**Minutes of Meeting of County Cavan Joint Policing Committee held in the Council Chamber, Cavan on 14th September 2018 at 3pm.**

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**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr Sarah O’ Reilly, Cllr Winston Bennett, Cllr John Paul Feeley, Cllr Paddy Smith, Cllr Madeleine Argue, Cllr Damien Brady, Cllr Clifford Kelly, Cllr Peter Mc Vitty, Cllr Noel O’ Connell.

**Community Representatives:** Bob Gilbert, Noleen Brady

**Executive**: Tommy Ryan (Chief Executive), Eoin Doyle, (Director of Services), Gráinne Boyle (Community & Enterprise).

**Garda Officers**: Chief Superintendent John O’Reilly, Superintendent Timothy Burke, Inspector Nial Mc Kiernan

**Oireachtas Members:** Deputy Brendan Smith, Senator Joe O’Reilly, Deputy Niamh Smyth, Senator Diarmuid Wilson

**Apologies:** Cllr Paddy Mc Donald, Cllr Carmel Brady, Cllr Fergal Curtin, Cllr Shane P. O’Reilly, Vanessa Clarke, Brian Mc Dermott, Frank Mc Dermott

**In Attendance:** Eddie Butler (Northern Sound), Detective Sergeant Adrian Kelly, Karen Shelley (Policing Authority), Damian Mc Carney (Anglo Celt)

Chair Cllr John Paul Feeley welcomed Superintendent Timothy Burke to the meeting and wished him well in his new post as Superintendent for the Bailieborough District. He also welcomed Karen Shelley from the Policing Authority and Sergeant Adrian Kelly to the meeting.

**Minutes from meeting 9th May 2018 & Matters Arising**

Cllr P. Smith stated that Ballyjamesduff submitted an application under the Community CCTV Scheme 15 months ago, however they recently learned that the application had not actually been lodged. Inspector Mc Kiernan explained that approval for the application had been sought through the National CCTV Advisory Committee, however the issue outstanding was Garda Vetting of the committee members. He believed that this has been completed and the application is now ready to be forwarded to the Department of Justice.

Cllr W. Bennett reported the frustrations conveyed at a recent council meeting in relation to the Community CCTV Scheme requirement that monitors have to be housed in council premises. Many at the meeting believed that the monitors would be better off placed in a premises owned by the Gardaí, as the requirement excludes communities without council premises in applying for funding. Inspector Mc Kiernan explained that the criteria for the scheme specifically state that the County Council are to be the data controllers.

Cllr. D. Brady asked for an update on the Belturbet and Ballyconnell Schemes, Inspector Mc Kiernan said that Garda Vetting was also to be completed for the members involved in these schemes. Chair Cllr J. P. Feeley referred to a question raised in the Dáil by Deputy Brendan Smith seeking an update on the number of applications submitted under the CCTV Scheme for County Cavan. The response stated that one application from Cavan did not meet the requirements for the scheme. However, upon further investigation by G. Boyle with the Department of Justice, she was informed that no applications from Cavan had been considered for grant approval as of yet. Deputy Brendan Smith said that communications between the Department of Justice and the An Garda Síochána would need to improve. All replies to the Dáil are to be accurate so this is very concerning.

Cllr. P. Smith referred to the funding requirements of the scheme which state that community groups need to fund 40% of the total costs of the CCTV scheme. He suggested that due to the low uptake and delays in the roll out of the scheme the department should consider providing 100% of the funds. Cllr. C. Kelly also backed these comments. Chair Cllr J. P. Feeley concluded discussions by stating that the financial burden placed on community groups through the scheme in order to police their own communities is not acceptable.

In relation to the Property Marking Machine Initiative, Chair Cllr. J. P. Feeley reported that there is good interest amongst the community in the initiative, and three groups borrowed the machine to date over a week’s period each. Blacklion, Dowra & Glangevlin Community Alert Group was the first group to borrow the machine back in May.

Previous minutes were proposed by Cllr D. Brady and seconded by Brendan Jennings.

**An Garda Síochána’s Computer Crime Investigation Unit (CCIU) - Detective Sergeant Adrian Kelly**

Chair Cllr. J. P. Feeley introduced and welcomed Sergeant Adrian Kelly to the meeting.

Sergeant A. Kelly commenced his presentation by providing an overview on the Unit. It was set up in 2017 following a dramatic increase in the area of cyber crime over recent years. They have links with UCD in the area of developing training in forensic techniques. The world of cyber crime is one which is constantly changing so they have to stay up to date on developments. He referred to the area of cyber crime and said that they are the first agency to get involved in tackling this issue. He provided a presentation to members covering the following areas:

* Staffing arrangements
* Functions of the CCIU
* Latest developments – in technology and cyber crime
* Current & future projects
* Keeping the organisation informed
* Forensic case life
* Overview of the Cyber Investigative Unit
* Challenges
* Advice to give to the public

Chair Cllr J. P. Feeley referred to the unit’s regionalisation plans as being ambitious and welcome. He thanked him for his presentation and the practical information provided within it.

**Crime Statistics for Quarters 2 2017 compared to Quarter 2 2018**

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly talked through the Garda Crime Statistics. The statistics were largely positive for the second half of 2018 compared to the same period in 2017. However he stated that the current limited resources received by An Garda Síochána could negatively impact on crime figures for this time next year. The number of assaults recorded has not changed significantly and he went on to explain that often a victim may report a crime but may decide not to proceed with the case. As a result this has an impact on the number of assault cases recorded. Drug possession and supply is an ongoing issue. The number of driving offences had reduced significantly.

Chair Cllr. J P Feeley thanked Chief Superintendent O’Reilly for the updated statistics. He queried the reduced resources received by to An Garda Síochána he had referred to, pointing out that it is being reported that the gardaí are receiving additional funding. Chief Superintendent O’Reilly responded that he was referring to a human resource issue, the gardaí are only slowly getting back to a level where they should be at in terms of staff quotas, however this is taking time.

Chair Cllr J. P. Feeley also enquired into people reporting assaults but not pursuing them further, he wondered if the gardaí have any control over this. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly responded that this is up to the individual and the gardaí cannot intervene in this, however they do have processes in place to provide supports to victims of crime.

Senator J. O’Reilly wanted to state that JPC members and the media should be careful that the fear of crime is not intensified unnecessarily to people by highlighting the negatives. He referred to the significant reductions in the offences recorded and said that this is a good news story and credit should be given to An Garda Síochána for their work in the reduction of crime levels. He went on to inform committee members of feedback he had received from the Department of Justice on the status of Community CCTV applications for the County. He said that they would allege there is an issue between the County Council’s and the gardaí over data protection following the implications of GDPR. Chief Superintendent O’Reilly referred to the CCTV application process and stated that An Garda Síochána are part of the application process and it is in their interest also that schemes are up and running. In relation to his point on the reduced crime levels he referred to Operation Thor and explained that this has led to significant reductions in the volume of crime and this can be seen in the presented statistics.

Cllr. Kelly congratulated Superintendent Timothy Burke on his new role. He referred to Kingscourt town and the loss of gardaí over the last number of years. He hoped that this would be rectified in the near future.

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly agreed that both Cootehill and Kingscourt have large populations and need additional gardaí in place. He reported that the Gardaí’s recruitment process in underway, interviews are being held and he would expect the number of gardaí assigned to these towns to increase once completed.

Deputy Brendan Smith also extended his congratulations to Superintendent Timothy Burke on his role. He pointed out that there are unique policing needs of the border region and asked if any consideration is given by An Garda Síochána towards this. He also referred to Brexit and the possible implications this may raise for the county.

Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly acknowledged Deputy Smith’s points and informed him that he has sought additional resources based on the grounds he pointed out. He welcomed the JPC to support his request also, stating all additional support requests for his case would be most welcomed. Deputy Brendan Smith said he would continue to raise the need for additional resources for the county.

Cllr P. Mc Vitty enquired if the assaults recorded in the statistics are classified and if so how many would be of a domestic nature. He also wanted to ask if An Garda Síochána test for driving under the influence of drugs.

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly replied that they do not receive a breakdown on the type of assaults recorded, however he will seek this information for the next meeting. He was able to confirm however that most of the victims would be women. An Garda Síochána provide assistance to victims of domestic violence, through the provision of information packs and other supports. In relation to the drug testing for drivers he stated tests are carried out and Cavan has the highest levels recorded of drug driving within the northern region.

Deputy Niamh Smyth welcomed Superintendent Timothy Burke to the meeting, she also welcomed the news of new garda recruits to the Bailieborough district. She enquired if all positions are now filled in Bailieborough and if garda reserves could also be recruited for the district. She also requested information on the number of public order fines made in the first six months of 2018. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly said that these figures will be provided to her by Superintendent Timothy Burke. In answer to her query around the new recruits he replied that the list of successful candidates is currently being finalised and four sergeants have been assigned to the Bailieborough area and the two other positions will also be filled in the near future. The number of sergeants limited the number of probationary gardaí a district can take as they require supervision. In relation to garda reserves assigned to the area, he said that it was not a prerequisite for sergeants to be in place in order to get reserves.

Cllr P. Smith thanked Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly for the updated crime statistics. He reported that he attended a recent meeting of the Baileborough Community & Text Alert Group and was informed by the committee that the gardaí have outsourced their text alert system to a private firm and, as such, the price per text is going up for individuals involved in the scheme, he felt that this was unfair. He asked Inspector Mc Kiernan if this is the case going forward with Text Alert Schemes. Inspector Nial Mc Kiernan said that each scheme operates differently and that the he is continuously looking at more cost effective solutions coming onto the market. However he said that there is currently no change as to how the scheme operates, text alert is not being outsourced by the gardaí. He will follow up on the issue in Bailieborough however and report back to Cllr P. Smith on his findings.

**Contributions for the 2019 Cavan & Monaghan Policing Plan**

A copy of the 2018 Cavan & Monaghan Policing Plan had been distributed to members in advance of the meeting for review. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly welcomed feedback from members under the various headings set out within the plan.

Cllr. C. Kelly welcomed the plan. He referred to the Roads Policing Programme commenting that this is an excellent initiative run with the schools. He’d like to see similar initiatives rolled out in the future. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly agreed that this is an effective initiative which is rolled out on an annual basis.

**JPC Public Meeting**

Chair Cllr J. P. Feeley said he would like to see three public meetings of the JPC take place across the county, one in each municipal area. It was agreed that these would take place in early November and property marking and crime prevention would be the focus of these meetings.

**"To ask Cavan County Council to extend bye laws for Anti Social Behaviour to the Castle Lake in Bailieborough". – Motion request by Niamh Smyth TD.**

Deputy Niamh Smyth had to leave the meeting early so it was agreed to defer the motion to the next meeting.

**Next Meeting**

7th December 2018, 3pm in the Council Chamber.