

**Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting
3.00 p.m. Monday 7th December 2020
Boardroom, Aras Chill Dara, Naas & Microsoft Teams**

Members in attendance:

Name:	Representing	Location
Cllr. Fintan Brett	Elected Member	Boardroom, KCC
Cllr. Aoife Breslin	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Ivan Keatley	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Tim Durkan	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Brian Dooley	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Ciara Galvin	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Nuala Killeen	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Naoise Ó'Cearúil	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Chris Pender	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member	Microsoft Teams
Dept. Patricia Ryan	Oireachtas Member	Microsoft Teams
Dept. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member	Microsoft Teams
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member	Microsoft Teams
Peter Carey	Kildare County Council	Boardroom, KCC
Sonya Kavanagh	Kildare County Council	Boardroom, KCC
Chief Supt. John Scanlon	An Garda Síochána	Boardroom, KCC
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána	Boardroom, KCC
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre	Microsoft Teams
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF	Microsoft Teams
Emma Berney	CYPSC	Microsoft Teams
Monica Cox	OPC	Microsoft Teams
Michael Corcoran	PPN	Microsoft Teams
John Daly	PPN	Microsoft Teams
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg	Microsoft Teams

(Boardroom – (B) / Microsoft Teams – (MT))

Also in attendance: Supt. Eamon Curley (B), Ins. John Fitzgerald (B), Sgt. Jim Molloy(MT) (all An Garda Síochána), Liam Dunne (MT), John Shannon (B), Denis McDermott (B), Ciara Gallagher (B) (all Dept. of Economic, Community & Cultural Development, KCC)

1. Minutes / Matters Arising:

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The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on Monday 7th September 2020 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy, seconded by Cllr. Naoise O’Cearúil.

2. Chairperson’s business:

Attendance of Garda Commissioner Harris at a JPC meeting in 2021:

- Cllr. Brett advised the meeting that Commissioner Harris had indicated he would reschedule his attendance for 2021. The committee agreed to his visit for any meeting date acceptable to the Commissioner.

JPC meeting dates for 2021:

- Cllr. Brett indicated that the proposed dates had already been circulated. On the proposal of Cllr. Anne Connolly, seconded by Cllr. Naoise O’Cearúil, the dates were agreed.

3. Policing Report:

Chief Superintendent Scanlan presented the policing report with relevant statistics comparing the period Q4 2018-Q3 2019 with Q4 2019-Q3 2020. Statistical details were given in relation to property crime, crime against the person, criminal damage / public order offences, drugs / weapons offences and road traffic incidents. The Chief Superintendent referred to the ongoing overall reduction in criminal activity which is linked to the Covid-19 restrictions on the community generally.

C.S. Scanlan confirmed eight new probationer Gardaí had been allocated to Kildare Division, with three retirements, giving a net improvement of five.

The Chief Superintendent clarified the headings on the charts for the members in response to a query raised. He also outlined how he has allocated Garda resources across the county in response to several queries on this issue.

4. Questions:

Please see Item No. 6

5. Motion from Celbridge Leixlip MD:

The JPC agreed that it would be worthwhile to undertake a publicity campaign to highlight the dangers of drug-driving as proposed in the motion. Supt. Oliver Henry confirmed that Gardaí were already working on a planned poster campaign for licensed premises etc. and he would ask Community Garda Gary Cogan to link in with Declan Keogh, Road Safety Officer, to discuss further options.

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6. Policing Plan 2021:

C.S. Scanlan confirmed the plan was being finalised and many aspects of it would trickle down to local policing plans. There was considerable input from the members at this stage and several members made points or asked questions as follows:

- Garda resources in Newbridge were insufficient and the town was suffering significantly as a result. It was suggested that Garda numbers per unit in the town were well below those of other towns and reported numbers included the Armed Support Unit, which is a regional resource. A dedicated drugs unit and dedicated community policing unit were required. The Garda station is unsuitable to accommodate the existing personnel. A meeting with the Chief Superintendent to discuss these specific issues was requested
- There was no reference to older persons in the policing plan which seemed a significant omission.
- Details of dates when there were no Gardaí available in Monasterevin were given to the Chief Superintendent for investigation.
- Could resources in Athy be increased both in terms of community policing and numbers of Gardaí per unit?
- Was there a possibility of increased opening hours and Gardaí at Maynooth Garda station in view of the current size of the town and planned growth?
- The Gardaí were thanked for assisting community alert and text alert groups during the ongoing Covid pandemic restrictions.
- Is there a specific target for Garda numbers in the county?

The Chief Superintendent and his team replied to these points:

- He is aware of issues in Newbridge which are common to all large towns and he did not accept that Garda numbers were as stated. He is continually seeking additional resources and must allocate them as demand requires. Garda numbers in Newbridge were at a significantly better level than two years ago and there is a dedicated drugs unit for the district comprising a sergeant and four Gardaí. There are currently 6-7 members on each unit compared to 3-4 two years ago. There have been targeted traffic unit checks

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in high-profile areas. There are no issues with accommodation in the station. Several new vehicles have been allocated to Newbridge recently.

- It was acknowledged that the policing plan did not reference older persons specifically and this was regretted, but Gardaí will always be alert to vulnerable persons in the community.
- The incident regarding Garda availability in Monasterevin will be checked and a reply issued to Deputy Ryan.
- Garda numbers in Kildare are improving significantly but there is always a demand for additional resources, with other areas competing also. He acknowledged that Kildare Division had been historically low in Garda numbers but the situation was improving with about 100 more needed to meet the national average per head of population.
- The Chief Superintendent stated again that he is available to take calls directly from JPC members if necessary.

7. JPC guidelines & Code of Practice review:

Cllr. Brett asked the committee members to submit their observations on the review documents in advance of the next meeting in March and the steering committee would consider all submissions and report back.

Cllr. McEvoy advised that the council's Protocol Committee was amending standing orders to cater for the changed environment of remote meetings.

8. CCTV update:

Supt. Henry confirmed that he was working with a small group to try to commence an initial scheme in Clane. It is envisaged that an outside consultant will be retained to help with aspects of design, planning and procurement due to the complexities involved. He reminded the committee that data protection issues remained to be resolved but confirmed that relevant AGS staff were in talks with the Data Protection Commissioner's office on these points.

9. Update on Text Alert Scheme:

Cllr. Brett confirmed that the working group had considered the submissions received from JPC members in response to the draft documents and that the project

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would now proceed to be advertised on the Etenders procurement portal. It was agreed to allow into mid-January for tender submissions to be received. The Council's procurement officer will be consulted before the request for tenders is published.

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10. Any other business:

- Steven Joyce raised the issue of a planned drug-litter publicity campaign between KCC and AGS. He was concerned that KCC was not now taking part as previously agreed. Cllr. Chris Pender, the JPC representative on the Drug Litter Task Force confirmed he was in discussions with Joe Boland, Director of Services for Environment Section to resolve the issues.
- Conor O'Leary advised that Muintir na Tire would be continuing their work in identifying and registering as many vulnerable persons in the community as possible, and he requested the ongoing assistance of Gardaí as necessary.
- Cllr. McEvoy asked that AGS liaise with the Office of Public Works to ensure that appropriate biodiversity measures were taken on any new Garda station buildings or renovations. Supt. Henry confirmed that he will link with the OPW as necessary.

Next meeting: Monday 1st March 2021 at 3.00 p.m.