board that they are complying with the Prevent Duty. There is an expectation that partners update their actions from this plan and there is a TEAMS site in situ to enable them to provide quarterly updates in addition to those shared within the Prevent Board.
19. Part of this Delivery plan involves the delivery of Prevent training. Whilst there is a mandatory training requirement within the council, a recent introduction this year in line with the delivery plan has been 2 synergy events led by the police focusing specifically on the 2 main ideologies. The first of these events was held on Islamist Extremism in September 2025 and included attendance from 62 delegates across the statutory and voluntary sector. The second event is being delivered for ERW/RWE in January 2026. Additionally, there is the roll out of some quarterly multi-agency Prevent Awareness training using the new Home Office portal training platform. This is due to commence in the Autumn with a multi-agency trainer pool that will be delivering a combination of online and face-to-face training to raise awareness around Prevent within Herefordshire.
20. In addition to this planned training, Prevent was also a topic at the yearly Risks Outside the Home Conference that took place on 19th March 2025. This conference was attended by over 150 delegates and the feedback and evaluations from attendees were positive with professionals highlighting how impactful and informative the conference was.
21. Children's services continue to host the PREVENT lead (Vicky Leader) with ongoing commitment, responsibility and accountability for the delivery of Channel Panel. This role also includes the ownership of the multi-agency PREVENT Delivery Plan and assurance meetings with the Home Office. Additionally, Children's Services continue to have significant input with the PREVENT agenda through the ongoing involvement of the Lead Officer for Education and Safeguarding (Niall Crawford) and the Get Safe Team Manager (Holly Powell).
22. Working with education settings is crucial to ensure there is an appropriate timely response to Prevent relevant concerns for children and young people within Herefordshire. Whilst we do have educational representatives who are members of the Prevent board, we are additionally developing an approach to supporting schools across the county to meet their Prevent duties. We will be progressing a tiered model of support for schools with variations in the support provided. A core part of this offer will be an annual Prevent newsletter which is circulated to all schools. This offer will include some focused work via a Preventing Radicalisation Fund bid (through the Home office).
23. We know that online platforms can be a significant enabler of extremist activity, and we know that young people spend a lot of their time on online platforms. Therefore, due to the susceptibility of children and young people online, we are committed to ensuring that we support Herefordshire children and young people, their parents and carers, along with our education colleagues and other front line practitioners supporting children and young people. With a focus on early

intervention and education in the online space we wish to promote and encourage critical thinking amongst young people as a vital protective factor, with the ultimate aim of empowering them to question, analyse and challenge the information they encounter online and in person. With this in mind, we will be collaborating with Prevent Board members to determine the best approach to meet this area of need, and this may include direct sessions with particular cohorts of young people; a 'train the trainer' package for some schools, colleges and other professional groups; and/or a webinar event for parents of children and young people within some schools and colleges. This will be achieved via the Preventing Radicalisation fund bid which will be submitted in the next round of applications in January 2026 with the aim to roll out this selected training offer in March/April 2026.

24. The PREVENT lead works closely with colleagues to ensure that all children and young people referred into Channel Panel have the appropriate safeguarding response (i.e. via referrals to MASH), and for those who do not meet the threshold for intervention or there is no consent for Channel panel support, they are still offered support where there are existing needs (e.g. Early Help, Get Safe team, other appropriate targeted support). This consideration is also given to those children and young people whose Channel interventions have come to an end and may lead on to Early Help support (flowchart included at Appendix 1).
25. Channel undergoes a similar but separate assurance process with the Home Office as Prevent, but the Home Office took the decision for 2025 that the assurance process would not be taking place. In place of this assurance process, the chair requested an observation of Channel panel by the Home Office (took place on 17th April 2025) and for this feedback to be shared at the Prevent Board. **This feedback was positive and Herefordshire were commended for significant progress and sustained improvement over recent years.**
26. The voice of the child throughout the Channel process is currently gained through the national Channel evaluation process, which allows for young people to feedback about their experiences of support at different stages of the support. This is dependent upon consent being gained from the young person to be part of this evaluation process. This feedback however is not available to us as a local Channel panel. Consent is always gained at the start of the Channel support and cannot progress without this, equally consent can be withdrawn at any point. We do consider at every panel what the child is communicating within their sessions with the Home Office Intervention Provider and this is considered by the panel to inform the support plan.
27. In addition, other involved professionals working with the child also attend panel (e.g. social worker, school, SAFE worker) to share not only their updates but also the child's voice. As an area for development, we will take forward the design of a local Channel feedback form to be used with the young person at the end of the process. This will help inform our model of Channel delivery.

Pursue

28. CT Policing manages the threat, harm and risk for the pursue strand of the Government's Force Contest strategy. The current threat and risk picture local to Herefordshire is shared via the Counter Terrorism Local Profile (CTLP) which is an annual document shared with key strategic partners across multiple organisations, including Herefordshire Council services (e.g. Children's Services) and Health and social care. A quarterly update is provided via the local Protect & Prepare, and Prevent boards.
29. The CTLP identifies strategic considerations for further service improvement across all agencies, and these considerations are managed via the aforementioned P & P and Prevent boards. Delivery plans are also managed by the Local Authority leads.
30. The CTLP document and associated briefing papers provide additional material (e.g. Signs & Symbols awareness) which can be utilised to promote awareness across frontline officers in partner agencies.

31. There is an acknowledged overlap between all four strands of the CONTEST strategy which means activity against the Prevent strand, can have a direct impact on the Pursue strand (e.g. intelligence reporting / sharing). The responsibility for the management of Pursue rests solely with Policing.
32. During operational activity linked to CT Policing (pursue) investigations, it may be necessary to engage with Local Authority or other strategic partners in order to respond or safeguard. This is completed on a dynamic basis, supported by a Gold structure where required. Due to the nature of CT investigations, the need to know principles will be adopted at all times.

Protect & Prepare

33. Since December 2024, the establishment of the Community Resilience Team has enabled a more integrated and coordinated approach to delivering the Protect and Prepare elements of the CONTEST strategy. Previously, these components were managed separately across directorates—Protect led by the Economy and Environment Directorate and Prepare by Community Wellbeing (Public Health). The consolidation of emergency planning and community safety functions within the Community Resilience Team has facilitated a unified, multi-agency response, ensuring that the Council's obligations under the CONTEST strategy are effectively led and coordinated from a single, cohesive team.
34. The establishment of a single strategic lead for the Protect and Prepare elements of the CONTEST strategy enhances the council's organisational resilience in planning for, mitigating, and responding to terrorism-related risks, as well as supporting effective recovery. Following consultation with the West Midlands Counter Terrorism Unit, this model is also their recommended approach. Both Worcestershire and Shropshire council have also recently adopted this approach and are in the process of forming their own strategic protect and prepare boards.
35. While Protect and Prepare involve distinct tactical disciplines, the strategic oversight of both through a unified board enables coordinated delivery across a range of service areas. These include, but are not limited to, highways, housing, planning, emergency planning, public health, and Talk Community. Activity aligned to the strategic aims would continue to be delivered by the relevant operational teams, ensuring subject matter expertise is retained while benefiting from joined-up governance.
36. The strategic aim of the board is: To ensure an appropriate level of joint working, preparedness, and resilience to enable an effective multi-agency response to present and emerging terror-related threats that may have a significant impact on the safety of the county.
37. To support the development of more detailed strategic objectives a delivery plan will be developed by the board including asset mapping to allow effective prioritisation of risk assessment, training and exercising and communications. The delivery plan will inform targeted actions and ensure that resources are directed appropriately.
38. The consolidation of Protect and Prepare under the Community Resilience Team provides single-point strategic oversight across highways, planning, licensing, public health and Talk Community. This positions the council to meet forthcoming duties under Martyn's Law.
39. Martyn's Law, officially known as the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill, became law on 3 April 2025. Named after Martyn Hett, who was killed in the Manchester Arena attack in 2017, this law aims to improve security and preparedness at public venues and events by helping organisers be better prepared and reduce the impact of potential terrorist attacks.
40. The law applies to certain public places, events, and venues, requiring those responsible to:
 - Understand the threat of terrorism.
 - Take necessary steps to reduce the risk and prepare for emergency situations.

- Train all staff and have a safety plan in place.
- Consider risk assessments leading to a range of emergency plans and procedures.
- Employ security systems, processes, and measures to mitigate threats.

The strategic protect and prepare board is in its infancy having only met twice to date. At the Q2 meeting it was agreed that a sub group would be tasked to begin the asset mapping of places and spaces throughout the country to enable development of risk assessment and associated risk management plans. Another work stream has been established to ensure that the Council's webpages are updated with advice and information in relation to protect, prepare and Martyn's Law. Whilst we await the publication of the ACT for local authorities guidance these information pages will primarily signpost to the available advice and information nationally.

Community impact

41. Permissive environments are considered at every Prevent Board and within the Prevent Partnership Delivery plan. A permissive environment refers to spaces – online or offline – where extremist ideas can be articulated and promoted without sufficient challenge, creating opportunities for radicalisation. One measure used within the multi-agency group to tackle the lack of reporting of graffiti and stickering across the different ideologies is the sharing of signs, symbols and groups to educate public facing staff and so that staff know how to report.
42. Prevent, and the aligned Protect & Prepare activity, contribute to wider community resilience across Herefordshire. Increased awareness among schools, youth services, and frontline professionals improves early identification and support for vulnerable young people and their families, strengthens confidence in local safeguarding pathways, and encourages timely reporting of concerns. Joint exercises, partnership briefings and targeted campaigns also help communities understand risks and what proportionate protective measures look like, which in turn supports trust, cohesion and recovery following incidents.
43. Pursue is led by Counter Terrorism Policing and the West Midlands CTU. Herefordshire receives updates through the annual CT Local Profile and routine liaison, with any relevant threat information feeding into the Prevent Board and the Protect & Prepare governance so that safeguarding, protective security and preparedness are aligned locally.

Environmental Impact

44. While there are no direct environmental effects arising from this report, delivery of the 4P's has practical implications for the public realm and event spaces. This includes proportionate use of CCTV and secure street furniture, safe site layout and crowd management at council-led or licensed events, and timely removal of extremist graffiti and stickers to protect the appearance of public spaces. Preparations for Martyn's Law will further align with planning, highways and licensing functions to ensure venues and events adopt proportionate protective security without undue environmental impact.

Equality duty

45. Prevent is a safeguarding duty focused on vulnerability to radicalisation, not on targeting any community or belief. Support is offered based on risk and need, and delivery is inclusive of race, culture, religion or belief, gender, age, SEND and mental health. Assurance activity includes oversight of training take-up across sectors to help ensure equitable access to preventative support.
46. Ensure that children, young people, and adults receive the necessary preventative services equitably across Herefordshire, similar to the support provided to adults through Prevent.

47. Prevent works to support a variety of different community groups and is inclusive in its approach in terms of race, culture, religion identity, gender, age-range, SEND and mental health.

Resource implications

48. There are no resource implications as a result of this report which is for information only.

Legal implications

49. There are no legal implications as a result of this report which is for information only.

Risk management

50. There are no risk implications as a result of this report which is for information only.

Consultees

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 Prevent and Channel Panel flowchart

Appendix 2 Home Office Assurance Letter

Background papers

None identified