



## Mayo Joint Policing Committee

### Minutes of the Meeting

Friday June 23rd, 2023, at 11.00am

Format – Teams / Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Castlebar

- Present:** Cllr. Al McDonnell (Chair), Dara Calleary T.D., Senator Paddy Burke, Cllr. Neil Cruise, Cllr. Michael Loftus, Cllr. Christy Hyland, Cllr. Damien Ryan, Cllr Michael Burke, Cllr. Ger Deere, Cllr. Sean Carey, Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne, Edith Geraghty - PPN, Michael Baynes - PPN, Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon
- In attendance:** Superintendent Gabriel Moran, Superintendent Gary Walsh, Superintendent Deirdre Gill, Insp. David Tiernan, Mary Gildea, Assistant Principal Officer, Detective Insp. Denis Harrington, Sergeant Thomasina McHale, Deirdre Finnerty MCC
- Apologies** Kevin Kelly, C.E., MCC
- Meeting Admin:** Maura Murphy – MCC, Michael Galvin - MCC
- Guest Speaker:** Michéal Durcan, Co-Ordinator of Western Region Drugs and Alcohol Task Force

#### 1. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

Cllr. McDonnell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. He welcomed Superintendent Deirdre Gill to her first JPC meeting and wished her well in her new role.

#### 2. Approval of minutes:

"That the minutes of meeting held 6<sup>th</sup> March held in the Council Chamber, Áras an Chontae, Castlebar and online via Teams, having been circulated to each member; be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy and accordingly signed by Chairperson."

**Proposed:** Cllr. Damien Ryan

**Seconded:** Cllr. Senator Paddy Burke

#### Correspondence:

Cllr. McDonnell read out a letter received from Dr. Judy Higgins, Manager, Policing Authority in response to JPC invitation to Policing Authority and the Commissioner to attend a Mayo JPC meeting - letter attached.

This was discussed by the group; Minister Calleary said that Minister James Browne was very keen to meet the Mayo JPC Chair and was willing to meet in the Autumn.

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Damian Ryan

**Seconded by:** Senator Paddy Burke

#### 3. Approval of Mayo JPC Annual Report 2022

"That Mayo's Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022 having been circulated to each member; be taken as read, confirmed as to accuracy of JPC event and activities recorded for 2022."

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne

**Seconded by:** Senator Paddy Burke



**4. Presentation: Michéal Durcan – Western Region Drugs and Alcohol Task Force, overview of service.**

The Chair invited Michéal Durcan, Co-Ordinator of the WRDATF to deliver his presentation. Michéal gave presentation on the WRDATF and it's services. Chairman thanked Michéal for his presentation, questions from JPC members were answered by Michéal. Michéal to forward reports on DRIVE and Planet Youth on the services of the WRDATF.

Cllr Al McDonnell thanked Michéal for his excellent and comprehensive presentation which was then discussed by the group. A Q & A session followed.

**5. Update from Sub-Committee's  
Crime and Drugs – Cllr. Christy Hyland (C):**

- The last meeting of the Crime and Drugs Sub-Committee was held on held on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023.
- The group discussed how the sub-committee will further promote and implement the actions under the Mayo JPC Strategic Plan.
- Michéal Durcan from the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force was invited to make a presentation at today's JPC to give an overview of their initiatives. Michéal was also invited to present at a Westport Municipal District meeting on the DRIVE project.
- Also discussed were crime prevention initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch, Community Alert and Text Alert Schemes. The new Crime Prevention Officer, Seán Cunnane will be invited to do a presentation on various Community Schemes at the December JPC which will be a public meeting.
- Cllr Hyland proposed that Mayo JPC invite the Garda Commissioner and the Garda Síochána Inspectorate to a meeting to discuss the new policing model as it is not serving rural communities. If they are unavailable to attend, members from JPC will meet them.

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Christy Hyland

**Seconded by:** Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne

**Community Engagement – Cllr. Michael Loftus (C)**

The Community Engagement Sub-Committee had a meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The following items were discussed:

- The Digital register of vulnerable / older people was highlighted at the recent Older Peoples Council Conference held in Meath. It was acknowledged and commended by Age Friendly Ireland. Paula Hillman, Assistant Commissioner and Minister of Mental Health and Older people Mary Butler attended this event.
- Sergeant Maher also presented on the project at Mayo's Older People Council Information Day.
- It was agreed to include information on jobs in the AGS at the careers fair which is held with Education Training Board in January each year.
- The application for Community CCTV from the Department of Justice is very onerous application form. Members agreed to compile a simplified document outlining details required for application process.
- Property marking was discussed. Funding has been sought to purchase machines for Mayo and the JPC will be updated on progress of this project.
- Cllr. Michael Loftus suggested that Local Policing Fora's be established in each Municipal District.

Cllr Loftus congratulated Superintendent Walsh on his future appointment to Chief Superintendent and asked for a commitment to have him replaced in due course as Mayo is now down from five superintendents to just two.

He also asked Mayo JPC Oireachtas members to vote down the proposed legislation regarding the restructuring of JPC's when it comes forward.



## 6. Report from An Garda Síochána – Overview on Crime / Traffic Statistics

Detective Insp. Denis Harrington gave an update on Crime Figures in Mayo reported to date:

The main increase in crime has been theft where a significant increase in shoplifting has been the trend. Burglaries have increased as have Sexual Assaults. A new Sergeant has been appointed to the Drugs Unit and there have been 52 Drug Offence detections and 1 Cultivation detection.

### Superintendent Gabriel Moran – Mayo South area

- Seven arrests were made in a recent operation that involved several units from AGS. Those arrested are on bail awaiting being brought to court.
- Property crime and shoplifting have increased in the area with several repeat offenders being brought before the courts.
- Road traffic accidents have increased significantly; Supt. Moran appealed to people to use the roads carefully, do not speed and never drink/drug drive.
- A joint Operation Tara was recently carried out with customs and drug dog units.

### Superintendent Gary Walsh – Mayo North Area

- Crime figures in the Mayo North area are steady without any major increase /decrease.
- There have been 6 serious road traffic collisions and he too appealed for motorists to drive with care.
- The recent visit of President Biden was very successful; Supt. Walsh thanked all those and other agencies in making it such a great success in such a short timeframe.

### Inspector David Tiernan - Roads Policing

- Speeding Offences detection 2,000
  - Use of mobile phone detection 400
  - Drink/Drug Driving arrests 85
  - Not wearing seat belts 122
  - Road traffic fatalities 10
- Insp. Tiernan appealed to the public to be mindful of vulnerable road users, reduce speed and to not use mobile phones while driving.
  - The new N5 is now open, the speed limit is 100kmph.

Cllr. McDonnell thanked all the Gardai for their comprehensive reports.

Comments from members of the JPC included:

#### Cllr. Damien Ryan:

Thanked AGS for their swift handling of the Ballinrobe situation and said Mayo County Council should invoke its powers in this situation also. CAB should have a divisional aspect to it and free Legal Aid should be challenged where visible resources are evident. A Drugs Unit is badly needed in the area and a Road Safety Officer needs to be appointed for the County.

#### Cllr Michael Bourke:

Complimented Supt. Moran and all involved in the recent situation in South Mayo. Recommended strong enforcement and extra manpower are needed in the area.

#### Cllr Michael Kilcoyne:

Commented that it was strange that bail was granted to those arrested in the Ballinrobe incident. Bail Laws should be examined and Senator Bourke and Minister Calleary need to raise this and the issue of Free Legal Aid in the Dail and Oireachtas.



Minister Dara Calleary:

- Commended Supt. Walsh and all involved in the organising of President Bidens visit which was very well run and a great success.
- He asked AGS to work closely with the Chambers of Commerce to help reduce the incidents of shoplifting and the Drugs Dog could be used at the upcoming Summer Festivals to show we are taking Drugs seriously.
- The budget for AGS for this year is €2.1 billion which is an increase of €78 million.

Cllr. Christy Hyland:

- Why is there one Superintendent in charge of North and South when these areas used to operate with six.
- Manpower in AGS is not increasing and only 165 out of the 200 places available in Templemore were taken up.
- The Minister should ensure the minimum sentence for attacks on frontline services is 10 years.

Senator Paddy Burke:

- Congratulated AGS on their handling of President Biden's visit and the very sophisticated manner in dealing with the Ballinrobe arrests.
- He asked if there were any regulations governing the use of Scooters.

Cllr Michael Loftus:

- Mental Health Services is a very serious issue and often falls to AGS to deal with outside of working week hours which impacts on their resources.
- Superintendent Andrew Lacey from Limerick should be invited to a future JPC to make a presentation.
- Drug intimidation has a serious effect on people and their families and he wanted to know where CAB were in this situation.

In response Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon thanked everyone for their kind comments and said the President's visit was a very enjoyable occasion and the professionalism of AGS and all the other agencies involved was excellent. He also thanked and congratulated everyone involved in the Ballinrobe operation.

- Regarding the Bail Laws he cannot comment as it is a Justice matter.
- Shoplifting has increased post Covid with a small number of gangs involved and the have had several detections and people are being brought before the courts.
- They are increasing the number of Inspectors in Mayo
- They are awaiting legislation to clarify the restrictions around using Scooters.
- He thanked retiring Superintendent Joe McKenna for all his hard work and his dedication throughout his career in keeping the communities of Mayo safe and wished him well in his retirement.

**7. Advance Question**

No advance questions were received.

**8. Tribute to Superintendent Joe McKenna on his retirement**

Cllr McDonnell on behalf of the JPC wished Superintendent Joe McKenna every health and happiness in his retirement. It was a great pleasure to work closely with him on the JPC. He thanked him for all his commitment, dedication and professionalism in working hard to keep the people of Mayo safe. He had a great relationship with all his colleagues, staff and communities throughout Mayo. Everyone present wished to be associated with these comments.

**This concluded the business of the meeting, the next JPC meeting is on**

**22nd September 2023, at 11.00 a.m.**



### New Actions

No.	Action point	By Whom
1.	Circulate copy of letter from Drew Harris office to JPC members	Maura Murphy
2.	Circulate WRDATF presentations to JPC members	Maura Murphy
3.	JPC delegation to meet with Minister Joe Browne to discuss the new Local Community Safety Partnerships	Deputy Dara Calleary

Signed: Cllr Al McDonnell:

  
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Date:

22/9/23  
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