

County Laois Joint Policing Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
Held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2019 at Áras an Chontae, Portlaoise

**Present:** Cllr Tom Mulhall (Chair), Chief Supt John Scanlon, Supt Anthony Pettit, Cllr Paddy Bracken, Cllr Pádraig Fleming, Cllr Seamus McDonald, Cllr Paschal McEvoy, Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Cllr Aidan Mullins, Cllr John King, Cllr Ben Brennan, Cllr Conor Bergin, Cllr Thomasina Connell, Cllr Aisling Moran, Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley, Mr Sean Fleming TD, Mr Brian Stanley TD, Mr Bobby Delaney, Mr Thomas Jones, Ms Sinead Gleeson

**In attendance:** Mr John Mulholland Chief Executive, Mr Donal Brennan Director of Service, Ms Pamela Tynan A/Administrative Officer, Ms Rose Doolin, Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Ms Orla Barrett, Senior Executive Officer, Ms Sara Rasool, Ms Antoinette Kinsella, Mr Conor O'Leary

The first part of the meeting was held in committee to consider a request from the IFA to have a member on the JPC. It was proposed by Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley and seconded by Cllr John King that the IFA be invited to the next meeting.

Cllr Tom Mulhall (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and he was congratulated by members of the committee on his appointment.

#### **Confirmation of Minutes of Meetings**

Upon the proposal of Cllr Paddy Bracken and seconded by Cllr John King the minutes of the meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> March 2019 were confirmed and signed.

Upon the proposal of Cllr John King and seconded by Cllr Pádraig Fleming the minutes of the Meeting to Elected a Chairperson of the Joint Policing Committee were confirmed and signed.

#### **Matters Arising**

The position of extra Gardaí for Mountmellick and Clonaslee was raised. The Chief Supt John Scanlon stated that a new member of An Garda Síochána had been appointed to Mountmellick. The appointment to Mountmellick should allow the Garda in Clonaslee to be in a position to deal with matters in Clonaslee on a full time basis. He stated that he had expected to receive 10 extra Gardaí but the 10 Gardaí were sent to Drogheda and this was beyond his control. He advised that there was a Sergeant and 4 Gardaí in Mountmellick and 3 Sergeants and 14 Gardaí in Portarlinton. He is hoping to get extra Gardaí in the next 3 months. He advised that this is all based on where the need is. Brexit may also affect the extra resources.

Cllr Ben Brennan enquired if Gardaí from Carlow could attend to calls in Graiguecullen/Killeslin area as many members of the community are worried about the lack of Gardaí in this area. Chief Supt John Scanlon said that he is working with his counterpart in the Carlow/Wexford area and that there is no issue with Carlow Gardaí attending incidents in the Graiguecullen/Killeslin area.

The matter of Gardaí doing paper work in stations was brought up and the Chief Supt stated that no Gardaí are assigned to desk duty except for 3 who are injured or sick. He stated that he will get figures for the number of members of the public who attend Garda Stations during the week and bring it to the next meeting.

Cllr Tom Mulhall stated that he never has a problem getting a call answered in Portarlinton. Cllr Paddy Bracken stated that the feedback on the Gardaí in Mountmellick is very positive and looks forward to an increase in numbers.

#### **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 numbers of burglaries again in quarters 1,2 and 3 of this year. However, there was a slight rise in the number of aggravated burglaries. He stated that of the 5 burglaries, all have been solved and are now before the courts. Domestic burglary is down 33%.

- Crimes against the person were up slightly on the same period last year. It should be noted that some of these crimes are committed in the prison.
- Criminal Damage and Public Order Offences were up slightly. This is in part due to drunkenness offences and public order offences.
- Drugs and Weapons offences – cultivation or manufacture of drugs and possession of drugs for sale or supply were down while simple possession was up.
- Intoxicated driving of a vehicles are up due to greater detection by Gardai. Traffic Collision with material damage only were up but non serious injury was down.

The Chief Supt stated that crime is down by ¼ over the past year but has fell significantly in the last few years. He stated that there are 3 types of criminals. Homegrown criminals who are in urban areas. Criminals coming from bigger urban areas and non national travelling criminals who come for short stays from abroad. He also advised that there were arrests last week in connection with bogus trade men offering to do work. He advised that people should be cautious when dealing with these calls.

The Chief Superintendent stated that he is now over Kildare, Laois and Offaly and that the headquarters would be in Portlaoise as this is the most central position especially with the presence of a prison.

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

- Cllr Mulhall welcomed the Garda Headquarters coming to Portlaoise.
- The reduction in crime overall was welcomed.
- They enquired about the numbers for drunk driving and for driving under the influence of drugs.
- They also enquired if they could have a breakdown on the number of assaults in the prison and those from the night time economy and those on a daily basis.
- Cllr Dwane Stanley enquired about CCTV for the Mountmellick Road.

#### **Laois County Council Report**

A query on the second point of this report was raised in respect of letters required by Donaghmore Community Alert in relation to community CCTV. It was agreed that this letter would be issued. There was a fear that grant money for Community CCTV from the Department would expire at the end of the year. Cllr Conor Bergin stated that the Minister for Justice & Equality hoped to announce an extension to this scheme in the near future.

Donal Brennan informed the members that a Federation has been formed for the CCTV and that there are 13 members of the federation.

Members of the Federation are as follows:

1. Dunmore Community Alert
2. Shanahoe Community Alert
3. Borris in Ossory Community Alert
4. Ratheniska Community Alert
5. Camross Community Alert
6. Woodenbridge Community Alert
7. Mountmellick Community Alert
8. Donaghmore Community Alert
9. Clonaslee Community Alert
10. Mountrath Community Alert
11. Castletown Community Alert
12. Cuddagh Community Alert
13. Rosenallis Community Alert

#### **Approval of Community CCTV Scheme**

On the proposal of Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr Paschal McEvoy, Ratheniska Community Alert CCTV Phase 2 was approved

On the proposal of Deputy Brian Stanley and seconded by Cllr John King approval was granted for the 13 Community Alert Schemes as listed above.

#### **JPC Strategy Implementation Plan 2019 – Update on Actions**

On the proposal of Cllr Padraig Fleming and seconded by Cllr John King it was taken as having been read. One query was raised by Cllr Aidan Mullins in respect of Strategic Objective 1, Action 6 in respect of Community Gardaí. The Chief Superintendent stated that it would not be fully implemented until the latter half of 2020. There is a unit in Portlaoise but that he considered every Garda to be a Community Garda.

#### **Proposed dates for meetings in 2020**

- 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 10.00 am
- 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 at 10.00 am
- 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020 at 10.00 am
- 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 (Public Meeting) at 3.30 pm

#### **Any Other Business**

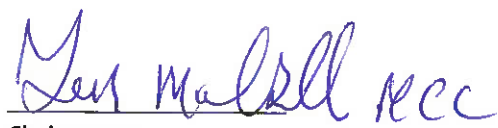
On the recommendation from the meeting held in committee at the start of the meeting on the proposal of Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley and seconded by Cllr John King, that a seat on the Joint Policing Committee be given to a representative of the IFA.

#### **Time and Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting, which is a public meeting will be held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2019 at 3.30pm.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed:

  
Chairperson

Dated:

