



Miontuairiscí / Meeting Notes
County Meath Joint Policing Committee

11th October 2016, Public Meeting, Trim Castle Hotel 7.30pm-9.00pm

In Attendance:

Chairperson: Trevor Golden

County Council Members: Gillian Toole, David Gilroy, Maria Murphy, Trevor Golden, Alan Tobin, Noel French, Francis Deane, Enda Flynn, Paddy Meade, Maria Murphy

Oireachtas Members: Deputy Peadar Tobin,

An Garda Síochána: Chief Superintendent Fergus Healy, Garda Ronan Farrelly, Garda Brian Stokes

County Council Officials: Barry Lynch DoS, Fiona Fallon SEO

Community & Voluntary Sector: Bernard Kenny, Jim Matthews , Ronnie Owens

Co-ordinator: Eugene Farrelly, Meath County Council

Item	Discussion / Action
1.	<p>Cllr Trevor Golden welcomed everyone to the JPC public meeting and outlined the purpose of the meeting was to allow the public the opportunity to raise matters with the JPC. He introduced the JPC members seated beside him as Chief Superintendant Fergus Healy and Barry Lynch Director of Service in Meath County Council. He advised that the format of the meeting would be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take questions submitted by email in advance of the meeting • Take questions from the public as per written submissions at the meeting • Take questions from members of the JPC <p>He advised that 2 questions had been received from the public in relation to the JPC.</p>
2.	<p>Question 1 – Extension of CCTV Scheme to Johnstown in Navan. Chief Super Healey acknowledged that the growth in population in Johnstown warranted the inclusion of same in the existing Navan CCTV Scheme but that same was subject to funding being available.</p> <p>He informed of the existence of the National CCTV Scheme which provides a 40%/60% funding arrangement for community groups and welcomed any proposal for schemes in areas which could benefit from same.</p>
3.	<p>Question 2 – Queries raised from Wildlife Rehabilitation Ireland :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does AGS have a recording system for reporting of wildlife crime and if not would they consider implementing one?



	<p>2. Would AGS consider forwarding case details to WRI for inclusion on the prosecutions page of their wildlifecrime.ie website ?</p> <p>3. Would AGS consider publishing these cases on their own web-site?</p> <p>4. Would AGS alert WRI of upcoming wildlife crime cases so as to arrange media presence at court?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy advised that occasionally wildlife crime had occurred in rural areas of the County, most recently with a decapitated deer found at Slane. Most animal crime revolves around domestic animals like horses dogs welfare issues. He informed that NPWS Rangers are empowered to enforce the wildlife legislation with backup provided by AGS as needed and when not available to attend an incident.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Question 3 – Volume and speed of vehicles travelling through Longwood in particular HGVs and was there likely to be a Garda presence in Longwood.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy advised that the traffic unit was now based in Dunshaughlin manned by 2 Sergeants and 14 guards which set up traffic stops around the county. The Councils Road Safety Officer is also involved with advising on road safety issues in the County. Barry Lynch also advised that the matter of traffic calming measures would be referred to the Transportation Section for review.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy also advised that the Gatso Van (speed cameras) could carry out speed checks at the village and also undertook to have the traffic unit call on the Quarries in the area to advise of the need avoid small villages if possible or at least to comply with speed limits at all times.</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Question 4 – Separation of Meath/Louth Garda Division that areas like Lobinstown, Donore, lost out badly due to waiting longer for Garda cars to come from stations in Navan/Ashbourne. Would the CS support the idea of reforming the LM Division?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed that the Meath Division was formed as its own division in 1999 and this was determined by population growth of Meath with it's own Chief Superintendent and 3 Superintendants in Navan Ashbourne and Trim. There is presently a complement of 313 Garda in the County following the introduction of 10 new Gardai (with 5 allocated each to Ashbourne and Navan) with more expected in 2018. Calls are directed to the nearest car available to the location which may involve some delay in getting to the area.</p>
	<p>Question 5 – There is an increased level of ASB with U18s not being sent to the diversion programme.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy noted that the National Juvenile Office is set-up to look after the diversion programme. Only individuals deemed suitable are accepted onto the programme. He noted that the programme diverts youths away from more serious crime at an early stage. However he noted that youths should be encouraged to get involved and stay involved in sports and youth activities as this was one of the key criteria. Chief Supt Healy noted that he was aware that the level of ASB was growing and needs to be addressed by a number of public bodies such as MCC, HSE Tusla and the Gardai.</p>



	<p>Question 6 – Lack of Garda foot patrols in Navan and absence of vehicle patrols to Johnstown.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy advised that the recent increase in numbers of Gardai allocated to Navan and Ashbourne will increase the Garda presence in those areas. It is anticipated that there will be further Gardai allocated to Trim and Kells when finished training in 2018. Currently patrols take place in particular at closing time of night clubs when trouble can occur and in areas where ASB has been reported. He also stated that there are now 100 Gardai stationed in Navan allocated to different units. The Community Liaison Officer allocated to Johnstown had moved job and a replacement is awaited.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Question 7 – What are Garda doing to address the issue of ASB and what policy is being followed.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed that the Juvenile programme is available for early intervention with underage crime but that encouraging community based activity and social interaction works equally well in diverting youth from crime. He also advised that Gardai are encouraged to live and engage with local communities and sporting organizations so as to break down barriers with youths.</p>
	<p>Question 8 – What methodology is to be brought in to ensure that the public can enquire about the progress on a particular case rather than needing to contact the investigating Garda in the context of the shift system in the Gardai.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed that the crime statistics and detection rates are observed on a weekly basis and it has been noted that the level of crimes under all categories have increased on 2016 figures. He also stated that he had set-up a Victim Support Office from his office in Athlumney which liaises with victims of crime and can advise on file progression issues.</p>
	<p>Question 9 – What is being done about open drug dealing in Belcourt Est and other places in Navan?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed that in order to keep one patrol car on the road manned by two Gardai takes a staff of 10 Gardai on a cover for 24/7/365 manning levels. This means that it is often difficult to get to crime sites as fast as he would like. It is a matter of demand exceeding supply but he will have ongoing meetings with his Superintendants and senior staff to ensure that the most effective use of resources will be employed across the Division. There is an undercover unit dealing with drug dealing specifically who are very effective however education around substance abuse must begin early with health and education programmes.</p> <p>If people observe illegal activity same should be reported to the Gardai who will follow-up. He also said that all incoming calls are handled through Navan GS and directed to nearest patrol car with response times capable of being recorded for follow-on analysis.</p>



	<p>Question 10 – Dangerous driving on the N2 – Collon-Slane-Ashbourne road.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy advised that there was a huge amount of traffic using this road to get to Dublin and that the traffic unit are paying particular attention to same with speed checks, monitoring driver behavior viz mobile phone usage while driving, drunk/drugged driving offences, car tax and Insurance etc. He noted that the number of fatalities was 30% down on same period last year from 11 to 7 and he hoped this pattern would continue.</p> <p>The Chief Supt also advised that the RSA and RSO have involvement in road safety issues and regular meetings are held with Council engineers to look at safety measures that can take place to promote safety awareness.</p>
	<p>Question 11 – Has Enfield been forgotten about with no Garda presence with a population of 3000 and ongoing ASB issues in the town and canal/greenway.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy advised that there is a new Superintendent to be assigned to Trim shortly and he will discuss the policing situation in Enfield with him. There was concern from the Enfield residents that the opening of the greenway opening could bring additional unwanted attention from undesirables to the locality. Chief Supt Healy committed to speak to the new Superintendent regarding the matter.</p>
	<p>Question 12 – Does the Chief Supt agree that driving licenses should be suspended in the case of rural mobile and drug crime?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy noted that the Court service currently has the remit to suspend licenses for a range of offences in addition to disqualification for drunk driving. However this is a matter for the courts and the Gardai have no involvement in sentencing.</p>
	<p>Question 13 – How many Gardai will be needed to bring Meath up to full complement.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed those present that there are 800 additional guards to bring the total to 15,000 to be trained by end 2020 and he hoped the Meath would get its fair share of them.</p>
	<p>Question 14 – With the growth in crime across all categories like ASB/criminal damage/public order/gangland crime/property damage /vacant and derelict buildings what long term planning is being employed to address the escalating problem in the County?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed the meeting that the matter requires a multi agency approach across education, health, Local Government, Gardai, Youth and social services and the Gardai will play their role in addressing the situation. He also said that he would seek additional funding from all sources to improve the policing situation in Co. Meath.</p> <p>Chair Trevor Golden suggested that the Councillors could play a role in seeking to allocate funds to assist with addressing some of the issues discussed this evening in</p>



	<p>the forthcoming budget process.</p> <p>Barry Lynch agreed that resources were needed including funding to assist in addressing issues and dereliction of buildings and this was an area that the Council are seeking to address at present.</p>
	<p>Question 15 - Lack of infrastructure for youth and community in Enfield - no community center or second level school in the area.</p> <p>Barry Lynch agreed that there was a need for community facilities in Enfield, which may need a partnership approach between all those involved to deliver them.</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed the meeting that there is a recruitment competition for sergeant currently underway which should release a number to Meath for allocation to rural stations and Enfield will be considered.</p>
	<p>Question 16 – How many submissions were received for the 2018 Meath Policing Plan?</p> <p>Chief Supt Healy informed the meeting that the draft plan was being prepared at present and had been circulated to a number of agencies. He informed that Sgt Dean Kearns was a great resource as Crime Prevention Officer for the County and is available to community groups for advice on text alert schemes and general advice on crime prevention issues.</p>
	<p>Chair Trevor Golden thanked all for their involvement in the meeting and in particular Barry, Fiona and Eugene for their work in putting this successful event together and Chief Supt Healy and the Gardai for attending JPC Meetings with up to date statistics. He also thanked the members of the JPC for their involvement in meetings and said it was important to keep lines of communication open</p>