

County Laois Joint Policing Committee Meeting
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 11th September 2023 at 3.30 pm in
County Hall



Present: Deputy Brian Stanley, T.D.
Cllr Aisling Moran, Chairperson
Mr. John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Laois County Council
Cllr Padraig Fleming; Laois County Council
Cllr Paddy Bracken, Laois County Council
Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Laois County Council
Cllr James Kelly, Laois County Council
Cllr Conor Bergin, Laois County Council
Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley, Laois County Council
Cllr Seamus McDonald, Laois County Council
Cllr Ben Brennan, Laois County Council
Cllr Thomasina Connell, Laois County Council
Chief Superintendent Anthony Lonergan, AGS
Inspector Joe Culliton, AGS
Seargent Graham Kavanagh, AGS
Mr. Bobby Delaney, PPN Representative
Mr. Thomas Jones, PPN Representative
Ms. Sara Rasool, PPN Representative
Mr. Brendan Birney, IFA
Ms. Antoinette Kinsella, Midlands Drug & Alcohol Taskforce

In attendance: Ms Pamela Tynan, A/Senior Executive Officer, Laois County Council
Mr. Paul McLoughlin/Senior Engineer/Project Manager-
Capital Projects, Laois County Council
Ms. Patricia O'Rourke, A/Assistant Staff Officer, Laois County Council

Apologies: Deputy Sean Fleming TD
Mr Donal Brennan Director of Services, Laois County Council

Cllr Aisling Moran welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished our new Chief Superintendent Anthony Lonergan the best of luck in his new role.

Adoption of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr Ben Brennan and seconded by Mr. Tom Jones the minutes of the meeting held on the 12th of June 2023 were adopted.

Matters Arising

Cllr James Kelly asked AGS if it is possible to install speed over distance cameras in Laois. He noted that a pilot scheme in Tipperary that proved very successful. Cllr Kelly's comments were noted by Superintendent Anthony Lonergan.

Correspondence

Ms. Pamela Tynan advised that a letter dated 5th September 2023 from Heather Humphreys TD, Minister for Social Protection in response to JPC communication regarding Community Welfare Office in Mountmellick, was circulated to all members with the meeting papers. The contents of the letter were noted.

Report from An Garda Síochana

Chief Superintendent Anthony Lonergan gave a detailed report on crime and traffic statistics:-

- *Property Crime*: overall property crime has decreased by 29% from Q2 2022 to Q2 2023.
- *Crimes against the Person* – AGS aim is to involve multi agency response to reduce crime.
- *Criminal Damage and Public Order Offences* – there was an overall decrease in public order offences with total Criminal Damage and Public Order reducing from 251 reported incidents in Q2 2022 to 201 in Q2 2023.
- *Drugs and Weapons offences* – has increased overall with notable increase in possession of drugs for sales or supply and simple possession.
- *Traffic* – Road Safety is AGS main concern and focus for reductions in all areas. Increase in theft of vehicles and a slight decrease in theft of bicycles.
- *Domestic / Domestic disputes* – AGS would like to advise members of the public, that they take the threat of domestic abuse seriously and all calls receive a high response. AGS are looking at victim engagement and encouraging people to report incidents.

During the course of the presentation, pictures were shown of the AGS working within our communities with members acknowledging the good work officers do in the county.

AGS advised members that individual cases could not be discussed in a public forum but would enquire about the specific issues raised at the JPC meeting.

Chief superintendent Anthony Lonergan thanked everyone for their best wishes in his new role and stated the following;

- AGS aim is to engage more with the members of the Community, police within communities and be more visible.
- Garda response will be very much data driven.
- Focus on variable speed limits/personal safety and road safety.
- People need to come forward and report crimes to AGS.
- Would welcome more resources and reiterated that there will be no reductions in personnel.
- Wants to encourage a multi-agency, multi-stakeholder approach to community safety.
- Prevention led safety should be our first priority, but it requires multi-stakeholder response.

Members thanked the Chief Superintendent for his report and wished him well in his new role.

JPC Strategy – Implementation Plan Update

Ms Pamela Tynan advised that the JPC Strategy Implementation Plan was circulated to members in advance of the meeting for their attention. The update was noted.

Any Other Business

- It was noted that women from diverse cultures are afraid to report any incidents due to a fear from their own cultures. Breaking down barriers is required.
- Councillors expressed that night crimes, possession of weapons is an issue and needs to be addressed.
- Dumping at Rock of Dunamaise was brought to the attention of AGS and LCC. Ms. Tynan advised that the issue will be brought to the attention of the LCC Environment Section.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be the public JPC meeting and will be held on **Monday, 20th November 2023 at 3.30 pm** in County Hall.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Cllr. Aisling Moran
Chair of the JPC

Dated: 20th November 2023