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Minutes of Joint Policing Committee meeting held on Monday, 31 May 2021 Via Ms Teams at 11.00 am.

In attendance:

Councillor Enda McGloin (Cathaoirleach)
Superintendent Christopher Grogan
Inspector Carla Curry
Sergeant Orla McGrath
Pat Forde, Regional Director, Youth Work Ireland, North Connaught
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Felim Gurn
Councillor Enda Stenson
Councillor Justin Warnock
Councillor Paddy Farrell
Breege Grimes
Janice Raine Conick
Samantha Healy, Senior Executive Officer Corporate Services and Housing
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer
Suzanne Duffy, Administrative Officer

Apologies:

Lar Power, Chief Executive
Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services
Chief Supt Aidan Glacken
Deputy Frank Feighan TD
Deputy Martin Kenny TD
Deputy Marc McSharry TD
Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Sean McGowan
Councillor Gerry Dolan
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Pdraig Fallon
Bernie McGauran
Kenny Murtagh
Kathleen Flanagan
Osazuwa Peter-Olabiyi

At the outset of the meeting Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed everyone to the meeting.

23 Adoption of Minutes

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda Stenson
SECONDED by Cllr Justin Warnock

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Joint Policing Committee Meeting of 29th March 2021

24 Correspondence

- 1 . Information leaflet produced by YAPS Garda Youth Diversion Project and the Garda Juvenile Liaison Office, An Garda Síochána Sligo/Leitrim on “**Get the facts about Knives**”.
2. Launch of Public consultation on Policing Priorities for An Garda Síochána for 2022

25 Presentation from North Connaught Youth Services

Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed Pat Forde, Regional Director, Youth Work Ireland North Connaught and Sergeant Orla McGrath to the meeting.

Pat Forde gave a presentation as set out in **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting on the Youth Education and Awareness Programmes.

Sergeant Orla McGrath delivered the second half of the presentation as set out in **Appendix 1** to the Minutes of this meeting on “Use your Brain not your fists” Programme.

Councillor Enda McGloin thanked both Pat Forde and Sergeant McGrath for their presentations and invited questions from the Members.

Janice Raine Conick paid tribute to both presentations received and queried how many more schools in Leitrim have to complete the programme and where can one access the information leaflets entitled “Get the facts about Knives”.

Sgt Orla McGrath said St Clare’s Secondary School in Manorhamilton was unable to come into the programme and the information leaflets are available from Leitrim County Council, An Garda Síochána and North Connaught Youth Services.

Councillor Justin Warnock sought clarification regarding the responsibility of, and interaction with, parents of children aged 12-18 years of age that are found in possession of a knife.

Mr Forde said An Garda Síochána use their discretion and talk to the young people and their parents. Mr Forde said a lot of people are unaware that carrying a knife is an offence.

Sergeant McGrath said that when underage children are found in possession of a knife the parents and the young person are engaged in discussion.

Councillor Mary Bohan paid tribute to Pat Forde, Regional Director, Youth Work

Ireland North Connaught, Sergeant McGrath, An Garda Síochána and Suzanne Duffy, Leitrim County Council and all those involved in these very useful programmes for the Youth.

Councillor Mary Bohan said she is sure that St Clare's Secondary School will undertake the programme in due course, and she acknowledged all the programmes that schools and teachers are currently delivering.

Councillor Enda Stenson complemented the young people who have engaged and participated in this programme as peer-to-peer communication with young people is the correct way to progress this programme.

Councillor Justin Warnock asked if younger children could be engaged in these programmes.

Mr Forde said this programme is not generally rolled out to children in primary schools. Generally, children aged 8-11 engaged in the programme are those with family members on the fringes of the Criminal Justice System.

26 LA16 Collision Reporting and Evaluation

The LA 16 Collision report and evaluation procedure form is completed by An Garda Síochána with the purpose of collecting data at road traffic collision sites where a fatality has occurred or that are likely to become fatal. Inspector Curry said thankfully no such incidents have occurred year-to-date in Leitrim.

27 Report from an Garda Síochána

Superintendent Christopher Grogan said this was his first meeting at the Joint Policing Committee. He was appointed in December 2020 but due to a serious injury he sustained was unable to take up the role officially until May 2021. He paid tribute to Inspectors Curry, Collins and Tracey for all their help.

Superintendent Grogan said that An Garda Síochána are down 4 members in the Leitrim District and the Chief Superintendent is continuing to seek more resources.

Superintendent Grogan gave a presentation on the crime statistics for County Leitrim for 2021 up to 17th March compared with 2020. He said that 334 drug searches have taken place to date this year which are up 118% from 45 to 98. Burglaries are down 55% from 33 to 15, Thefts are down 13% from 24 to 21, Assault Minor is down 24% from 26 to 19, Assault Causing Harm is down 50% from 10 to 5.

There are increased patrols on coastal and inland waterways. 186 Covid Fines were issued for the period 1st January 2021 to 30th April 2021, 135 of these fines were for movement of people and 49 for events. Domestic violence incidents are up over 60% this year. Superintendent Grogan paid tribute to Sergeant McGrath and assisted by Pat

Forde, Regional Director Youth Ireland North Connaught on Youth Education and Awareness Programmes which are a good starting point for young people.

Superintendent Grogan said Mohill Garda Station will be refurbished in a few weeks with Gardai being temporarily relocated to Carrick-on-Shannon or Drumshanbo while the works are ongoing. Mobile gardai clinics will be made available for the duration of the works. Kinlough Garda Station is also due for refurbishment works.

Superintendent Grogan said there were 13 drink driving offences, 12 drug driving offences, 3 traffic collisions resulting in serious injuries and no fatal traffic accidents. 217 checkpoints have been in place to date and 496 patrols have been carried out. A road safety campaign aimed at saving lives will be held from 14th to 18th June 2021. A drink driving campaign will take place from the 5th to 7th June 2021.

Councillor Enda McGloin thanked Superintendent Grogan for his comprehensive report.

Councillor Mary Bohan congratulated Superintendent Grogan on his appointment and thanked him for his report.

Councillor Mary Bohan sought clarification if the increase in the domestic abuse related to the entire division or was this a figure specific to county Leitrim and she asked what agencies are involved in dealing with this problem as this is a very worrying trend.

In welcoming Superintendent Grogan, Councillor Justin Warnock extended an invitation to visit Kinlough. Councillor Warnock paid tribute to An Garda Síochána for their activity in Kinlough and he noted that the citizens are happy with the increased presence. Councillor Warnock said he would like to see the staff in Kinlough Garda Station going up from 5 to 6. Councillor Warnock queried if there will be a mobile unit in Kinlough when refurbishment works are taking place on the Garda station.

Inspector Curry said the domestic abuse figures relate to Leitrim and acknowledged they have increased. An Garda Síochána link in with a lot of agencies that are available to people in this regard. Engagement is ongoing and as part of Operation Faoiseamh there is a national policy document whereby An Garda Síochána call back within 7 days to any call on domestic abuse and give information packs to affected persons. An Garda Síochána liaise with DVAS very regularly.

Superintendent Grogan said that he does not see Kinlough Garda Station closed for refurbishment works and he acknowledged that Kinlough has challenges due to its close proximity to Bundoran and he said he will do all he can to engage in extra policing.

Councillor Felim Gurn asked if there has been a large increase in detection of drugs at drug driving checkpoints in the Sligo/Leitrim area.

Councillor Armstrong McGuire welcomed Superintendent Grogan and welcomed the commitment to coastal and river waterways patrols and asked why this has come about.

Inspector Curry said with the high garda visibility presence on our roads an increase in drugs use has been detected with the use of roadside devices that detect drug driving. Garda presence is helping and a lot of work with intelligence in the background is also helping to detect drugs.

Superintendent Grogan said there is no specific alerts to Leitrim in regard to coastal or river waterways but is part of a national programme to increase patrols on waterways. This is an extension of road policing to the waterways.

Councillor Enda McGloin referred to a motion raised recently by Councillor Caillian Ellis in regard to a full-time presence in Ballinamore Garda Station. Cllr McGloin called for 2 or 3 hours public opening hours a week to be allocated to Drumshanbo Garda Station to facilitate members of the public in getting forms signed etc and this would save people having to travel to Carrick-on-Shannon.

Councillor Sean McDermott said there was a rumour that Garda Stations are going to be closed at night.

Inspector Curry said Ballinamore, Drumshanbo and Mohill are not 24 hr stations and An Garda Siochana have members assigned to these stations. Carrick-on-Shannon Gardai also carry out mobile patrols in these areas. An Gardai Siochana are always providing services and the high visibility is making people feel safe in their communities.

An Garda Siochana have put a business case forward for more resources and the Chief Superintendent is continually looking for additional resources. The Gardai will review the situation in relation to a short term public counter service at Drumshanbo Garda Station.

Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed this positive reply.

28 Questions submitted by JPC Members

28a Question from Councillor Sean McDermott:- Community Engagement

Can I ask for an update on the focus of the Gardai, as a community-based organisation, with community engagement. This would be very reassuring especially for the rural areas of the country.

Inspector Curry said there have been 496 patrols year to date through the community. There has been phenomenal engagement by the Gardai with communities over the past year, with welfare engagements, and programmes such

as a light up campaign, Christmas Card and Easter Egg campaign being very much appreciated by the older and vulnerable in communities. The Crime Prevention Officer is available and if members have any concerns to link in with Sergeant McGrath in this regard.

28b Question Janice Raine Conick - Additional Byelaws

Are there any additional byelaws or other powers that the Gardai may require to address any potential issues with on street drinking in light of public health Covid guidance which recommends outdoor dining and hospitality?

Superintendent Grogan said the Public Order Act is the legislation that An Garda Siochana rely on in this regard and he acknowledged that there are currently no byelaws in Leitrim. The introduction of byelaws is a matter for Leitrim County Council to consider and if they are introduced An Garda Siochana will enforce them. Each situation is dealt with on its own merits and where byelaws exist, they are an additional resource for the gardai to use.

29 Date and time of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Joint Policing Committee will be held at 11 am on Monday, 4th October 2021.

The date in quarter 3 for the public meeting will be confirmed later in the year. Councillor Enda McGloin proposed that this meeting take place in North Leitrim depending on the public health advice in place at that time.

Councillor Enda McGloin thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.

The business of the meeting concluded at 12.17 pm.

Signed:

Councillor Enda McGloin
Chairperson

Mary Quinn
Director of Services
Housing, Corporate,
Community & Emergency
Services

Monday, 4 October 2021

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