

Witness Name: DCS Sarah Kenwright

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THE SOUTHPORT INQUIRY

**WITNESS STATEMENT OF
DETECTIVE CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT SARAH KENWRIGHT
ON BEHALF OF COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING NORTH WEST**

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Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 I, Detective Chief Superintendent Sarah Kenwright, make this statement on behalf of Counter Terrorism Policing North West ('CTPNW'). I am the Head of CTPNW, a role I have held since 5 December 2022. I am a Merseyside police officer seconded to Greater Manchester Police ('GMP') for the purpose of conducting this role.
- 1.2 I have 23 years' service having started my career in August 2001. I am a PIP4 qualified Detective, and have conducted various uniformed policing, Investigations and Intelligence roles during my career to date. My first role within Counter Terrorism Policing was as a Detective Chief Inspector of Merseyside Special Branch, from January 2016 to November 2017. At this point, I became the Head of Intelligence at CTPNW until January 2020 when I returned to my home force. I subsequently returned to CTPNW in December 2022, having successfully applied for the Head of Unit role. I am also currently the Intelligence Capability lead for Counter Terrorism Policing.
- 1.3 I am providing this written statement in response to the Inquiry's Rule 9 request dated 4 June 2025 ('the Rule 9 request'). I am authorised to make this statement on behalf of CTPNW and the Chief Constable of GMP.
- 1.4 I would like to firstly express my heartfelt condolences to the victims, families and all those affected by the Southport incident. As a Merseyside officer, the area is known well to me and I appreciate what a significant impact this tragic and senseless act has had on the town, its community and the wider public.
- 1.5 This statement is based on my personal knowledge and experience, as well as work undertaken by the CTPNW Inquiry Response team. Officers have coordinated and liaised with a number of colleagues with relevant knowledge and experience across the organisation. The statement therefore relies upon their contributions as well as a review of contemporaneous written material and various reports that have been prepared in response to this event.
- 1.6 This statement focuses on the period from December 2019 to July 2024, which spans the period from when Axel Rudakubana ('AR') was first brought to the attention of the Prevent team, to the date on which the attacks took place ('the Relevant Period').

- 1.7 I have sought to limit my use of technical policing language and abbreviations where possible.

Section 2: Corporate Structure, Roles and Responsibilities

Overview

- 2.1 This section sets out the structure and governance in place for CTPNW during the period referred to in the Phase 1 Terms of Reference, namely during AR's interactions with CTPNW during the Relevant Period. It outlines the roles and responsibilities of key individuals and teams in CTPNW during the Relevant Period.

UK Strategy for Countering Terrorism ('CONTEST')

- 2.2 The police approach and structure to counter terrorism ('CT') during the Relevant Period reflected the UK Government's Strategy for Countering Terrorism ('CONTEST') dated June 2018 [SK1/01 – CTPNW000245] ('which was updated in July 2023 [SK1/02–CTPNW000246]'). The aim of CONTEST was to reduce the risk to the UK and its citizens and interests overseas from terrorism, so that people could go about their lives freely and with confidence.
- 2.3 This strategy was built on four work strands, known as the '4Ps' which were:
- a. Prevent: to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism;
 - b. Pursue: to stop terrorist attacks;
 - c. Protect: to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack; and
 - d. Prepare: to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.
- 2.4 Each of these connected work strands sought to reduce an element of the risk from terrorism ('intent, capability, vulnerability and impact'), and collectively provide a balanced and comprehensive end-to-end response to that threat.
- 2.5 The Home Secretary was, and remains, responsible for CONTEST and the Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism ('OSCT') in the Home Office leads on supporting the Home Secretary in developing, coordinating and implementing CONTEST. This has also enabled oversight of CT Policing and the coordination of responses to CT related crises. During the Relevant Period, OSCT led on the management and delivery of the Prevent programme, it owned the policy on Pursue, was responsible for overseeing cross-government work on Protect and managed the Government's plans for responding to a terrorist act on Prepare.
- 2.6 The police contribute to all four work stands of CONTEST. With respect to:

- a. Pursue – CT Policing, worked jointly with M15, to collect and develop intelligence, run CT investigations and disrupt terrorist activity;
 - b. Prevent – CT Policing worked with local forces to safeguard individuals and communities vulnerable to radicalisation. It supported Local Authorities and other partners in delivering their statutory duty under Prevent. Along with local forces, CT Policing sought to disrupt those who seek to radicalise;
 - c. Protect – CT Policing delivered protective security for the public, places, Royalty and VIPs; and
 - d. Prepare – CT Policing delivered specialist response capabilities to protect the public in the event of a terrorist attack.
- 2.7 During the relevant period, CT Policing consisted of a network of operational units based regionally across the UK with a headquarters that provided specialised national and international capabilities. Forces collaborated through an operating model and Chief Officers vested authority in both the National Lead for Counter Terrorism (routinely the Assistant Commissioner in the Metropolitan Police for Specialist Operations) and the Senior National Coordinator, who had strategic and operational oversight of CT Policing. The National CT Policing Headquarters ('CTPHQ') aids the co-ordination and national policing governance of these CT policing units across England and Wales and which work in concert with CT command within the Metropolitan Police Service. This ensured that CT Policing could operate as a single entity whilst anchored and connected to the local communities they serve. Like the rest of policing, it had been overseen by the National Police Chiefs Council ('NPCC') under its Counter-Terrorism Coordination Committee.
- 2.8 Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism Act 2015 ('CTSA') places a duty on specified authorities listed in Schedule 6 of the CTSA, in the exercise of their functions to have "*due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism*" ('**the Prevent Duty**'). Specified authorities included the police (including police forces in England and Wales), local government, criminal justice, education and childcare, and health and social care authorities and agencies. Channel forms a key part of Prevent with section 36 of the CTSA setting out a duty on local authorities and partners of local panels to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism ('**the Channel Duty**'). In England and Wales, this Channel Duty occurs through Channel panels. Multi-Agency led or Channel cases are led by local authorities and involve multiple agencies. Participation by subjects in Channel was, and remains today, voluntary and requires

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.

- 2.9 The police played, and continue to play, an essential role in most aspects of Prevent. The police are expected to take action in prosecuting, disrupting and deterring extremists working in partnership with other agencies (as set out in the Revised Prevent Duty Guidance ('2015') [SK1/03 – CTPHQ000011 - D77; SK1/04 – CTPHQ000012]). Through a multi-agency approach to protect people at risk from radicalisation, and when vulnerable individuals were identified, the police would:
- a. In partnership with other agencies, including local authorities, consider appropriate interventions, including a Channel programme which provided support to vulnerable individuals who were at risk of being drawn into terrorism;
 - b. Work in partnership with and support Channel Panels chaired by local authorities to co-ordinate Channel partners and Channel actions; and
 - c. Support existing intervention providers and identify potential new ones.

Corporate Structure: CTPNW

- 2.10 CTPNW was set up as a CT policing Unit in 2007. CTPNW and the other CT Units based across the UK were established to strengthen the UK's response to the threat from terrorism and domestic extremism ('DE').
- 2.11 Before this time, CT work was conducted across the UK by special branches that sat within police forces at a local level and these varied in size. In 2015, a national review of special branches was undertaken, and as a result of which, the NPCC recommended that there should be regional collaboration of special branch functions. This construct ran under a legally binding regional collaboration agreement signed by the nine Lead Force Chief Constables and their respective Police and Crime Commissioners. This agreement included clear arrangements for local, regional, and national tasking through the CT Network.

CTPNW Prevent

- 2.12 CTPNW provides support and assistance with terrorist investigations to Cheshire Police, Cumbria Constabulary, Greater Manchester Police, Lancashire Constabulary, Merseyside Police, and The Isle of Man Constabulary. CTPNW has been a national asset and a resource for the whole of the CT policing network. CTPNW Prevent provided specialist support and capabilities to manage the risk and vulnerabilities of those who

were of interest to authorities due to their extremist views or who have links to those engaged in terrorist-related activity.

- 2.13 Delivery of Prevent was locally led and driven by the analysis of the terrorism threat in communities. The Prevent Duty required local authorities, schools, colleges, higher education institutions, health bodies, prisons and probation, and the police to consider the need to safeguard people from being drawn into terrorism and it sat alongside long-established duties on professionals to safeguard vulnerable people from exploitation from a range of other harms, such as drugs, gangs, and physical and sexual exploitation. The Prevent Duty and the Channel Duty required local authorities to establish or make use of existing multi-agency groups to assess the local picture, coordinate activity, and to put in place arrangements to monitor the impact of safeguarding work.
- 2.14 The CTPNW Prevent Team was managed through a single line-management structure, with Police Officers and Police Staff based in each of the five Force Areas, but concentrated in the three Hubs, namely Merseyside/Cheshire Hub; GMP Hub; and Lancashire/Cumbria Hub. An organisational chart setting out the structure of Prevent at the Relevant Time is at SK1/05 – CTPNW000057.
- 2.15 In addition to these three Hubs, there was a Vulnerability Support Hub which was a clinical consultancy service and mental health team that provided dedicated support to the CTPNW Prevent Team for Subjects that may be vulnerable. At the Relevant Time, the Vulnerability Support Hub was led by Gaynor Egerton and Detective Sergeant Dominic Heslop, with PC Cara Papworth as the North East supervisor [SK1/05 – CTPNW000057]. This team was located with the Prevent Team in Manchester and Leeds. Whilst this Vulnerability Support Hub is now managed nationally and forms part of a national service, members from this Hub remain located with Prevent Teams in Manchester and Leeds.
- 2.16 CTPNW Prevent was led by a Senior Responsible Officer ('SRO') who was Superintendent Louise Harrison (from 22 April 2019 to 16 February 2020) and Superintendent Dawn McNally (from June 2020 to 25 April 2022). The SRO was the strategic lead, and managed and oversaw the CTPNW Prevent team. The Regional Prevent Co-ordinator ('RPC'), David Wells, who has held this position since 1 December 2007, reported to the SRO. The SRO and RPC were based in Manchester, supervising three Hub Police Inspectors and a Regional Safeguarding Lead Officer.

2.17 In each of the three geographical Hubs, there were Counter-Terrorism Case Officers ('CTCOs') and Counter-Terrorism Case Officer Supervisors ('CTCO Supervisors'). The role and responsibilities of the CTCOs and CTCO Supervisors during the Relevant Period are set out in policies and guidance issued by CTPHQ, including the Policy for Prevent Practitioners: Management of CT/DE Risk within the Community, June 2018 ('**Prevent Practitioners Policy**') [SK1/06 – CTPHQ000116] and the Counter-Terrorism Case Officer Guide, December 2020 ('the **CTCO Guide**') [SK1/07 – CTPHQ000059]. CTCOs and CTCO Supervisors were required, amongst other things, to complete, the National Prevent Foundation Course which was a weeklong national course. There was also training throughout the year for Prevent officers and staff so that people were up to date with current issues relating to Prevent functions. Professional Development Reviews also ensured that Prevent staff had up to date knowledge and dealt with any gaps in knowledge with all CTCOs and staff.

2.18 In addition, during the Relevant Period, there were Prevent Triage located in the GMP Hub. The Prevent Triage were almost entirely made up of police staff who would receive the referrals from Fixed Intelligence Management Unit ('FIMU') and start information gathering from partner agencies and referrers. They worked closely with FIMU and would make an initial assessment on whether the referral met the criteria for Channel and pass this initial assessment and the information gathered on to the CTCO. A CTPNW Prevent Regional Triage Policy and User Guide ('**CTPNW Triage Policy**') was in place from about May 2020 which set out the role of the triage team and the triage stages [SK1/08 – CTPNW000385]. During the Relevant Period there was also a Consequence Management and Engagement team in the GMP Hub. The Consequence Management function related to actions taken to mitigate the impact of CT police investigations on local areas and the responsibilities of this team have since been passed back to CT investigations teams. As for Engagement, this involved engagement officers going out into the community and conducting training for teachers on CT matters. This role also no longer exists in CTPNW Prevent.

2.19 In addition to the SRO and the RPC, during the Relevant Period, the key individuals at CTPNW Prevent were as follows:

- a. CTPNW Prevent Staff based in Lancashire during the Relevant Period were:
 - i. Detective Inspector, Darren Mangan (from 1 April 2019 to present);
 - ii. Two Sergeants – one of whom would have been a CTCO Supervisor;
 - iii. Six Police Constables (Counter Terrorism Case Officers); and

- iv. Three Police Staff.
- b. The CTPNW Prevent Staff based in Lancashire who had contact with AR were:
 - v. Sergeant Kathryn McIntyre (from 5 March 2018 to 30 April 2021);
 - vi. Sergeant Rachael Treharne (from 4 January 2021 to 24 June 2022);
 - vii. Constable Carmen Thompson (from 3 December 2018 to 31 August 2021);
 - viii. Constable Christopher Lawrence (from 1 January 2017 to 31 August 2021);
 - ix. Constable Russ Davies (from 1 February 2019 to present); and
 - x. Constable Rachel Johnson (from 28 June 2021 to present).

Pursue and Fixed Intelligence Management Units

- 2.20 Every CT unit nationally has been required to have an intelligence management function which comes under the 'Pursue' element in the CONTEST Strategy. CTPNW Intelligence Management teams were positioned in three main hubs, based at Lancashire Constabulary Headquarters ('Hutton'), Merseyside Police Operations Centre and Greater Manchester Police Headquarters. During the relevant period from 2019 to January 2020, I led the Intelligence strand of CTPNW as the SRO for Intelligence. After January 2020, the SRO was Detective Superintendent Vicki Ellis. Detective Chief Inspectors ('DCI') and Detective Inspectors ('DI') reported to SROs in each Intelligence Hub.
- 2.21 The National Standards for Intelligence Management ('NSIM') set out the Intelligence Management Unit ('IMU') configuration, including the responsibilities of the various IMUs, including the FIMUs (The NSIM IMU Configuration published in May 2018 is at **SK1/09** – **CTPNW000271** and January 2021 is at **SK1/10** – **CTPNW000270**).
- 2.22 The FIMU managed responsibility for the receipt and assessment of all intelligence entering the CT network. FIMU officers and staff made decisions as to how intelligence was managed and progressed through to a recognised outcome. FIMU worked to the NSIM and helped provide context, understanding and mitigation of CT threat, harm and risk. FIMU were required to monitor incoming information and intelligence to ensure that it was dealt with in a timely manner and met the accepted quality standards in relation to sanitisation, grading, handling codes, protective markings, access and visibility, and safeguarding.

- 2.23 FIMU teams consist of police officers and staff who are trained and vetted to conduct intelligence assessment as per NSIM. All intelligence assessors were subject to mandatory training before being authorised to assess intelligence, such as the National Common Intelligence Application¹ Core course, NCIA Assessor course and NSIM Assessor course, developed by CTPHQ's National Operational Development Unit ('ODU') and delivered by locally based trainers in CTPNW. When a significant policy was implemented, or an update to NSIM was made, the ODU would roll out national refresher training to all intelligence assessors nationally. In Lancashire, FIMU were co-located with Lancashire Prevent officers with effective lines of communication both formally and informally between the two including daily stand-up meetings.
- 2.24 In December 2019, at the time of the first assessment, the DCI who was the senior leader of the Lancashire Cumbria Intelligence Hub was Graham Hill. DI Hazra Patel was the Intelligence Manager responsible for the FIMU and the FIMU comprised of two sergeants, Sajid Mahmood and Tom Evans and 12 intelligence assessors. In 2021, at the time of the second and third referrals, DI Mark Saunders was the Intelligence Manager responsible for FIMU, the sergeants were DS Andy Prior and DS Mark Birchall. The assessors pertinent to the referrals regarding AR were [Officer B] (in relation to the first referral), [Officer A] (in relation to the second referral) and DC Tim Aspinall (in relation to the third referral).

Section 3: Policies and Procedures

Overview

- 3.1. In this section, I set out the relevant corporate policies, procedures and protocols in place during the Relevant Period. Insofar as there were changes or amendments during that time, I will seek to identify those changes or amendments.
- 3.2. Both central Government and CTPHQ have issued a range of policies and guidelines which underpin the CT functions and are carried out by CT policing nationwide, including CTPNW. These national policies and guidelines seek to drive a consistent approach nationwide in line with the CONTEST strategy and duties set out in the CTSA.
- 3.3. In addition to the policies and guidance I have mentioned above, the following policies and guidelines applied and/or were updated during the Relevant Period as follows:
- a. **The Prevent Practitioners Policy** which simplified the methodology of Counter Terrorism/Domestic Extremism ('CT/DE') risk management by identifying core

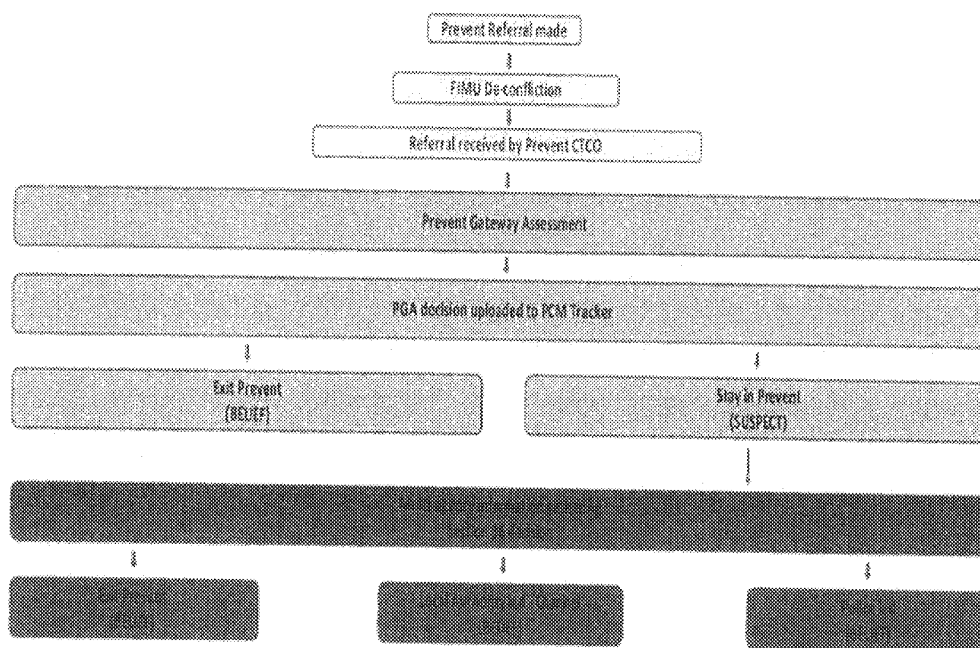
¹ The NCIA is a database used by UK police forces for CT investigations.

activities which must be completed by Prevent Practitioners for each case [SK1/06 – CTPHQ000116];

- b. **The CTPHQ CTP- Prevent Policy 2020 ('the Prevent Policy')** which was updated to reflect changes since 2018. The Prevent Policy underpinned the national Prevent strategic plan by setting out overarching principles whilst allowing flexibility and adaptations for future changes. It served as a framework that allowed regions to identify, promote and build upon existing good practices [SK1/11 – CTPHQ000034];
 - c. The CTCO Guide was used in conjunction with the Prevent Policy. The CTCO Guide was designed to support all speciality CTP-Prevent officers and staff to identify, assess and manage terrorism vulnerability and risk effectively. It endeavoured to provide step-by-step guidance on tasks that CTCOs and CTCO Supervisors were expected to undertake in the course of their duties [SK1/07 – CTPHQ000059];
 - d. **Channel Duty Guidance 2015** was guidance issued under section 26(7) and 38(6) of the CTSA for members of a panel and partners of local panels on the duty in the CTSA for local authorities to ensure that Channel panels were in place for their areas to provide support for people vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism [SK1/12 – CTPHQ000121]. It was revised in 2020 and updated in 2023 [SK1/13 – CTPHQ000122]; [SK1/14 – CTPHQ000123]. Channel was first piloted in 2007 and rolled out across England and Wales in April 2012. Channel formed a key part of the multi-agency Prevent Strategy. As set out further below, the Channel Process was subject to a number of pilots, known as '**Operation Dovetail**', and guidance was also issued in relation to these pilots;
 - e. **Prevent Gateway Assessment Guidance ('PGA Guidance 2018')** which can be found at SK1/15 – CTPNW000287; and
 - f. **Dynamic Investigation Framework ('DIF') 2019 and DIF 2021** [SK1/16 – INQ000000000; SK1/17 – CTPNW000259].
- 3.4. In relation to FIMU, national consistency of Intelligence assessment in CT Policing was underpinned by the NSIM. The implementation and review of appropriate policy and guidance was directed via the Intelligence Capability Board, a national board that ensured standard processes and operating principles were adhered to by action and audit. Between December 2019 to May 2021, the Intelligence Capability Board was chaired by the head of CTPNW, Detective Chief Superintendent Dominic Scally. The purpose of NSIM was to provide a consistent national standard for the management of information and intelligence within the police CT/DE network. All referrals were assessed by FIMU in

accordance with NSIM. The first edition of NSIM was issued in September 2013 and, as set out further below, versions 3 ('NSIM3') and 4 ('NSIM4') were used nationally between December 2019 and May 2021 [SK1/18 – CTPHQ000047; SK1/19 – CTPHQ000048].

- 3.5. The CTCO Guide provides an overview of Prevent Case Management. The Prevent Case Management process map that applied in 2018 is set out in the Prevent Case Management Process Overview 2018 [SK1/20 – CTPNW000317]. This was updated in the CTCO Guide 2020 [SK1/07 – CTPHQ000059] as below:



- 3.6. Within the Prevent Practitioners' Policy [SK1/06 – CTPHQ000116] and subsequently the CTCO Guide [SK1/07 – CTPHQ000059], the core activities of Prevent Case Management are set out.

Operational Dovetail

- 3.7. From Autumn 2016, a pilot of Operation Dovetail was run in nine local authority areas across England and Wales, including Lancashire [SK1/21 – CTPHQ000045]. This pilot sought to move 'ownership' of Channel from CT Police into local authorities with a local authority Channel Co-ordinator who would be responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of

Channel and many functions that were previously completed by the Channel Police Practitioner ('CPP'). Outside of the pilot areas the role of CPP continued to exist and functioned as normal.

- 3.8. Between April 2019 and March 2024, the Home Office piloted a whole-region version of this local authority-led Channel in the North West of England. A Channel Dovetail Regional Hub Pilot Guidance for Local Authorities and Police ('the Dovetail Guidance') was issued by the Home Office and CTPHQ in September 2018 [SK1/22 – CTPHQ000052].

Section 4: Decision Making and Actions: First referral

Prevent referrals: background

- 4.1 I will now turn to the three Prevent referrals that were made about AR between 2019 and 2021, setting out a chronology of the key decisions that were made and outlining how those decisions align with the key policies referred to above. I acknowledge where observations or criticisms have been made of the approach taken and seek to respond to those where appropriate.
- 4.2 It is worth noting for context that prior to the first referral, AR contacted ChildLine to disclose to them that he was being bullied, and during that call he admitted that he was carrying a knife to school. Please see more details at SK1/23 – CTPNW000318. Before the first referral to Prevent was made, and throughout AR's interactions with Prevent, he was known to police as well as being involved with numerous safeguarding services, including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services ('CAMHS'), social services, and educational support services, some of which were designed to assist him with undiagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder ('ASD') and other issues.

Circumstances of the first referral

- 4.3 On 5 December 2019, Janet Lewis, the Designated Safeguarding Lead ('DSL') at Acorns School in Lancashire, sent what was intended to be a Prevent referral to the relevant 'concern' email address at Lancashire police ('the First Referral') [SK1/24 – CTPNW000154]. The following day, Lancashire police asked the DSL to resend the referral, advising her to populate a Prevent referral form, which the officer attached. Due to IT issues, the referral was eventually resubmitted and received on 10 December.
- 4.4 The referral form explains that AR had started attending Acorns School from 17 October 2019, following his permanent exclusion from Range High School in Sefton after "taking a knife to school to injure a fellow student" [SK1/24 – CTPNW000154].

4.5 The first referral sets out several different concerns relating to AR's behaviour at school, setting out accounts from staff members detailing numerous incidents involving AR dating from 7 October 2019 (which predates his time at Acorns School) to 4 December 2019. The substance of the concerns, broadly, related to the following behaviours:

- a. On 15 November 2019, AR was found in class researching school shootings in America, and when chastised by his teacher for doing so, he tried to engage the teacher in conversation about the topic which the teacher refused to do. The school contacted AR's father to inform him of the incident and asked for an update on AR's progress with CAMHS. AR's father confirmed they were awaiting a referral from the school. AR's explanation to his father about his behaviour was that he had been copying another student's actions and had simply clicked on a link to a story on the subject;
- b. On 29 November 2019, AR refused to sit down at the beginning of class and instead was pacing near his seat and punching his hand forcefully. He made several comments during that lesson about people fearing those they do not know and people's mistrust of strangers "*in case they get murdered*". He was restless in class, and at one point jumped up and forcefully punched an item hanging from the ceiling;
- c. On 3 December 2019, while in art class, AR referred to images of guns on the internet and images of a severed head. That same day, a teacher observed AR making what they considered to be an inappropriate comment, including graphic remarks about videos on YouTube of people hurting themselves; and
- d. On 4 December 2019, AR was heard using offensive language with reference to a politician whose image was shown during a PHSE class. AR was not receptive when his teacher sought to explain why the language should not be used. That same day, he made comments about his key worker, accusing her of homophobia, sexism and racism.

4.6 Within the referral form, the DSL also included:

- a. Transcripts of email correspondence confirming she had tried, unsuccessfully, to refer AR to a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub ('**MASH**'). On 3 December 2019, the DSL emailed MASH regarding the need for a referral for AR to access targeted youth prevention in Sefton. The referral form included an email from PC Paul Harrison, West Lancashire Police Community Safety Officer ('**PCSO**'), dated 5 December 2019, requesting an urgent referral to MASH, with a view to the information being passed to the appropriate departments in police and other agencies. The referral form indicates

some confusion as to whether MASH had received the DSL's earlier referral correspondence, but PC Harrison confirmed on 5 December that he had forwarded the DSL's email to a contact at MASH; and

- b. Correspondence with PC Harrison about a meeting to discuss AR, due to take place at Acorns School on 5 December 2019. PC Harrison declined to attend the meeting on the basis that the case was *"of a higher risk than community safety to deal with"*.

FIMU assessment

- 4.7 On 11 December 2019, [Officer B], Lancashire FIMU, created an Intelligence report for AR noting he had: *"taken a knife into school due to bullying, whilst at school he has been researching school shootings in America"* [SK1/25 – CTPNW000145].
- 4.8 On the same day, 11 December 2019, Merseyside FIMU were made aware that AR had been arrested and taken into police custody on suspicion of an assault under s.47 of the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, and for possession of a bladed instrument, after attending Range High School (his previous school) with a knife and a hockey stick, intending to injure one of his former schoolmates. Further information can be found within the vulnerable persons safeguarding referral at SK1/26 – CTPNW000161.
- 4.9 PC Harrison shared this information with the CTCO at Lancashire Police while AR was in custody, including information indicating that the assault at Range High School was premeditated, given that AR had pre-booked a taxi to take him to the school. AR was released from police custody on the evening of 11 December and returned the following day with his mother acting as his appropriate adult. AR was interviewed in the presence of his legal representative, providing a written statement in which he admitted to the assault and possession of the knife and hockey stick. He stated that he did not intend to use either weapon to kill the individual in question. AR denied researching inappropriate material using his school's internet. Separately, and contrary to the position taken in AR's written statement, AR allegedly confided to a police officer from Merseyside police that he had taken the hockey stick to the school, planning to beat the victim with it, and planned to use the knife to *"finish him off"*. AR is said to have expressed no concern to the Merseyside police officer about the prospect of receiving a prison sentence.
- 4.10 The police report was referred to the Crown Prosecution Service ('CPS'), and AR was released on bail, with conditions attached, pending a decision on charge. All devices were seized from AR's home as part of the investigation.

Joint Assessment Team referral

- 4.11 [Officer B] referred the case for further intelligence assessment by the Joint Assessment Team ('JAT'), a triage team containing members of CTPNW and MI5. The referral was received by the JAT on 12 December 2019 [SK1/27 - CTPNW000146].
- 4.12 The JAT referral contained the following information:
- a. A summary of the relevant intelligence to be considered by JAT, which included details of AR's contact with ChildLine, the issues raised by the Acorns School DSL in the Prevent referral form, and AR's recent arrest;
 - b. The results of the FIMU research performed against the PNC, NCIA, PND, Lancashire police traces, and the Open Source research searching for AR on the internet. All results produced were 'no trace', except the PND search which contained traces in Lancashire only; and
 - c. [Officer B]'s assessment of AR's case: *"I have reviewed the above information in relation to [AR], this is a young lad who has a number of issues. Both his parents are fully aware of this referral. There is very little known about the family on Lancashire Police Systems. This is a concerning individual who has initially been bullied and has then progressed to viewing school shootings and severed heads and people hurting themselves. It is unknown what access he has to the internet at home and if he has viewed anything of CT DE concern at his home address."*
- 4.13 DC Phil Blundell completed the JAT Assessment and returned it to [Officer B] on 13 December 2019 [SK1/27 - CTPNW000146]. DC Blundell assigned a JAT Outcome of 'PREVENT/ Local Authority MASH' and requested that any new intelligence of a CT/DE nature be submitted for re-assessment by the JAT. The following rationale was recorded:

"There is no apparent ideology found and from reporting any context into how extreme the research conducted in ICT was. It is not known if the school had firewall to inhibit any results being viewed.

There seemed to be a common theme with regards weapons and this has been acted out with his arrest for possession of weapon at school on 11/12/2019.

AR has various issues and has been previously referred to Social Services.

The intelligence and relevant research at present does not meet any Lead or Police threshold for investigation under CT / DE banner.

However, consideration now that there is a Local Authority MASH led intervention following arrest and previous history at both schools that preference would be for continuance and recommend Dovetail team and Channel Panel are sighted with regards safe-guarding and AR vulnerabilities going forward.

Any new intelligence of CTDE nature for re-assessment."

Referral to Prevent

- 4.14 On 16 December 2019, FIMU wrote to Prevent stating: "...this is relation to Axel RUDAKUBANA who has been researching school shootings in America and videos he was arrested in Merseyside as he went to his old school armed with a knife and hockey stick to assault a pupil (details attached to email) he has admitted the offences and is currently on bail pending cps advice. This has been returned form [sic] the JAT for a prevent referral to be inputted onto the pcm tracker and referral to channel/dovetail ill create the action asap..." [SK1/28 – LANC000175].
- 4.15 All details, case information and actions conducted by the FIMU were copied into the Prevent Case Management Tracker ('PCMT') on the same day by Prevent Officer PC Russ Davies.
- 4.16 On 17 December 2019, the FIMU officer conducted research checks on the Police National Computer ('PNC') for AR and his family with no trace [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]. Two incidents of concern were identified from the research:
- a. AR was considered to be a high-risk vulnerable person ('PVP') as he was a victim of bullying who had carried a knife at school. His parents were aware, and the police had spoken to him with a high risk PVP submitted; and
 - b. Reference to the National Crime Agency ('NCA') informing the police about reports a child (AR) contacting them saying he was being bullied at school and taking a knife to school. Officers visited AR at his home address.
- 4.17 I can confirm that the reference to the NCA calling the police in the relevant research was an incorrect description of those events. In fact, AR called Childline to report that he was being bullied at school and admitted taking a knife to school. Accordingly, Childline made the decision to breach confidentiality on 7 October 2019 and report this to the NCA, who

subsequently reported it to local police the same day. Further information can be found within the NCA Briefing at SK1/29 – **CTPNW000019**

Prevent action taken

- 4.18 On 17 December 2019, AR's case was allocated to PC Carmen Thompson as the appointed CTCO. A colleague in the Community Safety Team ('CST') invited her to attend a multi-agency meeting relating to AR that day. That meeting had already been arranged following AR's arrest and before PC Thompson became involved, but the CST gave her the opportunity to attend because it would be relevant to her considerations. This was not an unusual occurrence (i.e. to be invited last minute to such a meeting) depending on when Prevent become involved, and it was common to attend multi-agency meetings in the early stages of case handling. CT considered it would be helpful to attend.
- 4.19 PC Thompson therefore attended an Emergency Child Protection conference ('a multi-agency professional strategy meeting') at The Youth Zone pertaining to AR on 17 December [SK1/30 – **CTPNW000132**]. The meeting included representatives from Children's Social Care, Mental Health, Investigating officer from Merseyside Police, early Education and Prevent CTPNW. Information and updates were shared by a range of organisations involved with AR noting:
- a. He had been arrested by Merseyside Police on 11 December 2019 for an assault on a child at his previous school (Range High School) and for possession of an offensive weapon and a bladed article and that his devices had been seized. AR had been released from police custody to return on 12 December 2019;
 - b. He had been permanently excluded from his previous school after taking in a knife with a view to injuring a fellow student;
 - c. He was receiving counselling every two weeks, a forensic CAMHS appointment had been made and AR was on a waiting list for an ASD assessment; and
 - d. Actions were set for the Mental Health team to carry out an urgent assessment and liaise with the investigation officer. Prevent confirmed they would visit AR the next week, and the next strategy meeting was set for 6 January 2020.
- 4.20 PC Thompson updated the PCMT on 18 December 2019, to confirm that she would be arranging a visit to AR at home to take place the following week. While not necessarily a requirement, PC Thompson preferred, where possible, to visit the individuals subject to Prevent referrals, which she considered provided a better basis for assessment.

- 4.21 On 20 December 2020, the PCMT was updated by PC Thompson, confirming that the referral had moved from 'Registered' to 'Initial Assessment'. PC Thompson recorded that further information needed to be obtained through a Prevent visit to AR.
- 4.22 On the same day, the PCMT was updated by PC Thompson, confirming that the referral had moved from 'Initial Assessment' to 'Police Led'². PC Thompson recorded that since there was *"very little information about this case, a prevent visit to be conducted to carry out a risk assessment and determine the appropriate course of action when further information is obtained."* [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318].
- 4.23 On 23 December 2019, the Police Case Management Plan ('PCMP') was prepared by and uploaded to the PCMT by PC Thompson. The PCMP framework considered indicators which would indicate AR's CT/DE vulnerabilities, including, but not limited to grievances, motivations, exposure and/or association with extremist groups/individuals/institutions. The following points were outlined in the plan:
- a. COMPLEX NEEDS: AR was described as having undiagnosed ASD and mental health issues, and may also have special educational needs. AR displayed ASD traits and the only emotions he was able to express were sad and angry. AR was recorded as having *"no understanding of remorse or consequences for his actions"* and had expressed that there was *"something wrong with him he is unable to express himself emotionally or make eye contact"*. AR felt resentment towards his brother who he did not consider to be truly disabled. AR's parents did not challenge his behaviour and appeared unable to cope. The assessment recorded that the following enquiries were being undertaken: *"The school has referred the subject to CAMHS, Forensic CAMHS, and for ASD assessment. A referral to the vulnerability hub to be submitted by prevent."*
 - b. GRIEVANCES: PC Thompson considered that there was *"no evidence of any grievances at this stage further information is required to assess this...Prevent to visit the subject to establish whether the subject has any grievances."*
 - c. ENGAGEMENT: When asked to describe any other suspected reasons, motivations, or 'push & pull' indicators that may have had an effect on AR in relation to suspected CT/DE issues, PC Thompson noted that AR was *"vulnerable due to his undiagnosed*

² Police Led cases or Police Led Partnerships ('PLP') (previously known as Police Case Management or Police Management) were managed by the police with partner agencies involved. PLP concerned the management of individuals, groups or institutions that were not suitable for Multi-Agency Led (Channel), but which had identified Prevent-relevant issues requiring support or mitigation, led by Police but working in partnership with other agencies

mental health and ASD, the triggers for his behaviour are not yet understood and further work needs to be done to establish this...The subject requires a Mental Health and ASD assessment to fully understand his triggers."

- d. IDEOLOGY: PC Thompson acknowledged that AR had been researching school shootings on the internet, as well as making a comment about the terrorist attack on the Manchester Arena being a "*good thing*". However, PC Thompson considered it unclear at the time of the PCMP as to whether AR had an ideology insofar as relevant to Prevent.
- e. INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS & INSTITUTIONS: The PGA reported that there was no evidence that AR was linked to any individuals, groups or institutions at that stage, but further information would be obtained during the Prevent visit.
- f. CAPABILITIES: AR's recent assault arrest was discussed, and further information required in relation to relevant capabilities was to be obtained by PC Thompson during the Prevent visit.
- g. INTENT: AR's recent assault arrest was discussed, as well as AR's mention of being previously bullied by the victim. However, the PCMP reported that there was "*no evidence of [bullying] and it is possible that he is using this as an excuse to justify his attack. It is believed that the subject has a list of 3 targets 2 named individuals and one unknown female this has not been corroborated at this stage. The subject has been using aggressive behaviour and has shown hatred towards his brother and the male he wanted to assault...Further information to be obtained on prevent visit to establish intent.*"
- h. INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA: AR's research of school shootings on school IT systems was noted. Since all of AR's devices were seized from his home address upon his arrest, the assessment recorded that there was no further information in relation to AR's online access at that stage. An item for further enquiry was recorded: "*The school are making enquiries into his internet search history whilst at school; police are examining the subject's devices. Prevent to make further enquiries during their visit.*"
- i. ESCALATIONS, TRIGGERS & WARNINGS: AR's escalation in behaviour was acknowledged, "*he has become more violent and aggressive and has been arrested for possession of a bladed weapon and section 47 assault.*". The assessment recorded that further information needed to be obtained as to what AR's triggers were,

and ASD and mental health assessments were required as well as a referral to the mental health vulnerability hub.

- 4.24 All of the above indicates the Prevent team's intention to gather more information before making a decision as to whether the case was suitable for Prevent / Channel.
- 4.25 The PCMP recorded AR's case as requiring a priority banding of 'Standard Priority' and the recommended route at that time was considered to be 'Police Led'. There are a number of factors that might influence the recommended banding – an officer making that assessment will look at the whole picture. Things that might increase the priority banding might include if there appears to be a fixation or an obsession with a particular subject. At the time, PC Thompson believed that this was the appropriate banding based on the information available.
- 4.26 On 23 December 2019, Sgt Kathryn McIntyre performed a supervisor review of the PCMP, agreeing with PC Thompson's assessment. Sgt McIntyre made the following observations: *"At this time there are a number of unknowns. The subject needs to be spoken to in order to clarify his ideology and address the potential risk and threat that he may pose. There are also safeguarding and vulnerabilities to be addressed in particular his ongoing criminal investigation and his vulnerability to radicalisation. Therefore I agree that it is appropriate and proportionate to record this PCMP as Police Led at this time to address these points. Once the information has been obtained if appropriate Channel will be considered."* [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]. The PCMP confirmed that FIMU were updated about the PCMP findings.
- 4.27 On 31 December 2019, PC Thompson updated the PCMT with the findings of the CTCO Subject Risk Assessment.
- a. Checks were performed against the NCIA, which showed 'no trace', and the PNC which identified AR's ongoing police investigation into the Range High School assault;
 - b. AR was scored 'medium-high' for the risk AR presented to others, and scored 'medium' for the risk presented to him; and
 - c. For any visit to AR, two officers with up to date Officer Safety Training and Personal Protective Equipment would be required, since AR was considered *"unpredictable"*, with PC Thompson acknowledging AR's recent section 47 assault arrest, possession of a bladed weapon, and history of *"questionable mental health"* whilst awaiting a formal diagnosis. PC Thompson also noted that officers attending AR's address were

to register with communications staff, so that the police division were aware of their location, should uniform support be required.

- 4.28 On 31 December 2019, PC Thompson and PC Lawrence attended AR's home to conduct the planned contact visit. Upon arrival at AR's home, the officers were asked to reschedule the visit due to AR's father being unavailable. The visit was rescheduled for 3 January 2020. Please see more details in the First Referral PCMT at SK1/23 – **CTPNW000318**
- 4.29 On 3 January 2020, PC Thompson and PC Lawrence attended AR's home address and conducted a contact visit with AR in the presence of his father. AR stated *"that he felt the school had taken things out of context in relation to his behaviour and online activity. When he was asked about researching the internet about school shootings he stated that he had been interested in a news article about this which he had looked at."*
- 4.30 During this visit, AR also stated that he had looked at some *"num chucks"* on the school internet but this was research for a lesson, and he had explained this to the teachers. He hated school and felt as though the teachers were picking on him. When asked about his recent arrest for s.47 assault, he explained this was because he was being bullied. He stated he would not carry knives anymore as he understood this was wrong. AR told the officers he did not like his brother as he was pretending that he couldn't walk to get attention, and he was angry that he had to move schools because of his brother.
- 4.31 The Prevent officers concluded: *"the subject did not display any extremist views or CT/DE ideology during the conversations and has no interest in politics or religion. He has no grievances against any specific groups, the recent assault was towards a pupil that has been bullying him. He does not currently have access to the internet as all his devices have been seized by the police... The subject is vulnerable as he possibly has autism which is undiagnosed at this stage... I do not feel there are any CT/DE concerns at this stage, however the subject is extremely vulnerable and needs support from other agencies that are already in place, I have advised agencies to re refer to prevent should they have any more concerns in the future and also if any relevant information is found on his internet history from the school or from his devices. This information will be submitted to FIMU for assessment."* [emphasis added] [SK1/23 – **CTPNW000318**]
- 4.32 On 6 January 2020, PC Thompson attended the second multi-agency professionals' strategy meeting in relation to AR [SK1/31 – **CTPNW000009**]. The following points were discussed:

- a. AR had received his first CAMHS assessment where no mental health concerns were identified, but ASD was *"apparent"*. An ASD diagnosis was noted to be required urgently. AR was also due to attend a Forensic CAMHS appointment on 21 January;
 - b. AR was not at that time able to return to Acorns School, and alternative education/provision was being considered. Acorns School considered that AR presented a safety risk to parents and pupils due to his previous comments that he wanted to *"get teachers murdered"* and had been *"displaying extreme emotions of dislike and hatred which are believed to be traits of autism"*; and
 - c. A continuous assessment was to be carried out by social services and a request for a statutory assessment ('**SEND**') was to be made by AR's parents with the assistance of supporting agencies.
 - d. The investigation into the Range High School assault was still ongoing with Merseyside Police and awaited a decision from the CPS. AR's devices were being examined by Merseyside police alongside the school's internet history.
 - e. It was determined that there was no requirement for enquiries to be made by the Local Authority under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 at that stage since the correct agencies and relevant support were, at that point, in place.
- 4.33 On 8 January 2020, details of the Prevent visit and strategy meeting were uploaded to the PCMT by PC Thompson. The tracker entry recorded that FIMU had assessed the case and considered it suitable for closure with regard to Prevent. FIMU's assessment was based on there being *"no CT/DE concerns present at this stage; the relevant agencies are supporting the subject, all agencies aware that if any new concerns are identified they can re refer to prevent."* [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]
- 4.34 On 15 January 2020, the PCMT was updated by PC Thompson, confirming that the referral had moved from 'Police Led' to 'Pending Closure'. When recording her reasons for this decision, PC Thompson referred to her attendance at the two strategy meetings, as well as the contact visit with AR and his father. PC Thompson concluded that she did not consider there to be *"any CT/DE concerns at this stage, however the subject is extremely vulnerable and needs support from other agencies that are already in place... This information has been assessed by FIMU as suitable for closure at this stage."* PC Thompson confirmed that she had advised agencies to re-refer AR to Prevent should they have any more concerns in the future and if any relevant information was found on his internet history from the school or other devices [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]

- 4.35 On 31 January 2020, the PCMT was updated by PC James Neale, confirming that the referral had moved from 'pending closure' to 'closed'. PC Neale observed: "As detailed in the PCM the concerns relayed to Prevent have been explored and do not appear to be linked to an ideology or a vulnerability to radicalisation. There are vulnerabilities and needs which are being met by mainstream safeguarding" [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318].
- 4.36 On 3 August 2020, PC Thompson conducted a six-month review of the first referral. The review involved a check of police systems (including PNC and the Lancashire police systems, 'Connect') to establish if there had been any further activity. No further concerns were identified on either system.
- 4.37 PC Thompson conducted a further twelve-month review on 15 January 2021, and again noted there were no updates on Connect or PNC. A final 24-month review was scheduled for 15 January 2022. This review was not conducted, as the second and third referrals in February and April 2021 effectively superseded those checks.

Section 5: Decision Making and Actions – Second Referral

Circumstances of the referral

- 5.1 The same DSL, Janet Lewis, sent a second referral form to the Prevent team via email on 1 February 2021 ('the Second Referral') [SK1/32 – CTPNW000126]; SK1/33 – CTPNW000124. The Second Referral was made after the DSL contacted CT/Prevent Manager, Pam Smith, to outline concerns, and was advised to re-refer AR to the Prevent team.
- 5.2 The primary reason for the Second Referral related to a social media post made by AR, in which he posted material about Colonel Gaddafi. The screenshots of AR's social media posts were shared by David Cregeen, DSL at Range High School, to Jo Hodson ('JH'), then Acting Head Teacher at Acorns School, and Anna Jamieson ('AJ'), AR's former social worker. These posts had been brought to his attention by pupils at Range High School who were still in contact with AR. Mr Cregeen noted that whilst there was "nothing strikingly dangerous" in the message, the nature of the post may raise concerns about potential radicalisation, particularly if AR had been posting or discussing other similar material [SK1/32 – CTPNW000126].

FIMU assessment

- 5.3 On 1 February 2021, FIMU Assessor [Officer A] began his assessment of the Second Referral [SK1/34 – CTPNW000140]. [Officer A] noted the following points:

- a. Discussing AR's First Referral, [Officer A] acknowledged that the referral's outcome found that AR did not display any CT/DE ideology or show vulnerability to radicalisation, despite the referral considering intelligence which was *"far more concerning"*;
 - b. When investigating the circumstances of the Second Referral, [Officer A] had searched for, and was unable to find, any Instagram pages associated to AR or social media accounts in AR's name;
 - c. The Instagram posts AR made were screenshots from a website article dated November 2011. [Officer A] did not consider AR to be the author of the article; and
 - d. Having reached a conclusion that there was no CT/DE risk presenting in the Second Referral, [Officer A] commented: *"As such I do not believe this new intelligence is worthy of a new Prevent referral as I do not assess it would meet the thresholds for adoption at Channel and the content does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology but rather an opposing opinion on Gaddafi's Libyan regime, questioning the US and EU motivation for removing him."*
- 5.4 [Officer A] sent the referral, along with the FIMU assessment, to the Prevent team on 1 February 2021 [SK1/34 – CTPNW000140].

Prevent action taken

- 5.5 On 8 February 2021, PC Thompson added the contents of the Prevent Referral Form into the PCMT. On the same day, Sgt McIntyre performed supervisor review, noting that the *"concern regarding this subject has been registered on the tracker and is awaiting update of the risk and threat assessment they may pose."* [SK1/33 – CTPNW000124].
- 5.6 On 9 February 2021, the following entries were added to the PCMT by PC Thompson:
- a. PC Thompson had commenced weekly checks of the PNC and Connect. She confirmed 'no trace' or updates. PC Thompson emailed DSL Jan Lewis to clarify whether there were any other concerns for AR other than those on the Second Referral. This entry records that the school confirmed that there were no further concerns to add [SK1/33 – CTPNW000124].
 - b. The status of the referral was changed from 'Registered' to 'Initial Assessment'. PC Thompson recorded that AR *"had previously been referred to prevent and was closed as non CT/DE. The new intelligence does not meet the thresholds for*

adoption at Channel and does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology. This case is suitable for closure." [SK1/33 – CTPNW000124]

5.7 PC Thompson carried out AR's PGA on 9 February 2021. The assessment was not uploaded to the PCMT until 15 February 2021. The following points were outlined in the assessment:

- a. PC Thompson noted that AR had been previously referred to Prevent and that the case was closed, having been determined not to involve CT/DE. She set out the previous concerns about AR highlighted in the First Referral, noting his exclusion from school and his behaviours displayed in class outlined above, including his research of school shootings, and comments made to the effect that the terrorist attack on the Manchester Arena was a good thing;
- b. PC Thompson's assessment of whether AR showed signs of having complex needs, grievances, ideologies, exposure to extremist individuals/groups/institutions, intent, or escalation of behaviour were all recorded as *"Non evident at this stage"*;
- c. PC Thompson's comments against the 'Internet & Social Media' assessment criterion record: *"The subject has commented on Instagram posts relating to Gaddafi. This has been assessed by FIMU as not being new intelligence it does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology."*; and
- d. The case was allocated a priority banding of 'Standard Priority' and the recommended route at that time was considered to be 'Closure'. PC Thompson's rationale for this decision states: *"The subject has previously been referred to Prevent and was closed due to there being no evidence of CT/DE concerns. PC 5905 has checked police systems and there are no updates to report since the last referral was closed. The school has have been contacted and they do not have any additional concerns other than the information reported from his previous school..."* [PC Thompson quotes Officer A's FIMU Assessment]... *This referral does not highlight any new concerns and can be closed to prevent, the school are aware re refer if there are any concerns in the future."*

5.8 On 10 February 2021, Prevent Supervisor, DS Rachael Treharne, reviewed the comments by PC Thompson and concluded:

"I have reviewed this case and note there is a lack of information in all areas. I am satisfied that the OIC has made sufficient enquiries with the original referrer and linked in with FIMU. The concerns in this case were around posts online which were not deemed CT/DE

relevant. There does not appear to be any further safeguarding that is currently required. I am unable to see any previous referral into Prevent on the PCMT, although as that has been closed and this case does not contain any CT/DE concerns then I am satisfied this can be closed immediately." [SK1/33 – CTPNW000124].

- 5.9 The status of the case was changed from 'Initial Assessment' to 'Pending Closure' on 15 February 2021. The status change rationale was recorded by PC Thompson as: *"This has been assessed as non CT/DE by FIMU the school will continue to support the subject and aware to re refer in the future if relevant."* [SK1/33 – CTPNW000124]
- 5.10 On 17 February 2021, the status of the case was changed to 'Closed' by Sgt McIntyre, on behalf of DC Treharne who had authorised the closure of the referral. The status change rationale adopted DS Treharne's supervisor comments included within the PGA.
- 5.11 On 23 August 2021 the six-month review of second referral was conducted by DC Rachel Johnson. She confirmed that no new reporting or updates were listed on Connect, Morse or PNC.

Section 6: Decision Making and Actions – Third referral

Circumstances of the referral

- 6.1 On 22 April 2021, Janet Lewis, the DSL at Acorns School, sent a third referral via email to the Prevent team at Lancashire Police ('the Third Referral') [SK1/35 – CTPNW000127].
- 6.2 A number of staff at Acorns School had flagged concerns over AR and the content that he was viewing within lessons. In particular, the following concerns were raised within the referral form:
 - a. A staff member noticed that AR had two web pages open with the words 'London Bridge'. The staff member did not see AR looking at these pages. When questioned about the webpages by the staff member, AR stated that he was *"reading the news about the recent bomb that had been planted on London Bridge"*.
 - b. AR also expressed interest in and spoke in great detail on the Irish Republican Army and the Israel-Palestine conflict. Staff were concerned about the potential radicalisation of AR.
- 6.3 The Third Referral notes AR's 'complex needs', namely that he had a confirmed ASD diagnosis, had an Education, Health and Care plan ('EHCP') in place, and was awaiting a specialised educational placement.

FIMU assessment

- 6.4 FIMU received the email on 22 April 2021 and shortly returned it requesting further information from Janet Lewis, the DSL [SK1/36 – CTPNW000143]. The DSL responded on 22 April 2021 with the completed Prevent referral form [SK1/37 – CTPNW000143]. SK1/38 – CTPNW000137. The referral was then received by FIMU Assessor, DC Tim Aspinall.
- 6.5 DC Aspinall completed a FIMU assessment on 22 April 2021 (uploaded to the case's PCMT on 26 April 2021) [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164]. In his assessment, he considered the details of the previous referrals, alongside the new information disclosed in the third referral. He made reference to:
- a. AR's first Prevent referral which was closed as it was not considered to be CT/DE relevant, following a visit by Prevent officers *"who were satisfied that his vulnerabilities lay elsewhere in a potential ASD diagnosis."*;
 - b. The local authority MASH led intervention around AR bringing a knife into school;
 - c. AR's 2019 JAT assessment under Intelligence Management Handling ('IHM') where he was assessed as not meeting the threshold for investigation under the CT banner; and
 - d. AR's second Prevent referral which was *"written once again as no CTDE."* [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164].
- 6.6 DC Aspinall concluded that he did not consider the Third Prevent Referral to hold any CT/DE relevance. His rationale for this decision made reference to the following points:
- a. The ongoing advice to school staff had been to refer should they feel that AR showed any vulnerabilities going forward. However, this could *"sometimes lead to knee jerk referral's this one being highlighted in case"*;
 - b. DC Aspinall did not consider that the comments made by AR displayed extremist views, *"in fact that he has commented that there are always two sides to a story, he obviously has an interest in current affairs but this behaviour can also be attributed to his ASD diagnosis"* [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164];
 - c. DC Aspinall acknowledged that AR was awaiting an EHCP and a specialist educational placement which he believed that would help and support AR through his ongoing education; and

- d. As per the CT/DE decision reached in AR's second referral, DC Aspinall concluded:
"I do not feel this new reporting holds any CT/DE vulnerability and only highlights and [sic] interest in world news and current affairs which is a trait of ASD. Subjects educational needs are being met at Acorn and it is clear that the teachers are aware of reporting any future concerns." [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164].

Prevent action taken

- 6.7 On 26 April 2021, an entry was created on the PCMT by PC Thompson [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164].
- 6.8 On 29 April 2021, PC Thompson carried out checks on the PNC and Connect [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164]. No further entries to the PNC were added since AR's assault charge from 11 December 2019. Connect was last updated on 7 October 2019 with 'VC [Vulnerable Child] PVP [Protecting Vulnerable People] no further updates'.
- 6.9 On 29 April 2021, PC Thompson updated the PCMT case status from 'Registered' to 'Initial Assessment' [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164]. PC Thompson noted that the referral had been assessed by FIMU as non-CT/DE and AR's vulnerabilities would be addressed by the EHCP.
- 6.10 PC Thompson completed the PGA on 29 April 2021 and sent it to DS Treharne to authorise case closure. The PGA was not uploaded to the PCMT until 7 May 2021, when DS Treharne had conducted her supervisor review. The following points were outlined in the assessment:
- a. The PGA framework considered indicators which would suggest that AR showed CT/DE vulnerabilities, including, but not limited to, grievances, motivations, exposure and/or association with extremist groups/individuals/institutions for example.
 - b. AR's 'complex needs' were acknowledged, with PC Thompson recording: *"The subject has an ASD diagnosis and awaiting a EHCP plan and specialist educational plan."*
 - c. For the majority of indicators assessed, DC Thompson listed that they were not evident at the point of PGA; and
 - d. When describing anything concerning about AR's internet and social media use, PC Thompson referenced AR's previous Gaddafi-related social media posts which were the subject of the Second Prevent Referral. PC Thompson noted that *"this has been assessed by FIMU as not being new intelligence and does not suggest he holds any extremist ideology. He has been assessed as no CT/DE vulnerability and only highlights*

an interest in world news and current affairs which is a trait of ASD.” [SK1/39 –

CTPNW000164

- 6.11 The case was allocated a priority banding of 'Standard Priority' and the recommended route at that time was considered to be 'Closure'. PC Thompson's rationale for this decision states: *"The subject has previously been referred to Prevent and was closed due to there being no evidence of CT/DE concerns. PC 5905 has checked police systems and there are no updates to report since the last referral was closed. The school have been contacted they do not have any additional concerns other than the information reported from his previous school and the recent concern. The subjects needs will be met by the EHCP plan. There have been no other concerns on police systems and a VC PVP has previously been submitted and there is no requirement for a further one to be submitted as per FIMU assessment...[PC Thompson quotes DC Aspinall's FIMU Assessment]..."* [SK1/39 – **CTPNW000164**]
- 6.12 On 4 May 2021, PC Thompson carried out a weekly check of the PNC and Connect and confirmed no further updates [SK1/39 – **CTPNW000164**]
- 6.13 On 7 May 2021, DS Treharne conducted a Supervisor Review of the case and completed her assessment of the PGA. She agreed with PC Thompson's assessment of the case, noting: *"The subject displays an interest in a recent London bomb and researched news articles as a result. Following a conversation with Teaching staff there is context provided which shows an interest in history and current affairs. Conversation included knowledge of troubles in Israel/Palestine, IRA/London attacks. **There are no extreme views or concerns of a CT/DE rhetoric.** The subject displays critical thinking skills demonstrating he has considered different viewpoints and information. I note the previous concerns raised which have been sufficiently addressed and does not change the outcome of this assessment. Subject appears to have sufficient support in place, and I do not feel the subject is at risk of radicalisation currently from the information provided. As such, I agree this case should close immediately. Agencies already involved can raise any issues should they arise. Referrer has been contacted and offered advice and support and is aware of reporting any future concerns. Agreed closure."* [emphasis added] [SK1/39 – **CTPNW000164**]
- 6.14 On 7 May 2021, PC Thompson updated the PCMT case status from 'Initial Assessment' to 'Pending Closure'. PC Thompson observed: *"There are no CT/DE concerns at this stage. He is currently waiting for an EHCP and is awaiting a specialist educational*

placement which I believe will help and support him through his ongoing education."

[SK1/39 – CTPNW000164]

- 6.15 On 10 May 2021, DS Treharne updated the PCMT case status from 'Pending Closure' to 'Closed'. The rationale recorded for this decision replicated the language used to provide a rationale for her decision with regard to review of the PGA [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164].

Section 7: Review of policy and process undertaken

- 7.1 Following the tragic incident that occurred on 29 July 2024, a number of reviews, both external and internal, have been conducted, or are currently in process.

Prevent Learning Review

- 7.2 In August 2024, a Prevent Learning Review ('PLR') to examine Prevent involvement with AR prior to the murders was jointly commissioned by Homeland Security Group and CTPHQ. CTPNW was made aware that a PLR had been commissioned and were asked to provide relevant documentation in support.
- 7.3 The PLR structure exists to identify opportunities for improvement in the Prevent system. In the case of AR, the PLR comprised a 'desktop review' of the relevant Prevent referrals between December 2019 and April 2021; the purpose being to identify (i) whether and how national policy may be improved, and (ii) opportunities for operational learning. Anthony Jenkyn of Jenkyn Prevent Consultancy and Training Ltd was appointed as the independent reviewer.
- 7.4 Aside from providing documentation, CTPNW was not invited to take part in the PLR. On advice from the CPS, the reviewer was unable to interview the Prevent officers involved in AR's case management, or any other individuals who engaged with AR during the relevant period. The information relied on by the Reviewer was taken from how it had been recorded in the PCMT [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]; SK1/33 – CTPNW000124; SK1/39 – CTPNW000164, with the PLR being completed against tight time constraints.
- 7.5 The PLR report was published online on 5 February 2025 [SK1/40 – CTPHQ000055].
- 7.6 The PLR report concludes that overall there had been a 'high level of compliance by the Prevent officers with process timescales, assessment completion and adherence to policy that were in place at the time' and thereafter identifies a number of 'learning points' and makes fourteen specific recommendations. I set out below CTPNW's response to the recommendations made.

Internal review - CTPNW Historic Case Review

- 7.7 In addition to these external reviews, following the actions of AR, the CTPNW Prevent SRO commissioned a review of CTPNW Prevent cases recorded between 30 July 2023 and 29 July 2024 which had been closed as either 'school massacre' or 'fascination with extreme violence' [SK1/41 – **CTPNW000088**]. This review was commissioned as part of a standard business assurance response to the incident in July 2024.
- 7.8 This review spanned 33 cases in total. Of these, 17 were found to be non-compliant with national policy. The vast majority of these non-compliant cases [15] related to an absence of internet intelligence and investigation ('III') checks being conducted. Two cases were reopened with actions set for CTCOs. Good practice was observed within a number of these cases, with clear decision making and rationales properly recorded. Overall, the review documented four learning recommendations, all of which have subsequently been briefed to Prevent supervisors:
- a. Supervisors must risk assess all visits (to referral subjects) and as part of that must assess whether the visit is within policy or not. Where exceptional circumstances apply, these must be recorded on the case notes;
 - b. Supervisors must ensure systems checks are completed if there is a long gap between the request for closure and the write up for such;
 - c. CTCOs must ensure all reviews are updated on the case when completed; and
 - d. CTCOs and all supervisors must be alive to risk within cases where no professionals have seen the subject. Cases such as this are rare, but where no other agency has had contact with the subject throughout the life of the case which has progressed past section 36, a CTCO must visit the subject.
- 7.9 Five minor learning recommendations outside of the scope of this review were also identified. Further, in two cases, it was apparent that there had been an opportunity for schools to have made Prevent referrals at an earlier stage. The author of the review brought these cases to the attention of the Department of Education Prevent Lead.
- 7.10 As a direct result of this Historic Case Review, 'dip sample' reviews of historic cases are now incorporated into Monthly Business Management and supplement the existing process of dip sampling open cases already conducted by the Chief Inspector.

CTPHQ led Project Dignate Review ('Dignate Review')

- 7.11 Separately, and in addition to the PLR, CTPHQ conducted their own review under Project Dignate. CTPNW was not made aware that this review was taking place, was not invited to take part, and was not given an opportunity to comment on the final report.
- 7.12 The CTPHQ Project Dignate 2 guidance ('**Project Dignate**') applies to cases where individuals referred to Prevent go on to commit, or attempt to commit, 'high-harm' offences [SK1/42 – CTPHQ000008]. Project Dignate, through case review, monitors this cohort of individuals with the objectives of preventing terrorist attacks, providing assurance, and identifying good practice / policy and organisational learning in Prevent.
- 7.13 For the purposes of Project Dignate, 'murder / homicide' is a 'mandatory high-harm' offence, which must be brought to the attention of CTPHQ SLT as soon as practicable following arrest and the recognition of Prevent history of the detainee. Following a submission, the Project Dignate case review options are (i) a Prevent Learning Review, (ii) a CTPHQ led review, (iii) a regional peer review, and (iv) an internal review.
- 7.14 The Dignate Review report was received by CTPNW on 23 April 2025 [SK1/43 – CTPHQ000028]. The report includes a number of 'reviewer comments' and fourteen 'learning observations'. I set out below CTPNW's response to this report.

Report by the Interim Independent Prevent Commissioner

- 7.15 On 21 January 2025 the Home Secretary announced the review of the Independent Prevent Commissioner, Lord Anderson KC into the Prevent history in the Southport case. It's purpose is to ensure that lessons from this specific case have been learned, to assess whether wider changes to Prevent have been implemented effectively and to identify whether further changes are required in the short term [SK1/44 – CTPNW000387]. That process is ongoing, and this statement has been prepared without sight or knowledge of any conclusions or recommendations the Interim Commissioner may make, including whether there are any additional findings to add to the PLR. Depending on the outcome of this review, CTPNW may wish to submit a further statement to the Inquiry addressing Lord Anderson's findings.

Lessons learned and organisational response

- 7.16 I set out below CTPNW's response to these reports and organisational steps taken to identify any further lessons learned by CTPNW in relation to the matters under investigation by the Inquiry.
- 7.17 Overall, the PLR concluded that there had been 'a high level of compliance' by the Prevent officers in terms of process, timescales, completion of assessments and general

adherence to policies in place at the relevant time. I recognise however that the authors of the PLR and Dignate Review do not agree with the decision to close these referrals. For context, I should reiterate that there is no specific or fixed threshold for referral to Channel – officers conducting the necessary assessments will take an overall view on the risks attaching to the individual case, and the person's susceptibility to being drawn into terrorism or being radicalised. As such, there is an element of subjectivity to the decisions taken, which are made on a case by case basis based on the intelligence available and a number of potentially reasonable decisions in any given case. The teams dealing with these referrals work closely and collaboratively, with a high level of support, training and oversight. As reflected in the PLR, the teams dealing with these referrals operated in accordance with the policies in place. I am confident that this has further improved over the last few years as we have implemented robust assurance processes, and I set these out in further detail below.

- 7.18 The events that unfolded in this case are exceptionally shocking, and it is vital that we reflect on every aspect of CTPNW involvement to ensure that we respond appropriately and improve wherever we can to minimise the risk of a similar future event. As such, I take the findings of these reviews, and any future recommendations that may be made by the Inquiry very seriously. Work will be done (and has already begun) to remedy them and implement change and we support the ongoing work reviewing these practices.

Section 8: CTPNW Response to the PLR and Dignate Review reports

- 8.1 In May 2025, having received and considered both the PLR and Dignate Review reports, the CTPNW Prevent SRO commissioned the CTPNW Change team to review CTPNW Prevent processes, to explore the effectiveness of current processes, expectations, compliance with policy, and good working practices across the three northwest hubs [SK1/45 – CTPNW000388]. This review is due to present its findings and recommendations in October 2025.
- 8.2 A number of the individual recommendations and learning observations ('LO') made in the PLR and Dignate Review call for a national-level response, beyond the remit of CTPNW. Many of these issues have since been addressed by changes to national-level policy introduced after AR's third Prevent referral in April 2021, including changes made prior to the murders in July 2024.
- 8.3 Both reviews also make criticisms and recommendations in respect of CTPNW processes and decision-making. For ease, I address the issues raised on a thematic basis. Reading the two reviews together, it is apparent that a number of common themes emerge.

Theme 1 – Role of the Fixed Intelligence Management Unit

- 8.4 Both the PLR and the Dignate Review express concerns around the role played by FIMU in this case, including that the FIMU assessments strayed into Prevent case management, by suggesting Prevent outcomes. The PLR goes on to recommend changes to policy, terminology and training, to better differentiate the roles of the two teams.
- a. **PLR Recommendation 1.** It is recommended that a standardised sharing of information product be considered for national use by all FIMUs when sharing the results of checks conducted for Prevent. This product should be agreed nationally, its use mandated and written into policy.
 - b. **PLR Recommendation 8.** It should be considered that Annex B [NB: of the National Standards of Intelligence Management] be embedded into [the NSIM] and not sit as an appendix. The policy should be explicit that it is for Prevent to determine closure once the referral has been handed to Prevent for action and initial assessment. It should be made clear that FIMU should refrain from suggesting Prevent outcomes as this may influence decisions made by CTCOs or support closure prematurely from Prevent.
 - c. **PLR Recommendation 9.**
 - (i) Consider a terminology change in Prevent management. CTP relevant should be replaced by the term 'Prevent Relevant'. This differentiates it from the term used in the IMU which may have a slightly different meaning
 - (ii) Currently Prevent referrals are assessed [under general risk assessment outcomes] by the FIMUs. Consideration should be given to Prevent having its own [risk assessment] outcome specifically which is clearly defined in policy. The current CTCO guidance coupled with Annex B guidance defines the roles of CTP Prevent.
 - (iii) Annex B appears a little dated and consideration should be given to a review / refresh.
 - (iv) Training for FIMU staff on Prevent should be reviewed to ensure a full current understanding of Prevent delivery and regular training refreshes delivered as part of continuous professional development ('CPD'). Where training is deemed to be inadequate then the appropriate courses are built and delivered.

- (v) Training for Prevent staff on guidance and FIMU delivery should be reviewed and where training is identified as inadequate the appropriate courses created and delivered, and regular training refreshes.
 - d. **Dignate Review LO 2.** When AR was arrested at his old school ... it was five days after the first referral was submitted, but before this referral was registered and assessed. When the FIMU did conduct their assessment, it is stated that AR was 'no trace' PNC, so the assault was not taken into account. Given the fact that the FIMU do not appear to have considered it, the CTCO does not resubmit this intelligence for reassessment of the risk despite noting it on the PCMT.
 - e. **Dignate Review LO 7.** FIMU decision making / guiding Prevent cases. In all cases the FIMU assessment appears to be suggesting Prevent outcomes for the referrals which are then adopted by the CTCO.
- 8.5 Having reviewed the relevant documents in respect of this referral, I agree the use of language by FIMU assessors is a point of concern and will be taking this forward to ensure consistent practice across the team. However, I am confident that the work of CTPNW has matured and developed in recent years, and there is a good understanding of the roles and the 'tests' they are applying at each stage. The FIMU and Prevent teams work very closely and are in regular discussion, for example regarding escalation, or new information arising.
- 8.6 Officers are given extensive training which is set at a national level and comprehensive guidance to follow. In terms of local training (i) in December 2021, CPD was delivered to IMU assessors on the FIMU / Prevent processes prior to implementation of the Prevent Policy; (ii) in February and March 2022 local CPD was delivered to intelligence assessors, relating to IMU assessment considerations and best practice in terms of recoding decisions on NCIA, (iii) and, in July 2023 further CPD on Prevent and regional triage was delivered. Further, in 2023, a 'new starters workbook' was created by CTPNW for all newly appointed intelligence assessors, to be completed before an individual can be deemed competent. This is further strengthened by the application of the Intelligence Professionalisation Programme, which is part of the College of Policing's Authorised Professional Practice
- 8.7 In respect of the specific criticisms, it was not clear to the PLR reviewer if the FIMU provided full details of all research conducted by them to Prevent. I am content that this was done but CTPNW would welcome a national policy on this issue [PLR

recommendation 1]. In the absence of which, a local 'CTPNW Prevent Triage Policy' was published in 2022 to outline the role of the Regional Prevent Triage Team within CTPNW, and their relationship with FIMU [SK1/46 – CTPNW000411]. This provides that in all cases, the FIMU must provide the Prevent Triage Team with the National Referral Form or relevant intelligence report, a summary of contact with the referrer, the research and intelligence assessment (including the date of assessment) and the de-confliction reference.

- 8.8 I am also content that at the time of the first referral, the FIMU were fully aware of, and took into account, AR's arrest on 11 December 2019 [Dignate Review LO 2]. As recorded on the PCMT, on 16 December 2019, FIMU wrote to Prevent stating "[AR] ... was arrested in Merseyside as he went to his old school armed with a knife and hockey stick to assault a pupil ... he has admitted the offences and is currently on bail pending CPS advice." [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318].
- 8.9 In terms of FIMU 'guiding' Prevent decision-making, it is well understood within CTPNW that while the FIMU assessment is persuasive, primarily because that unit has a breadth of oversight of intelligence and material that Prevent do not have, it remains entirely for the Prevent team to consider anew all information they are provided in connection with a referral, and they do so independently of FIMU, following their own processes. Ultimately, it is a decision for the CTCO, and the Prevent supervisor, to determine the most appropriate management of a Prevent referral. It is clear from the relevant tracker that the details of the violent altercation leading to his arrest on 11 December 2019 were before the CTCO in making the necessary assessments.
- 8.10 At the time of the first referral, the PGA records that 'FIMU have assessed that the case can now be closed to prevent' [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]. The term 'closed to Prevent' is used within FIMU to mean the IMU assessment is concluded and there is nothing further from their perspective; it is now for Prevent to proceed with their assessment. Whilst not clear if this wording was used by IMU in this case, I do accept that the terminology 'closed to Prevent' is ambiguous. I note that, in this case, the Prevent team did proceed with their assessment, including a home visit.
- 8.11 Regarding the second referral, the FIMU assessment includes the comment, "As such I do not believe this new intelligence is worthy of a new Prevent referral as I do not assess it would meet the thresholds for adoption at Chanel [sic] ..." [SK1/34 – CTPNW000140]. I accept that, in saying this, the FIMU officer expresses an opinion not required as part of the assessment framework, which may have influenced the Prevent officer's consideration

of the referral. I do note that, despite the opinion expressed, the FIMU officer did bring the referral to the attention of Prevent.

- 8.12 The FIMU assessment in respect of the third referral is recorded in the PCMT [SK1/39 – CTPNW000164]. Within their assessment, the FIMU officer states, *“The ongoing advice to staff [bc. school staff] has always been to refer should they feel that he shows any vulnerabilities going forward. This can sometimes lead to knee jerk referral's this one being highlighted in case.”* Taken as a whole, I consider the FIMU officer has assessed the case for CTP relevancy and vulnerability.
- 8.13 The current version of Annex B NSIM was published in July 2024, which sets out the role of IMUs within Prevent [SK1/47 – CTPHQ000044]. In addition, the local ‘CTPNW Prevent Triage Policy’ defines the relationship between FIMU and the Regional Prevent Triage Team [SK1/46 – CTPNW000411]. This provides that any information received on a Prevent referral form must be passed to the Prevent team, regardless of the FIMU assessment, and that information received otherwise, must still be considered for Prevent relevancy and forwarded to Prevent when deemed appropriate. CPD training was provided to IMU assessors to accompany this new policy.
- 8.14 Any further changes in policy or terminology would be for consideration at a national level.

Theme 2 – Considerations of Ideology and / or Vulnerabilities.

- 8.15 The PLR expressed concern that ideology and AR’s accepted vulnerabilities were considered separately, when those issues should properly be considered entwined.
- a. **PLR Recommendation 5.** Policy and guidance should be considered whereby referrals involving children and/or complex needs should be routinely referred to Channel unless immediate closure is the chosen option, or the CT risks are deemed too high for Channel.
 - b. **PLR Recommendation 11.** Static vulnerabilities can make an individual highly susceptible. Additional training should be considered, for those conducting assessments, on the importance of understanding the impact of static vulnerabilities on altering the risks of radicalisation. Where there are cases of limited engagement and complex needs, such as Autism in this case, then decisions to refer to Channel should be seriously considered. This would enable a professional perspective on the impact of the static vulnerabilities and a multi-agency approach to managing the

susceptibility to being drawn into terrorism. This recommendation should be viewed alongside recommendation 5.

- 8.16 In the reviewer's opinion, the decision-making on the first referral hinged on whether AR had an ideology, and that focus can overlook that individuals can be highly susceptible, even where there may be only limited engagement with ideology. In the reviewer's opinion, the PGA articulated a number of concerns that would add to AR's vulnerability to being drawn into terrorism.
- 8.17 The reviewer goes on to express their opinion that there was sufficient information to refer the case to Channel. This, of course, is a highly subjective opinion.
- 8.18 It is clear to me, from the record, that the concerns and vulnerabilities referred to by the reviewer were properly considered as part of the Prevent decision-making process [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318]. On 23 December 2019, the Prevent supervisor specifically noted, "*safeguarding and vulnerabilities to be addressed in particular his ongoing criminal investigation and his vulnerability to radicalisation*". Ultimately it was concluded that the apparent vulnerabilities and needs could be met by alternative safeguarding, noting support was already in place. Officers are trained to deal with people who may have vulnerabilities, for example people who may display ASD traits, and this forms part of the assessment of the different agencies who might be best placed to provide support to the individual. The fact that vulnerable individuals may be susceptible to terrorism does not appear to have been overlooked in this case. Where there are such additional vulnerabilities in place, but that person does not show indications of being drawn into terrorism specifically, responsibility for that case is more likely to fall to other teams or agencies outside of the CT space. Prevent, rather than seeking to identify vulnerabilities in and of themselves, is designed to divert people who are on the cusp of becoming involved in terrorism. Where there are not indicators relating to terrorism, but the Suspect has other vulnerabilities, it is important that, even if Prevent support is not considered appropriate, there is provision made to refer the individual to other sources of support.
- 8.19 Around the time of the First Referral, a multi-agency approach was already in place in respect of AR, outside of the Prevent framework. Work in respect of AR's vulnerabilities and safeguarding risks was being undertaken by several organisations, and AR was referred for a forensic CAMHS assessment, an ASD assessment and was receiving regular counselling. The CTCO attended strategy meetings on 17 December 2019 and 6 January 2020, with representatives from Children's Social Care, Mental Health, an Investigating officer from Merseyside, Police Early Action and Education [SK1/23 –

CTPNW000318]. Upon closure of the First Referral, these agencies, and the DSL at Acorns School, were advised to re-refer to Prevent should they have any more concerns in the future or if any relevant information is found.

8.20 In respect of PLR recommendation 5, CTPNW broadly agree that consideration should be given to such policy and guidance. That, of course, is a decision to be taken at national level.

8.21 The Dignate Review goes on to criticise the apparent focus of the Prevent reviewer on a lack of distinct CT/DE ideology, without also identifying school massacre / mass violence as a potential ideology or risk.

a. **Dignate Review LO 5.** School massacre as an ideology. The closure rationale for all three cases focused on the lack of a distinct CT/DE ideology. However, guidance, albeit new at the time of the first referral, stated that school massacre / mass violence should be treated as an ideology in itself ... It appears this was not identified as a potential ideology or Prevent Relevant risk and therefore does not feature in decision making in the three cases. A more careful assessment of these factors could have resulted in the case being progressed further ... At the time of the first referral the thinking on 'school shooter' / obsession with massacre or extreme / mass violence was encapsulated in a joint letter dated 25/06/2019 ...

8.22 This issue was also explored in the PLR, although did not result in a specific recommendation.

8.23 I am of the view that the issue of 'school massacre / mass violence' was properly considered by the Prevent officers in their decision making. During the PGA, the CTCO specifically notes that, "[AR] has been researching school shootings on the internet and has been talking about stabbing people, he has also stated that the terrorist attack on the MEN was a good thing. At this stage it is not clear if he has an ideology". This is explored during the visit to AR on 3 January 2020.

8.24 The PLR identified a joint letter from Homeland Security Group and CTPHQ in July 2019 regarding their joint position on managing individual with unclear, mixed or unstable ideologies [SK1/40 – **CTPHQ000055**]. The substance of this letter was known to the Prevent officer at the time of the referrals. The position, as articulated in the 2019 letter, was for Prevent officers to consider the possibility of an individual's 'obsessive interest in public massacres of any kind' as a possible sign of vulnerability. The threshold of 'obsessive interest' is not further defined. The possibility of ASD, the history of bullying, and those evident traits, were also taken into account in the CTCO's interactions with AR

and was factored in in considering whether he appeared to hold an obsession with school shootings. The conclusion was reached that while he may have had an interest in such things, his behaviours at the home visit did not indicate fixation. This reinforces the utility of in-person visits with the Subject.

- 8.25 The national policy in this area has since developed. In March 2025, CTPHQ published a new Interim Referrals Policy titled, 'Fascination with Extreme Violence and Mass-Casualty Attacks [SK1/48 – CTPNW000016]. This policy is due to be reviewed nationally. The interim policy *"seeks to provide clarity of violent behaviours which could indicate a risk or become triggers for radicalisation."* It notes the importance of one consistent and proportionate threshold applied to Prevent activity across radicalisation concerns. The category of Prevent subject with a "Fascination with extreme violence or mass-casualty attacks" was agreed in early 2024 and is now included as an ideological category on the PCMT. CTPNW has adopted this new policy in full, but it remains subject to further review at the national level.
- 8.26 I set out in paragraph 8.18 that the core purpose of Prevent is to divert individuals susceptible to or on the edge of being drawn into terrorism. That is a specific remit, in respect of which relevant bodies have sensibly been advised to exercise caution and to refer ('or re-refer if appropriate') as concerns arise in that respect. The threat landscape is ever-evolving, however, and as such there is ongoing and evolving consideration as to how to deal most effectively and appropriately with the emerging and relatively recent threat posed by what could be considered to be extreme views indicating a propensity towards violence, or even serious violence, but which do not involve terrorism in the way that is currently understood. There is a high volume of such cases that carry considerable risks, but without a clear link to a CT risk. It is important that in due course there is a clear pathway for dealing with those cases, without unduly stretching the parameters of Prevent, and in turn Channel, which have a very specific set of objectives. This reinforces the particular significance of effective cross and multi-agency working and sharing, to ensure ownership of cases is carefully considered and dealt with appropriately.
- 8.27 It is also very important FIMU and Prevent understand the impact of mental health and neurodiversity on a Subjects behaviour, so this can be properly considered in any assessment. This is a complex and developing area. CTPNW were involved in neurodiversity training packages which include operational awareness of casework involving neurodivergent individuals. This training is owned and co-ordinated by the national ODU.

Theme 3 – Completion of Internet Intelligence and Investigation (III) / Open-Source Checks.

- 8.28 The PLR reviewer noted that it was unclear if AR's devices were examined, or if any attempt was made to obtain search history, or if open source research was undertaken. The Dignate Review notes that AR's devices had been seized as part of the investigation into the violent altercation on 11 December 2019, and were examined by the investigating force. It goes on to say that best practice would have been to liaise with local police to gain a copy of the download to assess against CT relevant criteria **[LO 3 and 6]**.
- 8.29 My understanding is that if there had been anything pertinent to the referral arising in the course of those examinations, then it would have been shared with the relevant officer in Prevent, given how closely the different teams engaged in different aspects of the multi-agency approach in this case worked. I accept this may be an area in which lessons can be learnt with regard to proactive information sharing, to ensure roles and responsibilities are clear, and to ensure a clear joined up approach between different teams carrying out different functions. This is particularly true where an investigation runs alongside a referral. As set out above, I accept that throughout the Prevent engagement, limited open-source research was undertaken. Checks were done in respect of the second referral to confirm the details in the referral as to AR's posts, and the FIMU officer was unable to find any record of a relevant account.
- 8.30 The PLR recognises there is an important balance to be struck given the intrusive nature of the powers under which Internet Intelligence and Investigation checks ('III') checks are completed. However, it recommends consideration is given to strengthening CTCO guidance in cases where internet usage, search history or other online activity is relevant; to include considering the mandating of open-source research at the PGA initial assessment **[recommendation 4]**.
- 8.31 I agree there is a very important balance to be struck when deciding whether III checks should be undertaken, ensuring consideration is given to the core principles of necessity, proportionality and collateral intrusion. I would not expect FIMU officers to automatically conduct open-source checks on all referrals, but to assess them on a case-by-case basis. Further, if FIMU did conduct a review of an individual's social media accounts, any further activity by Prevent would again need to carefully adhere to those guiding principles. I would also highlight that there are often a number of organisations involved with a particular Subject who may have a responsibility to put in safeguards in respect to online activity –

in some cases, any searches by CTP forms just one part of the overall assessment of that individual's risk and needs.

- 8.32 On 21 October 2022, guidance was published to provide a consistent standard of III, recognising variation in practice across the country [SK1/49 – CTPNW000107]. This guidance pre-dates the Southport attack so was not published in response to the matters under investigation, but it is relevant to the way in which CTCO would deal with any future referrals such as AR.
- 8.33 The guidance provides that Prevent III research is most effectively conducted by Prevent practitioners/CTCO as opposed to tasking wider intelligence teams and should be conducted during the initial assessment stage. It also indicates:
- a. III research should only take place where the referral directly relates to an online issue or where it is deemed not possible to make a fair and valuable assessment of the referral without conducting III research and therefore it is justified. The justification for this must take into account Article 8 ECHR and be documented within the PCMT;
 - b. For cases that go beyond the Initial Assessment stage and into the Information Gathering stage, every case should have III research conducted. This practice is no more intrusive than the other elements of information gathering conducted at this stage which include reviewing an individual's mental health records or interactions with social services but is necessary because of the need to make an informed assessment of the individual's needs; and
 - c. Consideration of III research of Prevent subjects should be continuous throughout the lifecycle of a case.
- 8.34 CTPNW Prevent and CTPNW Intelligence have agreed a temporary measure to co-opt 3 staff to work solely on Prevent Referrals to meet the expectations of the National Interim Policies.
- 8.35 As a result of the recommendation in the PLR, we understand will there be a further review of policy at the national level and anticipate there may be further training and guidance issued by CTPHQ to address any concerns.

Theme 4 – Consideration of Repeat Referrals

- 8.36 Both the PLR and Dignate Review set out concerns in respect of the treatment of multiple/repeat Prevent referrals, noting that such cases should be treated with a

heightened risk, and must not be considered in isolation, recognising the cumulative nature of the concerns. In the reviewer's opinion – given the three referrals, the unknown nature of engagement, and high level of susceptibility, this case should have been referred to Channel.

- a. **PLR Recommendation 13.** Considerations should be given to guidance with regards to how repeat referrals are combined with previous ones to reflect the repeat nature. A review of the multiple referral policy addendum should be conducted to consider whether learning points from this review should be included and whether the policy could be strengthened with regards to the actions required to be taken in light of the repeat referral.
- b. **PLR Recommendation 14.** A review of the current PCMT prompt screens should be considered to see if these prompts are sufficient ... if not, a data inputting standards manual should be considered and embedded into policy. Inaccurate recording of data ('names, dates of birth and data missing') can lead to previous information not being found by CTCOs assessing a new referral and a potential failure to join the dots between referrals.
- c. **Dignate Review LO 9.** PCMT standards and data entry. All cases were dealt with by the same case officer, however, they were not all linked to the same PCMT subject (there were three identical subject pages with one PCM assigned). Additionally, there were data entry / spelling mistakes. The second and third referral used slightly different spellings for AR's name meaning the supervisor at times could not see the first referral and therefore was unable to take it into account in the decision making process.
- d. **Dignate Review LO 10.** Multiple and Repeat referrals. Multiple / Repeat Referrals can indicate a case should be treated with a heightened risk, however this does not appear to have happened throughout the three Prevent cases AR was the subject of. Although not in place at the time, there is now a multiple referral policy in existence from January 2023.
- e. **Dignate Review LO 12.** When the second and third referrals are received by the Prevent team there does not seem to have been a thorough consideration of the previous history as a whole, and the assessments rely on old information from over a year previous which was obtained from the subject during the contact visit.
- f. **Dignate Review LO 13.** Undue emphasis placed on the contact visit – As a continuation of the above point, throughout the first referral and in closing the third,

the decision making rationale relies on the contact visit that took place. The visit happened in the presence of protective parents who had expressed views ... that their son was a 'good boy' ... in addition AR was a youth and was known to have ASD yet his comments were apparently taken at face value ... this visit and its assessment by the CTCO then has an impact on all subsequent referrals and how they are subsequently dealt with.

- g. In respect of the second referral, in particular, the PLR reviewer concludes that a number of lines of enquiry were not pursued; that key information / concerns recorded in the first referral were not carried through; and that, overall, the referral was closed without the level of 'professional curiosity' expected.

8.37 It is clear the FIMU officers, and the CTCO - who was responsible for considering all three referrals - were aware of the previous concerns raised. Where possible, in the event of multiple referrals, the CTCO who deals with the first referral will also be allocated any subsequent referrals. There are limited circumstances where this would not happen in practice, for example where the original officer is no longer in post. Otherwise, the original CTCO will be involved throughout so they have knowledge of the case history.

8.38 It has further been noted that in the course of the Second and Third Referrals, an error was made in the spelling of AR's name, which may have meant that not all relevant information relating to him and his case history was easily accessible. That is a regrettable error but does not in my view constitute a breach of policy. While I acknowledge that it goes to a need to ensure general care and attention to detail in record keeping, I should be clear that the same CTCO dealt with all three referrals, was aware it was a repeat referral, and was able to view the information on the system for the previous referrals. It is worth noting also that in this context, information and intelligence comes in often from a range of sources and from time to time, for example, details are given in slightly different forms, but that is not something that has been an issue in terms of assimilating information and ensuring there that the appropriate case history is in place. Police systems should bring up the 'closest match' when conducting searches, such that an error in spelling will often not be detrimental.

8.39 The records are said to reflect a lack of professional curiosity, with an over reliance on the information obtained during the first contact visit, and the original assessment resulting in the first closure. The review therefore suggests that although there was knowledge of the earlier referrals, the FIMU and Prevent officers did not do a comprehensive review of the history and consider where new information may be necessary.

- 8.40 I do not necessarily consider this to be a fair reflection of the procedure in this case. Organisations who are subject to the Prevent duty are encouraged to exercise caution, and to re-refer any time there is any additional concern arising with regard to any given Subject. With that context, perhaps unsurprisingly, repeat referrals are not unusual. From a CTPNW perspective, this is a preferable position because it enables the Prevent team to have a record of relevant behaviours, to provide a full picture of the individual Subject, the risk posed, and to update on any new developments or changes in behaviour. A repeat referral could be for any number of reasons – there may be an escalation in behaviour, a repeat of previous behaviour, or come from someone who has not previously had interaction with the Subject. With that in mind, the fact of a repeat referral does not in and of itself create significantly higher risk or an accumulation or escalation of relevant behaviours, but I recognise it is a very relevant factor that must be considered.
- 8.41 With this in mind significant work has been undertaken to ensure risks attaching to repeat referrals are mitigated where possible. CTPNW has carried out work to try and understand what is driving the volume of repeat referrals, and in late 2023 we engaged an academic at the University of Lancashire, Gary Dunnagan, to take a sample of repeat referrals and analyse the causes. This was with a view to establishing patterns or, for example to ascertain whether there were gaps or failures in our approach or a pattern of incorrect or over-referral. Due to unforeseen circumstances this work was not completed so has its limitations, but initial findings from the review indicated the root of the volume of referrals was the challenge for other organisations working in the multi-agency framework to confidently discharge the risk of a given Subject. This included mental health services, education and policing. It is hoped the further national work ongoing in this space around repeat referrals will help to add value and understanding.
- 8.42 The CTPNW Prevent team hold a daily meeting to discuss all new referrals. This is then reported into a daily 'pace setter' meeting which I chair each day where the team raise and discuss any complex or repeat referrals, and the circumstances of that case. Consideration of repeat referrals features in our team governance, and regular stringent dip sampling of Open cases occurs to ensure there is a constant process of quality assurance.
- 8.43 Further, on 31 March 2025 the Multiple Referrals: Risks, Supervision & Accountability interim policy was introduced. This updated an earlier version published in January 2023, setting out new expectations on the management of multiple referral cases. These policies aim to provide clarity on the potential elevated risks for repeat referrals. The 2025 guidance specifically responds to recommendations from the recent learning reviews, clarifying details and closing any gaps within the 2023 Addendum. It emphasises the importance,

as a network, of getting the analysis, decision making and oversight of multiple referral cases right. As a result of these policies, additional measures have been put in place to strengthen the process and level of oversight in respect of repeat referrals. By way of example:

- a. A Prevent Inspector must be informed of all multiple-referral cases as soon as they are identified, irrespective of what stage of the PCM process the case is at (this builds on the previous CTPNW policy that where there had been three referrals about a Subject it must be escalated to a supervisor for review). That Inspector should have sight of the case management and support plans put in place. An Inspector must sign off any closure, with a closing rationale logged on the PCMT which fully explains the reasoning for this.
- b. All multiple referral cases in the information gathering stage must be put forward for full open-source III checks. A clear direction must be given to search for 'Prevent-relevant information' to ensure a thorough and effective search.
- c. If, based on the intelligence available a decision is made the case does not meet the s.36 threshold to be referred into Channel, officers must consider a contact visit to the subject.

8.44 This is an interim Policy and will be reviewed nationally.

Theme 5 – Role of Supervisor / Oversight

- 8.45 The June 2018 CTPHQ Policy for Prevent Practitioners provides for the supervisory role to include 'overall supervision of each case, ensuring CTCOs are applying the CT/DE management methodology appropriately and to the required standard' [SK1/06 – CTPHQ000116]. From December 2020, the CTCO Guide 2020 provided that Supervisors will (i) support and manage CTCOs day-to-day, (ii) bear joint responsibility for CTCO decisions, and (iii) supervise and quality check all CTCO PCM work and ensure its timely completion [SK1/07 – CTPHQ000059]. It is for supervisors to ensure that closure of cases only occurs when the identified case priorities around risk and vulnerabilities have been addressed and any risk has been appropriately mitigated, or at least evidence and justification that all management options have been exhausted.
- 8.46 Both the PLR and Dignate Review raised concerns which call into question the role played by the Supervisor in each of the referrals.
- a. **PLR Recommendation 3.** A review of current training for supervisors should be considered to strengthen that when signing off assessments as complete, all

behavioural factors and motivations for behaviour have been captured on the assessments, whether deemed Prevent relevant or not. Current assessments do not include a Prevent 'relevancy' element to factors. The new Prevent Assessment Framework (PAF) due to go live in September 2024 goes some way to addressing the Prevent relevancy for each of the susceptibility factors.

- b. **PLR Recommendation 7.** Each new comment on PCMT should be unique showing the officer has considered their views again. If there is no new information or no further updates then this should be articulated rather than copying a previous entry.
- c. **PLR Recommendation 10.** CTCO policy should be reviewed to ensure all outstanding enquiries or information gathering is completed prior to closure.
- d. **Dignate Review LO 8.** VSH/CCS. The Vulnerability Support Hub was not engaged, despite this being a strong recommendation in the DIF for cases with the types and quantity of identified concerns. The Inspector in the first case recommends a referral but there is no record on the PCMT of this taking place. There is also a note that the case will be referred but a referral did not take place.
- e. **Dignate Review LO 14.** Disguised Compliance. Several times throughout the first referral, AR makes contradictory statements that could be indicative of disguised compliance The point of disguised compliance is pertinent given the reliance on the contact visit to close the cases. If the possibility of disguised compliance had been explored it may have led to some of the cases being progressed further.

8.47 PLR recommendation 3 is based on the reviewer's comment that the PGA on 23 December 2019 stated 'there were no grievances' [page 14] despite there being a narrative of bullying from AR's previous school. As a result, a potential motivating factor 'may have been overlooked'. I would note that the relevant entry on the PGA actually states, 'There is no evidence of any grievances at this stage further information is required ... Prevent to visit the subject to establish whether the subject has any grievances'. [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318] entry dated 23 December 2019]. It is apparent from the record of the subsequent Prevent visit on 3 January 2020 [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318] entry dated 6 January 2020] that the subject of school bullying was raised, and that this was considered in the rationale for closing the case [SK1/23 – CTPNW000318] entry dated 15 January 2020]. Bullying as a potential motivating factor had not been overlooked.

8.48 I agree with PLR recommendation 3, but I would question the factual basis for making the recommendation in this case. CTPNW was one of the first regions to go live with the Prevent Assessment Framework in September 2024.

- 8.49 I also agree in principle with PLR recommendation 7 that each new comment on the PCMT should be unique, avoiding an approach of 'cut and pasting' previous comments. From a CTPNW perspective, this has been reinforced through Quarterly Away Days with all CTPNW Prevent staff. That said, I do want to comment on the factual basis underlying this recommendation.
- 8.50 The PLR reviewer notes that the supervisor's 'tasking and review' entry on 23 December 2019 was a direct copy from the PGA supervisor's comments. As a matter of fact, that is correct, but there is important context here. The PGA supervisor's comments were also made on 23 December 2019, less than two hours before the 'tasking and review' entry, and it was the same person [officer 2399] who made both entries. Essentially, they had commented on the PGA, and then shortly thereafter, as a matter of administration, had created a separate 'tasking and review' entry to capture their comments. With this context, I do not consider the supervisor's actions to be an example of bad practice. The commentary in the PLR, including at learning point I, page 17, risks an unfair conclusion being drawn [SK1/40 – CTPHQ000055].
- 8.51 CTCO Supervisors play an important role in the management of Prevent referrals. There is a strong culture of collaboration and team working in the Prevent team, with officers working closely together and having a good understanding of colleagues' caseloads. There is in addition a constant dialogue between Prevent team members and their supervisors, including having an initial discussion when a new referral comes in. This gives the supervisor an awareness of the facts and background to any case falling within their team, including whether it is a repeat referral. They will also, therefore, have detailed understanding of the key aspects of each case and its developments – it would be commonplace for a CTCO to consult and discuss with their supervisor each stage of a referral and its handling, from flagging repeat referrals to updating priority bandings, and to making risk assessments prior to undertaking a visit to the Subject. As such, it would not be practicable for every interaction or development in that management relationship to be reflected in the relevant case tracker. The supervisor does not become involved in a case at the stage of providing supervisory sign-off and should already have the background information and the key points before undertaking those supervisory functions. Routinely, CTCOs discuss their case with their supervisor prior to finalising their recommendations, and as such the information in the tracker will not be new to the supervisor in question, and at the point of making their decision, the supervisor would be fully apprised of the key details and rationale for the proposed approach.

- 8.52 PLR recommendation 10 and Dignate Review LO 8 both deal with the issue of ensuring that any outstanding queries or actions have been completed before a case is authorised for closure.
- 8.53 It is correct that the PGA in respect of the first referral states that Prevent will submit a referral to the vulnerability hub [SK1/23 – **CTPNW000318** – entry dated 23 December 2019]. I am not able to confirm whether this referral took place, and the reasons why it might not have occurred. I do note ('as the CTCO did') that the support AR needed from other agencies for his vulnerabilities was already in place.
- 8.54 Both reviews note the possibility of AR's disguised compliance during the Prevent visit in January 2010. The PLR reviewer considered that AR's account for his internet searches lacked credibility and, in their opinion, needed to be verified [learning point J – page 18]. The Dignate Review suggests, hypothetically, that 'if possibility of disguised compliance had been explored it may have led to some of the cases being progressed further'.
- 8.55 The Prevent officers involved in these referrals, including at supervisor level, were aware of the concept of 'disguised compliance' and understood this should be considered as part of the decision-making process. This would have been particularly relevant with regard to assessing next steps while undertaking a face-to-face visit, even if not specifically referenced in the PGA.
- 8.56 Finally, in terms of general record keeping, it is worth noting that, in keeping with the close, collaborative working relationships both within the Prevent team and with other key teams in the multi-agency approach, team members regularly shared information and updated each other. This method of working should assuage any concerns about any individual not having a full understanding of the background to any referral they are working on.
- 8.57 While teams endeavour to record as much as possible on the tracker, they are in such regular dialogue with each other and their supervisors that it would not be practicable or possible to record every interaction or rationale. Similarly, teams work extremely closely with FIMU to manage risk. So while not every interaction is recorded, this does not necessarily mean things have not been done or that team members are not fully apprised.

Theme 6 – Information Sharing / Engagement with Partners.

- 8.58 In the Dignate review [LO 4], it was noted that these cases took place while Operation Dovetail was ongoing, which may have affected decisions made at that time with regard to Prevent referrals. This report went on to note that the facts in this case were such that any or each of these referrals could have been progressed to Dovetail information

gathering following progression through the PGA, at which point a local authority coordinator could have gathered the appropriate vulnerability assessment and multi-agency information. The Dignate report observed, in noting that all three referrals remained police led, that there was a reluctance to share the information with Dovetail or to enable the decision making to be taken in that framework, noting also that CTCOs making decisions at PGA based on the section 36 threshold rather than that of 'suspect', meant that more cases were closed at PGA stage than in other regions where Dovetail was not being piloted.

- 8.59 During the Relevant Period, CTPNW were referring a substantial proportion of cases into Channel through the Dovetail process. In March 2020 Home Office Analysis and Insight conducted an evaluation of the North-West Regional Pilot for Dovetail and concluded it had been well implemented and led to some positive changes in delivery [SK1/50 - CTPNW000275]. The analysis showed that across the NW region, the number of cases referred to Channel between April to December 2019 was nearly as high as for the entire year of 2018/19. As such, there does not appear to be an organisational reluctance to share information with Dovetail.
- 8.60 In respect of AR, CTPNW made the decision for all three referrals that there was no CT/DE concerns and AR was not vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism. He was therefore not referred into Dovetail or to Channel. As set out above, officers conducting the necessary assessments will take an overall view on the risks of an individual case, and the person's susceptibility to being drawn into terrorism or being radicalised. Each case is assessed on its own merits and has an element of subjective assessment. A decision as to whether or not a case was referred to Channel would be based on the intelligence available in any given case.
- 8.61 I also note that when the first referral was received, strong multi-agency arrangements were already in place. The CTCO was invited to attend a multi-agency strategy meeting within two days of receiving the referral and attended a follow up meeting in early January 2020. This demonstrates a willingness to work with other agencies and share information. Work in respect of AR's vulnerabilities and safeguarding risks was ongoing with several organisations, and AR was referred for a forensic CAMHS assessment, an ASD assessment and was receiving regular counselling.
- 8.62 CTPNW recognise the importance of joint working with all organisations involved in Counter Terrorism and safeguarding. To ensure effective engagement with key

organisations and governance structures, CTPNW is represented on a number of boards including:

- a. Local Authority led Prevent Boards to provide local updates to practitioners from key partner agencies;
- b. Every Channel Panel in the NW region as Police representatives – there are 24 Channel Panels meeting every month, servicing the entire NW region; and

- 8.63 CTPNW Prevent deliver bespoke briefings every quarter into the 5 regional strategic CONTEST Boards, attended by key partners. This supplements the distribution of CT risk and Prevent demand product, as outlined in the paragraph 'Information Sharing'.
- 8.64 In all instances, the quality and relevancy of briefings are constantly reviewed to try and ensure key multi-agency partners have access to the most relevant briefings.
- 8.65 From November 2023, CTPNW Prevent has worked to secure the production and distribution of monthly 'Dashboards' to all non-CT partners throughout the region. This enables us to share on a regular basis demand information with local partners that will enable local decisions on funding and service provision.
- 8.66 This supplements the annual Counter Terrorism Local Profile, referred to earlier, which is distributed annually to key partners, outlining the current assessment of counter terrorism risk within their locality. This enables partner organisations an understanding of local CT risk, and to work to ensure they are complying with the expectations set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015.
- 8.67 In June 2024, CTPNW hosted an event for non-CT Police Colleagues to explore opportunities to widen access to non-statutory providers via colleagues in Violence Reduction Units. This has enabled access for CTPNW Prevent to new non-statutory services whose expertise in troubled juveniles and parental support is proving invaluable in assisting in the management of vulnerabilities in some young people referred into Prevent, as well as their parents. Further meetings to continue this work will be held during the remainder of 2025, individually with Force representatives.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief of its truth.

Signed: **Signature**

Dated: 11/08/25

Annex A: Exhibit Schedule

Please see attached.