

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

Minutes of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee The Osprey Hotel, Naas Monday 4th December 2017

Members Present:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Cllr. Martin Miley Jnr. | Chairperson |
| Cllr Aoife Breslin | Vice Chairperson |
| Chief Superintendent Gerard Roche | An Garda Síochána |
| Superintendent Declan McCarthy | An Garda Síochána |
| Peter Carey | Chief Executive, KCC |
| Sonya Kavanagh | Director of Services |
| Cllr. Fintan Brett | |
| Cllr. Carmel Kelly | |
| Cllr. Michael Coleman | |
| Cllr. Anne Breen | |
| Cllr. Anthony Larkin | |
| Cllr. Morgan McCabe | |
| Cllr Ivan Keatley | |
| Cllr Íde Cussen | |
| Cllr. P. McEvoy | |
| Dep. James Lawless | |
| Steven Joyce | SW Regional Drugs Task Force |
| Emma Berney | Kildare Children & Young People's Ser. Comm. |
| Monica Byrne | Kildare Older Persons Council |
| Patrick Balfe | Public Participation Network |

In attendance:

| | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Superintendent Martin Walker | An Garda Síochána |
| Superintendent Gerard Wall | An Garda Síochána |
| Inspector Oliver Henry | An Garda Síochána |
| Sergeant George Doherty | |
| Sergeant Eoin Phibbs | |
| Sergeant Gavin Dunphy | |
| Sergeant Mick Croke | |
| Garda Deirdre Barry | |
| Garda Gary Cogan | |
| Garda Sean O' Mahony | |
| Garda John Gaine | |
| Patrick Monahan | Guest Speaker |
| Gerry Shinnors | The Rotary Club Naas |
| Ann Marie Conneely | Community Section |
| Eileen Doyle | Community Section |
| Bernard Higgins | Community Section |
| Jacinta McPartlin | Community Section |

Members of the public were invited to the JPC meeting and those attending numbered up to thirty.

Item 1- Welcome and Minutes of the Meeting dated 11th September 2017.

The Chairperson Councillor Martin Miley welcomed everyone to the meeting, Councillor Miley stated that the theme of tonight's meeting was Road Safety and that there would be some hard hitting presentations here tonight but it was important to remember that Kildare has a large population with three busy motorways running through it and this is why we wanted to focus on road safety and to link in with the Garda Christmas Road Safety campaign which was launched on the previous Friday.

Councillor Miley also informed the meeting that Garda Resources within the community are on the increase. He congratulated Chief Superintendent Roche on the new Community Policing Model – Small Areas of Policing (SAPs) where the Gardaí make a point of constant point of contact for quality of life incidents. Councillor Miley also stated that this approach is in some degree a return to traditional policing methods.

The minutes of the last JPC meeting held on 11th September 2017 were formally adopted as proposed by Councillor Kelly and seconded by Councillor McCabe.

Item 2 – Matters Arising

The Chairperson Councillor Martin Miley welcomed the newest member, Patrick Balfe from Monasterevin Youth Action who has been nominated to fill the PPN seat. There were no other matters arising.

Item 3 – Policing Report and Garda Road Safety Presentation

Chief Superintendent Gerard Roche presented the Policing Report; he informed the meeting that Garda Resources in Kildare have dramatically improved over the past few years with an increase from 301 in 2014 to 356 now. The meeting also heard that the increase in Garda numbers has led to an increase in detection of crime, in particular Public Order and drugs offences.

This year's figures reveal a year to date drop of 23% in sexual offences, from 116 to 89. However there was an increase of 22% in minor assaults from 384 to 468. Assaults causing harm were up 28% from 95 to 122, while public order offences

were up 12% from 421 to 473. Thefts from shops were up 13% from 634 to 715. Thefts from the person were up 10, to 60. Thefts of vehicles were up 6% from 207 to 219. Criminal damage offences were up considerably, 23% to 687. Drugs offences were up considerably. Possession of drugs is up 31%, whereas possession of drugs for sale or supply was up 23% from 100 to 123. Offences for the cultivation of drugs were 13 in 2017, compared to 10 in 2016. These figures could well be attributed to the increase in Gardaí and an increase in drugs searches.

Chief Superintendent also informed the meeting about the Garda Youth Awards which took place on Friday 24th November 2017. The overall winner was Seán Sheridan from Newbridge with the Special Achievement Award going to Adam Burke from Two Mile House. The Cill Dara Foxes won the Group Award and there were also two awards presented for each District.

Chief Superintendent Roche also spoke about the Community Policing and Community Engagement with the Small Area Policing (SAP), for instance Gardaí are required to endeavour to get to know vulnerable people, identify problems early, be proactive and engage in visible policing in the format of beat patrols and checkpoints.

Inspector Oliver Henry presented the Road Safety Report, Inspector Henry stated with a population of over 222,000, 3 busy motorways and the upcoming M7 / Sallins upgrade the issue of Roads Policing in Kildare takes utmost importance. Inspector Henry presented the statistics on the manpower, vehicles, road traffic collisions, road traffic offences, road traffic enforcement, vehicle seizures and spoke on the salient points therein.

Inspector Henry stated that the Garda 2017 Road Safety Campaign's theme was to "Never ever drink and drive" but public co-operation and support is needed. The Roads Policing Unit are running an enforcement and education campaign with particular focus on the Just 1 Life Programme, early morning checkpoints, focus on cyclists and pedestrians and a media campaign.

The Chairperson Councillor Miley thanked Chief Superintendent Roche and Inspector Oliver Henry for their presentations.

Item 4 – Presentation from the Naas Rotary Club on the “ Just 1 Life “ Schools Programme

Gerry Shinnars from the Naas Rotary Club did a presentation on the “ Just 1 Life” Schools Driver Awareness Programme which is being run out to young pre-driving students across the county in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, the Fire Service and Naas General Hospital. It is a hard hitting half –day programme and those that have seen it will attest that it pulls no punches.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Shinnars for his excellent presentation and the great work being done with young pre-driving students in the county.

Item 5 - Guest Speaker Mr Patrick Monahan, Paralympian

Chairperson, Councillor Miley introduced Patrick and informed the meeting, that inspired by what he saw at London 2012, Patrick became involved in wheelchair racing in recent years, and has successfully defended his title as wheelchair winner of the Dublin Marathon. Patrick also won the Columbus Ohio Marathon in 2015 where he broke the Irish record by seven minutes. Patrick qualified for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games, for both the 800m race and the Marathon. Unfortunately he was withdrawn from the 800m event, on medical grounds, but placed 16th in the Marathon with a time of 1 hour 40 minutes 26 seconds.

Patrick recounted the day of his accident and candidly spoke about the speed involved in the final accident and showed a photo of a prior accident that he had been involved in as a result of speeding as well. Patrick stated that his actions affected his family and friends and could have affected other families if had passengers in the car with him that day. Patrick spoke about the emergency services who attended on the day, the hospital care plan, rehabilitation, the effects on his family and how normal life never resumed for him as the family returned to their daily activities as Patrick returned home to be a wheelchair user for the rest of his life. At this stage Patrick stressed that actions can have permanent

consequences and may have a lasting impact on the rest of your life, there is no reset button, and actions cannot be undone. He stressed that the main reason he was here tonight was to remind us all to:

- **Obey the speed limits**
- **Use your seat belt**
- **Put your phone down**

Patrick's life was to take an alternative path to his previous life as a plumber. This new journey involved coming out of his comfort zone, travelling, meeting new people along with feeling a sense of purpose with a new quality of life.

The Chairperson thanked Patrick for his frank and open account of his accident along with the powerful road safety message and the story of his new life afterwards. Councillor Miley stated that he hoped that young drivers are made of aware of Patricks' story and he wished Patrick the very best of luck in the future and in his sporting career.

Item 5 – Question and Answer Session

The panel responded to questions from members of the audience with the focus being on road safety for cyclists and pedestrians, speeding and drink driving.

Item 6 – Close and Meeting Dates for 2018

The Chairperson thanked the panel and the audience for their contributions and he stated that he hoped the message sent out tonight would help in saving lives.

The meeting dates for 2018 are as follows:

5th March 2018

11th June 2018

10th September 2018

3rd December 2018

The meeting concluded.

