*** ***  

**Galway City Joint Policing Committee**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Monday, 16th December 2019 at 11.00am

**Location:** Garda Western Regional Headquarters, Renmore, Galway

**Chairperson:** Cllr. N. McNelis, Chairperson of the Committee

**Members Present:** Cllr. M. Cubbard, Cllr. D. Lyons, Cllr. P. O’Reilly, Cllr. F. Fahy, Cllr. E Hoare, Cllr. A. Cheevers, Cllr. T. O’ Flaherty, Cllr. O. Hanley, Cllr. N. Larkin, Deputy Seán Kyne TD, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Mr. John Cleary, Mr. Cameron Keighron, Ms. Nichola Tierney, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Marie Skehill, InspectorPeter Conlon, Sergeant Sinéad Cunniffe

**Apologies:** Mr. B. McGrath, Chief Executive, Galway City Council

Mr. T. Connell, Director of Services, Galway City Council

**In Attendance:** Mr. Gary McMahon, A/Senior Executive Officer

Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Secretary to Committee

Ms. Theresa Donohue, Staff Officer

Ms. Máire Mortimer, Clerical Officer

**1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 21st October 2019**

In the absence of the Chairperson Cllr. N. McNelis and the Vice Chairperson Cllr. O. Hanley to start the meeting, Cllr. F. Fahy proposed that Cllr. N. Larkin act as Chair in their absence, which was seconded by Cllr. P. O’Reilly and agreed.

Cllr. N. Larkin introduced himself to the other members of the committee, advising that it was agreed at the Ordinary Meeting of Galway City Council, held on 18th November 2019 that following the resignation of Cllr. M. O’Connor from the JPC that he was now a member of the JPC.

Cllr. N. Larkin noted the apologies for the meeting and extended sympathies to Chief Superintendent T. Curley following the recent death of his mother.

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 21st October 2019 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. F. Fahy, seconded by Cllr. D. Lyons and agreed. The Chairperson invited Matters of Accuracy and Matters Arising.

In terms of Matters Arising the following points / queries were raised:

* Mr. J. Cleary referred to the email from Ms. C. Morgan regarding the Guidelines for the Operation of Joint Policing Committees, Appendix 1 Code of Practice, that an excessive amount of meeting time should not be spent on questions and speeches. An oral report or presentation and related questions should last for no longer than 15 minutes. Mr. J. Cleary stated that the JPC should focus on outcomes and should make recommendations.
* Cllr. T. O’Flaherty asked if the necessary Bye-Laws for the Control of Horses would be on the agenda at the next Housing SPC meeting. Cllr. D. Lyons confirmed that as Chair of the Housing SPC that the Bye-Laws would be on the agenda at the next Housing SPC meeting.
* Cllr. F. Fahy noted that the issue of horses needed to be dealt with by everyone at Galway City Council and is fearful that a serious accident may occur if this is not dealt with.

Ms C. Morgan advised on the following:

* As requested at the last JPC meeting in line with the motion agreed, Galway City Council wrote to the Minister for Health, Simon Harris and to the Minister of State for Health Promotion & the National Drugs Strategy, Catherine Byrne in relation to the motion that was agreed on Minimum Unit Pricing. She further advised that this correspondence also issued to each of the local Oireachtas members for Galway, noting that acknowledgements had been received from the Minister for Health Simon Harris and Minister of State Catherine Byrne. A reply has been received from Deputy Éamon O’Cuiv, which was circulated to the members after the meeting.
* Cllr. O. Hanley, Deputy Vice Chairperson on his arrival to the meeting took over as Chairperson.

**2. Consideration of Garda Report**

Chief Superintendent T. Curley referred to the Garda Report dated 30th November 2019 and the Fraud Incidents Report, as circulated noting that the reports were up to the end of November 2019 with a decrease in burglaries which was welcomed. On the arrival of Cllr. N. McNelis to the meeting he took over as Chairperson. Chief Superintendent T. Curley noted the decrease in for sale or supply which was also positive, in addition to the decrease in both serious injury and begging for the end of November 2019. He further noted the decrease in domestic incidents across the City, and advised that two additional Gardaí have been assigned to the Divisional Protective Services Unit, established and dedicated to investigating sexual abuse and domestic violence. A number of comments and queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded as follows:

* A new Dog Support Unit for use in drug detection in Galway will be set up in 2020.
* Analysis is to be carried out to examine bogus insurance claims and statistics would be available at the next meeting.
* An increase in theft figures would be common when there is an increase in heroin use and the Divisional Drugs Unit are doing excellent work to combat this.
* If a pedal cyclist cycles in the opposite direction to the directional arrow sign on a footpath, then an offense has been committed.
* Begging continues to be an issue and is discussed on a regular basis, noting that the detection figure is down.
* There has been a reduction in serious assaults taking place as priority has been given to hotspots in the City.
* In reference to heroin use being on the increase, An Garda Síochána are working with the Regional and National Drugs Units.
* The Garda Reserves are deployed to big events so that Community Gardaí can be retained in their own areas.
* An Garda Siochána follow the national instructions on the drugs type, value and weight for same.
* In relation to pedal cyclists and the use of high vis accessories and clothing, Gardaí have a supply of these and hand these out where needed, in addition to the issuing of FCPN for pedal cycles as noted in the report.
* Following a discussion on resources, Chief Superintendent T. Curley advised that this is an item that he continues to discuss and raise, noting that this would be discussed further in line with the next Agenda Item.
* In relation to drug driving offences, this statistic will be requested for the next meeting.

Following a query on the Driver Feedback Signs, Mr. G. McMahon advised that the City Council have rolled out a programme of signs over the past 3 years, with 41 of these signs located throughout the City. He noted that the primary objective of the signs is to inform the driver at specific locations on the road network of their speed if they are driving above the maximum speed limit for that section of roadway. He further advised that the signs operate using radar to check the vehicle speed, with this data only recorded within the sign hardware. As previously advised the City Council do not have the resources to assign to the download of speed data and the analysis of this data.

**3. Divisional Policing Model, Operating Model and Policing Plan for the Galway Garda Division**

Cllr. N. McNelis informed the Committee that he attended a meeting during October 2019, organised by the Policing Authority. The Garda Commissioner, Drew Harris was in attendance and presented on the above, noting that the Galway Division was a pilot for the new Divisional Policing Model.

Chief Superintendent T. Curley gave a detailed presentation on the Divisional Policing Model, Operating Model and Policing Plan for the Galway Garda Division. He outlined to the members the journey taken to the new Operating Model, which included consultation to date with both internal and external personnel. He presented an overview of the Operating Model, noting that it will bring increased consistency of high quality policing services and will increase the number of frontline Gardaí, deliver a more localised service to communities, and maximise the local operational impact of An Garda Síochána. He further outlined the community benefits, timeline for implementation with a particular emphasis on the local focus and what this will mean for the Galway Garda Division. In relation to Community Engagement, he further outlined that the Galway Garda Division will have two geographically dispersed Community Engagement Hubs, each led by a Superintendent and the benefits of these. Finally he spoke about the dedicated Community Policing Teams, noting that each will be responsible for a number of geographic Community Policing Areas, with strong partnership with the JPC among others critical to their effective functioning.

A number of comments and queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded as follows:

* In relation to personnel, there is currently 90% of the personnel needed to implement the model in Galway and he will continue to seek additional Gardaí, noting that each Division will see an increase in the number of Inspectors and Sergeants.
* Subcommittees of the JPC are a sufficient forum for the Community Garda to engage with the JPC.
* Gardaí are being replaced by civilians for administration duties to allow more Gardaí on the streets for patrol duties.
* He is confident Galway will receive additional Gardaí in the next round of graduates from the Probationer training programme.
* Following a number of queries in relation to the proposed locations for the Community Engagement Hubs, he noted his intention to put an Inspector into Clifden and the Gaeltacht areas.
* In relation to Garda Reserves, he noted that a new Garda Reserve recruitment competition is expected to be announced in early 2020 and hopefully there will be a good uptake on that.

**4. Galway City JPC Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020 / Proposed Membership of JPC Sub Committees**

Ms. C. Morgan referred to the previous meeting and follow up email that had issued inviting members to participate on the various subcommittees. Ms. C. Morgan referred to the list of subcommittee members, as circulated and requested that it be noted. She also advised the members that it had been agreed with the Gardai that the City Council would convene subcommittee’s no. 1 and no. 3 and An Garda Síochána would convene subcommittee’s no. 2 and no. 4. She advised that the subcommittee meetings would convene in January 2020.

In relation to the guidelines she advised that the City Council are currently waiting on revised guidelines to be issued by the Department of Justice and Equality, noting that the current guidelines had issued in August 2014. She advised that she expects that the revised guidelines will be based on the new Operating Model with greater emphasis placed on community engagement. Cllr. P. O’Reilly advised that she would participate in subcommittee no. 4. Ms. C. Morgan said that she would circulate the final list of subcommittee members.

In response to Mr. C. Keighron’s query regarding the Strategic Plan, Ms C. Morgan advised that a progress report had issued last July 2019 (Summary of Progress in Implementing the JPCs Work Programme) to reflect on the work carried out by the subcommittees. In response to Cllr. N. McNelis query regarding the membership of the subcommittees, Ms. C. Morgan advised that external members can be sought onto the subcommittee, if this is agreed as their specific expertise or local knowledge may be of assistance to the subcommittee.

**5. Proposed dates for Galway City JPC Meetings 2020**

The dates proposed for Galway City JPC Meetings 2020 were agreed by all members.

In relation to the public meeting, Ms. C. Morgan advised that the theme should be in line with the strategic goals as set out in the Strategic Plan. She also advised that the public meeting would be advertised in the local print media and asked that the GCCN would provide assistance in promoting and publicising the meeting, in particular to ensure that marginalised and hard to reach sections of the community are made aware of the meeting.

**6. Discussion on specific topics**

Cllr. N. McNelis and Cllr. O. Hanley noted the responses received on their questions as submitted.

Ms. C. Morgan reminded the members that in line with the Standing Orders, any questions that the members may have must be submitted in writing 14 days in advance of the next JPC meeting.

Ms. C. Morgan advised that in line with the Standing Orders and GDPR, the Garda Report cannot be circulated in advance of the next JPC meeting.

**7. Any Other Business**

Ms. C. Morgan reminded the members that the JPC is required to prepare and submit to the local authority a report on the performance of its functions during the preceding year, by the end of March. She proposed that a similar approach to last year is following, and that a draft Annual Report will be prepared and circulated in advance of the next meeting, scheduled to take place on Monday 23rd March 2020.

Ms. C. Morgan advised the members on the upcoming Galway Divisional Garda Youth Awards 2020, taking place on January 30th 2020, which was previously circulated to the members.

Cllr. N. McNelis thanked the Gardaí for all their work and wished everyone a safe Christmas.