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Minutes of Joint Policing Committee meeting held on Monday, 7 February 2022 via MS Teams at 11.00 am.

In attendance:

Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Mary Bohan
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Enda Stenson
Councillor Paddy Farrell
Kenny Murtagh
Breege Grimes
Janice Raine Conick
Chief Supt Aidan Glacken
Superintendent Chris Grogan
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 Sean McGowan
Councillor Gerry Dolan
Councillor Felim Gurn
Councillor Pdraig Fallon
Martin Kenny TD
Marc McSharry TD
Frank Feighan TD
Bernie McGauran
Kathleen Flanagan
Osazuwa Peter-Olabiyi

1 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 29th November 2021.

2 Correspondence

Mr Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator confirmed there was no correspondence.

3 Consider progress report on JPC Strategic Plan 2021-2026 & Annual Report for Council

Mr Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator gave an overview on the progress report of the Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan 2021-2026 as set out in **Appendix 1** to the minutes of this meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Sean McDermott
SECONDED by Councillor Justin Warnock

It was **AGREED** the progress report of the Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan 2021-2026 was approved and noted.

Mr Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator, gave an overview of the Annual Report which outlined the activities of the Joint Policing Committee in 2021 as set out in **Appendix 2** to the minutes of this meeting.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
SECONDED by Councillor Mary Bohan

It was **AGREED** this Annual Report be circulated to the Members and noted at 7th March 2022 Council meeting.

The reports were noted by the Members.

4 Consider JPC Draft Work Programme for 2022

Mr Kieran Brett provided an over-view of the Joint Policing Committee Draft Work Programme for 2022 as set out in **Appendix 3** to the minutes of this meeting.

On the **Proposal** of Janice Raine Conick
Seconded by Cllr Sean McDermott

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Joint Policing Committee Work Programme for 2022

5 LA16 Collision Reporting and Evaluation

Superintendent Grogan said the LA 16 Collision report and evaluation procedure form is completed by An Garda Síochána 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.

6 Report from an Garda Síochána

Chief Superintendent, Aidan Glacken acknowledged the work of the Local Authority, colleagues in the HSE, all voluntary agencies, GAA and the good neighbours who supported communities during the difficult circumstances that arose as a result of the COVID pandemic.

- Chief Superintendent, Aidan Glacken gave a presentation on the crime statistics for County Leitrim.

Notable overview points from the presentation included the following:

- Burglaries are down 25% from 48 to 3
- MIT Checkpoints are up 400% from 11 to 60
- Domestic Violence incidents are down 24% from 17 to 13
- Dangerous Driving Detections are up 200% from 2 to 9
- General Road Offences Detections are up 200% from 4 to 12
- Drugs Driving detections are up 200% from 0 to 2

Chief Superintendent Glacken referred to significant drugs find which occurred last year in North Leitrim and he confirmed a person has been charged and sentenced in relation to the detection. Chief Superintendent Glacken said a substantial effort is being put into dealing with organised crime and the drugs trade in particular.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said with the lifting of Covid restrictions there has been an increase in the number of garda checkpoints and this is leading to a rise in detections of drug and alcohol driving offences.

He also confirmed there were 649 community welfare checks carried out in the Sligo/Leitrim Division in the last 10 months.

Ms Janice Raine-Conick acknowledged that it is great to live in a safe county like Leitrim.

Councillor Mary Bohan welcomed the decline in domestic violence incidents in the district and she said this is at odds with domestic violence national figures. Councillor Bohan proposed that the domestic violence support services offered by the Gardai are promoted through the Local Authority' website and social media platforms.

Councillor Enda McGloin concurred with Cllr Bohan and said it should be highlighted through Leitrim County Council's social media channels to make the vulnerable aware that this service is available.

Chief Superintendent Glacken highlighted the need to raise awareness of the issue and to make people aware of the dedicated support services that are available

Chief Superintendent Glacken confirmed the following measures have been introduced in recent years by An Garda Síochána to try and deal with domestic violence incidents

- Leitrim have access to a dedicated protective services unit based in Sligo but serving both Sligo and Leitrim.
- New Risk Assessment forms have been introduced and distributed to gardaí
- Call back all victims of domestic violence within 7 days of a report. Leitrim are achieving an 80% rate of call back within 7 days which is higher than the national average of 60%
- An information pack is provided to people who are in fear of abuse.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said 12% of all assaults have a domestic element to them and the onus is on all people to remove the stigma associated with domestic violence. An Garda Síochána provide support to all victims, and this will maintain this matter as a primary focus area.

Superintendent Grogan said his officers take domestic violence reports seriously, and any call will be dealt with confidentially and sensitively. He assured the members that domestic violence is treated with the utmost seriousness by his officers.

Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin thanked Chief Superintendent Glacken and Superintendent Grogan for their update.

7 Questions submitted by JPC Members

7a Question from Councillor Sean McDermott:

In light of the many assaults and fatalities committed by men against women in the Republic of Ireland in recent times, can I ask what are the figures for such crimes in the Sligo/Leitrim Garda District?

Councillor Sean McDermott said our culture must change and this type of crime is a huge issue in society. Councillor McDermott highlighted the many incidents which recently appeared in newspapers concerning violence towards women. He noted over the last 20 to 25 years 240 fatalities that have occurred in Ireland through violence against women and he stressed that women should be respected. Councillor Sean McDermott said he is embarrassed as a man to hear of the violence towards women by men in today's society.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said he does not have the specific figures and he will revert back with the specific figures at the next meeting of the Joint Policing Committee.

Janice Raine-Conick said it is easy for this committee to raise this issue when it is a hot issue in the news. She asked what can be done positively to raise awareness through the Joint Policing Committee on this issue and she said this should be included as a priority on the Joint Policing Strategic Plan.

Councillor Sean McDermott said some women have conveyed to him that they are very fearful of walking on walkways/greenways, and he acknowledged that this is a sad reflection.

Councillor Enda Stenson said Leitrim GAA have organised walks throughout the month of January and thousands have participated in these walks and not one incident has occurred and 70% of the walkers are women. Councillor Enda Stenson said the walkways through Leitrim are very safe and the recent incident in Tullamore is scandalous.

Janice Raine-Conick concurred with Councillor Enda Stenson that it is very safe to walk in Leitrim.

Superintendent Grogan said there has been a presence of An Garda Síochána on our walkways and waterways in Leitrim to ensure all persons are safe. With the help of the public and the Joint Policing Committee, An Garda Síochána will continue to ensure that people are safe and that they can utilise these walkways/greenways.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said the matter in Tullamore is before the Courts and he asked everyone to be cautious in this regard. Chief Superintendent Glacken said there are much broader issues involved i.e., attitude issues, language, simple behaviour and the way we refer to people in our daily lives and all this has a ripple effect on all people particularly the young people. It is about treating people with dignity and respect.

Councillor Justin Warnock supported Councillor Enda Stenson and he said this was an isolated incident in Tullamore and Leitrim is a very safe place.

7b Question from Councillor Justin Warnock

Can this JPC write to the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee TD to instigate a media campaign to highlight the stark reality of drug abuse in every community in this country?

Councillor Justin Warnock referred to a recent incident where a person found in possession of €300,000 worth of drugs, and he said that are a lot of drugs in a rural area. Councillor Warnock said where there is supply there will be demand and he said he would be hopeful that an awareness campaign could be instigated from the Joint Policing Committee and in this regard that we contact the Minister on the issue.

Councillor Warnock said he is aware of occasions where drug debts have been settled by the

affected persons family. Councillor Warnock stressed any child can get involved in drugs nowadays and the issue needs to be addressed.

On the **PROPOSAL** of Councillor Just Warnock
SECONDED by Councillor Sean McDermott

It was **AGREED** that the Leitrim Joint Policing Committee write to the Minister for Justice Helen McEntee TD to instigate a media campaign to highlight the stark reality of drug abuse in every community in this country.

7c Question from Councillor Justin Warnock

What can be done to make the local Gardaí known to, and an integral part of, our community, because unfortunately today most people in our community don't know who they are?

Councillor Justin Warnock said there is less and less interaction with the local community and An Garda Síochána. Councillor Warnock said there should be a better presence in Kinlough by An Garda Síochána. Councillor Warnock said in many instances the local garda is not known to the community and he would like to see community policing enhanced in all communities.

Councillor Enda McGloin concurred with Cllr Warnock and said if there was more interaction between the An Garda Síochána and the community, the community as a whole would be better served.

Councillor Sean McDermott agreed with the comments of Cllr Warnock.

Superintendent Grogan said the whole of the society dynamic has changed and he said he is satisfied that his Officers know what is going on in communities. Superintendent Grogan said the Community Policing Unit do engage with the community and have excellent knowledge of what is happening in communities. The Gardai also depends on the local community to give them feedback on what is happening in the community. Officers are instructed to be as visible as possible at community events

Councillor Enda McGloin paid tribute to Sergeant Orla McGrath and the Community Policing Unit for their recent interaction with children through school visits in Drumshanbo.

Councillor Justin Warnock acknowledged that there is a detachment there and he is hopeful that something can be worked on to address this.

8 Date and time of next meeting

It was agreed the next Joint Policing Committee would take place on Monday, 30th May 2022 at 11 am.

Mr Kieran Brett said that some works are due to take place on the Council Chamber in the coming weeks which will render it unavailable for meetings for a number of

months. If the Chamber is ready on the 30th May the meeting will take place there.

Mr Kieran Brett confirmed the proposed date of 14th September 2022 for the Public Meeting which is to be held in the Ballroom of Romance in Glenfarne.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire proposed that everyone bring at least one or two members of the public with them to the Public Joint Policing Committee Meeting. Cathaoirleach, Councillor Enda McGloin paid tribute to the very information presentations that are delivered at these public meetings and concurred with Councillor Armstrong McGuire's comments.

Councillor Justin Warnock proposed that the 2023 Public Joint Policing Committee meeting be held in Kinlough.

The business of the meeting concluded at 12.02 pm

Signed:

Chairperson

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

Monday, 30 May 2022

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