

## **North Yorkshire Channel Panel Terms of Reference**

Full guidance on Channel Panels is provided in the Channel Duty Guidance (Home Office) [www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-guidance)

Panel members (and their deputies) must read the guidance in full, in conjunction with these Terms of Reference.

### **Purpose of the Channel Panel**

Channel is a programme which focuses on providing support at an early stage to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. The programme uses a multi-agency approach to protect vulnerable people, from radicalisation and extremism, by:

- **Identifying individuals at risk**
- **Assessing the nature and extent of that risk, and**
- **Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individual concerned.**

Channel may be appropriate for anyone who is vulnerable to being drawn into any form of terrorism. Channel is about ensuring that vulnerable children and adults of any faith, ethnicity or background receive support before their vulnerabilities are exploited by those that would want them to embrace terrorism, and before they become involved in criminal terrorist related activity.

The Channel process is managed by the Local Authority, who will chair the panel, in conjunction with the police, on behalf of the Home Office. The Channel panel is the principal decision-making and coordinating body for the Channel programme in North Yorkshire. Decisions and actions made by the panel will be based on discussions and input of all core members, with the final decision resting with the Chair. These decisions will be recorded in the minutes.

### **Legislation**

Sections 36 to 41 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CT&S Act) sets out the duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. In practice the legislation requires:

- The local authority to ensure that a multi-agency panel exists
- The local authority to chair the panel. (In the case of two tier authorities, it is the responsibility of the county council to chair the panel and to take on any related responsibilities)
- The panel to develop a support plan for individuals accepted as Channel cases
- The panel to consider alternative forms of support, including health and social services, where Channel is not appropriate; and
- All partners of a panel, so far as appropriate and reasonably practicable, to cooperate with the police and panel in the carrying out of their functions.

## **Membership**

The Channel Panel will include the following core representation:

- North Yorkshire County Council- Head of Safer Communities (Chanel Panel Chair)
- North Yorkshire County Council, Children's Safeguarding Unit (Proposed Vice Chair)
- North Yorkshire County Council- Safer Communities Corporate Development Officer (Channel Panel Coordinator)
- North Yorkshire Police (Channel Police Practitioner/ Prevent Coordinator)
- North Yorkshire County Council, Adults Social Care
- North Yorkshire County Council, Children's Social Care
- North Yorkshire County Council, Prevention Services
- North Yorkshire County Council, Youth Justice Services
- Adult Safeguarding, NHS
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)
- York Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Harrogate District Foundation Trust
- National Probation Service
- Probation- Community Rehabilitation Company.

### **To be co-opted as appropriate**

- Community Cohesion Team
- Housing
- Voluntary sector
- Local Delivery Team Managers/ District Council representatives
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
- Education representatives.

## **Channel Panel Chair**

The Channel Panel Chair is responsible for:

- Having oversight of all Channel cases in their area
- Ensuring that the appropriate representatives are invited to each meeting as panel members
- Establishing effective relationships across statutory agencies to ensure effective cooperation over information sharing and attendance at panel meetings
- Establishing the appropriate support plan for identified individuals by using the expertise of the panel
- Ensuring an effective support plan is put in place, and that consent is sought from the individual before that plan is put in place
- Ensuring individuals and/ or organisations on the panel carry out their elements of the support plan so that an effective support package is delivered
- Manage meeting so that they are conducted within time allowed
- Oversee administration of the agenda and record of meeting and actions agreed
- Monitor the panel's effectiveness and produce an annual report.

## **Channel Panel Members**

Panel member must have a good knowledge of *Prevent* objectives. Panel members will:

- Follow up actions agreed and report back on progress and outcomes from their own agency
- Record and hold information securely
- Attend and participate at the Channel Panel, or send an appropriate named deputy from their agency
- Members and any deputies sent in their absence must have enough seniority to be able to make operational decisions for their organisations
- Contribute to information sharing, risk assessment and decision-making about the most appropriate intervention to address identified vulnerabilities
- Represent and act as a SPOC- Single Point of Contact for their organisation. Channel Panel members will be expected to raise awareness around this agenda and promote the necessity to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. It is expected as SPOC, Panel members will promote their position and responsibility, providing advice and guidance to practitioners within their organisation.

## **Lead Worker**

A Lead Worker may be invited to attend a Channel Panel at a specific time in relation to a child or young person or adult whom they are working with. They may be a teacher, social worker, health professional, Probation Officer, etc. Their role is:

- To attend at time invited or provide email update to Chair
- Follow up actions agreed.

## **Operation of the Channel Panel**

The Channel Panel will

- Meet at least monthly although, when necessary, an emergency meeting can be convened if the individual's vulnerabilities require prompt consideration
- Provide details to Panel members so accurate updates can be shared at the meeting
- Ensure multi-agency support packages are tailored to the specific needs of individuals
- Monitor and challenge progress to ensure that follow up actions take place, and assess the outcomes of interventions
- Review the impact of the work of the Panel and learn lessons for future practice
- A Quorum for core membership will consist of the Chanel Chair and Chanel Police Practitioner as a minimum. Sufficient representation of other statutory agencies is required to reflect the multi-agency partnership
- Chair or Vice Chair or both can hold a meeting.

## **Vulnerability Assessment Framework**

Channel assesses vulnerability using a consistently applied vulnerability assessment built around three criteria.

**Engagement** with a group, cause or ideology

**Intent** to cause harm

**Capability** to cause harm.

The criteria are considered separately as experience has shown that it is possible to be engaged without intending to cause harm and that it is possible to intend to cause harm without being particularly engaged. The three criteria are assessed by considering 22 factors that can contribute to the vulnerability of radicalisation. These factors taken together form a holistic view of the vulnerability of an individual that will inform decisions on whether an individual needs support and what kind of support package may be appropriate.

### **Accountability**

- The running of the panel is accountable to the Chief Executive of North Yorkshire County Council
- Each agency represented is accountable through that agency's management system
- The Chair of the panel will provide an annual report and exceptional reporting when required to the Local Safeguarding Board for Adults or Children (depending on the age of the individual), Prevent Strategic Board, Children's Trust, North Yorkshire Community Safety Partnership and York and North Yorkshire MAPPA (Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements) Strategic Management Board
- Police will own the terrorism risk and the Local Authority will own the safeguarding risk associated to the cases discussed.

### **Confidentiality**

- Meetings are confidential and documents cannot be disclosed without the consent of the Chair
- Documents must be stored securely, in accordance with each agency's policy on record keeping. (Records on the Channel Case Management System (CMIS), currently managed by the police will be kept for a minimum 6+1 years nationally, in line with the management of police information (MOPI) guidelines. Minutes/ actions/ audit records should be retained for at least this period. These records will be relied up on when reviewing historic cases.
- Partners will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of each panel meeting
- Panel members' personal information contained within minutes, agendas and reports will be protected from public disclosure within the terms of the Freedom of Information Act
- The disclosure of information outside the meeting will be considered a breach of confidentiality unless agreed by the Panel Chair or by other panel members, during the meeting
- Panel members are bound by existing North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children and Adult Board Procedures and the North Yorkshire Overarching Information Sharing Protocol.

### **Process**

Once the referral has been assessed by the Channel Police Practitioner not to be malicious, misguided or misinformed, then the process for information sharing and potential

discussion at Channel Panel will start. Channel members are expected to respond to information sharing requests promptly (within 5-10 working days).

The Channel panel will regularly review cases at 6 and 12 months after closure. The Channel Panel Practitioner will drive this process, updating the Local Authority Chair on upcoming cases to be reviewed.

### **Information sharing**

Agencies should apply the principles outlined within the North Yorkshire overarching information sharing protocol and the Safeguarding Children / Adults Boards Information Sharing Protocols. [Incorporate link of ISA document here](#)

### **Consent**

As participation in Channel remains voluntary, section 36(4)(b) of the CT&S Act requires that informed consent to be given by the individual (or their parent/guardian in the case of a child) in advance of support measures being put in place. All individuals who receive support through Channel must be made aware that they are receiving this as part of a programme to protect people from being drawn into terrorism; what the aims of the process are; and what to expect. Where someone does not wish to continue with the process, it may be appropriate to provide alternative support through other services.

All practitioners and managers who work with children and families or adults at risk will need to make decisions on a case by case basis about sharing personal and confidential information.

Once a child or adult has been accepted on to Channel and an intervention proposed, that child or adult must be made aware that they are subject to Channel.