



PREVENT POLICY

2026

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Version Number	Purpose / Change	Author	Date
1.0	New Policy	Ian Butt	April 2026
1.1	Replacing redundant role and reformatting on most up to date template	Janette Parker-East	July 2026

Corporate Plan 2025-28

Council ambition	Linked?
Working for a prosperous future <i>We want to ensure the best possible local economy, with opportunities for our residents to succeed and achieve</i>	Yes - By maintaining public safety and social stability, the policy creates the secure conditions necessary for local businesses, investments, and jobs to thrive.
Healthier, safer communities <i>Residents should feel safe in our Borough and supported to be more active in order to improve their health and wellbeing</i>	Yes – The Policy directly protects vulnerable residents from radicalisation and harm, ensuring Castle Point remains a safe and secure borough for everyone.
A greener and cleaner environment <i>It's important to everyone that we look after our environment</i>	Yes - Ensuring safe and secure communities allows residents to confidently use, look after and enjoy the Borough's public parks and green spaces.
Restoring the Council to good health <i>We will place our Council on a sound financial footing and ensure resilience – delivering the service our residents deserve and expect</i>	Yes - Implementing this mandatory, statutory policy ensures the council avoids legal or regulatory failures, demonstrating strong and responsible governance.
We ♥ Castle Point <i>We will help create and maintain the best possible place to live in, work in and visit</i>	Yes - The policy fosters community cohesion and resilience against divisive extremist narratives, reinforcing local civic pride and a welcoming environment.

The Lead Officer responsible for owning the policy and internal approval body (meeting / board where the policy is approved for adoption or approved for referral to PFH or Committee for adoption)

Name: **IAN BUTT, DIRECTOR OF PLACE & COMMUNITIES**

Approved by: **CABINET**

- **Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken? Yes**

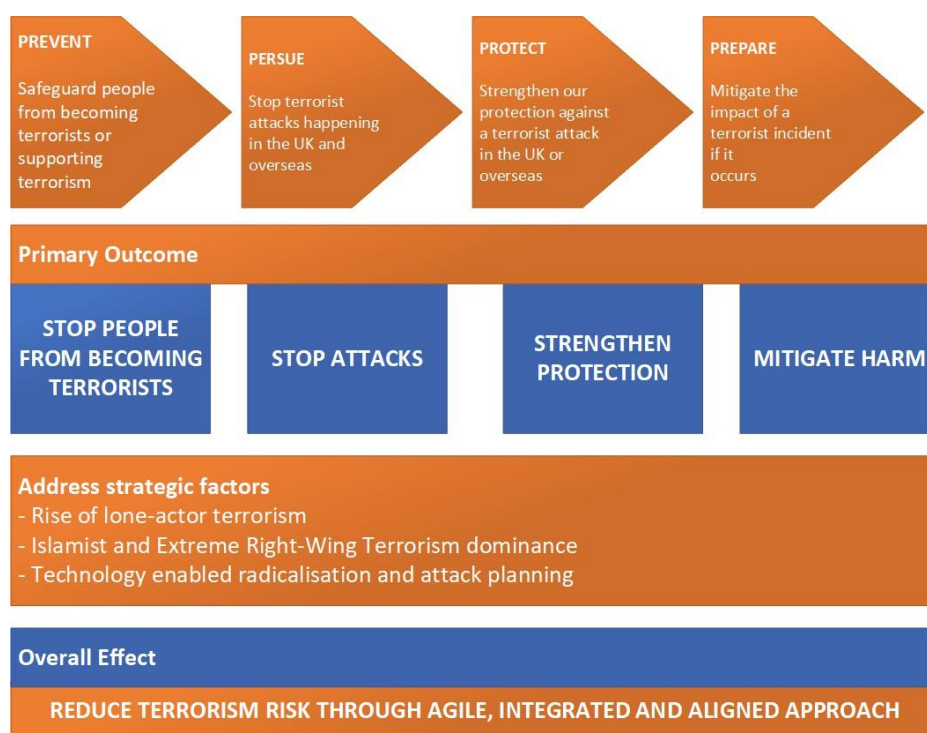
Contents

1. Introduction – What is Prevent	4
2. Scope of the Prevent Policy and its Aims	5
Channel – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Against Radicalisation	6
3. Legal Framework	6
Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.....	7
Terrorism Act 2000.....	8
Counter-Terrorism Act 2008	8
Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Care Act 2014	9
4. Partnership Forums	9
Channel Panel	9
Community Safety Partnership Meeting (Quarterly).....	10
Internal Safeguarding Forum (Bi-Annual)	11
5. Castle Point Borough Council Prevent Referral Pathway	11
6. Reducing Permissive Environments	14
What is a Permissive Environment?	14
Council Responsibilities in Reducing Permissive Environments	15
Identifying and Responding to Permissive Environments	16
7. Internal Prevent Leads	16
8. Information Sharing Guidance.....	17
Purpose of Information Sharing	17
Alignment with Castle Point Borough Council Information Governance	17
Legal Basis for Sharing Information	17
What Information May Be Shared	18
Who Information May Be Shared With	18
Secure Handling and Retention of Information	18
Transparency and Privacy.....	19
Support and Advice for Staff	19

1. Introduction – What is Prevent

- 1.1 **Prevent** is part of the UK Government’s Counter-Terrorism Strategy (First published in 2003 and last updated in 2023) (“CONTEST”). Its aim is to stop or *prevent* people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. **Prevent** focuses on safeguarding, protecting individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation, in the same way we protect people from other harms such as exploitation, abuse, or criminal grooming.
- 1.2 As a Lower-Tier Local Authority, the Council plays a vital role in spotting early signs of concern, supporting local communities and working with partners across Essex to safeguard vulnerable people.

Fig. 1 – How Prevent works



- 1.3 The UK Prevent Strategy was published by the Government in 2011 and is part of the overall counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The aim of the Prevent Strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.
- 1.4 In implementing its **Prevent** duty to support the identifications of and to safeguard and support those vulnerable to radicalisation, to stop them from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, the Council will:

- **Use local safeguarding, community safety and partnership intelligence** - to identify areas or individuals at risk of radicalisation, ensuring Prevent activity is guided by evidence and aligned with the Council's statutory safeguarding duties.
- **Strengthen and maintain clear Prevent referral pathways** - ensuring concerns are captured, escalated and triaged quickly through the Prevent Lead, Community Safety Manager and Channel processes.
- **Ensure all Council staff, contractors and partners receive appropriate Prevent and safeguarding training** - so they can recognise signs of radicalisation and know how to report concerns safely.
- **Reduce permissive environments for extremist narratives across all Council services, buildings, venues, grants, digital spaces and partnerships** - by applying Prevent considerations to governance, decision-making and public-facing activity.
- **Strengthen partnership working with communities** - to improve information sharing and early identification of risk.
- **Embed Prevent within the Council's wider safeguarding framework** - ensuring radicalisation is treated as a safeguarding harm and that Prevent concerns follow established multi-agency safeguarding routes.
- **Monitor online risks** - ensuring Council managed digital platforms do not facilitate the spread of extremist or harmful content, applying appropriate oversight.
- **Promote community resilience** - by supporting awareness-raising, engagement and education around safeguarding, extremism and community cohesion, in collaboration with partners.

2. Scope of the Prevent Policy and its Aims

- 2.1 This Prevent Policy sets out how the Council will meet its statutory duties under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which requires local authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism.
- 2.2 While Prevent responsibilities apply to both upper-tier and lower-tier authorities, the delivery of specialist safeguarding interventions, particularly those requiring statutory social care powers, sits primarily with Essex County Council as the upper-tier authority.
- 2.3 As a lower tier Local Authority, Castle Point Borough Council plays a crucial role in early identification, local risk management, and community-based safeguarding. This policy therefore outlines how the Council will:

- Identify and manage concerns relating to extremism or radicalisation that come to the attention of Council staff or services.
- Make timely and appropriate referrals where concerns meet the Prevent or Channel thresholds.
- Work collaboratively with partners, including Essex Police Prevent Officers, Essex County Council, education, health, probation and voluntary sector organisations.
- Participate in relevant Prevent and safeguarding forums, contributing local intelligence, supporting shared risk assessments and promoting coordinated action.

2.4 This policy aligns with the [2023 Prevent guidance](#), which sets out three strategic objectives for the UK's Prevent programme:

- **Tackle** the ideological causes of terrorism.
- **Intervene early** to support people susceptible to radicalisation.
- **Enable rehabilitation** for individuals who have already engaged in terrorism-related activity.

2.5 For further detail, staff should refer to the national [Prevent Duty toolkit](#) for England and Wales.

Channel – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Against Radicalisation

2.6 Channel is a key element of the Prevent Strategy and operates as a multi-agency safeguarding process designed to protect individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. Channel brings together local authorities, statutory safeguarding partners, police, education, health, youth services, probation and community organisations to:

- **Identify** individuals at risk of being drawn into terrorism.
- **Assess** the nature and extent of identified vulnerabilities.
- **Develop and coordinate** a tailored support plan.

2.7 Participation in Channel is **voluntary**, and support is based on consent.

2.8 For more information, staff should consult the latest [Channel Guidance](#).

3. Legal Framework

3.1 The Council's Prevent responsibilities are underpinned by a robust legal framework that places statutory duties on local authorities to help safeguard individuals from the risk of radicalisation.

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015

- 3.2 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (“CTSA”) sets out the Prevent Duty. It requires specified authorities to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism, and the Act is supported by the statutory Prevent duty guidance. Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales which was published in 2023.
- 3.3 Section 26 of the CTSA requires specified authorities to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. The specified authorities (which are also defined in Schedule 6 of the CTSA) include:
- Local Councils
 - Police
 - Health bodies
 - Education providers
- 3.4 Section 26 to 28, sets out how Prevent cases should be reviewed through the use of local Panels (called Channel Panels), that adopts a multi-agency approach to reviewing possible Prevent cases.
- 3.5 Section 29 of the Act also requires authorities to follow the statutory Prevent Duty Guidance, and explains what compliance looks like across leadership, partnership working, risk assessment, training, referral pathways and reducing permissive environments.
- 3.6 The Act, and supplementary guidance, places local authorities at the centre of multi-agency safeguarding against radicalisation. In addition to the Prevent Duty, the CTSA provides wider counter terrorism powers, including enhanced information sharing, terrorism prevention measures, and the statutory basis for Channel Panels, which assess vulnerability and coordinate support for individuals at risk of radicalisation. These measures collectively strengthen the UK’s ability to reduce the threat from terrorism and improve public protection.
- 3.7 The CTSA duty operates alongside wider legislation that shapes the Council’s safeguarding functions, including the Terrorism Act 2000, which provides the legal definition of terrorism; and, the Care Act 2014, which sets out the statutory framework for adult safeguarding where radicalisation may constitute a form of abuse or exploitation. Together, these laws define the Council’s responsibilities for identifying risk, sharing information appropriately, and working collaboratively with multi-agency partners to reduce vulnerability and protect the public.

Terrorism Act 2000

- 3.8 The Terrorism Act 2000 provides the legal foundation for the UK's counter-terrorism framework. It defines terrorism in law and covers
- Violence
 - Threats
 - Serious harm
 - Actions intended to influence government
 - Intimidate the public for ideological purposes
- 3.9 It gives Police powers to arrest, investigate, and disrupt terrorism-related activity. This definition is crucial because it shapes how individuals, groups, and behaviours are assessed across all later counter-terrorism legislation, including the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015.
- 3.10 The CTSA builds on the Terrorism Act by introducing the **Prevent Duty**, which requires local authorities and other "*specified authorities*" to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism.
- 3.11 Section 1 of the Terrorism Act defines terrorism and local authorities therefore use the that definition of terrorism when assessing risk, identifying extremist behaviours.

Counter-Terrorism Act 2008

- 3.12 The Counter-Terrorism Act 2008 strengthens the UK's ability to investigate, disrupt, and prosecute terrorism by expanding Police and intelligence powers.
- 3.13 Key elements of the Act include enhanced powers to gather and retain information, such as removing documents for examination and collecting fingerprints or DNA from individuals under control orders. It also introduces post-charge questioning of terrorism suspects, creates stricter sentencing provisions, and sets notification requirements for convicted terrorist offenders
- 3.14 The Act also includes provisions targeting terrorist financing, enabling authorities to freeze assets, monitor transactions, and restrict financial activity linked to terrorism.
- 3.15 In relation to the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act (CTSA) 2015, the 2008 Act forms part of the legal foundation that CTSA builds upon. While the 2008 Act focuses on enforcement, intelligence powers, and offender management, CTSA extends the UK's strategy into

preventative safeguarding, including the statutory Prevent Duty and Channel Panel obligations for local authorities.

- 3.16 CTSA requires councils to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, while the 2008 Act outlines how police and intelligence services act *after* radicalisation or criminality has occurred.
- 3.17 Together, the two Acts link safeguarding, information-sharing, and criminal justice responses into a cohesive national framework.

Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 Care Act 2014

- 3.18 The Care Act 2014 provides the statutory framework for adult safeguarding in England, giving local authorities clear legal duties to protect adults who have care and support needs and who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.
- 3.19 Under Sections 42 - 47, councils must make safeguarding enquiries, lead multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, and establish a Safeguarding Adults Board that includes the local authority, NHS and Police partners.
- 3.20 These Boards must create and implement safeguarding strategies and carry out Safeguarding Adults Reviews where necessary. The Act requires councils to prevent, reduce, and respond to abuse by leading a coordinated, multi-agency safeguarding system.
- 3.21 This safeguarding framework directly supports and overlaps with the Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. Adults at risk of radicalisation may also meet the Care Act criteria for safeguarding, particularly where care and support needs mean they may be unable to protect themselves from grooming, coercion, or exploitation by extremists.
- 3.22 As a result, Prevent for adults should be understood as a form of safeguarding intervention, with local authorities required to collaborate across Prevent, Channel, social care, health and police.
- 3.23 The Care Act underpins how councils identify vulnerability, share information, and coordinate early intervention to protect adults from harm, including the risk of radicalisation.

4. Partnership Forums

Channel Panel

- 4.1 The Channel Panel is a multi-agency safeguarding meeting designed to

protect people who may be vulnerable to radicalisation by assessing their level of risk and coordinating appropriate early-intervention support.

- 4.2 It is not an intelligence-gathering forum and does not deal with criminal investigations but instead focuses on helping individuals before any criminality occurs. Agencies share relevant, lawful, and proportionate information in order to build a complete picture of the person's vulnerabilities and determine whether tailored support (mentoring, education, health/family support, or specialist intervention) is required.
- 4.3 Participation in Channel is voluntary, and the process does not result in a criminal record. In Essex, the Channel Panel is led and chaired by Essex County Council (ECC) as the upper-tier local authority responsible for the countywide Prevent and Channel arrangements. The panel includes Essex Police Prevent Officers, social care, health, education, youth offending, probation, district/borough councils, and other safeguarding partners. ECC oversees the formation of each panel meeting, coordinates multi-agency contributions, and ensures decisions are recorded, reviewed, and aligned with national Channel Duty Guidance.
- 4.4 District and borough councils participate as statutory partners but do not lead Channel, they contribute local information, escalate concerns, and help deliver support plans agreed by the panel.

Community Safety Partnership Meeting (Quarterly)

- 4.5 The Castle Point and Rochford Community Safety Partnership exists to bring key agencies together, such as local councils, Essex Police, Fire and Rescue, health services, and probation, with a view to jointly reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, and safeguard vulnerable people.
- 4.6 Its core purpose, as set out through its Terms of Reference, is to identify local risks, prioritise community safety threats, and coordinate multi-agency strategies that protect residents and improve safety.
- 4.7 The Partnership directly supports early identification of individuals or locations where harm may emerge, mirroring the wider statutory requirement for local authorities and partners to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism as defined in the Prevent Duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- 4.8 By routinely sharing intelligence, monitoring patterns of risk, and addressing behaviours linked to exploitation or vulnerability, CSP activity aligns naturally with Prevent's safeguarding objectives, particularly early intervention and protection of those at heightened risk of radicalisation.

- 4.9 The Prevent Policy 2026 reinforces these links by requiring councils to build strong partnerships, reduce permissive environments, and ensure that safeguarding processes (Referral pathways, Channel participation, and Staff awareness), are fully embedded across community-facing services.
- 4.10 The CSP is one of the core forums through which meetings, data-sharing, and coordinated action planning, come together to strengthen the Council's ability to identify extremism-related risks early, escalate concerns appropriately, and deliver consistent safeguarding interventions across Castle Point and Rochford.

Internal Safeguarding Forum (Bi-Annual)

- 4.11 The Internal Safeguarding Group (ISG) brings together the Council's safeguarding leads, designated officers, and senior responsible staff to coordinate, monitor and strengthen safeguarding practice across the organisation.
- 4.12 Meeting biannually, the ISG oversees the implementation of safeguarding action plans, reviews emerging trends, receives escalated issues from operational officers, and ensures policy updates and audit requirements are met.
- 4.13 It operates to ensure that safeguarding remains an embedded, corporate responsibility across all service areas and will report any issues or concerns to the Council's Senior Leadership team.
- 4.14 The ISG reinforces the aims of Prevent and the Council's role in reviewing concerns, sharing intelligence, and improving practice complements the Prevent Policy's requirements for strong governance, cross-departmental training, and robust escalation mechanisms.

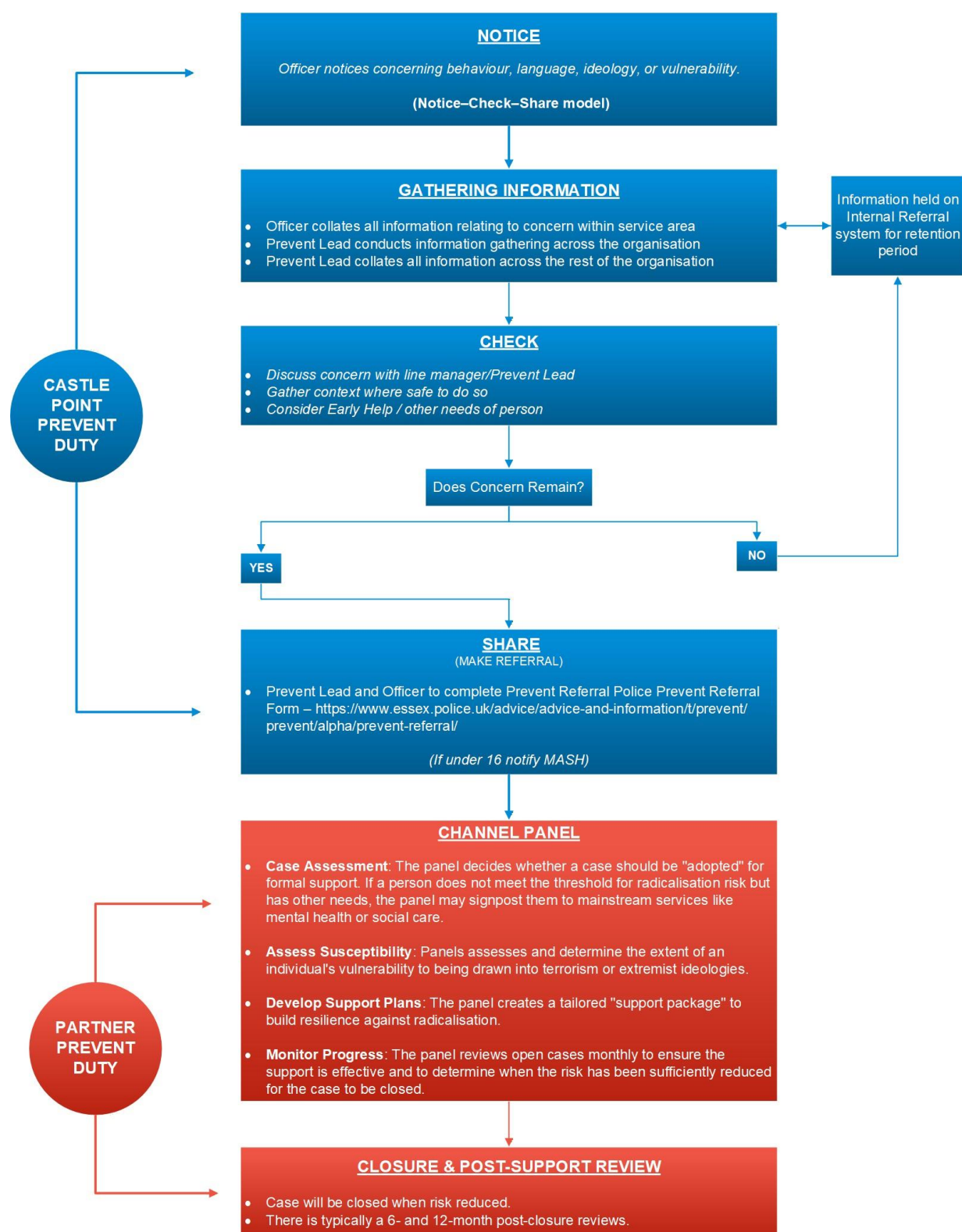
5. Castle Point Borough Council Prevent Referral Pathway

- 5.1 Fig 2 illustrates the Prevent referral process from the notification to or within the Council of a possible case to the closure and post support review.
- 5.2 The first role for the Council will be to collate information about the concerns within a service area and seek any information from other services – i.e. any signs of radicalisation that officers are aware of. This will be undertaken by the Prevent Lead within the limits of the Council's

legal information governance requirements as set out in Section 8 below.

- 5.3 The Prevent Lead discusses the case with their service manager and if a concern remain, the case is shared with partners ahead of a Chanel Panel.
- 5.4 Notwithstanding the process in Fig.2 if there are concerns about an immediate danger always call 999.

Fig 2. – The Prevent Referral Process



6. Reducing Permissive Environments

- 6.1 A permissive environment is any setting, either physical, organisational, cultural, or digital, where extremist or terrorist ideologies are able to circulate, go unchallenged, or take hold, increasing the risk that individuals may be drawn into radicalisation.
- 6.2 Under the Prevent Duty, specified authorities must take proactive and proportionate steps to ensure that their spaces, services, partnerships, and communication channels do not create opportunities for extremist narratives to grow.
- 6.3 The Council is committed to ensuring that all our Council owned environments, services, and platforms actively reduce the risk of permissive conditions arising. This includes safeguarding organisational culture, staff practice, public-facing activity, and online presence.

What is a Permissive Environment?

- 6.4 Permissive environments can arise when:
 - Extremist ideologies are tolerated, downplayed, or not appropriately challenged.
 - Staff are unaware of or unclear about their responsibilities under the Prevent Duty.
 - Community venues, grants, or platforms are used by groups or individuals promoting extremist views.
 - Policies, procedures, or decision-making do not consider extremism-related risk.
 - Digital or social media spaces associated with the Council allow extremist content, unmoderated harmful narratives, or dissemination of radicalising material.
 - Partnership working lacks sufficient oversight to identify or mitigate extremist influence.
- 6.5 Such environments do not require overt extremist activity. Simple lack of challenge, assurance, or oversight can create vulnerabilities.

Council Responsibilities in Reducing Permissive Environments

6.6 In line with the Prevent Duty Guidance (2023), the Council will ensure that:

- **Governance and Leadership**

Prevent considerations are embedded across all our relevant policies, risk assessments, and safeguarding procedures.

Senior leadership maintains oversight of Prevent risks and emerging threats and ensures staff are supported to respond appropriately.

Key decisions relating to public engagement, service delivery, or community partnerships take account of extremism-related risk.

- **Staff Competence and Training**

Staff understand what constitutes extremist ideology and how permissive environments can develop.

Mandatory Prevent training is provided for relevant teams, including Housing, Community Safety, Customer Services, Partnerships, and commissioned services.

Staff know how to challenge extremist narratives safely and how to escalate concerns using the Council's Prevent referral process.

- **Safe Use of Council Premises and Resources**

Council venues, meeting rooms, and community spaces will not host events that promote extremist ideology or provide a platform for those linked to extremist narratives.

The Council's grants, funding streams, and community support programmes will include appropriate due diligence checks to avoid inadvertently supporting extremist groups or individuals.

Third-party providers or partners using Council premises must comply with Prevent expectations.

- **Online and Communications Oversight**

Council-managed digital platforms (including websites, social media, and online forums) will be monitored and moderated to prevent dissemination of extremist content.

Staff responsible for communications will ensure that Council messaging does not inadvertently amplify harmful narratives or misinformation.

- *Partnership and Community Engagement*
The Council will work with partners (including Essex County Council, Essex Police Prevent Officers, community organisations, and statutory safeguarding bodies) to identify risks and maintain shared intelligence.

Engagement with community groups will include awareness of potential extremist influence and safeguarding considerations.

Council officers will escalate concerns promptly to Prevent partners when permissive conditions are identified.

Identifying and Responding to Permissive Environments

- 6.7 Where staff believe a permissive environment may be developing, they must:
- Record the concern clearly and factually.
 - Notify the Prevent Lead Officer or Community Safety Manager.
 - Take immediate steps, if safe and appropriate, to challenge or mitigate harm (e.g., cancelling a booking, moderating online content).
 - Seek support from Prevent Police Officers or the Essex Channel Team where a risk involves a specific individual.
- 6.8 Patterns of concern will be reviewed regularly to ensure lessons learnt are incorporated into practice.

7. Internal Prevent Leads

- 7.1 The Community Safety Manager is the Prevent Lead for the Council and can offer support and guidance in relation to prevent related concerns
- 7.2 The Assistant Director – Environmental Health, Licensing & Community is the Safeguarding Lead for the Council and can offer support and guidance in relation to concerns regarding vulnerable people who may be susceptible to radicalisation.
- 7.3 Together, these two officers lead the Council's response to Prevent.

- 7.4 Officers can also find practical help and guidance from the [ACT Early](#) website which provides a wealth of information relating to online radicalisation and spotting the signs of radicalisation.
- 7.5 The Council has an extensive training platform that includes Prevent radicalisation. Staff will be subject to this training, in particular all of the Leadership Team, managers and frontline staff.
- 7.6 Members of the Council are high profile members of the community who come into contact with residents on a daily basis. They are also an avenue for the prevention of radicalisation and members training, will, therefore, be provided.

8. Information Sharing Guidance

Purpose of Information Sharing

- 8.1 Information sharing is an essential component of the Council's Prevent Duty and supports the early identification of individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation. The Prevent Strategy requires authorised partners to share relevant, proportionate and necessary information to safeguard individuals from being drawn into terrorism and to support multi-agency work, including Channel. This approach aligns with Prevent's focus on early intervention, robust referral mechanisms, and strong partnership working as outlined in the Prevent Policy.

Alignment with Castle Point Borough Council Information Governance

- 8.2 All Prevent-related information sharing must comply with the Council's Information Governance framework, which sets out how the Council securely processes personal information in accordance with the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. The Information Governance webpages set out the Council's commitment to transparency, lawful processing, and the secure handling of personal data, supported by policies such as Data Protection, Freedom of Information, and Privacy Notices.
- 8.3 These principles underpin all safeguarding and Prevent information exchanges to ensure that the rights and privacy of individuals are respected.

Legal Basis for Sharing Information

- 8.4 Information may be shared under the Prevent Duty where it is necessary to carry out a task in the public interest or under official authority, in line

with Article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR and relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018.

- 8.5 In the context of safeguarding, additional lawful bases may apply under the “substantial public interest” conditions, particularly where information is shared to prevent harm, exploitation, or radicalisation. This reflects Prevent’s statutory foundation under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, which requires local authorities to have due regard to preventing people from being drawn into terrorism.

What Information May Be Shared

- 8.6 The Council may share information that supports the identification and assessment of concerns relating to radicalisation, including changes in behaviour, expressions of extremist views, contextual vulnerabilities, or any safeguarding concerns that may indicate an individual is at risk.
- 8.7 Only the minimum amount of information required to assess or mitigate risk should be shared, and all information must be accurate, up-to-date, and relevant to the concern being raised. This mirrors existing safeguarding arrangements and referral procedures within the Council’s Internal Safeguarding Group.

Who Information May Be Shared With

- 8.8 Information may be shared internally with the Prevent Lead, Community Safety Manager, Safeguarding Leads, and Designated Safeguarding Officers, and externally with partners such as Essex Police Prevent Officers, Essex County Council’s Channel Team, health services, education providers, and other statutory safeguarding partners.
- 8.9 Sharing must follow established Prevent referral pathways and reflect the multi-agency approach emphasised within both Prevent and broader safeguarding systems.

Secure Handling and Retention of Information

- 8.10 All Prevent-related information must be shared using secure channels and recorded accurately within authorised systems, in line with the Council’s wider Information Governance requirements.
- 8.11 Personal information must only be retained for as long as necessary and in accordance with the Council’s data retention policies and safeguarding procedures. These expectations reflect the Council’s commitment to secure data management and safeguarding best practice.

Transparency and Privacy

- 8.12 Where appropriate and safe to do so, individuals should be informed about how their personal data is being used for safeguarding and Prevent purposes, with reference to the Council's approved Privacy Notices.
- 8.13 However, in cases where notifying individuals would increase risk or undermine safeguarding actions, this step may be delayed or not undertaken, consistent with data protection legislation and Prevent guidance.

Support and Advice for Staff

- 8.14 Staff must seek advice from the Council's Prevent Lead or Community Safety Manager or the Monitoring Officer, if they are uncertain about whether information should be shared. No Prevent-related information should be shared informally or outside approved channels.
- 8.15 Training provided under the Prevent Policy ensures that staff understand the indicators of radicalisation, internal reporting procedures, and how to escalate concerns appropriately.