



Galway City Joint Policing Committee

Meeting Minutes (Held virtually on Zoom platform and in the Galmont Hotel)

Date: Monday, 20th June 2022 at 11.00am.

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. Alan Cheevers, Cllr. Noel Larkin, Cllr. Niall Murphy, Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, Senator Pauline O' Reilly, Senator Sean Kyne, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. John Cleary, Mr. Cameron Keighron, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Damien Flanagan, Inspector Brian Ryan, Sergeant Olivia Markham, Mr. Brendan McGrath, Ms. Ruth McNally

Apologies: Sergeant Mick Walsh, Sergeant Sinead Cunniffe, Cllr. Mike Cubbard

In Attendance: Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Secretary to Committee
Ms. Sheelagh Murray, Staff Officer
Ms. Emma Johnston, Clerical Officer

Cllr. N. McNelis reminded all on the protocols with regard to in person/online meetings as previously circulated and welcomed members of the media who were joining the meeting. The apologies were noted as per above.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 21st March 2022

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 21st March 2022 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D. Lyons, seconded by T. Flaherty and agreed by all.

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 5-month period January to end of May 2022 with comparison figures included for the same period in 2021. 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:

- In relation to shoplifting crime, he noted that gathering intelligence on these crimes often points towards organised gangs. Analysts can look at the statistics for trends to

help them address the issue and also to compare the theft figures against pre-covid records.

- In relation to drugs, he noted it is a problem nationally and not just Galway and that increased drug use leads to increase crime. He stated he is awaiting an allocation of more staff and a regional dog unit with trained drug detecting dogs. He will also ask the Drug Unit Sergeant to give more specific information about the kinds of drugs involved in the offences in the next Garda report. It was also requested that the Western Region Drug & Alcohol Task Force would be invited to give an update on their work / resources / supports in this area at a future meeting.
- In relation to speeding, he stated he will work closely with Galway City Council in obtaining any data that can be shared and to analyse their own records if trends emerge in order to allocate Garda resources to this area.
- In relation to begging, it was noted from legislation that it is allowed if it is not causing obstruction or intimidating people.
- In relation to sexual assaults, he highlighted that more cases are being recorded because of victim education and awareness raising efforts.
- In relation to the Go Safe speed vans, he will ask staff to check if they are parked illegally and will write to the Road Safety Authority to ensure they park legally.
- In reference to e-scooters, he pointed out that the law is being examined, particularly about the issue of e-scooter speed limits.
- In relation to pedal cyclists, he noted that cyclists can be prosecuted if caught cycling through a red traffic light and will put staff in place to monitor this in the reported locations.

Following a number of queries raised by members Chief Superintendent T. Curley updated the members on the Divisional Policing Model, which commenced 4 years ago in the Galway Division with the aim of increasing visibility to enable greater community engagement and promote public safety, professionalise services to support operational policing and improve performance and accountability by strengthening governance, leadership, and supervision. He noted changes to the Galway City District, which will result in 3 areas Galway City, East and West. In relation to the Salthill Garda Station, a number of concerns were raised which were responded too. Some clarifications were sought, and they were responded to. He advised that there was no downgrading of Salthill Garda Station as part of this project. He further advised that Salthill Garda Station will continue to operate 24/7 under the Galway City District noting sufficient resources were in place to continue to deliver community engagement and public safety. He further noted that a business case has been submitted to Garda HQ advising a request of 55-60 extra Gardaí for the division. Following a query in relation to the agreed locations for the districts, he noted that this was one of the last elements of this project is to be implemented and that he is confident it is working and will continue to work.

Following a query on the proceeds of crime it was requested that the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) would give a presentation on this to the JPC at a future meeting.

3. Up-date on JPC Workplan 2022

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 2022, 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 Driver Feedback signs, noting an update on maintenance contracts and plans on data sharing with An Garda Síochána where possible. He noted that several cycle network projects were under development with detailed design progressing as outlined e.g., Ballyloughane Road/ Renmore Avenue; Doughiska Road South and Clybaun Road. Galway City Council is engaging with the school community of Scoil Iognáid, Raleigh Row; Scoil Bhride, Shantalla; Galway Educate Together NS and St Joseph's Special School; and Radharc na Mara NS, to develop 'front of school' designs to make it safer for children walking, cycling, and scooting to school as part of Safe Routes to School programme. National Bike Week took place again this year from Saturday 14th – Sunday 22nd May 2022 with several events / initiatives.

- *Subcommittee No.2 - To Enhance Community Safety Responses with a view to crime prevention:*

On behalf of Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Cllr. N. McNelis noted that this subcommittee did not get the opportunity to convene but stated that they plan to meet very soon.

- *Subcommittee No.3 - To Reduce and Prevent anti-social behaviour in Galway City:*

Cllr. N. McNelis noted that this subcommittee did not get the opportunity to convene but stated that they plan to meet very soon.

- *Subcommittee No. 4 - To Devise & Support Community Engagement models of best practise in Galway City:*

Mr. T. Flaherty gave an update noting plans were underway in organising events for Positive Ageing Week 2022, which starts on 26th September 2022 with the elderly to encourage them to become more involved in community events. It was noted and welcomed a stronger and more visible Garda presence in Eyre Square. He also suggested that the next JPC Public meeting be held in the Connacht Hotel, Dublin Road this year as it is due to be held in the East of the city.

4. Discussion on specific topics

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

- In relation to the permanent presence of Gardaí in Eyre Square, he noted there has been great feedback on this matter and that it is a collaboration of efforts to carry the City forward and all bodies are needed to come on board to help achieve this.
- Superintendent Damien Flanagan also noted that a few queries had been submitted to Galway City Council regarding design improvements in developments / public spaces that he hoped the Gardaí could be involved in at an early stage to help design out crime to make Galway's public spaces safer.

5. Any Other Business

Ms. Caitriona Morgan referred to the Galway City Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) Issues Paper which had previously circulated and is open for public consultation. She also advised members on the Local Communities Festival Grant Scheme 2022, the Garda Síochána

Galway / Gaillimh 1922- 2022 exhibition commemorating 100 years of An Garda Síochána serving the people of Galway in the Galway City Museum. Finally, she advised members on the recruitment, through Galway City Partnership on behalf of the Galway City Ukrainian Response Forum for a Ukrainian Emergency Response Project Leader and a Ukrainian Refugee Support Worker.

Cllr. Donal Lyons noted his sympathies to the Moran family and requested that a letter of condolence be sent to them on behalf of this committee.

Cllr. Owen Hanley referenced a submission to the Draft Galway City Development Plan 2023 – 2029 by COPE Galway, noting a reference to Page 20 within.

Upon announcement of his retirement, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Western Region HQ, Galway, received warm tributes and thanks from the members.

The Chairperson, Cllr. N. McNelis thanked all members for their participation, noting that the next meeting of Galway City JPC was scheduled to take place on Monday 17th October, 2022 at 11.00am.