

COMHAIRLE CHONTE NA GAILLIMHE

Minutes of the Galway County Joint Policing Committee Meeting held in Regional Garda HQ Murrough, Galway on Monday, 11th February 2019

I LATHAIR:

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

Deputies: Deputy Catherine Connolly

An Garda Síochána: Chief Supt. Thomás Curley
Supt. Seán Glynn
Supt. Damien Ó’Flannacháin
Supt. Sean Colleran
Insp. Declan Rocke
Sgt. Peter Conlon

Community Reps: Mr. Gerard Larkin
Mr. Aodán MacDonncha
Mr. Gerard Costello
Mr. Tom Madden

Oifigigh: Ms. Marian Donohue, Meetings Administrator, Corporate Services.

Other: Ms. Karen Shelly, Policing Authority.
Ms. Ann Dolan, Environment Enforcement Section.

Apologies: Deputy Noel Grealish
Deputy Anne Rabbitte
Cllr. Frank Kearney
Cllr. Eileen Mannion
Cllr. Malachy Noone
Mr. Pat Flanagan
Ms. Cathy Ni Ghoill
Supt. Aidan Foley
Mr. Alan Farrell, A/Director of Service

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 member, Galway County Council Elected Members, Galway County Council officials, community representatives and members of the press who inform the public of the meetings business, and acknowledged the apologies received.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Ms. Karen Shelly, Policing Authority who will be observing the meeting.

Congratulations / Condolences

The Cathaoirleach of the JPC, Cllr. Roche, congratulated Oranmore Maree Hurling Club on their All-Ireland Club Intermediate hurling success yesterday.

The Cathaoirleach extended his condolences to Cllr. Donagh Killilea and the Killilea family on the passing of his father, Mark.

Condolences were expressed by Cllr. M. Maher to Cllr. Eileen Mannion and family on the passing of Brendan Mullen.

Item No. 1 – Minutes of the JPC Meeting held on 15th October 2018:

On the proposal of Cllr. Byrne, seconded by Cllr. Maher, it was agreed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 15th October 2018 be adopted.

Item No. 2 – Reports from Sub Committees:

Illegal Dumping & Litter Awareness Sub Committee

The Chair of the Illegal Dumping & Litter Awareness Sub Committee, Cllr. Michael Maher, Chair outlined the areas considered at the Sub Committee's meeting held on 6th February 2019.

1. **Illegal Dumping:** Cllr. Maher said that efforts between the local authority and An Garda Síochána against illegal dumping was continuing with the message that illegal dumping would not be tolerated and he confirmed that cases were now being brought to court for illegal dumping, with fines applied.
2. **Clean Ups & CCTV:** Cllr. Maher said that the grant funding of €82,000 received in 2018 by Galway County Council was used to undertake clean ups in the high-risk areas, identified by the Sub Committee, and CCTV cameras had been installed to deter further illegal dumping.

Cllr. Maher expressed concern with the difficulty by the Council obtaining information from the company who installed the CCTV cameras due to GDPR.

3. Fast food waste: Cllr. Maher said that Supermacs, were continuing to roll out their *Glan agus Glas* (Clean and Green) initiative in all its outlets.
4. 'Good Friday – Clean Up Day': Cllr. Maher said the Sub Committee would like to pursue a 'Clean Galway - Clean Up Day' similar to the initiative undertaken in Limerick each Good Friday since 2015. He explained that the initiative was spearheaded by Limerick City and County Councils, with the support of An Garda Síochána, Waste Collectors and Tidy Town Groups, with over 10,000 participating in the one day clean up. He said the Sub Committee would discuss same with the Director of Services for Planning & Environment.

Mr. Tom Madden welcomed the 'Good Friday – Clean Up Day' initiative and complimented the work undertaken by Tidy Towns Committees, the Probation service, Solás Schemes in local towns and villages. He said training and education around waste and dumping was vital in Schools.

Cllr. Thomas expressed concern that community and voluntary groups would be prevented from undertaking clean-ups on any major roads with a speed limit greater than 80km per hour, and traffic volumes greater than 1,000 vehicles per day. He explained that new rules and regulations '*Process Flow for Voluntary & Community Groups*' was circulated to community groups recently which outlined that works on minor roads would be assessed on a case by case basis and an application must be made attaching the appropriate insurance level, health and safety documentation, confirmation of safety courses undertaken by the volunteers and appropriate signage and equipment. He commended the community and voluntary groups who keep control of illegal dumping in an area, and provide other maintenance work which was essential for an area as the Council does not have the resources.

Deputy Connolly referred to the City Council public refuse collection which was in place in early 2000 where 56% of waste was diverted from landfill on a limited budget. She said the refuse collection service had declined since its privatisation.

Cllr. Cunniffe explained that a national licence requirement for waste collection, similar to the TV licence, should be introduced whereby each household must obtain a licence and a national register be maintained. He said it was necessary that households confirm how they dispose of their waste and ensure it was compliant with the waste disposal regulations, as currently there was a reliance on community clean-ups to stop the countryside becoming a haven for fly-tippers.

Comh. Ó'Cualáin concurred and said people need to prove how they dispose of their waste. He explained that Galway was a vast county with some narrow roadways in South Connemara which does not allow for waste collection trucks to turn and householders had to travel to

dispose of their waste. He said waste collection companies should be required to provide proper vehicles that could access all areas.

Cllr. Byrne expressed concern with the recent illegal dumping at Thoor Ballylee and welcomed the Councils proposed introduction of By-laws to deal with illegal dumping which would include public consultation. He said By-laws were needed so each household could verify how they dealt with their household waste. In reply, Ms. Dolan, Executive Scientist, Environmental Enforcement Section, advised that the By-Laws were at a draft stage. She explained that if the By-Laws were implemented, it would assist in the request of proof of waste disposal but stated this would in turn place a huge resource demand on the Environmental Enforcement section to initiate and follow up on this process.

Cllr. Charity referred to illegal dumping on the Headford Road where clean ups had been undertaken. He said while community efforts were great at promoting collective responsibility, it was not good enough that 'many' were expected to clean up for the 'few'. He said the GDPR legislation needed to be revisited by the Oireachtas as currently data subjects recorded on CCTV must be consulted and explained this would not be logistically possible for a busy stretch of road, such as the N84 Headford Road, where 10,000 cars could travel every day, and the dumping site's position was next to this road, so CCTV was not effective.

Cllr. Healy questioned how the CCTV recordings could not be used to obtain information on illegal dumpers. He also expressed concern over the overuse of plastic.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Roche expressed concern in areas where there was currently CCTV installed, that a more concerted effort was needed to extract this footage when illegal dumping occurred. He explained the companies that installed the CCTV cameras were not efficient enough in continually storing all footage obtained from cameras and there was also a difficulty in tracing perpetrators due to GDPR.

Ms. Dolan advised the Meeting that the Council must adhere to GDPR in respect of CCTV and said a Framework for the Council was expected later in 2019, which would outline procedures in respect of the adherence to GDPR.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Roche, advised the Meeting of a lenient court judgement issued in respect of illegal dumping, which was a disappointment. In response, Ms. Dolan said little benefit was obtained from illegal dumping cases heard in court due to the low fines awarded versus the onerous workload and resource heavy process required by the Environmental Enforcement Section in preparing files for court.

Ms. Dolan said additional financial and human resources were needed within the Environmental Enforcement Section to allow the Section's illegal dumping initiatives to be maintained and enhanced. She advised that the Environment Enforcement Section in conjunction with the Western Region Local Authority had set up a multi-agency committee to

combat illegal waste activities for the West region and said this Committee with its joined-up approach was very beneficial as ideas / feedback could be shared and acted upon.

Cllr. Killilea commended the ongoing work by the Environmental Enforcement team and Community Wardens and said while illegal dumping was a huge problem, it was in peoples' mindsets that they could dump their rubbish anywhere as the Council would clean it up and said this mindset must change.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Roche complimented the ongoing work by the Environmental Enforcement team and said engagement with the Executive was required to ensure the appropriate resources was provided to this Section to deal with this ongoing problem.

The Cathaoirleach asked if additional funding could be sought for clean ups and a schedule of works compiled. In reply, Ms. Dolan said while funding provided by the Department under their Anti-Dumping Initiative (ADI) to assist with clean ups was welcomed, she said clean ups were often not the best course of action to deal with this huge problem, as the problem only moved to another area. She explained that Government direction had been received for local authorities to devise more effective means of eliminating fly-tipping rather than clean-ups.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that funding for barriers and CCTV, where permissible, be applied for under the ADI initiative for 2019 if the funding was to be used for solutions rather than clean ups.

Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Sub Committee

The Chair of the Crime Prevention and Personal Safety Sub Committee, Cllr. Mary Hoade, advised the Meeting that everyone had a role to play in crime prevention and said the Sub Committee commended the 110 Community Alert Schemes and 55 Text Alert Schemes who were undertaking such valuable work. She expressed concern that Mr. Bernard Kearney from Muintír na Tíre who retired in 2017 was not yet replaced.

Cllr. Hoade expressed disappointment at the response received from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in reply to the proposal drafted by the JPC Committee, that the wearing of hi-vis jackets be made compulsory for all walkers, runners and cyclists with a start date of 1st January 2020.

With regard to GDPR, Cllr. Hoade said that Galway County Council had obtained redaction software to comply with the legislation. She suggested that a briefing on GDPR by the Council's Data Protection Officer to the three Sub Committees might be useful.

Cllr. Thomas said the correspondence received from the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, in reply to the proposal drafted by the JPC Committee regarding the compulsory wearing of hi-vis jackets, was very disappointing as this was a serious issue.

Cllr. Healy said it was important that road users wear hi-vis vests especially in the winter season and it must be encouraged and promoted but suggested that, in the absence of wearing hi-vis vests, road users use the light from the mobile phones, as it was a personal responsibility on each person to ensure they could be seen on the roads.

Cllr. Hoade said that the Sub Committee members supported having a joint Sub Committee meeting with the Illegal Dumping /Litter Awareness Subcommittee as topics such as illegal dumping and the control of horses overlapped.

It was agreed that a joint meeting of all three Sub Committees be arranged for 1st April 2019.

Education and Awareness Sub Committee

Cllr. Aidan Donohue, Chair of the Education and Awareness Sub Committee, outlined the 2018 outcomes by the Sub Committee. He said three initiatives were undertaken last year in relation to Home & Personal Safety with a 'Home Safety Presentation' held in Gort on 9th April 2018; a high visibility event is to be held in conjunction with NUI Galway Student's Union to mark 'National Be Safe Be Seen Day', on the shortest and darkest day of the year, 21st December 2018 and an event entitled 'Risky Business' focusing on illegal substances held with TY students on 11th December, 2018 in Coláiste Chroí Mhuire, An Spidéal.

He concurred with Cllr. Hoade that the Education and Awareness Sub Committee should also meet jointly with the other Sub Committees for their next meeting to discuss topics that overlap.

He said the main aim of the Committee in 2019 would be to focus on the topic of Personal Safety to include 'mobile phone safety' and drugs awareness.

In relation to GDPR, Cllr. Donohue asked that a designated person be assigned in the Council to deal with the rollout of Community based CCTV and referred to Dunleek in Co. Meath where this Scheme had been rolled out successfully.

Item No. 3 – Report from An Garda Síochána:

Chief Supt. Tom Curley outlined the Garda Report for the period 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018, in comparison to the same period in 2017.

Regarding Property Crime, Chief Supt. Curley said the figures had decreased in comparison to the 2017 figure. Cllr. Byrne commended the work and commitment of Gort Neighbourhood Watch and Supt. Sean Glynn who meet on monthly basis. He said these meetings provided a

great opportunity to raise awareness of issues locally. Chief Supt. Curley commended the Community and Text Alert Groups as information obtained from the public was vital in the detection and prevention of crime.

In respect of Drugs, Chief Supt. Curley said the figure for sale or supply was up in comparison to 2017 by 12% with simple possession down by 11%. He outlined the value of the drugs seized for 2018, which related to the county alone and excluded Mill Street and Salthill Garda Stations. In response to query raised by Cllr. Thomas, Chief Supt. Curley said the Gardaí normally seize around 7 % of the total amount of drugs for sale or supply every year. He said the value of cocaine seized at €127,801 showed the improved disposable income in the economy.

Chief Supt. Curley said fatal road accidents and accidents causing serious injury was up 75% and 21% respectively on 2017, while speeding offences was down 14%. Chief Supt. Curley said the loss of the 'Gatso' van could have led to a decline in speeding offences but this should level out throughout the year. Cllr. Charity queried the communication between the Gardaí and the Council when accidents occurred. Chief Supt Curley advised that the Gardaí have ongoing meetings with Council Engineers. He explained that following a serious accident, meetings would take place to examine the road where the incident took place with blind junctions, overgrown hedges etc considered. He said the recording of accidents were detailed to include medical evidence and information as to the seriousness of the accident i.e. minor, major or material damage only. In reply to Cllr. Healy, Chief Supt. Curley said that figure for fatal accidents referred to all single accidents.

Chief Supt. Curley referred to drink driving offences which had decreased by 15% in comparison to 2017. In reply to Cllr. Killilea's query whether the new Blood Alcohol Concentration limit had increased numbers caught drink driving, Chief Supt. Curley said much of the detections were two or three or four times over the legal limit and not on the baseline.

Chief Supt. Curley said drivers with no insurance was down 9% on the previous year. He said that the Gardaí were proactive in this area with the seizure of vehicles under Section 41 of the Road Traffic Act. He confirmed that a Roads Policing Unit was to be established with 2 Sergeants and 13 Gardaí to be added to this Unit. He explained that there was a lot of Garda visibility, a lot of checkpoints and he hoped the message was getting across with regard to road safety and confirmed that all Galway Gardaí would be on the lookout for drivers breaking the law to improve safety on the roads.

In respect of public order offences, Chief Supt. Curley said there was a 5% decrease compared to 2017, but an 18% increase in assaults causing harm.

Chief Supt. Curley said there was a 4% increase in breach of barring/safety/protection orders and a 15% increase in sexual assaults (not aggravated) compared to the same period last year.

Chief Supt. Curley advised the Meeting that the Gardaí were satisfied that they were not dealing with repeat offenders in current cases being investigated.

In reply to Deputy Connolly's query regarding resources for the Protected Services Unit, Chief Supt. Curley said the Protected Services Unit would provide great assistance when dealing with sexual crimes and in the protection of its victims. He said the Unit would be resourced by 2 Detective Sergeants and 10 Gardaí, with additional resources if the need arose, and the Unit would cover County Galway and City.

Chief Supt. Curley explained to the Meeting that the figure in respect of 'Domestic Dispute-No offence disclosed' referred to cases where there was no compliant forthcoming to the Gardaí. He advised there was a Domestic Policy and procedure in place in relation to these cases.

In reply to Cllr. Hoade's & Cllr. Roche's query re staffing in Headford and Corofin, Chief Supt. Curley explained that a new Divisional Policing model was being rolled out on 25th February 2019 which allocated responsibilities on a functional rather than geographical basis. Comh. O'Cualáin said there were similar vacancy issues in Connemara and the victims of crime in isolated areas were suffering. Chief Supt. Curley advised that he was constantly seeking resources for the Division and confirmed that a business case to fill positions ahead of the implementation of this new Divisional Model, which would focus on Community Policing, had been made to the Garda Commissioner and Garda Assistant Commissioner. He said 31 staff would be required to fill new positions, with an additional 20 positions to become vacant due to resignations and promotions. Chief Supt. Curley advised the meeting that Supt. Sean Colleran was successful in a recent Chief Superintendent competition.

Cllr. Connolly asked if the new contacts for the Galway Division could be circulated to the JPC Members, when finalised.

Item No. 4 – 2018 Annual Report of the Galway County JPC

Ms. Donohue presented the Galway County JPC Annual Report 2018 to the Committee.

She said the report was produced to reflect on the commitment and participation of the JPC Committee members and to summarise the actions undertaken (ITEM 1) and progress achieved by the Committee in 2018.

She advised that the Key Achievements of the County JPC for 2018 were outlined in Item 2 and included the 'Glan agus Glas' Supermacs initiative which progressed from the Cleaner Greener Galway initiative in 2017, many school road safety initiatives to include the 'Be Bright Be Seen' initiative with NUIG and the ongoing promotion of Home Safety/Community Watch.

Ms. Donohue said that the JPC held its Annual Public Meeting in Gort on 6th November 2018 which was well attended and said there was considerable input from the public in relation to

several matters ranging from burglaries, to anti-social-behaviour, illegal dumping including other matters which are recorded under Item 3 of the Annual Report. She said the meeting was very positive in terms of engagement and provided the opportunity for the public to contribute their views regarding crime prevention. She outlined that the Annual Report detailed the dates of the General Meetings (5th February, 15th April and 15th October) of the JPC which took place during 2018 and those whom attended (Item 4).

Ms. Donohue thanked An Garda Síochána for their very valued contributions and to each member of the JPC for their continuing support in fulfilling the role and purpose of the JPC and to Galway County Council for the administration of the Committee.

On the proposal of Cllr. Maher and seconded by Cllr. Connolly the Annual Report of the Galway County JPC 2018 was agreed to be brought to the plenary Council in the February Co Co Meeting for adoption.

Item No. 5 – Adoption of the Galway County JPC Annual Plan for 2019

Ms. Donohue presented the Draft Galway County JPC Annual Plan 2019 to the Committee.

M. Donohue said the Annual Plan 2019 was produced to set out the objectives for the Sub Committees for 2019. She explained it was an overall framework for the Sub Committees and the JPC Committee to highlight and reflect on the motions and issues which arise at the JPC Meetings and the approach to be taken to assist the addressing of these issues. She said that this Plan was at a Draft stage and the Sub Committees could still feed into this Plan to add additional actions.

On the proposal of Cllr. Healy, seconded by Aodán MacDonncha, it was agreed that the Draft Galway County JPC Annual Plan for 2019 be adopted.

Item No. 6 – Schedule of dates for 2019 JPC Meetings

Ms. Donohue outlined provisional dates for future 2019 JPC Meetings to be held at 10am in County Hall, Galway County Council as follows:

- Monday, 15th April 2019
- Monday 8th July 2019
- Monday 30th September 2019

She proposed and it was agreed that the Public Meeting of the JPC would take place on Monday 4th November 2019 in Ard Rí House Hotel, Tuam at 7pm.

The Meetings Administrator agreed to circulate these dates to the Committee.

Ms. Donohue advised that Meeting that following the local Elections to be held on 24th May 2019, the County JPC Committee would have to be re-appointed/ re-established.

It was agreed that the Community/Voluntary Members remain as is on the County JPC Committee following the local elections until a formal appointment by the new plenary Council could be made.

Item No. 7 – Any Other Business

Control of Deer- Health and Safety:

Mr. Larkin expressed concern regarding the ongoing safety risk to road users of wandering deer, in rural parts of Co. Galway including South East Galway. He asked how could injury to road users be minimised as this was a Health & Safety issue.

Cllr. Connolly concurred and said this was a growing problem in Ballygar, Ahasragh and Moylough. He said that deer were also carriers of Lyme disease which was a health concern.

Cllr. Byrne suggested that statutory signage was needed to caution road users to the presence of deer in the area and to caution road drivers to slow down.

Cllr. Healy concurred and requested that the NPWS be contacted regarding stats and information on deer numbers in particular areas of the County, the Dept. of Agriculture re prescribed signage and the RSA with regard to any road safety initiatives planned around this issue to caution road users.

Comh. O’Cualin & Cllr. Thomas advised that deer were an issue in the West of the County especially in the months of November / December.

Stray Horses

Cllr. Charity raised the issue of stray horses in County Galway and asked if there was merit to set up a working group within the JPC Committee to consider stray horses and stray deer.

Cllr. Hoade concurred and said there was an ongoing issue of stray horses on the N84 and they have caused several accidents which luckily have been non-fatal. She said this was a serious issue that must be dealt with.

In reply, Chief Supt. Curley referred to the Control of Horses Act 1996 which enabled local authorities to seize and impound stray horses and confirmed that the Gardaí assist local authorities in the removal of horses to a Pound. He explained that the seizure of horses can be difficult, due to the difficulty in the identification of the owner, storage for horses until the owner claimed the horse. He explained that if there was no microchip on a horse, it was very difficult to prove ownership. He said that there was a joint-agency group set up in the City

Council which was overseen by Sgt. Richard Owens and suggested that it might be beneficial for a joint City and County Meeting to be arranged at a future date to discuss this matter.

Community Based CCTV

In reply to Cllr. Donohue, Chief Supt. Curley advised that any application received by An Garda Síochána was examined on its merits and a recommendation made but explained that ownership of the data remains with the local authority.

The Cathaoirleach thanked all for their attendance and thanked Chief Supt. Curley and his team for hosting the meeting. He said that the next Meeting would be held on Monday 15th April 2019 at 10am in County Hall.

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Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach County Galway Joint Policing Committee

Date: _____