

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL



COUNTY KILDARE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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Message from the Chairperson

As the chairperson of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee, I welcome the publication of the 2020 Annual Report. The report details the main activities of the committee during a year which proved to be significantly challenging for all members of society and, at this time, continues to be so.

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, relevant agencies and elected public representatives.

The JPC held three meetings during 2020. The meetings were restricted to various degrees due to Public Health restrictions and concerns. The Annual Public Meeting was cancelled but the members of the JPC met to finalise committee business for 2020. The committee is anxious to return to open meetings as soon as possible as these offer real opportunities for local communities to participate in relation to matters affecting the policing of County of Kildare and any general policing matters affecting their area.

Unfortunately, the planned attendance by Commissioner Drew Harris at the Annual Public Meeting also had to be cancelled; however, Commissioner Harris has kindly agreed to attend in December 2021, and we hope this can proceed.

I wish to record my appreciation to Chief Superintendent Scanlan and his Garda colleagues for their valued contributions. The dedication of An Garda Síochána has never been more evident than in the last year and they have the full support of members of the JPC and the wider council in this regard. I also acknowledge the input of the members of the JPC and their continuing support. Finally, I wish to thank the Community Section of Kildare County Council for the ongoing facilitation and support of this valuable forum.

Councillor Fintan Brett

Chairperson of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

26th March 2021

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Introduction

The following is a report on the work of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee for 2020.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee (JPC) aims to develop greater consultation, co-operation and synergy on policing and crime issues between An Garda Síochána, Local Authorities, elected local representatives and relevant agencies. The committee facilitates the participation of the community/voluntary sectors in this regard through its membership profile.

The function of the JPC is set out in section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, which states: “The joint policing committee’s function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority’s administrative area”.

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Membership of County Kildare JPC.

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Members	
Name:	Representing:
Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin (Vice Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Ivan Keatley	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'Ceairúil	Elected Member
Cllr. Chris Pender	Elected Member
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin-Healy	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member
Dep. Catherine Murphy	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Reada Cronin	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Seán Ó'Feargháil	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Patricia Ryan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Bernard Durkan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. James Lawless	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Cathal Berry	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Vincent P. Martin	Oireachtas Member
Peter Carey	Kildare County Council
Sonya Kavanagh	Kildare County Council
Chief Supt. John Scanlon	An Garda Síochána
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF
Emma Berney	CYPSC
Monica Cox	Kildare Older Persons' Council
Michael Corcoran	Public Participation Network
John Daly	Public Participation Network

NOTE: There are 37 members of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee: 15 Local Authority members; 11 Oireachtas members; 2 members of An Garda Síochána; 2 Local Authority officials and 7 members from the community/voluntary/agency sector.

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Meetings of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

2020 meetings of the committee

The JPC Committee met three times in 2020 as follows:

1. Monday 2nd March 2020
2. Monday 14th September 2020
3. Monday 7th December 2020

There was no June quarterly meeting due to the initial phase of Covid-19 restrictions.
See Appendix 1 for attendance details.

Policing Reports

Chief Superintendent John Scanlan and his team presented an overview of the key policing activities for the Kildare Divisions at each of the Kildare JPC Meetings, including quarterly crime analysis, crime prevention and community policing measures, road traffic statistics and details of Garda resources.

The Chief Superintendent and his colleagues responded to questions on the policing reports from members of the committee at each meeting as required.

The issue of Garda resources in County Kildare (*Objective 1 of the 2016-2021 JPC Strategic Plan*) remains an issue of ongoing concern for the JPC members generally. While the roll-out of the new policing model has been affected by Covid-19 restrictions and additional duties, the specific issue of community policing and the number of Gardaí assigned to it was a consistent theme at JPC meetings. Chief Superintendent Scanlon indicated to the members that he considers all Gardaí to be community Gardaí in the first instance and he allocates resources to specific tasks as demands allow.

The problems linked to drug addiction/abuse/supply were also raised frequently, as was the increase in domestic violence, mental health issues and suicides possibly linked to the national public health restrictions. The reported increase of incidents of cybercrime and online bullying was also raised by members frequently.

**NOTE: Copies of all policing reports, annual reports, minutes of meetings and details of events etc. are available for consultation at:
www.kildarejointpolicing.ie**

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Specific presentations and reports

In addition to the Policing Reports, the JPC received several presentations and updates in line with the objectives of the JPC's adopted Strategic Plan¹. This aspect was significantly restricted this year as no external attendees were invited to meetings in 2020.

Item	Strategy Element	Comment
Community text alert	Objective 2	Current text alert system is no longer fit for purpose. Subsequently, it was agreed by each of the five municipal districts that they would provide Local Property Tax funding for a new countywide scheme to be put in place.
Draft Drug Litter Clean-Up Protocol	Objectives 3 & 4	Steven Joyce presented the draft protocol which was prepared by the drug litter sub-group of the SWRDATF. The protocol was adopted unanimously.
JPC guidelines & Code of Practice review	All	The committee received a comprehensive review of current implementation of the JPC in Co. Kildare. Members were invited to submit their comments on this review.
Community CCTV	Objective 2	Draft pilot scheme in preparation. Awaiting amending legislation re data sharing.
Divisional Policing Plan 2021	All	JPC members were circulated with details of the plan's preparation and were invited to make submissions as required.
Kildare County Council (Control of Consumption & Possession of Alcohol in Public Places) Bye-Laws 2020	Objectives 2,3 & 4	JPC members were circulated with details of the new bye-laws.

¹ See Appendix 2.

CCTV sub-committee

Co. Kildare JPC has one dedicated sub-committee whose role is to assist with the implementation of Community CCTV schemes as envisaged by the national scheme announced in 2017. The sub-committee is chaired by Cllr. Aoife Breslin. In addition to nominated JPC members, this committee includes relevant Garda personnel and Kildare County Council staff members working in this area.

Kildare County Council has agreed to act as data controller for proposed CCTV feeds. Accordingly, it has prepared a CCTV specification for groups to use to ensure any systems to be installed will be compatible with existing and future traffic management infrastructure. The sub-committee has endorsed this document.

A pilot scheme for Community CCTV is being prepared for Clane. Further development of this scheme is on hold pending clarification of data protection issues which have affected these schemes nationally.

Text Alert Working Group

A small informal working group has been set up to investigate the setting up of a county wide message alert system to replace the numerous stand-alone systems currently in place. It is hoped that a scheme will go to tender in early 2021. Kildare County Council will be required to advertise on the E-tenders platform.

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An Garda Síochána and Municipal Districts councillors

Locally based representatives of An Garda Síochána meet with members of each of the five Municipal Districts and the JPC community and agency representatives. These meetings take place on a quarterly basis linked to the formal JPC meetings. This process continued in 2020. Discussions at this local level can and does help eliminate problems such as anti-social behaviour and damage to public property. Councillors will often have access to information that An Garda Síochána may not have or they may be in contact with residents more frequently. Councillors regard these meetings as a vital part of their engagement with An Garda Síochána.

The members of each Municipal District have stressed the importance of these meetings being held without press or public attendance. The members believe that the formats of these meetings are beneficial as they are an informal exchange of essential information at a local level.

The essential role of An Garda Síochána as frontline community support was much in evidence in 2020 and was the source of significant praise from all elected members throughout the year at meetings.

MD meetings dates 2020

	Athy	Clane/Maynooth.	Celbridge/Leixlip	Naas	Kildare/Newbridge
Q.1	17th FEB	7th FEB	21st FEB	18th FEB	19th FEB
Q.2	No meetings due to Covid restrictions				
Q.3	n/a	21st JUL	17th JUL	21st JUL	15th JUL
Q.4	16th NOV	5th NOV	19th NOV	17th NOV	16th DEC

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APPENDIX 1

Record of members and meetings held 2020

Number of meetings held: Three

Dates of meetings: 2nd March; 14th September; 7th December.

Name of members (and title)	Organisation represented	Number of meetings attended
Steering Group		
Chairperson		
Cllr. Fintan Brett		3
Ch. Supt. John Scanlan	An Garda Síochána	2
Sonya Kavanagh	Kildare County Council	3
Vice-chairperson		
Cllr. Aoife Breslin		3
Elected Members		
Cllr. Padraig McEvoy		3
Cllr. Ivan Keatley		1
Cllr. Tim Durkan		1
Dep. Catherine Murphy		0
Dep. Reada Cronin		2
Dep. Séan Ó'Feargháil		0
Dep. Cathal Berry		0
Dep. Martin Heydon		2
Dep. Bernard Durkan		0
Dep. James Lawless		0
Dep. Patricia Ryan		2
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin ²		1
Sen. Mark Wall ³		2
Sen. Vincent Martin ⁴		2
Cllr. Brian Dooley		2
Cllr. Ciara Galvin		2
Cllr. Nuala Killeen		1
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell		3
Cllr. Naoise Ó'Ceairúil		1
Cllr. Chris Pender		3
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin Healy		3
Cllr. Anne Connolly		3
Cllr. Bill Clear		1
Cllr. Colm Kenny ⁵		1

² Could only have attended two meetings.

³ Could only have attended two meetings.

⁴ One attendance as councillor and one as senator.

⁵ Could only have attended one meeting.

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Name of members (and title)	Organisation represented	Number of meetings attended
Peter Carey	Chief Executive KCC	3
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána	3
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre	2
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF	2
Maura Littlewood ⁶	Comhairle na nÓg	1
Emma Berney	CYPSC	1
Monica Cox	Older Person's Council	3
John Daly ⁷	PPN	1
Michael Corcoran	PPN	3

⁶ Could only have attended one meeting.

⁷ Could only have attended two meetings.

APPENDIX 2

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan 2016-2021

The plan was adopted in June 2016. The plan's primary goal is to support safer communities by focusing on nine strategic objectives to support enhanced policing and crime prevention.

These objectives are:

1. Garda resources.
2. Crime prevention – assignment of Gardaí to specialist posts such as Community Gardaí, drugs specialists etc.
3. Anti-social behaviour and street crime.
4. Misuse of drugs, alcohol, and related crime.
5. Wildlife protection and cruelty to animals.
6. To increase public safety of newly designed roads and developments across Kildare – An Garda Síochána and Kildare County Council working in partnership.
7. To liaise with older people in the county through the Older Person's Council.
8. To strengthen the relationship between An Garda Síochána and the local community.
9. To support the local implementation of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

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, agencies and elected public representatives.

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APPENDIX 3

Further information on joint policing committees is available at:

www.kildarejointpolicing.ie

www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Joint_Policing_Committees

www.policingauthority.ie/en/joint-policing-committees

<https://www.garda.ie/en/Crime-Prevention/Community-engagement/>