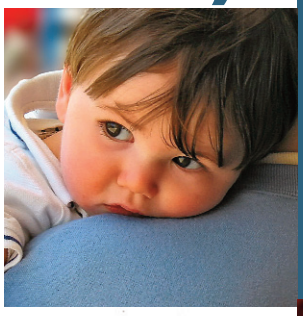
Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs)



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YORKSHIRE & HUMBER IMPROVEMENT AND EFFICIENCY PARTNERSHIP

Community Cohesion and Prevent Pilot

A report prepared for: Local Government Yorkshire & Humber

by
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The views expressed in this report are not necessarily those of the project funders.

Executive summary

Background

The Centre for Research in the Social Sciences at the University of Huddersfield is pleased to present the findings from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) Pilot Community Cohesion and Prevent Evaluation, funded by Local Government Yorkshire and Humber.

This research addresses the challenges of implementing the community cohesion and Prevent policy agendas, and building strong and positive partnerships across agencies and communities to support that implementation, in two local authority areas, Kirklees and Bradford.

The research took place from November 2009 – March 2010, and used a multi-method approach involving the following:

- Interviews with Local Authority and key partner policy makers, officers, and front line staff (20 interviews).
- Research by people working in the communities, including youth workers, housing workers, and community workers, with community members (33 interviews and 7 focus groups[1]).
- Analysis of Local Authority strategies (13 strategies).

Community cohesion emerged as a governmental policy priority in the wake of the violent disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in the summer of 2001. Prevent is a key component of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy.

The Localities

Kirklees and Bradford Metropolitan District local authorities are both are situated in West Yorkshire. Kirklees and Bradford both face challenges regarding racism, and economic and other inequalities; challenges that are relevant across the whole of the UK in various forms.

[1] Two deprived localities per local authority selected according the Place Survey (Dewsbury, Heckmondwike, South Bradford and Keighley), plus research was done with the following communities: Pakistani and Indian women, Pakistani men, Kurdish community members, young people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and older people (white and Minority Ethnic).

The research raised some concerns about the localities, including:

- Perceptions of unfairness in the allocation of resources amongst some people, and such perceptions leading to resentment that undermines good community relations.
- A sense of separate communities, with little interaction across social divides in some cases.
- The changes associated with new communities and tensions relating to jobs, housing and anti social behaviour.
- A tendency for predominantly white communities to present themselves as community minded and unprejudiced, whilst actually demonstrating alienation from other ethnic communities.
- Experiences of abuse on other grounds including gender and sexual orientation.
- Worries concerning the fragility of the local economy and the social issues associated with worklessness.
- High levels of disenfranchisement, hopelessness, and disempowerment in some localities.
- Issues concerning criminal activity, anti-social behaviour and drug use in some localities.
- A lack of amenities and poor public service provision in some localities.

Community Cohesion and Prevent in Kirklees

- Kirklees was one of the first local authorities to recognise the importance of building cohesion between its diverse communities following the disturbances in Northern Towns in the summer of 2001.

- Community cohesion is a priority for Kirklees local authority and for its partner organisations, given the centrality of key National Indicators (NIs) to the external assessment of the local authority. A wide ranging programme of initiatives is underway.

- There appears to be a strong understanding of local communities, and developed structures for engagement, which have informed work around both community cohesion and Prevent.

It was felt by some contributors to the research that Kirklees has an obligation to respond to the Prevent Agenda, but there is a greater focus on the cohesion agenda, due to a number of factors including the recognition of the historically divisive nature of the Prevent agenda and its potential to have a negative impact on cohesion workKirklees Community Cohesion strategy unified the existing Community Cohesion Action Plan and was launched in 2008. Both community cohesion and Prevent are dealt with by the Local Strategic Partnership Board and there is also a high level Community Cohesion Partnership Board..

- Contributors from Kirklees discussed a comprehensive consultation process for the 2008 Community Cohesion Strategy, which was underpinned by 5 Thematic Action Plans, as well as public consultation about the detail of the Action Plans, which was felt to be a useful and productive way of engaging people.

- Community cohesion and Prevent (to a lesser extent) are addressed in all the high level Kirklees local authority and partner strategies, including some Prevent indicators such as 'knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism and the Prevent objectives'. Community cohesion and Prevent are partially integrated into local authority middle level strategies.

- Kirklees local authority models its community cohesion work via three levels (intensive interventions, targeted interventions and universal provision). The intensive interventions are locality based, with a shift towards a ward-based structure

- The structures supporting Prevent are in place in Kirklees, including the Gold and Silver groups (Gold provides strategic direction and overview and has senior representation from all statutory stakeholders and Silver provides implementation), a Prevent Round Table and Reference Group, intelligence sharing mechanisms which enable a quick response to incidents, work with the Counter-Terrorism Unit, the Channel process, and the informal reference to NI 35.

- There is recognition amongst strategic level staff that work is ongoing, particularly around implementation of the community cohesion agenda.

Community Cohesion and Prevent in Bradford:

- The research found that community cohesion is seen as an important priority in Bradford local authority. Community cohesion and engagement has had considerable focus in Bradford for many years, since the 1995 disturbances and the 2001 disorders.

- The political sensitivities concerning the Prevent agenda are particularly marked in Bradford, with a stated need to focus on strong and resilient communities rather than Prevent per se.

- Community cohesion (and to a degree Prevent) related indicators are embedded in high level local authority and partnership plans; these include the NIs and Committee on Integration and Cohesion indicators. The Community Cohesion Framework was in the process of going through the Executive at the time of the research.

- The secondary level plans differ in the extent to which they include community cohesion and Prevent; the integration of community cohesion and Prevent is less thorough than is the case with higher level strategies in some `instances.

- The Safer Communities Partnership and the Stronger Communities Partnership (which deal with Prevent and community cohesion respectively) are amongst the partnerships supported by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). There are clear implementation structures and a range of delivery mechanisms in place.

- The structures supporting Prevent work are clearly present in Bradford, including the Gold and Silver groups and sub groups, and close working arrangements with the local police.

Implementation of community cohesion and Prevent initiatives in Bradford and Kirkless

- In the eyes of community members, general service provision (such as housing and crime reduction) is part and parcel of good community relations work. Key

concerns outlined by some contributors from both localities were with housing, safety and crime reduction, the cleanliness of neighbourhoods, the provision of general facilities on the estates, and issues of anti social behaviour.

- Mechanisms for mainstreaming community cohesion throughout local authority service provision was developed via the community cohesion Action Plans in Kirklees so that community cohesion included both targeted interventions such as activities, and an embedded set of procedures.

- In terms of the development of infrastructure that supports community cohesion and Prevent work more broadly, neighbourhood wardens and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) were welcomed.

- The development of both community-specific infrastructure and cross community infrastructure is important for building good community relations.

- Leadership concerning community cohesion, and good communication systems, were important for the implementation of community cohesion agendas.

- There is awareness and appreciation amongst some community members of the efforts that both local authorities are making to support diversity concerning race, ethnicity, faith and other aspects of diversity such as sexual orientation and age; these efforts support community cohesion and Prevent.

- There is currently a substantial amount of activity taking place concerning community cohesion, and to a lesser extent Prevent, within both Bradford and Kirklees localities. Initiatives have a real, positive impact on the ground.

There have been a range of targeted initiatives in both localities, for example:

- ✓ School twinning programmes for example a madrassah in Batley and Heckmondwike Grammar school.

- ✓ Sessions on internet safety and assisting parents to monitor children on the internet.
- ✓ Activities such as a gardening event in Mirfield to foster interaction with the deprived neighbouring area of London Park.
- ✓ A barbeque held in a local park at an event supported by the Community Cohesion team in tandem with a mosque.
- ✓ International Women's Day being used to support community cohesion.
- ✓ Myth busting in Dewsbury after the 7/7 bombings, with debates about Christianity and Islam and also lunches and trips to Parliament House.
- ✓ The Mela, the Pink Picnic and the Caribbean Carnival.
- ✓ Refugee week.
- ✓ Local authority support for Gay Pride.
- ✓ Trip to Auschwitz for young Pakistani men who were seen as being at risk of extremism as part of a development programme.
- ✓ A Jewish Life exhibition held at a Muslim community centre in Bradford, with national educational resources, held to demonstrate good relations between the communities.
- ✓ A series of lectures at the University in partnership with the Faiths Forum and University to encourage debate and discourse with national and international speakers on Islam and the challenges facing the Muslim Community in the UK.
- ✓ Capacity building within Mosques and their management.

Key issues in Kirklees and Bradford: Overview

There is clear support for more cohesion work. A range of professional respondents and community members expressed the view that they and their communities wanted and needed more cohesion activity - more opportunities to meet and work with people and agencies from 'other' communities. Some of those events or processes had not been designed as 'cohesion', or badged as such, but had involved people coming together to work or socialise.

The challenges facing statutory sector providers around the community cohesion and Prevent agendas go well beyond focused work in this area. These challenges exist at multiple levels, such as the global economic and political situation, which national actors

can have some impact on. Local actors are unable to make much impact on foreign policy and other international level issues, although they can affect responses at a local level.

Issues of definition and clarity

The research clearly identified that there is uncertainty and confusion about the scope and meaning of 'community cohesion', with 'community relations' being seen as more meaningful. This issue is exacerbated by differing views amongst various stakeholders over whether cohesion is simply about ethnic relations or about broader understandings of contact and forms of commonality that can span differing social and geographical situations and backgrounds.

Community cohesion and Prevent: Targeting certain communities?

Discussions about the focus of cohesion included perceptions that cohesion efforts were too focussed on ethnic minority communities, and not enough on predominantly white communities, with a real need and opportunity to encourage the involvement of a wider range of communities in cohesion activity. Similar concerns were expressed over Prevent, with national policy efforts to broaden the focus of anti-extremist work seen as being both positive and necessary.

Specific, 'single group' community organisations or venues are however a part of the community cohesion process in that they organise and encourage people, giving them the collective confidence to take the 'next step' and work with 'other' communities.

Co-ordination and resourcing

The research process identified clear and strong political leadership on cohesion and considerable efforts to develop effective local action. However, there were dilemmas identified concerning the most effective co-ordination mechanisms, both within local authorities, and between local authorities and other partner agencies. There is an issue of about the way in which cohesion agenda relates to equality and diversity.

There is concern about the difficult economic climate and the impacts on community cohesion work as a result of the recession. There are indications of the double jeopardy

that the economic situation presents for community relations – increasing economic hardship fuels social unrest and at the same time, there is the risk that the work that helps to support deprived groups and manage unrest is itself at risk. As indicated above, there are issues concerning the potential impact of real and perceived unfairness in resource allocation.

Engagement and communication

The research with communities revealed a gap between the views held by the local authority contributors around community engagement, and people in the communities. Local authority contributors were noticeably more aware and more positive about community cohesion work, whilst community members might be aware of a few targeted initiatives but would be unlikely to know about mainstreaming of community cohesion into services. There was a view expressed by some community contributors that local authorities do not deliver on promises. There were also indications that some people – those who live separate lives and covertly or overtly condone hostility towards people of other social groups - are not taking responsibility for addressing these issues and their impact on community relations.

Measurement

The research process identified significant challenges and dilemmas around the meaningful measurement of progress on community cohesion and anti-extremism. There is a disjuncture between perceptions of professionals and those of community members on the ground, and what perception-based survey data says about areas.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Centre for Research in the Social Sciences at the University of Huddersfield is pleased to present the findings from the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) Pilot Community Cohesion and Prevent Evaluation. Local Government Yorkshire and Humber funded this research project in order to explore the work done by two case study local authorities (Bradford and Kirklees) regarding community cohesion, including progress made in the co-ordination and implementation of community cohesion related strategies, impact on neighbourhoods, and the role of strategic partners. This research builds both on the University of Huddersfield's ongoing research around community cohesion and on its ongoing relationship with local authority partners, including research, evaluation activity and training for elected members and officers.

The report begins with a review of current policy concerning both community cohesion and Prevent. The report then leads into providing background information concerning the socio-economic factors which have come to influence the localities of Kirklees and Bradford. This is followed by a section which details the challenges the changing ethnic composition presents to the respective local authorities and other stakeholders, such as the voluntary sector and the communities themselves. After this, the report focuses on presenting the structures, strategies and mechanisms implemented by both local authorities and their respective stakeholders. This section contains examples of good practice concerning community cohesion and Prevent. The section on implementation focuses on the efforts undertaken to date and the progress made both in terms of positive targeted gains and critique concerning the impressions of frontline staff and the members of the community themselves. The section on key themes explores five issues identified from the research data. The key themes are as follows: Issues of definition and clarity; Community cohesion and Prevent: Targeting certain communities? Co-ordination and resourcing; Engagement and communication and Measurement.

1.2. The research took place from November 2009 – March 2010, and used a multi-method approach involving:

- Interviews with local authority and key partner policy makers, officers, and front line staff (20 interviews).

- Research by people working in the communities, including youth workers, housing workers, and community workers, with community members (33 interviews and 7 focus groups[2]).
- Analysis of local authority strategies (13 strategies).

The research addresses the extent to which community cohesion is embedded in the strategies and front line work of the local authorities and their main partners. It explores the understanding that front line workers and communities have of the work that their local authority and its partners are doing to build better community relations, and identifies suggestions for improvement. It identifies cases of good and interesting practice, as well as barriers to community cohesion. It provides a conclusion which draws together some of the key aspects of the report, and which provides numbered links to previous sections of the report. The research has also created a sector-led improvement mechanism, which will complement existing models, and which is grounded in local experiences and realities.

The case studies that have been chosen for this pilot evaluation are very specific in terms of their history, demographic characteristics and location. In addition, the community research sample was chosen primarily to gain material from the more disadvantaged parts of both localities, because of a need to develop understanding of the issues in these areas. A larger, more representative sample would of course be required in order to produce findings and an improvement toolkit which could be applied universally across localities in the UK.

The research took place over a very specific period of time, and significant changes were made to the policy environment shortly after the completion of the research. Specifically, the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) was abolished by the new government in May 2010 and National Indicators have also subsequently been abolished; details are available via http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/localgov/audit/.

[2] Two deprived localities per local authority were selected according to the Place Survey (Dewsbury, Heckmondwike, South Bradford and Keighley), plus research was done with the following communities: Pakistani and Indian women, Pakistani men, Kurdish community members, young people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and older people (white and Minority Ethnic).

It is important to note that some of the language used in the direct quotations may be offensive to some people, but it reflects what was said by some community representatives.

2 POLICY OVERVIEW

2.1. Community cohesion emerged as a governmental policy priority in the wake of the violent disturbances in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in the summer of 2001. The independent inquiry team headed by Ted Cantle (2001) identified the lack of community cohesion in all these areas, and the need to develop shared values and identities nationally through cross-ethnic contact and policy approaches that prioritise joint working and shared experiences across communities. This analysis was supported by local enquiries in Oldham (Ritchie, 2001) and Burnley (Clarke, 2001) that highlighted a reality of 'parallel lives' in their towns, and urged much greater effort by policy makers and communities to overcome ethnic segregation. Subsequently, community cohesion has been confirmed as integral to the government's Race Equality strategy (Home Office, 2005), with guidance to local authorities and other public bodies on how to promote and measure cohesion (Local Government Association, 2002; Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), 2009a). The importance of this focus was confirmed by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion (DCLG , 2007b), although the Commission's recommendation that there should be a presumption against 'single group' funding has not been accepted by central government.

2.2. Prevent is a key component of CONTEST, the government's counter-terrorism strategy. Launched initially as the 'Preventing Violent Extremism Pathfinder' activity in selected local authority areas (DCLG, 2007a), Prevent is now a comprehensive, national 'hearts and minds' educational programme that works with young people and communities across a variety of settings with the intention of preventing attractions to and involvements in violent extremism through activities aimed both at groups /communities and at vulnerable individuals. Funded by both the DCLG and the Home Office, this programme includes local authorities, the police service, the prison service and the Youth Justice Board, thus highlighting the importance of effective multi-agency arrangements in underpinning effective and coherent development of the Prevent programme. Whilst

primarily aimed at Al Qaida-influenced extremism, the scope of Prevent has now been widened to include right wing extremism; this is supported by the 'Connecting Communities' initiative (DCLG, 2009b). The relationship and synergy between community cohesion and Prevent has been actively debated since the latter programme was first introduced, and has recently been the focus of an Inquiry by the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee.

3 BACKGROUND TO THE LOCALITIES

3.1. Kirklees

3.1.1. The report by Cantle *et al* (2007) *A Review of community cohesion in Kirklees* provides a comprehensive overview of the development of community cohesion in the locality, as well as the key issues. To briefly summarise: Kirklees, which is situated in West Yorkshire, is the third largest of thirty-six metropolitan local authority districts in terms of area and the seventh largest in population. The district includes two major towns – Huddersfield and Dewsbury. It is characterised by a mixture of rural communities and small towns, each with a strong and distinct sense of local identity. The last century saw successive waves of immigration, first from Ireland and Eastern Europe, followed in the post war era by migrants from the Caribbean and South Asia, giving Kirklees today a diverse mix of cultures, traditions and faiths. Kirklees did not experience the disturbances erupting in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001. Key demographic and social issues highlighted in the Cantle report include:

- Kirklees is changing and its population is becoming more ethnically diverse.
- As is the case elsewhere, new communities are emerging in Kirklees – economic migrants from Eastern European EU Accession Countries and asylum seekers and refugees from the Middle East and Africa.
- Different communities are not evenly distributed across Kirklees. As measured by the Isolation Ration, Kirklees is the ninth most racially segregated local authority area in Great Britain. High levels of segregation are also associated with different social outcomes for different communities in Kirklees.
- While deprivation and disadvantage has a disproportionate impact on the BME population, in terms of overall numbers white working class communities are the

most deprived. Cantle *et al* (2007) found instances of disadvantaged, predominantly white communities in north Kirklees who felt very isolated and disenfranchised.

3.1.2. The more recently conducted Place Survey (2008/9) findings include:

- There has been an overall decrease in residents' perceptions of people from different backgrounds getting on well together (NI1) since 2006 (66.0% agree that this is the case, compared with 69.0% in 2006).
- The lowest scoring localities for NI1 are all in North Kirklees and there is a large gap between these localities (scoring 46.1% - 57.3%) and the South Kirklees localities (scoring 73.7% to 77.4%).
- Dewsbury and Mirfield locality is particularly low scoring for NI1 (46.1%), although the lowest scoring of all the wards is Heckmondwike in the Spen Valley locality (42.7%).

3.1.3. The findings from the Cantle report and the Place Survey are broadly echoed in the findings from the RIEP pilot, in a number of ways. Contributors discussed the diversity within the local population, and a polarisation of communities, with tensions in some localities, including between Iraqi Kurds and Eastern Europeans, Eastern Europeans and Pakistani Muslims, and Caucasians and Pakistani Muslims. Contributors also discussed the concern that right wing groups target these deprived communities in order to exploit the fears of the residents and further foment conflict and antagonism, for example one interviewee said that *'The [far right party] raise[s] polarisation and division within these areas'* (Faith Sector Representative). The drivers for community cohesion work are not only negative however, but include those that are driven by a positive vision for the locality. Indicative quotes are as follows:

> *'We were very directly affected by the 7 July bombings...people's houses being kind of checked out and then the arrests that kind of happened after, so we had a very direct experience of that kind of home grown bomber kind of scenario and the impact on communities'* (Local Authority Manager).

> *'We have had a series of incidents…concerns about... you know, concerns about media coverage, concerns around arrests and convictions on terrorism related*

charges and arrests and acquittals and concerns about both of those in terms of the impact on cohesion. Concerns about the whole national coverage of the Shannon Matthews, you know the murders at the Dewsbury station and in Crow's Nest Park, and I would say that the Place Survey was done when a number of those trials and the media coverage was going on. So I think the issue about concerns about managing tensions and a sense that there's strong potential within Kirklees for tension to escalate and therefore the need to prevent that. I say that at the same time as there being positive value driven drivers about people getting on. So I don't think... it's not just the straight forward analysis of social control to stop riots, I think it's much more complex than that and there's much more positive views around that' (Local Authority manager).

3.2. Bradford

3.2.1. Bradford is the 4th largest metropolitan district local authority in the country, situated in West Yorkshire. As of the 2001 UK census, Bradford had a population of 467665 (of which 366,641 people were white, 67,995 people were of Pakistani heritage, and 12,504 were of Indian heritage). Bradford has the youngest, fastest growing population outside London.[3] The Office of National Statistics Regional Trends report, published in June 2009, showed that most of Bradford suffers from the highest levels of deprivation in the country.

3.2.2. The Place Survey (2008/9) revealed that Bradford scores well on a number of national indicators (including civic participation in the local area). Community cohesion scores are similar to those in Kirklees:

- 65% of people across Bradford District believe people from different backgrounds get on well in their local area (against an average of 71% in Metropolitan Authorities).
- This figure drops to 55% in Bradford South and 53% in Keighley.

3.2.3. The community cohesion issues facing Bradford, as raised by research contributors, include those relating to demography – specifically the changes associated with new communities – and politics, notably issues relating to extremism, with a lot of worry raised

[3] http://www.investinyorkshire.com/Key-Locations/Bradford.aspx visited 15.03.2010

about the rise of the far right. *'On one side we've got Islamic or Muslim or whatever you want to call it and on the other end we've got I don't know what the term is for [far right] type groups'* (local authority officer). Similarly: *'there are people who live in certain parts of the district who would happily erect a fence around themselves and keep everyone else at bay, that's clear.''* (Voluntary Sector Organisation representative). Overall, the picture provided by a local authority officer is as follows:

> *'This is a low wage, low skilled economy in Bradford, so you already have quite a fragile base in terms of… We are very aware we've got a growing population, you know, outside London the fastest growing in the country, we need… The thing Bradford needs is to attract some high quality employers, yes, and employment in the districts, but we've got to have the skills to be able to mesh up… We have a high population in that number, so it's a worrying time. It's like I said to you earlier, it's not about maybe making things better, and it's about holding them together in certain places, stopping them getting worse'.*

3.3. Key challenges for both localities

3.3.1. There was evidence of deep social divisions around ethnicity, faith, and territory in parts of both Kirklees and Bradford district, concerning issues such as deprivation and a lack of amenities, criminal activity and drug use. A community contributor in Dewsbury for example said that: *'When people talk about disengagement and disenfranchisement and disempowerment they need to come here and speak to the people who see it'*. Areas such as Frizinghall in Bradford are seen as ghettos by some white people because *'Asian people prefer to live with their own kind'* (community member, Bradford). Social marginalisation is felt acutely by some sections of the minority ethnic communities, for example the Kurdish contributors in Kirklees who feel that as a community they are targeted and victimised. In addition, language barriers amongst Eastern European immigrants were identified as blocks to social cohesion.

3.3.2. The research with community members demonstrated a substantial amount of racism in some areas, with the active promotion of racism, for example there were reports of shops selling materials written by extremist groups in one locality. There was also evidence of other forms of abuse, including homophobic and transphobic abuse, sexual

harassment, class related abuse and more generic violence, which in some cases impacted severely, for instance one locality was seen as 'no go' by one of the contributors. Examples of prejudice and its impacts include:

> *'The thing about Islam if you're a different colour I would not step foot on the moor to be honest with you it's not that they're racist I don't think I think they are just like anti every thing well they are anti every thing, they're like animal[s] and [it is seen as] their territory. I think one family of Asian people tried to move on they got their windows put through. "Pakis go home" sprayed on their doors. Someone even went to the extreme and set their house alight'* (Young person 1, Kirklees)[4].

> *'They don't get on, you are having a laugh, they're all bullies, they pick on every one just because they can. If you're not in their clique, not their friend and you don't hang around with them you're a "slag, a scrubber, a bitch", every name under the sun I have been called I've been beaten up god knows how many times, just because I stuck up for my self. If you stick to your self they tend to leave you alone'* (Young person 2, Kirklees)

There seems to be a tendency for community members to present their community as close knit and themselves as unprejudiced, at the same time as demonstrating overtly prejudiced views. For example:

> *'People are different for a reason and if they don't like other people that are different to them then they are really sad and I pity them. Its like the Wednesday group its called Wilton Group and we got told not to come back to the group as the chavs dint like us and I don't think that is fair. Why should they get the whole centre to their self when they just fuck every thing up and vandalise the centre. Its getting to the point now that we're cleaning their mess up. If you won't do something about it, lock them all up, they're a drain on society. And they're taking our youth workers off us as they take all their time up'* (Young person 3, Kirklees)

3.2.3. There is a clear disparity in the perception of community cohesion and the concept of community – who belongs and who is relegated to the periphery, with communities

[4] Community researcher's spelling kept intact on purpose.

being separate. For example young person number 2 (Kirklees) attended the local rugby club and participated in the team. He appreciated this because he interacted with people he already knew and got to know them better, but there was no reference to interacting with members of other communities.

4 STRUCTURES

4.1.Kirklees Overview:

4.1.1. Kirklees Metropolitan local authority was one of the first local authorities to recognise the importance of building cohesion between its diverse communities following the disturbances in northern towns in the summer of 2001 (Cantle, 2007). It was selected by the Home Office to become a Community Cohesion Pathfinder and has demonstrated its commitment by going on to developing a wide-ranging programme of initiatives tackling priority issues across Kirklees (Cantle *et al* 2007). The Community Cohesion strategy built on and extended the existing Community Cohesion Action Plan (which was not necessarily closely coordinated) and it was launched in 2008. Both community cohesion and Prevent are dealt with under the Local Strategic Partnership Board, and details of the structures can be found in the local authority plans. There was also the establishment of the high level Community Cohesion Partnership Board and its subsequent slimming down plus the five thematic partnership groups. There are designated staff dealing with community cohesion at both strategic and front line levels within the local authority. There seems to be a general paucity of training specifically about community cohesion within the local authority but there are other less formal/designated routes to including community cohesion in local authority training, and the local authority also provides training in this area to external agencies.

4.1.2. Community cohesion is a priority for Kirklees local authority and for its partner organisations, given the centrality of key National Indicators to the external assessment of the local authority, as well as a strong value-driven commitment to community cohesion amongst a number of players. A number of community cohesion linked indicators (namely NI1, NI2, NI5, plus a local indicator) are also included within the Kirklees Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Comprehensive Area Assessment report (2009) also highlighted community relations as an area for improvement (although it is not red flagged). The

importance of community cohesion was emphasised by contributors to the research, particularly those operating at a strategic level; the Prevent agenda is also seen as important, but less of a priority. Contributors flagged up the overlaps between different agendas, including the importance of equality and diversity for community cohesion and Prevent work.

4.1.3. Part of the remit of this research was to address the ways in which community cohesion and Prevent are integrated into local authority and partner strategies. Some of the partner agency strategies encompassed both Bradford and Kirklees; notably the West Yorkshire Policing Plan 2008-2011, which is integrated with other strategies such as the Local Area Agreement (LAA) as well as the NIs. The West Yorkshire Policing Plan refers primarily to the National Community Safety Plan, Crime Strategy and Public Service Agreements (PSAs) 2008/2011 and it includes PSA 23 'Make Communities safer' as well as targets relating directly to community safety, in particular the target to 'increase the proportion of residents who agree their local area is a place where people from different communities get on well together'. The other strategies will be addressed below in sections specific to the two local authorities.

4.1.4. Kirklees Strategies:

The Kirklees Local Area Agreement (LAA) has 'Safer Stronger Communities' as one of its four key themes, and within this the LAA discusses the five key themes of the Community Cohesion strategy. NI1 and other indicators are included, and there is also inclusion of some Prevent indicators such as 'knowledge and understanding of the drivers and causes of violent extremism and the Prevent objectives', but others are not overtly included. Community cohesion and Prevent objectives are partially addressed in the high level Sustainable Community Strategy 'Vision 2012: A Blueprint for Our Future', (which was produced prior to the community cohesion strategy) including the objective to 'reduce all forms of discrimination and prejudice', but the strategy does not highlight community cohesion or Prevent, and it states that there will be areas for revision in the next version.

The Community Cohesion Strategy 'Shaping Our Future Together: Kirklees Community Strategy,' which was developed by Kirklees Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership or LSP) and launched in 2008, sets out five themes pulling together the practical actions to

make a difference to people's lives regarding community cohesion. It is tied into the national agenda (p 23) following the Cantle report (2007), and the government White Paper 'Strong and Prosperous Communities' both of which emphasise the importance of community cohesion at a local level. It includes NI1 and the Committee on Integration and Cohesion objectives (valuing diversity, rights and responsibilities, equal opportunities, commonality, bridging across communities, civility) for example:

- respect for a range of traditions, shared values and civic responsibilities (p. 8)
- tackling underlying inequalities (p. 8, p. 11)
- reducing domestic abuse, and racist and homophobic incidents (p. 12)
- development of shared locality based actions (p. 8).

The Community Cohesion strategy also addresses the Prevent agenda in a number of ways. Prevent is incorporated into community cohesion as strand five – 'managing tensions and high risks'. The strategy includes work on partners having a responsibility to tackle causes of violent extremism (p. 9), and supporting partner organisations in improving understanding of the causes of tensions. The strategy has developed via thematic based action plans such as developing a citizenship curriculum for primary and secondary schools to include community cohesion (p. 14), citing of schools facilities to encourage different communities to mix (p. 14), targeted programmes to increase diversity of people doing sports (p 15), and under theme 5 (Preventing and managing tensions in high-risk areas) developing a multi-agency approach to collecting community intelligence and feedback (p. 17). The Community Cohesion Action Plan themes 1-5 (which is a separate document) implements the above, including for example:

- Dream schemes – rewarding young people for improving their estates.
- A new programme of community based workshops enabling residents to find common ground and increase mutual understanding.
- Development of local citizenship plan for madrassahs.
- The facilitation of 'Difficult Debates' between people of different backgrounds.
- Various interventions to support integration of Migrant communities such as flagging access to ESOL and capacity as key issue.
- Working to establish a reference group of key community representatives. supporting/overseeing and consulting communities re Prevent and community cohesion work
- Providing training for youth workers in conflict resolution.

- Developing the Prevent agenda with a focus on younger people and work with younger people at risk of gun/knife crime.

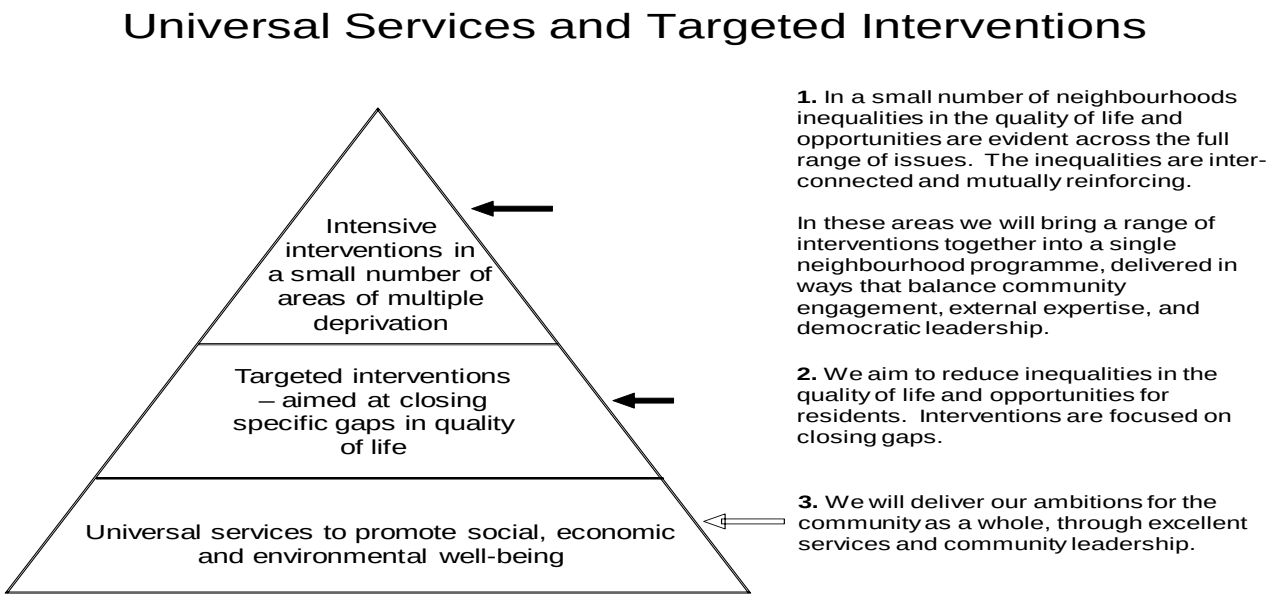
Community cohesion and Prevent are partially integrated into local authority middle level strategies such as 'Equality and Diversity: An enabling framework for treating everyone fairly and valuing diversity.' For example, knowledge of – and engagement with – diverse communities, is part and parcel of equalities work.

Strategies in Kirklees appear well integrated overall, with a strong Community Cohesion Strategy that includes five themes (such as leadership and communication) and action plans.

4.1.5. Kirklees: Structures and Mechanisms

Community cohesion in Kirklees is run via the Kirklees Partnership and uses the following model which was adopted in September 2009:

Table 1: Kirklees local authority's model for planning community cohesion work



From: Revised Cohesion Approach: Draft Sept. 2009

The intensive interventions are locality based, with a shift towards a ward-based structure. For instance a package of initiatives is currently being developed for Dewsbury, and these are developed in conjunction with mainstreaming mechanisms (five action plans plus

embedded strands are brought together in a composite action plan, with imaginative, accessible reporting mechanisms and monthly updates for the local authority leader). Work is driven via partnership approaches, and within the local authority. The local authority has developed joint impact assessments (equalities and cohesion). One contributor noted that the local authority has a weakness around systematic impact measurement, and that it has recently developed a pro-forma with questions about National Indicators 1 and 2 for use in assessing impact. Contributors saw the partnership approach to community cohesion, and the presence of senior statutory agency representatives on the partnership board, as being important.

Box 1: Kirklees Mainstreaming of Community Cohesion

…what I've been trying to drive through is that we have doing structures as well as strategic structures and to try and get the ownership and both local and senior levels and so hence the sort of multi-agency and also absolutely that it has to be multi-agency and so trying to make sure that the multi-agency partnership approach is taken to the workshops on the ground with frontline workers and with... and when I say frontline workers that would include representatives from mosques and voluntary and community organisations as well as the ownership at the more strategic level…[we have done] a series of briefings to management teams that have taken place since the strategy was introduced so from an early stage there's been briefings to what was the PCT, Kirklees neighbourhood housing, the council's senior management team, to the Kirklees federation of tenants' and resident's association staff so that's just an example of... also integrating the National Cohesion Toolkit for impact assessment and the Quality Impact assessment so that they're now one document for the council…we think the national community cohesion impact assessment toolkit is very good and we wanted that to be used but we just tweaked it slightly, we took that to the board and whilst they liked it they felt that people wouldn't complete that and the equality impact toolkit so we then met with our equalities colleagues and we integrated them together and also have looked at developing a pocket toolkit which hasn't been rolled out yet and much simpler version (Community Cohesion Manager)

4.1.6. Contributors from Kirklees discussed the consultation process for the Community Cohesion Strategy as well as public consultation about the detail of the action plans, which was felt to be a useful and productive way of engaging people. There is also a sustained

effort to engage with the various communities, as indicated by the following quote from a local authority manager:

> *'we've got 59 mosques for example in Kirklees, which is massive... we've produced for example a directory of all the mosques in Kirklees because there are that many, but then going below that and looking at the different, I know it's not called denominations but I find it easier to call it that because … understanding why and what the differences were between some of those and it makes absolute sense why some of them don't talk to each other, so we're doing faith mapping, we've started with the Muslim faith and then there's quite a comprehensive work around that which enables and helps our understanding and then we're going onto the Christian faith and we're just kind of building that knowledge up and producing that as well for people as a tool'*.

There is recognition amongst strategic level staff that work is ongoing, particularly around implementation of the community cohesion agenda.

4.1.7. The contributors at a strategic level indicated that partners in Kirklees have felt an obligation to respond to the Prevent agenda, but a greater emphasis has been placed on the cohesion agenda, due to a number of factors including the recognition of the historically divisive nature of the Prevent agenda:

> *'…the potential for Prevent to have a negative impact on cohesion work**…**I mean everything that is said nationally agenda in terms of you know, suspicion, concern about the real agenda, the impact on communities, particularly on Muslim communities, labelling of Muslim communities as terrorists, the council only wanting to talk to us because they want to spy on us, all of those things, concern about policing, concern about stop and search. So in sort of terms of trust particularly between council officers, police officers and the community'* (Community Cohesion Manager)

The structures supporting Prevent are clearly in place in Kirklees, including the Gold and Silver groups (Gold provides strategic direction and overview and has senior representation from all statutory stakeholders and Silver provides implementation), a

Prevent Round Table and Reference Group, intelligence sharing mechanisms which enable a quick response to incidents, work with the Counter-Terrorism Unit, the Channel process, and the informal reference to NI 35. There has not been consultation per se, but there have been briefings for elected Members and political groups.

There has been mainstreaming of Prevent work within the daily business of the Police, including Neighbourhood Policing Teams. As a senior Police Officer said:

> *'we have weekly or bi-weekly tactical intelligence assessments which are primarily around crime but we have the daily national community tension team reports and then we obviously have feed in to the daily report mechanism so as and when things are not going right then that's where we direct and indicate that we want a more structured planned approach to what we're doing with that community. I mean I suppose our Neighbourhood Policing Teams. I mean effectively our Neighbourhood Policing Teams are all about, I mean they've probably done... but I bet you when you go and ask them they wouldn't put it this way they won't say we're all about cohesion but they are about visible, accessible, approachable, uniformed staff on the streets, working for the neighbourhoods to solve their problems locally, making lives better'*.

4.1.8. To summarise, substantial work concerning community cohesion, and to a degree Prevent, is taking place in Kirklees. There appears to be a strong understanding of local communities, and developed structures for engagement, which have informed work around both community cohesion and Prevent. The main areas of challenge appear to be around, firstly, the ways in which different agendas overlap (for example the strategy that the Community Cohesion Board may develop and those of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP)), and secondly, implementation, including balancing work at a local level with broader interventions. There appears to be an issue about roles and responsibilities concerning community cohesion and Prevent; it is not always clear which bodies and individuals are responsible for the agendas and for implementing the different aspects of them.

4.2. Bradford overview:

4.2.1. Bradford has a long and proud history of welcoming diverse communities and consequently has had to grapple with many issues relating to new communities settling in Bradford, such as the provision of halal school meals, and providing access to services. The research found that community cohesion is seen as an important priority in Bradford local authority, and contributors reported that it is taken seriously as a cross-party issue. Community cohesion and engagement has had a lot of focus in Bradford for many years, since the 1995 disturbances and the 2001 disorders. A strategic level Police contributor reported that:

> *'After '95 we started to build up more neighbourhood level meetings and management structures up to the present day where now have Ward Officer Teams and a host of other engagements schemes such as the Faiths Forum. We are now looking at mainstreaming the work better and reconfiguring the strategies to enable frontline staff to engage with community cohesion. We have also configured police locality boundaries to manage council wards with neighbourhoods within this – easier where smaller neighbourhoods – developing engagement etc. We have also trained interpreters in order to engage'* (Police representative).

Bradford Strategies:

Box 2: The Big Plan and Community Cohesion

THE BIG PLAN

for the Bradford district 2008-2011

Our Sustainable Community Strategy

We recognise that certain forces can threaten the strength of communities and their ability to respect and live alongside each other. These include:

• ignorance and prejudice about different ways of life and culture

• feelings that some communities are being favoured with resources or services compared to others

• the tension between groups that results from these perceptions of disadvantage, unfairness and difference

• poverty, and economic, social or cultural isolation which can

lead to people feeling alienated from mainstream life
• a lack of opportunity to experience and understand what we have in common as people in families, communities of the district and as citizens of a modern multicultural country
• providers who plan and deliver services in ways which are insensitive to people's needs and identities
• threats of violent extremism and anxiety caused by the local impact of international relations.

Cohesion and inclusion will grow out of:

• communities being strong and self-confident in their identity, and respectful, tolerant and at ease with people from different communities and neighbourhoods around them
• public places and services which are accessible to all and ensure equality of opportunity, with chances for all people to influence decisions which affect their lives
• a narrowing of the gap between the most disadvantaged and the rest by action to distribute the benefits of economic and social development more evenly across the district.

4.2.2. Community cohesion and Prevent related indicators are embedded in high level local authority and partnership plans, including the police and housing agencies. The Big Plan for Bradford District 2008-2011 (the Sustainable Community Strategy) includes cohesion and equality as one of four identified challenges in the locality and refers directly to NI1 with performance indicators supporting this (for example there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the contribution of different individuals and different communities). The Committee on Integration and Cohesion indicators are also addressed, including valuing diversity, rights and responsibilities, equal opportunities and bridging across communities. Prevent included within community cohesion and is alluded to indirectly: 'we recognise that certain forces can threaten the strength of communities and their ability to respect and live alongside each other, including ignorance and prejudice about different ways of life and culture'. Most Prevent objectives – for example knowledge and engagement of marginalised communities – are embedded throughout the document, but the development of a risk-based Preventing violent extremism plan is not evident. Narrowing the gap (addressing inequalities) is seen as central in Bradford – clearly this is important to the Prevent agenda.

The Big Plan for Bradford District 2008-2011 is supported by the Bradford District Partnership (LSP) Stronger Communities Partnership Delivery Plan (version 2 September 2009) which includes a range of NIs such as NI1, NI17 (perceptions of anti-social behaviour) and NI23 (perceptions that people in the areas treat each other with respect and consideration) and NI140(fair treatment by local services). It does not address Prevent directly but the activities outlined under the Neighbourhoods and Reassurance Delivery Group include a wide range of relevant actions, such as improving data sharing at a local level. There are clear implementation structures and a range of delivery mechanisms in place, such as work around improving the capacity of the voluntary and community sector to deliver services to the most vulnerable groups, and targeted development work with particularly marginalised groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and refugees and asylum seekers.

The secondary-level plans differ in the extent to which they include community cohesion and Prevent. For example 'Forward Together: An intergenerational approach for Bradford District' maps onto both NI1 and Committee on Integration and Cohesion objectives, for example an emphasis on joint working between older and younger people and on good relations between them. The Equality and Diversity Strategy implicitly supports NI1 objectives with a strong focus on people from different backgrounds having similar opportunities, as well as supporting various other NIs including 4, and 17. It also supports the Prevent objective of knowledge and engagement with marginalised communities. However, the integration of community cohesion and Prevent is less thorough than is the case with higher level strategies in some cases. For example, the Allocations Policy 2009-12: A Choice Based Letting Scheme for Social Housing in Bradford District ties into the cohesion element of the Big Plan including building resilience for communities, but the focus is more on service provision to vulnerable groups than on cohesion or Prevent.

4.2.3. Bradford: Structures and Mechanisms:

In Bradford, work around community cohesion was historically structured via the LSP, 'Bradford Vision', which used to be independent but which has now been replaced by Bradford District Partnership (BDP), which sits within the local authority. Community cohesion work is driven by the LAA (where community cohesion is one of the block

indicators) and Comprehensive Area Assessment. There are 12 main BDP partnerships and the Safer Communities Partnership and the Stronger Communities Partnership (which deal with Prevent and community cohesion respectively) are amongst these.

It is worth noting that the local authority has viewed community cohesion as everybody's business and hence has not taken a centralist didactic approach to the co-ordination of community cohesion work in the district, although relevant aspects have been mainstreamed into local authority work for many years. The Community Cohesion Framework was in the process of going through the Executive at the time of the research, the finalisation of the strategy was dependent on the discussions taking place between the political groups. There are some mainstreaming structures in place as well as the production of a monthly return for the local authority leader on Community Cohesion. There are designated staff at both strategic and front line levels within the local authority.

4.2.4. The political sensitivities of the Prevent agenda are particularly marked in Bradford, with a stated need to focus on strong and resilient communities rather than Prevent per se. As a senior manager says:

> *'as a local authority our key drivers is to take our communities with us on the journey. So not to do Prevent through them but actually involve them as active stakeholders. And we've worked hard with our partners to get that message across and the police have been very supportive of that approach. And we have not even called our funding stream Prevent, we've called it around capacity building within communities. For both round one and two we've actually focused on giving the money to communities'*.

The structures supporting Prevent work are clearly present in Bradford, including the Gold and Silver groups and sub groups, and close working arrangements with the local police, including monthly meetings between neighbourhoods and neighbourhood policing teams. There is informal reference made to the NI 35 indicators. Local authority representatives stated that they were explicit about the objectives for the funding. These related to all of the Prevent National Indicators sub-indicators (challenging violent extremist ideology and supporting mainstream voices, disrupting those who promote violent extremism and supporting the institutions where they are active, supporting individuals who are being

targeted and recruited to the cause of violent extremism and increasing the resilience of communities to violent extremism and addressing the grievances that ideologues are exploiting). For example, there has been work around developing a tool kit for developing excellence in mosques, work with schools, and a diverse range of community groups.

4.2.5. To summarise, Bradford local authority has prioritised aspects of the cohesion agenda, including those concerning equality, and has developed structures and mechanisms to support delivery of the cohesion agenda together with the range of other agendas with which it engages. Community cohesion related NIs are widely evident in high level local authority strategies, but the production of a Community Cohesion Strategy per se has been delayed due to ongoing discussions amongst elected members. Prevent is seen as a very sensitive and potentially inflammatory initiative for the local authority and its partners, so that whilst structures are in place to identify and address issues around violent extremism, other aspects of the Prevent agenda have been absorbed into the wider community cohesion one. The view in Bradford has been that there needs to be a whole communities approach and community cohesion is a better base to ground Prevent work, as it can address the determinants of extremism such as community grievances and inequalities rather than treating it as a single issue and a separate stream of work.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. It is important to point out that in the eyes of community members, more general service provision (such as housing and crime reduction) is part and parcel of good community relations work. There was a considerable amount of material from the research with community members regarding general service provision, most of which is outside of the scope of this report. However, key concerns outlined by some contributors from both localities were with housing (especially run down estates or housing that is left empty for long periods of time), safety and crime reduction (particularly control of drug dealing), the cleanliness of neighbourhoods, provision of general facilities on the estates, issues of anti social behaviour, and problems with victims of harassment being moved off estates rather than the perpetrators being moved. There is awareness amongst some community members of the efforts that both local authorities are making to support diversity concerning race, ethnicity, faith and other aspects of diversity such as sexual orientation and age.

5.1.2. In terms of the development of infrastructure that supports community cohesion and Prevent work more broadly, neighbourhood wardens and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), were particularly welcomed by a number of community members[5]. The development of community-specific infrastructure is also important, for example the LGBT Network being linked into local authority community cohesion work. There is currently a substantial amount of activity taking place concerning community cohesion, and to a lesser extent Prevent, within both Bradford and Kirklees localities. Contributors discussed work around capacity building within a range of communities, creating neutral spaces where issues can be addressed, working on issues of common interest, youth work and diversionary activities for young people, positive work concerning gender and the inclusion of women, myth busting, and finding ways to demonstrate that individuals and communities are valued. Initiatives have a real, positive impact on the ground for example the work being done in the Thornhill Lees and Savile Town allowed both communities to interact with one another and dispel some preconceived ideas:

> *'Some of the women from Thornhill Lees had a fear of Savile Town and of Muslims and they would ask funny questions initially but when it had been explained to them they say "you don't do anything different from what we do in church and you've got the same issues as we've got in our community"'* (community member, Dewsbury)

There have been a range of targeted initiatives in both localities, which will be listed by locality.

5.1.3. Kirklees

- Twinning programmes (schools) for example at madrassah in Batley and Heckmondwike Grammar school.
- Sessions on internet safety and assisting parents to monitor children on the internet.
- Activities such as a gardening event in Mirfield to foster interaction with the deprived neighbouring area of London Park.
- The Over Fiftys' Ladies Club in Savile Town.

[5] Although of course the most disenfranchised people may not welcome these, and one young person remarked that he could not go to a particular locality because the police were there all the time.

- A barbeque held in a local park at an event supported by the community cohesion team in tandem with a mosque.
- International Women's Day being used to support community cohesion.
- Myth busting in Dewsbury after the 7/7 bombings, with debates about Christianity and Islam and also lunches and trips to Parliament House.

There are a number of examples of good targeted interventions in Kirklees including:

Boxes 3-4: Good targeted interventions in Kirklees

An Asylum Support Service has been established to assist asylum seekers of which a large portion come from Kurdistan. It involves the dispersal of the Kurdish community. The community is housed and assist them into education, employment and a new life. Another aspect I lead on is Engagement. This involves keeping in touch with new and emerging communities and listen to their needs and direct them to the appropriate service. The Kurdish culture and history is recognised. The local authority celebrated the Kurdish New Year last year [Newroz]. This was held at Birkdale high School. The Halabja commemoration took place last year – the Kurdish holocaust. This incident took place in 1988 at the end of the Iran-Iraq war. The local authority supported the procession last year and started from Huddersfield library and ended at the town centre (Community Cohesion Project Officer)

…working at the front line an engage with the community on the fringes of society. Activities and events which focus on those who are not engaged on a continuous basis, e.g. the young and the old, it proves constructive to engage with members of the community who are not the usual suspects, for example the Museums and Galleries Service with the Faiths Forum run the Holocaust Memorial Day. This takes place every year in January. This involved the establishment of meals which were referred to as 'Foods for Thought'. At these events survivors of the Holocaust and an individual from the community who had suffered persecution in their life attended. Invited guests were from the community which represented the pupils at schools, the elderly, the faith community, etc. This represented a transmission of ideas and experiences and transformed the education about such atrocities into a reality (Representative of Kirklees Faith Forum)

5.1.4. Bradford

Targeted community cohesion and Prevent work in Bradford includes the following:

- Twinning programmes (schools).
- The Mela, the Pink Picnic and the Caribbean Carnival.
- Refugee week.
- Trip to Auschwitz for mainly young Pakistani men who were seen as being at risk of extremism.
- Schools Linking Network.
- Local authority support for Gay Pride.
- The Tea Party Project and other such as 'cook and eat' which bring people of different ethnicities together (based in community centres).
- A Jewish Life exhibition held at a Muslim community centre in Bradford, with national educational resources, held to demonstrate good relations between the communities.

There are a number of examples of good or interesting practice, including the following:

Boxes 5-8: Good targeted interventions in Bradford

An individual placed a bid to support women of faith. 'Standing together to empower the participation of sisters'. This is not linked with the national Prevent programme in a formal way but it supported Prevent objectives - it allowed women to raise the concern that women have a voice and have a significant role to play. The women demonstrated negativity about Prevent and the event allowed them voice their skills and allowed them to develop their confidence. It included training courses concerned confidence, assertiveness and built towards leadership and civic engagement. This project was Prevent funded and while it is open to women of all ethnicities it focuses on women of faith because they wanted to put 'faith on the agenda'. There exists a strong representation of Muslim women within this project. Christian women are also involved (Front line worker, Bradford)

Interfaith meeting conducted once a month and involves a large number of people across the faiths and are involved in a Peace Prayer. An exhibition was held re the Jewish way of life. This was carried out at a time during significant troubles within Palestine. It allowed Muslims to appreciate the Jewish way of life and targetted the community and the schools within the community. This was held at the Khidmet Centre (Front line worker, Bradford)

Examples of twinning work:

1. A model UN Project meets regularly with 10 schools and represents Bradford in international competitions. This project focuses on justice, equality and race related issues. This project has been running for a year and the contributor hopes it will continue to run. This project is funded out of Prevent money. There are regular meeting with teachers asking for regular feedback; attitude surveys are conducted with the children both at the beginning and after the year. External evaluations are conducted to keep track of the work. The project demonstrates how young people are capable of tackling difficult issues and demonstrate a maturity to continue tackling difficult issues. They are capable of finding a common ground and then tackling the issues which may divide them. The age groups re Ambassadors: 14-19.

2. A theatre group involving two schools which have differing demographics. 30 children took part, with 15 from each school. They are examining what causes conflict and developing the play themselves. This will involve public and school performances. The theatre group involves facilitators who are experienced in this and approached by the One to One children's fund who provided the initial idea for this theatre group. Performance indicators for the impact of the Theatre group: The children are maintaining reflective journals and articles but no formal base line exists to evaluate the process. We are not able to measure outcomes at present because the project is still ongoing. The reflective practice is monitored every time they meet which was once a month but will increase as they approach the date on which they will perform (Front Line Officer)

5.1.5. Local statutory sector, community, and voluntary sector actors have little effect on the national policy and political situation (and its global and local impacts) but they have more ability to affect local and sub-local levels.

6.1 Issues of Definition and Clarity

The research indicated that there is a major issue with definitions of both Prevent and community cohesion. Prevent is problematic because of the historical focus on Muslim communities, so that *'as soon as they hear the words "Prevent" the shutters go up'* (Community Worker, Batley). There is a need to publicise the broadened scope of Prevent (to include all forms of extremism) and a need to *'keep remembering that, it's not about*

spying or getting people arrested it's about Preventing [violent extremism]. And for me that's why it is so tied into cohesion and inequalities because it's about tackling the grievances as well that then kind of, that people could then use and misuse to draw people into radicalisation' (Community Cohesion Manager Kirklees). With community cohesion, there was a widespread feeling that the term is 'civil servant-speak', and that 'community cohesion' as a term has no meaning to people in communities. The issue was discussed by a manager in Kirklees as follows:

> *'I do think that we need to focus on cohesion and I think we need to re-define what we mean by cohesion and take it away from institutes who are making business out of it and so on, and really bring it down to local people. And make it simple and let's just talk about being good neighbours. I think that will do a huge amount around community pride, around community spirit, relations, people feeling safe. All of that will come through as just being better neighbours than we currently are. I think at a strategic level I can see the sense of why we need to think about cohesion and the impact the circumstances have on cohesion, because if we're not looking out for it we will be hit by the consequences'*.

There is a lack of clarity about the relationship between Prevent and community cohesion – both the authorities in this study encompassed Prevent within community cohesion, broadening the scope to take a 'whole communities' approach (at least on paper), but discussions with a senior Police representative clarified the differences in remit:

> *'there's no two ways about it, it [Prevent] is part of a counter-terrorism strategy it's about a hugely violent criminal offences. And that's what PVE[6] is about and yes, it's got something to do with cohesion you can have that debate. But actually it's about violent extremism and that's the most serious crime that this country can encounter which goes way and above community cohesion if that makes sense?'*

There is also an issue about the way that the wider public may not be bought into the fundamental premise of community cohesion, for example:

[6] Preventing Violent Extremism.

> *'Communities consider this as an 'imposition' from on high. "The first barrier is the concept" because it invokes negativity in the minds of the communities who are targeted. Communities feel they are being forced to interact with communities they do not wish to interact with'* (Community Cohesion Project Officer Kirklees).

There is a further issue in that much of the work done under the community cohesion remit overlaps with other areas, including equality and diversity, and specific areas of service provision in particular for people who are vulnerable to extremism because of mental health issues.

A key issue is whether community cohesion is primarily about ethnic relations, which is certainly where its origins lie in the aftermath of the 2001 disturbances, or is actually about 'wider' understandings that also encompass geographical/territory barriers, and participation of marginalised groups such as LGBT communities or Traveller communities. The scope of community cohesion is not an either/or decision, as has been identified previously by the Cohesion Pathfinder funding and government guidance, but the data does suggest that clearer decisions need to be made and communicated regarding prioritisation and balance within local community cohesion strategies. This is not simply an issue of language and description, but more fundamentally about articulating the aim and purpose of community cohesion more clearly. A consistent message from professionals at all levels in relation to these issues of definition, language and prioritisation was that they want and need more training opportunities on community cohesion that allow them to explore these issues and help them to understand the approach of local community cohesion strategies – although it is important to note that Kirklees Council has received positive feedback on community cohesions training that it has run, which relates to the communication strand of the community cohesion strategy.

The scope of community cohesion is not an either/or decision, as has been identified previously by the Cohesion Pathfinder funding and government guidance, but the data does suggest that clearer decisions need to be made and communicated regarding prioritisation and balance within local community cohesion strategies. This is not simply an issue of language and description, but more fundamentally about articulating the aim and purpose of community cohesion more clearly. A consistent message from professionals at all levels in relation to these issues of definition, language and prioritisation was that they

want and need more training opportunities on community cohesion that allow them to explore these issues and help them to understand the approach of local community cohesion strategies. A helpful parallel was made by some respondents, who commented on how work on equality and diversity has been driven forward over the past two decades by staff training and awareness materials. There is also an instructive parallel with 'Prevent' work; whilst the approach taken on this agenda by central government has been controversial, it has had the effect of being clearer about aims and priorities, and this is now being backed up by information sessions and training at the local level, with these processes contributing to greater professional understanding of the aims of Prevent in contrast to community cohesion.

Overall, there is a need for clarification of the meaning and remit of community cohesion, its relationship to Prevent, and the scope of both. It is clear from many of the interviews with strategic and front line workers that they understand community cohesion as 'community relations' (both within and across identifiable 'communities') work, and this understanding may well offer routes towards more helpful and understandable definitions and language.

6.2. Community Cohesion and PREVENT: Targeting certain Communities?

The way in which community cohesion, and Prevent, work seems to be focused on ethnic minority communities is a major issue – and obstacle – for work in this field. In terms of community cohesion, there appears to be a need (driven by the communities) for a whole-community approach. There is a clear concern from respondents that communities that are predominantly white (especially marginalised predominantly white working class communities) have historically been given less prominence by community cohesion and Prevent work, and are now a key challenge for work in this area. As a senior Police representative said, '*Prevent is not just about one community, as its often portrayed, a lot of far right and ALF*[7] *activities are going on too'*. There is also some perception that the Muslim communities have unfair access to resources (Community worker, Batley). For example one of the community representatives from Keighley said that the local authority should address the imbalance of a disproportionate focus on assisting ethnic communities and seek to assist [predominantly] white communities as this creates the sense they are

[7] Animal Liberation Front.

being *'put to the back of the queue'*. The participant's frustration is further exemplified: *'We always go out of our way to look after everyone else [immigrants] and seem to neglect our own British citizens which causes more tension in doing this'*.

The problems with the focus of Prevent are recognised by the senior players in both local authorities, where steps have been taken to mitigate the 'blunt knife' approach that was perceived to have been the approach taken by central government and by some agencies in the past, for instance:

> *'[there were] some very crude responses which actually we saw here as doing more damage than good. And therefore we were quite careful distancing by the council and other local partners, from the national approach to Preventing Violent Extremism… it was overly focused on particularly young Muslims, which we saw as driving a lot of people deeper into themselves, away from their peers, into a more introverted position, which was damaging to the long-term interests of those individual and society as a whole'* (Senior participant, Kirklees)
>
> *'The Toolkit presented by the Police focused on Al-Qaida and was negative. The Police did insist they were not targeting the Muslim community but it did not appear to be the case. No mention was made of the [far right]. There are individuals and organisations who promote Islam as their core faith while committing atrocities, however they are in the minority and not representative of the wider Muslim community and as such, toolkits as presented by the Police are unhelpful... The contributions of Muslims need to be acknowledged in education and would resolve the tensions which exist within communities. Transform the perception of the hijab where it may allow the female to contribute more effectively'* (Representative of Kirklees Faith Forum) (Representative of Kirklees Faith Forum)

Both local authorities managed the interface between their local communities and central government, with interesting practice provided as follows:

Box 9: Example of local authority management of Prevent in a locality with large Muslim communities

'… there was a lot of anxiety around when the Contest strategy was announced and some of the publicity around it. And some of our communities were also kind of very worried about it, I mean you know, we'd had the 7 July stuff we'd just started to build that community, you know that community back up and they were being very strong and responding really effectively, the inter-faith networks were kind of standing behind the community. And this just felt kind of like a re-trenching you know, so in terms of being politically more acceptable we always and still maintain that it was part of our cohesion strategy and members felt more comfortable with that rather than it sitting as a big Prevent strategy it's all about the Muslim community, it's all about this, it did feel politically much more palatable. The other thing as well we had a massive debate politically around how far do you take this in terms of people's rights to be extreme and rights to kind of have quite extreme views and that very very productive kind of debate that you can have when people are being a little bit extreme. But so we did manage to get some political consensus but about when people are vulnerable and can then be used to radicalise them to much more violent extremism if you like, and when it spills out then that will have an impact on cohesion and even on crime' (Manager, Kirklees)

It is appreciated here that adjustments to the scope and remit of Prevent that were signposted by Department of Communities and Local Government Minister John Denham in December 2009, and the gradual roll-out of the 'Connecting Communities' Fund may both have impacted on this, but clearly these are communities under pressure, with some of them experiencing overt, far-right political agitation that is explicitly hostile to issues of equality, diversity and cohesion. The broadening out of the target groups was welcomed widely, because it avoided the resentment that can be fostered if resources are targeted at one group. However, there is still uncertainly about this within the front line services and communities, for example a front line worker said that she was unclear about whether Prevent funding was available for work around faiths other than Islam.

The limited impact to date of cohesion work on communities may reflect the lack of understandable cohesion aims and vision, and the implementation of it, identified above, and the issues of effective multi-agency co-ordination and prioritisation around community

cohesion (in contrast to Prevent) discussed below. Some respondents suggested that there is little interest in, or support for cohesion activity within some [predominantly] white communities; if so, this emphasises the need for more overt programmes of work that 'sell' the benefits of cross-community contact.

6.3. Co-ordination and resourcing

Respondents produced thoughtful material around how community cohesion strategies should be co-ordinated and by whom, and around how to integrate and measure community cohesion activity in relation to wider activity by Local Authorities and other agencies. There is considerable evidence of strong leadership from the highest levels within both Bradford and Kirklees local authorities, something that is widely welcomed by the front line and strategic officers as well as partner agencies such as the Police and some community members although there was some evidence that community members are not engaged with, or aware of this.

There are issues of co-ordination in three areas – multi-agency working, co-ordination within the Local Authorities, and funding of specific projects. In terms of multi agency working, some lack of clarity was identified over the respective roles of local authority, LSP and any multi-agency Community Cohesion Board that has been established. A contrast was identified with Prevent, where multi-agency relationships that necessarily underpin structures of Prevent Boards, and Gold and Silver co-ordination groups are established. The urgency of the Prevent agenda has clearly aided the development of these clear and effective multi-agency relationships, and it may well be that a greater focus and prioritisation of the multi-agency relationships around community cohesion is now needed:

> *'Bradford Vision was a Local Strategic Partnership. It was dynamic and assisted the communities by bringing them together and allowed for dialogue to take place. It created a space of what should be done within the district. It allowed for things to get done. This dynamism doesn't feel like it is there anymore and so the dialogue isn't present and this needs to return to assist understanding and tolerance and an appreciation for the diversity of our city'* (Representative of educational infrastructure organisation)

'Very good work being conducted, however this is fragmented- there is no overall guiding for partnership work' (Representative of Faith Forum, Bradford).

The second and related issue of co-ordination is within local authorities themselves, and it is something that is apparent to those working outside the local authority. There are complex debates around which part of a local authority should take responsibility for community cohesion. Bradford local authority is currently working on an 'embedded' model of cohesion, having moved away from a previous model of discretely funded cohesion project work. This is a very understandable approach, given the important need to 'mainstream' cohesion work and achieve ownership of it across the workforce and various departments of the local authority, but there did seem to be issues of co-ordination of practitioner understanding and measurement/evaluation at the front-line level, and the absence of a separate community cohesion strategy and designated actions, perhaps relating to issues of implementation for example:

'There have been better times where there was a lot more activity going on than there is at present' (Representative of educational infrastructure organisation).

'We need a more detailed and pragmatic vision of where we want to be in terms of race and culture in the future' (LGBT Community organisation representative)

'Community development could be a great cohesive force so if you've got your community developer workers you could programme it into them that the community centres carry out activities which reach more than one culture and so on and so forth so it's a... it can go... I think you could achieve more practical stuff by recognising it more and pushing it down to that level' (Community and Voluntary Infrastructure Organisation Representative, Bradford)

The issue of funding for community cohesion related posts/ projects is of crucial importance to the implementation of community cohesion initiatives and their success. Contributors – especially those on the front line and in the Community and Voluntary Sector – expressed a major concern about the impact of short term funding for projects that in some cases provide a lifeline for deprived communities. There has of course been substantial work done around funding for the community and voluntary sector community cohesion work, for instance in Kirklees the small grants fund for cohesion work and the

work associated with Theme 3 of the community cohesion strategy (Community, Faith, Voluntary Sector and Diversity). There is an issue with the use of Prevent funds in Kirklees – according to some community contributors, the local authority is holding onto the money and voluntary sector organisations cannot access it (community Worker, Batley) and there is also a problem with Prevent money being channelled through the Area Based Grant and it being up to the local authorities how they will spend the money (front line worker). There is also a need to 'act smart' regarding funding, given the current economic situation, so that:

> *'it's getting people to be aware when they commission services, you know, we don't actually have to pay out any more money we don't have to do anything else, what we have to do is emphasise this strategically, and even the narrow shifting of commissions and targets and reporting will actually have an impact but it's thousands of small scale, low level type decisions which impact that, so what you've got to do is get the strategic concept pushed down into the organisation and then outward'* (Community and Voluntary Infrastructure Organisation Representative, Bradford)

6.4. Engagement and Communication

Community engagement is part of the core work of any local authority, and engagement structures were in place in both Bradford and Kirklees. The community research demonstrated some concerns about Area Committees established for devolution and greater community involvement:

> *'They went through a process of making sure that Councillors were getting information down to the people. The council got money to do it at first but once they had their funding they pushed the community members to one side . . . The Area Committees have four people on them from the community but the Councillors make the decisions and they're [the community members] just there for there for show'* (Community Member, Dewsbury)

Research findings indicated that there is a need for government – and local authorities – to listen more fully to local people concerning the community cohesion and Prevent agendas. There were some indications that consultation may in some cases be rhetorical, for

example taking place after decisions have been made. This is something that is likely to contribute to consultation fatigue and the alienation of community members. There is also a clear need for designated posts within statutory organisations and for work with the community and voluntary sector concerning cohesion to be done as part of these, as *'we cannot do it on our own'* (Front line worker). Some groups expressed a need for better communication mechanisms to be developed between themselves and their local authorities – notably the Kurdish community and LGBT community in Kirklees.

As we show above, there is a considerable amount of good community cohesion activity taking place, organised and supported by a range of agencies. The research findings indicated a need to publicise this work more – especially because some community members expressed unhappiness and anger towards their local authority and its perceived lack of action, and then went on to express appreciation for cohesion-related services that are actually local authority funded. The publication of positive stories is significant to community cohesion (community Worker, Batley). One example of good communication is:

> *'… we don't actually put the results of the assessment on the web, we do a story-board. Yes, the story-board is a bit more user-friendly, it says what the issue was, what was done about it, who was consulted, what the outcomes were, and what we're trying to do as an organization is a story-board is more than an equality based issue, it was… we did them in response to the CPA[8] years ago, but it starts, you know, if we've done an Impact Assessment and we've changed the way we've done something to make it more equal, how has that impacted. So we're doing what the outcome of the Impact Assessment has, what difference it's made to somebody's life or people's lives'* (Officer, Bradford)

Better publicity of initiatives would have a number of inter-related benefits. Firstly, it would boost the confidence and esteem of the community members and professionals who have taken the first step and the 'risk' of participating in the work. Secondly, it would have a wider educational function by explaining the aims, content and terminology of cohesion to a wider audience, for instance, the parents/carers of young people taking part in programmes. Other professionals also need more positive examples to help them

[8] Comprehensive Performance Assessment, a performance management system which preceded the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA).

understand what cohesion is and what it has the potential to be. Lastly, these processes would all help to build momentum and a 'positive vibe' for cohesion that seems to have been somewhat sidelined by the focus on Prevent.

6.5. Measurement

The difficulty associated with measuring progress around community cohesion emerged as one of the key issues that statutory sector organisations face when working in the areas of community cohesion and Prevent. Local authority officers are in the process of developing work in this field, for example:

> '*that's certainly been an issue that we've looked at through the Comprehensive Area Assessment and that's seen as an area of improvement which is better capturing the impact. and ones about the cumulative impact of the strategy. So the specific interventions, looking at something simple like that two question thing, cumulative impact is obviously all of this stuff. And also to capture partner research, relevant partner research better… but in terms of the cumulative impact measurement it's trying to look at some of the other sources that are around and they are showing some tentative signs of improvement and also we've not had major, major sort of incidents since then so whether that has an impact or not who knows'* (Manager, Kirklees)

Considerable emphasis has understandably been placed on developing and analysing the results of the regular 'Place' surveys, and similar local surveys carried out by agencies such as the police service. However, a range of respondents expressed the view that the results of such surveys, which have identified quite negative messages in areas such as parts of North Kirklees, do not always tally with the assessments and experiences of practitioners on the ground. Conversely, some of the material from the community research is more negative than the picture provided by the Place surveys. For example:

> *'When we looked at the basket of indicators there wasn't necessarily a correlation between what our local intelligence was telling us about community tensions and relationships and what some of the basket of indicators for example educational attainment, kind of like high level areas, areas of high deprivation, didn't always kind of correlate, some of it did but some of it didn't'* (Manager, Kirklees)

Clearly, surveys are about perceptions, and so very open to influence by recent events, media coverage, or from 'taken for granted' attitudes, language and behaviour within communities. There are clearly issues here of what can and should be used as indicators of progress. Statistics of reported hate crime or racially-aggravated offences have to be seen in the context of long-term policy attempts to encourage more reporting of such incidents, so fuelling increases in such statistics. Nationally, debates about cohesion have stressed the importance of narrowing gaps between distinct ethnic or geographical communities in relation to key experiences, such as educational attainment, employment rates, and health experiences, but local authorities and their partners have only modest impacts on such indicators. Similarly, national policy approaches constrain the ability of local authorities to alter the ethnic and social make-up of individual schools, whether 'successful' or otherwise.

Respondent evidence around this issue suggests that more work could usefully be done at the local and regional level around more sophisticated ways of measuring and assessing 'progress' towards cohesion that is meaningful in relation to the specific local realities, and 'owned' by local practitioners. For example:

> *'I think the way cohesion is measured is very perception based, which in a sense doesn't help in really assessing how we do as an organisation or as a district, because it is so subjective and it is so prone to external variables. So I think the whole measure of cohesion needs to be looked at. …. I think it's because we're trying to measure something uniformly across the country, it doesn't have really much value. Whereas I think if we actually worked at a locality level and asked residents to identify how they would want to measure, what things are important to them, that would I think give a better indication of what people were experiencing day to day, and how they felt about themselves and their neighbourhoods and their communities. But then you've got the difficulty of trying to get aggregate picture of a large area then….. Cohesion is an outcome and it's the result of the sum of lots of different actions'* (Manager, Bradford)

Similarly, respondents expressed concerns over how 'success' in Prevent work can be measured, given that it may be a negative (the absence of any local terrorist plots or

incidents). One senior local authority contributor remarked that *'I think the Prevent Agenda is still too raw to establish a…too much wishful thinking about getting a really strong performance management system for Prevent at this stage, because I think it's still an agenda where people's understanding of what we're trying to effect and how to effect it'*. Academic evidence concerning the background and motivations of individuals who actually engage in Islamist or politically-motivated violent extremism highlights the range of social backgrounds and individual psychological factors involved as well as complex peer group processes, suggesting that agencies need to have a sophisticated and realistic understanding of 'building resilience' as a measure of Prevent success.

6 CONCLUSION AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

This study has looked at the challenges of implementing the community cohesion and Prevent policy agendas, and building strong and positive partnerships across agencies and communities to support that implementation, in two local authority areas, Kirklees and Bradford. A variety of senior officers and front-line workers from statutory and voluntary agencies, and community representatives have contributed to the process by helpfully giving their time to comment on progress to date, challenges and issues involved in the development of these policy agendas at the local level, and possible directions for the future. In recounting and analysing these views, and the policy documents that have underpinned the local processes of policy development, we hope this report provides useful insights, not only for the two areas examined, but agencies and communities further afield who are attempting to make positive progress around the cohesion and Prevent agendas. In support of that, we have produced both an Executive Summary that summarises the key findings from the Project, and a 'sector-led mechanism ' which suggests concrete ways of positively moving forward in local implementation. In this section we more briefly summarise key themes and issues identified, and indicate specific suggestions for further progress made to us by research respondents.

There is clear support for more cohesion work. A range of professional respondents and community members expressed the view that they and their communities wanted and needed more cohesion activity - more opportunities to meet and work with people and agencies from 'other' communities (5.1.2). Within this was the view that cohesion activity should be more ambitious and more courageous, and was supported by very positive evidence from cohesion events that had taken place. Some of those events or processes

had not been designed as ‘cohesion’, or badged as such, but had involved people coming together to work or socialise together, sometimes at ‘neutral’ venues.

Issues of Definition and Clarity

The research clearly identified that whilst there is support for work around these key policy areas, there is uncertainty and confusion about their scope and meaning (6.1). ‘Community cohesion’ is not seen as a helpful or understandable term, with ‘community relations’ seen as more meaningful. This is exacerbated by differing views over whether cohesion is simply about ethnic relations or about broader understandings of contact and forms of commonality that can span differing social and geographical situations and backgrounds. More training and opportunities for discussion were seen as productive ways forward here. Indicative recommendations include the following:

- Community cohesion to be inclusive of all communities and not focused primarily on ‘race’.
- The need to overcome operating in silos within local authorities in order to advance cohesion.
- A need for local authorities to ‘push harder’ concerning the cohesion agenda (into front line services).
- Promotion of equality is needed alongside efforts on cohesion.
- A need for more community cohesion work within schools, given the vital role that these play and the current extent of segregation.
- The importance of school twinning work and education generally to the agenda.

Community Cohesion and Prevent: Targeting certain Communities?

The discussions over the focus of cohesion included perceptions that cohesion efforts were too focussed on ethnic minority communities and not enough on predominantly white communities, with a real need and opportunity to encourage the involvement of a wider range of communities in cohesion activity (6.2). Similar concerns were expressed over Prevent, with national policy efforts to broaden the focus of anti-extremist work seen as positive and necessary. This demonstrates that there is a great deal of scepticism about policies that are perceived to target certain communities only, and much greater support for policy approaches seen to engage positively with all communities.

In terms of recommendations for improvements, most of those made by the community members related to generic provision, as noted above. One key point is frustration perceived by some at bias presented by the Police, who appear not to exercise their powers against law-breakers in a fair manner and appear to be discriminating according to the perpetrator's ethnicity. For example according to the perceptions of one research participant:

> *'The police need to do more and be able to arrest more people, regardless of the ethnicity…there needs to be some discipline and respect for the country, with people being made to abide by rules, not be let off because of culture, religion, colour etc. Everyone is the same'* (Community member, Keighley).

Indicative recommendations include the following:

- A need for robust equality and diversity policies and implementation mechanisms.
- A need for the positive contributions of the diverse Muslim communities to their local communities to be acknowledged more fully.
- A need for more work around visible inclusion.
- More resourcing for immigrants to learn English on arrival in the country.

Co-ordination and resourcing

The research process identified clear and strong political leadership on cohesion and considerable efforts to develop effective local action. However, there were clear dilemmas identified about the most effective co-ordination mechanisms, both within local authorities, and between local authorities and other partner agencies (4.1.5., 4.2.3). Kirklees highlights the issue of how a dedicated Cohesion Board or similar multi-agency body co-ordinates the cohesion work of the individual local authority and other agencies effectively, whilst Bradford's approach of 'embedding' cohesion promotes 'mainstreaming' of community cohesion.

Contributors expressed concern about the difficult economic climate and the impacts on community cohesion work as a result of the recession. One community cohesion front line worker in Kirklees discussed the double jeopardy that the economic situation presents for community relations – increasing economic hardship fuels social unrest and at the same time, there is the risk that the work that helps to support deprived groups and manage unrest is itself threatened.

A key underlying message from this positive support for cohesion, and the good examples of it expressed in this report, is that specific, 'single group' community organisations or venues are a crucial part of the process in that they organise and encourage people, giving them the collective confidence to take the 'next step' and work with 'other' communities (as well as being a venue for cross ethnic and social cohesion in themselves, as is the case with LGBT groups), so fulfilling a key part of what is known as 'contact theory'. Such evidence suggests that government was right to move away from the recommendation of the Commission on Integration and Cohesion that there should be a presumption against 'single group funding'. Such a policy would be damaging to processes of cohesion and cross-community resilience building, and groups should be funded on what they do (i.e. real cohesion activity as part of their programme), rather than on their title or their membership. Whilst resources available for cohesion activity is clearly outside of this project's remit, respondents were clear that cohesion resources available should be used for work that actually brings people of different backgrounds or communities together. Indicative recommendations include the following:

- A need for commissioning and targets to be tailored to maximise community cohesion, driving it into front line work.
- A need for greater recognition of the role of the community and voluntary sector and for commissioning and funding to reflect this.

Engagement and Communication

The overarching support for more face-to-face contact across the community cohesion strategy included the view that local authorities and other agencies should consult more in mixed, face-to-face environments, rather than via paper/email. The implication here was that policy development too often came through electronic comment and dialogue. The research with communities revealed a gap between the views held by the local authority

contributors around service provision, but also around community engagement. There was a view expressed by some community contributors that local authorities do not deliver on promises for example one participant commented that *'There seems to be lots of talk but little practical action on the ground'* (Participant, Bradford LGBT Focus Group). According to some respondents there appear to be plenty of policies being advertised by local authorities but they seem to ignore the reality of the lives of the community. *'They never seem to have the time to see just what is going on, what the problems are or to meet the residents at their door steps for example'* (community member, Bradford). This 'perception gap', shared by some voluntary sector personnel, suggests that not only do efforts around cohesion need to be stepped up, but that face-to-face contact and communication with communities and locally-based agencies is vital to such processes developing positively. It is crucial that consultation and engagement is followed by action in order to improve the lives of the communities who have been consulted. This is matched by recognition that communities need to take more ownership of cohesion and anti-extremism work, and that communities may need to be challenged to do more than they are at the moment.

As noted above, the challenges facing statutory sector providers around the community cohesion and Prevent agendas go well beyond focused work in this area. These challenges exist at multiple levels, firstly the global economic and political situation, which national actors can have some impact on:

> *'I personally think that the government need to listen to local people about what's important to them, and in terms of… not ignore, you know, the impact that maybe foreign policy has on certain things as well'* (Local Authority Officer, Bradford)

Local actors are unable to make much impact on foreign policy and other international level issues, although they can affect responses at a local level:

> *'National and global events can have a significant impact upon the sustainability of community cohesion initiatives within Kirklees. The initiatives need to be managed so the impact from such events remains at a minimum. The initiatives need to be managed on a long term basis and not on a short term scale. Once success has been achieved it needs to be capitalised on by building capacity within the*

communities and making the access to resources easy. A response strategy needs to be developed to national and global events' (Community Cohesion Worker Kirklees)

Indicative recommendations therefore include the following:

- A need for recognition of the impact of international policy on local communities and for the development of means to handle this in order to minimise impact on local community relations.
- Feedback and commitment needs to travel both ways top down and bottom up.
- A need for communities to take ownership of the issues that exist within their communities including drugs and crime, and not solely rely on the local authority and other organisations to deal with these.
- A focus on positive practical things *'…its about a sense of pride, how do you get people to feel proud to live in Bradford'* (Local Authority Officer).
- A need for projects to be put in place to target those on the margins who are NEET.[9]

Measurement

The research process identified significant challenges and dilemmas around meaningful measurement of progress on cohesion and anti-extremism 4.1.5, 4.2.3). The disjuncture between perceptions of professionals and community members on the ground, and what perception-based survey data says about areas was noticeable. . This highlights the complexity of judging progress, and there was general agreement that more dialogue and work needs to take place at a number of levels about how progress or the lack of it, on these key policy agendas can be captured and analysed in more effective and complex ways. One suggestion would be to develop multi-agency local working groups to look at how existing survey data can be augmented by other data, other including other forms of opinion and perception-based data.

[9] Not in Employment or Training.

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DCLG (2009b) Rt. Hon John Denham, MP, Ministerial Speech to National Prevent Conference, Birmingham, 8th December.

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8 APPENDIX A: STRATEGIES ANALYSED FOR THE EVALUATION

Bradford District Active Citizenship Framework (Consultation Draft 2009) (Sept 09), author not known.

Bradford Childrens and Young People's Partnership, education Bradford, LSC, NHS Bradford and Airedale, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Bradford Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2012.

Bradford District Partnership The Big Plan for Bradford District 2008-2011.

Bradford District Partnership Stronger Communities Partnership Delivery Plan Strategy of the Stronger Communities Partnership (Version 2 Sept 17 2009).

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Bradford Council Allocations Policy 2009-2012: A choice based Letting Scheme for Social Housing in Bradford District.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council Equality and Diversity Strategy 2010-2013.

City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council. Forward Together: an intergenerational approach for the Bradford District 2010-13 (V1 consultation Draft Document Nov 19th 2009).

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Equality and Diversity: An enabling framework for treating everyone fairly and valuing diversity.

Kirklees Partnership: Local Area Agreement 2008-2011.

Kirklees Partnership. Vision 2012: A Blueprint for our Future. Our Community Strategy for Kirklees.

West Yorkshire Police: West Yorkshire Policing Plan 2008-2011.

9 APPENDIX B: MOVING COMMUNITY COHESION FORWARD

This sector-led mechanism has been designed to complement existing models. It is is grounded in and draws on the Pilot Study which explored local experiences and realities. The purpose of the sector-led mechanism is to provide local authorities, strategic partners and citizens in communities with a range of suggested activities that might aid the deepening of community cohesion, encouraging understanding, knowledge-sharing and participation. These activities are not prescriptive but offer ideas that local authorities can adopt and develop in ways which reflect their diverse community cohesion frameworks. The sector-led mechanism seeks to encourage the development of sustainable evaluation plans to help in deciding the scope, purpose and audience of community cohesion and Prevent initiatives and their dissemination.

Disclaimer

This sector-led mechanism is provided by researchers at the University of Huddersfield as part of the Pilot Study commissioned by Local Government Yorkshire and Humber. It offers advice on activities that could have a positive impact on community cohesion. The sector-led mechanism is not a panacea to many of the issues raised in the Pilot Study and is offered without any guarantee on the part of the University of Huddersfield that it will have a positive impact on community cohesion in your local authority. Users are advised that they might adopt some or all of the suggested activities at their own risk.

Using the RIEP Community Cohesion and Prevent Indicative sector-led mechanism

The RIEP community cohesion and Prevent indicative sector-led mechanism is designed to help local authorities and their partners who are involved in the delivery of national and local initiatives, and their evaluation and impact. It relates to targeted community cohesion work rather than good service provision, which underpins community cohesion (see section 5.1). The sector-led mechanism is organised to address the following key themes:

1) **Issues of Definition and Clarity** – an overview of the development of community cohesion and Prevent. This section will include advice about definitions appropriate

for encouraging greater understanding of the relationship between community cohesion and Prevent.

2) **Community cohesion and PREVENT: Targeting certain communities? –** this section will address obstacles and uncertainties concerning the remit and focus of community cohesion and Prevent with relation to particular ethnic minority groups.

3) **Co-ordination and resourcing -** this section will address issues relating to co-ordination, focusing on multi-agency working, co-ordination within the local authorities, and funding of specific projects. It will also include funding of community cohesion and Prevent.

4) **Engagement and Communication –** this section will discuss how local authorities can develop public engagement and consultation strategies to involve local citizens in the development and strengthening of community cohesion and Prevent. It will also address issues of communication, particularly the effective promotion and publicising of the inter-related community benefits of the programmes in many Local Authorities.

5) **Measurement –** this section will address difficulties associated with measuring work on and progress around community cohesion and Prevent. It will consider evidence around this issue that suggests more work could usefully be done at the local and regional level involving more sophisticated ways of measuring and assessing 'progress'.

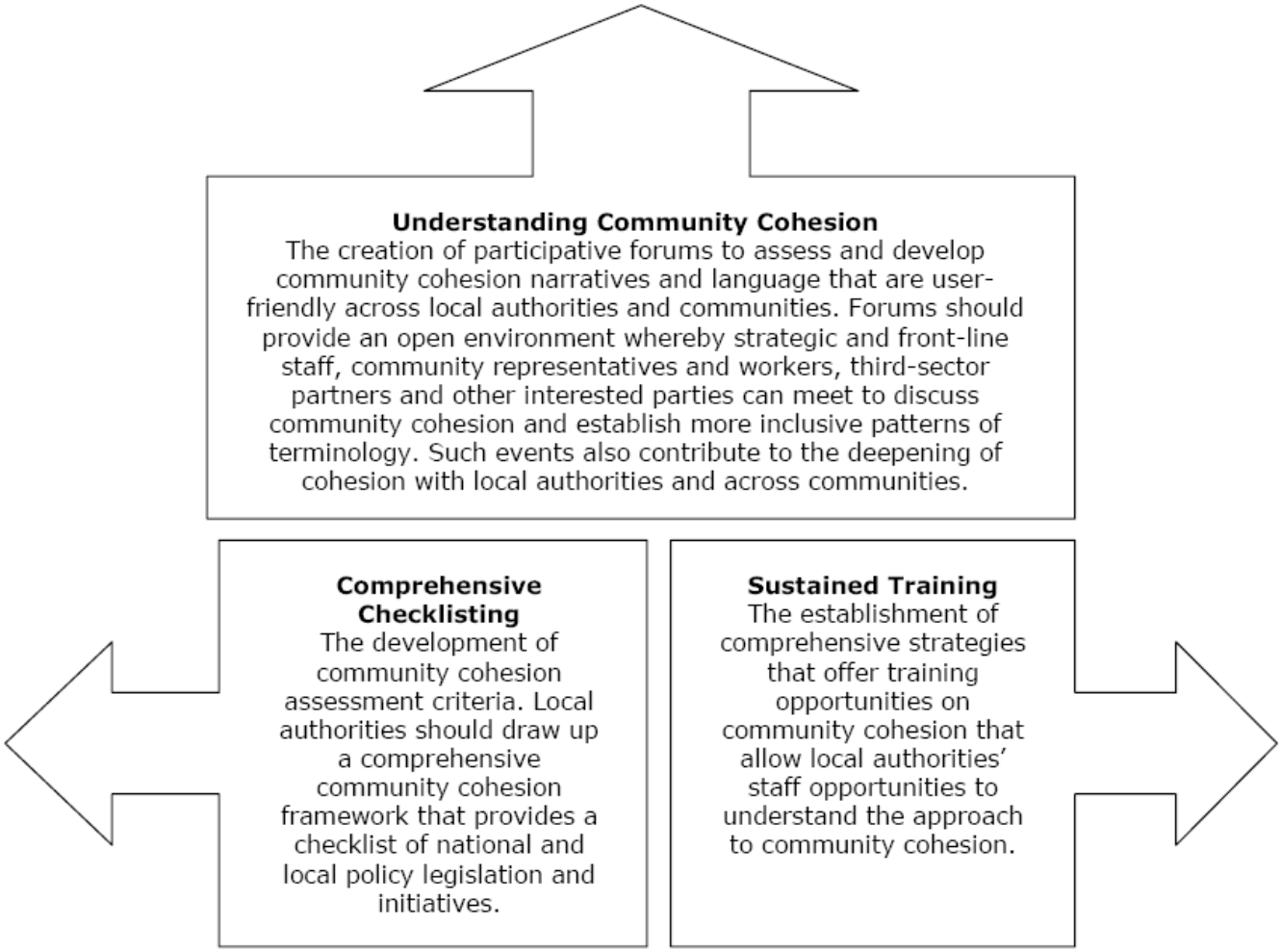
1) **Issues of Definition and Clarity**

The research indicated that there are major issues both in defining and understanding Prevent and community cohesion. A number of issues arose from the research:

- Community cohesion was an ambiguous term associated with 'civil servant-speak' which has little meaning to people in communities.
- There is a lack of clarity about the remit and focus of community cohesion.
- Prevent was seen to stigmatise the Muslim community without fully acknowledging the diverse source of tensions within communities.

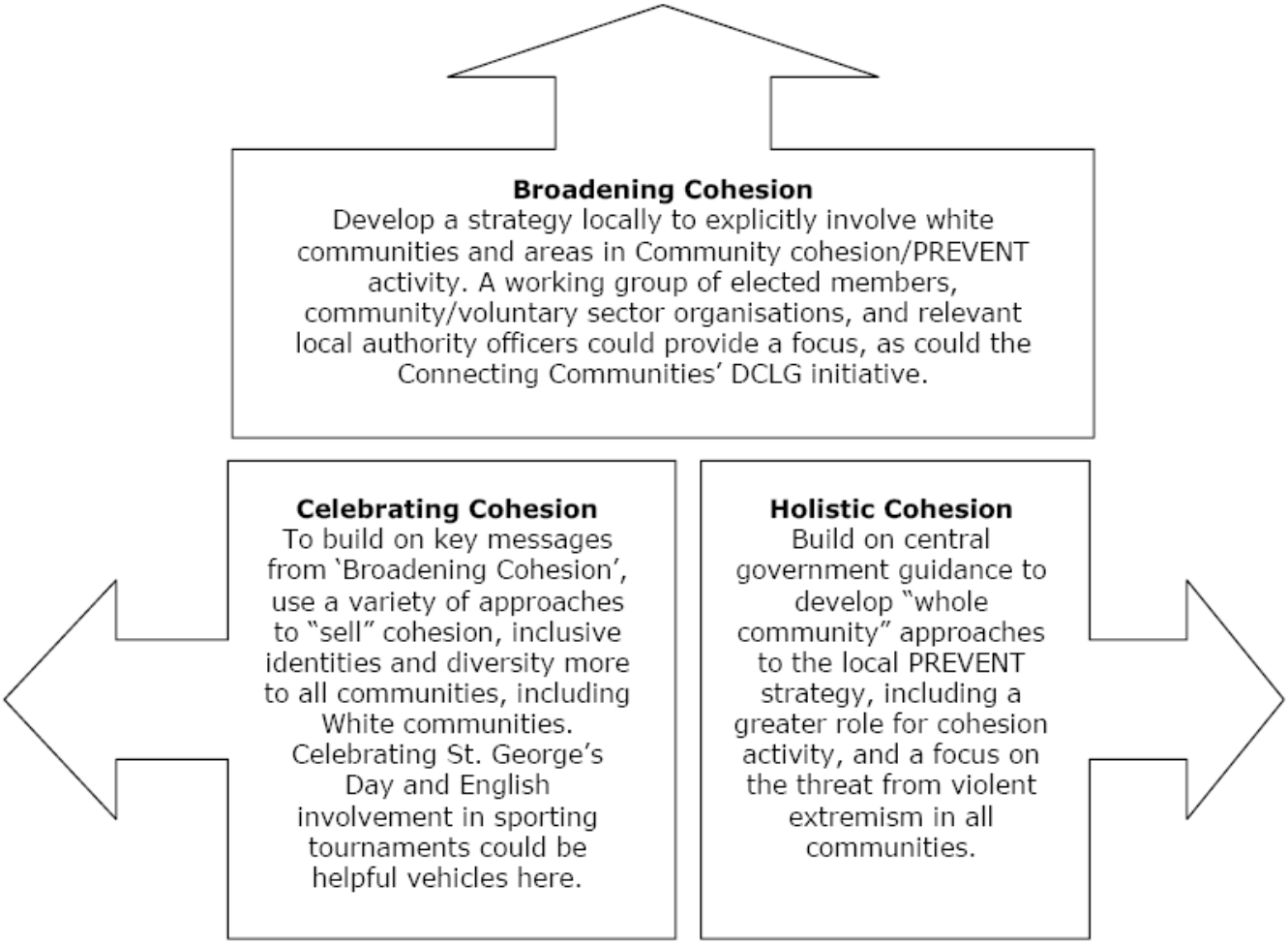
- The language used by central and local government such as ‘community cohesion’ and ‘Prevent’ elicited negative responses, suggesting the language adopted established social and cultural barriers to recognition or participation.
- Some work undertaken as community cohesion overlapped with areas such as equality and diversity whilst also influencing service provision.

The data suggests that local authorities need to give more attention to issues of definition, language and prioritisation to develop citizen and community understanding and empathy. The figure below provides some suggestions of the activities that might be taken to improve issues of definition and clarity, obviously depending on the specificities of the locality.



2) Community Cohesion and Prevent: Targeting certain Communities?

Our research highlighted the need and potential benefits of local authorities adopting a whole-community approach to community cohesion and Prevent. Concerns were expressed that the focus of community cohesion and Prevent focused on certain minority ethnic groups – particularly Muslim communities. Concerns were also raised about predominantly white communities - especially marginalised predominantly white working class communities – who were seen to have been neglected but were increasingly seen as a key challenge. Some of these issues have already been acknowledged by national and local government, with a broadening out of target groups. However, this is an area that requires considerable attention to develop and sustain interest in community cohesion activities. The figure below provides some suggestions of the activities that might be taken to support a whole-communities approach, obviously depending on the specificities of the locality.

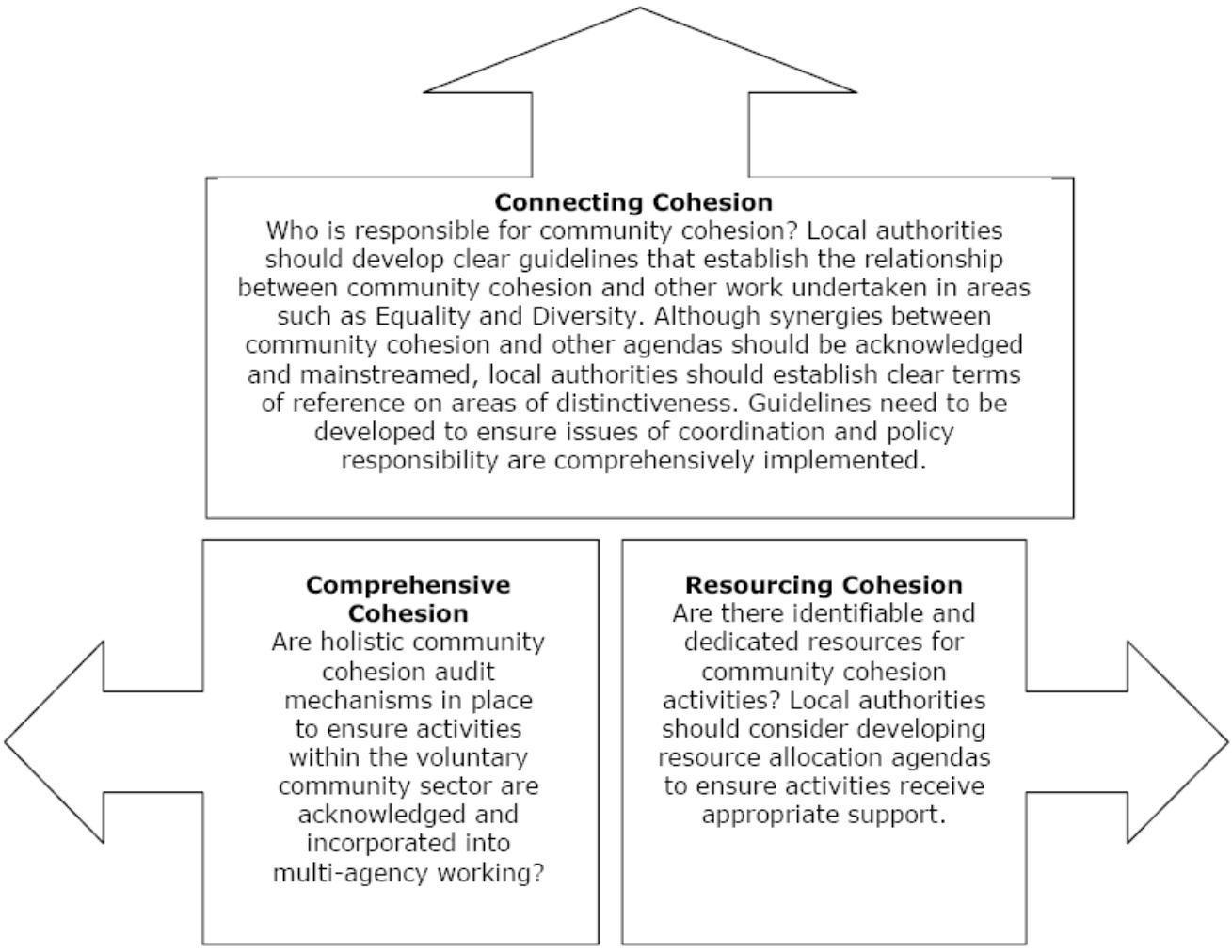


3) Co-ordination and Resourcing

Research undertaken suggested that the local authorities had developed strong executive leadership on community cohesion which provided front-line and strategic officers and partner agencies with clear coordinative frameworks. Issues were however raised in three areas:

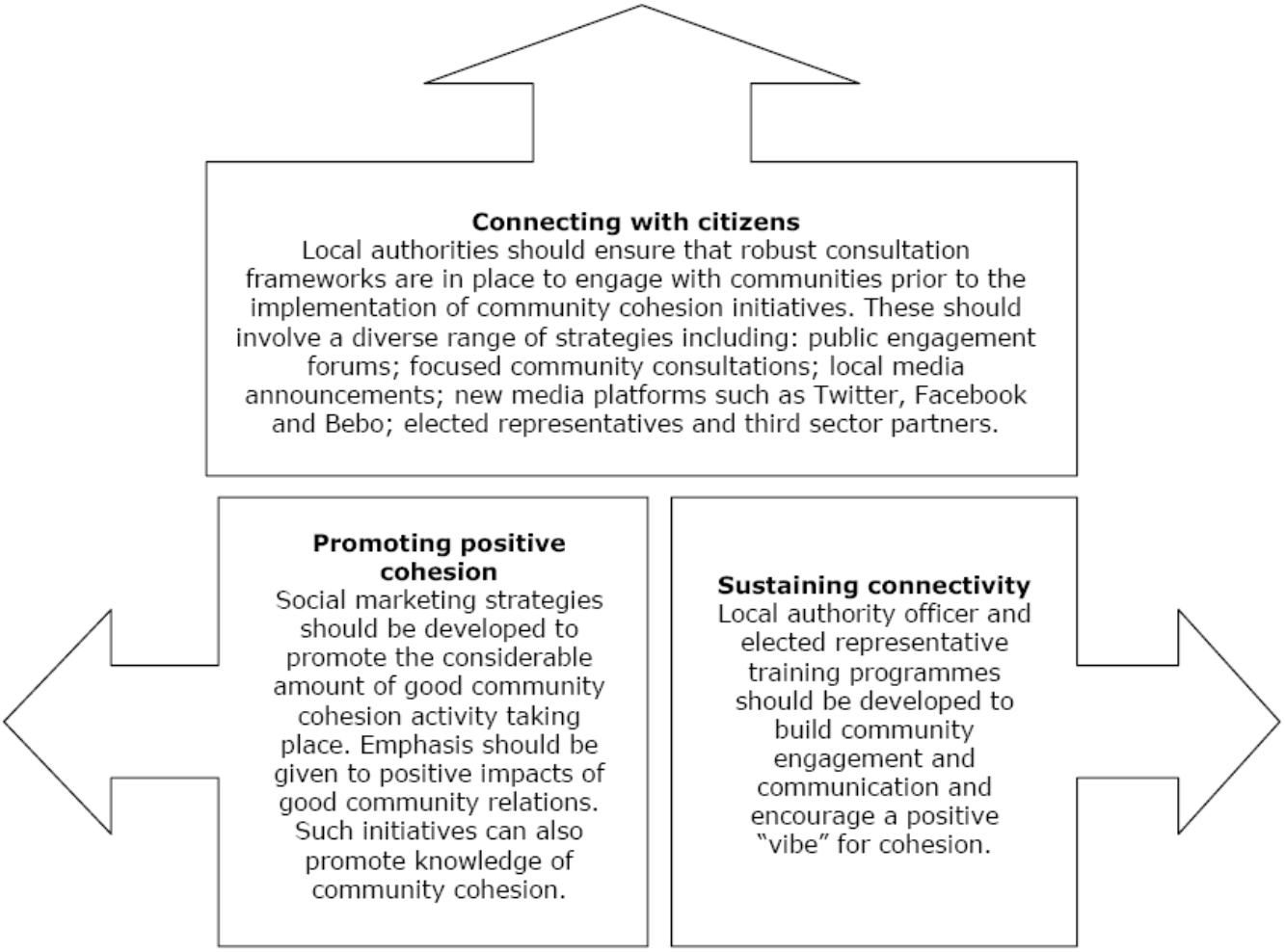
- A lack of clarity of multi agency working, particularly in relation to the respective roles of local authority, strategic partners and established multi-agency Community Cohesion Boards (where applicable).
- Co-ordination within local authorities and its relation to established Equality and Diversity agendas.
- The funding of specific community cohesion projects.

The figure below provides some questions that might be addressed in order to improve co-ordination of work in this field, obviously depending on the specificities of the locality:



4) Engagement and Communication

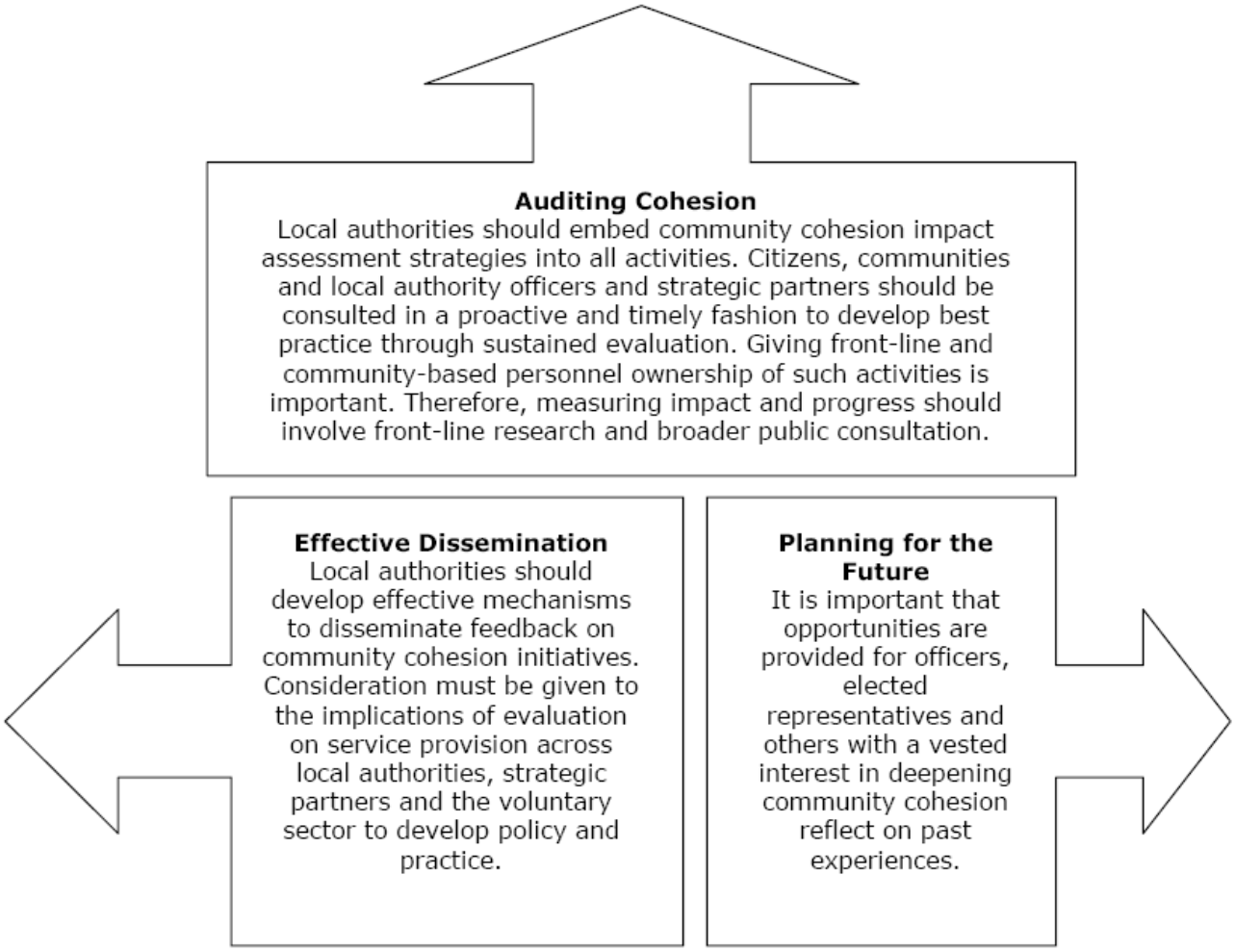
Establishing and sustaining links with citizens is a vital part of community cohesion and Prevent work. For this to be effective, local authorities need to both engage and consult with communities, providing mechanisms to involve citizens and allow them to express their opinions prior to implementation of community cohesion initiatives, through their lifespan and in garnering post-initiative feedback. Research findings indicated a need for local authorities to listen more fully to local people concerning the community cohesion and Prevent agendas. Concern over the potential for modes of engagement to be mere 'window dressing' exercises raised concerns over possible public scepticism, consultation fatigue and citizen and community disengagement. The figure below provides some suggestions of the activities that might be taken to improve engagement and communication, obviously depending on the specificities of the locality.



5) Measurement and Development

Measuring work on and progress around community cohesion emerged as one of the key issues where local authorities and other sector organisations face difficulties. The research highlighted the limitations of 'Place' and other local surveys. Local authorities should develop post-initiative evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of policies, services and functions on its citizens and staff. On-going evaluation can help local authorities to provide and deliver community cohesion that reflect the needs of communities.

The Pilot Study highlights that there is clear support for more cohesion work. However, it is vital that all those involved are given space to reflect on past initiatives to sustain progress and develop more opportunities for deepening community cohesion. Local authorities are under considerable pressures within the current climate but it is vital that different groups are kept 'in the loop' to sustain momentum. Progressive measurement and evaluation should draw on past experiences, thus informing current and future policy and practice. The figure below provides some suggestions of the activities that might be taken to improve development and performance measurement, obviously depending on the specificities of the locality.


Auditing Cohesion
Local authorities should embed community cohesion impact assessment strategies into all activities. Citizens, communities and local authority officers and strategic partners should be consulted in a proactive and timely fashion to develop best practice through sustained evaluation. Giving front-line and community-based personnel ownership of such activities is important. Therefore, measuring impact and progress should involve front-line research and broader public consultation.
Effective Dissemination
Local authorities should develop effective mechanisms to disseminate feedback on community cohesion initiatives. Consideration must be given to the implications of evaluation on service provision across local authorities, strategic partners and the voluntary sector to develop policy and practice.
Planning for the Future
It is important that opportunities are provided for officers, elected representatives and others with a vested interest in deepening community cohesion reflect on past experiences.

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