

Tim Jacques,
cc. Lord David Anderson

30 June 2026

By email only

RESPONSE TO LORD ANDERSON'S 'LESSONS FOR PREVENT' REPORT

Dear Tim,

Following the horrific attack in Southport in July 2024, my predecessor appointed Lord Anderson as the Interim Independent Prevent Commissioner and asked him to examine the interactions that Ali Harbi Ali (AHA), who murdered Sir David Amess, and Axel Rudakubana (AR), the perpetrator of the attack in Southport, had with Prevent. In July 2025, Lord Anderson published his 'Lessons for Prevent'¹ report. This report reviewed the failings exposed by these cases, the measures taken to address them, and made recommendations for further reform. After the establishment of the Southport Inquiry, the Home Office decided to consider the 'Lessons for Prevent' findings alongside the Inquiry's Phase 1 recommendations before formally responding to Lord Anderson's report.

Prevent is an early intervention programme which seeks to identify those at risk of becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. It then offers interventions to divert them from that path. Since 2015, more than 66,000 referrals to Prevent have been triaged by specially trained police officers, more than 12,850 cases have been considered by Local Authority chaired multi-agency 'Channel' panels and over 5,700² people have consented to receive interventions designed to divert them away from terrorism.

However, there are also cases like the two under scrutiny in Lord Anderson's report, where the support offered under Prevent at the time was either not made available, not delivered effectively, or not sufficient to avert future serious violence. It is essential in such cases, where individuals who have touched the Prevent system go on to commit horrific crimes, that we make practical changes to improve our work to protect the public.

¹ [Lessons for Prevent - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/111111/lessons-for-prevent-report.pdf)

² Statistics from 2015/2016 to 2024/2025. See: [Collection: Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/111111/collection-individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-statistics.pdf).

The Home Office accepts all of the recommendations made in Lord Anderson's 'Lessons for Prevent' report, has already delivered significant changes to Prevent, and will continue work to go further in some key areas.

Measures already taken include:

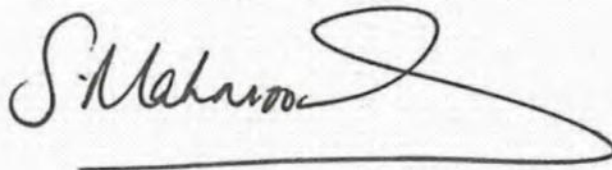
- We have strengthened our response to individuals who pose a risk of harm but lack a clear ideological motive, including by publishing the 'Key Principles of Prevent' on GOV.UK which clarify when such cases should be referred.
- I have created a taskforce in the Home Office to consider the Southport Inquiry recommendations, coordinate the Government's response, and develop a new approach to managing the risk from individuals fascinated with violence. The taskforce will start to develop a coordinated approach to identifying and tackling the risk posed by violence-fixated individuals, alongside the work of Phase 2 of the Southport Inquiry.
- We are piloting a number of ways to better spot people online at risk of radicalisation and provide them with diversionary support.
- We have strengthened the approach to repeat Prevent referrals. Where an individual is referred more than once, the case cannot be closed without mandatory senior police sign-off.
- We are strengthening the join-up between Prevent and other safeguarding and violence prevention frameworks to reduce missed opportunities, including piloting new multi-agency assurance meetings.
- We have improved independent oversight of the whole Prevent system by creating the role of the Independent Prevent Commissioner.

Details of the specific improvements made in response to each recommendation and our ongoing work is set out below.

I am grateful for the work undertaken across government and by our operational partners, including those at a local and regional level in Counter Terrorism Policing, education, health, local authorities, prisons and probation and devolved governments in Scotland and Wales.

We plan to publish this letter on GOV.UK on the same day that we publish the government response to Phase 1 of the Southport Inquiry. A copy of this letter will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'S. Mahmood', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Rt Hon. Shabana Mahmood MP
Home Secretary

Responses to Individual Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The utility of the Standards and Complaints Unit should be assessed, along with the question of whether it requires statutory powers in order to be an effective complaints mechanism.

Lord Anderson suggested changes to the Prevent Standards and Compliance Unit (StaCU), which sat within the Commission for Countering Extremism and was created upon the Independent Reviewer of Prevent, Sir William Shawcross's recommendation to monitor standards and compliance across the programme.

As a result, StaCU has moved into the Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner and will record and analyse patterns as part of the drive to improve Prevent's effectiveness. As the Office provides independent oversight of the Prevent programme, these records will then contribute to future reviews conducted by you as the Independent Prevent Commissioner.

My officials will continue to work with you, as the Independent Prevent Commissioner, to explore further strengthening the complaints mechanism and to explore statutory powers to support this. We will complete this work and report back to you by the end of 2026 on the merits of any statutory powers.

Recommendation 2: Prevent should remain open to individuals falling within the existing category of "fascination with extreme violence or mass casualty attacks". Consistent efforts should be made to improve the quality of referrals and encourage those that are appropriate, including by providing clear and consistent messaging to potential referrers and to Prevent practitioners.

The Home Office published the Key Principles of Prevent on GOV.UK in February 2026 which states that "while ideology is an important consideration, a clear identifiable ideology is not mandatory to make or adopt a Prevent referral". The Home Office will embed the Key Principles through new and updated policy and guidance such as the forthcoming revised 'Notice, Check, Share' document (which provides guidance on making referrals), and the upcoming revision of the guidance for Channel panel members and partners.

In September 2024 we introduced the new Prevent Assessment Framework (PAF). This provides a clear framework for case officers assessing Prevent referrals, and for Channel panels. This single document is updated frequently and follows the referral from Prevent into Channel. It improves the quality and consistency of decision-making and was developed with the Counter Terrorism Assessment and Rehabilitation Centre (CT-ARC). Training on the use of PAF is jointly delivered by the Home Office and Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP). The Prevent Case Management Risk Assessment Project Board (attended by Ministry of Justice, CTP and Home Office) oversees quality assurance and evaluation of the PAF, which includes how well the tool assesses Prevent referrals without a clear ideology.

The PAF requires information on repeat Prevent referrals to be recorded to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to cumulative risk as part of CT police and Channel panel decision-making. Its implementation is supported by mandated and assessed training.

In October 2025, the Home Office introduced regional strategic meetings which focus on improving referral quality. The meetings bring key partners together to review local performance, referral data and intelligence, identify outliers or areas of weaker practice, and agree targeted actions at regional level. These collaborative meetings create a shared understanding and a structured way to support a more consistent application of national Prevent policy and guidance.

The Home Office and Counter Terrorism Policing Headquarters hold quarterly joint briefings for practitioner networks. Practitioners are provided with essential information for effective policy implementation and facilitate direct engagement with the Prevent network, comprised of statutory partners under the Prevent duty and civil society organisations, to identify additional support requirements. This initiative underscores the Home Office and CTP's commitment to ensure that frontline practitioners have the support and tools they require to make Prevent as effective as possible, and that policy is implemented consistently and coherently.

Prevent have also strengthened senior cross-system oversight through the Prevent Partners Oversight Group which brings together the Home Office, cross-Government partners and CTP. This is a forum to discuss and clarify policy issues, to identify and address delivery issues, and to support consistent messaging.

Recommendation 3: A Cabinet Office task force should be established to lead exploratory work into the possibility of formally connecting Prevent to a broader safeguarding and violence prevention system.

In response to this recommendation, I have set up a cross-Government taskforce in the Home Office, which will draw on Cabinet Office expertise and support. This will consider the range of existing multi-agency and safeguarding arrangements, how they interact with Prevent and what more might be needed.

The taskforce brings together partners from across government, including the Department for Education, Department of Health and Social Care, the Ministry of Justice, operational partners and others working on safeguarding and violence prevention. Devolved governments will be important partners in this work, given much of this policy is devolved. It will also work closely with Prevent partners and local frontline networks. It will identify opportunities for building better connections between different safeguarding systems, so that people can be supported by the most appropriate local service. The taskforce will also examine the role of the online information environment in influencing this evolving threat.

The taskforce will work alongside Phase 2 of Sir Adrian Fulford's Southport Inquiry as it considers the adequacy of multi-agency systems to address the risk posed by young people fixated with extreme violence. Phase 2 of the Southport Inquiry will also consider the role of the internet and social media in influencing violence fixated people to carry out violent attacks, and the effectiveness of the approach to the sale and possession of offensive weapons and articles with a point or blade. The Home Office will support the Inquiry with this work.

In April 2025, a pilot was established in nine Local Authorities to look at ways to ensure that cases that leave the Prevent system are connected to the correct alternative services. The pilots focused on individuals who posed a risk of violence, or had a concerning interest in mass violence, but were not deemed a terrorist concern. Under the pilot, multi-agency assurance meetings were held every month with additional regular check-ins to monitor progress and outcomes of these cases. Over 12 months, around 50

cases were taken through this process and evaluated. From this evaluation, we identified practical minimum standards to strengthen the handoff process from Prevent to alternative services which we are working with partners to agree and roll out.

Recommendation 4: All feasible and rights-compliant avenues should be explored as a matter of priority to enable evidence of online activity to be more effectively used:

(a) to gauge risk factors, assess risk, identify clusters and escalation and activate and manage responses

(b) to assist in the identification of potential subjects for Prevent

(c) to evaluate and address the risk factors attaching to individuals referred to Prevent

Lord Anderson's report underscored the urgency of adapting the Government's approach to respond to the realities of online radicalisation, noting that online activity is now a common feature in the radicalisation pathway of those entering the counter-terrorism system. The Home Office strongly endorses his call for better capabilities, so that Prevent can spot young people online who are engaging with extreme content, as well as tools to help police understand young people's online activity so they can assess any risk they might pose once they are referred to Prevent.

Recommendation 4 (a): The Home Office is working closely with the Department for Education to strengthen both the consistency and safeguarding application of filtering and monitoring software in schools. We recognise that many schools already use filtering and monitoring tools which generate alerts on harmful or extremist content; our work is focused on ensuring clearer national expectations for how these alerts are acted upon, including their regular consideration by Designated Safeguarding Leads and school leadership. We are also addressing the variation in provision that Lord Anderson highlights, where systems are delivered through different commercial providers on a local or school-specific basis. Through strengthened guidance, standards-setting, and support for schools, we are driving greater consistency in how filtering and monitoring are implemented and how insights from them are used to identify risk. This is complemented by wider work to build resilience to online harms through curriculum, teacher training, and resources such as Educate Against Hate so that schools are better equipped both to detect and respond to emerging concerns. These measures complement wider government action, including the recently announced ban social media for under 16s and that certain harmful features on other online services like livestreaming and strangers contacting children will be restricted for under 18s.

Recommendation 4 (b): To improve early identification and support, we are piloting a number of approaches to better spot individuals at risk of radicalisation online. These pilots bring together data, analytics and operational insight to test how risk signals can be identified earlier across a range of online environments, including social media and other digital platforms, and how these insights can be translated into timely, proportionate interventions. This includes exploring how partners can work together to triage online behaviours of concern, strengthen referral pathways into Prevent, and ensure vulnerable individuals are diverted into appropriate safeguarding support before risks escalate. This is particularly important considering the rise in children being arrested for terrorism-related activity, much of which is carried out online. The Home Office is working directly with technology companies to spot people online at risk of engaging with illegal terrorist content (and therefore at risk of committing offences under the Terrorism Acts 2000 & 2006) and refer them to Prevent so that they can be offered support on a voluntary basis before any offence is committed.

Recommendation 4 (c): Counter Terrorism Policing (CTP) is strengthening the operational response by enhancing policy, guidance and capability for Prevent practitioners. This includes the development of a dedicated online activity policy, clearer national minimum standards for assessing online behaviour, and enhanced training for Prevent officers and caseworkers to interpret increasingly complex digital footprints. This work is ensuring officers are better equipped to assess intent, capability and risk in an online context, apply consistent thresholds, and take proportionate action – supporting more effective and confident decision-making when handling cases involving online radicalisation.

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Recommendation 5: Public transparency about the structures, systems and statistics of Prevent should be the default position. The Home Office and CTP should adopt a pro-active approach to the release of such information and be ready where possible to publicise the successes of Prevent.

The Home Office is committed to improving transparency and information sharing, recognising that trust in the programme from the public, frontline professionals and family and friends of those susceptible to radicalisation is essential to ensure that individuals receive the support they need to divert them away from becoming a terrorist or supporting terrorism.

Prevent, alongside our delivery partners including CTP, are increasing the information shared in line with this recommendation. In November 2025, the Home Office and CTP published the 2024/25 "Individuals Referred to Prevent" statistics, including for the first time data sets on consent data, ethnicity data and a breakdown of the prevalence of mental health and neurodivergence conditions³. The statistics will be published at least annually to support transparency of the programme.

Guidance aimed at practitioners under the Prevent and Channel duty is available online and includes information about the structures and systems in Prevent and Channel.

Recommendation 6: Civil society representatives who are sceptical about Channel or wish to understand it better should be invited to attend simulated Channel Panels organised for training purposes.

The Government committed to improving transparency and information sharing as an immediate action following the publication of 'Lessons for Prevent' last year, including by upskilling and training Prevent practitioners, front line workers and civil society organisations. On the suggestion of Lord Anderson, Prevent invited the media to a simulated Channel panel training session last year, and this year held one for academics, a number of whom are associated with civil society organisations. These

³ [Individuals referred to and supported through the Prevent Programme, April 2024 to March 2025 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-and-supported-through-the-prevent-programme-april-2024-to-march-2025).

sessions, which are based on real case examples, are a crucial training tool for Channel panel members. Those invited were given unprecedented insight into how Channel panels operate and broadcast media follow up gave the public insight into how panels function. Further opportunities to observe simulated Channel panel training sessions will continue, with a focus on sceptical audiences.

Recommendation 7: RICU briefings should where possible be circulated when they could be useful to CSOs working in the field.

RICU is the Government's centre of analytical excellence in terrorist and extremist ideology, and exploitation of the internet to radicalise. RICU maintains deep subject matter expertise, identifies emerging radicalisation risks and communicates insights objectively and without bias. RICU produces written reports and delivers briefings. These products inform policy and operational decision making in Prevent and across the CT system.

It is critical that staff subject to the Prevent duty in a frontline role who are likely to engage with people that may be susceptible to radicalisation are armed with the very best information possible to do their job. The Home Office routinely shares RICU products with the Prevent network, which is comprised of statutory partners under the Prevent duty and civil society organisations.

To support the delivery of the recommendation, the Home Office has also organised a series of forums for frontline practitioners including Prevent's Civil Society Organisation network. These forums aim to ensure that RICU's analysis can reach and inform an audience of frontline practitioners and civil society organisations engaged in the delivery of Prevent. The forums take place at least quarterly, ensuring ongoing communication and collaboration with practitioners on thematic reports.

Recommendation 8: Compliance with respective agency mandates to share information should be more closely monitored by their regulators and inspectorates. Consideration should be given to introducing a duty to cooperate with speed and candour in reviews after adverse incidents.

Phase 1 of the Southport Inquiry concludes that poor information sharing and management is a fundamental problem. The Chair makes recommendations that are relevant to information-sharing, which are being implemented by government and partners outside government, such as Ofsted.

Sir Adrian commits to further assessing the quality and timeliness of information sharing and considering the development of a shared multi-agency risk tool for public sector services as part of Phase 2 of the Inquiry. The Inquiry will hear evidence from witnesses with relevant insight and expertise on information management. The taskforce will support the Inquiry with this work.

Government must work with regulators and inspectorates whose responsibility it is to monitor compliance with respective agency mandates to share information. The taskforce is working with departments to agree an approach to engaging with regulators and inspectorates, highlighting the findings of Phase 1 and considering further action that can be taken ahead of Phase 2 reporting.

In relation to Prevent specifically, compliance and information sharing is a fundamental part of the Channel Quality Assurance process which is aligned with national policy and

guidance. The Home Office team works directly with Channel practitioners to maintain standards and monitor compliance across the Channel panel network. The team also strengthens national Channel panel engagement and oversight by targeting support where required and using a suite of measures and resources to drive practice improvement and consistency. These measures and resources include Channel panel observations, dip sampling, practice and learning reviews, policy direction, the identification and facilitation of support needs, and assessment of compliance.

My officials will continue to engage with your office to explore how any statutory powers considered under Recommendation 1 could support this recommendation to ensure authorities cooperate with speed and candour with reviews, where there are potential lessons for Prevent. There may be read across from the Public Office Accountability Bill, which is seeking to introduce a statutory duty of candour in relation to inquests and inquiries.

Recommendation 9: The Home Office and CTP should resolve the question of Home Office access to PCMT data pre-dating section 36 decisions to refer to Channel, on a basis that allows information to be shared, subject to any necessary safeguards, in a manner that allows for the fullest possible analysis in the public interest by both CTP and the Home Office.

Access and exploitation of data is crucial to enable the effective operation and continuous improvement of the Prevent system. CTP has agreed to share an anonymised data set with the Home Office as a first step and will have done so by the end of the year. Additional work between the Home Office and CTP is ongoing to consider whether it is possible to share more data with the Home Office in compliance with legal requirements to improve analytical capability, raise standards and drive continuous improvement of Prevent.

Recommendation 10: Consideration should be given to:

- (a) finding ways for young people to discuss and feed in ideas about Prevent**
- (b) systematising good local examples of engagement with parents**
- (c) having a specialist in male violence and masculinities peer review core Prevent materials**
- (d) addressing the particular circumstances of Black and mixed heritage boys who are less likely to have been referred for Early Help.**

The Home Office has carried out extensive stakeholder engagement, including with local authorities, delivery partners, other Government departments, and devolved governments to ensure proposals are grounded in operational practice and aligned with wider safeguarding systems.

Recommendation 10 (a): We are developing a more structured approach to engaging with young people on Prevent policy development both through our work with civil society organisations and local and national engagement through our network of Prevent Practitioners. Some examples to date include co-delivery of the Young Leaders Youth Summit with Westminster Council and engagement with Prevent Regional Delivery Officers to scope existing local and regional opportunities. We are also continuing ongoing work with the DCMS Youth Voice Team to explore practical ways of engaging young people in policy development.

Recommendation 10 (b): We launched a national Family Mentors pilot to provide direct support to families involved in Prevent and Channel cases, addressing a

previously identified gap in intervention support. We are working with the Department for Education's Families First Partnerships, improving join up with early help services. In addition, many projects delivered through the Home Office Preventing Radicalisation Initiative work with parents and families. This provides an opportunity to systematise our engagement with parents and families.

Recommendation 10 (c): Prevent commissioned Dr Elizabeth Pearson, a specialist in gender, masculinities and radicalisation, to undertake a peer review of core Prevent materials to assess how the intersection between masculinity, vulnerability and violence is reflected. The findings of the review are being used to inform and evaluate future updates to key guidance and training products.

Recommendation 10 (d): Lord Anderson's report recommended Prevent should create links with those tackling the fact that black and mixed heritage boys are less likely to have been referred for Early Help. Early Help can include a wide range of services and support provided to children, young people and families to address difficulties early and prevent issues from escalating to the point where statutory social care intervention is required. The report noted that when opportunities for earlier interventions have been missed, interventions at the Prevent stage may be more challenging. The Home Office has commenced engagement with practitioners and experts in Channel, Early Help and wider social care services. We have identified areas for further work to better integrate Channel panels and Early Help, such as strengthening the relationship between Channel panels and their local authority Early Help teams to ensure Channel panels are fully aware of historic behavioural concerns when assessing a child's susceptibility to radicalisation.