



Galway City Joint Policing Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, 7th December 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. F. Fahy, Cllr. E. Hoare, Cllr. A. Cheevers, Cllr. T. O' Flaherty, Cllr. O. Hanley, Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, Senator Sean Kyne, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Mr. John Cleary, Ms. Nichola Tierney, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Damien Flanagan, Inspector Brian Ryan, Sergeant Mick Walsh, Sergeant Sinéad Cunniffe, Mr. B. Barrett, A/ Director of Services

Apologies: Cllr. N. Murphy
Deputy Eamon O'Cúiv TD

In Attendance: Mr. Gary McMahon, A/Senior Executive Officer
Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Secretary to Committee
Ms. Sharon Carroll, Administrative Officer
Ms. Theresa Donohue, Staff Officer
Ms. Máire Mortimer, Assistant Staff Officer

Cllr. N. McNelis reminded all on the protocols with regard to Zoom meetings as previously circulated.

Cllr. N. McNelis welcomed the members of the media who were joining today's meeting via zoom.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 19th October 2020

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 19th October 2020 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by Cllr. T. O' Flaherty 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 asked if a full time profiler has been appointed and if Go Safe Vans parking on footpaths has been addressed.
- Cllr. M. Cubbard questioned if there was an update on the matter of speed ramps in housing estates and what the solution to boy racers is.
- Cllr. E Hoare queried where Go Safe Vans issued high numbers of fines and details of the level of speed being driven when fines were issued.
- Cllr. A. Cheevers queried the issue of Go Safe Vans parking on public footpaths.

In response Chief Superintendent advised on the following:

- In response to Go Safe Vans, An Garda Síochána do not have any control in obtaining information from the company, they are a private company. If they are seen to be breaking a law or there is an issue, he advised members to write to An Garda Síochána and they will write to the RSA.
- In response to Cllr. F. Fahy, he said he does not intend to have a full time profiler as he has adequate staff.

In response to Cllr. M. Cubbard, Superintendent Damien Flanagan advised An Garda Síochána have been patrolling the shopping centre car park where boy racers have been seen congregating but they have not received many complaints about them but will monitor the situation. The decision to close it off at night time can be discussed with the owners.

In response Ms. Caitriona Morgan advised on the following:

- Galway City Council did contact the RSA in relation to questions raised at the last JPC meeting. They advised that for operational reasons they cannot provide the requested information to the public.

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

- Cllr. O. Hanley expressed his disappointment that members of the public were unable to attend the online meeting today and wanted it noted in the minutes. He also referred to the previous meeting and said that not enough notice had been given to members of the public. He recommended that two weeks prior notice should be given once members of the public are allowed to attend.

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 the period from January 2020 up to the end of October 2020. A number of comments and queries were raised by members and Chief Superintendent T. Curley responded as follows:

- In relation to the increase in attempted theft from cars, it was due to money being left in cars. There is no major increase in the attempt of car thefts themselves, he has put extra patrols out and is monitoring the issue.
- In relation to the increase in begging offences, he has moved from a 5 unit roster to a 4 unit which has given him 20% additional staff in each unit on foot patrols. Instances of begging were brought to his attention so more attention was given to this matter, resulting in more convictions.
- There were 7 people convicted of drunk driving in the past week and there would be approximately 70 – 75 drug drivers convicted on an annual basis.

- In relation to domestic violence, there is a protective services unit in place with a dedicated person appointed as well as 3 Sergeants in this unit as well as a Sergeant in each district and there is zero tolerance in relation to this matter.
- In relation to the increase in speeding offences, this is due to the increase in Go Safe vans. Since March 17th 2020 there were less cars on the road due to COVID-19 and as a result, people tend to drive at a higher speed on quiet roads, leading to an increased number of convictions.
- Interceptions made by Gardaí will be on the Garda Report at the next meeting.
- There is one Detective Sergeant and 9 Detective Gardaí on the drugs unit. He appealed for any information from members of the public if they have any information on drug dealing.
- There were 305 public order offences issued for the year so far, some of which were for drinking in public.
- There were 12 calls for house parties for the past weekend alone. In most instances, people left the premises once procedures were explained. Gardaí cannot enter a property without a warrant
- He is aware of an upcoming Christmas jumper night being held by students in the City and he has put operations in place to prevent this from happening.
- In relation to barring orders, he is satisfied An Garda Síochána have sufficient resources to respond to this. There is a protective unit in the City and County and if there is a reoccurrence, a Superintendent will go to the household to address any issues.
- In relation to the speed limit not being lowered to 30 km/h, he has made his recommendation to the Council regarding this.
- “Test purchasing” the sale of alcohol is not an easy task as it involves asking a young person to commit an offence and it is difficult to get a young person and also their parents to agree to doing it. If An Garda Síochána discover underage drinking taking place, they try to find out where it was sold and will speak to the proprietor.
- In response to Cllr. O. Hanley’s request at the last meeting to change the heading “Rape of male and female” be changed to just Rape, An Garda Síochána were advised by the Central Statistics office that this is not possible.

3. Presentation from the Western Region Drug & Alcohol Taskforce

Mr. Michéal Durcan, Co-ordinator of Western Region Drug & Alcohol Taskforce gave a presentation highlighting the services provided by the taskforce, which was welcomed.

- Cllr. N. McNelis invited Mr. Michéal Durcan to attend a JPC Subcommittee meeting in 2021.
- Cllr. O. Hanley queried if the West of Ireland has adequate services and support for people post recovery.
- Mr. Michéal Durcan advised that there is no aftercare facility in the West of Ireland.

4. Control of Horses Act

Ms. Sharon Carroll gave an update on the Control of Horses Act, which was welcomed.

Ms. Sharon Carroll noted that Galway City Council are preparing the bye-laws at the moment and a first draft is expected before the end of 2020. Following this there will be a public consultation in early 2021 and it is hoped to be put the Draft before the Housing SPC in Q2 2021.

Ms. Sharon Carroll advised that the slides from the presentation would be circulated following the meeting.

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, and advised there are 20 pedestrian crossings almost ready to be installed, the expected date of installation being in Q2 2021. He also advised that 20 Driver Feedback Signs are in the process of being delivered, with Q1 2021 being the expected completion date. Also the contract maintenance and upgrade of existing signs has been delayed due to COVID-19.
- Subcommittee No.2 - To Enhance Community Safety Responses with a view to crime prevention: Cllr. M. Cubbard advised that 16,000 crime prevention leaflets have been printed and distributed. Posters highlighting domestic abuse and fraud prevention are to be displayed on 13 bus shelters throughout the City and a safe car park initiative will be rolled out in the coming weeks, reminding people to remove personal belongings from their cars etc.
- Subcommittee No.3 - To Reduce and Prevent anti-social behaviour in Galway City: Cllr. N. McNelis advised that three local electoral areas have been identified with high incidences of anti-social behaviour and a task group has been set up for each area and these groups have met and have begun to discuss solutions for these areas. Sergeant Mick Walsh advised that a multi-agency approach was needed and the SARA problem solving model was the most effective approach to these problem areas.
- Subcommittee No. 4 - To Devise & Support Community Engagement models of best practise in Galway City: Mr. T. Flaherty advised that the group was unable to meet before today's JPC meeting but the work is still ongoing. The public meeting is the one outstanding objective but this has not been possible due to COVID-19.

6. Update on the COVID-19 Galway City Community Response Forum

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 gave an update on the ongoing work through the Community Call Helpline, the Community Response Map, the COVID-19 Emergency Funding, COVID-19 Health Communications Stakeholder Support 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.

Ms. C. Morgan also advised on the “Keeping Well this winter” booklet, which is available on the HSE website.

7. Discussion on specific topics

There were no questions submitted prior to the meeting.

8. Proposed dates for Galway City JPC Meetings 2021

The proposed meeting dates for 2021 were approved on the proposal of Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, seconded by Cllr. D. Lyons and agreed.

The prospect of a public meeting will be revisited at the next JPC meeting on Monday 22nd March 2021.

9. Any Other Business

- Sergeant Mick Walsh advised the members that 16,000 double sided leaflets highlighting domestic abuse and fraud prevention have been distributed to relevant groups and organisations. He also noted the roll out of the bus shelter campaign, where posters advertising domestic abuse and fraud prevention will be featured on bus shelters across the City.
- Ms. C. Morgan advised that the “Lock Up Light Up” leaflets have been circulated to relevant groups and organisations and that a number of these will be circulated to each member of the JPC via post and via email after the meeting.

The Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis thanked all members for their participation and wished everyone a happy Christmas.