

News story: Extremism Commissioner confirms plans for 2018

Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Sara Khan, has today (15 March) set out her plans to engage and consult, produce a comprehensive study and make recommendations to government.

The government has said countering extremism is one of the most significant and important challenges of our generation.

The move follows the formal launch of the Commission after [the Home Office published a charter](#) confirming how the government will work with the independent Commission, and laid a written ministerial statement.

Sara will spend the coming weeks sharing her plans with activists and frontline workers, community leaders and extremism experts in a series of meetings, visits and roundtables.

Commission plan for 2018:

- The Commission will be seeking input to its work from the full range of voices required to tackle a problem that affects so much of our society. This will include public consultation, discussions with government bodies, and insights from experts, academics and think tanks. The Commission will publish a regular update which will summarise its engagement activity.
- The Commission will produce a comprehensive study that exposes the scale and consequences of extremism in this country alongside the great work already being done to tackle it.
- The Commission will challenge the whole of society on what more can be done, and publish recommendations to the Home Secretary by the end of its first year on what the future structure and priorities of the Commission should be.

Sara has described 2018 as a 'watershed moment for extremism'.

Her comments follow a speech by outgoing Assistant Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police Mark Rowley in which he spelt out the "chronic threat" of extremist propaganda, which reaches "into our communities through sophisticated propaganda and subversive strategies creating and exploiting vulnerabilities that can ultimately lead to acts of violence and terrorism".

Sara's statement also reflects the impact of high profile cases, such as the trial of Finsbury Park attacker Darren Osborne and Ripple Road mosque

'teacher' Umar Haque, which demonstrate the frightening reach of extremist propaganda.

In his sentencing, the judge remarked that Osborne was rapidly radicalised over the internet, encountering and consuming material from those determined to spread hatred of Muslims. Umar Haque attempted to radicalise children at Ripple Road mosque by showing students videos of beheadings.

Lead Commissioner for Countering Extremism Sara Khan said:

Extremism is a serious threat to all our communities and it requires a whole society response.

There are individuals and groups who have a bigoted 'us versus them' vision for this country. They pump out poisonous propaganda to turn communities against each other. They exploit grievances to promote isolation, provoke discrimination and sow the seeds of violence. They turn people away from the institutions set up to protect them.

This is a watershed moment for extremism. We have seen in recent high profile cases the frightening reach and influence of extremists and their propaganda. But at the same up and down the country brave individuals and groups are speaking out and fighting back.

I have been promoting human rights and exposing extremists for a decade. As activists will tell you, putting your head above the parapet to challenge extremism is often difficult and can be intimidating. But when we come together as diverse groups united by a commitment to tolerance and community we are stronger. That is my vision for this Commission.

On 24 January the Home Secretary revealed that Sara had been selected to lead the Commission for Countering Extremism.

This followed a commitment in the Queen's Speech last year to establish a commission "to support the government in stamping out extremist ideology in all its forms, both across society and on the internet, so it is denied a safe space to spread."

[News story: Minister announces £17](#)

million to improve children's services

Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi has today announced a package of support worth £17 million to improve outcomes for vulnerable children.

More than £15 million will go to eight new Partners in Practice, to expand a peer support programme between local authorities to improve children's services.

The government is also announcing £2 million to improve leadership in children's social care services, which will be delivered through the Local Government Association (LGA).

The funding is part of the Government's £20 million improvement strategy for children's social care, and will see the Partners in Practice Programme – children's services which are rated 'good' by Ofsted – develop and share strong practice, and deliver hands-on peer support to other councils, to help improve outcomes for more children and their families across the country.

Minister for Children and Families Nadhim Zahawi said:

Social workers do an incredible job providing some of our most vulnerable children in our society with life-changing care and support.

This investment for our Partners in Practice Programme will help the fantastic work councils are doing to deliver high-quality services and make a real difference to children's lives.

I am also pleased to support the Local Government Association to drive good leadership, which is crucial if we want to support and encourage frontline staff to deliver excellent care for children and young people.

This investment comes from £20 million announced at the National Children's and Adults Services (NCAS) conference last year (October 2017), to provide additional support for councils at risk of service failure and to help create a system of continuous improvement. Through the funding, the LGA will create a package of support to ensure lead council members have the skills they need to scrutinise performance and drive improvement in children's services.

Cllr Richard Watts, Chair of the Local Government Association's Children and Young People Board, said:

We are pleased that the Minister has backed the LGA's call for

children's improvement funding. This will help to deliver an enhanced programme of sector-led support to councils, offering everything from regular 'health checks' and training for lead members and senior officers.

The achievements of councils through the sector-led improvement approach demonstrate its success and shows what councils can achieve by working together and supporting one another.

Phil Norrey, the Solace spokesperson for Children and Families and Chief Executive of Devon County Council, said:

This is welcome investment for children's services, good news for the children and families we serve and a vote of confidence in local government as a whole. Sector led improvement has proven itself effective in other areas and we are pleased by the recognition that chief executives and whole council leadership is needed to drive meaningful change.

Solace looks forward to working with our partners on this bid – the Local Government Association, Association of Directors of Children's Services and Department for Education – to challenge and support our colleagues across the country.

The new Partners in Practice are Ealing, Camden, North Tyneside and South Tyneside in partnership, Essex, Stockport, Hackney, East Riding of Yorkshire and Doncaster Trust. The Partners in Practice Programme and the Innovation Programme are part of the government's ambitious reforms to children's social care, backed by to up to £250 million.

FOI release: Legal costs of case brought against Defra on Air Quality plan

RFI 9049 – Total legal costs incurred by the Government in relation to the legal case brought by ClientEarth against Defra on the Air Quality Plan.

Notice: B25 8HT, ITM Power (Trading) Limited: environmental permit issued

The Environment Agency publish permits that they issue under the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED).

This decision includes the permit and decision document for:

- Operator name: ITM Power (Trading) Limited
- Installation name: Tyseley Hydrogen Refuelling Station
- Permit number: EPR/KP3035JZ/A001

Notice: Y025 9RZ, H Chapman and Son: environmental permit application advertisement

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for waste operations, mining waste operations, installations, water discharge and groundwater activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- how you can view the application documents
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
- what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)