

FOI: 15280097 Prevent delivery plan

Your reply to FOI request number: 7783977 indicates that Tower Hamlets develops Prevent Delivery Plans, and that Prevent work in the Council is scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Please release:

- All Prevent delivery plans from 2011 to the current date
- Any and all evaluation or scrutiny documents related to Prevent
- A list of funded organisations or projects, and the funding amount given, from 2011 to present.

Response:

This request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that Tower Hamlets Council holds the information you requested.

All Prevent Delivery Plans from 2012 to 2018 are attached (with redactions).

The London Borough of Tower Hamlets does not hold a delivery plan for 2011-12.

However we are withholding some of that information (redacted from documents) since we consider that the following exemptions apply to it.

Section 24 (1) and 31 (1) (a) of the Act – National Security and Law enforcement

Information regarding organisations which receive Prevent funding is highly sensitive. Disclosure of information regarding Prevent funding and the names of the organisations that deliver Prevent could endanger the safety of those individuals who work for the identified organisations. Releasing this information, may allow third parties to compare the activity levels of the Prevent programme in different parts of the UK. This may facilitate the identification of intelligence regarding the areas of the UK where the threat to national security has been and is considered to be the greatest. This has the potential to seriously undermine the objectives of the Prevent project, which is a crucial element of the Government's strategy to counter terrorist and extremist activity in the UK 'at source'. It may facilitate the identification of areas where relatively little or no Prevent projects have taken or are taking place and consequently highlight potential target areas to those organisations which Prevent is designed to combat thereby revealing where intelligence

shows a threat level serious enough to attract counter measures and compromising the effectiveness of the strategy.

Section 38(1) (b) – Health & Safety

S.38 - Health and Safety

- (1) Information is exempt if its disclosure under the Act would, or would be likely to
(b) endanger the safety of any individual*

Disclosing the information regarding the organisation that work with Prevent would potentially divulge the existence of detailed information about organisations and individuals engaged in the delivery of, and who are supporting a range of activities to prevent terrorism. The information requested would jeopardise the personal security of individuals and organisations by potentially making them targets of reprisals or reactions, thereby endangering their wellbeing and health and safety. This information could put individuals at considerable risk of serious injury or harm from those who support terrorism and seek to damage the UK's interests, and harm individuals within its communities. The information would enable terrorists or criminals to gain knowledge about where counter terrorism, law enforcement and public safety measures are focussed and could target individuals, organisation and areas where resources are low. This exposes the individuals, organisations and the public to a greater risk.

Section 40 – Personal information

Section 40 relates to personal information and is an absolute exemption which does not require consideration of the public interest

Section 43 – Commercial interests

Section 43:

- (1) Information is exempt information if it constitutes a trade secret.
(2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).
(3) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, compliance with section 1(1)(a) would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests mentioned in subsection (2).*

Disclosure of information relating the organisations that we work with could potentially suggest the existence of confidential information relating to such partner organisations. This could reveal commercial interests and negatively affect the commercial viability of such organisations. Disclosing the information requested would attract unwarranted scrutiny from individuals involved in terrorist or criminal activities, weakening the confidence of organisations to operate freely and effectively in delivering Prevent initiatives.

Request for information on Prevent funding.

We do not currently disclose information on Prevent funding. The reasoning and exemptions are below:

Section 24 (1) and 31 (1) (a) of the Act – National Security and Law enforcement

S.24 (National Security)

S.24(1) Information which does not fall within section 24(1) is exempt information if exemption from section 1(1) (b) is required for the purpose of safeguarding national security.

31(1)(a) - Law Enforcement

S.31(1) Information which is not exempt information by virtue of section 30 is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice –

(a) the prevention or detection of crime.

We do not release information on Prevent funding in order to protect the aims of the Prevent Strategy. This information is exempt from disclosure by virtue of the exemptions at section 24(1) and 31(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act. Disclosure of information relating to funding would open up detailed information about how Prevent resource is apportioned and potentially the identity of areas of priority and show where capabilities are focused. This may impact negatively on the delivery of Prevent, and on the range of activities deployed to prevent terrorism. This includes activity to disrupt those who promote terrorism, and protect individuals who are vulnerable to recruitment, or who have already been recruited by extremists.

Some information is exempt from disclosure under Section 24 of the Freedom of Information Act (FoIA). Disclosure of the information poses a threat to the interests of national security; the information is being withheld in order to safeguard national security. To use this exemption we are required to undertake a public interest test. The matters which were considered in applying the public interest test are as follows:

Factors in favour of disclosure

There is a general public interest in disclosure and the fact that openness in government increases public trust in, and engagement with, the government. In relation to the redacted content the disclosure of some information could enhance the openness of government and help the public understand, in greater depth, how the government is responding to a range of factors that can draw people into terrorism or pull people away from it. It is also in the public interest to be assured that the government's counter terrorism strategy is robust and appropriate. It would also provide opportunities for other agencies to be able to support the prevention of terrorism.

Factors in favour of withholding

Some parts of the delivery plan comment on the current counter terrorism risk and threat which is sensitive information removed from other classified documents. There is a serious terrorist threat to the United Kingdom and disclosing this information into the public domain could put national security at risk by jeopardising or negating the government's efforts to prevent acts of terrorism and terrorist related crime. Disclosing materials requested could also provide useful information to extremists. Such extremists would then be able to provide advice to those they wish to

radicalise on how to change behaviour to avoid detection or influence individuals receiving support from project providers or any other associated parties. They could also undermine police and other agency operations to prevent terrorism.

We have determined that safeguarding national security interests is of paramount importance and that in all circumstances of the case it is our opinion that the public interest test clearly favours the non-disclosure of information covered by section 24(1).

It is considered that the greater public interest therefore lies in not providing the information at this time. In coming to that conclusion, the public interest in providing the information has been carefully weighed against any prejudice to the public interest that might arise from withholding the information; in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

This response therefore acts as a refusal notice under section 17 of the FoIA for part of the request for the redacted information.

Scrutiny Documents

All scrutiny documents can be found on the Tower Hamlets intranet site and are publically available documents. These can be found here:

<http://democracy.towerhamlets.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=327>

The Home Office Peer Review of Prevent Delivery in Tower Hamlets can be found here:

https://www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/ignl/community_and_living/community_safety_crime_preve/Prevent/Prevent_Peer_Review_Report.aspx

Funded Organisations

This information has been withheld for reasons outlined above.