

To: City Executive Board

Date: 3rd March 2010

Item No:

Report of: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: "BUILDING RESILIENCE" – PREVENTING VIOLENT
EXTREMISM FUNDING – RECOMMENDATIONS FROM
SCRUTINY

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To outline the scrutiny committee's recommendations concerning the funding for preventing violent extremism (PVE) and the work of the Oxford Preventing Violent Extremism Strategy and Commissioning Group (SCG)

Key decision - No

Executive lead member; Councillor Antonia Bance

Report approved by:
Scrutiny Committee Chair; Councillor Jim Campbell

Legal: Jeremy Franklin

Finance: Jeanine Graham

CEB is asked to consider the following and say if it:

- Agrees; or
- Disagrees and why

Recommendation(s):

The Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee asks the CEB to:

(1) Consider the following recommendations from the scrutiny committee and ensure that they are acted upon:-

- (a) Councillors (in particular Ward members of areas in which PVE projects were taking place) should received sufficient information to enable them to advise groups wishing to apply for PVE funding;**
- (b) Members of the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee should be informed of the means by which PVE applications were assessed by the SCG;**

- (c) In response to concerns from the Scrutiny Committee, CEB should ensure the appointment of representatives from 2 different political parties to the SCG;
- (d) Formally request that the minutes of the SCG meetings be sent to the Chair of the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee, and that he/she receives periodic briefings from Thames Valley Police.

1 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 A previous committee nominated two Councillors as scrutiny representatives on the Oxford Preventing Violent Extremism Strategy and Commissioning Group (SCG). This body guides the allocation of Preventing Violent extremism (PVE) funding in Oxford. As this representation has now ended, the scrutiny committee asked for a report updating it on work and achievements so far.
- 1.2 The committee discussed the report (**Appendix 1**) at its meeting on 10th February 2010. Superintendent Andy Murray (Area Commander, Thames Valley Police) was also present at the Chair's invitation to assist with the discussion.
- 1.3. During the discussion, the process for awarding grants was discussed, as well as the potential role for scrutiny.

2. Scrutiny Committee Conclusions and Observations

Role for Councillors in Grants process.

- 2.1 The Committee felt that all Councillors were not fully aware of the grants process, nor were all members as fully involved as they might be. It would be helpful if this could be rectified by means of additional information about the criteria for grants, and the grants process, being supplied to them.
- 2.2 This was especially relevant for members of wards where PVE initiatives were taking place.
- 2.3 Councillors should be able to help and advise groups seeking their help when making an application for PVE funding.
- 2.4 It was appreciated that some areas of this work were sensitive and confidential. However, members of the Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee should know how PVE applications were assessed by the SCG.

Conclusion:-

- (a) That information concerning the criteria for grants and a summary of the process should be sent to all members.
- (b) Members of the Communities and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee should be provided with information about the assessment of applications by the SCG

Committee Representation on the SCG

- 2.5 The Committee expressed disappointment at the perceived lack of involvement offered to the scrutiny committee. It was regretted that the committee's representation on the SCG had now come to an end. It was felt that this could lead to misinformation and misunderstandings.
- 2.6 The lack of Councillor involvement was a weakness in what was otherwise a very good initiative. Involvement of members from more than one political party was recommended.

Conclusion:-

- (c) CEB should ensure the appointment of representative from 2 political parties to the SCG

Liaison with the Strategy and Commissioning Group

- 2.7 The Committee noted that the Council was not the accountable body as far as PVE was concerned, nor did it own the overall strategy. The Council had to follow a programme that was laid down by the Government and be guided in its work by the Police and other partners.
- 2.8 It was felt that closer liaison with the Police, including regular briefings of the Chair, would help develop greater understanding of this project as it changed and developed over time.

Conclusion:-

- (d) Minutes of the meetings of the SCG should be sent to the Chair of the Committee on a regular basis, and he/she should receive periodic briefings from the Police.

3. Comment from the Board Member

Councillor Antonia Bance has commented as follows:

I appreciate the comments of the scrutiny committee and apologise once again for not being able to be present for their discussion. Although I am the chair of the Strategy and Commissioning Group, this

group operates as a partnership body and it would thus be inappropriate for the city to act on these recommendations without consulting our partners. I will raise the issues from the scrutiny committee at the next meeting of the Strategy and Commissioning Group, which will take a decision on how to respond, and will write to the Chair of the Community and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee with a response following that meeting.

4. Comment from the Strategic Director

No comment has been received.

Report Author:

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To: Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee

Date: 10th February 2010

Item No:

Report of: Head of Community Housing and Community Development

Title of Report: Preventing Violent Extremism funding.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To update the community on the use of PVE funding allocated to Oxford City Council by the CLG.

Report Approved by:

Finance: Janine Graham

Legal: Jeremy Franklin

Recommendation(s): To note the report.

BACKGROUND

1. The Communities and Partnership Scrutiny Committee has requested a report on the progress of the Oxford Preventing Violent Extremism Strategy and Commissioning Group (SCG).
2. Prevent is one of four elements of the CONTEST strategy that focuses on strengthening local communities to resist extremism. The other three areas are:
 - a. Protect – security of vulnerable sites
 - b. Prepare – to mitigate the impact of an attack
 - c. Pursue - to stop terrorist attacks by targeting identified perpetrators
3. The SCG was set up in 2007 to locally deliver the Prevent element of the government's Counter Terrorism Strategy, CONTEST. Members of the group include the Portfolio Holder for Social Inclusion (Chair), an Oxford City Council Member (Deputy Chair), the Oxford Police Commander, Head of Community Housing and Community Development, Oxfordshire County Council's Director of Community Safety and Oxfordshire County Council's

Head of Service for Youth Inclusion. The SCG is supported by members of the Community Safety Team and Thames Valley Police personnel.

FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS

4. In 2007, Oxford was chosen as a Prevent Pathfinder site and allocated £50k for the financial year. The SCG allocated these funds to a number of projects. Subsequently, Oxford has been allocated a three year funding stream, detailed in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Oxford PVE funding allocations

| | |
|---------|----------|
| 2007-08 | £50,000 |
| 2008-09 | £105,000 |
| 2009-10 | £143,929 |
| 2010-11 | £194,830 |

THE COMMISSIONING PROCESS

5. In 2008, the Community Safety Team took over the administration of the funds following a re-structure within the council. This resulted in an approach to commissioning based upon a newly developed local strategy (Appendix 1). The strategy sets out the priority areas for commissioning and describes how communities can apply for funds. From the outset it was made clear that unsuitable projects would not be funded even with the pressure of spending funds within certain time constraints, projects would be community inspired and community led and the commissioning process would be as transparent and objective as possible, based on evidence of need in a very difficult subject matter.
6. The three broad priority areas for commissioning projects in Oxford are in the following areas:
- harness the aspirations of our youth to ensure that they are able to contribute to our society and the future prosperity of Oxford;
 - support our religious institutions by consolidating their role as an anchor for community activities, services and leadership;
 - empower women to play a leading role in family and community affairs.
7. The SCG have further developed its knowledge of our Muslim communities through the development of a Risk Assessment Framework. The framework draws together demographic information and responses from semi-structured interviews to identify communities who may need additional support in some areas. This has been used to good effect in identifying and commissioning a project within the Somali community to provide educational support to young people and women.
8. Prospective project leads are required to complete a simple application that is submitted to the Community Safety Manager. A meeting is held with the project lead to discuss the project proposal and suggest amendments. The applicants are vetted by TVP and the project is then

presented to the SCG with a recommendation on funding. If successful, there is on-going dialogue with the project lead during the life of the project.

PROJECT MONITORING

9. All projects are required to supply financial and output monitoring reports. The reports help to identify how successful the project is and where there are areas that need addressing. Funding is usually allocated on a quarterly basis and is dependent upon the completion and review of the monitoring form.

STRATEGY OUTCOMES

10. Home Office guidance does not address the issue of measuring successful outcomes from Prevent activities. However, National Indicator 35 seeks to measure the processes and systems in place to successfully manage the Prevent funding. This is a self-assessment process based on four core areas, each with a maximum possible score of five. At present the SCG score themselves at 12.
11. The Government Office of the South East is a member of the SCG and are aware of the mechanisms used in Oxford. The Oxford Building Resilience Among Our Communities Strategy, our Risk Assessment Framework and Prevent Action Plan are all heralded as good practice in the South East.

PROJECTS COMMISSIONED

12. The Table 2 provides a brief description of the projects funded and Table 3 details the funding allocations. Table 4 provides a list of projects that were not successful in obtaining funds.

Table 2: PVE funded projects with descriptions:

| Project | Description |
|---|--|
| The Lounge | Drop in facility for Muslim young people in East Oxford. |
| Pupil Empowerment Programme 1 | This project has ceased with effect from 12/1/09 - Project will be incorporated within the School's Toolkit |
| One Extreme to Another | A play that covers issues of extremism within the UK including other issues that affect the Muslim community |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project 1 | To provide workshops to engage with isolated Muslim women |
| Oxford Council of Faiths launch | Multi-faith walking event in the city centre. |
| MECO | Debate on Islam in the 21st century. |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project 2 | To provide workshops for Muslim women in Wood Farm and Rose Hill |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project report | This project will provide a report on the Muslim Women Empowerment Project |
| ROSHNI Asian Women's Project | Women's Project to raise awareness of extremism and empowerment of Muslim |

| | |
|---|--|
| | women |
| OAC Community Cohesion | To provide meetings and events for the Afghan Shia Muslim Community |
| Ahlul Bayt Centre | To provide meetings and events for the Shia Muslim Community |
| Sphere Project | An action day to launch the web- based intra-faith student project |
| MOSAIC software Autavis | An online learning programme that provides information on Islam and its meaning. The programme highlights the fact that violent extremism causes harm and fear of harm. |
| Central Mosque Notice boards | Notice board facilities for community advertisements. |
| Gates at the rear of Stanley Road Mosque | Security measures for the Mosque entrance. |
| Oxford and Cherwell Valley College | To provide an Eid party in November for all young Muslim people attending Oxford College. To employ an Imam to attend the College one day per week to provide advice and guidance to young people. |
| Somali Association | This project aims to provide workshops and educational sessions for young people and the Somali community |
| Central Mosque | Governance support for the Mosque |
| Medinahh Mosque | Governance support for the Mosque |
| Bangladeshi Mosque | Governance support for the Mosque |
| Muslim Youth Outreach Worker | Youth activities in East Oxford. |
| Roshni Oxford Asian Women's Group – Young People's Project | Young people's project for English lessons and Q'uranic lessons. |
| Oxford Afghan Community Women's Group | Outreach worker to work with Afghan women and provision of English lessons. |
| Moharram Project | Discussion forums during the Moharram week. |

Table 3: PVE funded projects (projects in *italic* are in development)

| Activity | 2007-08 Forecast | 2007-08 Actual spend | 2008-09 Forecast | 2008-09 Actual spend | 2009-10 Forecast | 2009-10 Actual spend | 2010-11 Forecast | 2010-11 Actual spend |
|--|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| The Lounge | £11,000 | £11,000 | | | | | | |
| Pupil Empowerment Programme 1 | £18,900 | £18,900 | | | | | | |
| One Extreme to Another | £4,728 | £4,728 | | | | | | |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project 1 | £6,500 | £6,500 | | | | | | |
| Oxford Council of Faiths launch | £5,000 | £5,000 | | | | | | |
| MECO | £3,000 | £3,000 | | | | | | |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project 2 | | | £12,140 | £12,140 | | | £13,000 | |
| Muslim Women Empowerment Project report | | | £2,000 | £2,000 | | | | |
| ROSHNI Asian Women's Project | | | £9,900 | £9,900 | | | £10,000 | |
| OAC Community Cohesion | | | £6,500 | £6,500 | | | £6,500 | |
| Ahlul Bayt Centre | | | £3,800 | £3,800 | | | £3,800 | |
| Sphere Project | | | £910 | £910 | | | | |
| MOSAIC software | | | £5,000 | £5,000 | | | | |
| Autavis | | | | | £2,440 | £2,440 | | |
| Central Mosque Noticeboards | | | | | £529 | | | |
| Gates at the rear of Stanley Road Mosque | | | | | £825 | £825 | | |
| Oxford and Cherwell Valley College | | | | | £3,205 | | £2,000 | |
| Somali Association | | | | | £13,158 | | £13,500 | |
| Central Mosque | | | | | n/a | | | |
| Medinahh Mosque | | | | | £8,510 | | | |
| Bangladeshi Mosque | | | | | n/a | | | |
| <i>Muslim Youth Outreach Worker</i> | | | | | £30,000 | | £30,000 | |

**Name and contact details of author: Richard Adams, Community Safety
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Background papers: Building Resilience in our Communities Strategy

Version number: 0.1