

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

7.00 p.m. Monday 4th December 2023
Osprey Hotel, Naas

Members in attendance:

Name:	Representing
Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chair)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Tim Durkan	Elected Member
Cllr. Brian Dooley	Elected Member
Cllr. Naoise Ó'Ceairúil	Elected Member
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member
Dep. Réada Cronin	Oireachtas Member
Marian Higgins	KCC
Chief Supt. Anthony Lonergan	An Garda Síochána
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle Na Nog
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF
Michael Corcoran	PPN

Apologies received:

Sonya Kavanagh	KCC
John Daly	PPN
Dep. James Lawless	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Cathal Berry	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Martin Hayden	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Vincent P Martin	Oireachtas Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
John Daly	PPN

KCC staff in attendance: Ciaran O Toole, A/Senior Staff Officer and Colin Ennis, Clerical Officer –Community Department

Also in attendance: Senior personnel from An Garda Síochána, Kildare, members of the public and members of the press.

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1. Minutes / Matters Arising:

The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on Monday 4th September 2023 were adopted on the proposal of Michael Corcoran, seconded by Cllr. Naoise Ó'Ceairúil (no amendments).

2. Chairperson's business:

Cllr. Brett noted that the theme of tonight's meeting is Road Safety. He introduced Stephen Joyce, South Western Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force, Leo Lieghio, Irish Road Victims Association, Inspector Tony Connaughton, Kildare Road Policing.

3. Policing report:

Chief Superintendent Anthony Lonergan presented his policing report which compared crime statistics for Q3 2023 with Q3 2022. Some points to note were the high figures for thefts from motor vehicles and thefts from the person; the significant reduction in aggregated burglary, and the reduction in Public Order offences given the increasing population of Kildare; 50% reduction in the fatal traffic collisions was noted however the increase in traffic collisions where a serious injury occurred was significant.

A number of questions were asked as follows and answered by the chief superintendent:

- What is causing rise in Anti-Social behaviour?
- With the number of road deaths going up nationwide, are we over reliant on Go Safe vehicles?
- What plans are in place to address the issue of driving while intoxicated?
- Complimented Gardai in relation to significant drugs seizures in rural areas in recent weeks however the issue of speeding particularly young drivers who are a danger to themselves and other drivers needs to be significantly addressed.
- The need for a full-time station in Maynooth was raised given it is one of the fastest growing locations in the country. The need for additional resources for Maynooth was also highlighted to Chief Superintendent
- Can the chief superintendent comment on the recent riots in Dublin and the redeployment of Gardai from Kildare to assist.
- Is it possible for Roads Policing to be at schools at drop off and pick up to address driver behaviour both from parents and other drivers.

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4. Presentations:

Community Safety Innovation Fund

Mr Stephen Joyce of the South Western Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force gave a presentation of the successful funding application under the Community Safety Innovation Fund. The Safer Newbridge Community Partnership is a collaboration of a number of external stakeholders which aim to provide Community Harm Prevention Workers in Newbridge to engage with stakeholders to assess and address the drivers and impacts of anti-social behaviour. The overall objective of the scheme is to reduce the fear of crime and to replace a sense of fear with a sense of community.

Road Safety

Leo Lieghio of Irish Road Victims Association gave a hard-hitting account of the tragic experience of losing his daughter Marsia while using a pedestrian crossing in Clondalkin.

Inspector Tony Connaughton presented the current national figures on Road fatalities and data on the locations of these incidents. He informed the committee of the ongoing enforcement campaign "Operation Surround" and the results of the 14 Mandatory Intoxicant Testing (MITS) which were carried out in the Naas area which resulted in 6 arrests.

A number of questions were asked as follows and answered by the Inspector Connaught:

- Concerns around pedestrian in particular around schools. Would like to see more gardai at school times throughout the county?
- Comment on 40% less Gardai assigned to policing of roads in 2023
- Visible policing
- Speed camera signs not installed at new locations

5. Update on Text Alert Scheme:

Cllr. Brett advised that the text alert system is currently operational. The service is turning out to be more expensive than first anticipated. It is now proposed to migrate from the SMS system to an App based system which has additional functionality. The SMS system will remain operational for accessibility and to meet the requirements of some of our citizens.

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6. CCTV update:

Inspector Gavin Dunphy gave an update on the Community CCTV. Inspector Dunphy identified a recent change in legislation is currently under review and the impact of the legislative changes need to be assessed prior to proceeding further.

8. Close:

Cllr. Brett thanked the presenters for their contribution to the evenings meeting and to the attendees for their interaction throughout the meeting. The Chair offered his gratitude to Mr Leo Lieghio for sharing his personal experiences with the attendees.

JL Brett
3/14/2024.