



**COUNTY MAYO**  
**JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE (JPC)**

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2020**



## Message from the Chairman

As Chairperson of the County Mayo Joint Policing Committee, I welcome the publication of the 2020 Annual report. The Report details the key actions of the Committee in delivering on the objectives of the Strategic Plan 2016-2021 and is an important means of communicating the role and work of the Committee.

The Joint Policing Committee aims to develop greater consultation and co-operation on policing and crime issues between the Gardaí, the local authority, community representatives and elected public representatives. During 2020, the JPC continued to take a strategic approach to its work while also addressing local issues.

The JPC held three meetings during 2020 and a list of the key actions achieved is set out in the Annual Report.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank the Garda Síochána team led by Chief Superintendent Tony Healy and Mayo County Council team led by Chief Executive (Interim) Mr Peter Duggan for their valued contributions to the work of the Committee. I would like to also take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Mr. Peter Hynes for his valued contribution to this JPC and on behalf of the JPC wish him well in his retirement. I would like to place on record the excellent level of participation by the elected and community representatives on the Committee. I'd also like to acknowledge the contribution to the work of the committee of the following - The Garda Drugs Unit, Western Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force, Criminal Assets Bureau, Mayo Women's Support Services, the Road Safety Office of Mayo County Council and the Older Person's Council. Finally I would like to thank meeting co-ordinators Helen Blake, replaced Maura Murphy earlier this year and Michael Galvin for the work and support required for organising the JPC meetings.

Cllr. Al McDonnell  
Chairperson  
County Mayo Joint Policing Committee



## **Introduction**

The Annual report 2020 sets out how the County Mayo Joint Policing Committee carried out its functions for this period in accordance with Section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and in accordance with the revised Joint Policing Committee Guidelines 2014.

## **Role of the Joint Policing Committee**

The legislative framework for the establishment of Joint Policing Committees is set out in Section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

Section 36(2) provides that the Joint Policing Committee is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area. The Act refers specifically to the following matters:

- Keep under review
  - (a) the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour (including the patterns and levels of misuse of alcohol and drugs) and
  - (b) the underlying factors that contribute to these issues.
  
- Advise the local authority and the Garda Síochána on how they might best perform their functions and do everything feasibly possible to improve the safety and quality of life, to prevent crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour.
  
- Arrange and host public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the local authorities' administrative area.
  
- Establish in consultation with the local Garda Superintendent and specific neighbourhoods, local policing fora to discuss and make recommendations to the JPC.
  
- Co-ordinate the activities of local policing fora.



## **Divisional Drugs Taskforce**

A huge area of interest and concern for JPC members is illegal use and selling of drugs in Mayo.

On December 20, 2020 the Mayo Garda Division expanded its Divisional Drugs Taskforce, and since the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020, **€1,382,980** worth of drugs have been seized, approximately €30,000 worth of counterfeit currency has been removed from circulation, and more than €47,365 in cash has been seized in Co Mayo.

Included in these seizures is the detection of five grow houses ranging in value from €64,000 to €432,000, which have been significant in disrupting the sale and supply of drugs in the Mayo Garda Division.

Up to November 24, 2020 the number of drug cultivation incidents has risen by 300% compared with the same period last year, while incidents of sale and supply have increased by 191%, and possession for personal use has also increased by 100% for the same period.

Mayo is operating to the new divisional policing model and the model has enabled the provision of more resources by the Divisional Officer, Chief Superintendent Healy, to tackle the sale and supply of drugs.

The policing model has created greater flexibility and has allowed us take a county wide view of crime rather than a District focus. The new model has also enabled the expansion of the Divisional Drugs Taskforce, which now consists of two sergeants and seven Gardaí, growing from one Sergeant and three Gardaí.

**Two additional members from uniform personnel have been seconded to the Divisional Drugs Taskforce for a three month period.**



The following statistics highlight the increase in drug offences and searches in 2020:

### DRUG STATISTICS

#### **Cultivation/ Manufacture = 16**

Crime Trends = + 12 Detections,  
Increase 300%

Cannabis Growhouses at Charlestown, Claremorris (2) and Attymass.

#### **Possession for Sale & Supply = 78**

Crime Trends = + 49 Detections,  
Increase 191%

#### **Simple Possession = 222**

Crime Trends = + 111 Detections,  
Increase 100%

### SEARCHES

Search Person = 57, +25, Increase 78%.

Search Premises/Vehicle/Vessel with a warrant = 212, +136, Increase 179%

Search Premises/Vehicle/Vessel without a warrant = 75, +31, Increase 70%.

Search under Drugs Act, 1977/84 = 768, +400, Increase 109%.



### VALUE OF DRUGS SEIZED

The following figures provide the total value of drugs seized by the Divisional Drugs Taskforce and other units in Mayo Garda Division from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2020 to the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2020 as a result of the detection of cultivation, sale & supply and simple possession offences.

|                                    |                   |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Total Cultivation Offences =       | €1,101,900        |
| Total Sale & Supply Offences =     | € 269,392         |
| Total Simple Possession Offences = | € <u>11,688</u>   |
| <b>Total =</b>                     | <b>€1,382,980</b> |

**Total Value of Drugs seized for 2020 = €680,970**

**Total Cash Seized = €47,365**

**Annual Report of County Mayo Joint Policing Committee 2020**

**Item 1: Summary of progress in implementing the JPC's work Programme.**

The strategic plan for 2016-2021 was adopted at the October Meeting in 2016:

| <b>Strategic Objectives</b>   | <b>Summary of action taken and progress made during the year.</b>  | <b>Summary of advice given by the JPC to the Local Authority and the Gardaí.</b> | <b>Results of advice. Identify the feedback received for the LA and the Gardaí.</b>      |
|---|--|--|--|
| <b>High Priority Objectives</b>   |  |  |  |
| 1 Promoting the concept of the JPC's.   | One physical and two online meetings were held in 2020. Captain Lou Fine gave presentation at first meeting of 2020 on behalf of aviation authority.   | Overarching job of the JPC is to promote public awareness of policing matters.   | The JPC works closely with local media to promote the work of the Committee.             |
| 2 To monitor and review serious crime, drug supply and public order in Co Mayo. | An Garda Síochána provided detailed quarterly statistical reports which kept under review, and responded as appropriate, to the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in Mayo (including the patterns and levels of misuse of alcohol and drugs). | Ongoing collaboration.   | Ongoing monitoring of and review of crime, drug and public order at each meeting of JPC. |

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|---------------------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>High Priority Objectives</b> |  |   |   |
| 3                               | To encourage collective community initiatives which nurture a sense of community and promote the role for the Gardaí in the community. | AGS and MCC to work collaboratively in agreeing procedures for accessing, maintaining and operating data from CCTV. AGS worked with MCC and a number of other organisations in 2020 on the Community Response Forum | Ongoing collaboration.<br><br>Ongoing collaboration.                                |
| 4                               | To reduce the incidence of fatal and serious injuries from road collisions and to improve road safety in Co Mayo.                      | Promoting public awareness of safe driving and the far reaching consequences of road accidents.   | Ongoing collaboration.<br><br>Ongoing collaboration.                                |





**Item 2: Please highlight three key achievements of the JPC during the year and give reasons why they are significant.**

### **Achievement 1**

#### **Presentation Captain Lou Fine from the Irish Aviation Authority.**

At the February meeting of the JPC Committee Captain Lou Fine, IAA, delivered a presentation on regulations around the ownership and use of drones in Ireland.

The main regulation governing drones, the Drone Implementing Regulation - EU Reg. 2019/947 and Delegated Act 2019/945, was passed by the European Union of Ministers and came into effect in July 2020. He gave details on the regulation and areas it covers. There is no legislation in place yet to cover privacy issues concerning the use of drones.

The following Questions were raised and answered:

- Does the regulation cover every drone regardless of its size?
- Which Government Department has responsibility for regulation?
- Who is responsible for the enforcement of the Regulation?
- Have any charges been brought to date?
- Regarding Knock airport-who protects their space?
- Do landowners have the right to prevent use of drones over their property?

A subcommittee was established to compile an advice note on the subject.

### **Achievement 2**

#### **Community Engagement – Community Response Forum**

The forum was set-up in March by the Minister for for Housing, Planning and Local Government Mr. Eoghan Murphy in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is a multi-agency forum comprising of members drawn from, e.g. An Garda Síochána, HSE, MCC, Dept of Social Protection, An Post.

The Forum was set up to help the vulnerable in the community during the pandemic and will remain in place for any future needs. As part of the response MCC set up a Covid Support Helpline and remains in operation 7 days per week from 9am to 5pm. The Gardaí play a vital role on this forum as the link to the Communities. Garda Síochána have developed good relationships with Communities, and continue to conduct household visits to vulnerable and elderly.



They have also assisted in delivering of good/services/essential information and advice to those that are being advised to remain at home during pandemic.

During Level 5, AGS operate increased checkpoints, using the 4 E's approach – engage, explain and encourage before enforcement. Usually fixed charged penalties issued when people don't engage.

AGS continue to support and promote public health advice, i.e. wear masks, wash hands, cough etiquette, social distancing etc.

### **Achievement 3**

Community Engagement Policing Plan 2020 gave a presentation to the JPC outlining details of **Operation Faoiseamh** – Domestic Abuse Victim Support during COVID 19.

Operation Faoiseamh, which commenced as part of An Garda Síochána's community engagement response to COVID-19, was launched on the 1st April 2020, the aim of the Operation is to prevent loss of life and to ensure that victims of domestic abuse were supported and protected during this extraordinary time.

An Garda Síochána continues to treat all instances of Domestic Abuse as a priority and wishes to take this opportunity to once again re-enforce and reassure victims that domestic abuse incidents, including coercive control, continue to receive the highest priority response for service. We will continue to allocate adequate resources towards crimes against the vulnerable.

An Garda Síochána work closely with our partners in State and non-State Agencies to facilitate continuity in respect of access to support services and Courts Services. A great deal of work and planning has gone into maintaining business continuity and that plan continues to robustly hold firm. Frontline Gardaí, the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB) and Divisional Protective Service Units (DPSU) are all resources available to respond to these crimes.

There has been a total of **272** reported incidents of Domestic Abuse in the Mayo Division in the first six months of 2020 which is a **7% increase on 2019**.

**96%** of persons reporting Domestic Abuse were phoned back by AGS within 7 days.



**Item 3: Record of Members and Meetings held during the year.**

Due to Covid-19 restrictions it was not possible to hold a public meeting this year so only three JPC meetings were held during 2020. Dates of the meetings:

|                                |                            |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2020 | 17 <sup>th</sup> July 2020 | 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2020 |  |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|--|

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|                                      |                                  |                                      |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>21<sup>st</sup> February 2020</b> | <b>17<sup>th</sup> July 2020</b> | <b>27<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|

| JPC Member                | Organisation Represented | Number of meetings attended |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Cllr. Al McDonnell        | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Christy Hyland      | Mayo County Council      | 2                           |
| Cllr. Damien Ryan         | Mayo County Council      | 2                           |
| Cllr. Gerry Coyle         | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. John O'Hara         | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne    | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Michael Loftus      | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Neil Cruise         | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Sean Carey          | Mayo County Council      | 2                           |
| Cllr. John Caulfield      | Mayo County Council      | 0                           |
| Cllr. Mark Duffy          | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Michael Burke       | Mayo County Council      | 3                           |
| Cllr. Ger Deere           | Mayo County Council      | 0                           |
| Cllr. Tom Connolly        | Mayo County Council      | 0                           |
| Dara Calleary, T.D        | Oireachtas               | 1                           |
| Alan Dillon, T.D          | Oireachtas               | 2                           |
| Senator Keith Swanick     | Oireachtas               | 0                           |
| Rose Conway Walsh, T.D    | Oireachtas               | 2                           |
| Michael Ring, T.D         | Oireachtas               | 0                           |
| Senator Michelle Mulherin | Oireachtas               | 1                           |
| Senator Paddy Burke       | Oireachtas               | 1                           |



|                                       |                               |   |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| Peter Duggan, Interim Chief Executive | Mayo County Council           | 2 |
| Peter Hynes, Chief Executive          | Mayo County Council           | 1 |
| Keelan Moran                          | Westport/Belmullet MD         | 3 |
| Edith Geraghty                        | Mayo Travellers Support Group | 3 |
| Seamus Smyth                          | Ballina MD                    | 1 |
| Michael Larkin                        | Castlebar MD                  | 2 |
| Daniel Kabongo                        | SI (Migrant Rep)              | 2 |
| Tony Healy, Chief Superintendent      | Garda Síochána                | 3 |
| Joe McKenna, Superintendent           | Garda Síochána                | 3 |

Signed:   
**Cllr. Al McDonnell**  
**Chairperson, Mayo JPC**

Date: 12/3/2024