

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT MEETING OF THE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, MERCHANT'S QUAY, ON FRIDAY, 13TH JULY, 2018 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR :

Councillor Seán Lynch

MEMBERS PRESENT :

Councillors Keller, Costelloe, Ó Ceallaigh, Gilligan, Keary, Mitchell, O'Donoghue, Ryan and Pond

OIREACHTAS MEMBERS :

Deputy J. O'Sullivan, T.D., Deputy N. Collins, T.D., Deputy M. Quinlivan, T.D. and Senator M. Byrne

GARDA NOMINATIONS :

Chief Superintendent Gerard Roche
Superintendent D. Smart, Superintendent B. Sugrue,
Superintendent E. O'Neill, Inspector L. Kennedy, Senior Analyst L. Breen
Sergeant Denis Waters

COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES :

Mr. W. Priestley, Our Lady of Lourdes Community Services

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. J. Clune, A/Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services
Ms. L. Creamer, Staff Officer, Corporate Services

APOLOGIES

Councillor J. O'Dea, Mr. C. Murray, Chief Executive and Ms. M. McElvaney, Adapt Services

1. Adoption of Minutes

Circulated, copy of draft Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Policing Committee Meeting held on 23rd March, 2018.

Proposed by Deputy N. Collins,
Seconded by Councillor Gilligan

And Resolved

"That the Minutes, as circulated, be taken as read and adopted and signed".

2. To receive update from Chief Superintendent

The Chief Superintendent gave a brief introduction and listed the changes in the various Garda Stations. He also outlined the current staffing levels within the Limerick Division and District.

Ms. L. Breen then gave a presentation on the latest crime statistics for Limerick City and County under the following headings :

Property Crime

Burglary

Crimes against the person

Domestic Violence

Criminal damage and public order

Drugs and offensive weapons

Traffic

Members welcomed the new Chief Superintendent, Mr. Gerard Roche, and wished him the very best of luck in his new role.

Superintendent D. Smart gave details of three ASBO's issued within the last three months. He pointed out that one of these Orders was successful in Court yesterday and the person concerned was removed from O'Connell Street, William Street and Patrick Street. Anybody breaching these Orders can be arrested and fined/imprisoned. He pointed out that speed is still the most contributing factor in road traffic accidents.

Members raised the following matters and received replies to their queries from the Chief Superintendent and Superintendent Smart as follows :

In reply to Members Superintendent Smart stated that 74 incidents occurred last year where people were stopped and searched for offensive weapons. This compared with 39 incidents this year to date.

- The Chief Superintendent stated that the Gardai in Limerick have a very good working relationship with An Tusla. Partnership and monitoring meetings are held regularly between both and there is a constant flow and exchange of information between the Gardai and An Tusla.
- In reply to query the Chief Superintendent stated that three Gardai per day would be required if the Croom Garda Station was re-opened and even though staff resources have been increased by ten per cent in each area, it would not be possible to reopen Croom Garda Station with existing resources. He added that a meeting is held each month with the Traffic Corp.
- In reply to Members queries regarding preventative measures for repeat offenders, the Superintendent stated that every effort is made to work out how repeat offenders can be best supported to stay away from crime. The Gardai also work with families of offenders to see if anything is going on in the household that could be a contributing factor to offenders.
- The Chief Superintendent replied that a lot of issues and ongoing work is being done with other agencies in addressing anti social behaviour and constant resources are put in to deal with this problem. He stated that there is a lack of reporting of anti social behaviour in Garryowen. However, a number of people have been charged with selling drugs and burning cars. A specific budget was sought to address anti social behaviour in Garryowen and John Street. There is a Garda presence at all times in these areas, however, issues around drugs have dramatically increased.
- The Superintendent informed Members that retail theft is a nationwide problem, however, a number of initiatives have been put in place especially targeting repeat offenders and added that these are being dealt with at District Court level. There are a lot of juveniles involved in retail theft. He pointed out, however, that some shops do not make a complaint and do not follow up on CCTV cameras.

- The Superintendent stated that in a recent survey Limerick had the highest record of Insurance fraud. Gardai in Limerick have had briefings with Insurance Companies in relation to this matter and a Fraud Unit is going to be established in Limerick.
- In reply to Members concerns regarding the increase in sulkies during the summer months especially on the Old Cork Road and Childers Road during rush hours and the issue of horses being kept in small back gardens, sometimes with no water, the Superintendent stated that the new Community Policing Model will address this issue.
- In answer to Members concerns regarding the increase in crime statistics in Limerick despite increased Gardai and the fact that Limerick has the biggest concentration of crime outside Dublin as per the Criminal Assets Bureau Presentation, the Chief Superintendent stated that the statistics will decrease once the additional resources are in place. He added that active investigation is ongoing by CAB more in Limerick than any other county outside Dublin.

3. PRESENTATION FROM CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT ON THE NEW PROPOSED COMMUNITY POLICING MODEL

Sergeant Waters gave a presentation on the future of Community Policing in the Limerick Garda Division.

He stated that this is tailored differently in county compared to city due to resourcing issues. It is a new model and part of the National Community Policing Framework Partnership which will be launched in Autumn 18. It will provide accessible and visible policing in communities. The closing date for receipt of submissions being 1st September, 2018.

Members expressed hope that existing community guards will not be removed from communities and put working in another area of the Garda Siochana. They expressed hope that community guards will be working in pairs.

Superintendent O'Neill stated that this model has been welcomed in Newcastle West District. It is important to build a rapport with the community and added that very few community guards live in the community they work in. The model brings services out to the community especially for older people. He said input from communities and elected representatives would be very welcome.

The Chief Superintendent added that it is very important that local representatives liaise with the community guards in their areas. As part of the new system community police will be instructed to liaise with councillors in the area. There are full time policing guards in the city which is not the case in the county where there are community guards. It will be a problem solve approach with accountability and responsibility falling on the community guards. A website will be set up in Autumn 2018. He added that Members can ring the Garda Co-Ordination Office for urgent matters.

Members asked that a list of the names of all the community guards and the areas they are covering be circulated to all Councillors.

The Chief Superintendent stated that he would check out why the Garda road signs with lo call telephone number were removed from national routes.

The Chief Superintendent stated that there are not enough resources available to have community police full time in county areas, it will be based on level of crime in the areas.

4. TO RECEIVE PRESENTATION FROM MR. WILLIAM PRIESTLEY ON THE SOCIAL ISSUES BEHIND DRUGS

Mr. William Priestley gave presentation on the social issues behind drugs – Demand, Supply and Legacy.

Members pointed out that the most serious drug problems are in disadvantaged areas. Money is set aside by Government to highlight speeding, drink driving, safety on farms etc., but nothing in relation to drugs. Also very little finance given by Regeneration to addressing drug issues. Drug use is a huge social issue and a different approach needs to be taken in addressing the problem. Elected Members called on Oireachtas Members to raise in the Dail the matter of addressing drug use and the problems associated with same.

5. TO CONSIDER NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR L. GALVIN (REFERRED FROM MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD ON 26TH MARCH, 2018)

“I will move at the next Meeting that the Government review the locations of the ‘Go Safe’ vans within Co. Limerick”.

The Chief Superintendent stated that the Gardai have little or no involvement in relation to the location of the ‘Go Safe’ vans. The locations are based on analysis of accidents and in particular fatal accidents. However, the message is getting out there and traffic is slowing down as a result of the ‘Go Safe’ vans. Members said they would welcome additional locations for the ‘Go Safe’ vans.

6. TO CONSIDER NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED BY COUNCILLOR J. POND (REFERRED FROM MEETING OF METROPOLITAN DISTRICT OF LIMERICK HELD ON 18TH JUNE, 2018)

“I will move at the next Metropolitan Meeting that following the unveiling of the proposed Castletroy Local Area Plan 2019 – 2025 that allows the population of the area to increase to 28,000 Limerick City and County Council would petition the Minister for Justice and the Garda Commissioner to provide a Garda Station for the area. This Garda Station could also serve the needs of University of Limerick which now caters for approx.. 13,000 third level students plus staff”.

In reply to Members concerned, the Chief Superintendent stated that if another Garda station in Limerick was opened, even on a temporary basis, there is no staffing resources available for same. It would not be possible to open another Garda Station with the existing manpower and resources that are available at present. He pointed out that the Gardai work very closely with University of Limerick and Students Union and a full time Burglary Unit is located in the area. He added that it would take 5 to 10 years for a new station to be built.

7. TO SET DATE FOR PUBLIC JPC MEETING IN QUARTER 4, 2018

Members queried the purpose of this meeting and the Cathaoirleach stated that under the JPC Guidelines it is compulsory to have one public meeting per year.

It was unanimously agreed to hold this public meeting in the Council Chamber, Dooradoyle, on Monday, 10th December, 2018 at 7.00 p.m.

Members asked that heretofore, if the Chief Executive is unable to attend JPC Meetings, then Deputy Chief Executive or a Director of Service attend meetings.

Members wished the Limerick Hurlers the very best of luck for next Sunday.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed : _____
Cathaoirleach

Date : _____