This document provides an evaluation of the North-East Pilot of the Publicly Accessible Locations (PALs) Zones workstream, which ran from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

The evaluation was commissioned by NaCTSO and completed by Coventry University's Institute for Peace and Security (IPS). IPS is a multidisciplinary, applied research institute based at Coventry University. Their focus is on research and action which grows the capacity of all actors to work towards secure and resilient societies.

The evaluation had a number of aims and objectives applicable to a wide audience including NaCTSO, CTPNE, The Home Office's Homeland Security Group, and Local Authorities. This document, however, has been produced for a Local Authority audience, and therefore includes only content deemed relevant to this audience. All content is taken from the original evaluation.

Key Conclusions

This evaluation finds that the North-East Zones Pilot has achieved the aim of increasing the capability of local authorities to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy. The logic of the programme is also coherent with the activities undertaken and resources used clearly align with the desired outcomes and aims of it.

Local authorities which actively engaged in the pilot have seen improvements in their capacity and confidence to work with and address Protect and Prepare which have, in turn, led to increases in their capabilities to do so.

There are clear indications that the successful embedding of working practices that are conducive to good Protect and Prepare work at a local level have taken place and that these are likely, in many local authority areas, to be sustained after the pilot has ended. This suggests that there is a recognition at local authority level of the need to do this work.

The data shows that the CTSA model employed in the pilot is both effective and appropriate.

The North-East Zones Pilot has performed well and the model that it uses is sound and suitable for a wider rollout if desired. It is also likely that more impact and joint outcomes will be seen in the North-East over the coming months and years.

Executive Summary

1. For the majority of local authorities, engaging with the pilot and the CTSAs brought Protect and Prepare onto the agenda with dedicated time and expertise. (Page 6)
2. There was a mixed response to the guidance that was available with the pilot. (Page 7)
3. Generally, the policy, training, guidance, and advice provided by CTSAs has increased the confidence of individuals within the local authorities as their base level of knowledge in relation to Prepare and Protect has increased because of the pilot. (Page 7)
4. The close level of mentoring, where enacted, was found to be incredibly useful by participating local authorities. (Page 8)
5. It was recognised that the partnership working between local authorities and CTSAs was incredibly effective at boosting the reach of Protect & Prepare related training. (Page 9)
6. There is a clear indication that capacity for Prepare and Protect elements have increased within local authorities. (Page 10)
7. Having considered all of the activity strands within the Theory of Change model, evaluators have found the logic to be largely sound and, even with some minor exceptions, they all contributed to their relative sub-aims of increasing confidence and capacity. (Page 11)
8. The vast majority (83.4%) of local authorities and those at local authorities who worked with CTSAs were satisfied with the support that they received. (Page 12)
9. There were very few instances of the pilot being adapted and performing a high level where there was not buy in from the top of the organisation and/or where the local authority lead was not able to make autonomous decisions. (Page 13)
10. The Maturity Matrix and Protect and Prepare Groups are not only important to the pilot as individual pieces of work that contribute to increasing the capability of local authorities to address Protect and Prepare, but they also represent a clear opportunity to embed practice in the local authorities and to bring about changes to established working practices. (Page 13)
11. Some of the key barriers in this pilot are centred on the relationship between the local authorities, the police force, and NaCTSO, stemming from different working cultures and

discrepancies in expectations of their own and each other's roles and responsibilities. (Page 15)

12. The zones approach taken in the pilot has been one of the more challenging, and subjective, elements of both the delivery of the pilot itself and the evaluation. (Page 17)
13. There is a very positive and generalisable amount of feedback around zones that suggests that local authorities and CTSAs have a well-developed awareness of the importance of the Protect and Prepare agendas that goes beyond the focus on zones and directly addresses the aim of the pilot in increasing the capability of local authorities. (Page 17)
14. Amongst local authorities, the ProtectUK website was a well-used and well-regarded resource. (Page 18)
15. It is clear that the capacity for joint outcomes amongst local authorities and partners has been increased by the work of the pilot. (Page 20)

Introduction

This document provides an evaluation of the North-East Zones Pilot and was commissioned by NaCTSO with a dual remit. The first is a traditional summative evaluation which serves to assess whether the zones pilot has increased the capability of local authorities in the North-East to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the national counter terrorism strategy (CONTEST). The second is to build an understanding of how, if at all, the programme worked to bring about and influence change in key thematic areas.

The North-East Zones Pilot was launched in April 2022, in the North-East Counter Terrorism Region to test a new way for Counter Terrorism Policing to engage with local authorities around the Protect and Prepare agenda.

The Pilot aimed to build the capabilities of local authorities to consider and implement security through their current policy, functions, and services…by building a security-minded culture within the local authorities and their departments. The Pilot focused on the support, engagement and tools required for local authorities to prepare for and mitigate against terrorist risks.

Thirty local authorities sit within the North-East region and were eligible to volunteer for the pilot. These range from urban metropolitan city councils, such as Newcastle City Council, to smaller rural district councils, such as Ryedale District Council.

Evaluation Aim

The central purpose of the research is to evaluate whether the Zones Pilot has increased the capability of local authorities in the North-East to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the national counter terrorism strategy. This includes, but is not limited to, developing an understanding of and evidencing the impact of the pilot.

Theory of Change

The evaluation team employed a Theory of Change process to frame the evaluation research and gain a better understanding of the pilot. The Theory of Change model can be seen in full at Appendix A.

A Theory of Change is a method of logically describing the desired impact of an intervention (such as the North-East Zones Pilot), using the terms: 'activities', 'aims' and 'outcomes'. It uses assumptions to show how the everyday activities of the intervention create a set of intermediate outcomes. These outcomes collectively show how the intervention contributes to an overarching, aim or long-term goal.

Whilst the Zones Pilot had a clear objective, in terms of increasing the capability of local authority areas, the logic underpinning this and linking it to the day-to-day activities of the programme was less obvious. This process is especially important in a pilot because of its novel, small scale nature, whose primary purpose is to test the logic of a programme and see if it works. This helps to build an understanding of how, if at all, the programme worked to bring about and influence change in key thematic areas.

The Theory of Change process begins with the overarching aim of the pilot. This aim has to encompass all sub-aims and objectives of the programme, at the highest possible level, in one sentence. This process allows all stakeholders to have a shared understanding of what the pilot is aiming for and allows participants and evaluators to discount activities and data which do not bear direct relevance to this aim. The overarching aim was set in the briefing fulfils this purpose and is as follows: Increased capability of local authorities to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy.

Once this broad aim was established, it became important to understand what capability looked like, so researchers could assess if it had increased. Through discussions with all stakeholders, researchers understood capability to be comprised of both confidence and capacity. These are embodied in the two sub-aims, which all activities and outcomes could be directly shown to contribute to.

Activities and Outcomes

A key benefit of conducting a Theory of Change is the opportunity to temporarily think outside of organisational structures, project plans and delivery schedules and view the activities of an organisation solely through the lens of the change they create. The process identified a wide range of activities, some which were firmly established as common practice across all participating local authorities, many of which developed organically over the course of the pilot. As the programme was not heavily prescriptive, researchers have dedicated effort to creating a clear picture of all activities that took place.

Strand 1 - Raising Awareness and Building Profile

In this first strand, the focus is on activities which raise awareness and build the profile of Protect and Prepare work as completed by named individuals within the local authority, supported by the CTSA. The Theory of Change shows how the 'Raising Awareness and Building Profile' activities intend to achieve the sub-aim of increasing the confidence of individuals within Prepare and Protect in local authorities.

Theoretically activities designed to promote the Protect and Prepare work would follow the below pathway:

There is greater visibility of CTSAs in local authorities which leads to a greater awareness of Protect and Prepare
So that;
Those working within local authorities have a greater profile and credibility within and across local authorities
So that;
Those working on Protect and Prepare have greater buy-in and impact in their work with local authority colleagues.

In the pilot, this was achieved through attending meetings, running events internally for the local authority and relevant teams or externally for the local community and businesses. These meetings and events increased the awareness of the Protect and Prepare work. The CTSA lent credibility so the local authority achieved greater buy-in from hard-to-engage local businesses and non-statutory bodies and raised the importance and profile of the work within their own organisations. Once the awareness had been raised, the perceived credibility of the CTSAs further increased the impact the local authorities were able to achieve by bolstering the legitimacy of the work and encouraging greater buy-in, internally and externally (see Appendix B, Graph 1).

For the majority of local authorities, engaging with the pilot and the CTSAs brought Protect and Prepare onto the agenda with dedicated time and expertise, so participants began to think about, discuss and address elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy.

Overall, 'Raising Awareness and Building Profile' has been highly successful in local authorities with lower levels of awareness of Protect and Prepare policy. Having built on the awareness and profile of the work, the pilot has increased the confidence as shown in Appendix B, Graph 2.

Strand 2 - Policy Understanding and Enactment

The second strand of the Theory of Change required a wide range of activities focused on policy understanding and enactment to theoretically increase the knowledge base of local authorities. This should entail practical activities designed to increase the impact and efficacy of local authorities by educating them on the current Protect and Prepare agenda and tools.

Theoretically activities designed to increase the policy understanding and enactment of the Protect and Prepare elements would follow the below pathway:

Local authorities accessing key training and documents, learning more about Protect and Prepare in their roles and areas
So that;
Local authority professionals have a greater understanding of Protect and Prepare statutory obligations and policy guidance
So that;
Local authorities are better placed to enact and inform policy and stay informed on changes to their roles.

If successful, these activities should contribute to increasing the confidence of local authorities working on Protect and Prepare elements.

During the pilot these activities included sharing best practice from across CT networks, signposting to key guidance and documents, training, and development on counter terrorism issues. Throughout the fieldwork the evaluation team saw conflation of Martyn's Law, Prepare and Protect, other counter-terrorism responsibilities and CTSA work.

One of the questionnaire statements required participants to indicate if their involvement in the pilot had made them less worried about Martyn's Law's arrival in statute, with an overwhelming 77.8% either agreeing or strongly agreeing. In particular, the training available on ProtectUK was mentioned by interviewees and questionnaire respondents. One constructive suggestion that came from some of the rural authorities was that there could be better examples of how Protect and Prepare could be applied and considered in rural settings.

There was a mixed response to the guidance that was available with the pilot. Local authorities were generally surprised at the lack of guidance around what a Zone was and what the pilot was 'supposed' to look like in the early stages. However, the majority were able to make the pilot work in the best way for them and by giving them the space to make their own decisions, it avoided making them feel put upon, as some had done with their inclusion in the programme.

There was a consistent message that local authorities wanted to be consulted and advised rather than "told what to do" with heavily prescriptive guidance. However, generally, the policy, training, guidance, and advice provided by CTSAs has increased the confidence of individuals within the local authorities as their base level of knowledge in relation to Prepare and Protect has increased because of the pilot.

Strand 3 - Mentoring and Practical Support

Although mentoring and practical support is implicitly contained within the first two strands, it is the primary focus of the third strand. Included here are some of the specific activities undertaken by CTSAs that solely offer mentoring and practical support.

Activities designed to encourage mentoring and practical support by CTSAs in relation to Prepare and Protect elements would follow the below pathway:

Local authorities receive more and better support to practically enact Protect and Prepare elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy
So that;
Local authorities work on Protect and Prepare increases in volume and efficacy with the support of CTSAs
So that;
Local authorities are better able to support local Protect and Prepare

The close level of mentoring, where enacted, was found to be incredibly useful by participating local authorities. Having a dedicated CTSA and personal connections allowed for high levels of trust, communication, and advice to be available to local authorities, guiding them through the new elements of the pilot with easily accessible advice. While there were still significant challenges in the work, the mentoring from the CTSAs reassured local authorities and gave them a greater sense of confidence when tackling new guidance or implementing new elements of Protect and Prepare.

However, it is important to note here this was not the experience of all local authorities. A small percentage of respondents had negative experiences with their CTSA, highlighting the issue with assigning a single CTSA to authorities and a wider issue within the pilot. The success of the pilot was heavily 'personality dependent'; mentoring could only be successful with a motivated member of the local authority engaging fully and a motivated CTSA being available to work with the authority. While these cases were certainly the exception rather than the rule, two (16.7%) of the survey respondents stated they were either dissatisfied or strongly dissatisfied with the support they had received from their CTSA, claiming a "lack of presence during the pilot" and making "the whole process extremely confusing as guidance was all over the place". This highlights the risk of having a single CTSA contact and vice versa within the local authority as it creates a single point of failure.

Nevertheless, the majority of participating authorities found the mentoring useful, and their only improvement would have been to have more of their CTSA's time to conduct site visits. CTSAs were often lauded for their quick responses, personable approaches, and commitment to helping their local authorities find solutions.

Ultimately, the mentoring and support from CTSA's allowed the majority of local authorities to practically enact Protect and Prepare elements, increase the efficacy of the work they were doing and subsequently be better able to conduct Prepare and Protect work. All authorities who engaged with the pilot were clear that they would like to continue with the work, even if their CTSA was moved on. Therefore, the mentoring has resulted in the local authorities having greater confidence in their work. Thus, local authorities are becoming more able to support Prepare and Protect elements independently as a direct result of their involvement with the pilot and dedicated CTSA boosting their confidence.

Strand 4 - Bringing People in and Together

The fourth strand of this Theory of Change relates to the importance of building networks of stakeholders around Protect and Prepare work, which the pilot was designed to play a key role in.

Theoretically, activities that bring people in and together regarding Protect and Prepare elements would follow the below pathway:

Police and CTSA leadership add credibility to Protect and Prepare work, bringing more local stakeholders together

So that;

More networks of shared interest, practice and responsibility around Protect and Prepare develop

So that;

More and better collaboration and work around Protect and Prepare takes place at local level.

The activities for this strand were among some of the most varied across the local authorities, although some common activities were convening meetings and public outreach events.

CTSAs and local authorities worked to offer training both internally and externally to educate on Protect and Prepare work they could undertake, in anticipation of it becoming statutory duty. In the local authorities where this training took place, they all said that the CTSA was an excellent resource in getting stakeholders to engage and participate in either conversations or learning. Some of the highest praise for the CTSAs was in direct reference to their work going door to door with local authorities or on outreach events. This was adding credibility to Protect and Prepare work and bringing more local stakeholders together as shown in the below quotes.

"We wouldn't have had as much local authority buy in from different teams without the CTSA… it piques people's interest in it."
- Local authority interviewee.

"They're very approachable and good at presentations and site visits. They've been going door to door to get businesses involved in training, where previously we'd had poor turnout."
- Local authority interviewee.

It was recognised that the partnership working between local authorities and CTSAs was incredibly effective at boosting the training's reach.

Strand 5 - Embedding Practice and Leadership

This strand also contributes to increasing capacity, as embedding collaboration and growing networks of stakeholders, and establishing good practice within leadership will increase the ability of a given local authority to deliver Protect and Prepare elements sustainably. The more systems and practices that are in place, the greater the legacy, organisational memory and culture will be available for statutory and non-statutory bodies to refer to and learn how to deliver on the Protect and Prepare agenda.

The most common activity in this strand was the establishment of Protect and Prepare Groups (PAPG) that met, with varying regularity, to discuss issues relating to Protect and Prepare for their local authorities. Researchers found there to be significant variation between the nature of these groups across the local authorities. Some were established with support from the CTSAs (61%); who assisted with compiling lists of potential stakeholders, regularly attending the meetings, providing presentations to the group. Others were established by local authorities with limited intervention from the CTSAs and were created "on the same line as the Prevent [group]".

As Appendix B, Graph 3 shows, the PAPGs, regardless of how they were established have on the whole created an environment that allows for discussions on Protect and Prepare, where before at most they were less focused and at least did not exist.

It was reported that engaging stakeholders such as the emergency services, that already have counter-terrorism protocols and processes, was generally easier than engaging with other potentially important stakeholders such as private businesses. Nevertheless, the establishment of working processes and groups gives local authorities systems to continue using after the pilot and ways to encourage engagement. This is a direct legacy of the pilot and demonstrates that practice has become successfully embedded in the regular functioning of the majority of local authorities.

Using Appendix B, Graph 4, it is clear that the majority of local authority participants feel they have made progress towards embedding Protect and Prepare in their organisation, implying that organisational culture sufficiently altered for the work to be sustainable. This is a clear indication that capacity for Prepare and Protect elements have increased within local authorities.

Strand 6 - NaCTSO Internal Development

The final strand explores the internal practices at NaCTSO which aim to strengthen and develop the work of the pilot and subsequent programmes. Theoretically, activities that are designed to promote internal development will follow the below pathway:

NaCTSO has more evidence of what works in supporting Protect and Prepare at the local level
So that;
NaCTSO refines its approaches based on evidence, becoming more effective and impactful over time
So that;
More understanding of the resourcing required to enable the model to grow, innovate and have a wider reach.

Through the process of this qualitative and quantitative evaluation, the evaluation team is providing NaCTSO with evidence of successes and barriers within the North-East Zones Pilot. There are evidence-based recommendations that can be enacted to achieve greater impact and increase the capability of local authorities to address Protect and Prepare elements of CONTEST. Furthermore, there are elements of the programme that have been highlighted as effective and should be maintained to continue increasing the capability of local authorities.

Sub-aims – Confidence and Capacity

Having considered all of the activity strands within this Theory of Change, evaluators have found the logic to be largely sound and, even with some minor exceptions, they all contributed to their relative sub-aims of increasing confidence and capacity.

Appendix B, Graph 5 shows the vast majority of questionnaire respondents agreed that they as individuals were more capable working in Protect & Prepare as a result of the Pilot.

Similarly, the capacity of local authorities, was increased by the pilot. Although, it is important to remember that individual change will be easier to achieve than cultural organisational change in a year-long pilot. As shown in Appendix B, Graph 6, the majority of questionnaire respondents felt that activities focused on bringing stakeholders in, embedding good practice and leadership had resulted in an increased capacity within their local authority.

As both confidence and capacity have increased, it supports the Theory of Change that the capability of local authorities to respond to elements of Protect and Prepare has also increased as a result of their Pilot involvement. This is explicit in Appendix B, Graph 7.

Although this was not universal, as with the confidence and capacity, in the interviews it became clear that some local authorities were already working at an above average level of capability. No interviewees suggested the pilot had in any way damaged their capability to deal with Prepare and Protect and on the whole were confident it had improved things. Therefore, the logic of the programme stood up in the pilot, where the proposed activities were achieved, they contributed to the aim of 'Increased capability of local authorities to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy'.

The role of CTSAs

A core remit of this evaluation was to develop a greater understanding of the impact of the CTSA role in supporting local authorities to develop their capabilities to address Protect and Prepare related work. This includes articulating what did and did not work well in the pilot alongside analysing and evidencing why this may have been the case.

The vast majority (83.4%) of local authorities and those at local authorities who worked with CTSAs were satisfied with the support that they received.

Although the support tapered off over the course of the pilot, this was not viewed as problematic by the CTSAs or local authorities. The organisations had begun to own their Protect and Prepare work and become sustainable. Local authorities being able to work autonomously but call on CTSA support and guidance around particular emergent issues or needs was seen as a positive outcome.

An interesting outcome in interviews with local authorities is that they are particularly keen to continue working with "their" CTSA and not just any CTSA. It was an almost universal finding that local authority representatives found the support of a named individual to be beneficial. This is opposed to a hypothetical model whereby they contacted a generic CTSA support desk and were given support and advice from whoever picks up the telephone or email.

A necessary aspect of the model used in the pilot entailed local authorities trusting CTSAs with internal information, often about risks or organisational weaknesses or issues, and believing that the CTSAs intend positive outcomes for the local authority. This is not a trivial matter and this trust being successfully built and leveraged into a working relationship is an achievement and tangible outcome of the pilot. However, this model also requires a degree of continuity in the relationship between the CTSA and the local authority with which they have worked. That local authorities want to continue working with "their" CTSA is illustrative of this.

Appendix B, Graph 8 shows strong agreement that working with a CTSA made it easier to roll out Protect and Prepare work.

At a practical and transactional level, the CTSAs bring knowledge and a skillset to local authorities that the local authorities do not have and do not have the resource, or sometimes internal drive, to develop. This is partly because this area of counter-terrorism work is emergent and rather specialist but also because of competing local authority priorities and resources. There are relatively few local authority staff with both the remit and the resources to get sustainable, high quality Protect and Prepare work off the ground without external drive or support.

"CTSAs are the driver. They are tasked to, and know how to, do stuff that others don't or can't. That is part of the reason why local authorities want to work with us"
- CTSA interviewee.

"Lots of colleagues were sceptical about the pilot… the CTSA was reassuring because they showed us CT measures can be hard and soft. If you're doing a big event with thousands of people, you don't need concrete blocks, you just need to think about your area and what works for your areas"
- Local authority interviewee.

Understanding and working with Local Authorities

Finding the right people in local authorities to be operational leads appears to be less dependent on their job role or particular department and more dependent on a variety of other factors. There were very few instances of the pilot being adapted and performing a high level where there was not buy in from the top of the organisation and/or where the local authority lead was not able to make autonomous decisions. This would suggest that high level involvement and interest is, to some degree, key. Where operational leads were not backed or empowered to make decisions, the work tended to move slowly and less purposefully.

In a significant number of examples, local authority performance around Protect and Prepare has been heavily dependent and linked to the person at the local authority who is operationally responsible for it. With this comes a risk, and one that has been realised at several local authorities, of Protect and Prepare work dropping off or ceasing completely if that individual leaves the organisation, changes roles or is away for an extended time. A common theme in local authorities faltering on CONTEST related work was key individuals retiring and not being replaced.

This over-reliance on key individuals at local authorities creates a real single point of failure risk, which can undermine both previous good work and future progress. Where the pilot has been successful in embedding policies and practices within local authorities, and where several different individuals have named responsibilities and are trained to perform Protect and Prepare related roles, the risk is mitigated. This process of embedding is discussed in greater detail alongside the analysis of the use of the Maturity Matrix and the establishment of Protect and Prepare Groups.

Additionally, the reliance on local authority leads undertaking work on Protect and Prepare in addition to their normal job description and the reliance on "goodwill" bears mention here too. This is not sustainable in the longer run and is potentially doubly problematic given the aforementioned concerns around some members of staff representing a single point of failure within their organisation.

Embedding practice via the Maturity Matrix and Protect and Prepare Groups

A major aspect of the pilot is the usage of the Maturity Matrix and the establishment of Protect and Prepare Groups in local authority areas. Not only are these important to the pilot as individual pieces of work that contribute to increasing the capability of local authorities to address Protect and Prepare, but they also represent a clear opportunity to embed practice in the local authorities and to bring about changes to established working practices. In this respect they represent a clear legacy for the pilot if they are continued with after April 2023.

> *"Collective responsibility and therefore buy in. The Maturity Matrix and PAPG gave us these"*
> *- Local authority interviewee*

However, whilst it is a sign of some success that nearly all local authorities in the pilot did complete a Maturity Matrix, this is not the same as the matrixes being an embedded and sustainable part of the working practices of local authorities. These are designed to be living documents that are frequently reviewed and updated. 64.7% of local authorities that had completed a matrix had definitely gone onto revisit it over the course of the pilot. This is a good return and instances of local authorities revisiting and updating several times were not uncommon.

"Some areas have updated their maturity matrix at their PAPGS. This is good practice and has got a lot of the partners involved. It is transparent too. It would be good if these became a standing agenda item and happened twice a year or so"
- CTSA interviewee.

"We've got together twice as a team now to update and refresh our maturity matrix. The process has got easier with time, and we know what we are doing with it now. We're expected to show progress when we report on this to our managers as they report it up"
- Local authority interviewee.

Where local authority representatives who had been involved in completing and then updating their Maturity Matrix were interviewed, there were clear trends in their responses around the reasons and benefits for doing so. Where local authorities had scored themselves "low" on the matrix, those responsible for Protect and Prepare saw this as an opportunity to leverage internal support and resources to address and improve the low score. Revisiting and updating the matrix gave these staff the opportunity to demonstrate progress and, in some cases, to continue to push for more resource and organisational focus on their work. This includes feeding back results and outcomes to Protect and Prepare Groups.

"They don't want to be judged badly and they want to be seen to be achieving and so were motivated to take action and move up the scores."
- CTSA interviewee.

With regards to Protect and Prepare Groups, nearly all local authorities have Group that exists to some extent and the majority of these meet regularly.

There does, however, appear to be a greater level of uncertainty amongst respondents and interviewees around what constitutes a fully-fledged Protect and Prepare Group. This may be because, unlike the maturity matrix, groups meeting to discuss and action Protect and Prepare work is not a new concept or piece of work for many local authorities. In many cases the Group has been the result of a formalisation and/or conglomeration of previously existing groups and fora. These groups varied widely from local authority area to local authority area and any attempt to bring these together in any future rollout should be mindful of this and not make generic recommendations around formalising and consolidating.

"We've got a PAPG. It is made up of pre-existing groups, formal and informal, that were made into a formalised PAPGs"
- Local authority interviewee.

"We've had groups and working groups meeting on these kinds of issues for a while before but now they are 'proper' group."
- Local authority interviewee.

Both the interview data and the timing of these previously informal groups being formalised as Protect and Prepare Groups (or similar) support the notion that CTSAs and the pilot were responsible for the change taking place.

That Groups are currently meeting is a positive outcome for the pilot but, as with the Maturity Matrix being continued with after the end of the pilot, a test of whether or not working practices have become embedded is whether or not the Groups will also continue to meet. 84.6% of respondents from those local authorities that definitely have Protect and Prepare Groups agree that this is likely. This is a positive finding and, though the sample size is small, is one that is corroborated by data from interviews with local authority staff. There were no instances in the online questionnaire or in interviews of staff believing that the Protect and Prepare Groups were only for the duration of the pilot and not likely to continue beyond them.

That there seems to be a greater certainty in the Protect and Prepare Groups continuing to meet than there is in the Maturity Matrix being continued with after the pilot is perhaps a reflection of the meetings already being ongoing work for most local authorities prior to the pilot. This is as opposed to them being an entirely new area, like the Maturity Matrix. It is also clear that a significant proportion of local authorities involved in the pilot have seen the benefits of Protect and Prepare Groups too though, and that this is a factor in their likely continuation.

"All 4 of my PAPGs are carrying on. They've seen the benefits and want to keep momentum. Having the police on there, but the local authority leading it has helped too"
- CTSA interviewee.

"The Groups are good for getting in stuff early and integrating it. Like, at the planning stage. We've used the groups to get planners involved and that's not happened before. There are long term benefits and savings there"
- Local authority interviewee.

Barriers to effective and sustainable local authority engagement

Some of the key barriers in this pilot are centred on the relationship between the local authorities, the police force, and NaCTSO, stemming from different working cultures and discrepancies in expectations of their own and each other's roles and responsibilities. The difference in working cultures between these organisations has led to slower progress and some frustration on both sides, while the culture of responsibility has, in some cases, created a single point of failure.

The working culture difference is that, for the local authorities, this was often one part of an individual's much larger role. It was rare for the Pilot to be the sole focus of someone's work within

the local authority. As a result, they were working with several competing priorities which could delay the work they were able to do on the pilot and the responses they were able to provide the CTSAs.

This tension between availability and achievable time frames is one that must be considered before the programme is taken further. Though relatively easy to solve, it would be important to include the need to discuss time and resource available from the local authority for the work for the CTSA to adapt their timelines accordingly. For the police, this discussion includes shift work, which can make it difficult to have regular meetings at on the same day. All local authorities are different and the time they will be able to devote to this work will be different which should be considered alongside CTSA availability.

Likewise, the working practice within local authorities can lead to a single point of failure, where the pilot was reliant on single individuals, rather than a team, due to their team or department size. Although legacy has been discussed elsewhere in this report and there is evidence showing that the work is becoming more sustainable and moving away from individuals.

It is important to recognise that is not the case in all authorities and there were examples of burnout for some individuals taking on this work. Again, this is heavily context dependent, and some authorities will have the time and staff to take the pilot further than others, it is important that CTSAs engage with their local authorities to understand their positions.

There should also be further consideration of NaCTSO's engagement with the local authorities. Similarly, to local authorities preferring the chance to make decisions for themselves, the way in which the pilot was launched, and they were involved was alienating for some. Several interviewees mentioned that they felt pressured into and not consulted about the pilot.

This clearly demonstrates that several local authorities were dissatisfied with the way the pilot was launched. Although many of them went on to praise the work of the CTSA and their involvement, it is worth reconsidering how approaches are made in the future to maximise buy-in from the start. This miscommunication of intent and engagement is reflected in their difference in working styles, born out in difficulty understanding, on both sides, what it was realistic to expect from each other over the course of the pilot.

This conflict is to be expected in a pilot where the parameters of what is possible are being tested, though it is worth considering in the event of wider rollout, that early conversations setting expectations and realistic goals may be a useful introductory step to the pilot.

Other guidance and good practice

Zones

The zones approach taken in the pilot has been one of the more challenging, and subjective, elements of both the delivery of the pilot itself and the evaluation. It is for this reason that in this report discussion of zones has, as much as possible, been limited to this section which focusses on guidance and good practice. Here it can be framed and discussed in a manner which informs good practice and future rollout, or delivery as opposed to creating a further contribution to the debate around what a zone is or is not.

This ongoing debate and framing of zones were a recurrent theme in nearly all interviews with all stakeholders and impacted on the evaluation and the delivery and success of the pilot in more than just a theoretical level.

The key takeaway here, and one of the major learnings from this evaluation is that guidance around zones needs to be clear and consistent going forward and designed in a way that is neither subjective nor dogmatic. All CTSAs and NaCTSO staff involved in interviews have a clear understanding of the aim of the pilot, as do the majority of local authority interviewees and these are all able to express the purpose and desired outcome of the work without overly long discussions of zones. It is also significant that zones do not feature strongly in the Theory of Change's articulation of the pilot logic. Here, and in on-the-ground practice, they are the means to the end in achieving the aims of the pilot and not the end in themselves. This needs to be clear in future guidance.

With regards to how the use and discussion of zones could positively inform future guidance for local authorities, there was an emergent middle ground around non-prescriptive advice and parameters but one that allows for the sharing of best practice. There have been significant learnings from this pilot, which is one of the purposes of a pilot, and one of these should be that each local authority should not have to, or be expected to, develop, and implement its own model. At best this leads to huge inefficiencies in "repeatedly re-inventing the wheel" while at worst it could lead to a large number of local authorities nationally adopting and persevering with inefficient practices.

> *"You need guidance that isn't prescriptive but that stops local authorities wasting time and making bad decisions. Sharing best practice is the thing here. They don't need to map every ward or have 10+ zones and we need to tell them that."*
> *- CTSA interviewee*

Finally, there is also a very positive and generalisable amount of feedback around zones that suggests that local authorities and CTSAs have a well-developed awareness of the importance of the Protect and Prepare agendas that goes beyond the focus on zones and directly addresses the aim of the pilot in increasing the capability of local authorities. This is a recognition that whilst zones are a means to an end in allowing for targeted interventions and focus on specific geographic areas and/or themes, that good Protect and Prepare policy and practice at local authority level needs to go wider than this and not miss other, often softer, targets. Educational establishments and hospitals were recurrent examples of potential targets that, though potentially covered under Sectors, are likely to fall outside of the more basic zones models and that some support or check here should be provided direct to these organisations and institutions. PAPGs were seen as a good way of doing this.

ProtectUK

Amongst local authorities, the ProtectUK website was a well-used and well-regarded resource. All local authority stakeholders that completed the online questionnaire had accessed the website as a part of the pilot. Feedback on the content was unanimously positive with interview participants who discussed it feeling it to be accessible and relevant to their roles and needs.

Several local authority interviewees are now regularly accessing and using the site to keep themselves and their authority informed about Protect and Prepare policy and practice. In one instance the local authority lead is sharing relevant information in monthly updates and meetings to ensure that it is disseminated widely across the organisation. These autonomous approaches to being aware, and raising awareness, of policy and practice link to the logic of the pilot as expressed in the Theory of Change document and are further evidence that it has been impactful in embedding Protect and Prepare at local authority level.

Pilot Programme Joint Outcomes

Joint outcomes are benefits of the work undertaken that reach beyond counter terrorism and the aims of the pilot. This includes benefit that crossed over, for example into community safety areas and/or the prevention of anti-social behaviour. Some of this has already been touched upon in other sections as being a factor which motivates or incentivizes local authorities to engage with the pilot.

Very practical and concrete examples of joint outcomes include increased capacity or resource in areas such as the installation of First Aid or trauma kits which, though put in place for counter terrorism purposes, could be used during another serious incident such as knife crime. These joint outcomes add value to the work of the pilot and are worthy of being documented and understood as they can inform future rollouts and, potentially, more efficient ways of working.

Joint outcomes in this section are discussed in two distinct ways. The first is in terms of actual, realised, and documentable joint outcomes that have occurred as a result of the pilot whilst the second discusses those that are likely or probable to occur over a longer time that the pilot or this evaluation allows.

The medium through which joint outcomes tended to occur in the pilot is through improved partnership working and a collective, localised awareness of what other involved stakeholders do and need. This enables those stakeholders with shared interests to collaborate on and around these and to see the benefits.

In terms of community safety there have been clear benefits to Protect and Prepare work taking place and these include the police being more involved and more aware of local authority and partner concerns, increased partner awareness of community safety issues and improvements to the physical environment that both design out crime and protect crowded spaces.

> *"Community Safety benefits, great working relationships and improved joined up working"*
> *- Local authority interviewee.*

An example of this improved joint working – that has been directly credited back to the pilot by the local authority involved – came through a bomb hoax at an educational establishment in their area.

The following is a redacted extract from an email discussing this incident that was shared with the evaluation team:

> *"As a result of being a member of the Prepare and Protect Partnership, we took up the opportunity for training for their staff in how to respond to a terrorist incident and undertook an exercise yesterday with the involvement of various agencies including the council and emergency services. Unfortunately, they had to put this training into use within 24 hours due to what has now been identified as a hoax but was reported as a bomb in the toilets due to go off at 12pm. The building was evacuated, and the Police undertook a full fingertip search of the buildings lasting three hours with 20 ambulances on standby nearby.*
>
> *Our contact there said yesterday's training definitely helped. As a result of the day, all staff remained calm and knew exactly what to do. The emergency services responded quickly and were very supportive and neighbouring establishments were fantastic and even set up a rest centre. There has been quite a bit of learning such as evacuation to more than 500 metres is actually quite challenging for those with disabilities and so we need to review how to do this."*

Though this example actually took place, there have been numerous examples given by CTSAs of joint outcomes that could have similar impact if an incident, such as a stabbing, took place. In one such example a college and museum are located in the same park. As a result of a site visit to the park when it was under consideration as a zone, these two premises now have a joint critical incident action plan and front of house staff are known to one another and have a secure means of rapid communication if any incident occurs.

Though there were no examples given by local authorities or CTSAs of trauma kits which have been provided as a result of the pilot being used, there is an awareness amongst local authorities that these are a joint outcome or "fringe benefit" of the Protect and Prepare work. Tangible, quick win and relatively low-cost measures such as these do link closely back to how to effectively engage and incentivize local authorities and should be considered a form of good practice.

> *"Sharps crime preparedness - trauma first aid kits for the community via a bid win"*
> *- Online questionnaire respondent.*

> *"An increased understanding and the deployment of trauma kits"*
> *- Online questionnaire respondent.*

Local authorities are, and have been made, keenly aware that engaging in the pilot and using the CTSA as a resource to help establish and formalise local networks has led to the involvement and buy in of some elements of the private sector. Examples of this cited to the evaluation team frequently include developers, major city centre landlords (including shopping centres) and large event venues.

> *"It has developed networks and relationships that were not already established and led to more stakeholders being aware of their responsibilities in relation to counter terrorism"*
> *- Local authority interviewee.*

"Leverage into other community safety money and ideas plus stronger links between LA, Business and VCSE"
- Local authority interviewee.

Many of the benefits of increased private sector interest and involvement have yet to be realised and it is vital to acknowledge the short time frame that the pilot has taken place over and that this evaluation is providing a snapshot in time towards the end of this. Therefore, some interventions and practices which are likely to have joint outcomes in the longer run may have not been fully realised or recognised yet.

"It is still a work in progress getting people to buy in, but the work will continue, and more benefits will be realised as time progresses"
- Online questionnaire respondent.

It is clear though that the capacity for joint outcomes amongst local authorities and partners has been increased by the work of the pilot. This was a recurrent theme in interviews with local authorities and Protect and Prepare Groups were seen as being particularly useful in getting partners around the table and building and formalising networks. As per the Theory of Change model, these networks then generally lead to some kind of positive action, and not all of this will be purely focussed or solely impacting on Protect and Prepare.

This is an area of the pilot which, if the desire is there, could be easily re-visited longitudinally to capture these joint outcomes as they develop and raise in profile over a more appropriate timeline. At this point in time there are concrete joint outcomes that can be evidenced and that have had positive impacts, but it is almost certain that there are more than have gone, as yet, unnoticed, and unrealised.

Conclusion

This evaluation finds that the North-East Zones Pilot has achieved the aim of increasing the capability of local authorities to address the Protect and Prepare elements of the National Counter Terrorism Strategy. This is in large part due to it being a well-designed and well-run pilot that is pitched at the correct level, and works in a flexible way, to meet the wide range of needs of the differing local authorities involved. The logic of the programme is also coherent with the activities undertaken and resources used clearly align with the desired outcomes and aims of it.

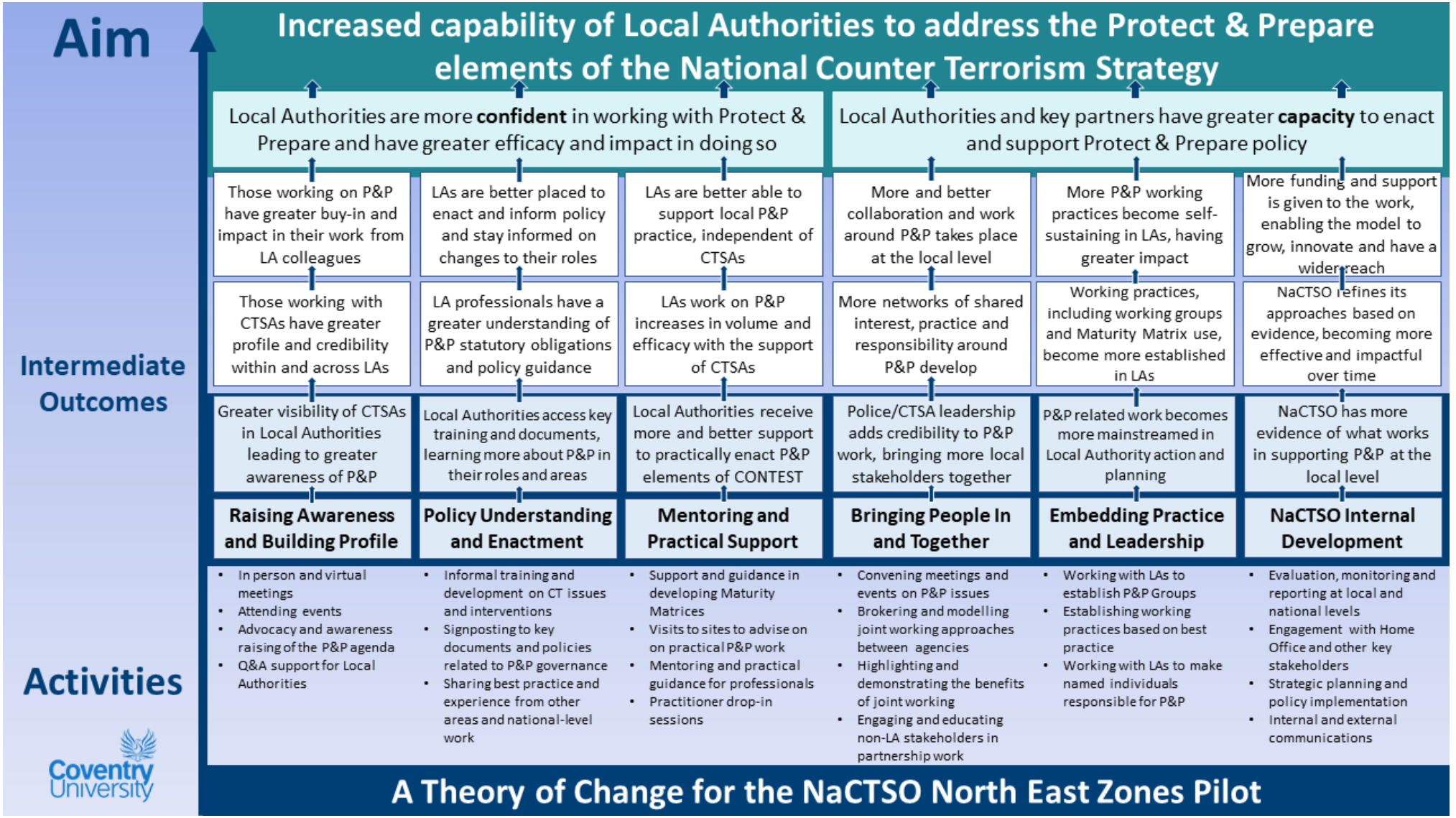
Local authorities which actively engaged in the pilot have seen improvements in their capacity and confidence to work with and address Protect and Prepare which have, in turn, led to increases in their capabilities to do so. Qualitative and quantitative data shows clear, measurable increases in all three areas and across a wide range of local authority areas and types.

There are clear indications that the successful embedding of working practices that are conducive to good Protect and Prepare work at a local level have taken place and that these are likely, in many local authority areas, to be sustained after the pilot has ended. Most notably these include the establishment and frequent meetings of local Protect and Prepare Groups as well as local authorities initially completing, and then revisiting and updating, their Maturity Matrix. For a one-year pilot programme in its first iteration, delivering this change within local authorities who have voluntarily taken part is impressive. This also suggests that there is a recognition at local authority level of the need to do this work. This evaluation also finds that, where they have been used and adopted, the Maturity Matrix and Protect and Prepare groups have been valued and seen as useful.

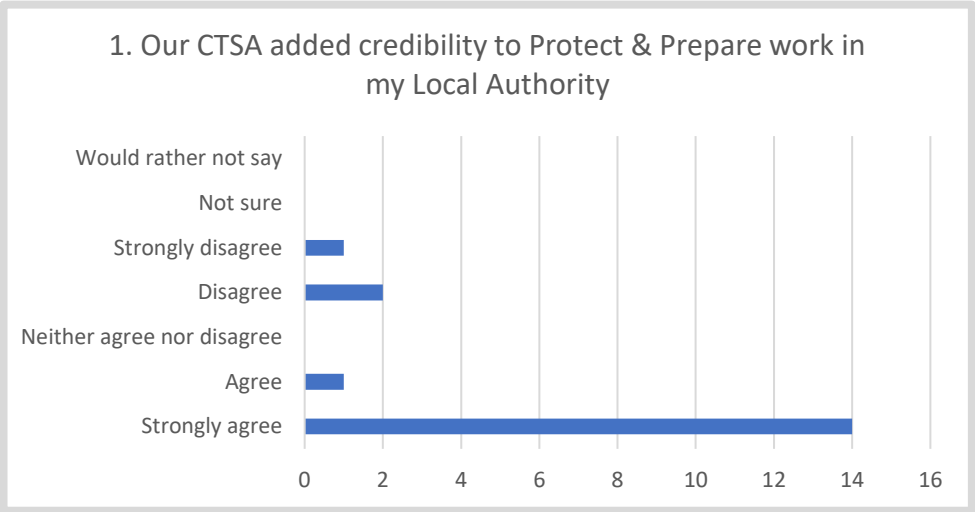
The data shows that the CTSA model employed in the pilot is both effective and appropriate. The CTSAs bring a high-level of credibility to the role that empowers local authority leads, particularly when they have little to no counter terrorism experience and it encourages engagement at local authority and partner levels. That CTSAs are able to work in a tailored way to meet the different needs and attitudes of the local authorities with which they work is important. Additionally, that they are seen by local authorities and other local stakeholders, as being independent and well intentioned could be undermined if they, or any similar role, were more closely embedded within local authorities.

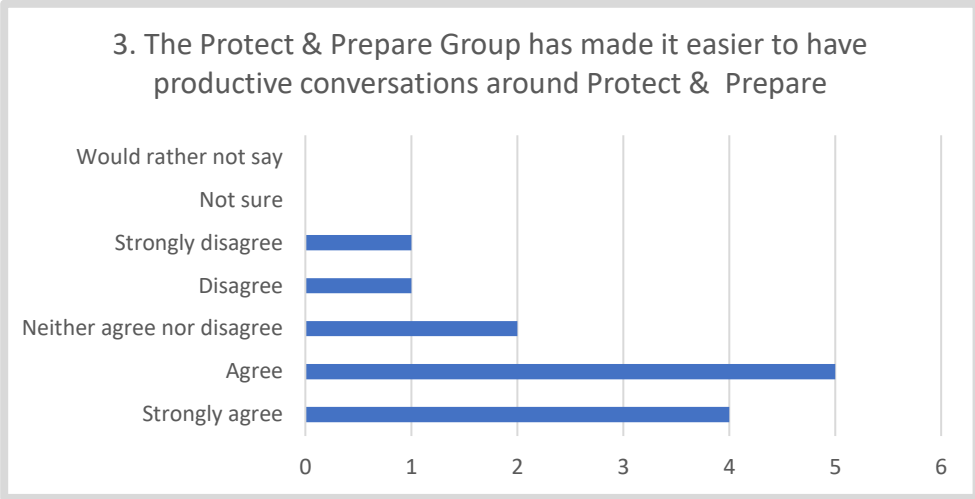
This report is written at the end of the pilot and provides a detailed snapshot in time of the impact and reach of the pilot, as well as an articulation and testing of the logic and model that underpins it. The North-East Zones Pilot has performed well and the model that it uses is sound and suitable for a wider rollout if desired. It is also likely that more impact and joint outcomes will be seen in the North-East over the coming months and years.

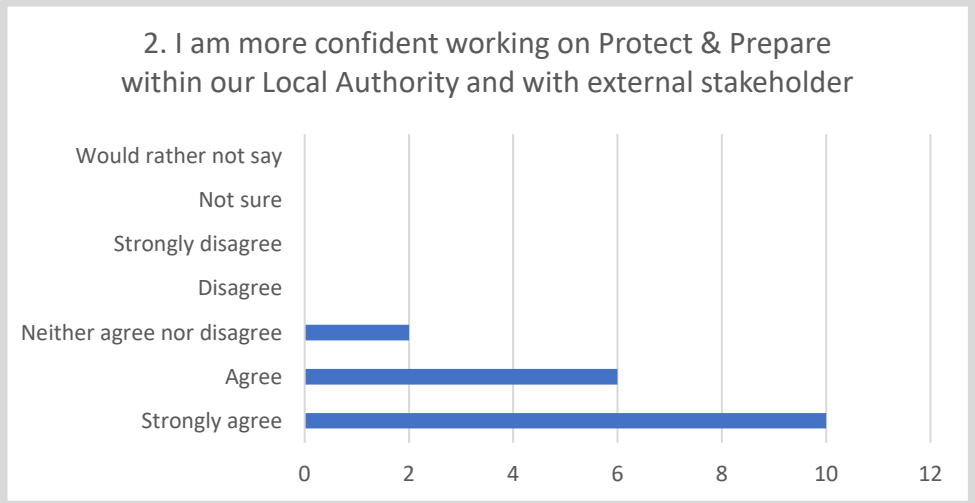
Appendix A – Theory of Change model

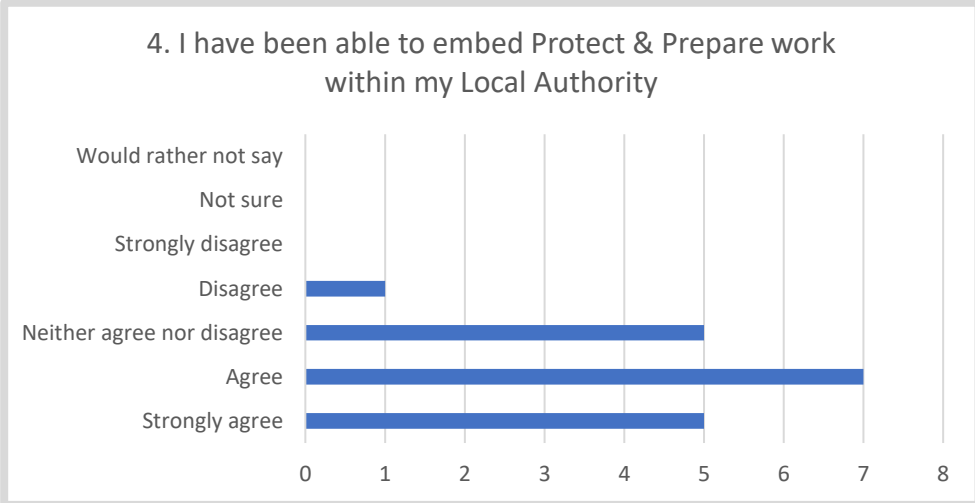


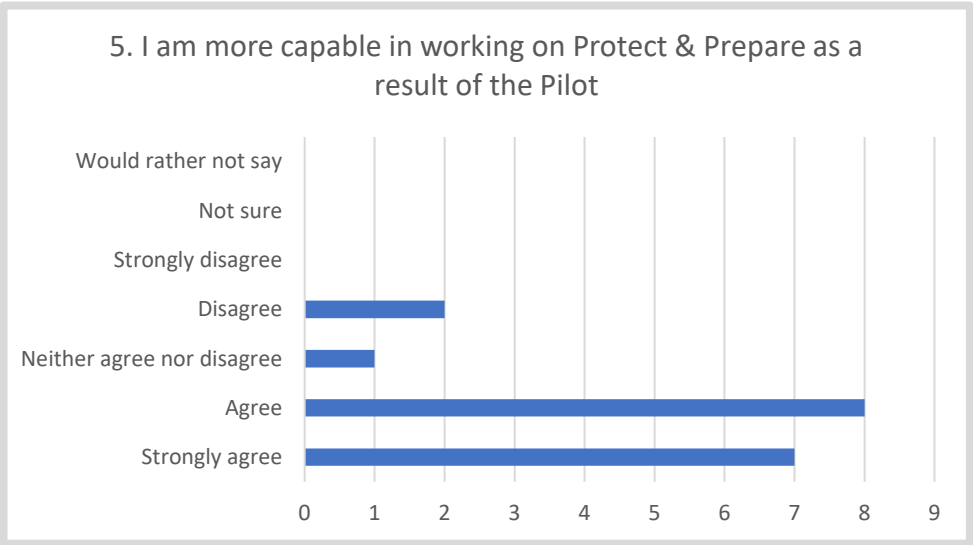
Appendix B – Online questionnaire results

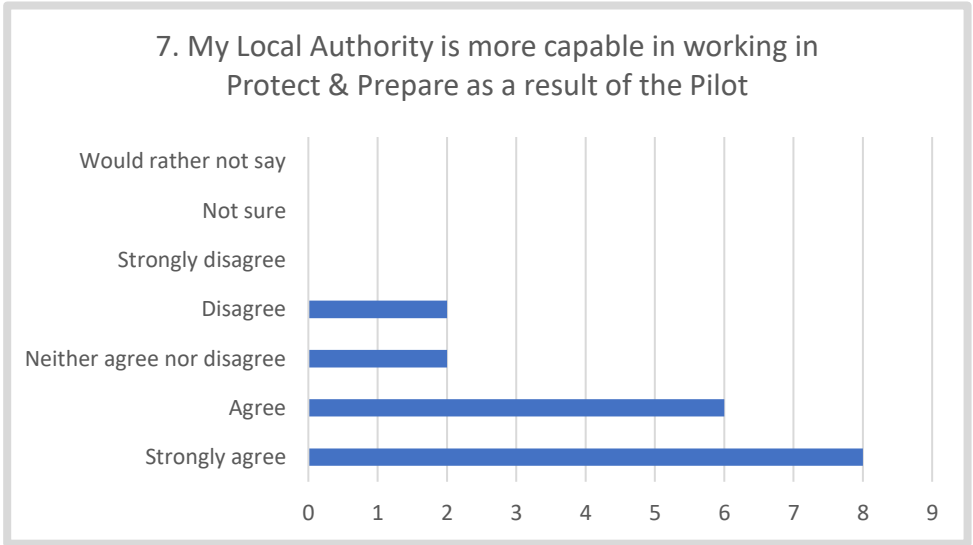


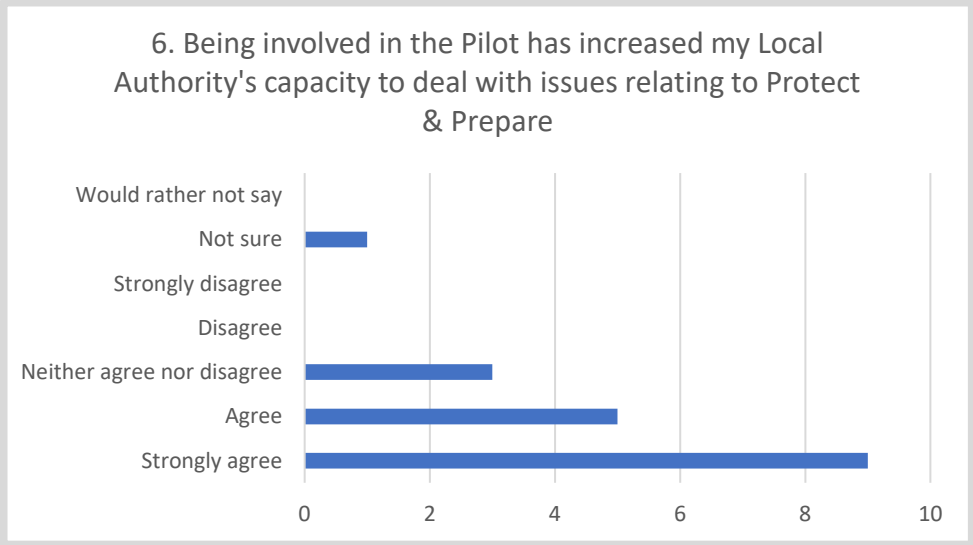


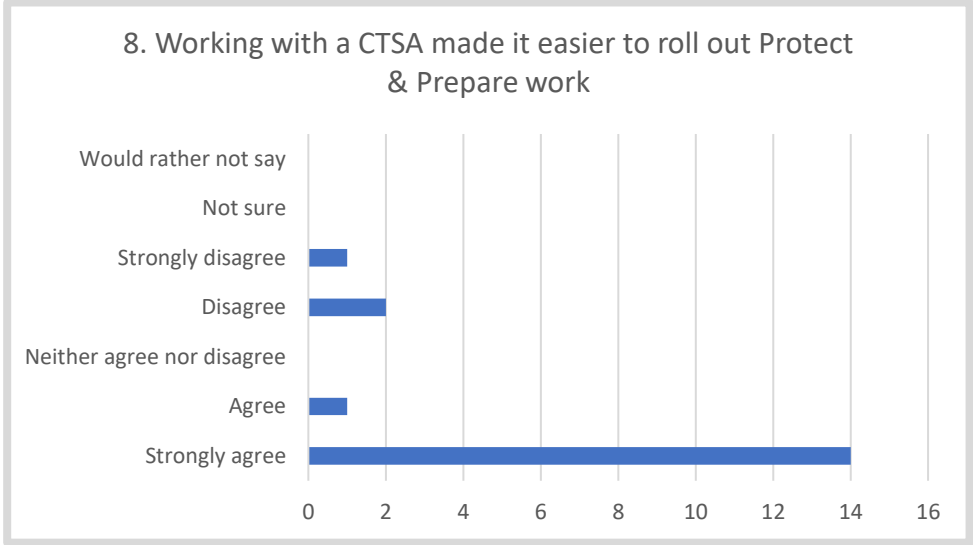





5. I am more capable in working on Protect & Prepare as a result of the Pilot
Would rather not say
Not sure
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9


7. My Local Authority is more capable in working in Protect & Prepare as a result of the Pilot
Would rather not say
Not sure
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9


6. Being involved in the Pilot has increased my Local Authority's capacity to deal with issues relating to Protect & Prepare
Would rather not say
Not sure
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
0
2
4
6
8
10


8. Working with a CTSA made it easier to roll out Protect & Prepare work
Would rather not say
Not sure
Strongly disagree
Disagree
Neither agree nor disagree
Agree
Strongly agree
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
14
16