

# Channel Multi-Agency Panel North East Lincolnshire

## Terms of Reference

### Introduction

The Channel Multi-agency Panel is a statutory function of each local authority and is an element of the early intervention approach to the government Prevent Strategy. Within North East Lincolnshire (NEL) the panel sits on a monthly basis and has core membership of key stakeholders.

### Purpose, Aims and Objectives

The prime purpose of the panel is to consider referrals into the Prevent Police Officer in order to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults who are at risk of being drawn into or are involved in extremism, radicalisation or recruitment for terrorism.

The Channel process is the multi-agency means to an early intervention approach to this vulnerable group and seeks to protect, support, and divert vulnerable people away from the risk they may face from being drawn into extremism or terrorist related activity.

### Aims

The Panel provide a multi-agency forum and framework in which to assess the nature, the level and the extent of risk to vulnerable individuals of being groomed, coerced and exploited by those who may seek to radicalise them into terrorist-related activity or encourage them into extremist thinking and behaviours.

### Objectives

The panel sits to determine whether the Channel model would provide an appropriate method of support for vulnerable individuals who have been referred.

Where it is determined that the individual can be supported via the Channel model, the panel will consider and propose the means to offer and provide appropriate support through Channel that will steer vulnerable people away from supporting terrorist-related activity, extremist thinking and behaviours or violent extremism .

The panel also ensures that the referrals considered are not subject to discrimination in the assessment of cases and/or in the delivery of interventions on the grounds of race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or transgender identity.

The panel is committed to ensuring that the confidentiality of individuals is respected at all times and that information shared is managed in accordance with statutory guidance and data protection legislation and stored securely. Where cases referred are deemed to be either unsuitable for the Channel process or no longer require Channel interventions – the panel will agree closure and sign-off of these cases – or where appropriate will at the earliest opportunity, fulfil its responsibility to refer to other appropriate safeguarding or support mechanisms.

### Operation of the Channel Multi-Agency Panel Group

### Referrals to Channel

The multi-agency group will receive referrals from partner organisations or members of the community via the Channel Coordinator (Prevent Officer - police) of individuals for whom there is a concern about their vulnerability to radicalisation or extremism.

## Assessment and Information Sharing

Cases will be assessed initially by the Channel Co-ordinator (CC). For those referrals adopted by the Channel Panel a 'Vulnerability Assessment Framework' will be completed. The framework for assessing referrals involves three dimensions: Engagement, Intent and Capability to become involved in violent extremist actions or terrorism.

Where insufficient information is available to the CC, new referrals will be raised with the Channel Chair and a request will be sent out securely for relevant agencies to provide information on the individual to inform the assessment.

Where possible, each new Vulnerability Assessment Framework will be sent to the Channel Multi-Agency Panel members prior to the Channel meeting and the panel will consider the assessments and add to or review the content and level of risk at subsequent meetings.

Providing an accurate picture of the vulnerabilities of high risk cases will often require involved professionals and or case-holders to attend the Channel Multi-Agency Panel meeting. In this way the panel will have access to 'first-hand experience' of the individual or other associates and may also have direct and ongoing contact with the individual.

In some circumstances it may only be possible to complete an accurate assessment after a period of time has elapsed and more information has become available. The Channel panel will continue to seek further information as necessary to inform planning for the case and monitoring risk levels.

The Vulnerability Assessment Framework provides a guide to vulnerability and risk. It should not be assumed that it will necessarily indicate that a person is either committed to terrorism, is actively involved or committed to extremist views or may become a terrorist.

## Management Referrals and Interventions

The panel will be informed of all cases that have been referred and make a note of these in the records. If the referral is not deemed appropriate for CHANNEL it will exit the process or be referred to those services which are more appropriate to the vulnerable individual's needs. Following the assessment the Channel Multi Agency Panel will determine whether support should be offered through the Channel process.

Should this be the case the Channel Multi Agency Panel will identify and secure resources to offer a relevant support package to the individual being referred.

Interventions are intended to divert those who are being drawn into terrorist or extremist activity and can include statutory, community or specialist interventions i.e. mentoring, counselling, theological support, encouraging civic engagement, development of support networks (family and peer structures) or providing mainstream services (education, employment, health, finance or housing).

## Consent and the Voluntary Nature of Channel

Channel is based on the active engagement of the vulnerable individual and is at a non-criminal stage. It is therefore appropriate that consent should be obtained from the individual involved prior to a referral to Channel intervention. Where the individual is a minor, it may be necessary to gain consent from the parent or person with parental responsibility.

The Channel Co-ordinator will continue to update the Vulnerability Assessment Framework until the individual exits the Channel process and the assessment will be made available to the group members.

## Monitoring, Review and Closure

Each Channel case will be monitored regularly by the Channel Co-ordinator and will be reviewed by the panel at a minimum of quarterly meetings. Ongoing cases open to Channel will remain on every agenda for an update. In addition, there will be a 6 and 12 monthly review meeting on every case where interventions have been completed, where the referral has been closed to the panel and has exited the Channel process and where there is no current Channel intervention.

The group will clearly document agreed actions and plans to provide an audit trail for future reference. The panel will also ensure that closed cases referred on or signposted to other agencies or services clearly document the panel decisions and those other agencies are notified accordingly. The panel will also make recommendations about the notifications to referrers where either the case is not opened to Channel or the interventions are completed and closed.

### Information sharing and confidentiality

All panel members and invitees on specific cases will be party to a confidentiality statement at the commencement of panel meetings and will sign an information sharing agreement, and abide by the terms of confidentiality assigned to the process.

### Accountability

The panel will be accountable to the Local Authority Prevent Silver group.

### Membership

The panel will include as a minimum a senior member of staff from the Local Authority who will be the Chair, a senior Officer from Humberside Police and the Channel Police Practitioner.

Membership may include representation from Partners to the Panel from;

- Local Authority Safeguarding Adults and Children's Boards (Core member)
- Education
- Social Services
- Adult Mental Health Services
- Probation Service providers
- NHS Trusts, CCG's or NHS partners (Core member)
- Youth Offending Service
- Other organisations or charitable groups with specific knowledge of the case

### Meetings

Meetings will be held on a monthly basis and where necessary extraordinary meetings can be convened. Prior to each panel the chair and the CC will have a pre-Channel meeting to discuss new referrals and coordinate requests for information on new cases.

The dates for the meetings will be set by the Local Authority Chair in conjunction with the Police.

