'No Platform' Policy

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'No Platform' Policy

Preventing messages of hate and intolerance in Birmingham

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'No Platform' Policy

Introduction:

Birmingham City Council devotes much time and energy to ensure that our employees, members and communities are confident that their Council operates in a fair and democratic way, demonstrating through our services the highest standards of equality and social justice. The use of Council facilities by groups holding extreme religious, ideological or political views may pose a threat to this confidence as extremist groups may seek to create or exploit grievances and community tensions to the detriment of the whole community. This presents a complex problem for elected members and Council officers who need to uphold freedom of speech and values of tolerance and respect whilst retaining the trust of local communities.

Extremism is defined by the UK Government as: "the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to: (1) negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or (2) undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or (3) intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve either of (1) or (2)."[1]

The Strategic Framework and Statutory Duty:

Birmingham City Council has developed a No Platform Policy to ensure we comply with our statutory obligations, as detailed below.

Prevent Duty: Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the Act) places a duty on certain bodies ("specified authorities" listed in Schedule 6 to the Act), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".

The term "due regard" as used in the Act means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/new-definition-of-extremism-2024/new-definition-ofextremism-2024

This policy incorporates the Prevent Duty Guidance: England and Wales 2023. Specified authorities must have regard to this guidance which states: "Local authority settings should have measures in place to ensure their facilities are not exploited by radicalisers. This includes ensuring that any event spaces, publicly owned venues and resources or IT equipment are not being used to facilitate the spread of extremist narratives." (paragraph 133)[2]

The Prevent Duty Toolkit for Local Authorities[3] gives further guidance on how local authorities should deliver Prevent. It also sets out the benchmarks for reducing permissive environments. These include having comprehensive plans and policies in place to limit radicalising influences where appropriate and having an awareness of what these are in the local area.

This policy balances the need to ensure freedom of speech and expression whilst ensuring that the city council complies with current legislation and our commitment to creating cohesive communities. Birmingham City Council values freedom of speech as a fundamental right underpinning our society's values. However, free speech is not an unqualified privilege and must be subject to laws and policies governing equality, human rights, community safety and community cohesion. Both private citizens and public officials have the right to speak freely and voice their opinions. But freedom comes with responsibility and free speech that leads to violence and harm of others goes against the moral principles on which free speech is valued.

The Council recognises the importance of reducing permissive environments, including settings or practices that allow extremist ideologies to flourish unchallenged. We will regularly review use of public spaces, digital communications, venue hire, and partnerships to ensure that opportunities for dissemination of extremist materials are identified and mitigated. This includes in council buildings and assets, events hosted, facilitated or funded by the Council, and online platforms under Council control.

This policy will also ensure that the Council upholds its duty of care towards all our citizens by seeking to ensure no discrimination on the grounds of political opinion, age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation shall be exercised by any individual on Council premises.

1.0 Policy Overview & Summary:

[2] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance
[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-toolkit-for-local-authorities

1.1 No person using Birmingham City Council facilities and assets should express or promote extreme ideological, religious, racial, or political views.

1.2 Birmingham City Council will not allow the use of its facilities to any group or organisation proscribed by HM Government. A list of proscribed organisations can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/proscribedterror-groups-or-organisations--2

1.3 This policy underlines the Council's statutory duties and embeds a commitment to the promotion of strong and cohesive community relations.

2.0 Definitions for the purpose of the Policy:

For this policy:

2.1 The Terrorism Act 2000[4] makes it a criminal offence to:

2.1.1 Belong, or profess to belong, to a proscribed organisation (section 11 of the Act).

2.1.2 Invite support for a proscribed organisation (and the support is not, or is not restricted to the provision of money or other property) (section 12(1));

2.1.3 Arrange, manage or assist in arranging or managing a meeting in the knowledge that the meeting is to support or further the activities of a proscribed organisation, or is to be addressed by a person who belongs or professes to belong to a proscribed organisation (section 12(2)); or to address a meeting if the purpose of the address is to encourage support for, or further the activities of, a proscribed organisation (section 12(3)); and

2.1.4 Wear clothing or carry or display articles in public in such a way or in such circumstances as to arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of the proscribed organisation (section 13).

[4] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents

2.2 Section 38b of the Terrorism Act 2000 states that an individual has committed an offence if they have information which is known or believes might be of material assistance in preventing another person from committing an act of terrorism or securing apprehension, prosecution or conviction of another person for an offence involving the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism and they fail to disclose that information to the police as soon as is reasonably possible.

2.3 Extremism is defined by the UK Government as

"the promotion or advancement of an ideology based on violence, hatred or intolerance, that aims to: (1) negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others; or (2) undermine, overturn or replace the UK's system of liberal parliamentary democracy and democratic rights; or (3) intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve either of (1) or (2)."

2.5 The Equality Act 2010 [5] protects nine individual characteristics set out in Appendix 2. All members and employees of the Council have a duty to not unlawfully discriminate against anyone based on any of these characteristics.

2.6 The Equality Act 2010 also requires the Council to have due regard to:

2.6.1 Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.

2.6.2 Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and

2.6.3 Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2.7 Council facilities include (by way of example):

2.7.1 Property, assets, or land owned by the Council, in part or in whole.

2.7.2 Property, assets, and land leased or licensed by the Council, in part or in whole.

2.7.3 The provision of services, such as IT services (including copying or printing).

[5] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

3.0 Freedom of Speech:

3.1 The Council is committed to the principles of free speech so far as is reasonably practicable and access to Council facilities is not denied to anyone on any grounds relating to the lawful beliefs or views of that individual.

3.2 Where the expression of beliefs, views, policies or objectives are unlawful and where it is reasonably anticipated that the unlawful expression of such beliefs, views, policies or objectives might occur, the Council reserves the right to prevent by any means those views/beliefs from being expressed on its premises.

3.3 The Council recognises the need to balance the rights to freedom of speech with the provisions of the Equalities Act 2010, which brings together legislation covering anti-discrimination law and which outlaws the use of threatening words or behaviours, or the display of threatening written material with the intent to stir up religious hatred.

4.0 Communication Methods:

Use of the Internet & other Electronic Means:

4.1 It is forbidden to use the Council website, IT facilities or any other elements of the information management systems or processes for the promotion or planning of terrorism, or promoting extreme ideological, religious, racial, or political beliefs.

4.2 Any legitimate research or investigation, particularly with relation to groups causing concern (including those proscribed by Government) must first be agreed by a line manager.

4.3 The Council has the right to exercise control over all activities on its IT facilities and networks, including monitoring of systems and electronic communications and access to external resources, pursuant to its existing policies.

Written and Printed:

4.4 It is forbidden to use Council facilities to produce, store or circulate materials for the promotion or planning of terrorism, or materials promoting extreme

ideological, religious, racial, or political beliefs. Materials may only be stored or circulated to appropriate individuals if it is in accordance with the law and with the purpose of enacting this or any other relevant Council policy. A line manager's approval is required to store or circulate such materials.

4.5 The Council has the right to exercise control over all materials stored within its facilities, including the right to destroy materials, and to pass on materials to the police for criminal investigation as deemed appropriate.

4.6 Infringements of, or departures from, the procedures set out in this Policy in whatever respect may render those responsible subjects to disciplinary proceedings and they may be referred to West Midlands Police.

5.0 Implementation:

5.1 In order to comply with this policy, when an employee or member of the Council decides to allow the use of the Council's facilities to an individual, group or organisation, they must satisfy themselves that the intended use of the facilities is not in breach of this policy.

5.2 This can be achieved by considering the following questions and taking the following actions:

5.2.1 Check whether the individual/group is listed on the government's list of proscribed organisations, see paragraph 1.2 above. If they appear on the list, then the booking must be declined. Immediately inform your line manager and the No Platform Inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk) and report the matter to the West Midlands Police. Permission must not be granted for the use of the Council facilities in breach of the Terrorism Act 2000.

5.2.2 Identify if the individual/group has previously made a booking and been cleared by this process.

Previously cleared:

5.2.3 If the individual/group have previously been cleared, check if any concerns were raised that would be considered a breach of the Terrorism Act 2000 or the Equalities Act 2010 either during or after the event.

5.2.2 If no concerns were raised, check if the planned event/activity is free from controversial issues or activity that appears to promote extremist ideological, political, racial or religious beliefs If it looks like it may, find out more about the individual, group or organisation and the intended use of the facility. (follow the Assessing Information Guidance as set out in Appendix 1 below).

5.2.3 Does the use of the facility breach the Terrorism Act 2000?

If it does breach the Terrorism Act 2000, immediately inform your line manager and the No Platform Inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk) and report the matter to the West Midlands Police. Permission must not be granted for the use of the Council facilities in breach of the Terrorism Act 2000 and clearance must be sought from the lead Director for this policy via the No Platform Inbox.

5.2.4 Does the activity appear to breach the Equality Act 2010 duty, either by discriminating against individuals with protected characteristics or by not complying with the public duty?

If so, refer to your line manager and the No Platform Inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk). Permission must not be granted for the use of the Council facilities in breach of the Equalities Act 2010 and clearance must be sought from the lead Director for this policy via the No Platform Inbox.

5.2.5 If the planned event/activity is free from issues raised in paragraphs 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 above then booking can be accepted.

5.2.6 If the matter has been referred to the No Platform Inbox the booking must not be accepted until clearance has been given.

Previously not cleared or first time Booking:

5.2.7 Check to see if the planned event/activity is free from controversial issues or activity appears to promote extremist ideological, political, racial or religious beliefs. If it looks like it does, find out more about the individual, group or organisation and what is the intended use of the

facility (follow the assessing information guidance as set out in Appendix 1 below).

5.2.8 Does the use of the facility breach the Terrorism Act 2000?

If it does breach the Terrorism Act 2000, immediately inform your line manager and the No Platform Inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk) and the matter to the West Midlands Police. Permission must not be granted for the use of the Council facilities in breach of the Terrorism Act 2000 and clearance must be sought from the lead Director for this policy via the No Platform Inbox.

5.2.9 Does the activity appear to breach the Equality Act 2010 duty, either by discriminating against individuals with protected characteristics or by not complying with the public duty?

If it looks like it does, refer to your line manager and the No Platform Inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk). Permission must not be granted for the use of the Council facilities in breach of the Equalities Act 2010 and clearance must be sought from the lead Director for this policy via the No Platform Inbox.

5.2.10 If the planned event/activity is free from issues raised in paragraphs 5.2.2, 5.2.3 and 5.2.4 above then booking can be accepted.

5.2.11 If the matter has been referred to the No Platform Inbox the booking must not be accepted until clearance has been given.

5.2.12 Always refer to the no platform inbox (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk) for further guidance if you are unsure.

5.3 If an activity, following an assessment, is considered to promote extremist ideological, political, racial or religious beliefs and/or to be in breach of the Equality Act 2010, then you should:

Refuse the use of the facilities following clearance from the lead Director for the Policy. (See Appendix 1, Due Diligence Process below).

Explain to the individual, group or organisation the reasons why you are refusing, including reference to any evidence you have used in reaching your decision.

Explain to the individual, group or organisation that they can appeal the decision as set out in this policy.

6.0 Appeals:

6.1 Appeals against decisions made by the Council in accordance with this policy should be made within seven working days and in writing to: (noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk).

7.0 Model Guidance for Schools:

Responding to speakers promoting messages of hatred and intolerance.

7.1 Introduction:

Schools, both state-funded and independent, have a range of duties in relation to safeguarding children from extremism. The statutory guidance ***Keeping Children Safe in Education***, updated in September 2025, is the key document for schools, colleges and their staff as part of the wider safeguarding system for children. It provides an overview of their duties regarding preventing the radicalisation of children [6] . It recognises that children are vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and that protecting children from this risk should be part of a schools' safeguarding approach.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 placed the Government's 'Prevent' Duty on a statutory footing and placed duties on schools to have due regard to the need to prevent children being drawn into terrorism.

The Government has also sought to strengthen a schools' abilities to address a wide range of potential concerns relating to radicalisation, such as the potential for children to be groomed through several mediums and be drawn into extremist narratives.

7.2 Aims of Policy:

This "No Platform Policy" aims to ensure that Selly Oak Trust School balances the right of freedom of speech against the potential use of its facilities for the promotion of

[6] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

extremist ideological, religious or political beliefs. In this context beliefs are considered to be extremist if they include the expression of racist or fascist views; if they incite hatred based on religious interpretation, ideology or belief; or if they promote discrimination on the grounds of political opinion, age, disability, gender, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation..

This policy provides guidelines on how schools can respond to extremist concerns and conduct research into the background of potential speakers, visitors and organisations.

7.3. Definitions:

These can be found in section 2.0 above.

7.4. Principles:

The principles on which this policy is based are:

- No person may use the facilities of Selly Oak Trust School to express or promote extremist ideological, religious, racial, or political views.
- No person may use the facilities of Selly Oak Trust School to express or promote discriminatory views in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- Selly Oak Trust School will not allow the use of its facilities by any group or organisation that is proscribed by HM Government.

7.5. Electronic Communication:

Selly Oak Trust School will not allow the use of the school website, IT facilities or information management processes to:

- Promote discriminatory views in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- Promote or glorify terrorism; or
- Promote extreme ideological, religious, racial, or political beliefs.

The school has a right to exercise control over all activities on its IT facilities, including electronic communications associated with the name of the school and use of school equipment to access external resources. This includes the right to monitor the use of school resources.

7.6 Written and Printed Communication:

Selly Oak Trust School has the right to exercise control over the content of any written or printed material that identifies itself as associated with the school. It will not allow the use of its facilities in the production of such material, or permit the use of its name, or of any identifying marks relating to the school, in such material, if that material appears to:

- Promote discriminatory views in relation to the protected characteristics listed in the Equality Act 2010.
- Promote or glorify terrorism; or
- Promote extreme ideological, religious, racial, or political beliefs.

7.7 Use of Buildings, Facilities and Property:

In deciding whether to allow any group or organisation to make use of its buildings, facilities and property Selly Oak Trust School will consider the views, policies and objectives of that group or organisation and may refuse on the grounds that these are incompatible with the policies and objectives of the school. In particular, access will be refused if it appears likely that the proposed activity would promote extremist ideological, political, racial, or religious beliefs.

7.8 Accountability:

The statutory body of the school (Governing Body) has ultimate responsibility for this policy. The implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Head Teacher.

Selly Oak Trust School will use the **No Platform Policy** of Birmingham City Council for guidance on conducting research into the background of potential speakers, consulting other schools, other organisations, using search engines, assessing the reliability of information found, identifying risks to community cohesion etc. We recognise the importance of reducing permissive environments, settings or practices that allow extremist ideologies to flourish unchallenged. We will regularly review use of premises, digital communications, venue hire, and partnerships to ensure that opportunities for dissemination of extremist materials and ideologies are identified and mitigated.

7.9 Reporting Concerns:

School staff have a responsibility to act on concerns. All staff in specified roles will receive training appropriate to their level of Prevent responsibility, including

understanding extremist ideologies, spotting signs of radicalisation, risk assessments and referral processes. Training will be refreshed periodically and aligned with Home Office or statutory guidance.

At Selly Oak Trust School staff will inform the DSL if they have a concern.

Any staff member who has raised a concern will be given feedback on the action taken.

If after reporting a concern staff feel that no satisfactory action has been taken, then they should escalate the concern by informing John Williams (Prevent Governor) of their concerns. If a concern needs to be escalated further, then Selly Oak Trust School Whistle Blowing Policy is to be used.

In addition to in-school safeguarding mechanisms, if someone is concerned about someone using school premises to promote extremism, then further advice can be sought by writing to noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk

No Platform Policy, Advice and Good Practice for Venue Bookings

Follow the steps below to mitigate the risks of undesirable bookings. This document is not a definitive list, and it should be used in conjunction with other checking mechanisms.

ASK

What is planned and who is planning it?

1. Who is the individual or organisation booking the event?
    - Ask for their name and associated names they operate under
    - Ask for their address and phone number
    - Get details of the individual or the organisation's website and associated social media profiles.

2. Do they implement a policy that promotes equality and diversity and challenges all forms of discrimination? Or will they agree to their event subscribing to your equality and diversity policy?

3. Ask for details of the event, including: theme; title; agenda; content; speakers; expected audience, numbers and demographics; details of how the event will be promoted (ask for copies of flyers/posters etc); is the event open to the public or a ticket only event?

CHECK

Undertake due diligence to confirm what you've been told and find out more.

1. Consider publicly available information on the individual/organisation/speakers by:

    - Viewing their website, relevant articles or speeches

    - Consider what other people are saying about them (articles/blogs etc.)

2. Ask for a reference from a venue provider previously used by the individual/organisation.

3. If the booking is for a charity, check the charity number and verify relevant information about the organisation at: **charity.commission.gov.uk**

DECIDE

Do you let the event go ahead? Or take action to reduce risk? Use the information collected to inform your decision.

TOP TIPS when taking bookings

- If the booking is being arranged by an event management or another company, make sure you know who their client is.
- Be wary of individuals only giving out mobile numbers.
- Consider whether any speakers will be taking part online/virtually.
- Be wary of individuals/organisations making large cash payments.
- Is the stated purpose political, religious, racial or issue-based? If so, are there indicators of hate-speech or extremist narratives?
- Does the timing/location coincide with a symbolic or sensitive anniversary that could increase the risk of tension?
- Ask for final speaker lists and pre-event publicity.
- Ensure that in the event of reputational risk you can withdraw from the contract.

TOP TIPS when researching individuals/organisations online

- Complete a proportionate check on the individual/organisation by: - Viewing their website(s).
  - Considering what other people are saying about them (article/blogs etc.)
- When you are looking at a website, check that it is being kept up to date.
- Review official social media accounts to ensure alignment with school/organisation ethos and values.
- If you are unsure about an organisation, check that it has a landline number and a business address. Check reliable sources like Companies House or the Charity Commission.
- Where possible use primary evidence – an organisation's manifesto or a person speaking on YouTube.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

List of Terrorist Organisations banned under UK Law: Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations - GOV.UK

The Charity Commission
charity.commission.gov.uk

If you still have a concern about the booking, you can contact your Local Authority **noplatform@birmingham.gov.uk**

In case of an emergency dial **999**

If you have any information about suspicious activity or behaviour, contact Counter Terrorist Police via https://act.campaign.gov.uk or call **0800 789 321**

Appendix 1 - Applying the Framework:

The following diagrams set out the processes for information gathering and decision-making for the local authority in implementing the No Platform Policy.

Decision-Making Authority According to Venue Type

BCC Owned/ Managed Venue	BCC Owned Venue but Managed by Third Party	Managed by Third Party with Funding relationship with BCC	BCC provides advice and support
e.g. Town Hall, Council House, parks and other event spaces managed by the Council	Third Party organisations leasing Council owned venue	Community and voluntary organisation owned property	Hotels, conference and banqueting centres, private business, office and room hire
BCC is primary decisionmaker	BCC provides advice and support	Community and voluntary organisation primary decision-maker	BCC provides advice and support

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	BCC primary decisionmaker following consultation with third party	BCC provides advice and support	Venue owner primary decision-maker

Advice and Decision-Making Process:

SOURCE

- Member of staff
- Local resident
- Partner organisation
- Local organisation or group
- Social media
- Other

ASSESS INFORMATION

- Gather information

- Identify venue type
- Apply assessment criteria
- Does the speaker/event breach Terrorism ACT 2000, Equalities Act 2010 or UK government definition of Extremism? • Consult relevant community groups
- Be proportionate
- Seek appropriate partner advice if required

CONSIDER IMPACT

- Consider impact on cohesion, equalities, community safety and potential for disorder
- Identify and decide on appropriate course of action
- Obtain further advice and clearance from the lead Director via the No Platform Inbox (NoPlatform@birmingham.gov.uk)

MAKE DECISION

- Decision to support booking
- Decision to not support booking. In this instance inform booking person/organisation of reason for decision, refer them to the No Platform policy and their right to appeal.

Assessing Information:

GATHER INFORMATION

- Undertake due diligence by conducting open-source checks; use more than one search engine to prevent bias.
- Consult partner organisations, communities and third-party sources for further information
- Gather as much primary source and attributable information as possible

ASSESS INFORMATION

- Assess credibility of sources and allocate weight accordingly
- Is there evidence that the speaker/group has promoted messages of intolerance and hate towards any groups
- Under the protected characteristics identified within equalities legislation.
- Identify if the speaker/group has been banned elsewhere previously
- Consider any risks to cohesion, equality, community safety and the potential for public disorder
- Seek further advice from partner organisations to understand information if necessary

CONSULT

- Consult relevant group(s) from protected equality groups that may be affected (LGBTQ+, faith partners etc)
- Review identified risks to cohesion, equalities, community safety and the potential for public disorder and liaise with policy holder.
- Consult partner organisations on any risks identified
- Consult with venue owner

Assessing Information:

Assessment Criteria for Managing Extremist Events or Speakers:

In assessing the risks posed by an individual event or speaker, Birmingham City Council will work with relevant stakeholders, including West Midlands Police and base our judgment on research that is:

Primary – Caution will be exercised when information about individuals is derived from secondary sources without any supporting primary evidence.

Attributable – Evidence from official, personal websites or videos, remove any doubt as to what an individual said and therefore present a stronger case.

Reliable and Valid - It is important to be able to assess the reliability and validity of a source to be credible.
The first is the **validity** of the information. This is the truthfulness of the source in respect to the information presented. When assessing the Reliability of the information, the extent to which we can rely on the source of the data should be considered.

Objective – Statements or actions will be seen within context. What are the intended outcomes of the meeting/messages and what is the intended audience? Is it part of a wider campaign? Are there any speeches/videos? Consider the manner, tone and

messaging of these in their current political and social context. It is important to understand what the current climate is and contextualise the impact of the messaging based on this. Support and advice can be sought from the policy holder.

When assessing the risk of potential speakers based on past event the following should be considered:
What is the manner and tone in which the speaker addressed its audience and the subject matter?
Are the comments made derogatory and offensive to any group or community, and breach the aforementioned policies? And does the speaker appear to be condoning the derogatory comments in historical or religious texts?

Do the views of the speaker(s) invoke extremist and/or derogatory views?

Statements or actions that provide opposite or positive evidence, or evidence of the individual recanting, clarifying or apologising for previous views will also be considered (as should how consistent and public these clarifications have been).

Reviewed – Research should be periodically reviewed to ensure that it reflects current positions.

The Council recognises the need to ensure that all information/research collated for the purpose of sensitive decision-making is gathered from as many sources as possible and reserves the right, where necessary, to consult partner organisations including West Midlands Police and the Home Office for further advice and guidance.

As part of the information gathering process, appropriate weight will be allocated dependent upon the type of source material; primary evidence will be sought where possible. When assessing information gathered from online sources the Council will exercise caution of allocating too much weight to information contained within blog sites and for example, of quotes that may have been taken out of context.

If someone contravenes the No Platform Policy, staff should be made aware that information collected is reasonable and judgments are consistent with the policy, and that decisions are not based on personal views and judgments. If a decision is made to decline a booking,

staff should ensure that reasons for decision making are appropriately logged. Staff should also be prepared to provide proactive feedback and evidence of reasons as to why they have been refused

Potential Breaches

- Associated with a proscribed group
- Subject to adverse media attention
- Views deemed as being discriminatory or inflammatory to others
- Views/activity in breach of the Counter Terrorism Act 2000

Considerations for gathering and assessing open-source data found online:

- Use more than one internet search engine to minimise search engine bias.
- Where possible find primary source information (e.g. a group's manifesto on their website; You Tube videos of a person speaking or band's music; an individual's personal writing on their blog).
- Is the website stating information as fact ("*depression is the most common mental illness in the UK*"), or is it clearly giving something as the author's opinion? ("*I don't think doctors in the UK get enough training in dealing with depression*")
- Is the information detailed enough for what you need?
- Does the webpage give sources for the information – does it say where it came from? What other sources can you find to check the information against? Try to find a different type of source, like a report from a well-known body, or published statistics.

- If the webpage is clearly giving someone's opinion on an issue, how much weight should you give to their opinion?

- Can you easily tell who the person or organisation behind the webpage is? Can I trust the person or organisation behind this webpage? Are they likely to be biased? Are they an authoritative source? Is the author taking a personal stand on a social/political issue or is the author being objective? Bias is not necessarily "bad," but the connections should be clear.

- With what organisation or institution is the author associated? Is there a link to the sponsoring organisation, a contact number of and/or address or e-mail contact? A link to an association does not necessarily mean that the organisation approved the content.

- If you found the page through a link or a web search, and are not sure where it comes from, look for the home page, or an "About Us" or similar link. Does the page author give a real-world postal address and phone number?

- Given how quickly information on the web can change and how long some websites have been around, always check how up to date the information is. Does the page say when it was last updated? If not, try checking the Properties or Page Info options in your Web browser for a date. Is the website generally being maintained – do all the links still work? Can you check against sources you know are up to date for comparison? If there are several out-of-date links that do not work or old news, what does this say about the credibility of the information?

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- When undertaking open-source due diligence, the following principles must be complied with:[7] o Research should take the form of web searches using a well-recognised internet search engine such as Google or Bing, and key terms such as: "extremism", "racism", "sexism", "homophobia", "misogyny", "antisemitism" and "islamophobia".[8]

    - To ensure compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) and the Data Protection Act (1998), any searches must minimise the risk of unfairly intruding upon on an individual's right to privacy and therefore should not include exhaustive trawls of social media content.
    - Local authorities should only seek to identify information that could give rise to concerns related to extremism.

    - Local authorities should not routinely conduct internet searches as described above for the following purposes:
        - Party political events and engagements
        - Private engagements or meetings held under 'Chatham House' Rules
        - Personal or non-official activities or engagements
        - To identify whether individuals agree or disagree with HMG policy

    o Local authorities should also not routinely conduct internet searches on the following groups: ▪ Elected UK officials ▪ UK public servants
        - Individuals under the age of 18.

[7] Guidance provided by the Office for Counter Terrorism, Home Office

[8] For further helpful guidance on conducting effective internet searches, please see: http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/10-things/10-tips-for-smarter-moreefficientinternet-searching/

Appendix 2 – Unacceptable Behaviours:

Unacceptable Behaviours:

The Special Cases Unit in the Home Office holds the pen on recommendations for exclusion cases. Detailed guidance is published online regarding the exclusion process[9] . The Special Cases Unit uses the following criteria in assessing whether an individual should be prohibited from entering the United Kingdom.

The list of unacceptable behaviours covers any **non-UK citizen** whether in the UK or abroad who uses any means or medium including:

- writing, producing, publishing or distributing material
- public speaking including preaching
- running a website
- using a position of responsibility such as teacher, community or youth leader to express views which:
- foment, justify or glorify terrorist violence in furtherance of beliefs
- seek to provoke others to terrorist acts
- foment other serious criminal activity or seek to promote others to serious criminal acts
- foster hatred which might lead to inter-community violence in the UK

The Equality Act 2010 and **Protected Characteristics:**

The Equality Duty, introduced by the Equality Act 2010, is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions.

The Equality Act 2010 lists the nine protected characteristics which are the grounds upon which discrimination is unlawful. The characteristics are:

Age
Disability
Gender reassignment
Marriage and civil partnership
Pregnancy and maternity
Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
Sex
Sexual orientation

[9] Exclusion from U.K, Home Office 2018

The Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person. The act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

The Equality Duty, introduced by the Equality Act 2010, is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions. The Equality duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have *due regard* to the need to:

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.