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Minutes of Joint Policing Committee meeting held on Monday, 3 October 2022 via MS Teams at 11.00 am.

In attendance:

Councillor Enda McGloin (Cathaoirleach)
Councillor Brendan Barry
Councillor Sean McDermott
Councillor Sean McGowan
Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire
Councillor Thomas Mulligan
Councillor Felim Gurn
Councillor Enda Stenson
Councillor Padraig Fallon
Councillor Justin Warnock
Councillor Paddy Farrell
Janice Raine Conick
Chief Supt Aidan Glacken
Superintendent Chris Grogan
Lar Power, Chief Executive
Kieran Brett, Meetings Administrator
Kathleen Ellis, Assistant Staff Officer

Apologies:

Martin Kenny TD
Marc McSharry TD
Frank Feighan TD
Bernie McGauran
Kenny Murtagh
Kathleen Flanagan
Breege Grimes
Osazuwa Peter-Olabiyi
Mary Quinn, Director of Services, Housing, Corporate Services, Community and Cultural Services

18 Adoption of Minutes

On the **PROPOSAL** of Cllr Enda Stenson
SECONDED by Janice Raine Conick

It was **AGREED** to adopt the Minutes of the Joint Policing Committee Meeting of 30th May 2022

19 Presentation from Dept. of Justice on Community Safety Partnerships

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin welcomed Jensen Byrne, Ben Ryan, and Amy Shields from the Department of Justice to the meeting.

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin invited Jensen Byrne, Ben Ryan and Amy Sheils

from the Department of Justice to give a presentation to the meeting on Community Safety Partnerships.

Mr Ben Ryan gave a presentation to the meeting which appears as **Appendix 1** to the minutes of this meeting.

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin thanked Ben Ryan for the presentation and invited questions/comments from the members.

Janice Raine Conick raised the following queries

- When will the Community Safety Partnerships be rolled out
- Who is carrying out the evaluation process and is it currently taking place
- What lines of accountability will be in place at a local level, for the new committee
- How does it relate to Local Government and JPC
- How will recruitment of the partnership members take place
- How will the Chairperson of the committee be selected.
- Can the evaluation reports that have been completed to date be shared with the JPC in advance of the next meeting.

Councillor Brendan Barry welcomed the proposal and recommended that agencies that deal with mental health issues be involved in the committee. He stated that access to Mental Health care should not be dependent on a crisis arising which necessitates the intervention of An Garda Síochána.

Councillor Justin Warnock expressed his concern that the number of elected members will be reduced on the partnership. Cllr Warnock said there is a lot of pressure on elected representatives concerning anti-social behaviour incidents in the community.

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire asked if this is being introduced or do members have a decision in its introduction.

Mr Ben Ryan responded to the queries raised by the members as follows

- Partnership will be rolled out in 2024
- The Department have engaged consultants to carry out the evaluation process. The baseline report is complete
- A Dedicated Community Safety Co-ordinator in each Local Authority will support the partnership
- The Community Safety Partnership will replace the JPC
- Recruitment can be from the PPN or the Local Community Voluntary Sectors, depending on what suits best for each group. A good cross section of the community should be represented
- It is envisaged that Each Safety Partnership Committee will elect their own Chairperson. In the pilot Local Authorities of Longford, Waterford and Dublin North Inner City, the Department appointed the Chairperson of each

committee.

- The evaluation reports will be published when finalised and circulated to the JPC members.
- The Government has published a new Community Safety Policy Paper on a wide range of issues e.g., Mental health, youth crime, hate crime, alcohol and substance abuse, domestic violence, drug prevention, anti-social behaviour. The HSE will be represented on the Safety Partnership Committee. The HSE provide advice and supports in relation to early intervention in mental health issues.

20 Correspondence

1. Guidelines for Joint Policing Committees

21 Update from Public Meeting of Leitrim JPC held on Wednesday 14th September 2022

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin said the public meeting of the JPC held on Wednesday, 14th September 2022 was very successful, and he paid tribute to the Community of Glenfarne for providing the venue and refreshments.

Mr Kieran Brett gave a report on the public meeting as circulated to the Members which appears as **Appendix 2** to the minutes of this meeting.

22 LA16 Collision Reporting and Evaluation

No update was available for this meeting.

23 Report from an Garda Síochána

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin extended sympathy to Chief Superintendent Aidan Glacken on the death of his mother.

Chief Superintendent Glacken thanked the members for their sympathy expressed to him on the death of his mother.

Chief Superintendent Glacken gave a report that outlined yearly comparative statistics for 2019, 2020 and 2022 for various crimes such as burglary, theft, criminal damage (not by fire), assault causing harm, assault minor, sexual offences, public order offences, drunkenness offences, possession of drugs for sale or supply, intoxicated driving of vehicles, traffic collisions (serious injury) and MIT Checkpoints for the period up to 12th September 2022. Chief Superintendent Glacken noted that 2019 is a more realistic comparative year due to the COVID-19 restrictive measures in place in 2020 and 2021.

Chief Superintendent Glacken welcomed the slight drop in intoxicated offences in driving cars in Leitrim and he said this may be due to the MIT Checkpoints which are up at 119% in Leitrim, and he hoped this drop in incidents would continue. The detections for possession of drugs for sale or supply are up 22%, from 9 to 11 incidents. Traffic collisions resulting in serious injury are down 40% from 5 to 3. A drug seizure of €80,000 worth of cocaine was recovered in an operation in Carrick-on-Shannon on the 3rd September 2022. Drugs valued €124,00 have been recovered to date in Leitrim with 155 searches having been carried out.

A joint agency taskforce operation targeting rural crime in association with the PSNI took place on the 22nd September with a checkpoint in Glenfarne and he said this type of operation will continue throughout the winter.

There has been an increase in incidents fraud or attempted fraud.

Chief Superintendent Glacken paid tribute to the Sligo Leitrim Youth Awards event that took place recently. He said Leitrim was well represented and the finalists will go through to the National Awards. Chief Superintendent Glacken outlined that An Garda Síochána recently held an initiative to deal with anti-social behaviour on trains and they had a presence at Mohill and Carrick-on-Shannon recently as part of this initiative. Crime prevention events took place at Manorhamilton and Drumshanbo Marts in conjunction with IFA. All An Garda Síochána staff will receive a medal in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of An Garda Síochána.

Chief Superintendent Glacken welcomed the 9% reduction in domestic violence, and he acknowledged that this is going against the national trend, but he appealed to people to come forward and report such violence to the Gardai.

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

24 Questions submitted by JPC Members

24a Question from Councillor Sean McDermott:

Are there any indications that digital speed signs are having a positive impact on the speed drivers travel at, and if so, should we increase the number of these signs on our roads?

Chief Superintendent Glacken said this is not a question for An Garda Síochána. Chief Superintendent Glacken said the indications are that the visual impact of digital speed signs does improve road behaviour. He is not aware if any evaluation that has been carried out by the NRA on this matter.

Mr Lar Power said drivers adjust their road behaviour when they see visible digital speed signs and are one of a range of measures to improve driver behaviour.

Ms Janice Raine Conick queried as to who has the responsibility of selecting an area for such

signs.

Chairperson, Councillor Enda McGloin said that the elected members raise issues at Municipal District meetings when they receive representations about locations where speeding occurs on roads and the District Engineer will consider if appropriate speed controls are to be put in place.

24b Question from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire

Does this policing area belong to a National Drugs Unit? To give outline to my question: Customs and police are at large airports and ports and gardaí have a presence when homes are visited. What is happening between these locations?

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire outlined the background to her question stating it comes from conversations that “drugs are everywhere” and for parents and guardians this is a huge statement.

Both questions from Councillor Armstrong McGuire were answered as one.

24c Question from Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire

Could this JPC have a presentation on drugs seizure enforcement in our area outlining the activities in place both by Gardaí and Customs officers within the counties and surrounding area?

Councillor Finola Armstrong McGuire said we wanted to hear from An Garda Síochána and Custom Officers regarding the activities that are being carried out on our roads, trains, harbours and on our streets and what their role is in curbing the spread of drugs in Leitrim.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said these are very broad questions and he outlined that there is a full-time drugs unit in the division with 2 full time Gardai based in Leitrim. An Garda Síochána work with Customs, and Revenue on roads, waterways and coasts to combat all forms of trafficking including the sale and supply of drugs in communities throughout Sligo and Leitrim and this will continue. Through the implementation of the Organised Crime Strategy, the Gardai have identified 5 organised crime gangs in the division. To date, one person has been charged with directing a criminal gang. An Garda Síochána work with International Policing Agencies concerning money laundering operations. Chief Superintendent Glacken said drugs is a primary focus and will continue to be.

Superintendent Chris Grogan said An Garda Síochána are very committed to dealing with all crimes. He appealed to anyone that sees something or knows something that is happening in their community to bring it to the attention of An Garda Síochána and they will investigate.

Councillor Sean McDermott queried if there is an increase of drugs in secondary schools.

Superintendent Grogan said that the policing teams are visiting schools continuously and he said there are no figures to show there is an increase in drugs in secondary schools. He acknowledged that drug use is a societal trend rather than being used in 2nd or 3 level colleges.

24d Question from Councillor Justin Warnock:

Should the culprits of attacks, such as those witnessed recently on members of An Garda Síochána, face charges of attempted murder and for these types of crimes should An Garda Síochána oppose free legal aid for the suspects?

Councillor Justin Warnock said he feels when dangerous driving is committed directly against members of An Garda Síochána, those responsible should be charged with murder and he said he hoped An Garda Síochána would oppose free legal aid in these instances.

Ms Janice Raine Conick said this would be a dangerous course of action as free legal aid is a civil right. The burden of determining who should or should not be eligible to avail of free legal aid should not be put on An Garda Síochána.

Chief Superintendent Glacken said for An Garda Síochána to be adjudicators on determining the eligibility of persons for free legal aid would not be a good practice.

24e Question from Councillor Justin Warnock:

I ask this Joint Policing Committee to call on the Justice Minister, Helen McEntee TD, and the Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris, to reinstate the community type policing where the local sergeant and the gardaí were an integral part of every community and which served the citizens well for the past 100 years.

Councillor Justin Warnock said that local sergeant needs to be living in the area where they work.

Councillor Enda McGloin said in the last number of years the work of The Community Policing Unit of An Garda Síochána in Leitrim has been tremendous with a variety of services provided for different age groups.

Chief Superintendent Grogan said society has changed and there is more transient population with movement of people for work, sports, celebrations, extracurricular activity etc. Similarly, An Garda Síochána must respond to these changes in society. If more personnel are needed, then they will be sought.

Councillor Justin Warnock proposed that the JPC call on the Minister to bring about changes in community policing. Councillor Warnock said An Garda Síochána are not seen in the

community and this is a worry for communities. The people in the community should know the local Gardai in the town and he said he would like to see a better connection between the local gardai and the communities in which they serve.

Councillor Sean McDermott seconded this proposal.

25 Date and time of next meeting

Mr Kieran Brett advised the members that the next meeting of the JPC will be on Monday 5th December 2022 at 11 am. The meeting will take place in the Council Chamber.

The business of the meeting concluded at 12.33 p.m.

Signed:

Councillor Enda McGloin
Chairperson

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

Monday, 5 December 2022

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