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The Kirklees Prevent Young Peoples' Engagement Team: Insights and lessons from its first year



Huddersfield Centre
for Research in
Education and Society

1. Acknowledgments

This research was a joint project by Kirklees Council and the University of Huddersfield.

First and foremost, the University of Huddersfield research team would like to thank all of the Kirklees Council officers, Prevent Young Peoples' Engagement Team (PYPET) staff and the Prevent Police officers who gave up their time to be interviewed and to reflect on the learning from the process of establishing and operationalising the PYPET. All these colleagues spoke to us at length (we have not thanked them by name or used their names within the report's discussions for reasons of confidentiality).

Whilst the research, and the parallel process of devising and carrying out a bespoke training package for the PYPET staff and colleagues from the Kirklees Council Community Engagement team, involved a process of collaborative co-production between the University and Kirklees Council, the analysis and learning offered here is entirely the responsibility of the University research team.

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3. About the authors

Professor Paul Thomas is Professor of Youth and Policy and the Associate Dean - Research in the School of Education and Professional Development, University of Huddersfield. A qualified Youth Worker, Paul's research interests are around how multiculturalist policies, such as Community Cohesion and the Prevent strategy, are understood, mediated and enacted at local level. This has led to two books and numerous academic journal articles, many of which have analysed how the Prevent strategy has been understood and enacted at ground-level. Paul was invited in 2009 to present oral evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee Inquiry in to Prevent and has been invited to speak on the subject in a number of other countries.

Dr. Shamim Miah is a Senior Lecturer at the School of Education and Professional Development, University of Huddersfield. He is the author of two books: *Muslims, Schooling and the Question of Self-Segregation* (Palgrave, 2015) and *Muslims and the Question of Security: Trojan Horse, Prevent and Racialised Politics* (Palgrave, 2017). Shamim's research focuses on the framing of race, religion in educational policy. His research interests draw upon both empirical and also theoretical approaches to the study of public policy. He draws upon Critical Race Theory and also Post-Colonial theory to shape his theoretical world-view. Shamim has also contributed towards chapters in books, reports and also various peer reviewed journals.

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HudCRES is the umbrella research centre for research activity in the University of Huddersfield's School of Education and Professional Development. HudCRES publishes a regular newsletter, organises an annual series of high-profile public lectures, has a regular educational research blog 'Ed Space' and its Twitter feed can be followed @HudCRES. Much of HudCRES's research is developed through a process of co-production with local and national government, third sector organisations and educational institutions. For more information see: <http://www.hud.ac.uk/research/education/hudcres/>

4. Executive Summary

Background: Prevent and the establishment of the Kirklees

Prevent Young Peoples' Engagement Team

- The national Prevent strategy has been in operation since 2006/7 and has evolved significantly in its priorities and content over this period. In particular, the 'Prevent duty' placed on local authorities and public bodies in 2015 has posed a significant new challenge to Kirklees as a local authority responsible for both safeguarding local people from extremism and for supporting the work of other bodies such as schools, colleges and community groups. Alongside this has been a growing threat of extremism and/or travel to foreign conflict zones both locally and nationally.
- Kirklees's response has been to establish the 'Prevent Young People's Engagement Team' (PYPET) through secondments from other parts of the council. This new team, largely resourced by the local authority itself despite being a 'Prevent Priority area', has two key functions. One is to support educational institutions in their implementation of the Prevent duty through training and direct work with and alongside teachers. The other to fill a gap that arguably has existed in the national Prevent strategy since the changes enacted by the 2011 Prevent review, namely having dedicated and experienced educationalists who can do direct, preventative anti-extremist work with young people and communities in a variety of settings.
- A specific part of this remit is to respond to the increasing number of local Channel referrals and, especially, concerns about 'at risk' young people who do not actually meet the Channel threshold at present.
- The creation of the PYPET has been both a significant commitment to safeguarding by Kirklees local authority and an innovative response to this local and national context.

The University's role: Training and Research methodology

- The University of Huddersfield has a longstanding research relationship with Kirklees council around the areas of anti-extremism and community cohesion. Much of this research has been 'co-designed/co-produced' by the University and Kirklees staff with the aim of both producing research data that aids improved local policy and which also improves the knowledge, skills and professional confidence of local practitioners on these issues.
- The University had two, interrelated roles around the development of the PYPET. The first was to design and deliver a bespoke, six session training course that provided academic input and 'safe space' for practitioners to explore difficult issues. This was then followed by a research process of qualitative interviews with Kirklees managers who designed and directed the work of PYPET, members of the PYPET and the local Police Prevent officers who work alongside the team to explore their experiences of and learning from the PYPET process to date.
- The resulting data and recommendations contained in this report draw heavily on these insights from those involved but represent the independent assessment of the University research team.

Findings: Key Themes

i) The drivers of PYPET's establishment

- Local challenges and real events of extremism were as important to the establishment of the PYPET as the national driver of the Prevent legal duty
- The Kirklees response of PYPET's establishment reflects the resulting need to support schools, colleges and other local institutions as they implement the Prevent duty and to respond to the growing number of individuals referred formally to Channel or seen generally as being 'at risk' of extremist influence.
- The need to engage with local communities on the Prevent agenda and build resilience to radicalisation and extremism
- This development reflects Kirklees's approach of close co-ordination between Prevent and its broader community cohesion work, as well as its learning from preventative work around issues such as gang violence.

ii) The public profile of PYPET

- A significant problem in the first phase of the Prevent strategy (2007-11) locally and nationally was a reluctance to use the 'Prevent' label because of its controversial public image. This merely fuelled concerns over 'spying'. As a result, the PYPET has been determined to avoid this trap and has been upfront with communities about its purpose – this has been done through the title of the project/team, their own unique branding and in the open manner in which team members have explained their focus to the individuals, communities and institutions that they have engaged with.
- In being overt about its purpose and in the nature of the educational engagement outlined below, the PYPET is attempting to alter how sections of communities perceive the Prevent strategy through the nature and quality of their engagement.

iii) PYPET's composition and work model

- The PYPET development also reflects a perception of a gap in the post-2011 national Prevent approach – the absence of dedicated and skilled anti-extremist educational practitioners who can both do preventative work in the community and who can work effectively with young people 'at risk' of extremism.
- In recognition of this, the original conception for PYPET was to recruit youth work-background practitioners; in practice, the team actually has more varied backgrounds that also include family support work and community development. This variety has proved an asset and what all the PYPET team members share is an ability to engage individuals and groups within communities in conversation and work approaches that enable a focus on the threat of extremism and how to prevent it.
- Here, the PYPET very much takes a 'safeguarding' approach of working with both young people directly and the community members and professionals close to them to explore how resilience against extremism can be built. This recognises the 'vulnerability' to extremism of young people without stigmatising, or being suspicious of, them.
- Central to PYPET approach has been a process of initial consultation with individuals and communities so that the engagement is driven by their concerns or interests. As

work has developed, the PYPET have engaged in increasingly varied geographical areas and communities, reflecting the varied nature of extremist threats within communities. This has included a focus on majority white communities and far-right extremism.

- The development of the PYPET has been welcomed by local Prevent Police colleagues, both because the PYPET are able to engage in different ways with communities and also because the Police are gradually withdrawing from aspects of Prevent implementation locally and nationally.

iv) PYPET's engagement work in practice

- The PYPET have engaged directly with individuals and groups in communities, as well as supporting and working with communities and schools in identified areas.
- Young people have obviously been a priority group for PYPET engagement in the community, using traditional youth work approaches. This has enabled the development of 'Young Leaders' programmes, as well as work around issues that young people see as important, such as forms of bullying. Alongside this, highly-successful engagement has been developed with women in different parts of Kirklees, enabling a focus on internet/social media safety and risks for young people within their family networks.
- The PYPET have also worked in schools. This has involved WRAP/Prevent training for school staff and direct delivery of anti-extremism activities with/alongside school staff. The training role of the team has also included training and support for community-based educational institutions.
- A tangible benefit of having the PYPET resource was shown by the 'Britain First' far-right rally in Dewsbury in January 2016, where the team was able to successfully direct local community members from confrontation with the marchers through proactive, community-based activities on the day.

v) Resources, results and challenges

- The establishment of the Kirklees PYPET foregrounds broader challenges for the national Prevent strategy around what the purpose of preventative work is and how success can realistically be measured. Here, it can be argued that Prevent has to invest in and trust preventative processes of educational and community engagement, as well as judgments of impact from a variety of ground-level community members and professionals – simple quantitative measures cannot capture progress on such a complex issue.
- All respondents agreed that 'one off' inputs cannot hope to have a lasting impact, so the PYPET and its work need to be supported over a period of time. This requires continued investment, both from the local authority itself and from the Home Office. It is not realistic for the entire burden of such a proactive initiative around a priority national strategy to fall on the local authority at the time of a challenging local government funding situation.

5. Background: Prevent and the establishment of the Kirklees Prevent Young Peoples' Engagement Team

The Prevent Strategy

The Prevent Strategy is one of the four key strands (the so-called '4 P's) of the UK's Counter-Terrorism strategy, 'CONTEST'. Established in 2003, Prevent effectively did not come into operation until 2006/7, following the 7/7 London bombings of July 2005. Prevent's role is to prevent individuals from being drawn into all forms of extremism and terrorist activity through community engagement. The Prevent strategy has experienced significant modifications and developments during its lifetime. In the initial 'Prevent 1' phase of 2007-2011, local authorities such as Kirklees were at the forefront of the strategy. Kirklees and other local authorities with significant Muslim populations received funding to develop programmes of youth engagement and community development (see Thomas, 2008 for analysis of Kirklees's operationalisation of Prevent in its initial, 'Pathfinder' year, and Munro et al, 2010 for discussion of subsequent local Prevent work). This element of the national Prevent strategy attracted significant media and political criticism because of its exclusive focus on Muslim communities, its problematic relationship with wider polices of community cohesion and the prominent role of the Police.

Subsequently, the Coalition government substantially modified Prevent in their 2011 Prevent Review (HMG, 2011; Thomas, 2012). This review removed the Department for Communities and Local Government from the strategy and significantly reduced funding for local authority programmes – Kirklees was one of a number of local authorities in northern England who were no longer designated as a 'priority/funded area' and so no longer received Prevent funding. It also broadened Prevent's remit to all types of extremism. However, real events, such as the murder of soldier Lee Rigby and the growing Syria crisis that saw young Britons attempt to travel there to join Daesh led to further policy reconsideration (HMG, 2013). This led to a significant development within the Prevent strategy – the introduction of the 'Prevent legal duty' (Home Office, 2015) whereby public bodies such as local authorities, schools and colleges and health trusts all now had a legal duty to '*show due regard to prevent people from being drawn in to terrorism*' and to refer individuals seen to be 'at risk' of extremist involvement to the multi-agency Channel process. In recognition of the greater responsibility that this now placed on local authorities to support the implementation of the Prevent duty in their area (for instance within local educational establishments), and of the associated growing challenge of extremist activity, both of which were leading to increased Channel referrals, the programme of local authority Prevent funding was expanded. This has led to Kirklees once again becoming a 'Prevent funded area', which brings support for the local Prevent Co-ordinator's salary and some access to limited additional resource.

Kirklees and the Prevent Duty

The Prevent Young People's Engagement Team (PYPET) was established in August 2015 following the introduction of the Prevent duty in July 2015. The team is made up of youth workers and family workers seconded from within the Council's Children's Directorate. As part of the Prevent duty, local authorities have to have in place and manage a Channel safeguarding panel. Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early

stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people by: identifying individuals at risk, assessing the nature and extent of that risk and developing the most appropriate support plan for individuals concerned. One of the roles of the PYPET is to support the Channel process by supporting those individuals and families who are deemed vulnerable. The team also plays a key role in the Kirklees Prevent strategy which uses a prevention approach to tackling all forms of radicalisation and extremism. The work carried out by the PYPET in schools, colleges and in communities is rooted in safeguarding principles, which in Kirklees means the local authority aims to prevent things from happening in the first place. As a result, since its establishment, the PYPET has been involved in delivering a significant range of Prevent related activities and programmes with the aim of raising awareness and educating young people, families, teachers and the wider community about safeguarding against extremism and radicalisation.

This range of activity, the partners involved and the learning to date from this new work approach to local Prevent are all outlined and analysed below.

[**The partnership between Kirklees Council and the University of Huddersfield**](#)

The University of Huddersfield, and in particular, HudCRES, has a longstanding research relationship with Kirklees Council. This has involved a number of research projects that have been ‘co-designed’, designed collaboratively by the University and the Council to provide research evidence and other benefits in relation to pressing local policy and practice challenges. Examples of this approach have included:

- Qualitative analysis of the initial, ‘Pathfinder’ year of the Prevent strategy (2007/8; Thomas, 2008).
- Nationally-funded evaluation of how Kirklees and Bradford Councils were implementing Prevent and community cohesion policy measures (2009-10; Munro et al, 2010).
- Mixed methods research into attitudes and dispositions towards ethnic diversity and anti-minority protest groups in economically-marginalised areas of Kirklees (2013/14; Thomas et al, 2015).
- Action research around community cohesion that both gathered perspectives from community members and supported the development of enhanced skills and confidence in discussing cohesion work amongst the Kirklees Community Engagement Team (2012/14; Sanderson and Thomas, 2015).

6. Training for anti-extremism educational engagement

The approach of seconding staff from other Kirklees Council departments/teams to the PYPET meant that this new team already has significant educational practice knowledge, skills and experience. The original conception was that the team would all have a youth work background but the eventual team comprised staff with youth work, community work and family support backgrounds, a mix that has proved to be a strength as is suggested below. Whatever the skills mix of the team, though, Kirklees officers identified in planning sessions with the research team that the University input to the new initiative should have two distinct but inter-related elements:

1. A bespoke training course that would help the team develop their work approach
2. A process of interview-based research that would enable officers, PYPET members and key stakeholders, particularly local Prevent Police Engagement Officers, to reflect on the team's progress and learning to date.

This section outlines and explains the content and approach of the resulting bespoke training course that the University research team devised and delivered for both the PYPET members and members of the broader Kirklees Community Engagement team (who have input to Kirklees's Prevent work by, for instance, supporting the delivering WRAP/Prevent training to local partner agencies).

Firstly, the training course had both process and product aims:

- Provide and facilitate a 'safe space' for discussions about how to effectively engage with young people to prevent attractions towards extremism.
- Provide appropriate academic analysis and input on radicalisation, extremism, community identifications and experiences, and effective anti-extremism youth engagement strategies and approaches.
- Support the development of reflective practice and critical analysis within the team.
- Help the professional practitioners feel more knowledgeable and more confident in developing their educational engagement work.

This approach meant that each of the half day sessions included academic lecturer input as well as group work discussion exercise and considerable time for facilitated debate.

The training programme consisted of a series of themed sessions during the period November 2015 to March 2016 and delivered by at least one of the University team members:

1. **Radicalisation** – perspectives on drivers of radicalisation (using a ranking exercise to promote group discussion), the contested nature of the concept, and the role of anti-extremism policy/practice interventions at the macro, meso and micro level.
2. **Anti-Extremism education/Understanding Muslim communities:**
 - Analysing the problematic history of anti-extremism educational initiatives within different settings and communities – what has worked and what hasn't.
 - Sharing/mapping knowledge of local Muslim communities and their diversity; historical perspectives on British Muslim identifications and organisations

and how these have related to key concepts such as multiculturalism and ‘super diversity’.

3. **Approaches to Youth engagement** – perspectives on the nature of youth work and on the skills, values/ethics and challenges in engaging with marginalised young people.
4. **Understanding Right-Wing extremism** – perspectives on the ideologies, organisations and manifestations of right-wing extremism within British society.
5. **Muslim political perspectives** – analysis of changing and differing identifications and political organisation/representation within British Muslim communities, including analysing hostility within some sections of communities to counter-terrorism measures.
6. **The partnership context of PYPET** – analysing and mapping the team’s relationship to other agencies, professional and institutions, including areas of overlap and of organisational tension where further clarity and dialogue is needed.

Feedback from participants on the interactive training sessions was positive and became more so as the programme developed. When asked to rate the usefulness of each session out of 10 where 1 was ‘not useful’ and 10 was ‘very useful’, participants scored session 1 at an average of 8.5 (16 responses), with the average ratings rising to 9.1 (11 responses) for Session 4 and 9.3 (10 responses) for session 5. Qualitative comments from individual participants supported this positive rating of the impact and learning from the training sessions:

Most helpful aspects of sessions:

- ‘Safe and open space for dialogue’ (Session 1)
- ‘Historical context of far-right and also parallels with anti-Semitism across the board – far right and Islamism’ (4)
- ‘Interesting and informative session overall’ (5)
- ‘Group work was helpful – interesting discussion came from this’ (1)
- ‘Variations of Muslim communities and culture’ (5)
- ‘Open discussion of radicalisation’ (1)

Comments in support of session ratings:

- ‘Very useful because I’m new in to my role and the session has enabled me to think further about practice, policy, and barriers to engagement’ (1)
- ‘I learn from everyone else and it’s great to have some historical and political context on the situation we are now in in terms of the far-right and how it has evolved’ (4)
- ‘Interesting and I feel everyone was contributing’ (5)
- ‘Provided me with a broader perspective and reassurance in hearing other viewpoints’ (1)
- ‘Absolutely loved this – symptoms, causes, ideology’ (4)
- ‘Very insightful, engaging and informative’ (5)
- ‘Great content and very relevant to the line of work and recent events in the local community’ (4)
- ‘Allowed a good amount of time for group discussions’ (4)

7. Methodology

University of Huddersfield researchers conducted qualitative, one-to one interviews with colleagues engaged in Prevent work in Kirklees to explore experiences, insights and perceptions around both the establishment and the operationalisation of the PYPET. These were held with:

- Four Kirklees Council officers with responsibilities for designing and managing aspects of local Prevent provision.
- Four members of the PYPET.
- Three Police Prevent colleagues who work closely with the PYPET (this was a group interview with three colleagues holding a similar role).

All interviews were one-to-one (with the exception of the group interview with police colleagues) and were held in a private space nominated by the interviewee. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed, and all interview transcripts were read and analysed for key themes by at least two members of the University research team.

Respondents' experiences of and insights on the development of the PYPET to date is discussed below under a number of key themes:

- The drivers of PYPET's establishment
- The public profile of PYPET
- The team's composition and work model
- PYPET's engagement work in practice
- Resources, results and challenges

8. Findings: Key themes

i) The drivers of PYPET's establishment

A number of inter-related factors came together to prompt Kirklees council to establish the PYPET. These included a growing local and national challenge of extremism, including around planned travel to Syria, consequent changes and developments in the national and local Prevent strategy and Kirklees's own broader perspective on preventative and cohesion-based approaches to social risks.

The challenge of extremism at the local Kirklees level was real and immediate, with two young men from Dewsbury travelling to Syria in 2015 and at least one of them subsequently losing his life. This was followed closely first by a Huddersfield man becoming a suicide bomber in Iraq, and then by the murder of local MP Jo Cox, by a local man with far-right racist sympathies and links. Both consequently and alongside these local events, the Prevent strategy became more prominent for the authority – the Prevent duty (Home Office, 2015)

came into force, placing obligations both on the local authority itself and on the local public institutions, such as schools and colleges that the authority supports.

This not only created a significantly greater workload around training and support for teachers, lecturers and other community-based public servants but also raised associated questions of who would be best placed to do this effectively and what model and philosophy of work should be adopted. This local policy consideration included how to address a very significantly increased number of enquiries and formal Channel referrals of young people who, whilst not yet actively involved in extremist networks or plots, raised significant causes for concern. The consequent response of the PYPET was officer-led but with strong and active support from many elected members.

PYPET's creation reflected broader and longer-term approaches that Kirklees had taken to associated challenges of cohesion, community tensions and youth marginalisation. Here, the philosophy driving PYPET was that preventative interventions that helped to build resilience were needed with a significant number of young people and community members have some risk/vulnerability for a range of micro, meso and macro reasons.

A key issue was who would be best placed to do such preventative work without being viewed as stigmatising or securitising – key public critiques of Prevent in the past. The PYPET solution was to deploy a team with youth and community work backgrounds and skills – an immediate statement that this aspect of the Prevent strategy was NOT Police-led. At the same time, the PYPET development built on a strong local Prevent relationship between Kirklees council and the Police.

The nature of the team assembled and their core work approach, as is discussed below, also re-stated Kirklees's commitment to see its Prevent work as closely aligned with the broader and ongoing community cohesion work through its 'Connecting Communities' strategy that both emphasises commonality and aims to support civil society capacity building in all communities.

ii) The public profile of PYPET

As highlighted above, the public image and reputation of the national Prevent strategy is extremely contested and controversial. One of the long-term drivers of negative public perceptions was a belief, sometimes well-founded, in Prevent's initial (2007-2011) phase that it wasn't always up front about what the activity was for and whether or not it was funded by Prevent, leading to allegations that Muslim communities were being sometimes misled and spied upon. Indeed, in Kirklees in the initial year of Prevent, the rather opaque title 'Pathfinder' was used for Prevent activity, precisely because of the already controversial national reputation of the programme. This immediately gave Kirklees the dilemma of whether or not to be up front about the PYPET's direct connection to the Prevent strategy or whether this would stifle community engagement before the team had a chance to demonstrate their values and approach in practice. The Kirklees approach has been to be entirely upfront, both in the naming of the PYPET and in the explaining of its role to communities. This included Kirklees specific Prevent branding.

This need for transparency about the policy focus and intent of the work was a lesson that had already been learnt by Police colleagues who'd worked on Prevent for some time. This danger of being less than straightforward was clearly identified but this openness did mean that PYPET faced direct suspicion initially from some parts of communities precisely because it 'was' Prevent. Here, part of PYPET's intent and impact has been to alter perceptions of what Prevent is and what it is about locally, both through the background of the staff involved and in the working approach developed.

This highlights that openness and the development of trusting relationships between community members and PYPET staff on the ground has helped overcome the negativity that was recognised as a likely initial reaction to the PREVENT brand. Through this approach, Kirklees as a local authority have aimed to alter community perceptions and 'buy-in' to the local Prevent strategy by deploying community and youth work-background staff, sometimes into spaces (especially involving Channel concerns/referrals) that had previously been occupied by (often uniformed) Police staff around communities holding wider, longer-term suspicions of the Police. Arguably, national criticisms of Prevent can only be addressed by such changed and proactive work at the local level.

iii) PYPET's composition and work model

One of the key drivers of PYPET's establishment was the sense that there was a skills and capacity gap in the local Prevent strategy, as it responded to the national policy requirements highlighted above. This identification of this gap very much focused on community-based education skills and experience, stemming from the need both to work with educational institutions and community groups wanting to engage with Prevent activity, and the need to engage directly with young people having some 'risk factors' in relation to extremism but not meeting the threshold necessary for a formal Channel referral and intervention. This led to the original conception of PYPET being about secondment of youth workers who could bring a different work approach to the local Prevent 'offer'. This was based on the understanding that youth workers' strengths are in building relationships with (often alienated) young people so that they voluntarily then engage with more challenging educational programmes.

In fact, the team actually recruited through secondments from other parts of the Council's workforce was broader than youth work in its experience and included staff with backgrounds in family support work and community development as well as traditional youth work, a strength in itself as they bring a range of complementary skills to the work. The team recruited was also personally diverse, including staff with diverse ethnic, faith and gender backgrounds.

The real strength of the PYPET and its individual staff is their ability, based on previous work skills and experience, to engage community members with Prevent-related conversations and activities. Central here is a traditional community and youth work approach of listening to individuals and communities about what their concerns and agendas are and responding to them, so that any development towards Prevent-related activity is a negotiated process.

When moving into a new area, the team starts with some kind of consultation process, usually based on an event, where they explore the community's perception of, and emphasise the voluntary nature of participation in, Prevent. This has involved starting out with consultation meetings, asking residents about gaps in provision and what sort of help they'd like to see. Some of this has involved relationship building work through activities with young people and adults within communities.

Even when the team members are involved in delivering Prevent awareness sessions to community groups, it has not been a 'one-off' event. Follow-up work is important in all settings where members of the team deliver training. Above all, the aim of PYPET'S establishment has been that the work approach is all inclusive, open and transparent. Responsibility for delivering on the Prevent duty in Kirklees has been based within the Council's Safe & Cohesive Communities Directorate. This has made it possible to align the new Prevent duty with existing, mainstream work such as community cohesion activity and broader community development work.

Building on this organisational location and the background of the team staff, the work approach of PYPET is very much focused on 'safeguarding' notions of individual vulnerability and what parallel local work on, for instance, youth gang activity, has highlighted about the preventative and protective importance of educational-based strategies. Here, PYPET utilises a 'vulnerability model' which acknowledges that there are local young people 'at risk' of extremism who need enhanced support and guidance. The real, tragic local events identified above have driven this conception of addressing vulnerability and attempts to understand the youth networks that the two young Dewsbury men who became ISIS volunteers were associated with, and seeking to enhance protective factors for them. This has included engagement with key local schools to promote 'safe space' for debate and difficult conversations around contentious issues.

The establishment of the PYPET enabled the local Prevent strategy to broaden its overt contact with communities beyond the dedicated, uniformed Prevent Police officers who had been working on Prevent for some years. Here, the development of the PYPET has not just increased the local Prevent engagement capacity but has also enabled a different messenger with a different community profile and possible work approach to be deployed.

This development has had significant benefits in the eyes of the Prevent Police officers themselves. This includes the ability to deploy a wider range of resources on Prevent work. It has enabled, conversely, the Prevent Police officers to work with 'at risk' young people in a different way. The relationship between the existing Prevent Police officers and the new PYPET has been strengthened by co-locating them in a 'Prevent Hub' office in Kirklees. The resulting supervision of Police officers by a Council employee has been a possibly unique element of the approach taken by this initiative and one which seems to have worked well overall to date. The recruitment of an additional member of staff for the broader Kirklees Council Prevent team means that more work will be transferred from the Police to the team, including the processing of referrals to the local Channel programme. Despite the significant change this co-location represents, Police respondents were also positive about the approach. This practice partly reflects a reality of Police stepping back from Prevent and other aspects of local work.

The geographical focus for the PYPET has been an issue of significant discussion and gradual development from being largely focused on Dewsbury/North Kirklees to working across the whole local authority area. The areas where the initial phase of PYPET has been subsequently focused include a diverse range of communities, including significant (and disparate) South Asian communities, White British, Hungarian and other recently-established communities.

iv) PYPET's engagement work in practice

One of the key areas of activity for PYPET, and an area that is steadily growing in scale and importance, is engagement with women, particularly in Dewsbury and North Kirklees. Here, a women's group with up to 50 regular attendees has developed. This group has engaged both in discussion and in a range of training, covering issues such as desktop safety, privacy settings on phones, and the 'dark web' – much of this relating to the very limited knowledge and experience of the internet and social media amongst some of the group members. This had led to the group developing their own counter narratives to extremism (videos available on the Kirklees Prevent website) and them becoming an established civil society group in their own right.

Young people generally have obviously been a key target group for the PYPET. This has involved a number of strands, including community-based engagement using youth work approaches, direct work with young people through schools and colleges and training and support for front-line education professionals. This has included delivering a 'Respect' programme in schools, which includes consideration of British values, online safety, conspiracy theories, and extremist propaganda.

Using both the direct work with schools and their liaison with Kirklees Council's existing youth work provision, the PYPET have recruited young people to a number of their anti-extremism educational programmes. This has included a Girls Group, bringing together young Asian girls and young White girls, so demonstrating PYPET's connection to wider community cohesion work, and including a residential experience. It has also included developing a multi-ethnic 'Young Leaders' group, a process including a residential and community activity / project around graffiti, anti-racism and anti-bullying. This is just one of the strands of work that enables young people to explore 'identity', both their own preferred identifications and how they perceive those of other young people.

As well as engaging with young people as a priority, the PYPET has also engaged with communities more generally, as shown by the developing Women's' work discussed above. That has included engaging with communities at points of tension, such as the regular attempts by far-right groups to hold rallies or marches in North Kirklees. The Prevent team has also arranged a number of public meetings and events across Kirklees, to which guest speakers have been invited. This included a community round table event to discuss Prevent with officials from the Home Office and a meeting addressed by a leading female figure from the Muslim Council of Britain.

One form of engagement has been team members delivering WRAP and associated Prevent awareness training for community groups and institutions. Local mosques have been invited to participate collectively in a wide range of training as part of the Council's wider safeguarding work. These cover issues such as governance, managing challenging behaviour, safeguarding and – now – discussions and training around Prevent. The WRAP training has been extended to provide training to partners so that they are in a position to deliver equivalent training in their organisations. For instance, Kirklees College engaged the PYPET to run some sessions with their 'Young Ambassadors' group, after which their staff were trained in the use of Prevent resources with other students. Here, members of the team have been able to build on their pre-existing working relationships with colleagues from the service areas within the Council where they were located prior to the launch of the new team (e.g. IYSS in Dewsbury and Batley, Sure Start Children's Centre in Batley).

Although the development of the PYPET reflects a perceived need for a different messenger and skill set in some Prevent work, there is a recognition of how past and present local Police Prevent work has been helpful to the team. The involvement of the Police is seen as advantageous in some of the Prevent community engagement work, not only because of the PEOs' experience in this aspect of the work, but also because the presence of a uniform can help community members appreciate the seriousness of policy issue.

v) **Resources, results and challenges**

In setting up the PYPET and in dedicating resources to it, Kirklees has foregrounded broader challenges about the preventative approach of the Prevent strategy – what does Prevent-focussed preventative work try to achieve and how can and should 'success' be measured? This led to thoughtful conversations with different respondents around how, both individually and collectively, they would measure 'success' for the PYPET. Measures of success were partially identified in both the depth and nature of youth and community engagement with both the PYPET and hence with Prevent more widely, such as the vibrant Women's Groups. For such a section of the community, even attending group sessions regularly for a few hours is an achievement and a significant mark of engagement. In relation to the work with young people, the measures of success were traditional, youth-work judgments about the demeanor of the young people as a result of the engagement process.

Some of the initial PYPET contact with schools or community organisations has been 'one-off' inputs. Here, it is harder to measure the impact of such one-off sessions, especially with young people in schools, and respondents felt that it would be better if done over several weeks/sessions. There is, though at the same time a confidence that the knowledge and understanding enhanced by participation in Prevent training has given staff in schools and organisations a sound basis for implementing the Prevent duty. There is, however, a realistic acceptance of the long-term challenge in building community resilience against extremism.

One measure held up by respondents as an indication of the success of the PYPET approach they have taken is that communities appear to be more resilient than before this process of community engagement (which itself builds on longer-term and broader local cohesion work) started in these communities. The response to the January 2016 'Britain First' march suggests that local communities are more prepared to take this kind of intimidation in their

stride, organise a response, and not get embroiled in lengthy post mortems about the event. On a deeper level, there is an acceptance that the arguably altered perception of Prevent that the positive community engagement with PYPET indicates is difficult to measure but is, at the same time, real and visible.

Closely connected to these reflections on how the success and impacts to date of PYPET and its underpinning approach were considerations of the sustainability of this approach, especially as it has been largely funded by the local authority itself at a time of significant reductions in national government funding. Certainly, this way of working has attracted interest from other local authorities (including Sheffield and Bradford) who have sent staff to research Kirklees' provision. The general view of respondents is that this is a strong, sustainable model of delivery.

At the same time, there is a recognition that PYPET and associated work is part of a long-term approach of 'mainstreaming' Prevent within broader safeguarding and community-based preventative work. Here, both the Police colleagues and PYPET members have supported the Council's Learning and Development Team to strengthen the base of trainers available to deliver Prevent / WRAP training in schools and elsewhere. Similarly, PYPET can be seen as promoting a similar 'mainstreaming' and capacity-building within communities themselves.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

As a new initiative, the Kirklees Prevent Young Peoples' Engagement Team (PYPET) has clearly faced the practical, organisational and philosophical challenges that any new development that seeks to work across established organisational and policy boundaries faces. These challenges, and the learning curves around them for all concerned, have been highlighted and discussed in this report. However, a number of important conclusions can be identified from this research process of asking key players within and around the creation and work of the PYPET to reflect on and analyse the process and learning from it to date:

- The creation and (largely) self-funding of the PYPET by Kirklees council is an imaginative, innovative and proactive response to the challenges both of local extremist threats and to the national requirements placed on all public bodies by the Prevent duty. The response of creating PYPET addresses gaps in Prevent policy and practice capacity, as outlined below.
- Creating an engagement team from diverse practice and personal backgrounds has been a real strength but has further emphasised the need for the bespoke training package devised and delivered by the University of Huddersfield and which enabled not just a focus on necessary knowledge and understanding but the 'safe space' for reflection vital to practitioners having the confidence to deploy skills around these challenging issues of extremism within communities.
- Having the PYPET addresses a vital gap in local Prevent practice and delivery – it is a team that does not just deliver initial Prevent/WRAP training to a wide variety of educational institutions and community groups (so taking some of the burden off the local Prevent coordinator and addressing the reality that Police Prevent colleagues

are, of necessity, withdrawing from such work) but which then has been able to go further and provide preventative educational input to support and encourage teachers and other ground-level professionals.

- Similarly, the PYPET has also been able to work directly with communities to build relationships of dialogue and trust, so gradually developing genuine community resilience against extremism. This is arguably a vital piece of the policy jigsaw that has been largely missing since the 2011 Prevent Review, which greatly reduced Prevent funding for local work and entirely withdrew Prevent funding for many local authorities, such as Kirklees, and community groups.
- In doing this community engagement work, based on traditional community and youth work approaches, the Kirklees PYPET is successfully gaining community engagement with Prevent in supposedly ‘hostile’ communities, such as Muslim communities in North Kirklees, and is starting to alter perceptions in such communities about what the Prevent strategy is actually about and what it is trying to achieve in relations to safeguarding communities and their members from extremism. The current, overwhelmingly negative community perceptions nationally of Prevent and its intent will only be altered through such proactive, community-based engagement of the type that PYPET represents, NOT through national-level changes to the name or stated aims of Prevent – Prevent can only make progress at community-level through such processes of community engagement.

Recommendations:

For Kirklees Council - Continue to support the work and approach of the PYPET for the coming period and request government to provide further support for this work.

For the Home Office – Provide greater support for the Kirklees PYPET; Look carefully at this innovative work and support and encourage similar community-based engagement processes in other key local authority areas.

For the Local Government Association – highlight and promote this preventative working approach to other local authorities facing significant challenges of extremism.

10. References

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