

Public Document Pack

Minutes of Joint Policing Committee meeting held on Monday, 29 November 2021 in via MS Teams at 11.00 am.

In attendance:

Councillor Enda McGloin (Cathaoirleach)

Councillor Brendan Barry

Councillor Sean McDermott

Councillor Mary Bohan

Councillor Sean McGowan

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire

Councillor Gerry Dolan

Councillor Thomas Mulligan

Councillor Enda Stenson

Councillor Padraig Fallon

Councillor Justin Warnock

Councillor Paddy Farrell

Martin Kenny TD

Kenny Murtagh

Breege Grimes

Janice Raine Conick

Superintendent Chris Grogan

Inspector Carla Curry

Lar Power, Chief Executive

Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services

Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator

Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies:

Councillor Felim Gurn

Marc McSharry TD

Frank Feighan TD

Bernie McGauran

Kathleen Flanagan

Osazuwa Peter-Olabiyi

Chief Supt Aidan Glacken

38 Adoption of Minutes

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda Stenson

SECONDED by Cllr Mary Bohan

it was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Joint Policing Committee Meeting of 4th October 2021.

39 Correspondence

- Joint Policing Committee Draft Guidelines 2021
- Policing priorities 2022—2024
- Letter dated 27th October 2021 from Chief Superintendent Glacken in relation to former Garda Station in Drumkeerin.

Councillor Mary Bohan expressed her disappointment with the reply received from the Gardai in relation to Drumkeerin Garda Station and she said the members were given a commitment that it was under consideration. Councillor Mary Bohan asked for an update to be made available at the next Joint Policing Committee meeting in relation to Drumkeerin Garda Station.

Councillor Padraig Fallon said Deputy Martin Kenny had received similar correspondence from the Assistant Commissioner on 2nd November 2021. Deputy Kenny is progressing the matter with the Assistant Commissioner.

Councillor Justin Warnock expressed his disappointment with the reply, and he hoped the decision will be turned around.

40 Update form Public Meeting held 3rd November 2021

A report on the Public Meeting of Leitrim Joint Policing Committee meeting held on 3rd November 2021 was noted by the Members. The report as circulated to the Members appears as **Appendix 1** to the minutes of this meeting.

41 LA Collision Reporting and Evaluation

Inspector Curry said the LA 16 Collision report and evaluation procedure form is completed by An Garda when a fatality has occurred or that are likely to become fatal following a road traffic accident. No such incidents have occurred year-to-date in Leitrim.

42 Report from an Garda Síochána

Superintendent Chris Grogan gave a presentation on the crime statistics for County Leitrim.

Notable points from the presentation included the following:

- 209 drug searches have been completed year to date
- A recent drugs search resulted in drugs with an estimated street value of €95,000 being seized.
- A male has been apprehended, charged and brought to court in relation to a number of recent thefts in Carrick-on-Shannon. Chief Superintendent Glacken paid tribute to the CCTV and business watch which had assisted the

Garda in this regard.

- 161 fines have been issued from 1st Jan to 24th November 2021 in respect of breaches of COVID guidelines
- 278 Welfare checks have been carried out to date with older or vulnerable persons.

Councillor Enda Stenson referred to a disturbance that took place in Bridge Street in Carrick-on-Shannon recently and called for more experienced Garda personnel to be more visible on the ground in the future.

Inspector Curry confirmed there is an active investigation currently taking place on this incident.

Councillor Justin Warnock welcomed the fact that burglaries are decreasing and acknowledged that every community is experiencing a problem with drugs.

Inspector Curry said the Community Engagement Unit of An Garda Síochána is facilitating welfare visits to older residents in the community. If anyone knows vulnerable people in their locality who need assistance, or who could benefit from the welfare checks, they should pass the details to Sergeant Orla McGrath.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan said he was aware of some older residents in his area that are not happy to accept a welfare visit, and he asked if this is a common issue.

Inspector Curry said she has received no report to this extent from Sergeant McGrath but acknowledged that some older residents may not want to avail of this service. Where a person does not want to avail of welfare visits from An Garda Síochána they are provided with an information pack and are welcome to speak with the Gardai at any time in the future.

Councillor Pádraig Fallon noted the increase in drug searches and detection of drug driving. Councillor Fallon sought clarification on the figure of 209 drug searches and queried what percentage of this relates to the night-time economy as opposed to house searches.

Inspector Currey confirmed this figure relates to stop and search incidents. Houses that have been searched on foot of a warrant have not been included in the figure.

Deputy Martin Kenny welcomed the increase in drug searches and asked if additional Garda resources are needed in Leitrim. Deputy Kenny also referred to the fear among young people, and young girls especially, in regard to spiking of drinks. Deputy Kenny said they need to be assured that they are safe and for the staff of night clubs to inform An Garda Síochána of such incidents. Deputy Kenny said he considered this issue has been exaggerated and magnified by the media.

Superintendent Grogan said approval has been granted for a Garda drugs unit with officers based in the Leitrim District. Superintendent Grogan said his officers have a good rapport with the staff of night clubs and he assured the members that such activity won't be tolerated in night clubs in Leitrim. Superintendent Grogan said there was a certain element of scare mongering taking place and it is not a concern in Leitrim at the moment

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said it is important to report burglaries, spiking, or other crimes to the Gardai, so that they give a true reflection of Gardai crime statistics. Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said it is great to hear that the CCTV in Carrick-on-Shannon is doing the job it is intended for.

Superintendent Grogan outlined that it is important that An Garda Síochána are informed of incidents that occur. Referring to the Community Engagement Unit, Superintendent Grogan, said the unit works on person-to-person interactions and he is satisfied with the way the unit is carrying out its duties.

43 Questions submitted by JPC Members

43a Question from Councillor Enda McGloin

At a previous JPC meeting, I requested that consideration be given to have a weekly 2 hour opening time on a particular day at Drumshanbo Garda Station to facilitate the general public on issues like passports etc. My suggestion is, for example, 2pm to 4pm on a one day per week basis. Is this suggestion anyway nearer becoming a possibility?

Superintendent Grogan said an additional member of An Garda Síochána will be based in Drumshanbo Garda Station in line with his work shift pattern. Inspector Curry said if a member of the public in Drumshanbo needs assistance that is not urgent, they can phone Carrick-on-Shannon Garda station and leave a message, which will be followed up with the Garda based in Drumshanbo Station when he is available.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan said the same situation arises in Mohill and he asked if some facility could be put in place where forms requiring a Garda signature could be dropped in and then posted out.

Inspector Curry said the signature on forms has to be witnessed and she advised that the public ring Carrick-on-Shannon and the same system will be in place as in Drumshanbo.

Ms Janice Raine Conick asked if the same service is available in Manorhamilton Garda station for the north of the County as in Carrick-on-Shannon Garda Station.

Inspector Curry confirmed the same service is offered in Manorhamilton Garda Station.

At a previous JPC meeting, I requested that consideration be given to have a weekly 2 hour

opening time on a particular day at Drumshanbo Garda Station to facilitate the general public on issues like passports etc. My suggestion is, for example, 2pm to 4pm on a one day per week basis. Is this suggestion anyway nearer becoming a possibility?

Superintendent Grogan said an additional member of An Garda Síochána will be based in Drumshanbo Garda Station in line with his work shift pattern. Inspector Curry said if a member of the public in Drumshanbo needs assistance that is not urgent, they can phone Carrick-on-Shannon Garda station and leave a message, which will be followed up with the Garda based in Drumshanbo Station when he is available.

Councillor Thomas Mulligan said the same situation arises in Mohill and he asked if some facility could be put in place where forms requiring a Garda signature could be dropped in and then posted out.

Inspector Curry said the signature on forms has to be witnessed and she advised that the public ring Carrick-on-Shannon and the same system will be in place as in Drumshanbo.

Ms Janice Raine Conick asked if the same service is available in Manorhamilton Garda station for the north of the County as in Carrick-on-Shannon Garda Station.

Inspector Curry confirmed the same service is offered in Manorhamilton Garda Station.

43b Question from Councillor Sean McDermott:

Can the Gardaí provide any assurance to alleviate the serious concerns in the community due to the rise in the number of house and property burglaries?

Councillor Sean McDermott paid tribute to the article that appeared in the Leitrim Observer recently by An Garda Síochána on advice in combating burglaries. Councillor Sean McDermott referred to the proximity of his community to the border and therefore criminals can leave the jurisdiction of the state quickly. Older people are concerned about burglaries and during the COVID-19 lockdown, there was a reduction in this type of criminal activity. Councillor Sean McDermott called for a greater presence of An Garda Síochána in the community especially during the winter months.

Superintendent Grogan referred to the Garda Traffic Units that are in place and he acknowledged that there are many routes into the county which present challenges in terms of policing. He asked for the help of the community in order to combat criminal activity by reporting incidents or suspicious behaviour to An Garda Síochána.

Superintendent Grogan outlined that the Crime Prevention Officer is always available and he referred to the presentation she delivered at the Joint Policing Public Meeting recently and suggested that a similar event be held in another part of the county. Superintendent Grogan assured the members that the Community Engagement Unit is very proactive, and he acknowledged that there is more movement now in County Leitrim following lifting of Covid restrictions.

43c Question from Councillor Justin Warnock

Can Superintendent Grogan give a commitment to bring the number of Garda in Kinlough back up to the full complement of 4 Garda and a Sergeant in early 2022.

Councillor Justin Warnock paid tribute to the great service An Garda Síochána deliver in north Leitrim. Councillor Justin Warnock acknowledged that north Leitrim is a large geographical area and he said it would be great to get the full complement of 4 Garda and a Sergeant working in Kinlough Garda Station.

Superintendent Grogan acknowledged the difficulties in policing a large geographical area and he said if Kinlough needs more resources he will act accordingly. Superintendent Grogan paid tribute to the members of An Garda Síochána in Kinlough and he said there is a good mutual working relationship with An Garda Síochána in Ballyshannon.

Councillor Justin Warnock outlined that the population in Kinlough is likely to be in the region of 1200 in the next census. Councillor Justin Warnock said he hoped there will be extra Garda personnel appointed to Kinlough.

43d Question form Councillor Justin Warnock

When are the refurbishment works due to commence at Kinlough Garda station?

Superintendent Grogan said that a date had not been agreed yet for the works to begin.

44 **Schedule of meetings for 2022**

Mr Kieran Brett, Meeting Administrator gave the schedule of meeting for 2022 as follows:

Monday, 7th February 2022
Monday, 30th May 2022
Monday, 3rd October 2022
Monday, 5th December 2022

The public meeting will most likely take place in March 2022 Public Health guidelines permitting and this will be kept under review.

Councillor Sean McDermott proposed that the public meeting be held in the Ballroom of Romance, Glenfarne.

This was noted and agreed.

45 **A.O.B.**

Councillor Sean McGowan asked people to be vigilant about prank phone calls posing

as Revenue and Customs outlining his fears for vulnerable people.

Inspector Curry said the National Cyber Crime Bureau delivered a very informative and interesting address to the public meeting on how to stay safe online and how individuals should protect their assets and accounts from various forms of cyber crime. Inspector Curry said the advice is not to answer phone calls if you don't know who they are from and don't open suspicious text messages. Inspector Curry said An Garda Síochána will be doing an information piece on their social media channels in this regard.

Councillor Justin Warnock said he attended a community alert meeting recently and he confirmed that the money for the community text alert system has been exhausted.

Mr Kieran Brett confirmed that discussions have taken place with Muintir na Tire and the Department of Justice to source funding for a county wide text alert system and An Garda Síochána will have a role to play in this.

Inspector Curry said a meeting with community groups and Muintir na Tire will take place by zoom in early new year.

Councillor Brendan Barry proposed that the Council consider operating a county-based text alert system. This system would have a reduced cost for each community group. Councillor Barry said the existing standing charges are difficult for community groups to pay.

Councillor Gerry Dolan thanked An Garda Síochána for all their work and wished them a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin thanked An Garda Síochána, the executive, the elected members and the community groups for their participation in the JPC during 2021 and wished all a Happy Christmas.

The business of the meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.

Signed:

Councillor Enda McGloin
Chairperson

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

Monday, 7 February 2022

This page is intentionally left blank

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank