

County Laois Joint Policing Committee
Minutes of Meeting
Held on Monday 6th July, 2020 at Dunamaise Arts Theatre, Portlaoise

Present: Cllr Tom Mulhall (Chair), Supt Anthony Pettit, Cllr Paddy Fleming, Cllr Paddy Bracken, Cllr Seamus McDonald, Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald, Cllr Aidan Mullins, Cllr John King, Cllr. Paddy Bracken, Cllr Ben Brennan, Cllr Conor Bergin, Cllr Thomasina Connell, Cllr Aisling Moran, Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley, Mr Brian Stanley TD, Mr Bobby Delaney, Mr Thomas Jones, Mr Conor O'Leary, Ms Sara Geraldine Rasool, Mr Brendan Birney

In attendance: Mr Donal Brennan Director of Service, Ms Carmel McNicholl, Senior Executive Officer, Ms Elaine Moore, Senior Staff Officer, Ms Emma O'Connor, Laois County Council,

Apologies: John Mulholland, C.E., Chief Supt John Scanlon, Garda Joe Culliton, Mr Sean Fleming TD, Cllr Paschal McEvoy, , Ms Antoinette Kinsella

Cllr Tom Mulhall (Chair) welcomed everyone to the July meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes of Meetings

Upon the proposal of Cllr Seamus McDonald and seconded by Mr Bobby Delaney the minutes of the meeting of 18th November 2019 were confirmed and signed.

Matters Arising

None

Cllr Tom Mulhall introduced Brendan Birney, new member of the Committee representing Laois IFA and welcomed the important contribution the farming community can make to the JPC.

Cllr Mulhall expressed his condolences to the family friends and colleagues of Garda Colm Horkins, the family of Betty Peters and the Brophy family, Ballybrittas and a minutes silence was held.

Catherine Fitzgerald, Tom Jones, Deputy Brian Stanley, John King, Paddy Bracken, Paddy Fleming Conor O'Leary and Caroline Dwane Stanley wished to be associated with the expression of sympathy. Supt Anthony Pettit acknowledged the appreciation of AGS with regard to the expressions of sympathy for Garda Horkins and the Peters family.

Caroline Dwane Stanley also expressed her sympathy to the Colbert and Wheeler family (Mountmellick).

Report from An Garda Siochana

Supt Anthony Pettit gave an update with statistics for the first two quarters of 2020. He stated that Property Crime was down by 31% and Aggravated Burglary was down by 60% and theft from person decreased by 75% . In respect of Crimes against the Person there is a reduction overall of 25% however within this there was an increase in Domestic Violence. Criminal Damage and Public Order(including Covid non compliance offences) is down by 15%.

Drugs and Weapons Offences have increased by 14% but there have been some significant seizures.

Traffic Crime including Intoxication down by 35% Laois Fatalities are at zero and overall trends are significantly better than National comparisons.

The members thanked Supt Pettit and sought clarification and further detail on the following:

- a) Is there a decentralisation of major drug players out of Dublin and into Laois?
- b) Are there adequate resources?
- c) Is there a problem with young people late teens /early twenties organising parties as we emerge out of Covid?
- d) What is the drugs/drink ratio for those caught intoxicated whilst driving?
- e) Reinvigorating of Community Alert Groups and how to set up a new Group?
- f) How to educate drivers into slowing down and better behaviours around pedestrians in rural areas?
- g) Bicycle education needed to be addressed , some are cycling on footpaths with no care to pedestrians.
- h) Have incidents of Domestic Violence increased and how they were/are dealt with during Covid emergency.
- i) Are mental health issues contributory factor?
- j) Comment on Possession of Firearms figures?

Supt Anthony Pettit clarified and provided further detail on each of the issues raised.

The members complimented an Garda Siochana on the excellent work done throughout the Covid Emergency and the sensitive handling of Road Blocks and also their dealing with families effected by suicide.

Approval of Community CCTV schemes

The approval of Raheen Community group CCTV scheme was proposed by Deputy Brian Stanley and seconded by Paddy Bracken.

The question of CCTV cameras was raised by Deputy Stanley and in particular the level of detailed paperwork that is required by the Council to comply with GDPR and Data Protection Regulations. Donal Brennan DOS clarified that for Community CCTV schemes, the Council as Data controller must ensure that Data is stored in a secure manner and is collected in a manner compliant with GDPR, as provided for in law. The Council is in correspondence with various Community Alert Groups in order to progress the matter. Meetings will be held with representatives from individual CCTV groups with both the Council and the Gardai in attendance, the first of which is scheduled for 7th July2020.

It was agreed that a progress report be available for the next JPC meeting.

JPC Annual Report 2019

Report was circulated and the contents noted as read.

JPC Strategy- Draft Implementation Plan 2020

Plan was circulated and the contents noted and agreed as read.

Any other Business

Conor O'Leary suggested a review of Community Alert Group operations be undertaken, as COVID had interrupted the normal engagement process. A small working group with himself, Garda representation and Community Alert representation be established. He will progress same in consultation with AGS.

John King sought clarification about Private Property rights and the public accessing same.

Bobby Delaney sought confirmation of where the proceeds of CAB liquidated assets go.

Tom Mulhall noted that Commissioner Harris would attend the next meeting of the Laois Joint Policing Committee in September.

Date for next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 21st September 2020.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Dated: _____