



To each Local Councillor

By email - info@ailg.ie

26 June 2024

Dear Councillor,

I am writing to share an update on this Department's plans for the roll-out of the cross government initiative to set up Local Community Safety Partnerships in each local authority area as provided for in the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024. The establishment of a Partnership in each Local Authority will put a significant focus on the actions that need to be taken to improve community safety.

As you may be aware, the Minister is progressing a new community-based approach to safety based on a key principle highlighted in the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland; that policing is not the responsibility of An Garda Síochána alone. Community safety promotes a strategic partnership approach which brings together a range of public bodies/service providers and local communities with the objective of supporting people to feel more secure in their communities. In bringing other service providers to the table, and through a Local Community Safety Plan designed for each Local Authority area, we can develop a tailored approach to community safety that meets the needs of each community.

Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs)

The primary delivery structures for this new approach to Community Safety will be the new Local Community Safety Partnerships (LCSPs) to be established under the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 passed earlier this year. These will build upon the work undertaken by Joint Policing Committees to date.

The Act also introduces important measures that will further support the LCSPs, including a new National Office of Committee Safety which will in turn develop a

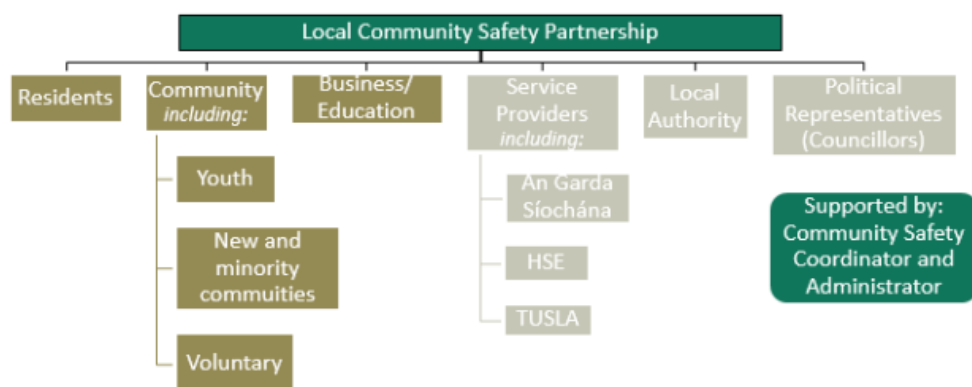


new National Strategy. This will be overseen by a designated Cabinet Committee; and a National Steering Group with officials drawn from relevant departments.

It will be open to each Partnership to consider what sub-structures will best serve the needs of their communities. This could include the establishment of area-based neighbourhood community safety for a.

Structure and membership

Local Community Safety Partnership - Structure



The Partnerships will bring all the relevant state services and the community together at local authority level. This will build on the work undertaken through Joint Policing Committees by ensuring that the other relevant stakeholders necessary to constitute a more holistic forum for discussion, decision-making and action are present.

The LCSPs will have a maximum of 30 members and membership will include: local councillors; residents; community representatives, including representatives of youth, new communities and the voluntary sector; business and education representatives; relevant public services in the area, including the HSE, Tusla, An Garda Síochána and the local authority.

In terms of membership, 20 of the 30 members will be specified in regulation, to include seven local councillors. The remaining 10 places will be appointed by the Chair of each partnership in consultation with the members, and will seek to



reflect local demographics and needs. Additional councillors can be appointed as part of these 10 places.

Each Partnership will be responsible for developing and overseeing a tailored and prioritised Local Community Safety Plan which will be informed and prioritised by the community itself in collaboration with public services.

The design of the Partnerships aligns with similar approaches in related policy areas such as the Sláintecare Healthy Communities initiative and the existing Local Community Development Committees. Each partnership will have the ability to consider the local landscape as it relates to the services already being provided, and what else is needed.

Engagement

Since 2021, this Department has undertaken an outreach programme regarding the move to Local Community Safety Partnerships. In 2022, existing JPCs members were invited to a number of webinars to engage and answer questions on the proposed new approach. In addition, departmental officials also provided LCSP information sessions to several individual JPCs across the county.

Three pilot partnerships have been running for the last two years in Longford, Waterford and Dublin North Inner City, and have been subject an independent evaluation which I am happy to report is broadly positive. The feedback which was received from Councillors who sat on the Pilot partnerships has been invaluable as we move to roll out partnerships nationwide.

The new LCSPs will meet at least once per quarter but can meet as often as considered necessary to conduct their work effectively. In addition, each partnership will be required to hold at least one closed meeting per year for all local representatives (TDs and Councillors), and a second open public meeting (which TDs and Councillors would also be entitled to attend). Furthermore, the Partnership may schedule additional meetings which would be confined to local representatives or open to the Public.



Role of the Chair

The next step in the LCSP national roll-out is the selection of a Chairperson for each Partnership. The role of the Chairperson will be to lead the work of the Local Community Safety Partnership and the Community Safety Coordinator, find consensus among the partnership's members so that a tailored local community safety plan can be developed and drive forward the implementation of the community safety plan across the community, in order that it delivers tangible benefits for the relevant community.

The learning from the independent evaluation of the LCSP pilots informs us that the role of the Chairperson is central to the Partnership. The term of appointment for the Chairperson is three years.

The Chairperson will:

- Provide leadership and strategic direction,
- Focus the LCSP on making informed decisions and solutions tailored to the needs of the specific community within which they are working,
- Develop and implement the Local Community Safety Plan in conjunction with both the community and public services, and
- Act as an advocate for the LCSP and represent the LCSP to the public, media and other stakeholders as appropriate.

An Expression of Interest process to select Chairpersons for each partnership is to take place over the coming weeks, with Chairs to be appointed during the summer. I'd like to take this opportunity to confirm once again that it is open to all local Councillors to apply for these roles.

The future of Community Safety

The new approach to Community Safety is about ensuring that all the factors that can make our communities safer are taken into account, including the provision of appropriate social services. This joined up cross agency approach can ensure that focused supports and interventions relevant to each local community are identified and then actioned service providers.



To demonstrate how I believe the partnerships will benefit communities across Ireland, I attach an information note that highlights just some of the achievement and the valuable lessons learned from the pilot partnerships.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Helen McEntee".

Helen McEntee TD

Minister for Justice