



**TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE GALWAY CITY
JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE**

Date: 13th October 2022

Item No. 7 on Agenda – Question(s) submitted:

Questions received from Cllr. Donal Lyons:

1. The Knocknacarra School Cycle Bus is a fantastic initiative, but it is frequently subject to illegal and intimidating driver behaviour. What concrete measures do the Gardaí intend to take to enforce the law and tackle this behaviour in order to keep our children safe on their way to school?

Response received from An Garda Síochána: Salthill Community Gardaí will engage with this initiative. It is understood that all Cycle Buses are escorted by parents. The parents are encouraged to report driver behaviour as necessary. An Garda Síochána will rigorously investigate any reports received in respect of driver behaviour.

2. What are Galway City Council and An Gardaí doing to address dangerous passes and violent road behaviours by motorists against people on bikes? What are the key performance indicators for these actions?

Response received from Galway City Council: Galway City Council staff enforce double yellow lines when observed.

Response received from An Garda Síochána: On receipt of a report of any alleged incident towards a cyclist/pedestrian/road user by motorists, all incidents will be fully investigated. Cyclists and pedestrians are encouraged to report any such incidents to a Garda Station.

3. What are Galway City Council and An Gardaí doing to combat illegal parking on our streets? Double yellow lines are routinely ignored as there are no disincentives.

Response received from An Garda Síochána: An Garda Síochána continuously monitor parking violations in the Galway City Community Engagement area. FCN's are issued for illegal parking daily by members on beat and mobile patrols. Where specific areas are identified then a structured approach is taken through communication with the various stakeholders to ensure a multi-agency approach. Please advise on specific areas of concern.

Questions received from Cllr. Níall McNelis:

1. Could the Garda please confirm if Campus Watch has been put in place for both University of Galway and Atlantic Technical University? This is the first time in 3 years that 1st years are able to attend a full year onsite and that all other years are back on campus. The social element of college life can lead to concerns of anti-social behaviour: house parties, drugs misuse, assaults. We all want everyone to enjoy college life and get home safely and a Garda relationship with both colleges is needed. How does this relationship work and what resources are available for same?

Response received from An Garda Síochána: In recent weeks Community Gardaí, JLO's and CPO's held a 2 day conference at the Garda College in preparation for Campus Watch. Inspector Birmingham was in attendance from the Galway Division. A Campus Watch plan for the year ahead has been devised routed around key areas:

- Anti-Social Behaviour/Consent- Fresher's Week / Orientation Week
- Personal Safety - Christmas
- Cyber Crime Awareness Economic Crime Awareness

Sergeant Michael Walsh, Crime Prevention Officer holds weekly teleconferences with the Garda Press Office and information on all relevant issues (including students and campus watch) is circulated via social media and other Garda Channels. Sergeant Walsh is working with the Garda Press Office on a new TikTok channel which would be a good channel to target students with the relevant crime prevention messages. These channels have been used recently to highlight Accommodation Fraud, Money Mules etc. October is European Cyber Awareness Month and relevant information is be disseminated. Sergeant Walsh continues to communicate with the different Student Unions with key messages throughout the college year and designated Community Gardaí are assigned to each Student Campus as Liaison with the Colleges.

2. Following a meeting with the Policing Authority and the Commissioner I asked the question should the public be calling their local Garda Station or emergency number. I was told that the emergency number should not be used instead of the local number. Can you please advise what the public should do in calling a complaint, query or report and seek help from Gardaí?

Response received from An Garda Síochána: Members of the public wishing to make a query with Gardaí should call the Garda Station number or call in person to a Garda Station. Where a member of the public requires assistance from An Garda Síochána in reporting an incident or requires a call for service from An Garda Síochána they can phone any Garda Station, call to a Garda Station or phone the emergency line 999.

Questions received from Cllr. Niall Murphy:

1. A recent incident of a cyclist being knocked by the door of a car received a lot of media attention, but apart from that incident, 'dooring' is a fairly common occurrence. In terms of policing is it considered dangerous driving or is it a lesser offence since the car is stationary?

Response received from An Garda Síochána: All reports of alleged incidents will be treated seriously and investigated thoroughly in accordance with the legislation. The report of the incident will determine the type of offence committed.

2. Unfortunately parking on a double yellow has been treated as a harmless, victimless crime by many road users. I have heard of cases of motorists getting 5 or 6 tickets at the same spot in Galway, but not changing their behaviour. In some locations, such as Silver Strand an attempt was made to prevent parking on double-yellow lines by adding bollards – to no avail. The recent doubling of the fine to €80 is welcome, but seems to have limited impact. The corner of the Prom closest to the Salthill Garda Station has recently been the focus of a lot of attention following a campaign by safety advocates to encourage motorists to obey the law at that location. Anecdotally the amount of illegal parking at that location has dropped dramatically – which should therefore be defined as a success. Should publicity campaigns around specific locations be considered a valuable tool in combating illegal parking? Is there a channel for such publicity campaigns to be coordinated with the other safety advocacy work done by the Gardaí?

Response received from An Garda Síochána: In respect of Silver Strand, Gardaí attached to Salthill discussed remedial work for the area in the lead up to the summer months. Policing of the area was a priority with regular patrols during the busier periods. FCN's were issued. In respect of the Salthill Promenade junction with Dalysfort Road, in conjunction with business owners in the area, plans have been put in place to deal with the situation on a short term basis. A permanent solution to the issue is required.

3. The approach road to St. John the Apostle School in Knocknacarra including the entrance to Gort Siar continues to have a problem with illegal parking. My understanding is that the Gardaí will come out in response to complaints from the residents on a specific day, but is it possible to take a more pro-active approach? An occasional Garda presence before the parked cars gather at school times would encourage a few more to use the recommended parking 100m further away, and I believe if that habit can be established then much of the problem will be resolved.

Response received from Galway City Council: Galway City Council staff enforce Double yellow lines when observed. There may be opportunity for a publicity / awareness campaign.

Response received from An Garda Síochána: The issues around parking around St. John the Apostle School in Knocknacarra have been highlighted previously. Prior to the end of last term Gardaí along with Galway City Council met with local and school representatives to discuss a course of action for the area. In this school term, Community Gardaí attached to Salthill have attended at the school at regular intervals in a proactive approach to the issue. It is belief that education is the most beneficial approach to issues such as these and there has been a marked improvement in driver behaviour since the counteractive measures have been put in place. The situation will continue to be addressed by Gardaí attached to the Galway City Community Engagement area.