



Galway City Joint Policing Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, 22nd June 2020 at 11.00am via Zoom

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

Members Present: Cllr. M. Cubbard, Cllr. N. McNelis, Cllr. D. Lyons, Cllr. N. Murphy, Cllr. F. Fahy, Cllr. E Hoare, Cllr. A. Cheevers, Cllr. T. O' Flaherty, Cllr. O. Hanley, Cllr. N. Larkin, Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, Senator P. O'Reilly, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Mr. John Cleary, Ms. Nichola Tierney, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Damien Flanagan, Inspector Peter Conlon, Sergeant Sinéad Cunniffe, Mr. B. McGrath, Mr. B. Barrett.

Apologies: Cllr. M. Crowe
Mr. Cameron Keighron

In Attendance: Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Secretary to Committee
Ms. Theresa Donohue, Staff Officer
Ms. Máire Mortimer, Clerical Officer

Before starting the meeting, the Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis requested a moment silence for Detective Garda Colm Horkan and expressed sympathies on behalf of the members to An Garda Síochána and the Horkan family.

Cllr. N. McNelis reminded all on the protocols with regard to Zoom meetings as previously circulated. He also noted the changes in membership on the JPC since the last meeting and noted apologies received for the meeting.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 16th December 2019

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 16th December 2019 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by Cllr. N. Larkin and agreed. The Chairperson invited Matters of Accuracy and Matters Arising.

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

- Cllr. F. Fahy queried when the Control of Horses Act was to be brought before the JPC.

- Mr T. Flaherty queried if An Garda Síochána had improved on their figure of 90% of personnel needed to implement the Divisional Policing Model in Galway. He also queried if the members could receive the questions submitted by the public and responses given from the public meeting in February.
- Cllr. T. O’Flaherty asked if the Dog Support Unit for use in drug detection in Galway had been set up. She also queried if statistics were available from analysis of bogus insurance claims.

Chief Superintendent T. Curley advised on the following:

- The Garda Commissioner has signed off on the Dog Support Unit and the Galway Division will be one of the first regions to see this rolled out, receiving two dog handlers in the coming months.
- It is not possible to obtain the data from bogus insurance claims, as they are logged as insurance fraud.
- In terms of the Divisional Policing Model, he noted that 90% is up and running. Since the last meeting, he has nominated an extra community functional area in the City which is Oranmore and he is awaiting a decision on this from Garda Headquarters.
- Mr B. Barrett advised an update will be given in relation to the Control of Horses Act in the next two weeks.

Ms C. Morgan advised on the following:

- A summary report of what was discussed at the public meeting is in the Annual Report. The questions and answers are being finalised and will circulate to the JPC.

2. Consideration of Garda Report

Chief Superintendent T. Curley presented the Garda Report dated 22nd June 2020 and the Fraud Incidents Report, as circulated noting that the reports were for the period from January 2020 up to the end of May 2020. A number of comments and queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded as follows:

- The matter of speeding in housing estates should be put on the agenda for the relevant subcommittee meeting for members to discuss.
- In relation to Go Safe vans, An Garda Síochána have no input into the locations of these vans and suggested this could be an opportunity for the JPC to write to the RSA regarding this matter. Currently the locations of Go Safe vans are identified where serious and fatal accidents have occurred in the area.
- In relation to the rise in burglaries and theft from cars, the majority of incidents occurred before the COVID-19 lockdown. These figures have reduced since St. Patrick’s Day.
- In relation to action being taken on incidents relating to public order offences and assault causing harm, statistics are provided which identify hotspots where these offences occur and An Garda Síochána put extra resources into these areas.
- An additional Garda is being placed in both the Doughiska area and Ballybane estate.
- An Garda Síochána would support a 30km/h speed limit in the City.
- An Garda Síochána used a 4 E strategy whilst policing during the COVID-19 pandemic: Engage, Explain, Encourage and Enforce, working closely and as needed with many other statutory agencies and stakeholders.
- Western Regional Gardaí work very closely with the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) and profilers have proved to be a very useful technique in combating the drugs problem

in Galway City and County. A full time profiler is intended to be approved in the coming months.

- In relation to heroin abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic, increased patrols and drugs searches were ordered and there has been an increase in detections from the same period last year.
- In relation to the increase in breach of barring order, safety order and protection order offences it was noted that this peaked during the initial lockdown measures during April and May.
- There is a 7 day call back in place regarding issues of domestic violence and there was a 95 – 100% success rate in completing these call backs during lockdown.
- In relation to the number of convictions following begging offences, it would be up to the Courts Service to provide this.
- There were over 70 detections for illegal parking during the June bank holiday weekend.
- In relation to the value of fraud offences, he will check with analysts to see if this is possible.
- Chief Superintendent T. Curley noted that since the last meeting Superintendent Marie Skehill and Superintendent Pat McHugh had both retired, noting and thanking them both for their contributions and support to the JPC.

3. Update on the COVID-19 Galway City Community Response Forum & planning for strategic responses to COVID-19

Ms. C. Morgan gave an update on the Galway City COVID-19 Community Response Forum, co-ordinated and led out by Galway City Council as required. She also updated on the work ongoing through the Community Call Helpline, the Community Response Map, the COVID-19 Emergency Funding and some other initiatives which were ongoing. She acknowledged the ongoing co-operation and support of Forum members which included An Garda Síochána, Galway City Community Network, Galway City Council and many others. Mr. B. Barrett gave an update on the Galway City Mobility Team, which was welcomed.

- Cllr. A. Cheevers commended the response and the provision of services by both the Galway City COVID-19 Community Response Forum and the Galway City Mobility Team during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also commended the residents associations and community groups around the city for their show of community spirit throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. He queried what the consultation was with businesses and business groups within the City, in particular with the pedestrianisation of Cross St.
- In response Mr. B. Barrett advised that the Tourism Officer, Galway City Council meets with the representative groups across the City on a regular basis to discuss and address issues as needed. He also noted that measures introduced as part of the Mobility Plan are dynamic and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, in consultation with stakeholders.
- In relation to the large number of submissions received from members of the public resulting in a significant piece of input and feedback from the people of Galway, Cllr. E. Hoare noted that Galway City Council should make a proposal to Central Government to promote remote working.

4. Consideration and approval of JPC Annual Report 2019

Ms. C. Morgan reminded members that it is a requirement that the JPC submit an Annual Report to its Local Authority each year, outlining the performance of its functions during the preceding year, which was previously circulated. The JPC Annual Report 2019 was approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by Mr. T. Flaherty and agreed.

- In response to Cllr. O. Hanley's query regarding the mapping exercise of CCTV, Ms. C. Morgan advised she will look into this from Galway City Council and circulate to the JPC.

5. Up-date on JPC Strategic Plan 2017- 2020

The Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis referred to the current Strategic Plan 2017- 2020 which was circulated to the Committee, noting the 4 strategic goals with a number of actions identified to be delivered through the work of the various JPC Subcommittees. He advised that the JPC Subcommittees have been meeting in relation to the above and asked the Chairperson of each of the 4 Subcommittees to give an update of their strategic goals.

- Subcommittee No.1 - To Promote the Safety of all Road Users in Galway City: Mr. J. Rabbitte outlined the 3 priorities, with a focus on the promotion of alternatives to the car transport system a priority.
- Subcommittee No.2 - To Enhance Community Safety Responses with a view to crime prevention: Ms. C. Morgan gave the update on behalf of Cllr. M. Cubbard. She advised that the subcommittee had discussed cybercrimes and the increase in this during the COVID-19 pandemic. They also discussed domestic violence, with a view to promoting Bright Sky Ireland, a new mobile phone app which provides support and information to victims of domestic abuse.
- Subcommittee No.3 - To Reduce and Prevent anti-social behaviours in Galway City: Cllr. N. McNelis noted the main points discussed which included open spaces, public and private housing and night-time economy. They also received a presentation of the current Anti-social behaviour document 2017 and will be making submissions on the new one currently being drafted. They will also request a representative from the Students Union(s) and Alcohol Forum to join the subcommittee.
- Subcommittee No. 4 - To Devise & Support Community Engagement models of best practise in Galway City: Mr. T. Flaherty advised the group discussed the updating of Galway City Council's website with past JPC Agendas and Minutes and the various social media platforms used. They also discussed the need for members of different ethnicities to join the subcommittees, as their input would be valuable.
- Cllr. T. O'Flaherty noted that she experienced technical difficulties on the day of her subcommittee meeting and that is why she made no contribution to the meeting. She recommended these meetings be held in person in the future if possible.

6. Discussion on specific topics

Cllr. O. Hanley and Deputy M. Farrell noted the responses received on their questions as submitted.

7. Any Other Business

- Ms. C. Morgan reminded members of the upcoming online public consultation being carried out by the Department of Justice and Equality, to inform the development of the first ever Strategy for the Criminal Justice System, which has been previously circulated.
- Ms. C. Morgan advised members of the Community Integration Fund announced by Minister of State with special responsibility for Equality, Immigration & Integration, David Stanton TD, for community integration projects from the Department of Justice and Equality. The Communities Integration Fund will provide grant funding for local community projects that support the integration of migrants, with the application period from Friday 19th June 2020 until 1pm on Thursday 16th July 2020.
- Cllr. A. Cheevers enquired if the Community Gardaí would be present at the upcoming meeting for the Galway City Councillors East Electoral Area, being held in Leisureland on Monday 29th June 2020.
- Mr. B. McGrath expressed his condolences and those on behalf of Galway City Council to An Garda Síochána and the Horkan family on the death of Detective Garda Colm Horkan. He also thanked An Garda Síochána for the assistance and co-operation given to Galway City Council during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The date for the next meeting of Galway City JPC was noted for Monday 19th October 2020 at 11.00am.

The Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis thanked all members for their participation and the meeting concluded.