

Community Cohesion

Purpose of report

For discussion and decision.

Summary

The violent murder of Lee Rigby, increased EDL activity and wider issues such as prosecutions for child sexual exploitation have resulted in a number of incidents of inter-community violence and have heightened media interest in the associated community tensions. This issue was discussed by the LGA's Leadership Board and Executive in June and this report therefore reports on those discussions and actions.

Recommendation

Board members are asked to:

- note the discussions to date and the work that is currently undertaken by local authorities on community cohesion;
- discuss and direct any further activity.

Action

Officers to implement the recommendations, and any other work identified by the Board.

Contact officer: Helen Murray
Position: Head of Programmes
Phone no: 020 7664 3266
E-mail: Helen.murray@local.gov.uk

Community Cohesion

Background

1. There have been a number of recent reports of people arrested, tried and convicted for terrorist related offences in the UK. Figures for the year to September 2012 confirm the perception of an increased number of prosecutions, with 245 terrorism-related arrests, a rise of 60% on the previous year. In his Parliamentary Statement on 3 June, the Prime Minister highlighted three major counter-terror trials this year, in which 18 people were found guilty.
2. It is not clear why there has been such an increase in the number of arrests. It may be related to clearer intelligence and security efforts set in place during the Olympics, and more publicity about these cases. It may, however, be a manifestation of more individuals, either alone or in groups, seeking to carry out terrorist attacks. National security remains a top priority for successive governments and a key part of the overall strategy needs to focus on preventing individuals becoming radicalised to the extent that they want to commit violent acts.
3. Lee Rigby's murder, alongside the convictions in Rochdale and Oxfordshire for child sexual exploitation, has fuelled community tensions. Media reports suggest there were over 200 Islamophobic incidents in the week immediately following the murder in Woolwich, including attacks on 10 mosques. There have also been protests by far-right groups across the country with over 50 demonstrations by both the English Defence League (EDL) and British National Party (BNP) in early June. Serious incidents continue: a fire at a Somali Islamic centre in Muswell Hill, London, a fire at the Darul Uloom Islamic School in Chislehurst both of which have led the Metropolitan Police Commissioner to announce 24 hour patrols at vulnerable Islamic sites. An EDL rally is planned in Woolwich on Armed Forces Day, 29 June.
4. Following the tragic events in Woolwich, the Prime Minister announced that he will lead a task force that will focus on tackling extremism and radicalisation. The Group has now met twice and is focusing on disrupting extremist activity; challenging poisonous narratives; trends in radicalisation; tackling radicalisation in institutions (mosques, madrassahs, colleges, universities and prisons); and supporting faith and community leadership to build strong, integrated and united communities. We have sent in a paper illustrating the good work councils have done on cohesion (at Annex A). The Prime Minister has also asked the Intelligence and Security Committee to examine how the suspects were radicalised, whether any more could have been done to stop them and in order to learn lessons.

The local government role

5. Councils have always worked closely with the police, schools, voluntary sector organisations, religious institutions and others such as prisons and probation on community cohesion, but the Prevent programme gave this work a specific focus on violent extremism. During the three years from 2008 to 2011, 94 local authorities identified as having some risk factors within their locality received a total of £55m of funding through their Area Based Grant for Prevent. Most councils undertake far less overt work on Prevent but the emphasis on cohesion remains pivotal to mainstream activity.
6. A small number of areas have continued to receive a grant for Prevent work. However, for the majority, the funding from central government has ended, with the expectation that councils have now incorporated this work into everyday council business. There are many good examples most notably in London and West Yorkshire where this work continues, through bodies such as cohesion boards.
7. The knowledge, expertise and maturity of councils has grown since the Cattle report in 2001; the Commission on Integration and Cohesion – Our Shared Future in 2007 which set out to deliver a vision of a society where people are committed to what we have in common rather than focusing on differences; and through the recent emphasis on preventing violent extremism. Areas already map their communities to provide a clear understanding of who lives in the local area and this provides a foundation for understanding conflicts between different groups and knowledge of the barriers and opportunities which exist.
8. The national counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST, was introduced by the previous government, and was revised and updated by the coalition government in 2011. It has four strands, of which the Prevent strategy is one, which has the aim to ‘stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism’. This strategy overlays the existing work that councils undertake on community cohesion.
9. CLG launched Creating the Conditions for Integration in February 2012. Creating the Conditions recognises that integration is a vital local issue requiring a local response, with many references to localism and civic leadership, and strongly encourages local partners such as councils to take a lead. It acknowledges the excellent examples of locally-led action to build integration and challenge extremism.

Responding to incidents

10. Councils continually face a number of community cohesion challenges - from influxes of new migrants, to far right extremists, to tensions arising from serious crime incidents.

11. Councils are experienced in providing an effective and appropriate response to incidents, often issuing public statements urging unity and calmness, offering joint meetings with the police to explain activities, and calling faith leaders together to respond collectively to condemn violence of any kind. However, this activity, such as that seen in Woolwich, can be made more complicated by the response from groups such as the EDL. However, again, over time councils have built up expertise in dealing with marches/demonstrations and this is now widely shared, principally through the EDL special interest group, which is led by officers and members from Blackburn with Darwen and Luton Borough councils.

Wider issues

12. There is no single path that leads people to turn acceptable radical views into violent extremism: social, foreign policy, economic and personal factors all play a part. Tensions in communities can arise through a number of issues such as unemployment, especially for young men, slow growth in the local economy and migrant groups who do not always easily integrate into society can have a profound impact on identity and feelings of belonging. Some of these individuals can experience identity crises and feel resentful towards their adopted society which leads them to search for an ideological cause, making them open to extremist messages which they feel resonate with their experience and circumstances.
13. Recently, child sexual exploitation (CSE) has received increased media, political and public attention in part due to a number of high profile court cases principally concerning that of vulnerable young girls exploited by 'Asian men'. However, the Children's Commissioner's interim report in November 2012 found that the perpetrators and victims of CSE in recent cases have come from a wide range of ethnic and social backgrounds. The danger of a narrow focus on one particular form of CSE is that attention can be diverted from crimes which do not appear to match that model, with an associated risk to victims.
14. Councils have reported concern about the impact of cases on community cohesion and some are in active discussions with local faith and community leaders. The Community Alliance Against Child Sexual Exploitation, a coalition of organisations representing different faiths was launched in May. It is led by the Islamic Society of Britain and the campaign '*HOPE not hate* aims to raise awareness of CSE; provide training for faith and community leaders; break down misconceptions; and, create a zero tolerance attitude to CSE.
15. Reports suggest that there are a further 54 ongoing investigations across the country into cases of child sexual exploitation. Whatever emerges from those cases, particularly around warning signs, preventative action taken and the response from public authorities, will have learning for councils in taking this work forward.

Political leadership

16. Councils and councillors know who lives in their local area and this provides a foundation for understanding conflicts and a clear leadership role in dealing with issues around violent extremism, child sexual exploitation and other cohesion issues. It is therefore vital that elected members feel comfortable in tackling these issues head on and do not look to ignore incidents that occur in their areas.
17. The Prime Minister's task force will, no doubt, want to consider how British foreign policy can cause tensions in communities and as a two-way dialogue councillors will be keen to act as the link between their communities and national government so that views are taken into account in developing policy.

Communications

18. The importance of effective communication is critical relating to community cohesion, both to re-assure and bind communities together in an atmosphere of tolerance. Developing a local counter narrative to confront extremist ideology, creating alternative choices, and using credible voices to expose flawed arguments are critical parts of a local strategy to ensure extremist messages do not take hold.
19. The cohesion agenda has become more complex in a very short period of time, principally due to the role and impact of social media. It can be used by extremist organizations like the EDL to rapidly organise protests, and it can also create division and foster rumour. It also means there is an ever increasing awareness of international events and what is happening in real time in other cities and towns. However, as was seen during the civil disturbances in August 2011, social media offers a means of getting information out to communities, discrediting rumours, and bringing people together. Councils and other agencies have already been making good use of social media for these purposes.

Next steps

20. Members of the SSCB will be aware of the work underway to address CSE. There is, however, a need to refresh our support for councils around community cohesion and on Prevent. The flagship publication at the LGA's Conference, *Rewiring Public Services: Rejuvenating English Democracy*, will provide the framework for a new focus on resilient communities, building social capital and civic engagement and a new way of funding this work through community budgets.
21. The LGA Communications Team is developing a workshop to share best practice and case studies which will cover the spectrum of community cohesion communications issues. These are planned to be rolled out in the autumn, following the launch of the CSE toolkit and will be hosted regionally.

22. The LGA's Executive universally endorsed the importance of this work being led locally. Other issues raised were the lack of sharing of intelligence between counter terrorism police and local policing units; the lack of debate about the roles of national and local government; the changing make up of a council's population which means that extremism is now an issue for councils who have not dealt with this before; the importance of working with the local media to calm tensions and the importance of hearing people like Tommy Robinson, Leader of the EDL so that more people hear these incoherent arguments.
23. Actions from the LGA's Executive include organising a private meeting with CLG Ministers at the LGA's Annual Conference; submitting examples of good practice to the PM's Task force; and setting up a Practitioners' Forum for officers to share good practice.

Financial Implications

24. This work can be progressed by scaling back work on other safer communities issues such as the support we provide to Police and Crime Commissioners and Police and Crime Panels.

Appendix A - Cohesion good practice – June 2013

North East Lincolnshire

The Grimsby Mosque was attacked on 23 and 26 May and a third incident occurred at the Cleethorpes Mosque on 31 May.

In response to this, North East Lincolnshire DC and Humberside Police provided the Mosque with all necessary support and assistance in the form of community briefings, regular updates for the Mosque, a permanent police presence close to the premises for over a week and installing CCTV units. The Council also offered victim support services and also assisted with media and press enquiries. As a mark of their appreciation, the Grimsby Mosque organised a reception on 12 June to thank the Local Authority, police and members of the local community.

Following the attacks, the Mosque remains committed to deepening engagement and interaction with local community, council and police. The local Neighbourhood Policing Team is interested in a training workshop on engagement with BME communities, and the Grimsby Mosque has agreed to host a session on Prevent training in the coming months. The Mosque has expressed an interest to engage with the young people involved in the first incident and explore the delivery of a restorative awareness programme through North East Lincolnshire Council and the police.

POC: Usman Nawaz usman.nawaz@nelincs.gov.uk

Calderdale

As soon as news of the incident was received an email was sent to all partner agencies giving brief details and asking for any signs of tension to be reported through well - established Single Point of Contact arrangements in the Community Safety Team at Calderdale Council.

A Partnership 'Bronze' meeting was convened the following day and visibility was increased in the town centre and within the main Asian/Muslim residential area. A key aim was to provide reassurance and to monitor tension across all communities.

The Council and police were represented at West Yorkshire 'Gold' meetings chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable on the Thursday and Friday following the incident. Local 'Silver' arrangements were also implemented to agree the immediate response and ongoing strategy.

Reassurance visits were undertaken to Mosques and Madrassahs, and to the local Army Cadet Centre (and have continued, particularly when incidents have occurred in other parts of the country).

On 24 May a joint statement was issued by Calderdale Council of Mosques, Calderdale Interfaith Council and the Leader of Calderdale Council expressing abhorrence at the events and a plea to local people to continue their proud record of tolerance.

The connection of Drummer Rigby to Halifax soon became apparent and local Neighbourhood Policing Team Officers were deployed in a low key manner to the area where his family live. A Family Liaison Officer was also allocated to the family.

A message was delivered at Friday prayers across all the borough's Mosques, which aimed to reassure the Muslim community and urged calm in the face of potential provocation. The Vicar of Halifax visited one of the largest local Mosques and this was reciprocated by attendance from the Muslim community at the Minster's Sunday Service.

Various rumours and pieces of intelligence were received about possible EDL activity in the area and wider afield. Around 20 EDL supporters laid a wreath at Halifax Cenotaph on 1 June and then continued to a regional gathering in Leeds. A low-key partnership presence was maintained in Halifax Town Centre through an increased police presence and additional Council Community Wardens, but no problems were encountered.

POC: Andrew Pitts Andrew.Pitts@calderdale.gov.uk

Kirklees

The Council's well established daily Partnership Community Tensions monitoring response system was put in place to gather and disseminate latest community intelligence and impacts (including hate crimes).

This system sees the Hate Crime and Community Tensions Officer from the Council co-ordinating the collation of intelligence flow from a range of frontline officers from partners including housing, community workers, rangers, fire service and young peoples' services.

This flow of information in the tensions system is twofold; to identify some of the on the ground tensions and temperature checking of community feelings through engagement with communities, and secondly to provide staff and elected members with the necessary information to reassure communities (including challenging myths etc).

This information is then combined with intelligence from the Police Intelligence Unit to provide a more complete understanding of tension levels and inform appropriate multi-agency actions to be taken. In addition to these local interventions and plans, the Council fed into the Gold command structure at a West Yorkshire level to ensure strategic co-ordination of local responses across the County.

As a result of this, the potential impact of the Woolwich incident on possible tensions locally was minimised through early partnership engagement with local residents on the basis of robust community intelligence. This meant that the more reactive parts of the community tensions system which co-ordinate tactical responses including emergency planning activities did not needed to be activated although they were kept informed of the picture on an ongoing basis.

POC: Chris Walsh Chris.Walsh@kirklees.gov.uk

Suffolk Armed Forces Community Covenant/Suffolk Community Partnership

Following the Woolwich incident the local response was led by the Suffolk Police Constabulary and Suffolk County Council's Business Development Team. A meeting with community leaders was organised and representatives from the Muslim and Sikh communities and from ISCRE (Ipswich and Suffolk Council for Racial Equalities) attended. All present expressed their condolences for the soldier who lost his life, as well as their support for the British army. The Muslim representatives advised that they have not become aware of any community tensions to raise concerns so far, but are aware that members of the Muslim community are being affected by information being circulated on social media. The increased police presence was welcomed and a request was made for patrols to be in the vicinity of mosques and prayer centres.

There was discussion around the large numbers of Muslim taxi drivers, and it was agreed to circulate information to them and the taxi control room staff regarding the reporting any incidents and increased vigilance regarding their safety at this time. In addition, it was requested that the police speak to senior officers at the army barracks in Suffolk as people based at the barracks are frequent users of taxis, so that the message can be shared with their staff that the Muslim community in Suffolk share the abhorrence about the attack and to request that users of taxis do not challenge the Muslim taxi drivers regarding the attack.

POC: Jim Brown Jim.Brown@suffolk.gov.uk

Nottingham

Following the Woolwich incident, Nottingham Police set up an initial critical incident response meeting attended by the Police and Council staff, at which it was agreed to arrange and host a local faith, community and Councillor Reassurance Meeting.

Community leaders were invited to meetings in a large local Mosque, to ensure key messages could be agreed and fed back both at Friday prayers and over the weekend at local events. Many of the attendees were female, the mosque made special provision to ensure the group could meet together.

Supported by the council, community and faith leaders agreed and publicised their [own response](#) in the local media. A unity and solidarity event followed, hosted by the local Interfaith Council and a number of Mosques, attended by council representatives. In addition, representatives of the local Muslim community organised to give out roses in the city centre; the Council's Deputy Leader, Graham Chapman gave a speech at the event, which was also supported by the Chair of the Police BME Independent Advisory Group.

Following rumours of an EDL protest, reassurance was provided to a number of concerned local people, key messages were sent to frontline colleagues and additional visits scheduled to community groups who felt under pressure or concerned about repercussions. Police colleagues provided additional patrols around vulnerable locations.

The council is now working to finalise and agree a new community cohesion strategy to broaden their reach and to improve their relationship with local groups who work with disaffected young people at risk of becoming radicalised.

POC: Amy Goulden Amy.goulden@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Luton

On 31 May Luton Borough Council made a “call for peace” on its website, met with local groups at a local mosque and organised a multi-faith memorial for Lee Rigby at the Town Hall memorial. This was publicised on the council twitter account. Cllr Hazel Simmons, Leader of Luton Borough Council, made a public statement calling for peace, in particular she said “We want to send a clear message of peace and harmony. Luton is a town of incredible diversity. It is something that we embrace and celebrate as a unique strength. This has been reflected in the universal condemnation of Lee Rigby’s murder and the desire to show our respects in this way as well as reflecting on other tragic events in Luton.”

The community cohesion activity is largely lead by the community and supported by the council, under the “Luton in Harmony” banner.

Bracknell Forest

On Tuesday 28 May Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) was informed of graffiti in a subway under which contained the letters EDL and other graffiti of a racist / obscene nature. This graffiti was photographed and removed very swiftly by Bracknell Forest Council as well as being reported to Thames Valley Police. A second incident of racist graffiti was reported on Thursday 6 June on a commercial bin outside an Indian restaurant run by a member of the Muslim community. This graffiti was also photographed and removed very swiftly by Bracknell Forest Council as well as being reported to Thames Valley Police.

Bracknell Forest Council is reviewing the Prevent strategy, and the Schools Partnership has met with Head teachers and Bracknell and Wokingham College to monitor issues; no new issues were reported.

Crucial to Bracknell Forest’s response has been the strong relationships and partnership working that the Council has with the Police and community groups and their representatives. Members of the Bracknell Forest Partnership Community Cohesion and Engagement Partnership have been briefed on and discussed the response to the murder. Regular communication has been maintained with the Bracknell Islamic Cultural Association to provide reassurance to the community.

POC: Alison Sanders Alison.sanders@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

A community message was issued by the Leader of the Council and also a separate one was issued by community groups the same day. The shared theme of the messages was that they would not allow such actions by individuals to divide the community. A meeting of the community tension monitoring group was held to address any emerging issues and to gather

community intelligence so that agencies could respond if necessary. This enabled the council, quick time, to get a 'grass roots' reaction and feedback from communities on the ground.

In addition the council holds a comprehensive list of Muslim leaders from all places of worship and study that are in regular contact with the dedicated community worker within the Metropolitan Police who, in turn, works with each Safer Neighbourhood Team and the Community Safety Coordinator from the Local Authority. This makes fast time contact, response and reassurance easy but also allows the council to tailor a response bespoke to each individual request.

Police patrols were agreed and carried out at key prayer times and other requests such as visibility at the end of certain classes were also met.

In essence there were no significant reports of any backlash aimed at the communities, though there have been a small number of hate crimes reported by individuals.

Milton Keynes

In the week after the Woolwich incident local community members of various communities were contacted and appeals for calm were made. This included contact with local members of EDL. The council worked with partners and issued a press release which included key messages from investigating officer, Cabinet Member and Mosque representative (using the council extensive community relations).

In the same week the council worked with the Equality Council and local MPs to hold a community meeting which was attended by MPs, council representatives, Thames Valley Police, 42 community members, and partners.

Muslim community members spoke about 'the tiny minority who wanted to divide us'. There were calls to understand the proactive work in Milton Keynes that occurred through "Prevent", and some of this work was reported to the meeting. The meeting allowed MPs to hear how communities from different religious groups wanted to open their religious buildings more often, so that people could understand and appreciate their activities. Various comments were made about the positive nature of the meeting, suggesting people feel that they enjoy very good community relations. Praise was given for the integrated Milton Keynes messages in the press.

POC: Jeremy Beake jeremy.beake@milton-keynes.gov.uk

Crawley

As events unfolded in Woolwich, Crawley council was concerned with the potential for the emotions to resonate at a local level. Their Tension Monitoring Group agreed a joint response in terms of communications and management of contact with the two established Mosque communities and also with other smaller, less visible, local Muslim community groups.

Both of the established Mosque Communities had already expressed raised levels of concern around the possibility of reprisals against the Muslim community and the local police provided an increased visibility and presence outside both Mosques in the immediate aftermath, and also for the weekend that followed.

Relevant officers and elected Members were briefed on actions taken and their vigilance requested, together with feedback on any indication of raised tensions or concerns in the community.

POC: Phil Rogers Philip.rogers@crawley.gov.uk

Gateshead

Prior to events in Woolwich, Gateshead were already working closely with community leaders in preparation for the EDL protest scheduled for 25th of May in Newcastle. As part of this a multi-agency Joint Engagement Group was established to monitor any increased tensions in the area and identify consistent reassurance messages.

As part of the response to the protest a high visibility patrol strategy had been agreed to provide reassurance which focused on community centres and places of worship for the different local communities. This patrol strategy was enacted early and daily contact was maintained with community leaders through designated officers.

All local partners have continued to maintain regular contact and share information of any emerging issues through the weekly community tension monitoring reporting process.

POC: Mark Cheetham MarkCheetham@Gateshead.Gov.UK

Hull

In response to recent events, Hull's CSP analyst has been mapping all '888 logs' (hate incidents and racial incidents) and overlapping them with the locations of the city's mosques. Details on all logs are being looked at, contextualised and reviewed.

Key contacts within community groups have been identified and risk assessed in relation to current tensions. All those classified as high risk have been met with twice a week to discuss issues and concerns. Key contacts information has also been cross-referenced with the 888 incident logs.

In addition, a community tension training package is also being rolled out to all front-line local authority staff and police.

POC: Justine Mortimer Justine.Mortimer@hullcc.gov.uk

Stockport

Stockport Council has responded in a number of ways to recent events. Mosques and community associations have been encouraged to organise open days and share facilities with their neighbours. In addition, several focus groups and community meetings were organised in a disadvantaged area where the BNP were active to discuss, and listen to, some of the real issues that had led to BNP support. Attended by different agencies, this

aided their understanding and enabled them to act in accordance with the community's wishes.

Further, following EDL and BNP opposition to a planning application for a mosque (which was later withdrawn), residents from different backgrounds were brought together and given more choices about how local community budgets should be spent (through participatory budgeting).

Letters have also been sent to schools from the Council's Chief Executive encouraging schools to work with Prevent leads and to make referrals into the Channel safeguarding panel.

POC: Steve Brown steve.brown@stockport.gov.uk

Peterborough

Following the incident in Woolwich, a [joint statement](#) was issued by the Peterborough Racial Equality Council, Safer Peterborough Partnership, Peterborough City Council's Cohesion Board, Faith Communities Network, Muslim Council of Peterborough and Holocaust Memorial Day Steering Group, calling on all communities to remain true to their core beliefs and to redouble their efforts to work for peace and harmony and to unequivocally condemn the dreadful events in Woolwich.

Cambridgeshire

On 22 February 2013 there was a [joint statement](#) on an EDL march in Cambridge by Cambridgeshire County Council leaders.

On 5th July 2013 a "faith and social action" event will be held with Cambridgeshire County Council and the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge and the Woolf Institute. This will look at the ways in which minority communities are impacted on by [austerity](#). Whilst this is not directly as a result of Lee Rigby murder, it is pertinent to the issue.

Cambridge City

In Cambridge the EDL planned a march following Lee Rigby's murder, however it seems that turnout was small. Unite against Fascism made [a statement](#) to the local press and Cllr Tim Bick, the city council leader, said the EDL were not welcome. He said: "People in Cambridge are well able to express their own feelings in their own way about the terrible terrorist killing of Drummer Lee Rigby without help from the EDL. Polarising the community is the stock in trade of the EDL - exactly what the terrorists want too."

London Borough of Brent

A week after the murder of Lee Rigby, the Leader of Brent Council and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety hosted an open public event that brought together over 100 representatives of its very diverse communities, as well as statutory and voluntary sector partners, to unite in committing to actions that further strengthen community cohesion.

The Community Safety Strategy has been refreshed with a specific priority line around 'community reassurance' and shared priorities for the Safer Brent Partnership are now being worked on, to be delivered by a new full time Prevent Co-ordinator embedded within the Council's Community Safety Team. Brent's 'Weeks of Action' – focused interventions in one particular locality to work with local people on issues of key concern – now reflect this new priority.

Lincoln

Before an anti-Islam march took place in Lincoln on 8 June 2013 by the East Anglian Patriots, urgent talks took place between the police, council officials and business leaders to prepare for hundreds of protestors to descend on Lincoln city centre. John Latham, director of development and environmental services at the council, said "it will be business as usual. The message to people wanting to come into the city is to keep to their plans. We want to make sure that a peaceful protest can take place but also that the city centre can remain open for people to continue with their lives. It is business as usual for shops too as far as we are concerned. Each individual business will make its own decision but we would encourage them to remain open."

The protest was arranged before the killing of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich, but rapidly gained support since.

Councillor Ric Metcalfe, leader of the City of Lincoln Council, said stirring up tensions was "totally unacceptable. People expressing such views are not welcome in Lincoln. We pride ourselves on tolerance and respect for people's different beliefs. My message to the demonstrators is 'do not come to this city'."

Rochdale

Rochdale Safer Communities Partnership established a Consequence Management Team after the death of Lee Rigby in order to manage any resulting tensions. The team liaised with a number of community groups, including Rochdale Council of Mosques, community groups working with African Refugees and African run businesses based in Middleton (where Drummer Rigby's family are from) to provide reassurance messages and give information about how to report any tensions and concerns. Other action has included a sweep of the street cleaning around Mosques and other high-risk locations to remove debris as well as fire risk assessments at Mosques and businesses.

Extra youth work provision was put in place over the weekend and licensing staff visited pubs to provide information and reassurance. A book of condolence was also set up to enable the community to express their sadness. An executive decision was taken to go ahead with a pre-planned Armed Forces event in the borough with extra staff as there was a possibility that far right groups may attend. The event passed without incident.

POC: Steph Kendrick-Jones Stephanie.kendrick-jones@rochdale.gov.uk