



## Channel Guidance

### Section 1: Introduction

1. The purpose of this guidance is to enable The Trust, Durham County Council, Durham Constabulary and partners to ensure that children, young people and adults are protected from the harm of being drawn into terrorism.
2. The Prevent strategy, refreshed and published by the Government in 2011, is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy; CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
3. DCC and Durham Constabulary lead the local response to the Prevent Strategy and are part of a multi-agency group, known as the Silver CONTEST group.
4. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities in the exercise of their functions to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. 'Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales' provides details about specified authorities and the wider statutory expectations placed on them.
5. DCC has a duty under S.36 of that Act to ensure that a Panel is in place to assess the extent to which identified individuals are vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and developing an appropriate support plan. It is referred to as the Channel Panel. It is dependent on the co-operation and co-ordinated activity of partners to ensure that those vulnerable to radicalisation receive support before they are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism or engage in criminal terrorist related activity.
6. Raising awareness of Prevent and helping appropriate front-line practitioners, across the public sector and other institutions will increase understanding of the potential signals of vulnerability and how Channel can offer support.
7. The way in which Channel will be delivered may often overlap with the implementation of the wider safeguarding duty, especially where vulnerabilities have been identified that require intervention from DDC's Children and Adults' services, or where the individual is already known to the service.
8. A checklist of best practice and responsibilities can be found at **Appendix 1**.

## Section 2: Channel: Summary

### 9. What is Channel?

Channel is a multi-agency approach, led by local authorities and the police. It provides support to individuals identified as being at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity. It forms a key part of the Government's *Prevent* strategy which aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting any form of terrorism. Channel seeks to:

- a. Safeguard individuals who might be vulnerable to being radicalised, so that they are not at risk of being drawn into terrorist related activity;
- b. Ensure that individuals and communities have the ability to resist all forms of terrorism and violent extremist activity likely to lead to terrorism

### 10. How does Channel work?

The Channel process identifies those most at risk of radicalisation, and refers them, via the police, for assessment by a multi-agency panel. The panel considers how best to safeguard them by ensuring they have access to support from mainstream services, such as health and education, through to specialist mentoring or faith guidance and wider diversionary activities. Each support package is monitored closely and reviewed regularly by the multi-agency panel.

### 11. Who is involved in Channel?

People working in front-line services across the public sector, Ministry of Justice, educational institutions or those who are already supporting vulnerable people, may often be the first to see signs of concern. Partners include:

- a. Local authorities;
- b. Further & Higher Education;
- c. Health;
- d. Probation, Youth Offending Services and Prisons;
- e. Police, Fire and Ambulance Services;

### 12. What is a Channel Panel?

It is a panel, Chaired and managed by the Strategic Manager, Youth Offending Service, DCC. Members of the Panel must include the Local Authority and Durham Constabulary who co-ordinate the process. An individual referred to the Panel will be subject to an assessment and partners, with knowledge of the individual, will join the Panel and share information leading to the most appropriate delivery of support. A support plan is put in place to help prevent the individual being drawn into terrorism (see Appendix 2).

13. Who makes referrals to the Panel?

Referrals are co-ordinated by the police and come from a wide range of sources, including (but not exclusively) members of the public, children and adults services, youth offending services, health and education practitioners.

**Section 3: Channel Panel**

14. The Police Prevent Team is responsible for co-ordinating Channel across County Durham and has access to the regional Prevent Coordinator who has responsibility to provide support and advice to Durham Constabulary and DCC.

15. The Police Prevent Team is responsible for:

- a. managing referrals and cases through the Channel process in accordance with the Channel guidance and case management principles;
- b. ensuring that referrals are dealt with swiftly, and where appropriate, brought to the attention of the Channel panel as soon as possible;
- c. increasing understanding of Channel amongst panel partners and others;
- d. establishing effective relationships with panel partners, individuals and organisations who can deliver support; and
- e. managing any risk associated with the individual's potential involvement in terrorist-related activity.

16. The Durham County Council Chair is responsible for:

- a. oversight of all Channel cases in their area;
- b. inviting appropriate representatives to each meeting as panel members;
- c. establishing effective relationships across statutory agencies to ensure effective co-operation over information sharing and panel meeting attendance;
- d. establishing the appropriate support plan for identified individuals by using the expertise of the panel;
- e. ensuring that risks of persons being drawn into terrorism are identified and are referred to the appropriate agencies for action;
- f. ensuring an effective support plan is put in place, and that consent is sought from the individual before that plan is put in place; and
- g. ensuring individuals and/or organisations on the panel carry out their elements of the support plan so that an effective support package is delivered.

17. The Chair should be fully briefed by the Police Prevent Team on every referral discussed at panel so that they can assess all aspects of the case with rigour and agree the most effective support plan.

18. The multi-agency involvement in the Channel process is essential to ensure that vulnerable individuals have access to a wide range of support, from access to specific services provided by local authorities to diversionary activities. Information sharing is an essential part of the process to determine whether an individual requires support, and if so, what that should consist of. Panel members identified by the Chair may also be members of other strategic groups who can provide the most relevant support to address identified needs and vulnerabilities.

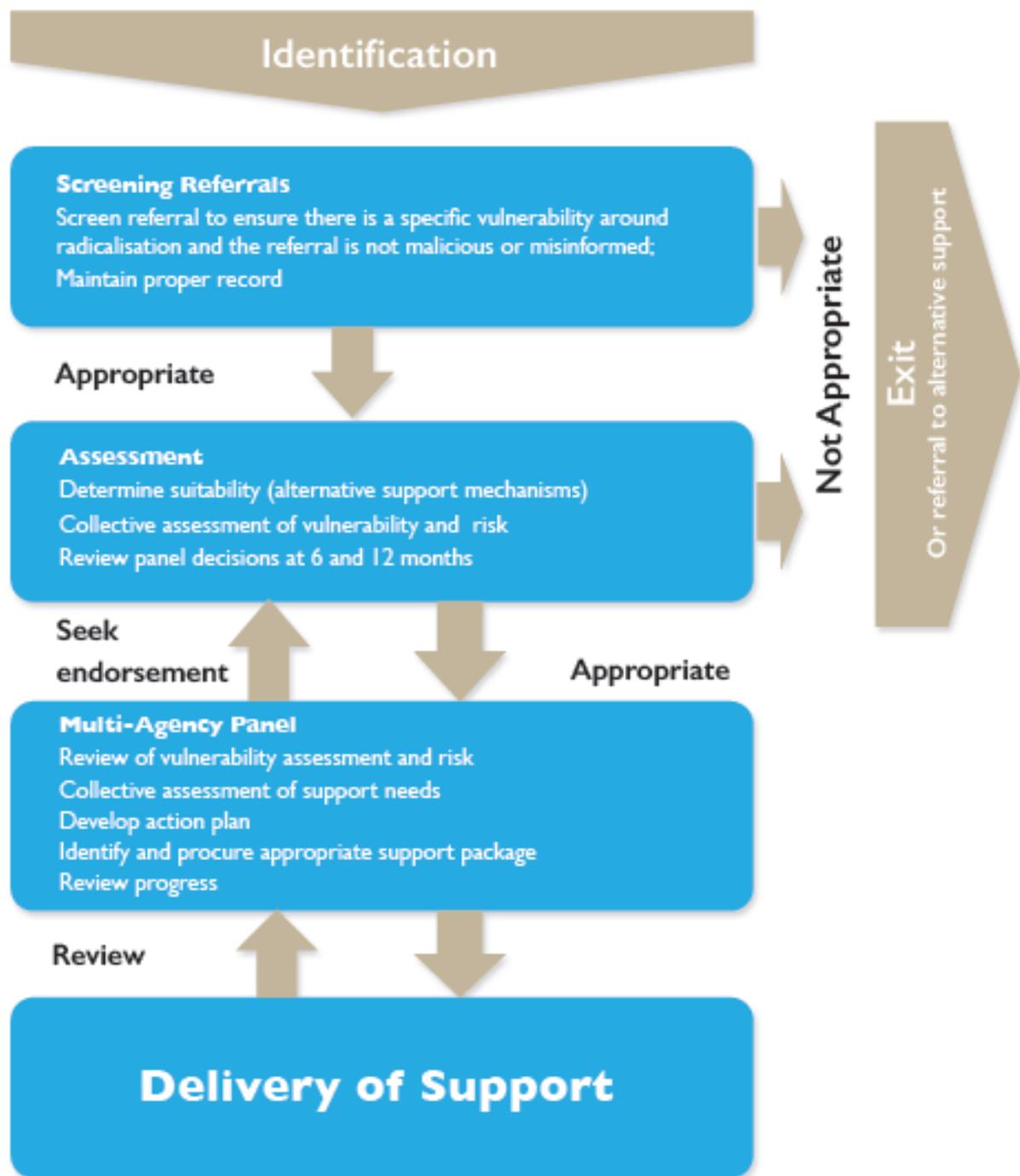
#### **Section 4: Channel Process**

19. The police co-ordinate activity by requesting relevant information from about an individual referred to them. This will help the police make an initial assessment of the individual's vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism and determine if the information should be presented to the panel.

20. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 requires the:

- a. local authorities to ensure that a multi-agency panel exists in their area;
- b. the local authority to Chair the panel;
- c. panel to develop a support plan for individuals accepted as a Channel case
- d. panel to consider alternative forms of support, including health and social services, where Channel is not appropriate; and
- e. partners of a panel, so far as appropriate and reasonably practicable, to co- operate with the police and the panel in the carrying out of their functions.

21. Channel Process diagram produced by the Home Office.



## **Identification**

22. There is no single way of identifying who is likely to be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. Factors may include: peer pressure, influence from other people or the internet, bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity and personal or political grievances.

## **Screening Referrals**

23. Referrals are often made by individuals who come into contact with people who could be classed as vulnerable, for a variety of reasons. Equally it is possible that an individual presents no sign of vulnerability other than that which is terrorist related. In all cases, professionals should 'trust their instincts' and make contact with the police.

24. All referrals will receive a preliminary assessment by the police. If the initial information received through the referral shows a vulnerability that is none- terrorist related, then the case is not suitable for Channel; the police will refer the individual to other more appropriate support services. This will ensure that only those cases where there is a genuine vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism are processed through Channel.

## **Information Sharing**

25. Partners may be requested to provide information about an individual to the police during the information gathering stage. The County Durham Community Safety 'Information Sharing Protocol' has been revised to include Prevent. This will expedite the appropriate sharing of information. For institutions outside of the protocol, a bespoke Memorandum of Understanding has been created.

26. The default when determining what information can be shared should be to consider seeking the consent of the individual (or parent/guardian).

## **Information Requests**

27. The 'Counter Terrorism and Security Act' recommends considering the implications of releasing information on third parties when complying with Freedom of Information (FOI) legislation. In the context of Channel, third parties may include local and national delivery partners and referred individuals. The section 45 Code of Practice of the FOI Act facilitates consideration by public authorities of the interests of third parties and stakeholders who may be affected by any decision to disclose information by setting standards for consultation. All public authority partners involved in Channel may receive FOI requests. If an FOI request is made all information will need to be assessed against FOI

legislation to see if it can be disclosed or not. All requests for the release of information held must be assessed on a case- by-case basis.

28. To achieve a consistent approach in responding to FOI requests relevant to Channel panels and assessments of individuals, and to protect third parties, all local partners who receive such an FOI request should bring it to the attention of their local panel. The Chair should notify the Police Prevent Team and the Office for Security and Counter Terrorism in the Home Office, who will advise if any further consultation is necessary, for instance with other central government departments.
29. Under Section 7 of the Data Protection Act 1998, individuals can also make a Subject Access Request to see data held about them, or children they have parental responsibility for. The individual can request information on any paper and computer records held about them. As with FOI, any organisation holding personal data can be subject to these requests. There are a limited number of exemptions, and not all personal information needs to be released in all circumstances (refer to Information Commissioner's Office guidance). Any requests for Subject Access Requests should also be brought to the attention of the Channel Panel Chair.
30. National, international and specialist media enquiries about Channel are managed by the Home Office Press Office and should be referred to directly using the number **020 7035 3535**.

### **Assessment**

31. Referrals that progress through to the Channel process will be subject to a thorough assessment of vulnerabilities. Durham Constabulary will carry out the assessment and share with panel members ahead of the meeting along with the information shared by Channel partners. The vulnerability assessment will be built within a specific framework (**see Appendix 3**).
32. If the individual to be discussed is a child known to DCC Children's Services, or if there is a concern that a child might be at risk of significant harm, then Children's Services should attend the panel, and be involved in all decisions about the child.
33. Channel assesses vulnerability using a consistently applied vulnerability assessment framework built around three criteria. It is used to guide decisions about whether an individual needs support to address their vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of radicalisation and the kind of support they need. The three criteria are:

- a. **Engagement** with a group, cause or ideology;
- b. **Intent** to cause harm; and
- c. **Capability** to cause harm.

34. The three criteria are assessed by considering 22 factors that can contribute to vulnerability (13 associated with engagement, 6 with intent and three with capability). These factors taken together form a holistic view of the vulnerability of an individual that will inform decisions on whether an individual needs support and what kind of support package may be appropriate. These factors can also be added to and are not considered an exhaustive list. By undertaking regular vulnerability assessments the progress that is being made in supporting an individual can be tracked through changes in the assessment.

### **Endorsement**

35. Panel members in attendance at a meeting should collectively assess the risk and decide whether the person:

- a. is vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism and, therefore, appropriate for Channel;
- b. should be referred to a different support mechanism; or
- c. should exit the process.

36. In assessing the risk, consideration should be given to:

- a. the risk the individual faces of being drawn into terrorism; and
- b. the risk the individual poses to society if they get drawn into terrorism.

### **Support Plan**

37. Each case is handled separately; people deemed appropriate to receive support will have a tailored package developed for them, according to their identified vulnerabilities. Using the initial vulnerability assessment and their professional expertise, the panel should develop a package to support the needs of the individual and use the information to inform the assessment and mitigation of any risk posed to potential support providers.

### **Offender Management**

38. Channel can be used where appropriate to provide support to individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of radicalisation and who are serving custodial sentences. This can be in cases where they are coming up to release from prison and there is a need to put in place some form of intervention or support prior to, or following, release. The decision to refer an offender to Channel should be agreed in close consultation with Prison

staff and the National Probation Service.

39. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are reserved for those who present the highest risk of harm in their local community. Most people are managed within MAPPA because of the nature of their offending. In some cases agencies may determine that an individual's vulnerability is such that it is best managed through the MAPPA process. Where this is the case, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Panel can, if necessary, seek advice from the Police Prevent Team, though the case will remain subject to MAPPA and will not be adopted under Channel.

40. Where an offender is supervised in the community by a provider of probation services (Community Rehabilitation Company) and they are at risk of being radicalised and drawn into terrorism, the individual may be managed by either the appropriate offender manager or in some circumstances via a referral to Channel. This will be determined in close liaison between the offender manager and the Police Prevent Team.

## **Section 5: Delivering the Support Plan**

41. The Act requires the panel to:

- a. prepare a plan for an individual whom the panel considers appropriate to be offered support;
- b. make arrangements for support to be provided as described in the plan where consent is given;
- c. keep the support given under review;
- d. revise or withdraw a support plan if considered appropriate;
- e. carry out further assessments, after such periods as the panel considers appropriate, of an individual's vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism
- f. where the necessary consent to the provision of support is refused or withdrawn
- g. the panel has determined that support should be withdrawn; and
- h. prepare a further support plan if considered appropriate.

42. Each case will be handled separately; people deemed appropriate to receive support will have a tailored package developed for them, according to their identified vulnerabilities. Using the initial vulnerability assessment and their professional expertise, the panel should develop a package to support the needs of the individual and use the information to inform the assessment and mitigation of any risk posed to potential support providers.

43. Risk is a theme that runs through the entire Channel process, i.e. risk to the individual; risk to the public; and risk to partners or organisations providing support to the individual, including any intervention providers. The panel is responsible for managing the risk in relation to the vulnerable individual. Support offered for some individuals could span several agencies and each agency

involved will own the element of risk they are responsible for addressing through the support plan.

44. The risk posed by the individual to themselves and society through their potential active involvement in criminality associated with terrorism lies with the police. The police are the most appropriate agency throughout the entire life of each Channel case to assess and manage this risk.

45. Participation in Channel is voluntary and consent is required from the individual (or their parent/guardian) in advance of support measures being put in place.

All individuals who receive support through Channel must be made aware:

- a. they are receiving support as part of a programme to protect people from being drawn into terrorism;
- b. what the aims of the process are; and
- c. what to expect.

46. Where someone does not wish to continue with the process and in exceptional circumstances, it may be appropriate to explore alternative support through other mainstream services, such as Children or Adult Social Care Services. If there is a Counter Terrorism issue, support will be explored in consultation with the Police Prevent Team.

47. As part of the programme, information about an individual will be shared with multi-agency partners, including the police. Individuals (or their parent/guardian) must give their consent prior to this information being shared for that purpose.

48. In the case of a child, there may be certain circumstances when a parent/guardian does not give consent for their child to be supported through Channel, particularly if some of the vulnerabilities present are in the home environment. If the child is thought to be at risk from significant harm, then Children's Services will be involved in decisions made about the child.

49. The involvement of the correct panel partners ensures that those at risk have access to a wide range of support ranging from mainstream services, such as health and education, through to specialist mentoring or guidance to increase theological understanding and/or challenge the claims of extreme or violent ideologies. It can also include wider diversionary activities such as appropriate training courses. The partners involved should be tailored to the vulnerabilities of the person getting support. In England and Wales, Channel intervention providers engaging with these vulnerable individuals must first have been approved by the Home Office.

50. As part of agreeing a full wrap-around package of support, the panel must decide how to connect the vulnerable individual with the support providers. All decision-making should be clearly documented and in line with the guidance on the sharing of information, which is set out in the County Durham Community Safety Information Sharing Protocol and within the Memorandum of Understanding between Durham Constabulary and a partner agency.

51. The type of activities that are included in a support package will depend on risk, vulnerability and local resource. To illustrate, a diversionary activity may be sufficient for someone who is in the early stages of being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of radicalisation, whereas a more focussed and structured one-on-one mentoring programme may be required for those who are further along the path towards embracing terrorism. The following kinds of support might be considered appropriate:

- a. **Mentoring support contact** - work with a suitable adult as a role model or provide personal guidance, e.g. guidance addressing extremist ideologies;
- b. **Life skills** - work on life skills or social skills generally, such as dealing with peer pressure;
- c. **Anger management session** - formal/informal work dealing with anger;
- d. **Cognitive/behavioural contact** - cognitive behavioural therapies and general work on attitudes and behaviours;
- e. **Constructive pursuits** - supervised or managed constructive leisure activities;
- f. **Education skills contact** - activities focused on education or training;
- g. **Careers contact** - activities focused on employment;
- h. **Family support contact** - activities aimed at supporting family and personal relationships, including formal parenting programmes;
- i. **Health awareness contact** - work aimed at assessing or addressing any physical or mental health issues;
- j. **Housing support contact** - activities addressing living arrangements, accommodation provision or neighbourhood; and
- k. **Drugs and alcohol awareness** - substance misuse interventions.

52. Where the individual has a need for theological/ideological support, Home Office approved intervention providers must be commissioned to mentor them. The mentoring aims to increase theological understanding and challenge extremist ideas where they are used to legitimise terrorism.

### **Funding Support Plans**

53. Where support is provided by a panel partner they should be represented at the panel meeting and are responsible for the delivery of that element of the overall

support package; funding for any support offered should be met from their existing budgets.

54. Where support is provided by a Home Office approved intervention partner, the police service is responsible for liaison with the partner and for funding and monitoring the delivery of that element of the support package.
55. Providers of support need to be credible with the vulnerable individual concerned and to understand the local community. Their reliability, suitability to work with vulnerable people, and commitment to shared values needs to be established. Police must ensure that a number of background checks have been made and satisfy themselves that the potential support provider is suitable.

### **Monitoring and reviewing arrangements**

56. Durham Constabulary will be responsible for liaising with the support provider(s), updating the vulnerability assessment and for assessing progress made with the Channel Panel. Individuals receiving support should be reassessed at least every three months to ensure that the progress being made in supporting the individual is being captured. If necessary, they can be reassessed more frequently to inform a key panel meeting or because the provision of support has reached a particular milestone.
57. If the panel is satisfied that the risk has been successfully reduced or managed they should recommend that the case then exits the process. A closing report should be completed as soon as possible setting out the reason for the panel's recommendations. The recommendations will need to be endorsed by the Channel Panel Chair and the Police representative.
58. If the panel is not satisfied that the risk has been reduced or managed the case should be reconsidered. A new action plan should be developed and alternative support put in place. If the risk of criminality relating to terrorism has increased, the Police Prevent Team must consider escalating the case through existing police mechanisms and determine whether the case remains suitable for Channel.
59. All cases exiting the Channel process, whether they are referred elsewhere or offered support under Channel, should be reviewed by the panel at six months and again at 12 months from the point at which an individual exits the process.

## Checklist

### Preliminary Assessment

- Police, and partners where relevant, carry out preliminary assessment of individual referred to them prior to decision to refer to Channel Panel
  - This includes information from partners with whom an Information Sharing Agreement should be in place.
- If assessment identifies it is not terrorist related it is not suitable for Channel Panel.
  - Appropriate support may be sought via other organisations / agencies.
- If assessment is terrorist related refer to Channel Panel and invite relevant partners
  - Preliminary assessment to be forwarded by Police Prevent Officer to Channel Panel partners ahead of the Channel Panel meeting.

### Channel Assessment

- Channel Panel to be chaired by DCC.
- Minimum requirement - Chair must have contact details of relevant partners and ability to call meetings at short notice.
- A record, and audit trail, of all decisions must be kept.
- Channel Panel membership:
  - must include the local authority and police
  - additional partner to be invited such as those that have supplied information as part of the preliminary police assessment
  - Social worker should attend if a child is known to Children's Services or there is concern about a risk of significant harm
  - Partners invited to the panel will have a statutory duty to co-operate
  - Prisoner release - decision to refer to Channel Panel will be made with prison staff and probation.
  - Offenders managed in the community can be managed by appropriate offender manager or Channel Panel with relevant co-operation from each.
- Police Prevent Team make decision on whether it is terrorist related or not.
- Vulnerability Assessment (initiated by the Police) will be monitored and updated by the Channel Panel.

### Support Plan

- Support Plan to be put in place for the individual.
- Consent of individual (or parent/guardian) should be sought in advance of support measures being put in place.
- If parental consent not forthcoming, other safeguarding routes may apply.

- Those services providing Channel intervention must first have been approved by the Home Office.
- If individual requires theological/ideological support, Home Office approved intervention providers must be commissioned to mentor them.
- Where support delivered by partner it should be funded through existing budgets.

### **Monitoring Channel support**

- Police Prevent Team will liaise with the support provider, update the Vulnerability Assessment and assess progress made with the Channel Panel.
- Individuals receiving support should be reassessed at least every three months - more often if necessary.
- If Channel Panel is satisfied risk has been successfully reduced or managed they should recommend the case exits Channel
  - A closing report should be completed as soon as possible setting out reason for the decision.
- If the Channel Panel considers support should be delivered by a body other than Channel Panel, the Chair will record the reasons for the decision and an audit trail to the new body who takes the referral from Channel Panel.
- If the Channel Panel is not satisfied any risk is reduced or managed, the case should be reconsidered and alternative support plan put in place.
- If risk of criminality related to terrorism increases, the Police Prevent Team to consider police mechanisms.
- All cases exiting Channel will be reviewed by the Panel at 6 months and again at 12 months from the point at which the individual exited Channel.



# Channel Support Plan

Name of Individual subject of the Support Plan

Members of the Channel Panel Associated to this case


**Context** (Background and desired outcome)

<b>R</b> = Behind target (exception report)	<b>A</b> = On target	<b>G</b> = Completed / Closed
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No	Intervention / Deadline	Lead Officer	R	Update
			A	
			G	
<b>Vulnerability:</b>				
1	<i>Deadline:</i>			
2	<i>Deadline:</i>			

No	Intervention / Deadline	Lead Officer	R	Update
			A	
			G	
<b>Vulnerability:</b>				
1	<i>Deadline:</i>			
2	<i>Deadline:</i>			

**Review (To what extent has the desired outcome been achieved)**

<b>Review No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Review Decision</b>	<b>Chair's Signature</b>

### Vulnerability Assessment Framework

Completing a full assessment for all **22 factors** requires thorough knowledge of the individual that may not be available at the point of the initial referral. However, there are a number of behaviours and other indicators that may indicate the presence of these factors. The criteria are considered separately as experience has shown that it is possible to be engaged without intending to cause harm and that it is possible to intend to cause harm without being particularly engaged. It is possible to desist (stop intending to cause harm) without fully disengaging (remaining sympathetic to the cause); though losing sympathy with the cause (disengaging) will invariably result in desistance (loss of intent).

**Engagement** factors are sometimes referred to as “psychological hooks”. They include needs, susceptibilities, motivations and contextual influences and together map the individual pathway into terrorism. They can include:

- 1) Feelings of grievance and injustice
- 2) Feeling under threat
- 3) A need for identity, meaning and belonging
- 4) A desire for status
- 5) A desire for excitement and adventure
- 6) A need to dominate and control others
- 7) Susceptibility to indoctrination
- 8) A desire for political or moral change
- 9) Opportunistic involvement
- 10) Family or friends involvement in extremism
- 11) Being at a transitional time of life
- 12) Being influenced or controlled by a group
- 13) Relevant mental health issues

**Intent** is considered separately because not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm. Intent factors describe the mind-set that is associated with a readiness to use violence and address what the individual would do and to what end. They can include:

- 1) Over-identification with a group or ideology
- 2) ‘Them and Us’ thinking
- 3) Dehumanisation of the enemy
- 4) Attitudes that justify offending
- 5) Harmful means to an end
- 6) Harmful objectives

**Capability** is also considered separately because not all those who have a wish to cause harm on behalf of a group, cause or ideology are capable of doing so, and plots to cause widespread damage take a high level of personal capability, resources and networking to be successful. What the individual is capable of is therefore a key consideration when assessing risk of harm to the public. Factors can include:

- 1) Individual knowledge, skills and competencies
- 2) Access to networks, funding or equipment
- 3) Criminal Capability

**Example indicators:**

That an individual is *engaged* with an extremist group, cause or ideology includes:

- a) spending increasing time in the company of other suspected extremists;
- b) changing their style of dress or personal appearance to accord with the group;
- c) day-to-day behaviour becoming increasingly centred around an extremist ideology, group or cause;
- d) loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;
- e) possession of material or symbols associated with an extremist cause (e.g. the swastika for far right groups);
- f) attempts to recruit others to the group/cause/ ideology; or
- g) communication with others that suggest identification with a group/cause/ideology.

That an individual has an *intention* to cause harm, use violence or other illegal means includes:

- a) clearly identifying another group as threatening what they stand for and blaming that group for all social or political ills;
- b) using insulting or derogatory names or labels for another group;
- c) speaking about the imminence of harm from the other group and the importance of action now;
- d) expressing attitudes that justify offending on behalf of the group, cause or ideology;
- e) condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others; or plotting or conspiring with others.

That an individual is *capable* of causing harm or contributing directly or indirectly to an act of terrorism includes:

- a) having a history of violence;
- b) being criminally versatile and using criminal networks to support extremist goals;
- c) having occupational skills that can enable acts of terrorism (such as civil engineering, pharmacology or construction); or
- d) having technical expertise that can be deployed (e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training or survival skills).

The examples above are not exhaustive and vulnerability may manifest itself in other ways. There is no single route to terrorism nor is there a simple profile of those who become involved. For this reason, any attempt to derive a 'profile' can be misleading. It must not be assumed that these characteristics and experiences will necessarily lead to individuals becoming terrorists, or that these indicators are the only source of information required to make an appropriate assessment about vulnerability. Outward expression of faith, in the absence of any other indicator of vulnerability,

is not a reason to make a referral to Channel.

The Prevent strategy makes clear that Channel is about stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, and that this will mean intervening to stop people moving from extremist groups or from extremism into terrorist-related activity. Where people holding extremist views appear to be attracted to or moving towards terrorism they clearly become relevant to Channel.

Association with organisations that are not proscribed and that espouse extremist ideology as defined in the Prevent strategy is not, on its own, reason enough to justify a referral to the Channel process. If professionals at a local level determine that someone attracted to the ideology of such groups also exhibits additional behavioural indicators that it would be appropriate to make a referral to Channel. It would be the presence of additional behavioural indicators that would determine the suitability of the Channel process and not the fact they are associating with or attracted to a group that manifests extremist ideologies.

Association or support for a proscribed group is a criminal offence. It may be appropriate in some cases for individuals believed to be on the periphery of proscribed organisations to be referred to Channel. Professionals at a local level must consider whether a proscription offence has been committed before doing so. If there is evidence that a proscription offence has been committed this should be passed to the police.

The vulnerability assessment should initially be completed by the Police Prevent Team and then circulated in full to panel members in advance of meetings so that all relevant panel members can contribute their knowledge, experience and expertise to the case. This should complement and inform rather than replace professional judgement and/or other assessments such as the Common Assessment Framework (or local equivalent) when deciding on the most appropriate types of support at panel meetings.