

BEV HUGHES
DEPUTY MAYOR
OF GREATER
MANCHESTER

Rt Hon Priti Patel,
Secretary of State for the Home Department
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

4th May 2020

Dear Home Secretary

SUBJECT: Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Crime and Fire and Rescue Service (HMICFRS) Report Counter-terrorism policing - An inspection of the police's contribution to the government's Prevent programme

I write in response to the recent HMICFRS inspection that examined the effectiveness of the police contribution to Prevent, one of the strands of the UK Government's CONTEST strategy for countering terrorism.

The report makes one recommendation for ***the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) national Prevent lead and each force Prevent lead to review the attendance of force representatives at Channel panels. This is to ensure that police are correctly represented by decision makers who can contribute to managing risk.*** I wish to respond to this as follows:

Police representation on panels to support people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism is a statutory duty under the *Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015*. Greater Manchester Police advise that the Counter Terrorism Police North West (CTPNW) Regional Prevent lead has reviewed attendance at every Channel panel in both Greater Manchester and the North West region and confirms each has police representation. Each representative has a responsibility to represent the police service and contribute to the mitigation of terrorism risk.

Channel peer reviews will recommence this year, following the successful roll out of the Greater Manchester Dovetail pilot, which saw the responsibility for Channel move from the police to local authorities. Although different to Channel Panels, the Channel peer reviews provide an opportunity to consider learning from both specific cases and the systems and processes in place. In the 18-19 peer reviews, many of the cases referred involve some element of mental ill health and to ensure that safeguarding lessons in relation to mental health continue to be made, the Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership have made a commitment for a safeguarding representative to attend each of these meetings.

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I note the report also makes a recommendation around recognising vulnerability to radicalisation as a key element of public protection. Although this recommendation does not directly relate to Chief Constables, I would like to comment on this.

The attack on the Manchester Arena in May 2017 was a harrowing and sobering reminder of how quickly innocent people's lives can be devastated. It was also a reminder of how important the police and other public services are in maintaining public safety, caring for those who have been harmed and in helping to rebuild lives.

In the immediate aftermath of the attack, a Community Recovery Group, jointly chaired by Greater Manchester Police and Manchester City Council, was established. The work of the Community Recovery Group was steered by the Political Oversight Group led by the Leader of Manchester City Council and the Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester (Police and Crime). Alongside this, in September 2017, the Greater Manchester Mayor established a Commission, which was asked to consider any learning in relation to community cohesion and integration.

Both pieces of work highlighted areas of learning and I continue to support borough level implementation by aligning hate crime funding with the priorities that have been identified, examples of which include:

- The need to provide young people with access to opportunities around learning, training, employment and socialisation was seen as crucial. With this in mind, the free bus pass for young people was introduced in August 2019. Alongside this, the Youth Combined Authority have been working with local colleges and businesses to develop opportunities around mentoring, which was identified in the research as a key protective factor in relation to radicalisation.
- A Cohesion Summit hosted in July 2019, which included workshops where engagement tools and techniques were debated and explored.
- In some local areas, robust tension monitoring provides the police and partners with a real opportunity to diffuse situations in communities, which have the potential to escalate quickly. There are some excellent examples of where graffiti, or social media comments have been addressed quickly and removed. The preventative impact of work such as this cannot be underestimated.
- Whilst a significant amount of training has been provided for partners over the course of the last year, specific issues in relation to countering narratives and holding challenging conversations have been raised by frontline staff. Work has been undertaken to identify a suitable organisation to work at a Greater Manchester level to support this work.
- Chaired by Greater Manchester Police, the Greater Manchester Hate Crime Working Group is attended by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority and borough hate crime and cohesion leads. The group monitors hate crime trends, shares best practice and receives awareness raising inputs from third sector advocacy organisations.

The Manchester Arena attack illustrated how international events can impact upon lives in Greater Manchester. In the weeks and months that followed, diverse communities of Greater Manchester came together in a phenomenal show of solidarity and defiance of this hateful extremism. However, alongside this, we also witnessed an increase in hate and crimes of intolerance. I am committed to working with Greater Manchester Police and other partners to build and develop a distinctive community led Greater Manchester approach to challenging radicalisation. I have committed funding to each borough to fund hate crime prevention activities. This includes the provision of small grants for locally-organised events

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by local community groups to bring people from different backgrounds together to celebrate diversity and promote cohesion.

Yours sincerely



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Policing, Crime and Criminal Justice

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