

COMHAIRLE CHONTE NA GAILLIMHE

**Minutes of the Galway County Joint Policing Committee Meeting held in Áras an Chontae,
Prospect Hill, Galway on Monday, 9th July 2018**

I LATHAIR:

Council Members: Cllr. Peter Roche (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. Michael Connolly
Cllr. Aidan Donohue
Comh. Seosamh O’Cualain
Cllr. Noel Thomas
Cllr. Joe Byrne
Cllr. Mary Hoade
Cllr. Michael Maher
Cllr. James Charity

Deputies: Deputy Noel Grealish
Deputy Anne Rabbitte
Deputy Catherine Connolly

An Garda Síochána: Chief Supt. Thomás Curley
Supt. Seán Glynn
Sgt. Peter Conlon

Community Reps: Mr. Aodán MacDonncha
Mr. Gerard Costello

Oifigigh: Ms. E. Dolan, A/Senior Executive Officer, Corporate Services.
Ms. Marian Donohue, Meetings Administrator, Corporate Services.

Apologies: Supt. Ernie Whyte
Cllr. Malachy Noone
Cllr. Tom Healy
Cllr. Eileen Mannion
Cllr. Shaun Cunniffe
Cllr. Donagh Killilea
Cllr. Frank Kearney
Mr. Tom Madden
Ms. Cathy Ni Ghoill

Introduction and Welcome by the Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Peter Roche

Cllr. Peter Roche, Cathaoirleach of the JPC, opened the meeting and welcomed the members from An Garda Síochána, Oireachtas members, Galway County Council Elected Members, Galway County Council officials, community representative and the members of the press who inform the public of the meetings business, and acknowledged the apologies received. He welcomed Mr. Patrick Clavin, Chief Bureau Officer, and Mr. Tom Lynch, of the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB).

Item No. 1 – Minutes of the JPC Meeting held on 30th April 2018:

On the proposal of Comh. Ó'Cualáin, seconded by Mr. MacDhonncha, it was agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 30th April 2018 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

Arising from the Minutes, Cllr. Hoade thanked the Gardaí on the management of the traffic and safety for the Ed Sheeran concert which took place on 12 & 13th May in Salthill. Deputy Rabbitte concurred.

Deputy Grealish acknowledged the active role taken by An Garda Síochána and the Council with regard to illegal dumping over the years, which was now chronic all over the County. He advised the Meeting that he had raised this serious issue of illegal dumping with Minister Denis Naughten, Communications, Climate Change and Environment and proposed that legislation be amended so that Gardaí could have the power to seize vehicles if the owner was caught carrying out illegal dumping. He said that such a move was the only way to tackle indiscriminate and repeated dumping of waste at many locations throughout the county to include the N84 Galway to Headford road.

In response, Chief Supt. Curley advised that the Gardaí act as Authorised Officers, under the Litter Pollution Act 1997, and can prosecute for offences detected. He said the proposal to allow the Gardaí to seize and store vehicles would need to be considered in terms of the cost to the state of the long-term storage of these vehicles.

Cllr. Byrne referred to his motion proposed at the February 2018 Plenary Council Meeting where the Motion required that a connection be made between the Local Property Tax and their registered waste collection payment confirmation, so when a householder goes to pay their Local Property Tax, they must produce payment confirmation for waste collection from a registered waste provider.

Cllr. Hoade advised that the Crime Prevention/Personal Safety and the Illegal Dumping/Litter Awareness Sub Committees had a joint meeting and said both Committees wished to issue a strong message to the public that householders should not give their waste to a Waste

Collector who does not have a permit and if a bogus collector does call to one's property, the householder should come forward and report those bogus collectors, who have no permit or licence and are taking payment from householders but then illegally disposing of the rubbish.

Cllr. Hoade said that illegal dumping is a very serious issue and said the Community Wardens and the Environment Section work hard to identify culprits and arrange clean-ups but the support of each individual to be the 'eyes and ears' for the community is required and they should report any illegal activity, as there cannot be CCTV at every location.

Deputy Rabbitte expressed her disappointment at the unsatisfactory lack of response to the public following concerns raised by them regarding illegal dumping in their area and referred to Derrew Crossroads in Killimor, where trailer loads of are being dumped illegally in the area. She queried the procedure in place regarding follow up of complaints made with respect to illegal dumping.

Cllr. Roche acknowledged the noticeable effort made by the JPC and the Sub Committees in this area. He acknowledged the investment by the Department and the Council in the identification and clean-up of litter blackspots and said progress had been made in many areas because of this funding. He advised that he attended a Policing Authority National Consultation event in Dublin last week and said he was heartened that Galway County JPC was one of the most productive in dealing with illegal dumping. He said that Cllr. Maher would provide an update from the recent Joint Sub Committee meeting held and the proposals for the coming year.

Cllr. Thomas requested the presence of another full-time Garda in the Maigh Cuilinn/Oughterard area due to the large area that must be covered. In reply, the Chief Supt. advised that additional Garda placements to an area were considered based on priority, crime figures and population increases. He explained that Maigh Cuillin was part of the District of Salthill and additional assistance could be provided from Salthill, when required, in addition to the full-time person already in place in Maigh Cuilinn. Regarding Oughterard, he said that due a retirement in that area, a Garda would be transferred to Oughterard in the coming weeks and it was hoped that a second Garda would also be appointed and Oughterard could provide assistance to the Garda in Maigh Cuilinn as required.

PRESENTATION by Mr. Patrick Clavin, CAB:

Cllr. Roche introduced Chief Supt. Patrick Clavin, Chief Bureau Officer, Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) who presented a briefing to the Members on the Criminal Assets Bureau.

Chief Supt. Clavin said that the Criminal Assets Bureau (CAB) was established in 1996 and its aim was to identify the criminally acquired assets of persons and to take the appropriate action to seize these assets. He confirmed that CAB was a separate statutory body that

worked alongside An Garda Síochána, Dept. of Revenue, Dept. of Social Protection and Dept. of Justice. He explained that following government legislation in 2016, the threshold used by CAB to seize assets was reduced from €13,000 to €5,000. He said that CAB have a commitment to examine how communities could better engage with CAB including the provision of information on the suspected local use of the proceeds of crime. He asked that communities report any suspected assets to CAB and all information will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Chief Supt. Clavin said to provide context there were 800 targets countrywide with 50% within the Greater Dublin Area and 50% outside with a total of 19 investigations (8 full investigations and 11 preliminary investigations) in the Galway area.

Deputy Grealish thanked Chief Supt. Clavin for the presentation and asked if CAB could deal with foreign criminals. In reply, Chief Supt. Clavin advised that CAB could operate within or outside the country and advised that it worked with and was an active member of the Camden Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network (CARIN).

In reply to Cllr. Thomas, Chief Supt. Clavin advised that the same tax code applied to all persons is applied to criminal earnings, in that tax, interest and penalties could be applied to criminal assets and it was classed as miscellaneous earnings.

Cllr. Thomas asked if it was productive to undertake investigations for low level of assets in region of €5000. In response, Chief Supt. Clavin said that the pursuance of smaller cases may be effective to stop operations progressing on a larger scale in the future.

Cllr. Charity asked if the value of assets sold would be a better indicator of CAB's return to the Exchequer, Chief Supt. Clavin disagreed and said that the best measure on the return to Exchequer would be the number of cases that CAB had taken on and explained that if it was measured in value, CAB would only seek the larger cases.

In reply to Comh. Ó'Cualáin, Chief Supt. Clavin advised there were 9 Divisional Asset Profilers working in the Galway division. He explained that nationally there were 6 teams made up of Officers from the Garda Síochána; the Revenue Commissioners; and the Department of Social Protection. He said that there was a strong training programme in place for the Divisional Asset Profilers. With regard to Deputy Rabbitte's query on staffing, Chief Supt. Clavin, advised that there were 71 authorised officers in place in 2017, which included members from An Garda Síochána, the Revenue Commissioners; Department of Social Protection, and the Chief State Solicitors Office, together with other specialist officers including IT staff, administration staff, forensic analysts and financial analysts. He said as the business grows, consideration will be given to the requirement of additional resources.

Item No. 2 – Reports from Sub Committees:

Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Sub Committee & Illegal Dumping & Litter Awareness Sub Committee

The Chair of the Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Sub Committee, Cllr. Mary Hoade, advised the Meeting that a Joint Sub Committee meeting was held on 29th June 2018 and suggestions were considered where both Committees could work together to meet objectives from their 2018 work plans.

Cllr. Michael Maher, Chair of the Illegal Dumping & Litter Awareness Sub Committee, explained that six items/areas were planned for 2018.

1. **Illegal Dumping:** The Sub Committee considered and identified black spot dumping areas with 7 areas being identified to focus on the eradication of illegal dumping in 2018.
2. **Fast food waste:** The Committee have worked with Mr. Pat McDonagh, Supermacs, regarding the issue of packaging of the food produce and how to reduce same.
3. **CCTV:** The Environment Enforcement Team have initiated the installation of boxes containing cameras and additional empty decoy boxes on poles in isolated areas to combat illegal dumping.
4. **Checkpoints:** The Enforcement team from Environment Section, in conjunction with the Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority (WERLA), have set up a Multiagency committee to combat illegal waste activities for the West Region. The first project to be considered was the setup of Roadside check points, to be carried out in consultation with Inspector Tom Waters.
5. **Pilot Scheme:** Suggestions were made by the Sub Committees in relation to pilot schemes which might be considered over the next 6 months to combat illegal dumping.
6. **RTÉ Investigates:** The *RTÉ Investigates* programme was discussed and the need for additional resources for enforcement in Galway County Council was raised.

In respect of Anti-Litter and Illegal dumping initiatives, Cllr. Maher said that grant funding of €82,000 had been made available to Galway County Council. He explained that high risk areas have been identified by the Sub Committee and it is proposed to install CCTV in these areas, following consultation with each Municipal District area.

Cllr. Maher said an element of the Cleaner Greener Galway campaign, which was launched last year, was for the Sub Committee to advance the communication with Fast Food outlets to reduce wrapping on fast food. He said that members of the Illegal Dumping Committee had met with Mr. Pat McDonagh last year, to discuss the reduction on fast food packaging and last week Supermacs announced that their *Glan agus Glas* (Clean and Green) initiative would be extended to all their restaurants. He said the project, which had an initial pilot in

Westport, allowed the introduction of 100% recyclable cups, paper straws and biodegradable burger wraps in all its restaurants, with dispensers to be rolled out for sachets and napkins within outlets. He said that 'Green Teams' were to be established in each outlet as part of a major initiative to 'Go Green'. He said this was an invaluable initiative supported by the JPC and should be rolled nationally by all fast food firms.

In reply to Deputy Rabbitte, Mr. Maher said that consideration was given to areas identified as high risk with an initial 7 areas identified but explained that the additional areas could be considered. He said that the identified areas would be brought before each Municipal District for their consideration.

Cllr. Byrne said he welcomed the initiative by Supermacs to help clean up public areas. He said this would place an additional cost on the company but it displayed that Pat & Una McDonagh, owners, wished to support their community. He said this significant initiative and the other initiatives proposed showed that the Sub Committees of the JPC were focused in cleaning up their communities.

Cllr. Roche said that there was engagement between the local community and the Council and referred to a recent clean up organised by the Environment Enforcement Team held outside Tuam where locals were anxious to get involved for the betterment of their area.

Education and Awareness Sub Committee

Cllr. Aidan Donohue, Chair of the Education and Awareness Sub Committee, advised that the meeting arranged for last Friday did not go ahead and was to be rescheduled but said the Sub Committee was working on its 2018 workplan actions.

Item No. 3 – Report from An Garda Síochána:

Chief Supt. Tom Curley outlined the Garda Report for the period 1st January 2018 to 30th June 2018, in comparison to the same period in 2017.

Regarding Property Crime – Burglary figure, Chief Supt. Curley said this had increased by 5% but expressed concern that there was a huge increase of 43% on the theft from MPV (mechanically propelled vehicle) which was a concern. He said theft from shop was down 14% with other theft up 1% on the same period last year.

Cllr. Hoade expressed concern about the increase in the theft from burglaries. She said that people needed to be always vigilant and said that the Text/Community Alert schemes were vital to make people more aware. Cllr. Byrne asked if the increase in burglaries related to urban areas or rural dwellings. In reply, Chief Supt. Curley said there had been an increase of

burglaries where vans were being targeted with tools being taken and said that construction site owners/management needed to be cautious as it had occurred that criminals were entering construction sites in hi-vis jackets/hard hats to blend in with the environment and tools were being stolen. Chief Supt. Curley expressed the need for people to be vigilant and take ownership of their property and not leave vehicles doors unlocked with property on display in vehicles, as this was the cause of between 70-90% of the burglaries. He referred to a crime gang from Offaly that undertook 20 thefts in one night but were arrested in Galway City.

Chief Supt. Curley said the figure for sale or supply was up for up in comparison to the first six months of 2017 and he outlined the value of the drugs seized for the first six months of the year. He referred to the Drugs Unit established in Ballinasloe over a year ago which had made notable success in the fight against illegal drugs.

Chief Supt. Curley advised that speeding offences were down 44%. He explained while this was welcomed, he explained that the 'Gatso' van was no longer in the Galway Division which could have had an effect on the figures. Chief Supt. Curley referred to the 38% decrease in driving without insurance and the 10% decrease in drunk driving offences, compared to this time last year, and said that in the previous 10 days there had been 10 offences which was unacceptable.

Comh. O'Cualain referred to the reduction in the number of fatal accidents over the past 13/14 years and acknowledged the efforts made by the Gardaí, the RSA, the public and other agencies. He referenced stats from the *European Transport Safety Council -ETSC* and said that in 2004/2005, Ireland was the 6th worse country and now is the 5th best in the EU. He said this reduction was not reflected in the cost of motor insurance which had increased astronomically, with people being quoted €6,400 for insurance. He asked that the Oireachtas members raise this serious issue in the Dáil as it affected rural Ireland a lot more than Dublin, which had more accessible public transport options. Chief Supt. Curley said that one fatal accident was one too many, and one cannot become complacent.

Cllr. Charity concurred and said nothing had emerged from the EU Competition Authority on insurance company offices. He expressed dissatisfaction that Insurance Companies were to fund a new Garda Fraud Unit and said this Unit which would investigate false insurance claims would appear to be a conflict of interest. In response, Chief Supt. Curley explained that the Garda's function in this area is to monitor non-compliance and could not comment on insurance companies. He said that the continuance of checkpoints and Garda visibility can assist in keeping this figure in the decrease.

With respect to the driving without insurance figures, Cllr. Hoade queried the age profile of persons behind these figures. Chief Supt. Curley said the breakdown was not currently available but the post of crime data analyst for the Galway Division had been advertised and more data may be available following the filling of this post.

In reply to Cllr. Hoade's query re parking at Pearse Stadium, Chief Supt. Curley advised that there needed to be a balance and common sense approach taken but advised that people cannot park illegally.

Chief Supt. Curley referred to the 14% decrease in public order offences and the 4% decrease in breach of barring/safety/protection orders, compared to this time last year.

With regard to the 14% decrease in domestic disputes – no offence disclosed, Deputy Connolly, referred to an audit report under Section 12 of the Child Care Act 1991 by Dr. Geoffrey Shannon, and sought clarification on the timeline for implementation of the recommendations from this report. She said the report praised the work of An Garda Síochána but expressed concern that the recommendations from the report were still being discussed at National level.

In reply, Chief Supt. Curley said that the recommendations were being examined and were achievable but formal guidance from the Garda Commissioners' office was awaited. He referred to the recommendations from Dr. Geoffrey Shannon's report which included the undertaking of a Risk Assessment and said that on receipt of a referral, an independent risk assessment would be undertaken by a Detective Sergeant who would be the 'contact' and included as part of the decision-making process. He said comprehensive training on child protection would be provided as part of the Garda training programme and the Pulse system was being upgraded to facilitate recording of information, along with the production of a laminated card for every member of the Gardaí, and all Garda vehicles would be equipped with child safety belts and car seats in accordance with the law. He said a timeframe could not be given, as a clear Policy Directive would need to be issued by the Garda Commissioner to all Garda Districts.

In reply to Deputy Rabbitte and Deputy Connolly's query if there were plans by the Gardaí and Tusla to pilot in the new Garda Division HQ the set-up of an out-of-hours Specialist Child Protection Unit, the Chief Supt. advised that it was envisaged that a Specialist Child Protection Unit would be established in the new Garda HQ in Q4, under the direction of Deputy Supt. Declan Daly with staffing of 2 Detective Sergeants and 14 Gardaí.

Regarding the domestic incidents figures in the Garda report, Deputy Connolly explained that the figure was at odds to the National figures which had increased and was at a worrying level in Ireland. In response to Deputy Connolly, Chief Supt. Curley said that the figures related to the first six months of 2018 which were reported and included on the PULSE system. He said that the Gardaí had a clear policy in relation to Domestic Violence and was satisfied that the Galway Garda Division was fully implementing this policy.

Deputy Rabbitte sought clarification on the omission of figures re the number of children affected under Section 12 of the Childcare Act. She asked that this figure be included in future reports. In reply, Chief Supt. Curley clarified that the Garda Crime Analyst had expressed

concern and advised against the release of this sensitive information at JPC Meetings. He explained that as outlined in the Joint Policing Guidelines 2014 and the County Galway JPC Strategic Plan 2015-2021, the role of the County Galway Joint Policing Committee was to provide a forum where the Committee could meet to consult, discuss and making recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area and to identify, raise awareness of, and find solutions for, issues impacting on, or causing concern for the local community such as crime prevention, anti-social behaviour, drug abuse, personal safety, road safety and the environment. He said that the stats requested does not come under the remit of the JPC. Deputy Rabbitte noted the response but said it was regrettable that the voice of the child could not be included on the JPC's reports.

Cllr. M. Connolly sought clarification on the future of a Garda presence in Moylough as the Garda Station building was for sale. In reply, Chief Supt. Curley explained that the building was up for sale but the Gardaí had a lease on this property until 30/06/2022. He said that an expression of interest to purchase the building had been forwarded to the Garda Housing Section in Dublin and a reply was awaited from the OPW. He clarified that a Garda presence would remain in Moylough.

In reply to Deputy Connolly, Chief Supt. Curley advised that the recent Garda recruitment campaign included an additional Irish language stream where it was a requirement that 20% of all new recruits would have proficiency in the Irish language. He said he was committed that vacancies in Gaeltacht areas would be filled by Gardaí proficient in Irish. He added that while the Salthill Garda Station was not in the Gaeltacht area, it would be his intention that a service, as Gaelige, could be provided for a number of hours each day. He also hoped that the Traffic Unit in Gaeltacht areas would have an Irish speaking Garda member.

In reply to Comh. O'Cualáin, Chief Supt. Curley outlined that that some positions had become vacant in the West but advised that the post at Rosmuc had now been filled, with a proposed assignment to Maam, and it was hoped to send an additional Garda to Carna and Carraroe. He said there was a vacancy at Recess but explained that it was important that an experienced Garda, with Irish, would be placed in a Sub District and it was important that a rotational system was implemented for placements in the Islands.

In response to Deputy Grealish's query on additional manpower and vehicles, Chief Supt. Curley advised that 5 new recruits were to start in the Galway Division within the coming weeks. He said following the successful promotion of many Gardaí to the post of Garda Sergeant, there will be approx. 15 vacancies at Garda level. He said that over 20 probation Gardaí would be arriving into the Galway District in autumn. In addition, he said it was hoped that there would be a Public Order Van in each of the towns in the coming months.

Cllr. Thomas asked if the new HQ would assist in improved Garda patrols for the county and city and would its opening affect the Millstreet Garda Station. In reply, Chief Supt. Curley advised that it was hoped that the new Galway Division HQ at Murrough, Renmore, would be

opening on Monday 16th July 2018. He said that the public office hours would be extended from 7am to 10pm and the HQ would have 13 detention cells. He said the opening of this HQ would not result in the closure of the Millstreet Garda Station as there was a requirement for a City Centre Garda Station. He said it was hoped that any Units which was currently in rented accommodation could be accommodated within the new HQ. He expressed an invitation to the JPC Meeting to hold their October meeting in the new Garda HQ.

4. Any Other Business

Cllr. Thomas referred to an incident which involved a hit-and-run and said no Text Alert was sent out despite the presence of two Garda members. Chief Supt. Curley said he would take the comment on board and bring up at the next Garda Management Team Meeting.

Chief Supt. Curley outlined that a Government proposal was to introduce a new Divisional Policing Model with 4 pilot Divisions to be set up to include Cork City, Dublin South Central, Mayo and Galway. He said that the Governments view was that there were too many Districts and that a divisional model where responsibilities would be allocated on a functional rather than geographical basis, would ensure that a better relationship with communities was maintained within large rural divisions.

In response to Comh. O’Cualain’s query re Clifden, Chief Supt. Curley congratulated Sgt. Ernie Whyte on his recent promotion and advised that his new role would be in the District HQ as Regional Crime Superintendent. He clarified that the Superintendent in Salthill would now have operational control over the Clifden district while the Superintendent in Ballinasloe would also oversee Tuam. He explained that Governance and Strategic Policing would now be undertaken for the Galway District in the Galway HQ in Murrough and said the 6 Superintendents in the Galway District would be assigned Divisional roles rather than responsibility for a broad range of issues in a geographical area. He said the new Model would improve services to the public and gave a greater presence of Gardaí on the ground rather than undertaking administration roles. Chief Supt. Curley outlined that a Superintendent/Inspector would also be appointed with responsibility for community engagement. Chief Supt. Curley said that he would provide a presentation to the JPC Committee at the next meeting.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all that attended the meeting and it was AGREED that the next meeting would take place in the new Galway Garda HQ at 10am on 15th October 2018.

CRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINIÚ ANSIN.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach County Galway Joint Policing Committee

Date: _____

20/9/2018