



Galway City Joint Policing Committee

Meeting Minutes

- Date:** Monday, 6th December 2021 at 11.00am via MS Teams
- Chairperson:** Cllr. Níall McNelis, Chairperson of the Committee
- Members Present:** Cllr. Níall McNelis, Cllr. Donal Lyons, Cllr. Frank Fahy, Cllr. Eddie Hoare, Cllr. Terry O’Flaherty, Cllr. Owen Hanley, Cllr. Noel Larkin, Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. John Cleary, Mr. Cameron Keighron, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Damien Flanagan, Inspector Brian Ryan, Sergeant Mick Walsh, Sergeant Sinéad Cunniffe, Mr. Brendan McGrath; Chief Executive, Ms. Ruth McNally; Director of Service
- Apologies:** Cllr. Niall Murphy, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Ms. Nichola Tierney
- In Attendance:** Mr. Patrick Foley, A/Secretary to Committee
Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Administrative Officer
Ms. Emma Johnston, Clerical Officer

Cllr. N. McNelis reminded all on the protocols with regard to MS Teams meetings as previously circulated and welcomed members of the media who were joining the meeting via MS Teams.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 18th October 2021

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 18th October 2021 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by Cllr. E. Hoare and agreed by all. There were no matters of accuracy or matters arising raised.

Ms. Caitriona Morgan noted that an amendment to previous minutes was made to the date of the confirmation of minutes.

Mr. Brendan McGrath gave an update on Storm Barra and outlined the range of precautionary measures being put in place by Galway City Council.

2. Consideration of Garda Report

Chief Superintendent T. Curley presented the Garda Report and the Fraud Incidents Report, as circulated noting that the reports were for a 10 month period January to end of October

2021 with comparison figures included for the same period in 2020. Overall it was noted that there were reductions in figures across a number of headings which was welcomed. A number of comments and queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded to same:

- Queries in relation to increased statistics and resources on the seizures of drugs.
- In relation to domestic violence he stated that Covid 19 is a factor in the increased figures along with the higher reporting level and the increased barring orders applied for by victims. He noted the policy is being adhered to 100% and that he is satisfied that reporting meets the policy standards, noting the work and focus of the Divisional Protective Service Unit based in Galway HQ delivering a consistent and professional approach to the investigation of specialised crime types.
- In relation to assaults he noted that the figure is taken from a variety and mixture of assaults reported, noting the increase and concerns expressed by members on this. He clarified the difference between the assault types as requested.
- In relation to the ongoing phone/online scams he stated that it is everyone's personal responsibility to go along and get the message out to not give out personal/sensitive data.
- In relation to supports and services available to those suffering with addiction he noted that there are several facilities readily available to anyone suffering with addiction.
- In relation to taxi insurance he noted that operations are carried out with the taxi regulator of which the roads policing unit are very active on monitoring this matter also.
- In relation to business watch he welcomed the operation and support in this as it is a very important strand in relation to combating and monitoring crime.
- In relation to sexual assaults he noted these are active ongoing investigations which he cannot discuss but is satisfied that progress is being made on them all.
- In relation to Community Gardaí in certain communities he noted that investigations are ongoing and that extra patrols in relation to certain areas which incidents have occurred have been put in place and he is satisfied that progress is being made in relation to this. It was noted that an updated list of Community Gardaí would be provided so that it could be circulated to all members of the JPC.
- Many members complimented the recently hosted Crime Prevention Webinar, noting the important and valuable contributions that were made.

3. Up-date on JPC Workplan 2021

Cllr. N. McNelis referred to the above, inviting each of the 4 Subcommittee chairs to give a verbal update to the JPC on their strategic goals for 2021, following recent meetings at JPC Subcommittee level.

- Subcommittee No.1 - To Promote the Safety of all Road Users in Galway City: Mr. J. Rabbitte gave an update on the strategic objectives, which included that 60 driver feedback signs have been installed across the city with a further 3-4 to be erected. There has been a schedule of repairs and replacements arranged. Collecting data from the driver feedback signs has progressed noting this facility is possible on newer signs installed in line with an annual fee. The audit carried out regarding speed limit signage took place noting all changes are made in line with the relevant 2009 byelaws. Signs have also been erected approaching the city boundary alerting drivers of the 50kmph zone. School streets continues to be monitored with a

possibility of rolling the scheme out in further locations next year. Maintenance of existing cycle lanes continues to be part of the routine maintenance on an ongoing basis. Finally he referred to the input on Road Safety as part of the recently hosted Crime Prevention Webinar.

- *Subcommittee No.2 - To Enhance Community Safety Responses with a view to crime prevention:* Sgt. M. Walsh gave an update following on from the recent Crime Prevention Webinar that took place on 24th November 2021 noting that the four key areas of focus were Home Security, Cyber Security, Domestic Abuse and Road Safety. It was very well received, being viewed by thousands and it is posted on the Garda YouTube channel for further viewing at the link [Crime Prevention Webinar Galway - YouTube](#). An article has been submitted to the Connaught Tribune this week on Operation Faoiseamh in the lead up to and over the Christmas period prioritising victims of and citizens vulnerable to Domestic Abuse.
- *Subcommittee No.3 - To Reduce and Prevent anti-social behaviour in Galway City:* Cllr. N. McNelis noted that a number of issues were raised regarding anti-social behaviour such as the recent Christmas jumper day, issues in Salthill and Merlin Woods. He referred to a video done by Sgt. Kevin Courtney for Age Friendly Ireland focussing on designing out crime as it shows some examples of designing safer places. It was noted that An Gardaí should become a statutory body in all planning processes to give their views/observations and to assist with the design process with the planners at the earliest stage. The noted ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour in Eyre Square in recent times. Finally he advised that a representative from both Student Union bodies have been invited to join the subcommittee to work with them on relevant issues.
- *Subcommittee No. 4 - To Devise & Support Community Engagement models of best practise in Galway City:* Mr. C. Keighron gave an update from this subcommittee. He referred to plans to host meetings in the New Year with the elderly in all areas of the city to better understand their concerns, to support them and to show them that we are here to help, that we are open and encourage them to leave their house and start meeting people and groups.

4. Update on the Covid 19 Galway City Community Response Forum

Ms. Caitriona Morgan gave an update on the above as circulated previously, noting that the Community Response Forum had stepped down since the end of October on advice received from the Department. She noted the Community Call Helpline continues to operate. She made reference to the ongoing Covid 19 vaccination programme and the changes that are coming through, in addition to and alongside the flu vaccine. She advised members on a new fund called the Community Activities Fund which will be administered by Galway City LCDC an open in early January 2022 for online applications. Finally she referred to Alcohol Awareness month which took place throughout the month of November and the Crime Prevention Webinar as previously referenced. The JAM card, recently launched by Transport for Ireland for people that need additional time and supports, noting that libraries have come on board with same. Lastly the NTA are looking to establish a transport user advisory group to give recommendations to the authority.

5. Discussion on specific topics

Cllr. N. McNelis advised that 6 questions were submitted in advance of the meeting and a written response had issued, as circulated. A few queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded as follows:

- Operation THOR pro-actively targets organised crime gangs and repeat offenders through coordinated crime prevention and enforcement activity based on intelligence and the latest crime trends and patterns to protect communities.
- Overtime allocation is fully spent noting that if a new operation is requested that this needs to be costed and sent for sanction and is more often than not approved.
- In relation to child and adolescent mental health crisis events it was noted that the Gardaí work very closely with Tusla and a programme was designed prior to Covid 19 and unfortunately roll out could not commence due to this. The option to progress a programme to deal with child and adolescent mental health crisis will be looked into.

6. Proposed dates for Galway City JPC Meetings 2022

The proposed meeting dates for 2022 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons seconded by Cllr. E. Hoare and agreed by all.

7. Any other Business

It was noted that ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour in Eyre Square requires an interagency approach involving a number of stakeholders. An update on any proposals in this regard will be sought for the next JPC meeting in 2022.

Cllr. Mike Cubbard referred to the survey, based on the SARA model that was piloted on anti-social behaviour and queried if this had been done in other local areas and what data or findings were available from this.

The Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis thanked all members for their participation, wishing them all a very safe and happy Christmas and New Year, noting that the next meeting of Galway City JPC was scheduled to take place online on Monday 21st March 2022 at 11.00am.