

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT VIRTUAL MEETING OF THE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JUNE, 2021 AT 10.00 A.M.

IN THE CHAIR :	Councillor A. Teskey
MEMBERS :	Councillors B. Collins, J. Collins, J. Costelloe, L. Galvin, S. Hartigan, S. Kiely, M. Murphy, J. O'Donoghue, K. Sheahan, C. Sheehan and A. Talukder
OIREACHTAS MEMBERS :	M. Quinlivan, T.D., N. Collins, T.D. and K. O'Donnell, T.D.
PPN SECTORAL NOMINEES :	Ms. D. Dunne and Dr. B. Hayes
GARDA NOMINATIONS :	Chief Superintendent (Mr. G. Roche), Superintendent (Mr. B. Sugrue), Superintendent (Mr. D. O'Connor), Superintendent (Ms. A. Magner), Assistant Principal Officer (Ms. Lynda Breen) and Senior Intelligence Analyst (Ms. L. Collins)
OFFICIALS :	Chief Executive (Mr. P. Daly), Senior Executive Officer (Ms. L. Flannery), Administrative Officer (Mr. S. Hayes), Staff Officer (Ms. L. Creamer)
OTHERS :	Assistant Commissioner (Mr. M. Finn), Councillors S. Benson And O. O'Sullivan
APOLOGIES :	Councillor S. Keary, Mr. C. Flynn and Ms. S. Johnston

The Chairman welcomed Assistant Commissioner Michael Finn to the meeting and invited him to address the meeting.

The Assistant Commissioner stated that as he was in Limerick today he took the opportunity to say hello at the JPC Meeting this morning and to acknowledge the great co-operation from Limerick City and County Council and the Elected Representatives. He said it was important to acknowledge this great co-operation. He stated that it has been a difficult twelve months and more for everyone but everyone responded to the challenge. He added that covid 19 is still with us and he appealed to the public for their support in combatting the spread of covid. He acknowledged the great work done by the Council, Elected Representatives, the Chief Executive and his staff in addressing the challenges of Covid 19.

The Chairman thanked Assistant Commissioner Finn for virtually attending this meeting and he noted the great work done during these challenging times by the Chief Superintendent and his staff, in particular the Superintendent in his own district of Adare-Rathkeale. He paid tribute to all frontline workers who put their lives at risk every day. He stated that the Chief Superintendent is very forthcoming in his answers to councillors queries and that this was the reason the JPC was set up and operating so well.

1. Minutes

Circulated, copy of Minutes of Joint Policing Committee Meeting held on 5th March, 2021 :

Proposed by Councillor S. Kiely
Seconded by Councillor L. Galvin

2. Update from Chief Superintendent

The Chief Superintendent thanked the Assistant Commissioner for his kind words and also the Chairman. He stated that crime figures are going in the right direction with a reduction in property crime, non aggravated burglary and assaults, however, drug and drink driving detection is still high. The Gardaí got a lot of help from members of the public and a joint task force was set up with LCCC and a number of ongoing projects are underway on the north and south sides of the city. He referred to the reduction in crime, however, pointed out that night culture has not returned yet and this will bring its own challenges when bars and restaurants open. These are strange times at present, however, challenging times will return. He stated that an emergency meeting was taking place this afternoon with the Chief Medical Officer and Assistant Chief Medical Officer to discuss the worrying trends in Limerick with the rise in covid cases. He said the HSE is going through incredibly difficult times at present due to the cyber attack and all the challenges that brings. He commended the Health Service on doing fantastic work and said the Gardaí will continue to help in any way possible. He confirmed that there are plans in place for this weekend to reduce the spread of the virus adding that the increase in cases is a cause for concern.

3. Overview on Crime Statistics from Senior Crime and Policing Analyst

Ms. L. Collins gave a brief statistical overview of current crime statistics.

Ms. Dunne commended the Gardaí on the initiative set up to deal with domestic abuse which is up 6%. The Gardaí work very closely with ADAPT in this initiative which is being extended country wide.

The Chief Superintendent thanked Members for their positive comments. In reply to Members comments he said this is a surreal time for policing and is not natural or normal. Crime and public order issues will change after covid but the Gardaí will continue to respond. He agreed to check response time in relation to joyriders in the Rhebogue area last Tuesday night. He stated that a lot of work has been done in Johnsgate Village in addressing anti social behaviour. Gardaí are working very closely with the Council in relation to housing issues. Work is ongoing in relation to drug detection and many people have been brought before the courts. He said the rise in domestic abuse is very worrying, however, the initiative that has been put in place is working very well. This has been extended by three months and the Gardaí will continue to support ADAPT and all those affected by domestic violence.

In reply to Members queries, the Chief Superintendent stated that the positive reduction in burglaries is due to people working from home and the increased garda checkpoints. Offenders targeted under Operation Thor are getting longer sentences so a number of people who commit burglaries are in prison. Travelling criminals are not moving about as much due to the increased garda checkpoints. He added that the checkpoints account for the rise in drink and drug detections, however, such checkpoints have been stopped for the last few weeks.

Members asked what type of operation would be in place over the bank holiday weekend to reduce the threat of increased covid cases and said it was critical to get control over the spike in numbers. They expressed concern at people drinking on the streets terrorizing residents, sitting on steps of homes, with no masks and partaking in anti social behaviour. People have become trapped in their homes. Rubbish and cigarette butts are also an issue. They appealed to the Gardaí to take action on this. They commended all involved in the garda operation in Thomondgate in relation to scramblers. However, there is now a problem with scramblers in Rhebogue and asked the Gardaí to look into this. Legislation is needed urgently to address this issue. Concern was expressed also at rubbish from take away food and plastic glasses being thrown into the River adding that every effort should be made to protect the River. Reference was made to taxi drivers delivering take away food in specific areas of the city being targeted and robbed. Taxi drivers are very vulnerable and every

effort should be made to address this problem. The Chief Superintendent stated that a policing plan is compiled each week on addressing covid, risks are evaluated and submitted to the Assistant Commissioner.

The Assistant Commissioner stated that additional garda patrols will be out in all counties over the bank holiday weekend and especially in areas where there are large numbers of people congregating. He acknowledged that there is a problem with outdoor drinking and take away alcohol, however, the Gardaí are restricted by legislation and the issue is presenting significant challenges. He appealed to the public to be responsible and to continue to adhere to public guidelines and he asked councillors to relate this to their communities.

The Chief Superintendent informed Members that there was an emergency meeting taking place later today so existing plans may change but will react accordingly. There is an issue with legislation in relation to takeaway alcohol as covid legislation conflicts with other legislation. The Council Bye Laws also conflict with covid legislation but he is liaising with the Chief Executive in relation to the matter.

Superintendent Sugrue stated that he is meeting the Head of the Vintners Association today to discuss the matter of takeaway drinks and the anti social behaviour that it causes to see if the matter can be minimised.

In response to a query regarding guards being drug tested, the Assistant Commissioner stated that in today's world young Gardaí are no different to ordinary people and controls need to be in place to monitor members of the Gardaí, same as any other citizen. They need to be aware of any issues and offer help and support to individuals if required. No more than any other police force they have to be mindful of corruption and would be naive to think otherwise.

Members referred to Brú na Brudain estate in Castletroy where house parties are taking place on an almost nightly basis and asked that the Gardaí address this matter. Members also asked Gardaí to police the Stables Bar in University of Limerick where there are a lot of tables and chairs outside resulting in big numbers of young people congregating. They also requested more policing in Glasgow Park to address the problem of scramblers.

4. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sharon Benson (referred from Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick held on 19th March, 2021

"I will move at the next Meeting of the Metropolitan District of Limerick, that this Council write to the Garda Commissioner, requesting additional Garda resources to police the Northside of Limerick city, as a matter of urgency, in response to the continuous decline of resources in Mayorstone Garda Station and to tackle the increase in anti social behaviour and crime. Also, to take note of the recommendations set out by the Fitzgerald Report 2007 regarding Garda resources in Limerick city".

In supporting her Notice of Motion, Councillor Benson stated that anti-social behaviour is a big problem in the city and has escalated in recent years. More Garda patrols and community policing is needed to effectively tackle this problem but the lack of resources is a continuous problem and this is really being felt on the ground. Everybody is aware that there are not have enough resources and certain elements are taking full advantage of this. Everybody has seen the videos on social media recently that are tarnishing the reputation of good estates and the great people who live there. These scenes are casting a shadow over all good work being done in these communities.

She acknowledged and welcomed the addition of 3 new community policing members in the past few months however, said this is nowhere near what is required.

The Fitzgerald report from 2007 recommended that ‘intensive policing arrangements were to be put in place which would involve a minimum of 100 additional Gardai, with appropriate management structures whose sole function will be the policing of these areas’.

According to February’s figures, there are just 5 additional Gardai in the city. While Henry Street saw a small increase in resources, the Northside has suffered serious losses. In 2008 there were 104 Gardai stationed on the Northside; now there are only 50. There was a loss of 3 sergeants in Mayorstone over the past year which she stated, to the best of her knowledge, have not been filled. She stated that community policing creates an opportunity to identify and engage with young people who may be at risk of going down a wrong road. It also helps to strengthen relations between the gardai and communities by building trust and respect. People have a right to live in their homes and communities free from fear, crime and anti-social behaviour.”

The Notice of Motion was proposed by Councillor Benson and seconded by Councillor Costelloe.

The Chairman proposed an amendment to the Notice of Motion. Instead of writing to the Garda Commissioner, to allow the Chief Superintendent an opportunity to respond in due course as it is a localised issue.

Councillor Benson agreed to the amendment by the Chairman to the Notice of Motion.

Councillor Galvin proposed that this Notice of Motion be opposed.

As there was no seconder to Councillor Galvin’s proposal the Notice of Motion was declared carried.

5. Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Liam Galvin

“I will move at the next Meeting that this Council calls on the Minister for Transport to hand over full control of the Go Safe vans to the Department of Justice where the Gardai would have full control of their use particularly at accident black spots and known racing sections of road”.

The Chief Superintendent stated that the Gardai have no input locally in the location of Go Safe vans, however, can make recommendations to the National Roads Policing Unit.

The Motion was proposed by Councillor Galvin, seconded by Councillor Sheahan and agreed.

6. Question submitted by Councillor Liam Galvin

“I will ask at the next Meeting (a) what revenue was collected from Go Safe vans in 2020 (b) where/who benefited from same and give breakdown and (c) how many speeding tickets were handed out and give breakdown per county”.

In reply, the Chief Superintendent stated that Go Safe are contracted to perform a specific number of hours of roadside checks, irrespective of the number of detections made or revenue generated. They are provided with a fixed fee for the service in accordance with the contracts agreed. The revenue collected from these fines go to the Exchequer. 106,395 Fixed Charge Notices were issued in 2020 for Go Safe offences. His office is awaiting the breakdown information from GSAS.

7. Question submitted by Councillor Liam Galvin

“I will ask at the next Meeting for a detailed report on the anti social behaviour in our towns in the Newcastle West District especially Abbeyfeale and a breakdown of the Garda numbers for the district, what are the official opening times for Abbeyfeale Garda Station and why are the Garda numbers in Abbeyfeale cut down so low”.

The Chief Superintendent stated that when considering the notion of anti social behaviour he concentrated on incidents falling under the following categories :

- Property crimes
- Criminal damage
- Crimes against the person
- Minor assault
- Assaults causing harm
- Public order offenses
- Drunkenness Offenses

The following figures relate to Week 21, week ending 30th May, 2021 :

Category	Newcastle West	Abbeyfeale	Misc.
Property crimes	-31%	-23%	
Criminal damage	+50%	Up from 2 to 7 this year (14 in NCW)	3 incidents referring to 1 X adult individual 1 X referring to a youth 1 X persons known to each other 1 X DV incident 1 X window in early hours
Crimes against the person	-44%	-82%	
Minor assault	-51%	-100%	
Assaults causing harm	-64%	-100%	
Public Order offenses	-29%	Up from 7 to 9 this year	Neighbours dispute/parking disputes/youths/DV incident/Failing to comply with direction of a Garda
Drunkenness Offenses	-64%	Static 1 this year	

Official opening times for Abbeyfeale Garda Station are displayed on the station itself. It is opened daily from:

Monday/Wednesday/Friday/Sunday: 12.00 Noon to 1.00 p.m.
Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday: 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m.

It is frequently open outside of these hours when Gardaí are in the station and available to attend at the public counter. If any member of the public rings the station they will get through to Gardaí and arrangements can be made for the working Garda to attend to assist.

The Chief Superintendent stated that the Garda numbers in Abbeyfeale have not been cut. In fact a Sergeant was allocated to the Sub District in Feb 2020.

Unit A; Garda O Dowd and Garda Morgan
Unit B; Garda Dwyer
Unit C; Garda Roger O Donoghue and Sgt O' Connor
Unit D; Garda John Maguire

1 x plain clothes crime member
5 members attached to roads policing working from the station
2 members working in the Firearms office
1 member working fulltime in warrants office

All of the above are supplemented by the members who work in Athea and Glin, as well as from all other areas of the District.

There is intensive stakeholder engagement in Abbeyfeale;

The Gardaí are working closely with West Limerick Resources and only last week the Gardaí were delighted to be involved in the Abbeyfeale Community Blooms project; a joint enterprise involving WLR, Primary Healthcare Project for Travellers, Limk City and County Council, Abbeyfeale Community Council through Abbeyfeale Family and Community Network. (50th Anniversary of certain estates in Abbeyfeale and was a gift to mark same).

Garda Youth Diversion Project; heavily involved in youth engagement in the town including with those under the age of criminal responsibility.

Extremely progressive and worthwhile meeting with Abbeyfeale Community Council. The Gardaí will work closely together so as to promote the town of Abbeyfeale and jointly combat any issues that may be arising.

8. Question submitted by Councillor John Costelloe

"I will ask at the next Meeting who funded the recent Garda operation in relation to the attempted seizure of stock by KPMG from Debenhams in Limerick on May 17/18".

In reply, the Chief Superintendent stated that on 17th May, 2021, an operation to assist KPMG, the High Court appointed Liquidators in the removal of stock from the Debenhams store on O'Connell Street, Limerick, which commenced at 10.00 p.m. In total 90 members were detailed for the Operation including the following resources and equipment :

- One Public Order Unit consisting of One Inspector, three (3) Sergeants, eighteen (18) Gardai and three (3) drivers, totalling twenty five (25) members
- A Protest Removal Team consisting of four (4) members with various tools, cutting and safety equipment
- Armed Support provided by two (2) Units of the Armed Support Unit consisting of four (4) members
- An intelligence gathering Unit consisting of two (2) Detective Gardai
- Uniform personnel
- Plain Clothes personnel
- Communications Room personnel on Garda CCTV cameras
- A tow truck at the scene on standby
- A trained EMT in the Public Order Unit

- Trained personnel in First Aid in the Protest Removal Team
- Forty (40) crowd control barriers

Following a number of briefings Gardai were deployed to the location at 12am on the 18th of May 2021, on arrival there were protesters blocking access to the loading bay at Debenhams by initially standing then sitting at the gate. Following engagement with the protesters including advising them of the High Court Order, a direction was given to the Public Order Unit to remove the protesters blocking the gate to allow the Liquidators access as directed in the High Court Order .

In total 34 protesters were removed from the gateway in compliance with the High Court Order with the majority being carried in a safe manner by trained personnel attached to the Public Order Unit. Each protester was removed to a safe area on the Arthurs Quay Plaza. Further protests involving persons sitting/lying on the roadway then occurred which coincided with the arrival at the location of an articulated lorry acting on behalf of the liquidator. In total there were approx. 70 persons engaged in protests on the night of the operation.

Following a review of the High Court Order and the situation that presented itself, a decision was made to cease the operation to ensure the safety of both Gardai and protesters. No further powers outside of those contained in the High Court Order were utilised during the operation.

He pointed out that at all times protesters were informed Gardai were present in accordance with the High Court Order and protesters were engaged with in a proactive and professional manner utilising the “Four Es” approach.

He emphasised that the High Court Order was to the Commissioner who directed him. The Order only said to remove the protestors, not to arrest them. There was no violent incident. All protestors were removed safely and the Gardaí complied with the High Court Order. Nothing else was done.

9. Question submitted by Councillor John Costelloe

“I will ask at the next Meeting how much did the whole operation cost and how many Gardaí were involved in the operation at Debenhams on May 17/18”.

The Chief Superintendent confirmed that the Operation involved 90 Garda members in total. 60 of these members are attached to the Limerick Division and they were working their normal hours of duty at the time of the operation. One other Limerick member accrued 5 hours overtime.

The remaining 29 members are members of the Public Order Unit attached to the Southern Region. They were deployed to assist and support the members on the regular units throughout the duration of the operation. The cost of overtime and travel and subsistence claims for these members is not available at the current time. These figures will be available, at the earliest, on the 21st of June 2021 (current roster due to end the 13th of June 2021).

Total cost of overtime so far was €4,352.40.

Ancillary Costs – approximately €1,000.00 was also incurred for hire of equipment, barriers and meals. He stated that he was not in a position to submit a final cost for this operation at present as all claims have not been submitted.

Sub and Travel - €325.05

The overtime and subsistence incurred referred mainly to the Public Order Unit which was resourced by members from Limerick City and County and a number of members from other divisions in the Southern Region.

The Chief Superintendent stated that he had the highest respect for the Debenhams workers and they were treated with the utmost respect by the Gardaí during the operation.

10. Question submitted by John Nugent, PPN

‘I will ask at the next Meeting for a presentation on the challenges and successes of Exclusion Orders under the Housing Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1997, with a view to the use of Exclusion Orders being increased’.

Mr. Seamus Hayes, Community Support Services gave a presentation on Exclusion Orders.

11. Question submitted by Kieran O'Donnell, T.D.

‘I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on Limerick Division’s cyber security preparedness in light of the HSE cyber attack and whether resources are available to the division to ensure IT systems are up to date’.

The Chief Superintendent stated that, for operational and security reasons, the Gardaí do not disclose details of systems and processes which could in any way compromise those efforts. In particular, he said it was not considered appropriate to disclose information which might assist criminals to identify potential vulnerabilities in the Gardaí’s cyber security arrangements. Therefore, he said it was not considered appropriate to disclose particular arrangements in place in relation to cyber security tools and services and An Garda Síochána does not comment on operational security matters.

12. Question submitted by Kieran O'Donnell, T.D.

‘I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on

- (a) Plans the Limerick division have to roll out the Limerick County Beats Initiative 2021 to further Towns and villages in Limerick City and Environs.
- (b) The submission sent from the Limerick Division to the forthcoming Garda Building and Refurbishment Capital Programme for 2022 for a new Garda Station in Castletroy/Annacotty, Any engagement with Garda Headquarters on the matter and when you expect a response to the Submission’

The Chief Superintendent stated that the Limerick County Beats initiative is a new initiative which was recently rolled out in the County Districts where members utilise the Garda Community Bus on one day a week and drive to different villages and towns to perform beat patrols and offer advice and support to the local community. He said it is in its infancy at present but the feedback has been very positive.

Superintendent Magner stated that over the past 12 months the focus of An Garda Síochána was and still is supporting our communities through the COVID 19 pandemic by engaging in the following:

- Partnership with Limerick City and County Council, Sporting Organisations and voluntary bodies in support of Limerick’s Community Response;
- High visibility patrols, checkpoints and engagement in communities to ensure the public’s safety and compliance with public health advices/regulations;
- Due to the COVID 19 pandemic there has been challenges in promoting community engagement initiatives and the following are ongoing at present or will recommence as the situation improves:

Schools Programme – Primary and Post Primary
Campus Watch – (including the policing of The University of Limerick)
Transition Year Garda Programme
Neighbourhood Watch/Community Alert/Resident Associations

- A new Garda Ethic Policing Forum – currently being established to provide new communities with a dedicated link to policing in the city and county and a forum to raise concerns while building relationships
- Property Marking Initiative was established involving property etching equipment in partnership with LCCC
- Dan Buoy Initiative currently being established – equipment purchased in partnership with LCCC involving lifesaving and tracking floatation devices which will be used by AGS in emergencies
- Garda led initiative in relation to Water Safety Protocols involving all relevant stakeholders
- Other Crime Prevention Initiatives
- Older and Vulnerable Persons Initiatives
- Elderly and Vulnerable Person Register
- Older Persons events – Christmas Party etc.
- Community Garda Clinics
- Business Watch/City Centre Operations (Op Meirle)
- Garda Youth Diversion Projects
- Regeneration Area Initiatives/Operations (Op Copóg)
- Other Sports and Youth Projects and Clubs
- Garda Community Bus
- Engagement with the Pride Festival and Diversity Initiatives
- Community Policing Gardaí

Limerick City Districts – LCN and LCS

In the City Districts there are the following dedicated Community Policing Members in Henry Street, Mayorstone Park and Roxboro Road : 3 Sergeants and 29 Gardaí
Ardnacrusha and Castleconnell Stations : 1 Sergeant and 12 Gardaí
Patrickswell, Ballyneety and Caherconlish : 1 Sergeant and 9 Gardaí

Limerick County Districts

Newcastle West and Bruff / All Members perform Community Policing duties.

The Limerick County Beats Initiative 2021 was launched on Thursday, 15th April 2021 in Newcastle West. Foot patrol has historically been a central feature of policing as a preventative measure, which relied on a high visibility approach and particularly as there was a public desire to see feet on the street as such. The initiative encourages Gardaí to embrace short beat patrols in areas of high density such as public parks / amenities, schools, retail areas and residential estates.

Foot patrol is associated with community policing and can be referred to reassurance policing or citizen focused policing. The initiative is not just about a deployment tactic, it is about community based style and hopefully over the summer Gardaí will get a sense of the public perceptions and feedback on it's rollout. Where a beat is taking place the public are encouraged to approach Gardaí (safely as restrictions remain) if they have a concern or a problem or indeed just for a chat. Therefore, it is hoped that increases in foot patrols will be more responsive to the local communities and matters are addressed at ground level in the first instance. The use of pedal cycle patrols will also be part of the initiative. The Gardaí are working towards a multi agency (LCCC lead partners) approach to a wide variety of issues that are emerging.

Evaluating Foot Patrol

It is genuinely believed that many members are already carrying out these patrols, albeit sometimes within vehicles so it is about encouraging the rollout of the initiative and placing ourselves in locations at particular times whereby the public will see Gardaí on the ground and have an opportunity to engage which might negate the limitation around station opening hours in rural sub districts. The initiative will also be evaluated over the remainder of the year through consultations with community groups, JPC's and other relevant agencies. The Divisional Community Co-Ordinator will be used as a point of contact for suitable enquiries which will be relayed to the relevant sub district.

Four Beat Patrol Models – Connecting the concepts

Four distinct beat patrol models have been identified :

- Community engagement model which emphasises community responsiveness both during and prior to the intervention;
- Citizen contact model whereby walking the beat is supplemented by visits to residences and businesses;
- Deterrent model based simply on showing a presence and enforcing the law;
- Familiarity model involving foot patrol and other duties by patrol officers leads to members of the public getting to know local Gardaí

Manage Expectations

While the concept and intention is to roll this initiative out across the county there is a clear need to manage expectations of the policing service given the size of the county districts and the number of Gardaí. There will inevitably be instances where these resources are required for critical incidents or planned operations but where there is flexibility they are looking to deploy resources in short duration beat patrols to high density areas.

Limerick Community Bus

In September 2020 Limerick City and County Council, in partnership with An Garda Síochána, acquired a new 15 seater community bus that will serve all sections of the community across the Limerick Garda division. The new mini bus has been jointly funded by Limerick City and County Council and An Garda Síochána and will allow Gardaí to engage directly with local community groups. Another component of the Limerick County Beats Initiative 2021 will see the use of the community bus across the towns and villages of county Limerick on a weekly basis. This will be a valuable resource and an alternative means of delivering accessible policing in the county through the dissemination information leaflets and other joint initiatives with Limerick City and County Council. The concept will see additional resources deployed to travel the county one day a week for community policing functions.

Community beats is only one of the community initiatives that the team in Newcastle West are planning. Unfortunately, Covid has restricted plans but look forward to future joint endeavours with various stakeholders including the Council

Submission from Limerick Garda Division to new Garda Station in Castletroy/Annacotty

Submissions were made by the Limerick Garda Division, as part of the forthcoming Garda Building and Refurbishment Capital Programme for 2022-2030, for a new Garda Station in the Castletroy/Annacotty area. The Commissioner has been briefed on this submission. The timing of the decision on this matter is not known.

IT WAS AGREED TO TAKE QUESTIONS 13 AND 14 TOGETHER

13. Question submitted by Maurice Quinlivan, T.D.

‘I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the ongoing Garda/Council operation ‘Operation Copóg’ in St. Mary’s Park’.

14. Question submitted by Maurice Quinlivan, T.D.

‘I will ask at the next Meeting for an update on the number of seizures and arrests that have arisen to date from the ongoing Garda operation ‘Operation Copóg’ related to St. Mary’s Park’.

In reply, the Chief Superintendent stated that there has been a significant number of person/house searches and detections for both simple possession of controlled drugs and possession of controlled drugs for sale/supply. Two of the main organised crime gangs based in St. Mary’s Park were charged in this period, to be tried in the circuit court.

Also, a number of suspects were identified driving vehicles under the influence of drugs. In a number of incidents the vehicle was seized from a suspect on the basis that the vehicle was being driven uninsured/untaxed.

- To date, since the 1st March 2021, there has been 191 searches of persons pursuant to Section 23 Misuse of Drugs Act.
- Sixteen premises have been searched under warrant pursuant to Section 26 Misuse of Drugs Act.
- There has been nineteen cases where persons have been found in possession of controlled drugs for their own use.
- There has been nine incidents where persons have been found in possession of controlled drugs for the purpose of sale/supply.
- There has been nineteen vehicles seized under Section 41 Road Traffic Act.
- There has been three persons arrested for driving under the influence of drugs.
- A violent disorder incident was detected where three people were arrested and two people subsequently charged as a result of same.
- An operation was conducted where five people were arrested in relation to recent drug seizures and questioned regarding their involvement in the sale/supply of controlled drugs in St. Mary’s Park.
- There has been one case of money laundering where cash was seized believed to be the proceeds of drug dealing.
- Two high profile people were charged with the offences of possession of drugs for the purpose of sale/supply.

He stated that the area of St. Mary's Park continues to be monitored and patrolled on a regular basis.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed : _____
Councillor Adam Teskey

Date : _____