LIVERPOOL MARAC OPERATING PROTOCOL
2010 - 2013

INTRODUCTION
The Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Operating Protocol (MOP) establishes the accountability, responsibility and reporting structures for the MARACs in Liverpool. It outlines the process of MARAC in Liverpool and how agencies can engage in the process.

There are key links into the work of safeguarding (Children and Adults) and also public protection arrangements (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)). This protocol will show the links with the above and clarify the role of MARAC meetings. There is an information sharing protocol in operation for the MARACs and this will be reviewed on an annual basis.

PARTNER AGENCIES
Liverpool is a city of approximately 450,000 people. It has on average 12,000 calls to Merseyside Police each year in relation to incidents of domestic violence. The city is complex in its proliferation of agencies and organisations that potentially may have an input into the MARAC process. The information sharing protocol for the MARAC reflexes the complexity and the signatories to that protocol are;

Statutory -
- Family Crime Investigation Units – North & South
- Liverpool Community Health
- Merseyside Probation Service
- Liverpool Direct Limited
  - Careline
- Liverpool City Council
  - Children’s Services
  - Adult Safeguarding
  - Housing Options Service
  - Youth Offending Service
  - Citysafe Strategy Unit
- Mersey Care
- Royal Liverpool & Broadgreen University Hospital Trust
- Aintree Hospitals
- Community Justice Centre
- Greater Merseyside Connexions
- Children’s Centres
- CAFCASS
- Liverpool Women’s Hospital

Voluntary (Third Sector) –
- NSPCC
• Victim Support – North & South
• Kensington Domestic Abuse Service
• Voice for Change
• SHAP
• Action for Children – Family Intervention Projects
• Community Integrated Care (CIC)
• Sanctuary Support Service
• Local Solutions
  o Independent Domestic Violence Adviser Service, Liverpool
  o Worst Kept Secret
  o Addressing Barriers for Change
• The Whitechapel Centre
• Centre 56
• Amadudu
• Speke Gartson Domestic Violence Project
• Chrysalis
• Rape And Sexual Assault (RASA)
• New Start Homes

Other:
• Registered Social Landlords
  o Riverside
  o Cosmopolitan
  o Cobalt
  o South Liverpool Housing
  o Venture
  o Liverpool Housing Trust
  o Arena
  o Liverpool Mutual Homes

The meetings are chaired by the Family Crime Investigation Unit’s (FCIU) Detective Inspectors in the city. There is a core group of agencies that will have input into the majority of cases heard at the MARAC. This includes police, housing, health, social care plus other statutory and third sector organisations (appendix 1).

Agencies are responsible for ensuring their attendance at the MARAC, there should be a named lead and a deputy should the lead not be available. If an agency is unable to attend it is their responsibility to ensure that relevant information is shared with the MARAC. If agencies are unable to send a representative to the MARAC the information to be shared should be sent to the Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator.

The information brought by agencies must be relevant and proportionate. It must be in line with the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol (ISP) and relevant legislation and guidance.

New members of staff who may be taking on the role from a previous MARAC lead should be provided with an overview of the MARAC process by the current lead. A meeting with the Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator about the MARAC process should then be arranged as part of an induction process for new members. All new agencies requesting an input into the MARAC will meet with the Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator prior to
involvement with MARAC. This is to ensure suitability, consistency of
approach, relevance and overview of the responsibility of agencies involved in
the MARAC process.

GOVERNANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
The Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Group (DV & SV
Response Group) will have responsibility for the governance and performance
management of the MARAC. The objectives of the DV & SV Response
Group is to report to the Violent Crime Subgroup and to meet quarterly to:

a) Monitor performance against all priority Performance Indicators in
respect of:
   a. Domestic violence, and
   b. Sexual violence

b) Consider detailed data analysis reports.

c) Task and co-ordinate appropriate partnership responses to domestic
violence across services, this work will look at performance in relation
to domestic violence reduction work.

d) Monitor the work of the MARACs in Liverpool. This will include
performance management, agency attendance and participation in the
MARAC process and any potential breaches of the ISP.

e) Allocate funding to specific projects as identified by the group, which
meet the performance requirements of domestic violence (abuse)
reduction work.

f) Work to be developed in the field of sexual violence.

The DV & SV Response Group will report into Citysafe, Local Safeguarding
Children’s Board (LSCB), Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and
Merseyside Criminal Justice Board (MCJB) through the Specialist Domestic
Violence Court Steering Group.

PROCESS OF THE MARAC
The purpose of the MARAC is to provide a multi agency response to high risk
victims of domestic violence in the city. The aim is to reduce risk by sharing
information and providing actions to support the victim of domestic violence
and their family.

Identification of MARAC cases
• Agencies in the city should have individual policies in relation to
domestic violence. These policies should be adhered to on disclosure
of domestic violence.
• If a case is identified as high risk there are a number of considerations
that should be made immediately, these will include whether or not
there is a need to refer a case on to the police, safeguarding (adult or
child) and/or to an appropriate support service for example,
Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) Service. Such referrals need to be actioned as soon as possible and within agency protocols.

Criteria for MARAC
- Liverpool uses the Merseyside Risk Indicator Toolkit (MeRIT) (appendix 2). This is the risk indicator that should be used by all agencies when identifying whether or not agencies should refer a case to MARAC. All agencies should refer their high risk cases to MARAC.
- The criteria for referral is;
  - An incident **within the last 3 months**, and
    - Visible high risk (using MeRIT), or
    - Professional judgement and/or
    - Escalation (incidents may not meet high risk threshold but are occurring more often and causing concern).
  - Or, if an incident occurred **longer than 3 months ago**, and
    - Professional judgement and/or
    - Pattern of behaviour historically linked to a recent event that may cause concern (for example, a recent release from custody and contact being made with the victim).
- Any case referred to the MARAC should be flagged and tagged by agencies and if there is a further incident the case should be referred back into MARAC. This can be done by any agency to which the victim discloses a further incident and does not need to be the initial referring agency.
- Citysafe will ensure that the criteria for NI 32\(^1\) is being applied consistently. Cases that do not meet the criteria for NI 32 but where there has been a further incident will be listed for ‘information only’ to alert agencies to potential ongoing risk and escalation. For cases that meet the criteria for NI 32 they will be marked as ‘repeat’ on the agenda for the MARAC.

Referral
- Agencies can refer into MARAC by completing the MARAC referral form (appendix 3).
- The MARAC lead from each agency should be the person who refers in the case. It is their responsibility to gather relevant information from the worker involved and feed this information in the MARAC. This should include any current concerns from the worker and specific requests for assistance.
- Referrals should be sent to marac@liverpool.gov.uk using secure e-mail only. Where this is not possible then referrals should be faxed on 0151 225 4830. If agencies do not have access to either method that hard copies of referrals can be sent by special delivery to Jayne McPartland/Maria Curran, MARAC, Citysafe Strategy Unit, Municipal Buildings, Dale Street. Liverpool L2 2DH. During the course of 2010 a web-based referral system will be introduced. Once available i-__

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\(^1\) National Indicator 32 – reduction of repeat victimisation of cases seen at the MARAC within a 12 month period.
casework will replace the above referral route and allow agencies to log directly onto a secure website and submit details of the case.

- All referrals should include as much relevant information as possible and as a minimum;
  - Name, address, date of birth and any aliases for the victim,
  - Name, address, date of birth and any aliases for the perpetrator,
  - Name, address, date of birth and any aliases for any children,
  - Details and date of last incident,
  - Outline of history of domestic violence within the relationship,
  - Any other significant factors for example, substance misuse, mental ill health, pregnancy etc, and
  - In cases of professional judgement referral a full and complete outline of why the referral is being made and the opinion of the person making the referral.
  - Details of how consent was obtained should be included in full.
  - In cases where information sharing is happening without consent full details as to why this is occurring must be included on the referral form.

- Deadlines for the submission of referrals for the agenda will be circulated in March each year. The deadline will always be the Friday before the agenda is circulated.

**MARAC agenda**

- In recognition that the MARACs in Liverpool are complex and have a high volume a ‘mini agenda’ will be circulated two weeks after the last MARAC for agencies to begin to research cases.
- The full MARAC agenda will be circulated by e-mail and/or fax one week before the meeting is to take place.
- The full MARAC agenda will list cases in the following manner;
  - Pregnant women
  - Victims with children under 5 years of age
  - Victims with children 5-11 years
  - Victims with children 12-17 years
  - Victims without children
  - This will allow for agencies to attend only the cases they need to be present for.
- The template for the agenda can be found at appendix 4.
- It is the responsibility of individual agencies to print and bring a copy of the agenda to the MARAC meetings. **Only secure environments** (places of work, ensuring that only the named person has sight of the documentation) should be used to print MARAC agendas and notes of the meetings as they contain detailed and sensitive information. Any agency not adhering to this will be considered to have breached the ISP.
- Agencies that are part of the MARAC should check the agenda and if there are no cases known to their agency and no outstanding actions from the previous MARAC meeting ensure that their apologies are recorded in the notes of the meeting. They do not need to attend the meeting.

**Actions before the MARAC (where safe to do so)**
• MARAC does not take away responsibility from agencies for immediate actions in relation to the safety of high risk victims, particularly with regard to statutory duties (e.g. police, children’s services etc). Any referrals that need to be made to statutory services should be completed prior to the MARAC taking place.

• If it is possible to refer a victim to the IDVA Service prior to the MARAC taking place then this should be done and the relevant referral form (appendix 5) completed.

• In all high risk cases the police will give consideration to placing a ‘treat as urgent’ (TAU) marker on the property.

• In all high risk cases where target hardening (Sanctuary) could assist in the improvement of the victim and their family’s safety a referral should be considered by the referring agency. All Sanctuary referrals should be accompanied by the referral form (appendix 6) with relevant permission for works to be completed provided.

• If agencies feel that there may be safeguarding issues in relation to adults or children in the family appropriate referrals should be made. The referrals should be in line with the agencies safeguarding procedures but should also follow the guidance provided by LSCB and LSAB. See www.Liverpool.gov.uk for further information.

• All MARAC cases should be flagged and tagged by agencies so that any further incidents of domestic violence disclosed to any MARAC agency can result in a referral back into the MARAC process.

• Agencies are expected to bring information to the MARAC that relates to individual cases is relevant and proportionate.

Victim contact before the meeting (where safe to do so)

• Victims in the majority of cases should consent to their case being referred to the MARAC. It is the responsibility of the referring agency to ensure that the victim is aware of the referral and consent has been obtained. In cases where a referral is made without consent then the circumstances and reasoning behind the referral must be fully included on the referral form.

• Individual agencies are responsible for notification that the referral has been made to MARAC. A letter should be sent to the victim confirming that the referral has been made in all cases where consent has been obtained with one exception. Where a victim has agreed to a referral but is still in a relationship with a perpetrator written information should only be sent to an address where it is safe to do so.

• The majority of MARAC cases should be referred to the IDVA Service. However with a number of support agencies in the city the victim may already be engaged with another service and decline the support of an IDVA. In order that the victim’s voice is heard at the MARAC meeting where possible, the IDVA or support service should contact the victim pre meeting to ascertain if there is any specific information they would like shared. Or any actions that the victim feels would help them or their family.

MARAC meeting

• Liverpool has two MARACs one in the north of the city and one in the south. Each meeting will be convened on a monthly basis.
• The Detective Inspectors of the FCIUs in Liverpool will chair MARAC meetings and in their absence this responsibility will lie with the Detective Sergeant. When the FCIU is not available the chairing of the meeting will be the responsibility of the Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator.

• At the beginning of the meeting the Chair should go through the actions of the previous MARAC and ask agencies to confirm that their actions have been completed. Where actions have not been completed it remains the responsibility of the agency to ensure that these are done in a timely manner. A list of outstanding actions will be carried at the meetings until agencies have confirmed completion.

• The Chair should ensure that all agencies with information about the victim, perpetrator and/or their family are able to share the information before actions are agreed. Once information is shared agencies should offer appropriate actions. It is the responsibility of the Chair to summarise these actions and ensure that agencies know who is doing what and when. Actions should be specific measurable achievable realistic and timebound (SMART).

• Agencies should ensure that representatives are able to offer actions on the agency’s behalf and provide feedback on MARAC actions from previous meetings.

• Agencies should endeavour to attend all meetings where a victim, perpetrator and/or their family are known to them. If the agency lead is unable to attend a meeting a deputy should be provided. Where agencies are unable to attend or provide a deputy an update should be sent to the Domestic Violence Prevention Co-ordinator.

Notes of the meeting and administration

• The Domestic Violence Support Officers (Citysafe) are responsible for the administration of MARAC meetings.

• They will ensure that the agenda and notes of the meetings are circulated approximately one week before the MARAC takes place.

• The Domestic Violence Support Officers will monitor all referrals via a control list as to whether or not it is a repeat case for the purposes of MARAC. Cases which have been to the MARAC in the past 12 months but do not reach the criteria for repeats will be marked as ‘information only’ on the agenda. For cases where there has a period in excess of 12 months between incidents the cases will be listed with their original MARAC number on the agenda however they will not fulfil the criteria of a repeat incident unless a further incident occurs within 12 months of the current referral.

Information shared at MARAC

• Member agencies of the MARAC will be required to sign up to and adhere to the MARAC Information Sharing Protocol (ISP). They will also be expected to sign a confidentiality statement at the beginning of each meeting that reinforces the purpose of the meeting and the restrictions in relation to sharing of information.

• The MARAC ISP is currently being reviewed and sign off is expected by agencies during June 2010. The Protocol will then be reviewed on a yearly basis with a full revision and sign off scheduled for April 2013.
Action planning

- Action plans are put together at the MARAC by agencies. The purpose of which is to increase the safety of the victim and their family. Agencies will be expected to offer specific actions to meet the needs of the case and for full consideration to be given to actions by all member agencies.
- All agencies are expected to flag and tag cases for a period of 12 months following that case being discussed at MARAC. Priority should be given to actions agreed at MARAC by the individual agencies concerned. Where there is a perpetrator under the age of 18 years a referral will be considered to Multi Agency Response to Violence (MARV). The purpose of the MARV is to provide a targeted and holistic response to perpetrators of violence.
- Actions will be signed off as completed at the next MARAC meeting.
- After the MARAC meeting the IDVA or specialist support service for the victim will take the responsibility to feedback actions agreed, where it is safe to do so.

Emergency MARACs

- There may be occasion when cases are discussed outside of MARAC meetings. This will be on an as needed basis and is not a formal part of the MARAC process in Liverpool.
- Agencies would be expected to put in place necessary actions, refer to relevant agencies etc outside of MARAC meetings where there is a need to progress cases prior to a meeting.

Referral to and from other MARACs

- Liverpool accepts referrals from other MARACs where there is evidence of a continued risk and/or other concern. This process is usually facilitated through the Domestic Violence Support Officers or FCIU. In all incidents referral forms will need to be completed.
- Liverpool will make referral to other MARACs where a risk still exists. The referral will be completed by an agency within the MARAC or by the Domestic Violence Support Officer. In all cases relevant referral forms will be completed.
- In all cases of referrals to and from MARAC the IDVA Service will be informed of referrals and will liaise with service outside of the city.
- It is anticipated that a Merseyside MARAC Referral Protocol will be developed in 2010/11 and this will be included within the MARAC Operating Protocol once agreed.

EQUALITY

- Liverpool will use the Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) database this includes information collated in relation to gender, sexuality, disability and ethnicity. The information will form part of a performance management report which will be submitted to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Group. Together with information on the attendance of agencies at the MARAC it will be scrutinised to ensure that the MARAC is reflective of the local area.
• Liverpool has a number of specialist support services for people who face additional barriers. These services form part of the MARAC membership.
• There are also a number of ongoing actions in the Domestic Violence (Abuse) Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (2010-2013) that will ensure scrutiny and monitoring of the equality strands to ensure that the work of the MARAC is reflective of the communities in the city.

EVALUATION
• Quarterly performance management reports will be submitted to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Group. Reports will also be made available to the LSCB, LSAB and Citysafe.

COMPLAINTS
• There may be times when individual agencies raise issues. In the first instance the agency making the complaint should use the complaints procedure of the agency concerned. If the agency feels that their complaint impacts on the multi agency work of the MARAC, then a complaint should be made in writing to the Chair of the MARAC. Complaints will be acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt and resolved within 20 days of the initial complaint being received.

BREACHES
• The MARAC processes should not be discussed with any agency outside of the meeting. Discussion of the MARAC without prior agreement could potentially place the victim at further risk. All breaches of information sharing will be dealt with by the Chair of the MARAC. Single agency breaches will be dealt with on an individual basis. If there is a failure to resolve will be sent to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Group. Breaches that impact on multi agency working will be looked at by the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Response Group.
• All agencies are responsible for ensuring that MARAC information is stored and maintained in a secure manner. Details of MARAC meetings are not to be discussed outside of the remit of the confidentiality agreement and IPS.

WITHDRAWAL
• Agencies attendance and input to the MARAC will be monitored. Agencies not attending or contributing to the process will be removed from the mailing list and notified of this decision in writing. Agencies wishing to withdraw from the MARAC will need to put this in writing and provide a clear exit strategy to ensure that any existing cases continue to be monitored for a 12 month period.

SIGNATORIES
REVIEW

- The protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis and revised in May 2013.
Risk identified → Referral form completed

Form e-mailed, faxed or sent special delivery to: - strict timelines exist in relation to referrals please contact Jayne McPartland/Maria Curran for further details

Jayne McPartland/Maria Curran
The Citysafe Team
Municipal Building
Dale Street
Liverpool L2 2DH

Tele: 0151 225 4817
E-mail: marac@liverpool.gov.uk

AGENDA
One week before MARAC agenda is circulated to all agencies

Victims, Child(ren) or Perpetrator are known to Agency
Agency researches information known to them and comes prepared to share relevant information

No-one known to agency and no actions from previous meeting
- Do not attend the MARAC.
- Send apologies and advise that cases are not known to your organisation.
- Shred/securely destroy agenda.
- If actions are assigned to your agency during the MARAC it will be the responsibility of the MARAC Administrator to inform you so that you can action them.

MARAC takes place - information is shared and actions agreed

Actions agreed at MARAC - noted by agency and carried out

MARAC - actions are reviewed and signed off, outstanding actions noted on