

North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) and Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) CHANNEL PANEL

Guidance Summary

Statutory Guidance issued in 2015, under Sections 36 to 41 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CT&S Act 2015) sets out duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. In England and Wales this duty is the *Channel programme*. Section 26 of the CT&S Act 2015 places duty on certain bodies to exercise functions having 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

Prevent and Channel

Channel is a key part of the *Prevent* strategy within the government overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of Prevent is to reduce the threat of terrorism in the UK by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Channel is a multi-agency approach to identifying and providing support to individuals who are at risk of being drawn into terrorism.

PREVENT three specific strategic objectives are:

- To respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it;
- To prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support; and
- To work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that we need to address.

Other Key Legislation re LA duties; CT&S Act 2015 and Channel includes:

- S11 of the Children Act 2004
- Care Act 2014
- Adult Protection and Support Order, S.127 of the 2014 Act (Gaining Access)
- The Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of need and risk faced by the individual and the process of assessment

Delivering Channel programmes may overlap with wider safeguarding duties if vulnerable individuals require interventions from or are already involved with social work/adult social care. LSCB and SAB partners must consider Channel cases in the context of ongoing safeguarding and support needs.

How Does Channel work? It aims to protect vulnerable people by:

- A. identifying individuals at risk;
- B. assessing the nature and extent of that risk; and
- C. developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Who is it aimed at? Channel is for any adult or child, regardless of faith, ethnicity or background, who is vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism, radicalisation or extremism; to provide support *before* they are exploited and/or led into embracing terrorism or becoming involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

What is the local authority duty re Channel Panel? Legislation requires:

- Local authorities to ensure that a multi-agency panel exists in their area;
- Local authority to chair the panel;
- The panel to develop support plans for individuals accepted as Channel cases;
- The panel to consider alternative forms of support, including health and social services, where Channel is not appropriate;
- All partners of a panel (as specified in Schedule 7), so far as appropriate and reasonably practicable, to cooperate with the police and the panel in the carrying out of their functions.

Who sits on the panel? Section 37(5) of the CT&S Act requires Channel panels to be chaired by the local authority. Panel Members must include the LA, the police for the LA area under section 37(1) of the CT&S Act, and depending on the case, may also include, but not limited to, representatives from the following:

- NHS;
- Social workers; Schools, further education colleges and universities
- Youth offending services; Prisons; and Probation.
- Directors of children's and adult's services;
- Chairs of Local Safeguarding Children Boards and Safeguarding Adult Boards;
- Local authority safeguarding managers (adult/children); Troubled Families Teams
- Home Office Immigration (Immigration Enforcement, UK Visas & Immigration); Border Force;
- Housing

What are Combined Panels? Local authorities may combine panels with other local authorities but ensure combined panel is fit for purpose to effectively manage vulnerability and risk. If cases involve two or more local authority areas, e.g. the individual resides in one, works in another, or is looked-after away from the responsible authority; both local authorities must attend the panel. The lead authority is *always the authority in which the individual resides*. Combined panels must include:

- Representation from each local authority for the cases referred or being discussed
- Police representation for each of the relevant local authorities
- Other agencies as appropriate to the needs of the individuals

What is the CPP? This is the Channel Police Practitioner and is responsible for:

- Assessing and managing Channel referrals and cases in accordance with guidance
- Ensuring referrals are dealt with swiftly, and notified to panel as soon as possible;
- Increasing understanding of Channel amongst panel partners and others;
- Establishing effective relationships with partners, individuals and organisations to deliver support;
- Manage risk associated with the individual's potential involvement in terrorist-related activity
- Briefing the chair on all referrals discussed at panel to aid establishing the most effective support plan

- Circulating vulnerability assessments to panel members

What is Panel Chair's role? The chair must have oversight of all local Channel cases and ensure:

- Appropriate representation invited to each panel members; and relationships with statutory agencies, enable effective co-operation, information sharing and attendance at panel;
- Appropriate support plans are established for Channel cases using the expertise of the panel;
- Risks of individuals' being drawn into terrorism are referred to appropriate agencies for action;
- Effective support plan is established and consent sought from subject prior to plan being put in place;
- Individuals/organisations execute tasks in support plan and deliver an effective support package

What is the remit of Panel members? The multi-agency involvement is to ensure good information sharing and provide access to a wide range of support and specific services including diversionary activities.

Vulnerability Assessment Framework

The CPP assesses Channel cases' vulnerability using a framework around three core criteria:

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

The three criteria are assessed by considering 22 factors that can contribute to vulnerability within the appendices of the main guidance.

Examples of engagement may include: spending increasing time with other suspected extremists; changing style of dress or personal appearance to 'fit' with the group; extremist ideology, loss of interest in other friends and activities not associated with the extremist ideology, group or cause;

Examples of intention to cause harm, use violence or other illegal may include: identifying another group as threatening what they stand for; using insulting or derogatory labels for another group; condoning or supporting violence or harm towards others; or plotting or conspiring with others.

Examples of capability may include: history of violence; being criminally versatile, criminal networks to support extremism, occupational skills to enable terrorist acts; E.g. civil engineering, pharmacology; technical expertise that can be used e.g. IT skills, knowledge of chemicals, military training, survival skills.

Consent and Information Sharing

Participation in Channel remains voluntary, section 36(4)(b) of the CT&S Act requires consent to be given by the individual (or their parent/guardian in the case of a child¹⁵) in advance of support measures being put in place. The guidance gives detailed advice on information sharing and the legislation underpinning this but prescribes that the default for panel partners should be to consider seeking the consent of the individual or their parent/guardian dependent on the case. Information relating to health, law enforcement or protection of the public may be exempted but should be made explicit in panel records.

Parental Consent and Use of Childcare Legislation: When parental consent cannot be obtained in the case of a child, and the child is thought to be at risk from significant harm then social services for the relevant local authority area must be involved and there may be circumstances where the Channel panel and social services determine that a child is in need as defined by section 17 of the Children Act 1989 17. In such a case, statutory assessments may need to be out by a social worker under section 17, or section 47. (Ref: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015)

Individuals Being Managed in Other Frameworks

Prisons: Channel can be used for individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or radicalised whilst in custody. Cases will need support plans in place prior to release but should be agreed in close consultation with Prison staff and the National Probation Service.

MAPPA: Where MAPPA identifies cases as vulnerable to radicalisation/terrorism, it may seek advice of CPP but the case will remain responsibility of MAPPA (not managed via Channel). MAPPA eligible offenders that are managed by a single agency, may be appropriate for Channel and it will be for the single agency to liaise with the Channel Panel as to how this risk should best be managed.

Probation: Offenders supervised in the community at risk of being radicalised/drawn into terrorism, may be referred to Channel, determined through liaison between offender manager and CPP

Channel Panel role: is to decide if the individual referred:

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

Risk Assessment at panel should consider and record:

- The risk of the individual being drawn into terrorism;
- The risk the individual poses to society if drawn into terrorism
- All information available to make an objective decision on the support provided
- The details, decisions and actions to provide an audit trail of decisions if needed at a later date.

NB Records to be retained whilst the case is live and for the relevant data retention period thereafter.

Support plan: Each case will have a support package tailored to its needs and vulnerabilities recognising any risks to potential support providers. Section 36(4) of CT&S Act requires panels to:

- Prepare a plan for individual whom the panel considers appropriate to be offered support;
- Make arrangements for support to be provided as described in the plan where consent is given;
- Keep the support given under review;
- Revise or withdraw a support plan if considered appropriate;
- Carry out further assessments, after such periods as the panel considers appropriate, of an individual's vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism
- Where the necessary consent to the provision of support is refused or withdrawn
- Prepare a further support plan if considered appropriate.

Types of Support that Channel Programme may consider appropriate:

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

NB. Funding Support Plans: The panel is collectively responsible for ensuring delivery of the overall package of support, but not for managing or funding the support providers.

Monitoring Channel Support: The CPP is responsible for regularly liaison with support provider(s), updating vulnerability assessments and assessing progress made with the Channel Panel. Individuals receiving support should be reassessed at least ***every three months*** to monitor progress and if necessary, reassessed more frequently to inform panel of key progress or change

If satisfied that risk has been reduced or is managed, panel recommends the case exits the process. CPP completes closing report with reason for panel recommendations, endorsed by the Chair.

If the risk has not been reduced or managed, the case should be reconsidered and plans revised or new plans put in place. If increased risk or offending is indicated, CPP must consider escalating via police route to determine if the case is still suitable for Channel programme.

Reviewing Channel cases: All cases exiting Channel, whether they referred elsewhere or offered support via Channel, should be reviewed by panel at 6 months and again at 12 months from the date the individual exits the process.

Sharing good practice: It is advised that forming regional or local networks will aid the sharing of good practice in running Channel panels and help LA areas with very few Channel cases to learn from more experienced areas. Channel Panel Chairs will also have the opportunity to attend regular national forums to share good practice more widely.

Training: The successful delivery of Prevent is dependent on engaging national, regional and local partners including the community and voluntary sector. Public sector frontline staff are a key to identifying and referring individuals vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism through radicalisation. Training in awareness and understanding of Prevent amongst the public sector and into the community is essential. Prevent guidance details various training available for different sectors.

Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent (WRAP) training: WRAP is an hour long DVD-led interactive workshop aimed at frontline staff (such as police, social services, probation, education and health staff) as well as the community, and an introduction to Prevent aimed at supporting vulnerable people and raise awareness.

Channel e-learning package: The National Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters (NCTPHQ), in conjunction with the College of Policing, have developed a general awareness e-learning package for Channel on how Channel links to the Government's Counter-Terrorism Strategy (CONTEST) through the Prevent

ANNEX A – Provides the guidance and principles of Information Sharing

ANNEX B – Details those with duties to be involved and cooperate with Channel

ANNEX C – The Vulnerability Assessment Framework used to determine risk and support needs of individuals. The assessment framework dimensions are summarised below.

1. Engagement with a group, cause or ideology

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

- Feelings of grievance and injustice; or feeling under threat
- A need for identity, meaning and belonging or a desire for status, excitement and adventure
- A need to dominate and control others, a desire for political or moral change
- Susceptibility to indoctrination, mental health issues, influenced or controlled by a group, family or friends involvement in extremism
- Opportunistic involvement or being at a transitional time of life

2. Intent to cause harm

Not all those who become engaged by a group, cause or ideology go on to develop an intention to cause harm but relevant factors associated with a readiness to use violence can include:

- Over-identification with a group or ideology or them and Us' thinking
- Dehumanisation of the enemy and attitudes that justify offending and harmful means to an end or harmful objectives

3. Capability to cause harm

Not all those who have a wish to cause harm are capable of doing so, so when assessing risk of harm to the public. Factors can include:

- Individual knowledge, skills and competencies
- Access to networks, funding or equipment
- Criminal Capability

Sue Sheriden August 2015

Attached Terms Of Reference for North East Lincolnshire Council Channel Arrangements



Humberside Channel
Multi Agency terms of