



Galway City Joint Policing Committee

Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, 21st June 2021 at 11.00am via MS Teams

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

Members Present: Cllr. N. McNelis, Cllr. D. Lyons, Cllr. F. Fahy, Cllr. E. Hoare, Cllr. A. Cheevers, Cllr. T. O' Flaherty, Cllr. O. Hanley, Cllr. M. Crowe, Cllr. Noel Larkin, Cllr. Niall Murphy, Cllr. Mike Cubbard, Deputy Mairéad Farrell TD, Senator Sean Kyne, Mr. John Rabbitte, Mr. Tommy Flaherty, Ms. Nichola Tierney, Cameron Keighron, Chief Superintendent Tom Curley, Superintendent Damien Flanagan, Inspector Brian Ryan, Sergeant Mick Walsh, Sergeant Sinéad Cunniffe, Detective Sergeant Cormac Bane, Mr. Brendan McGrath, Mr. Brian Barrett

Apologies: Mr. Gary McMahon, Mr. John Cleary, Senator Pauline O'Reilly, Deputy Eamon O'Cúiv TD,

In Attendance: Ms. Caitriona Morgan, Secretary to Committee
Ms. Angela Breslin, A/Staff 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. He expressed condolences on behalf of the JPC to Mr. T. Flaherty on the passing of his sister. He congratulated Sergeant Peadar Ryan on his upcoming retirement and wished him well noting his long service in particular in community policing.

1. Confirmation of Minutes of Meeting of Galway City Joint Policing Committee held on Monday 22nd March 2021

The Minutes from the previous meeting held on Monday 22nd March 2021 were approved on the proposal of Cllr. D Lyons, seconded by Mr. T. Flaherty and agreed by all. There were no matters of accuracy of matters arising raised.

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 2021 with comparison figures included for the same period 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 as follows:

- Following a number of queries in relation to outdoor dining and the sale / consumption of alcohol he noted that bye laws prevent consuming alcohol in public areas. Numerous complaints had been received and following guidelines Gardaí had recently visited licensed premises across the city to ensure compliance with the current bye laws and licencing laws. He noted that he had raised issues and concerns both regionally and nationally in May 2021 in relation to the legality of this, and that discretion will continue to be applied by Gardaí in their engagement and monitoring however a clear direction is awaited and required. He further noted that no fines had issued and no tables and chairs had been removed, adding that licensed premises had been recently visited and the legal situation explained to owners. Mr. Brian Barrett also noted that the CCMA had also raised issues from the initial announcement of outdoor dining and that engagement was ongoing with business owners and Gardaí.
- In relation to parking of Speed Vans he again noted that the RSA are the body in charge and if there are issues in relation to illegal parking of these to bring it to the attention of an Gardaí.
- In relation to begging he outlined that it is monitored closely and that he would link in with other divisions and nationally to see if organised begging is becoming an issue as currently there is no solid evidence to suggest this, noting the reduction in this figure.
- In relation to drug offences he noted this is via intelligence led investigation by the Drugs Unit working closely across the division. He welcomed the increased figures on drugs seized as they are getting more off the street. He advised that Galway does not have a Water Unit in the city, noting the availability of one in Athlone if needed, however he was not aware of any practice or activities on the water in this regard but if anyone had any information they should bring it to the relevant Gardaí.
- In relation to excess speeding in areas raised, he advised to email them onto Salthill station and they will look into same for follow up. In relation to additional speed limit signage on Bóthar na dTreabh this request should be raised with Galway City Council. In relation to the matter of speeding in Housing Estates if there are particular issues / concerns / estates to contact the Roads Policing Unit for their follow-up and attention.
- In relation to road statistics / accidents he would ask their analyst to include the breakdown by type as requested on the report.
- In relation to the internal review on domestic abuse related 999 calls he advised that 53 such calls were cancelled in the Galway Division and he had commenced a detailed investigation on this which would include appropriate follow up. In relation to the increase in domestic abuse he noted the high priority this area is given with guidelines, policies and trained personnel in place in the Protective Services Unit to deal with calls and investigations appropriately.
- In relation to antisocial behaviour calls he noted to contact Sgt. Sinead Cunniffe to follow up on further.

3. To receive a presentation from the Galway Divisional Drugs Unit

Detective Sergeant Cormac Bane gave a presentation on behalf of the Galway Divisional Drugs Unit outlining the work they carry out including detections and seizures to date in 2021 with both increased considerably on 2020. A number of queries and comments were raised by members of the JPC which were responded to as follows:

- In relation to drug related intimidation prosecutions he noted less than 5 of these. He advised members that Detective Inspector Michael Coppinger deals with drug related intimidation reporting with advice and supports in place for both victims and their families encouraging those that maybe affected to make contact in confidence.
- He stressed the importance of local information being reported on an ongoing basis to an Gardaí as they rely on local information to assist with their intelligence led investigations.
- In relation to the inclusion of the possession of cannabis into the adult cautioning scheme during December 2020 he noted a welcomed introduction of this.

4. 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 installation of 69 Driver Feedback Signs in identified high risk locations across the City, in addition to Galway's School Zones Scheme implemented in 15 schools which is widely welcomed. He noted that a number of projects are at design stage for the Cycle Networks and referred to new street lighting erected and footpath repairs carried out across the City.
- Subcommittee No.2 - To Enhance Community Safety Responses with a view to crime prevention: Sgt. M. Walsh outlined the strategic objectives noting that they are continuing to support existing networks with a recent campaign and body of work with Galway Business Watch outlined, including the publication and circulation of a Retail Security checklist and engagement with local businesses across the city. Cybercrime and fraud awareness continues to be delivered through local media, leaflets and talks. Engagement with COPE Galway and other agencies regarding joint ventures on Domestic Violence being explored.
- Subcommittee No.3 - To Reduce and Prevent anti-social behaviour in Galway City: Sgt. M. Walsh noted and welcomed new members from NUIG & GMIT students union. Survey is now complete which will be circulated in due course. He referenced a new Security & Vulnerability initiative to help provide safe and secure pubs, hotels and restaurants as they resume service following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. Members of the JPC are welcome to join this Subcommittee.
- Subcommittee No. 4 - To Devise & Support Community Engagement models of best practise in Galway City: Mr. T. Flaherty outlined the strategic objectives and updated on the proposed actions following a couple of meetings held, including clean ups in areas needed, sports street league and bike safety initiative. He also advised that the committee received a presentation from Cladagh Watch which followed an invite from Cladagh Watch to join them on a patrol to see how things work and noted we will take them up on their offer once it is safe to do so. He advised that a public meeting is proposed for the end of the year, restrictions allowing.

5. 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 circulated. She noted the ongoing work of the Community Call Helpline, Cycle Again Suicide Buddies Programme, Comhairle na nÓg, Womens Aid Training Rollout, NTA Webinars. She acknowledged the ongoing co-operation

and support of members which included An Garda Síochána, Galway City Community Network, Galway City Council and many others.

6. Discussion on specific topics

Ms. C Morgan advised that 2 questions were submitted in advance of the meeting and a written response had issued, as circulated. Mr. Brendan McGrath outlined the statutory process as set out in relation to the existing bye laws for the regulation and control of the consumption of alcohol in public places, which restrict the consumption of alcohol in public spaces in general terms, noting that any amendment would have to follow the full statutory process.

7. Any Other Business

Ms. Caitriona Morgan reminded members on the survey as circulated in relation to parking in Salthill, noting closing date for feedback on this is 10th July 2021, asking members to share with their relevant groups and organisations as appropriate. She also made reference to the public consultation on the first ever National Outdoor Recreation Strategy which had launched as circulated, noting closing date for completion of 23rd June 2021. She noted the Alcohol – Did you Know online information sessions, hosted by the Galway City Alcohol Forum as circulated.

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 18th October 2021 at 11.00am.