

Mayo Joint Policing Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Friday June 10th, 2022 at 11.00am (Online and in-person in Aras Chambers).

Present: Cllr. Al McDonnell (Chair), Cllr. Neil Cruise, Cllr. Michael Loftus, Cllr. Christy Hyland, Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne, Cllr. Damien Ryan, Cllr. Sean Carey, Cllr. Mark Duffy, Cllr. Tom Connolly, Cllr. Ger Deere, Cllr. Gerry Coyle, Cllr. Michael Burke, Senator Paddy Burke, Rose Conway Walsh T.D., Alan Dillon T.D., Dara Calleary T.D., Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon, Superintendent Joe McKenna.

In attendance: Superintendent Gabriel Moran, Insp. Gerard McNally, Insp. David Tiernan, Insp Anton McNulty, Mary Gildea – Assistant Principal Officer, Garda Shane O'Connor, Ben Ryan – Dept. of Justice, Maeve Brett - Dept. of Justice, Deirdre Finnerty MCC, Maura Murphy MCC, Michael Galvin MCC.

Apologies Kevin Kelly - MCC, Micheal Larkin - PPN

1. Welcome

Cllr. Al McDonnell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

Cllr. Michael Loftus complimented everybody involved in the inquest into the R116 helicopter crash, particularly An Garda Síochána, Air Accident Investigation Unit, Search and Rescue units and the Communities of the Belmullet and North Mayo areas. These wishes were echoed by all present at the meeting.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and matters arising

Proposed by: Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne **Seconded by:** Cllr. Damian Ryan

Cllr. Hyland expressed disappointment that Agenda item on CCTV was being deferred to the next JPC meeting in September.

The deferral was as a result of the Department of Justice accepting a request to make a presentation to the JPC, following the JPC's invitation to Deputy Commissioner Shawna Coxon to outline the proposal on the restructuring of JPC's.

3. Reports from An Garda Síochána

Supt. Joe McKenna – Drugs and public order offences:

Superintendent Joe McKenna gave an update on crime figures in the Mayo Division. He said crime levels are beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels, and in that regard, it would be better to compare statistics in relation to same against 2019 figures to get an accurate reflection of trends.

The value of drug seizures in Mayo to date amounts to €2,197,258.58 with cash of €136k being seized.

Figures reported to date:

Crime	Total	Change
Burglary	54	Up 54%
Serious Assault	32	Up 33%
Minor Assault	123	Up 73%
Theft from Shops	94	Up 12%
Theft from Car	11	Down 42%
Theft from Person	2	N/A
Public Order offences	169	Up 100%
Criminal Damage	110	Down 4%
Sexual crime- Rape	7	Down 13%
Sexual crime – Assault	18	Up 38%

Supt. Gabriel Moran – Claremorris Area

Superintendent Gabriel Moran also reported that crime figures in Claremorris area are returning to pre-pandemic levels.

There is an investigation underway into the recent serious melee that occurred in Claremorris. Follow up searches were carried out and arrests have been made. He thanked the members of the Claremorris community and the AGS for their cooperation with the investigation.

Figures reported to date-:

Crime	Total	Change
Burglary	22	Up 7
Serious Assault	49	Up 20
Crime against the person	63	Up 12
Theft from Shops	30	Up 2
Property Crime	90	Up 6
Public Order offences	64	Up 20
Criminal Damage	49	Up 9
Drink Driving	15	Up 7

Inspector Gerard McNally reported on behalf of Supt Calvey on Roads / Safety:

“Operation Surround’ which is a series of high visibility MIT (mandatory intoxicant testing) checkpoints carried out simultaneously at key locations is continuing with two operations per month. Over 1600 people have been stopped and checked to date. AGS are currently working with Irish Rail regarding education on the safe use of level crossings. There will be a day of

action in each month June, July and August for engaging with motorcyclists regarding the safe use of motorbikes on the roads.

Figures reported to date-:

Offence	Total	Change
Fatal RTA	2	Down 1
Serious Injury RTA	4	Down 7
Material Damage	275	Down 90
No insurance	46	Down 38
Speed detection	1300	Down 9
Use of Mobile phone	392	Up 63
Seat Belt	27	Up 3
Drug /Drink driving	10	Up 1
Checkpoints	557	Up 230

Inspector David Tiernan reported on behalf of Supt. Gary Walsh – Ballina / Belmullet Area:

Inspector Tiernan thanked Cllr. Loftus for his kind words regarding the R116 helicopter crash and inquest. The following was reported by Insp. Tiernan:

Crime trends in the Ballina area are also on the increase and are returning to pre-pandemic levels since restrictions have been lifted.

Two people have been arrested and charged in relation to robbery in Belmullet following detection using CCTV footage.

A recent melee in Crossmolina is currently under investigation.

He thanked everybody involved in the missing persons search and said the person has been located.

There was unfortunately one fatal road traffic accident on March 17th, 2022.

AGS were involved in bringing 60 Ukrainians to the international soccer match in the Aviva Stadium.

AGS have 1150 people on the vulnerable persons register and they are continuing with their visits.

Cllr. Al McDonnell thanked the Gardaí for their reports.

Cllr. Duffy complimented the Community Policing Unit in Ballina for all the excellent work they are doing integrating the Ukrainian refugees into the community. He also commented there was a total failure with the line painting around towns which is leading to confusion and could lead to accidents.

Cllr. Ryan wished to acknowledge the exemplary work by AGS with the Claremorris melee incident. He requested the drugs unit be supported with more resources given that drugs are the number one crime in Mayo.

Cllr. Loftus welcomed the fact the vacancy in Foxford Garda Station has now been advertised and asked would there be a replacement for Garda Reilly in Crossmolina. He also asked when the Crime Superintendent would be appointed in Mayo.

Deputy Dillon asked regarding resource planning if there were adequate numbers in the supervisory ranks. There is a concern with the new operating model that some Garda stations may be closed down or depleted. Other Garda stations will have to be strengthened at Inspector and Sergeant levels and he asked how these positions would be approved by Garda headquarters.

Cllr. Kilcoyne asked where 999 calls made in Mayo were handled and what was the process for assigning Ambulances.

In response Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon replied:

In relation to resources / staffing issues raised they are continually monitoring the situation. When dealing with resources he must look at capacity throughout the division which is continuously being reviewed.

He hopes to have the Detective appointed within the coming weeks.

The 999 calls are answered from a central dispatch in Galway, a presentation around this process for a future JPC meeting can be arranged.

4. **Presentation on “Local Community Safety Partnerships”**

Following a request to Deputy Commissioner Shawna Coxon to outline the proposal around the restructuring of JPC's, Ben Ryan, Department of Justice, gave a detailed presentation on the new Local Community Safety Partnerships to the JPC. This was then followed by a discussion with those present. Some of the items raised were as follows:

Cllr. Al McDonnell:

Thanked Ben for his excellent presentation and asked would JPC's be redundant as a result of the proposals being piloted. He also made the comment that current structure of JPC works very well and expressed concern about the makeup of the new structure.

Cllr. Damien Ryan:

The democratic affiliation of the JPC worked very well and any attempt to diminish democratic membership will be strongly opposed. The JPC forum was one of the best initiatives under the Local Government Act.

Deputy Rose Conway-Walsh:

Asked what are we trying to fix and what measurements are going to be used in the assessment process and how will it affect people on the ground?

Cllr. Michael Loftus:

Expressed disappointment that Ben Ryan was not at meeting in person as it would give him an idea of the huge geographical spread of the region. The consultation process with different groups but did not include consultation with Councillors and JPC members who are also part of the community.

Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne:

It is not clear how many JPC's there will be. Will there be amalgamations in the region. There is merit in involving the HSE and others as they have a direct impact into the work of AGS.

Cllr. Christy Hyland:

JPC's are serving communities very well and should be left in place; AGS should get back to basic policing.

Cllr. Michael Burke:

Mental Health professionals and emergency services should have a role in JPC's and Councillors representation is very important also.

Cllr. Gerry Coyle:

The JPC is for solutions and he can ring the local sergeants if he needs assistance with any issues in his area and they are doing a very good job on the ground. Better use of technology could also help going forward.

In response Ben Ryan acknowledged the good work of JPC's and reminded members that this is just a pilot scheme. The assessment and evaluation from it will feed into legislation. He agreed that one size does not fit all but geographical size was taken into consideration when choosing the three pilot areas.

The structure of the new Local Community Safety Partnerships mirrors other fora such as LCDC's as it was felt that today's issues cannot be solved by AGS alone, input from other agencies, e.g. emergency services, HSE, Tusla etc. is required.

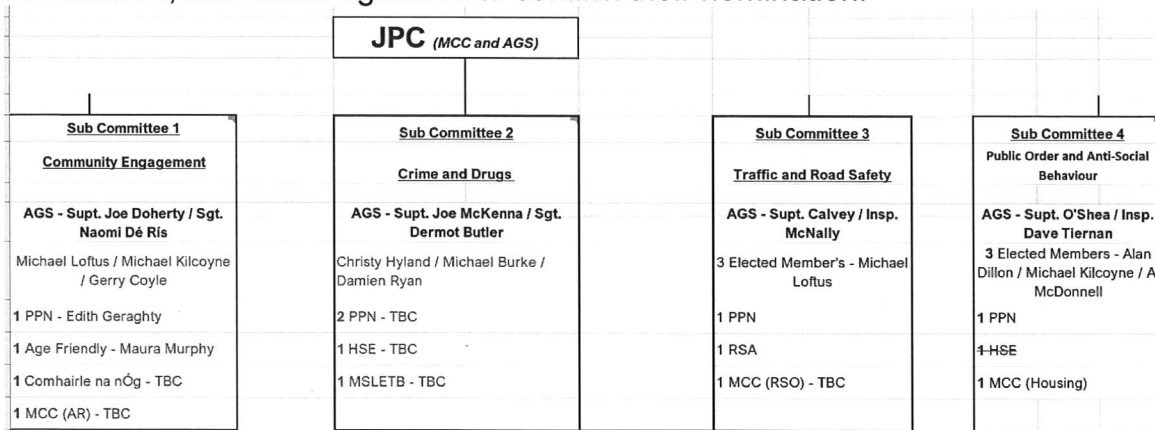
The purpose of the pilot is not to diminish the role of Councillors but to increase the role of a wider community of businesses, services and the public. There is a community innovation safety fund with a budget of €2 million available for innovative projects.

There would be one new forum per Local Authority and in the pilot regions of Waterford, Longford and North Inner-City Dublin the JPC's have been replaced.

5. Update on Sub-Committees

Maura Murphy gave an update on the formation of the four sub-committees.

Progress is being made with sub-committees, the following have committed to participate on committees, with some agencies to confirm their nomination:



6. Advance Questions

Cllr. Christy Hyland:

- How many Gardai were on outdoor duty on Saturday night May 21st in Westport, Louisburgh, Achill and Newport between 7pm and 7a.m.
- Is it happening on a regular basis that two Gardai are on duty between Achill and Leenane, how many Gardai were on foot patrol in Westport town for the last eight Saturday nights.
- Has civilianization made more Gardai available for outdoor duties in Mayo.

Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne:

- Can the Chief Superintendent advise on the number of gardai who have retired / left / transferred (including all grades) since the 1st September 2021 in County Mayo and how many of these have been replaced?
- What is the total number of gardai serving in County Mayo currently?

Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon replied to the above:

He would arrange to give specific details to the Councillor directly, he is satisfied there are enough resources on the ground. The current number of Gardai in the division is 328; 13 of these accounts of civilian staff. Resourcing is decided by Government Policy on Policing in Ireland which he must implement but he will always need and could do with more resources.

**This concluded the business of the meeting, the next JPC meeting is on
9th September at 11.00 a.m. 2022.**

X O'Donnell
