

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

3.00 p.m. Monday 1st March 2021

Via Microsoft Teams

Members in Attendance:

Name:	Representing:
Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin (Vice Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Ivan Keatley	Elected Member
Cllr. Tim Durkan	Elected Member
Cllr. Brian Dooley	Elected Member
Cllr. Ciara Galvin	Elected Member
Cllr. Nuala Killeen	Elected Member
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell	Elected Member
Cllr. Naoise Ó'Cearúil	Elected Member
Cllr. Chris Pender	Elected Member
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member
Dep. Patricia Ryan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Bernard Durkan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin	Oireachtas Member
Peter Carey	KCC
Sonya Kavanagh	KCC
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF
Emma Berney	CYPSC
Monica Cox	Kildare OPC
Michael Corcoran	PPN
John Daly	PPN
Apologies:	
Chief Supt. John Scanlan	An Garda Síochána
Dep. Catherine Murphy	Oireachtas Member

An Garda Síochána: Supt. Eamon Curley, Ins. John Fitzgerald, Ins. Jim Molloy, Ins. Georgina Gray, Ins. Paul Reilly.

Kildare County Council - Dept. of Economic, Community & Cultural Development: John Shannon, Administrative Officer and Ciara Gallagher, Clerical Officer.

Members of the press and public were also in attendance.

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1. Minutes / Matters Arising:

The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on Monday 7th December 2020 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Bernard Caldwell seconded by Cllr. Padraig McEvoy.

2. Chairperson's business:

Cllr. Brett, on behalf of the committee, extended his thanks to An Garda Síochána and all frontline workers for continuing to provide services to the public during the ongoing restrictions. The chairman advised that Chief Superintendent Scanlan was unable to attend the meeting due to required attendance elsewhere.

3. Correspondence:

Cllr. Brett noted written confirmation that Commissioner Drew Harris hoped to attend the December meeting of the committee. Cllr. Brett advised members that he would remind them of this at the September meeting and would invite the members to prepare a list of topics or issues they wished to raise with the commissioner at that stage.

4. Policing Report & Questions:

Supt. Henry presented the policing report with relevant statistics comparing Q4 2020 with Q4 2019. Statistical details were given in relation to property crime, crime against the person, criminal damage / public order offenses, drugs / weapons offences and road traffic incidents. The superintendent referred to the overall reduction in burglary activity and noted that travel restrictions seemed to be keeping certain criminal elements out of the county. He indicated that the reduction in assaults seemed to be linked to the overall reduced night-time economy. He confirmed current Garda priorities are focussed on Covid-related policing and that Gardaí have the powers to deal with any issues that arise. He also noted that the new Protective Services Unit is fully operational and has been working extremely well in domestic abuse cases.

There were several questions and points raised in relation to the report:

- Have the restrictions had an effect on knife crime statistics?
- Have recent large drug seizures had a knock-on effect on drug dealing arrests and/or drug driving detections?
- Have Gardaí sufficient resources for dealing with the online drugs trade?
- What training have Gardaí received for dealing with mental health issues arising with the public?
- Are the Gardaí liaising with genuine users of gas canister products to prevent abuse of them?

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- What can JPC members advise persons complaining about neighbours' CCTV cameras possibly recording their activities?
- Have the illegal shebeens that were previously reported been closed for good?
- What are the plans to deal with illegal encampments on the Curragh?
- How are statistics regarding cyber bullying or image-based online abuse recorded and how will they be dealt with going forward?
- Have the Gardaí a countywide strategy in place to enforce the new alcohol byelaws?
- Several instances of road racing by drivers of cars and motorbikes were raised.
- Gardaí were requested to enforce the byelaws to reduce drinking in public amenity areas.
- Several members indicated their full support for An Garda Síochána during recent violent protests and thanked them for their dedicated policing during the restrictions generally.

Supt. Henry and Inspector Molloy answered the questions raised and noted some details in order to respond to the relevant members at a later date.

5. Motion from Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy:

"Request that the JPC write to the Ministers for Justice, Finance and Public Expenditure to make provisions where monies confiscated under the Proceeds of Crime Legislation be redirected from central funds back into local addiction services, youth organisations, and community initiatives to combat the effect of addiction on our communities, and that the necessary legislation is changed as a matter of urgency to allow this vital funding support to happen."

Cllr. McLoughlin-Healy indicated to the meeting that this motion was submitted as one element of a nationwide campaign to try to ensure that seized proceeds of crime were put back into the communities and services worst affected by such activity. There was a brief discussion on the motion and it was agreed unanimously that the JPC would write as outlined.

6. CCTV update:

Supt. Henry advised the meeting that amending legislation is still awaited regarding the sharing of data streams with An Garda Síochána. Cllr. McEvoy advised that the proposed pilot CCTV scheme in Clane was progressing and the group hoped to be able to appoint a consultant to design the scheme in the next few weeks.

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7. Community Text Alert Update:

Cllr. Brett advised that the working group had decided to withdraw the initial tender documents as several issues had arisen, particularly regarding likely costs that would be incurred. The documents were being redrafted to better reflect the wished of the working group (i.e. an app-based message alert service) and they would go back on the E-tenders platform soon. The documents would be sent to all JPC members for information when finalised.

8. Community Safety Partnerships:

Sonya Kavanagh gave members a brief presentation on the new partnerships which are being trialled in three different locations currently. It is envisaged that, subject to review at the end of the trial, this new model will replace the current JPC structure and will involve a more community-based policing model, with enhanced input from relevant service providers and a dedicated co-ordinator to manage the partnership. In response to a question, Ms. Kavanagh agreed that the recent community meetings in Newbridge might be similar to the proposed format of the partnerships.

9. Any other business:

- Conor O'Leary advised members that the text alert rebate scheme was currently open to groups to apply for funding for costs incurred. He also advised that Muintir na Tire's community support register initiative was progressing and that a webinar on elder abuse was planned for 25th March, details to be circulated.
- Cllr. McEvoy asked if the council's community development workers could attend the local MD meetings with An Garda Síochána as he felt it could be useful, particularly in his own MD.
- Steven Joyce indicated that the drug litter protocol previously adopted by the committee was being rolled out and was progressing well. He requested that the Council might update signs at their public facilities to reflect the new alcohol byelaws being in place with a view to providing information regarding assistance that is available for alcohol-related issues.

Next meeting: Monday 14th June 2020 3.00 p.m.

