

COMHAIRLE CHONTE NA GAILLIMHE

Minutes of the Galway County Joint Policing Committee Meeting held in Áras an Chontae, Prospect Hill, Galway on Monday, 17th May, 2021 via MS Teams

I LATHAIR:

Council Members: Cllr. Jim Cuddy (Cathaoirleach)
Cllr. Mary Hoade
Cllr. Michael Maher
Cllr. James Charity
Cllr. Joe Byrne
Cllr. Karey Farag McHugh
Cllr. Andrew Reddington
Cllr. Liam Carroll
Comh. Pádraig Mac an Iomaire
Cllr. Colm Keaveney
Cllr. Dáithí Ó Cualain

Deputies: Deputy Catherine Connolly

An Garda Síochána: Chief Supt. Thomás Curley
Supt. Damien O'Flannachain
Insp. Declan Rocke
Insp. Georgina Lohan
Sgt. Sinead Cunniffe
Supt. Karen Maloney

Community Reps: Mr. Aodán MacDonncha
Mr. Martin Ward
Mr. Pat Flanagan
Mr. Gerard Costello
Mr. Thomas Madden

Oifigigh: Mr. Alan Farrell, A/Director of Service
Ms. Ita Martyn, Meetings Administrator, Corporate Services.

Other Officials: Ms. Una Ní Eidhin, Corporate Services.
Ms. Noreen Moughty, Corporate Services.

Apologies: Cllr. Gerry King
Cllr. Shelly Herterich
Sgt. M. Walsh
Deputy Noel Grealish

Cllr. Cuddy welcomed all to the JPC virtual meeting.

Item No. 1 – Minutes of the JPC Meeting held on 8th February, 2021:

On the proposal of M. Ward and seconded by Cllr. Keaveney, it was agreed the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th February, 2021 be adopted.

Matters arising from the Minutes:

M. Ward acknowledged the work of the Tuam Town Volunteers in cleaning up the Town.

Report from An Garda Síochána

Chief Supt. Curley outlined the Garda Report for the period January to April 2021 in comparison to the same period in 2020. He also gave a breakdown of figures in accordance with the different fraud types. He said there were 136 incidents of fraud for the period.

Deputy Connolly queried the high rate of domestic violence incidents, the reasons why offences were not recorded and the measures in place to deal with such incidents.

Deputy Connolly referenced An Coimisinéir Teanga's report and the failure to implement recommendations made regarding compliance with legislation designed to ensure the linguistic rights of the public. She said that Gaeltacht areas must be adequately staffed with Irish speaking Gardai.

Cllr. Keaveney acknowledged the dedication of the Joint Policing Sub-Committees.

He expressed his concern regarding a Pipe Bomb which exploded in the Tuam Area and he said that people were reluctant to come forward with information.

Cllr. O' Cualainn acknowledged the work being done by the Gardai and he welcomed the appointment of an Inspector to An Cheathrú Rua, Garda Station. He was concerned about the filling of posts in Gaeltacht areas and the transfer of a Garda from An Cheathrú Rua, Garda Station. He said there was an issue with juvenile anti-social behavior in the Bearna/Indreabhán area and he questioned if there was a plan to deal with Juvenile Drug offences.

Chief Supt. Curley replied that the Policing Plan will be in Irish and it will be in reference to the Divisional Plan and Regional Plan.

He advised that in relation to An Cheathrú Rua, Garda Station a Garda was assigned to the Aran Islands from the Station and expressions of interest were invited from Gardai who were fluent in Irish to fill the position.

He said that the Galway Division was in a good place in relation to the allocation of Irish speaking Gardaí in Gaeltacht areas and he advised that a person can request to speak to a Garda fluent in Irish in both Mill St. and Salthill Garda Stations.

He advised that in relation to domestic violence where there is no follow-up there are visits and call-backs and advice given regarding the different orders. Each case is actively investigated, analysis of data is recorded and regular meetings are held and discussions take place regarding each individual case.

He stated that in relation to the fatalities on the R336 he would make recommendations regarding the dangerous locations where the accidents occurred and regarding the Anti-Social Behaviour he said that the Sergeant in the area of concern has been notified. He advised that extra resources have been transferred to Salthill Garda Station to deal with Anti-Social Behaviour.

Cllr. Keaveney congratulated the Gardai on their work and he highlighted the issue of Cyber attacks.

Chief Supt. Curley replied that a number of Detectives have been trained to deal with Cyber Crime.

He advised that in relation to the pipe-bomb incidence an investigation was ongoing.

Cllr. Byrne raised the issue of resources in Gort and Kinvara Garda Stations as two members had retired.

Chief Supt Curley replied that work was underway to fill the positions and he advised that the Sergeants in the Portumna Station would assist in the meantime.

Cllr. Mac An Iomaire expressed his concern regarding juvenile anti-social behavior in the Carraroe area and he questioned the level of Irish required to enter the Gardai

Cllr Hoade thanked Supt Curley for his report and thanked him for the work of the Gardai and she expressed her concern regarding On-Line crime.

Chief Supt. Curley replied that there was a problem with Texts and calls from Financial Institutions which were bogus calls. He advised that anybody who received such calls or texts should contact the Gardai immediately. He said people were losing a lot of money on Bit-Coin and elderly people were very vulnerable.

Cllr. Keaveney expressed his concern regarding the Gardai receiving bad publicity on Social Media.

Cllr. Reddington requested additional Gardai for the Headford Garda Station. He said there had been a number of incidents in the area.

Cllr. Farag-McHugh thanked Supt. Curley for the extra resources in Tuam and she raised the issued of Cyber Crime.

Chief Supt. Curley advised in relation to the Irish Language that it is no longer a requirement to speak Irish when joining the Gardai but there is an Irish strand when joining the Force. He added that the Commissioner's Office are inviting Gardai with proficiency in Irish to do an Irish Test and this will source people for the Gaeltacht areas.

Chief Supt. Curley in response to Cllr Reddington advised that Headford Garda Station was adequately staffed.

Cllr. Maher complimented Sgt Walsh's initiatives on how to protect your property.

Cllr. Keaveney raised the issue of members of the public recording gardai on their phones and posting clips on social media.

Chief Supt. Curley replied that Gardai will be equipped with body cameras which is welcome legislation and the cameras will be there for the protection of Gardai and members of the public.

Update from Committees

2. Update from Galway County Council Sub-Committees.

Cllr. Maher advised that €130,000 funding had been received to deal with Anti-Dumping.

He said that the CCTV Cameras cannot be used for illegal-dumping and Waste Prevention Bye-Laws have been adopted and are in place. He advised that a new Civic Amenity Site had been approved for Gort and it was hoped to open a Civic Amenity Site in every area to assist with illegal-dumping.

Cllr. Byrne acknowledged the work of the Sub-Committees and he recommended that every household should provide proof of their method of disposal of household waste.

Cllr. O'Cualain welcomed the funding for illegal-dumping and he stated that there was no prosecutions in the Connemara Area in relation to illegal-dumping and he enquired about a hazardous waste collection.

Cllr. Mac An Iomaire stated that it was a huge cost having trucks pick-up rubbish in bogs in the Connemara area and he questioned the number of prosecutions that had been brought to Court for illegal-dumping.

Cllr. Maher recommended that with the support of the Joint Policing Committee that a request should be made to the Department seeking a date for cases to be dealt with in Court.

Cllr. Cuddy expressed his concern regarding illegal-parking in Disabled Parking spaces.

Chief Supt. Curley replied that the Community Gardai in Oranmore and Athenry would monitor the situation and he would raise awareness with all the Garda Stations throughout the County.

Cllr. Carroll thanked Chief Supt Curley and he stated that parking on double yellow lines and footpaths in Oranmore was an issue also.

Chief Supt. Curley confirmed that the Gardai would take a pro-active approach regarding illegal parking and data will be provided for the next meeting.

A. Farrell acknowledged the work being done by the Gardai and he said that the Community Wardens will be notified to address the issue.

Cllr. McHugh requested that a record of the fines issued for the previous six months be provided at the next meeting.

A. Dolan gave an update in relation to Environment issues:

She stated that funding was approved for Twelve Projects and progress was being made on the Waste Bye-Laws.

She advised that three cases for illegal-dumping were brought to Court but were not very successful. She recommended prevention of illegal-dumping as a more effective approach to dealing with the issue.

In response to Cllr. O’Cualainn regarding a Hazardous Waste Collection she advised that there was no plan to provide a collection.

G. Larkin recommended that the Joint Policing Meeting should deal with Joint Policing matters and there should be a separate Committee to deal with Litter issues.

Cllr. Byrne concurred with G. Larkin and recommended having a separate Litter Committee.

A.O. B.

A. Farrell advised that there were three Committees but this was revised to two Committees.

He said that Litter Pollution/Waste Management was a huge issue and the sub-committee plays a key role in this area.

He said the Joint Policing Committee review the Strategic Policy regarding what is best for the locality and a lot has been achieved. He advised that the Garda Report can be placed Item No.1 on the Agenda for the next meeting.

He thanked Chief Supt. Curley and the Gardai for their support and he thanked the Chairman and all the Members of the Committee.

Chief Supt. Curley wished A. Farrell well in his new role and he acknowledged the excellent working relationship he had with the Gardai.

Cllr. Cuddy thanked A. Farrell on behalf of the Committee for his support and wished him well.

Next Meeting 13th September, 2021.

CRIOCHNAIGH AN CRUINNIÚ ANSIN

