

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

3.00 p.m. Monday 6th September 2021
Via Microsoft Teams

Members in Attendance:

Name:	Representing:
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Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin (Vice Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Tim Durkan	Elected Member
Cllr. Brian Dooley	Elected Member
Cllr. Ciara Galvin	Elected Member
Cllr. Nuala Killeen	Elected Member
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell	Elected Member
Cllr. Naoise Ó'Cearúil	Elected Member
Cllr. Chris Pender	Elected Member
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member
Dep. Bernard Durkan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member
Sonya Kavanagh	KCC
Marian Higgins	KCC
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF
Emma Berney	CYPSC
Monica Cox	Kildare OPC
Michael Corcoran	PPN
Apologies	
Chief Supt. John Scanlan	An Garda Síochána

An Garda Síochána: Supt. Martin Walker, Supt. Eamon Curley, Ins. Georgina Gray, Ins. Anthony Connaughton.

Kildare County Council - Dept. of Economic, Community & Cultural Development: Liam Dunne, Senior Executive Officer, John Shannon, Administrative Officer and Ciara Gallagher, Clerical Officer.

Members of the press and public were also in attendance.

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1. Minutes / Matters Arising:

The minutes of the quarterly meeting held on Monday 16th June 2021 were adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil seconded by Cllr. Tim Durkan.

2. Chairperson's business:

Cllr. Breslin advised the meeting as follows:-

1. An invite had been received to the Policing Authority's 6th annual meeting with the chairpersons of the Joint Policing Committees (JPCs) and the Chief Executives of the Local Authorities. (The meeting takes place on Thursday 30th September – online format).
2. Members were reminded to submit items for consideration for Commissioner Harris for the annual public meeting in December.
3. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Lorraine Rowan was not able to attend the meeting and consequently the domestic violence item would be postponed to the December meeting.

3. Correspondence:

Cllr. Breslin noted the invitation from Dept. of Rural and Community Development to members to participate in the PPN structural review focus group (16th August- previously circulated by email).

4. Question - Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin - Illegal encampments on the Curragh

Supt. Walker gave a brief overview of the areas of responsibility of the various authorities on the Curragh lands, and confirmed that dealing with illegal encampments was a matter for Gardaí. He referred to the most recent such incident which involved over 30 caravans near Ballysax. The superintendent explained that Gardaí had to serve individual notices on persons under public order or housing legislation and had to be satisfied as to the identity of the alleged offenders, which was time-consuming and somewhat impractical in many cases. He expressed hope that powers under the Curragh of Kildare Act 1961 could be used to target the owners of vehicles involved in bringing the caravans to the lands in the first instance would be of more benefit, with on-the-spot fines available as needed.

Supt. Walker confirmed that he had taken part in a recent forum with the various interested agencies to develop a plan for the management of the Curragh generally.

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

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5. Policing Report & Questions:

Supt. Walker (in place of Chief Superintendent Scanlan) presented the policing report with relevant statistics comparing Q2 2021 with Q2 2020. Statistical details were given in relation to property crime, crime against the person, criminal damage / public order offenses, drugs / weapons offences, and road traffic incidents. Overall, the figures seemed to indicate that the number of incidents in most categories were increasing generally, in line with the upturn in activity as society started to approach normality post Covid 19 restrictions.

There were several questions and points raised in relation to the report and policing generally:

- Were there any particular the reasons for the increase in harassment and assaults figures?
- Fatal traffic collisions were down from four to one.
- There were very poor lines of sight and /or maintenance of road warning signs and road markings in many locations.
- Does speeding continue to be a factor in many cases?
- Could relevant speeding data be made available to assist members with the upcoming speed limit reviews?
- How are road traffic incidents trending compared to pre-Covid restrictions periods?
- Can a renewed publicity campaign be targeted towards speeding and general motorists' impatience as traffic levels approach normal?
- How is the theft of catalytic convertors recorded in the statistics?
- How are Gardaí dealing with the ongoing issue of nuisance phone calls?
- It was noted that overall drugs offences incidents have increased, and the issue of drug-driving was raised.

Supt. Curley, Supt. Walker, Supt. Henry, and Inspector Connaughton answered the questions raised in so far as possible and agreed to follow up with members queries later where required.

5. Presentation from Monica Cox, Older Persons' Council:

Monica gave a detailed presentation to the JPC on the structure and activities of the OPC and her role within it. The presentation was very well received. Cllr. McEvoy noted that Pobal runs a scheme to financially assist older persons with house alarms and Monica confirmed that individuals could join existing groups to avail of the scheme if they wished. Upon request by members the presentation will be circulated by email after the meeting.

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Minutes of Meeting

3.00 p.m. Monday 6th September 2021
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6. CCTV update:

Cllr. McEvoy advised that Clane Community Council's request for consultants to design a CCTV scheme was closing later this month. The group hoped to develop a scheme or design that could be replicated county-wide as soon as possible thereafter. In response to a question from Deputy Durkan regarding likely timelines, Supt. Henry confirmed that it could take up to a year to secure the appropriate permissions and install the system on the ground.

7. Domestic Violence Supports (postponed)

- Cllr. Nuala Killeen
- Lorraine Rowan, Manager, Teach Tearmainn, Kildare
- Det. Sgt. Diarmuid Lalor, Protective Services Unit

8. Community Text Alert Update:

Cllr. McEvoy advised the meeting that five tenders had been received in response to the tender request. The working group had set aside two dates to assess the tenders and he hoped to be able to advise the next meeting of the outcome of the process.

9. Any other business:

1. Cllr. Durkan asked if the Gardaí had alternatives to static camera vans for detecting speeding in areas where the vans could not be used. He agreed to discuss the matter directly with Inspector Connaughton after the meeting.
2. Cllr. McLoughlin Healy asked how the list of items for discussion with Commissioner Harris would be finalised. Interim Chief Executive Sonya Kavanagh said the list of suggested topics would be circulated to all members in advance of the December meeting. Cllr. McLoughlin Healy indicated she would be submitting questions regarding the proposed change from JPCs to community safety partnerships and on the Supreme Court judgements on conflicts of interest having regard to the steering committee of the JPC.
3. Michael Corcoran asked if the GDPR issues regarding CCTV systems and Garda body cameras had been resolved yet. Supt. Henry indicated amending legislation to cover sharing of images from such sources is still awaited but should be in place soon. In response to a further question, Supt. Henry and Insp. Connaughton advised they could not comment on proposed mobile phone checking legislation at this time.
4. Cllr. Caldwell asked that speeding in the Confey Junior School area be monitored.
5. Cllr. Caldwell suggested that members should list only one well-prepared item for Commissioner Harris rather than trying to cover too many items.

Next meeting: Annual Public Meeting on Monday 6th December 2021 7.00 p.m.

JK Burt 8/12/2021
John Burt 4/1/2022