

**Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

**Date: 24 July 2017**

Wards: All

Subject: *Prevent* practice – scope and terms of reference

Lead officer: Annette Wiles, Scrutiny Officer

Lead member: Councillor Dennis Pearce, chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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**Recommendations:**

- A. That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel agree to set up a task group review of *Prevent* practice as demonstrated by the Merton family of schools to help inform and support practitioners in the borough and beyond;
  - B. That the Panel discuss and approve the terms of reference and scope of the *Prevent* task group as set out in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.11 below; and
  - C. That the Panel appoint members to the task group.
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**1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To present the draft terms of reference and scope of the *Prevent* practice task group to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for approval.

**2. DETAILS**

- 2.1 The Panel recognises the importance of the role schools play in their use of *Prevent* to help keep children and young people from risk of radicalisation. Members are mindful of the four terror attacks that have happened in just three months between the end of March and the end of June this year, (Westminster, Manchester, London Bridge and Finsbury Park). Their aspiration is to highlight, collate and share *Prevent* practice as well as support the Merton community to work collectively to prevent radicalisation.
- 2.2 In order that this review is effective (and achieved in the time constraints imposed by the forthcoming local elections – see 2.9), it is recommended that this exclusively focus on the *Prevent* practice demonstrated by Merton's schools rather than looking at the practice of other providers.
- 2.3 If feasible, the task group will also consider examples of innovative and successful practice in schools from outside of the borough.
- 2.4 Draft terms of reference have been set out below for the consideration by the Panel:
  - To examine the full range of *Prevent* practice being delivered in Merton's schools including primary, secondary and special settings;
  - To identify practice that is effective and innovative as well as any specific challenges faced in delivering the duty and how these are addressed by schools;

- To consider the support provided by borough Police and the wider Merton Safeguarding Children's Board partnership (that includes schools themselves);
  - To identify any additional support that school practitioners would welcome being provided by Merton's *Safer and Stronger Partnership*;
  - To look at how schools work to safeguard their pupils from being stigmatised by the duty; and
  - To collate, celebrate and disseminate *Prevent* practice happening in Merton's schools to assist local practitioners and those outside of the borough.
- 2.5 The scope of the *Prevent* duty on schools is significant, (including effective leadership, partnership working, staff training etc). The task group will therefore need to determine the scope of its review. It is anticipated that this is likely to focus on the duty on schools to promote community cohesion and British values.
- 2.6 The nature of the *Prevent* duty may make it difficult to identify clear criteria by which to judge the success of local practice. If there is a focus on the promotion of community cohesion and British Values, it will be important to consider the views of the wider community. The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel already has experience of working with local community groups around the *Prevent* duty on which the task group will be able to build.
- 2.7 Fears have been expressed by members of the local community in Merton (as well as teachers generically through a [national study](#)) about the increased risk of stigmatisation of Muslim students. The task group could also consider what steps schools are taking to protect Muslim students and safeguard them from this stigmatisation.
- 2.8 It is anticipated that members of the task group will visit schools in Merton to gain direct experience of *Prevent* practice, to report back to the other members of the task group.
- 2.9 Ofsted is currently undertaking a combined inspection of children's services including the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board which will cover the *Prevent* duty. It is thought likely this will identify good practice which will be of assistance to task group.
- 2.10 The task group would produce a report for the Panel's meeting on 1 February 2018 prior to it being reported to Cabinet at its meeting on 26 March 2018. It should be noted that due to the local elections (taking place on 3 May 2018) this timing must not slip and the work of this task group must be finished and reported to Cabinet well in advance of the start of election period. Members are therefore encouraged to be careful in defining the scope of this task group and limit their aspirations to what can reasonably and successfully be achieved in the limited time available.
- 2.11 Support would be provided by the Scrutiny Officer.

### 3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

### 4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

There has been preliminary consultation with officers from the Children, Schools and Families Department.

**5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None for the purposes of this covering report. Any resource implications will need to be taken into account when drawing up and approving specific review recommendations

**6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 There are none specific to this report.

**7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are none specific to this report.

**8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are none specific to this report.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are none specific to this report.

**10. APPENDICES**

10.1 None

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 Counter-extremism policy in English schools briefing paper (House of Commons Library) - [here](#)

11.2 Revised *Prevent* Duty Guidance: for England and Wales - [here](#)

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