

Escalation, Complaints Procedure & Resolution Process **Multi- Agency Public protection Arrangements – Merseyside**

MAPPA is a set of arrangements for managing the highest risk sexual and violent offenders. MAPPA is not a statutory body in itself but is a mechanism through which agencies can better discharge their statutory responsibilities and obligations.

The purpose of MAPPA is to help reduce the re-offending behaviour of sexual and violent offenders in order to protect the public, including previous victims, from serious harm. It aims to do this by ensuring that all relevant agencies work together effectively to:

- Identify all relevant offenders.
- Complete comprehensive risk assessments that take advantage of co-ordinated information sharing across the agencies.
- Devise, implement and review robust Risk Management Plans.
- Focus the available resources in a way which best protects the public from harm.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all the Responsible Authorities (Police Probation Prison) and Duty to Co-operate Agencies (YOS, Mental health, health, Children Services, Adult Services, Housing, DWP, EMS, UKBA) working within Merseyside have a quick and straightforward means of resolving professional differences in view of specific cases, in order to protect the public, safeguard victims and promote offender rehabilitation.

Context

Effective partnership working depends on an open approach, clarity of roles and responsibilities, a belief in genuine partnership and honest relationships between agencies. Any disagreements within this working relationship needs to be resolved to the satisfaction of workers / agencies in order to maintain effective working together.

This procedure has been developed in line with the MAPPA Guidance 2012 version 4. This procedure is to ensure that RAs and DTCs have a quick and straightforward means of resolving professionals' differences in specific cases.

Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.

Each agency should have their own procedures in place to deal with concerns within their own setting. On occasion, where concerns need to be raised with another agency for example non attendance at the MAPP meeting, or not carrying out allocated actions, the MAPPA Chair should ensure this occurs as soon as possible following the incident and all information clearly recorded. If resolution cannot be reached by the MAPPA Chair this will need to be progressed to line managers.

When any professional considers there is an imminent risk of serious harm to others then the MAPPA Chair must ensure their concerns are escalated on the same working day to the Strategic leads (Probation and police) and local MAPPA co-ordinator.

At no time must professional disagreement detract from ensuring Public protection. This is to remain paramount throughout.

Disagreements can arise in a number of areas but most likely to arise around non attendance, inappropriate attendance, levels of risk of serious harm, roles and responsibilities, the need for action and communication.

The Process:

Level 1 – non attendance at MAPP meeting or professional disagreement.

Action: MAPPA Chair – to try and resolve for example non attendance should trigger a phone call immediately after the meeting to the non attendee so an update can be provided and assurance of attendance at the review meeting. These actions and resolutions should be noted and recorded in the MAPPA B minutes under Issues for reporting to SMB as Level 1.

Level 2 – when the issues are unable to be resolved at Level 1.

Action: The MAPPA Chair should raise the issue with the operational / strategic leads as identified as the MAPPA SPOC for the relevant organisation. These actions and resolutions should be noted and recorded in the MAPPA B minutes under Issues for reporting to SMB as Level 2.

Level 3 – when the issued are unable to be resolved at Level 2.

Action: the MAPPA Chair to report to the SMB Chair (Marie Orrell) and MAPPA co-ordinator (Jayne Phillips) using the form attached they should progress the issue within 1 working week and record outcomes at the next MAPPA SMB meeting. The SMB Chair and MAPPA co-ordinator will aim to resolve the issue using the relevant SMB representative from that agency but acknowledge on a rare occasion a meeting may need to be scheduled to find resolution.

Dealing with MAPPA complaints

From time to time there may be complaints about MAPPA. These may be from offenders who have been managed under MAPPA or from their friends, family, legal advisers. It may also be possible that there will be complaints from external organisations or professionals.

As MAPPA is not a body in its own right, it is important to determine whether the complaint received by MAPPA is legitimately a complaint about MAPPA or about how one of the agencies is managing a case. For example if an offender is raising a complaint about a licence condition this should be directed to the National Probation Service not dealt with by the MAPPA co-ordinator.

Each RA and DTC agency will have their own complaints procedures and it is important that complaints are managed promptly in line with agency policy.

MAPPA Complaints

As with all complaints they should be resolved at the lowest possible level and as promptly as possible. The complainant should be advised of any delays in the process.

The Process

All MAPPA complaints should be in writing and directed to the MAPPA co-ordinator.

The MAPPA co-ordinator then consults with the MAPPA SMB chair to agree how to proceed.

If at that stage they assess the complaint is in regard of one particular agency the complaint will be passed to the SMB representative for that agency. The MAPPA co-ordinator will then write to the complainant to advise who is dealing with the matter.

If it is a MAPPA complaint –

- SMB Chair will consult with the MAPPA Chair and decide whether further investigation beyond consultation and reviewing of the MAPPA minutes is necessary.
- The MAPPA co-ordinator must report all complaints received and findings to the SMB. Therefore the SMB Chair must ensure to keep MAPPA co-ordinator updated.
- If further investigation is required a lead investigator will be identified by the SMB Chair – ideally a member of the Responsible Authorities.
- The investigator can establish a sub group most typically consists of three members: member of RA, a lay adviser and a DTC member non of whom should be involved in the case.
- On completion of the investigation the outcomes should be reported in writing to the complainant, the SMB Chair and MAPPA co-ordinator.
- If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome and wishes to take the matter further they can apply to the Chief Constable, Deputy Head of the NPS or Prison NW Strategic Lead.