

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

3.00 p.m. Monday 5th September 2022
Council Chamber

Members in Attendance:

Name:	Representing:
Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member
Cllr. Ciara Galvin	Elected Member
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member
Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil	Elected Member
Sonya Kavanagh	KCC
Marian Higgins	KCC
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg
Michael Corcoran	PPN
Conor O'Leary	Muintir Na Tíre
Dep. Bernard Durkan	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Patricia Ryan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Reada Cronin	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Vincent Martin	Oireachtas Member
Apologies	
Chief Supt. John Scanlan	An Garda Síochána
Dep. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell	Elected Member
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member
Emma Berney	CYPSC

An Garda Síochána: Supt. Martin Walker, Ins. Paul Reilly, Insp. Cormac Ryan and Helena Murphy.

Kildare County Council - Dept. of Economic, Community & Cultural Development: John Shannon, Administrative Officer and Ann Dooley, Staff Officer.

FL Brett
5/9/2022

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1. Minutes / Matters Arising:

The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on Monday 13th June 2022 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil seconded by Dep. Bernard Durkan (no amendments).

2. Chairperson's business:

1. Cllr. Brett advised the meeting that both himself and Chief Executive Sonya Kavanagh would be attending the annual meeting of the Chairpersons of the Joint Policing Committees and the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities with the Policing Authority on 19th September.
2. Cllr. Brett noted the call for projects issued to youth diversion programme providers (previously circulated). Supt. Henry indicated that it was likely that Insp. Cormac Ryan would be the Garda lead in this area going forward.

3. Correspondence:

None received.

4. Policing Report:

Supt. Walker (in place of Chief Superintendent Scanlan) presented the policing report with relevant statistics comparing Q1 & Q2 2022 with Q1 & Q2 2021. 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. Supt. Walker noted increases in property crimes, public drunkenness and drunk driving and a slight decrease in drugs offenses. He also highlighted some significant Garda successes in drug seizures in all three districts. In addition, Insp. Paul Reilly gave a brief presentation on fraud and cybercrime, in which he indicated approximately 25% of detective time is spent in this area.

There were several questions and points raised in relation to the contents of the report and policing generally:

- Recorded crime in most categories seems to be back to pre-Covid levels
- There is significant exposure to the depiction of extreme violence on TV and in media generally and it could be causing issues in society
- Legalisation of drugs must not be considered but every assistance should be provided to addicts and their families
- Can Gardaí indicate any particular drivers for the increase in property crimes?
- There is an approved group of tradespersons available for small jobs based in Allenwood which might assist in addressing bogus traders in some cases
- There is very good work being done in youth diversion and some feedback from the Gardaí on this would be helpful

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- Have the Gardaí adequate resources to deal with all issues currently?
- There was a significant increase in violence against women during Covid and this issue remains very important
- Hate crimes appear to be increasing in general
- Instances of accommodation fraud are being reported linked to students attending Maynooth University
- Gardaí should begin reconnecting with community groups in the post-Covid scenario as many of them are only starting to reform
- What guidance is offered to pharmacy staff in the Safe Spaces initiative?
- The numbers of drugs offences recorded seems low for the size of the county
- Is there any liaison with mobile phone companies regarding phone scams?
- Are Gardaí aware of instances of so-called “boy racers” adapting their vehicles post-NCT tests?
- Is it possible to expand the policing report to better capture the range of domestic violence offenses?
- Could Gardaí elaborate on a reported kidnapping in Newbridge?
- Public order issues in Dublin are spilling over the border into Kildare
- Could Gardaí liaise with the housing SPC to discuss drugs/social issues in certain locations?

Supt. Walker and his colleagues answered the questions raised and some of the points made were as follows:

- Garda numbers had improved generally in the county with 33 new appointments.
- Any instances of accommodation fraud should be referred directly to Leixlip Gardaí for investigation
- The Protective Services Unit continues to engage with all victims of domestic violence
- Gardaí are not aware of the nature of training provided to pharmacy staff
- Community Gardaí are available to re-establish links with community groups as they restart activities
- There are no reports of cars being adapted post-NCT but Gardaí will follow up on any cases notified to them
- Gardaí cannot comment on matters currently under investigation

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5. Questions/motions:

With Department of Transport published records (2019) of car ownership expanding by c.155k per year towards 4 million by 2030, that County Kildare's Joint Policing Committee consider recommendations for an Oireachtas Bill to regulate the manufacture, sale and supply of vehicle registration plates.

Senator Vincent P. Martin was invited by the chair to speak on his motion. The senator indicated that he had drafted the bill on foot of discussions at previous JPC meetings. He expressed his concerns at the absence of any legislation regarding the manufacture and supply of vehicle licence plates, or the need to produce any documentation to acquire plates. He gave examples of legislation from the UK, Belgium, The Netherlands and the U.S.A. that addressed some of these issues. Senator Martin hoped that the bill would be taken up in the Dáil to primary legislation stage eventually. The JPC confirmed its support for this initiative.

4. CCTV update:

(In accordance with the code of conduct for councillors, Cllr. McEvoy absented himself from this part of the meeting due to his membership of Clane Community Council Executive).

Supt. Henry updated the meeting on the status of the Clane Community Council CCTV project. The community council had completed a procurement process in line with the scheme process previously circulated and had received one response to the call for tenders. Subject to JPC approval, the next stage would be for Clane MD to consider the proposed project and approve it as it is to be funded by LPT.

On the proposal of Cllr. O Cearúil, seconded by Cllr. Clear, the JPC agreed to refer the matter to Clane MD for consideration.

7. Community Text Alert Update:

Cllr. Brett informed the meeting that good progress was being made on getting the service started. The council is in discussions with Muintir na Tíre/BeAlert regarding appropriate publicity for the scheme launch. Separately, a public meeting for all current and potential text alert administrators will be organised to brief them on the new service.

8. Presentation:

Community representative Maura Littlewood (in sync) introduced herself and her three guests from Comhairle na nÓg- Aoibhe Toft, Aisling O' Farrell and Olivia Houlihan. The group made a presentation to the JPC on the background of Comhairle and its membership, activities and current projects, with a focus on equality issues. There was widespread praise from the members both in respect of the presentation itself and the excellent work being done by Comhairle na nÓg.

Next meeting: Monday 5th December 2022 at 7.00 p.m. (Annual Public Meeting)