

## Multi-Agency Public Protection



Lancashire



# Lancashire

MAPPA Annual Report 2002

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# Managing Dangerous Violent and Sexual Offenders

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# 1. Introduction

This report provides Lancashire area information to supplement the national report. It is a joint report prepared by the Lancashire Constabulary and National Probation Service Lancashire.

In Lancashire, joint arrangements between Police and Probation commenced in response to the 1996 Probation Inspectorate thematic inspection on the management of dangerous offenders. By the implementation of the 1997 Sex Offender Act, joint arrangements were well developed both for the joint assessment of sex offenders, required to register, and for the assessment and management of violent offenders. Subsequently a formal protocol for the establishment of joint High Risk Strategy meetings was agreed, and shortly afterwards a joint media protocol. Involvement of other agencies, where appropriate, in these strategy meetings led to increased confidence in sharing relevant information.

In anticipation of the new arrangements a Senior Probation Officer was appointed in 2000 to manage risk registration and information sharing with the Police. The post is located for half the week at Police headquarters and has access to the sex offender register held by the Police, and the Probation Service risk database.

In 2001, these arrangements were further developed in response to the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. Multi-Agency Public Protection Panels were established. A protocol for the assessment and management of sexual and potentially dangerous offenders was agreed between the Police and Probation and publicly launched. Statements of commitment to the protocol have been signed by a range of other agencies.

This document will provide further details of the arrangements made in Lancashire.

## 2. Summary of Roles and Responsibilities

The Police and Probation Service in Lancashire have statutory responsibility for the arrangements for managing potentially dangerous offenders. A protocol was signed at a public launch, on August 31st 2001, attended by a broad range of relevant agencies, who were asked to sign a statement of commitment, and to identify their specific contribution to Multi Agency Public Protection Panels.

The following agencies have signed:

- Youth Offending Teams
- Health Authorities
- Social Services
- Employment Service district office
- NW Secure Commissioning Team
- Lancashire Police
- National Probation Service – Lancashire
- Borough Councils – Housing Departments
- (All district councils and unitary authorities have signed a protocol with the Probation Service for the accommodation of potentially dangerous offenders)
- Prisons
- Communicare
- NSPCC
- Victim Support, Lancashire

Further work will be undertaken to engage those agencies who have not yet signed the statement of commitment.

All the agencies have a primary concern for public and child protection. In exercising this duty, the role of local agencies in relation to joint management of sex offenders and potentially dangerous offenders is as follows:

*Police and Probation:* assessment and management of risk posed by offenders, using statutory powers where appropriate to return offenders to prison or bring them before a court.

*NSPCC:* Protection of children. NSPCC in Lancashire work in partnership with the Probation Service to assess risk posed by sex offenders against children. NSPCC works with the Police to assess the risks posed by sex offenders on the register

*Health Services:* Treatment of mentally disordered and learning disabled offenders, to reduce the risk of offending – using statutory powers where appropriate to place mentally ill offenders in secure accommodation. Health Services also provide drugs assessment and treatment. Health Services work to strict guidelines on patient confidentiality and the protocols on information sharing

*Housing Departments:* Duties to accommodate vulnerable and homeless people. In Lancashire protocols have been signed with probation for accommodation to be provided in locations appropriate for the risk assessed by the Probation Service.

*Employment Service:* Employers have a duty to check Criminal Records for applications to certain posts. Employment Service can advise on this. The Probation Service in Lancashire will notify the Employment Service of risks posed by individuals through the Multi Agency Public Protection Panel process.

*Prisons:* In conjunction with Probation Services, prisons aim to release prisoners to accommodation and appropriate support (especially drugs and mental health support). Governors and/or parole Board have authority to insert licence conditions necessary to protect the public. Prison Service notifies the Dangerous Offender Unit prior to release of dangerous offenders, and notifies local Social Services

Departments of the release address of schedule 1 offenders

*Social Services Directorates:* Social Services have a primary responsibility for the protection of children. Their role is assessment of children who might be in need of care and support, and provision of appropriate care and safety.

*Youth Offending Teams:* YOTs are multi agency teams of Police, Probation, Social Services, Education and Health staff who work as an integrated team to prevent juvenile crime and reoffending by young offenders (under 18). Locally, Youth Offending Teams have recently finalised a strategy for work with high risk young offenders.

In addition multi agency steering groups for Mentally Disordered Offenders oversee arrangements for assessment and management of mentally disordered offenders, and multi agency Area Child Protection Committees, for child protection in Lancashire. Area Child Protection Committees have been active in promoting public education and child safety and programmes with parents and schools

### 3. Outline of the Arrangements

The Probation Service routinely assesses the risk posed by any offender for whom it has a statutory duty, using structured assessment. The Police routinely assess the risk posed by any offender on the Sex Offender Register also using structured assessment. Any agencies with concerns about the potential risks of an offender can make a referral to either the Police or Probation Service, using a standard form. The referral is considered jointly by Police and Probation, working together at Police HQ

If the criteria for a Multi Agency Public Protection Panel do not appear to be met, further information will be sought, and advice given about other avenues for information sharing or to obtain a desired outcome. Members of the public who have a concern should contact their local Probation office or Police station

Subject to the criteria being met the Probation Service arrange a meeting with the Police as quickly as possible. The Probation Service provide the coordination, administration and clerical support. Initial meetings are chaired by Probation Service Assistant Chief Officers. 5 panel slots are scheduled monthly, and used as required. Review meetings are chaired by the

Senior Probation Officer (risk) . Police attend all meetings and other agencies who have a current or potential interest in a case attend as appropriate. Minutes of the meetings are accessible electronically at both Probation and Police HQ.

Multi Agency Public Protection Panels consider all potential risk information, including any previous history of violence or sexual behaviour or threats, and factors likely to increase risk, such as alcohol or drugs misuse. The Panel also considers the known triggers for violence, and who is most likely to be at risk. The current situation and any previously agreed action is reviewed and an action plan agreed. Normally the action plan will be multi-agency and include any appropriate intervention and restrictions, such as statutory or voluntary controls on behaviour, attendance at offending behaviour programmes (e.g. Sex Offender Programme, Domestic Violence Programme), drugs treatment, mental health treatment and appropriate accommodation. The Multi Agency Public Protection Panel will consider any resource implications, disclosure issues and media strategy arising from the action plan. The protocol contains a confidentiality statement which is read out at the beginning of each meeting.

In most cases offenders are still subject to prison licence or a court order, and if necessary additional conditions can be inserted into the licence or order. Court orders and prison licences and their requirements are rigorously enforced by the Probation Service and any breach of requirements results in a probation report to the court or Home Office, with the probability of immediate recall to prison (if on licence) or court sanction. If an offender is not on any order, then the Panel may recommend that an order be sought from the court, such as a sex offender order. Although there have been some breaches of licence condition resulting in a return to prison, further offending while subject to Multi Agency Public Protection Controls, has been effectively prevented.

Any case deemed to meet the criteria of dangerousness, by the Multi Agency Public Protection Panel is placed on a public protection register. This case is then reviewed regularly, until it is determined that there is no imminent risk, when the case is placed in an archived list. Any sex offender subject to a Sex Offender Order remains on the Public Protection Register until the end of the order.

## 4. Strategic Management Arrangement

A Strategic Management Group has been established. This group comprises representation at a senior management level from:

- Police
- Probation
- Housing and Social Services Directorate
- YOTs
- Prison
- Health
- NSPCC
- Victim Support

The objective of the group is to provide strategic management oversight with a perspective from each of the key agencies – not to provide geographical representation from all the agencies who have signed a statement of commitment to the protocol. This model will be reviewed in 12 months.

The terms of reference for the group follow the initial guidance to:

- Monitor and review the effectiveness of the joint arrangements

- Develop and agree systems for sharing information
- Establish and agree systems to ensure that only those few offenders who represent a serious risk of harm are referred to the Multi Agency Public Protection Panel
- Consider training needs and resource implications
- Consider communication issues in relation to local communities and media
- Prepare and publish an annual report

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## 5. Disclosure

Information about key dates in a dangerous offender's sentence is always disclosed to the victim of the offence, by the Probation Service, Victim Liaison Officer. The victim is also consulted about release plans. Where public safety would be increased by disclosing information about the offender to someone else not attending the meeting, or not already involved in the case, the Multi Agency Public Protection Panel will recommend it. The Police have the power to disclose to third parties, without the offender's consent, on the authority of the Assistant Chief Constable (or higher grade).

This is however a last resort, and the offender's consent is sought and to date has been obtained. Examples of disclosure in Lancashire are to:

- Accommodation providers (Housing Departments, and Private Landlords)
- Head Teachers

- Employers and Employment agencies
- Social Service Departments
- Partners of the Offender

Examples include:

Prior to the release of a registered sex offender from prison, the prison censor notified the Probation Service that the man was corresponding with a woman from the area where he intended to return on release. Further investigation by Probation revealed that what had started as a pen pal arrangement had developed into a much closer relationship, and an invitation by the woman to meet on release. The woman had two young children. After discussing the issues and risks with the offender, he accepted disclosure of his offences to the woman. As a result the woman terminated the relationship, and the offender's release plans were changed.

Following release from prison of a registered sex offender, he gained a

place at a local college, to continue with studies he had commenced in prison. However because this would give him easy access to teenage girls, the Probation Officer requested a MAPPP. A representative from the college was invited to the MAPPP. The college decided not to exclude him but to implement measures which would minimise his contact with teenage girls. The Probation Officer discussed the risks with the offender, who agreed to co-operate with these measures and restrictions on him.

Following release from prison, and a further period in a strictly supervised hostel, a sex offender was assisted to find his own accommodation. The landlords of any potential accommodation were informed of the offender's background. Accommodation was eventually found, where there were no children in any part of the premises, and where any access by children was unlikely, with CCTV in the reception area.

A Probation Officer working with a former sex offender, with some history of mental illness, became concerned that he may be beginning to fantasise about specific girls in the same town. The officer

explored with him the dangers that such thoughts might lead to, and with the offender's knowledge, disclosure to the parents of the girls took place. Together with the offender's agreement to avoid the

vicinity, the public were protected by the parent's knowledge, and their immediate access to Probation and Police should there be any concerns.

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## 6. Work with Victims

Victim Support is the national charity for people affected by crime. It is an independent organisation, offering a free and confidential service, whether or not a crime has been reported. Trained staff and volunteers at local branches offer information and support to victims, witnesses, their families and friends.

Victim Support provides the Witness Service, based in every criminal court in England and Wales, to offer assistance before, during and after a trial. You can also call the Victim Support line – 0845 30 30 900 – for information and support and details of local services and other relevant organisations.

The Probation Service in Lancashire undertakes to contact victims of serious violent or sexual crimes, in accordance with the requirements of section 69 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act. This is now done by specialist victim liaison

officers, based in 5 districts, because of concern that Probation Officers who are the offender's case manager may not be entirely independent. A central victims administration co-ordinator has also been appointed. The Lancashire Crown Courts provide information to the co-ordinator, listing all offenders who have been sentenced to 12 months or more for a violent or sexual offence. With Police assistance the victims' names and addresses are identified and contacted by the victim liaison officer. Victims are approached sensitively and informed that if they wish, they may be informed of key events during the offender's sentence, and are provided with the opportunity to request extra conditions in the offender's licence, such as where the offender will or will not live, and whom the offender should be prohibited from contacting.

Victims liaison officers refer all victims who require continuing support to the local Victim Support (Lancashire Branch)

Contact numbers for Victim Support are:

Blackburn, Darwen and District  
01254 680442

Burnley/Pendle/Clitheroe  
01282 455955

Chorley and District  
01257 246229

Fylde  
01253 626193

Hyndburn and Rossendale  
01254 871198

N Lancashire  
01524 859044

Preston  
01772 201142

W Lancashire  
01695 728303

Area Office  
01772 828422

## 7. Statistical Information

### Number of Offenders

i. The number of registered sex offenders (RSOs) in the community on 31 March 2002 (s68(2) CJ &CS Act 2000) (see note 1)	610
ii. The number of RSOs per 100,000 population	43
ii. The number of sex offenders cautioned or convicted for breaches of the registration requirement, between 1/4/01 and 31/3/02	41
iii. The number of Sex Offender Orders 01/04/01 - 31/03/02	
(a) total applied for.	9
(b) granted.	4
(c) not granted.	0
(d) applications still in progress 5	5
iv The number of violent offenders and other sex offenders 01/04/01 – 31/03/02 (s 68 (3) (4) &(5) CJ&CS Act 2000) (see note 2)	639
The number of other offenders 01/04/01 – 31/03/02 (s67 (2) (b) CJ & CS Act 2000) (See note 3)	27

#### Notes.

- 1 S 68 (2) This applies to any sex offender required to register with the Police under the requirements of Part 1 of the Sex Offender Act 1997
- 2 S 68(3),(4),(5) refers to sexual or violent offenders who either receive 12 months or more imprisonment, or who are made subject to a mental health order
- 3 s 67 2 (b) refers to any other person who by reason of their offences is considered by the Police or Probation Service to be persons who may cause serious harm

## ADDITIONAL COSTS OF LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS

Although the arrangements are based on developments prior to the 2000 Act, they represent a significant additional, more focused and rigorous application of processes. There are therefore additional costs to all agencies who attend MAPPPS and to the Police and Probation Service for managing the arrangements.

### Estimated costs of attendance at MAPPPs

### Other Costs (Staffing/Admin)

Police	£15000	
Probation	£25000	£30,000
Other Agencies	£11000	