

To: Huntingdonshire Community Safety Partnership
From: Chief Inspector Russell Waterston
Date: 23rd July 2009
Title: Update from Counter Terrorism Partnership Conference

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The intention of this report is to provide member of HCSP FPCG with an update in relation to above conference that took place at Newmarket Racecourse on 30th June 2009.

1.2 This report will therefore update the members as follows:

- Format of the event
- Key Issues covered
- What this means for Huntingdonshire

2.0 Format of the event

2.1 On Tuesday 30th June the regional Counter Terrorism Intelligence Unit hosted a partnership conference seeking to review how partners can work better together in the context of the government's Contest Strategy. The conference focussed on increasing our understanding of why individuals become involved in violent extremism and how, through joint working, we can all begin to identify individuals who may be vulnerable to radicalisation and find ways of diverting them from that path.

The conference used "10kv" (Ten thousand volts) technology to enter questions and discuss issues via lap top computers. This technology allowed the attendees to enter comments and questions anonymously which were then merged into the conference and encouraged debate.

3.0 Key issues covered

3.1 An input was given from Asim Hafeez (OSCT) during which he outlined how the manner in which we deliver our services and engage with our communities can have a positive or negative (isolating) effect on individuals.

3.2 Health should be better involved as there had been great lessons learned from the Nicky Reilly case. There was however, a clear indication that there was a willingness to engage with local partners, particularly around information sharing.

- 3.3 Graham Robb, an ex Head Teacher now working for DCSF discussed the Prevent Toolkit for Schools and stirred debate on how to include young people in solving the VE challenge. Graham's presentation showed that we need to place our efforts in tapping into schools/young people to avoid radicalisation and spot the early signs.
- 3.4 An outline from the Quilliam Foundation on how radicalisation can occur through exploiting how foreign policy is interpreted as picking on Islam and how this generates a desire within Muslims to stand alongside their brotherhood (Ummah) across the world.

4.0 What this means for Huntingdonshire

- 4.1 Engaging with communities in Huntingdon on the VE agenda is difficult as the perception of threat is low. Similarly the delivery of Prevent has been perceived as peaking behind net curtains and reporting what your neighbours are up to.
- 4.2 In fact one of the strongest components of the day came from Asim Hafeez who outlined a model; which identified the following:
- There is a demand amongst Muslims for a greater knowledge of Islam.
 - There is a supply of bad material on Islam from the violent extremist voice.
 - There is a harvest ground of social components which can stabilise or destabilise communities and individuals e.g. employment prospects, grievances, unfairness, feelings of self-worth and achievement.

All of the above can be kept in balance if there is strong resilience. But if the resilience is weakened by any one component, the door is opened to radicalisation (or indeed knife crime /gang culture/ drugs / bullying / prostitution / relationship problems etc)

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that HCSP members note the content of this report.