

County Laois Joint Policing Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Held on Monday 4th March, 2019 at Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise

Present: Cllr Padraig Fleming (Chair), Chief Supt John Scanlon, Supt Aidan Fennelly, Cllr Paddy Bracken, Cllr Seamus McDonald, Cllr Paschal McEvoy, Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Cllr John Moran, Cllr John King, Cllr Tom Mulhall, Cllr David Goodwin, Cllr James Kelly, Cllr Noel Tuohy, Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley, Cllr Noel Tuohy, Deputy Sean Fleming, Deputy Brian Stanley, Mr Conor O'Leary, Ms Antoinette Kinsella, Mr Thomas Timmons, Mr Thomas Jones

In attendance: Mr John Mulholland, Chief Executive, Ms Georgina Ireland, A/Senior Executive Officer, Ms Pamela Tynan, A/Administrative Officer.

Apologies: Mr Michael Rainey, A/Director of Services, Cllr Willie Aird, Mr Patrick Fitzpatrick
Cllr Padraig Fleming welcomed all members and members of the press

Confirmation of Minutes

Upon the proposal of Cllr Seamus McDonald, seconded by Cllr John Moran, the minutes of the Laois County Joint Policing Committee meeting held on 19th November, 2018 were confirmed and signed.

Construction of Extension to Garda Station Portlaoise

Chief Supt John Scanlon gave an update on the extension to Portlaoise Garda Station. He stated that agreement has finally been reached for a likely multi-million redevelopment of the Laois Offaly Garda HQ in Portlaoise which will necessitate the building of a new facility for Irish Army in the town. The project will involve an extensive refurbishment, redevelopment and alteration of Portlaoise Garda Station and the construction of a new facility for the Irish Defence Forces. As the existing two storey main Garda block is a protected structure, it will be retained. However, extensive refurbishment work will be carried out within the historic limestone building. A new three storey Garda office block will be added as an extension to the building requiring the demolition of some existing structures. The Defence Forces currently use a hall in a site to the rear of the Garda Station. As part of the redevelopment, this entire property will form part of the new Garda facility.

Report from An Garda Síochána

Chief Supt John Scanlon presented a report on behalf of An Garda Síochána. The following matters were noted:

- There has been a decrease in the number of burglaries again in the fourth quarter of 2018.
- Crimes against the person were up slightly on the same period last year. Threat to kill or cause serious harm increased but this is due to having the prison in the jurisdiction.
- Criminal Damage and Public Order Offences were up slightly on last year.
- The number of Simple Possessions is up, but this is due to the active effect of the Drugs Unit.
- While some traffic offences were up, the overall statistics show that Traffic Crimes are down overall.

The Chief Superintendent stated that the crime statistics have been improving over the past 7 years and that this is thanks to the community, and the Gardaí. He stated that it might be difficult to bring down the figures much more. He also stated that he hopes to be in a position to send Gardaí to more stations around the county as the training period for new recruits is coming to an end in the next 6 months and new Garda recruits will be coming then. He hopes to put another Garda in Mountmellick and Clonashlee. He hopes there will no longer be one man stations in the next year.

The members thanked Chief Superintendent John Scanlon for his report and raised the following:

- The members welcomed the development of Portlaoise Garda Station.
- It was asked if the prison statistics could be removed from the statistics for Laois. It was suggested that a letter should be written to the Minister to ask him to remove these statistics.
- Could more Gardaí walk the beat on weekends as older people are afraid in the smaller towns with people selling tickets outside shops and the Post Office.

Laois County Council Report

The Chief Executive, Mr John Mulholland outlined the contents of the Laois County Council report.

JPC Annual Report 2018

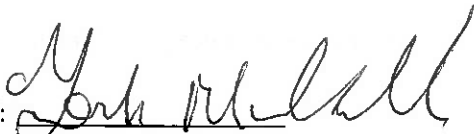
This was proposed by Cllr Paddy Bracken and seconded by Cllr James Kelly.
This report will be forwarded to the Policing Authority.

Draft Implementation Plan 2019

This was proposed by Cllr John King and seconded by Cllr Padraig Fleming.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:



Cllr Padraig Fleming
Chairperson

Dated:

14 Oct 2019