



Mayo Joint Policing Committee

Minutes of Meeting

July 17th, 2020 (Held Online)



Present: Cllr. Al McDonnell, Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne, Cllr. Neil Cruise, Cllr Gerry Coyle; Cllr. Michael Loftus, Cllr. Michael Burke, Cllr. Mark Duffy, Cllr John O'Hara, Cllr Sean Carey, Rose Conway Walsh TD, Alan Dillon TD, Edith Geraghty MTSG, Louise Glynn 3rd Mayo Scouts, Ballinrobe, Keelan Moran Westport Youth Activities Club, Daniel Kabango MIA, Peter Duggan, Interim Chief Executive, Mayo County Council, Chief Superintendent Tony Healy, Superintendent Joe McKenna,

In attendance: Superintendent Joe Doherty, Superintendent Thomas Calvey, Superintendent Gabriel Moran, Mary Gildea AP, Anne McCarthy, Maura Murphy, Michael Galvin,

Apologies: Cllr Damien Ryan, Dara Calleary TD, Cllr Christy Hyland, Michéal Larkin, Killawalla Community Council.

1. Welcome

Cllr. Al McDonnell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to this unique online meeting. He welcomed Peter Duggan, Interim Chief Executive Mayo County Council and Anne McCarthy A/Head of Community and Integrated Development, Mayo County Council to their first JPC meeting. He also extended the committees congratulations to Dara Calleary on his appointment as Minister of Agriculture. He then proposed a minute's silence as a mark of respect following the death of Garda Colm Horkan. He also acknowledged the recent passing of retired Garda John Beirne, Partry and the 40th Anniversary of the passing of Garda John Morley and Garda Henry Byrne.

Edith Geraghty on behalf of Mayo Traveller Support Group wished to be associated with these comments as did each member of the committee.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and matters arising

Proposed: Cllr Michael Kilcoyne

Seconded: Cllr Neil Cruise

There were no matters arising.

3. Presentation – Domestic Violence Act 2017.

Superintendent Gabriel Moran gave an update on the Community Engagement Policing Plan 2020 and a presentation outlining details of **Operation Faoiseamh** – Domestic Abuse Victim Support during COVID 19.

(1) Operation Faoiseamh – Domestic Abuse Victim Support during COVID

- Phase 1 –Call backs made for incidents reported 1 Jan –25 May
- Call backs made to reassure persons reporting in line with national plan.
- Phase 2 –Enforcement on Breaches of Orders
- All incidents reviewed to maximise enforcement
- AGS Mayo Division are a key partner in Safe as Mayo
- Launched in November 2019
- Engagement with partners continued during COVID

There has been a total of **272** reported incidents of Domestic Abuse in the Mayo Division in the first six months of 2020 which is a **7% increase on 2019**.

96% of persons reporting Domestic Abuse were phoned back by AGS within 7 days.

(2) Community Policing

- There were 7421 High Visibility Patrols so far in 2020
- The Older and Vulnerable peoples register has been updated with 2718 now registered
- AGS has engaged with communities in partnership with JPC and MCC for the Covid Response
- Mayo Division has 9 Community Gardai and 3 Sergeants
- Community Gardai support the Divisional Drugs Taskforce
- Mayo Division was allocated 10 Probationer Gardai and 5 Student Gardai for Covid response
- AGS has taken a Human Rights Based response to Covid -19 -:
Engage / Explain/ Encourage / Enforce
16 Covid -19 related incidents in Mayo Division have been sent to the DPP

4. Local Community Response Forum

Anne McCarthy, Acting Head of Community Engagement MCC, gave a presentation on the Local Community Response Forum. The forum was set-up in March by the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government Mr. Eoghan Murphy in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

It is a multi-agency forum comprising of members drawn from, e.g. An Garda Síochána, HSE, MCC, Dept of Social Protection, An Post.

The Forum was set up to help the vulnerable in the community during the pandemic and will remain in place for any future needs. As part of the response a Covid Support Helpline was set up and it has received over **790** calls to date mainly for advice, grocery and medicine delivery, meals on wheels and transportation. The helpline remains in operation 7 days per week from 9am to 5pm. Anne complimented Local Link for their excellent work throughout the county where they have made over 6900 deliveries to date.

Cllr Al McDonnell thanked Anne for her presentation and said he joined everyone on the committee in congratulating Anne and her staff for providing such an excellent service to our communities in our greatest time of need.

5. Establishment of a sub-group to compile advise note on the regulations governing Drones.

Maura Murphy reported that this sub-group has been established since the last JPC meeting and it comprises Cllr Neil Cruise, Cllr Al McDonnell, Edith Geraghty and Maura Murphy. Cllr Michael Kilcoyne proposed the Gardai should have a representative on the sub-group also and Chief Superintendent Tony Healy said he would nominate a Garda member for it.

Proposed by: Cllr Michael Kilcoyne

Seconded by: Cllr Mark Duffy

6. Reports from An Garda Síochána

Superintendent Joe McKenna and Superintendent Tom Calvey gave an update on crime figures in the Mayo Division for the first six months of 2020.

6. Reports from An Garda Siochana (cont.)

Crime	2020	2019	Change
Burglary	42	73	Down 42%
Minor Assault	102	140	Down 27%
Property Crime	274	424	Down 35%
Criminal Damage	159	148	Up 7%
Domestic abuse	270	252	Up 7%
Public Order	179	269	Down 33%
Drugs for sale or supply	39	15	Up 160%
Drugs-personal use	128	42	Up 205%
Drug Searches	618	234	Up 164%
Fatal Road Collisions	3	2	Up 50%
Serious Road Collisions	5	16	Down 69%
Driving while intoxicated	69	105	Down 34%
Dangerous Driving	113	109	Up 3%
Drink Driving	186	246	Down 32%
Speeding offences	5105	3709	Up 38%

Most crime figures have shown a decrease, but Drug figures continue to rise. The Drug Force has been expanded and have received assistance from the Armed Support unit and the Dog Handling unit. A significant number of Grow Houses have been detected and drugs with a street value of €1.2m, €30k counterfeit currency and €20k cash have been seized.

The following questions were then raised-

Cllr Michael Kilcoyne:

- How many breaches of Covid-19 legislation were prosecuted?

Cllr Mark Duffy:

- Would Community Policing be rolled out to the rest of the County?
- Was there a breakdown of Drugs figures for the Ballina Area?

Rose Conway Walsh, TD:

- What are the protocols for a Garda patrolling unaccompanied?
- Was there a breakdown of the profile of Cocaine users?
- Has there been any Cyber Crime in Mayo?
- For Domestic Abuse crime is there adequate resources/training in each station to deal with reports?
- Where does the income for Speeding Fines go?

Cllr Michael Loftus:

- How many Gardai have been redeployed from Admin roles?
- Will Crossmolina GS be getting a replacement for recently retired member?
- How many Superintendents will there be in the new enlarged Division?

Cllr Gerry Coyle:

- How many cars have been seized from Drug dealers?

In response Chief Superintendent Tony Healy advised:

- 16 cases were sent to DPP under Covid-19 legislation. They were increasing the number of personnel for Community Policing and all Gardai are involved in Community Policing.
- There is a Dynamic Risk Assessment applied to all areas of patrolling to assess the number required in each situation.
- Cocaine use has been found across all age profiles.
- Volumes of Cyber Crime are small but there has been an increase in “money mules” detection where individuals allow their bank accounts to be used for illicit purposes.
- Speeding fine funds go directly to the Exchequer.
- There would be 5 Superintendents in the new Division.
- Ballina drug seizures rose from 20 to 40 to June 2020.
- 13 Gardai have been returned to the frontline from Admin duties.
- Gardai do not have the power to seize cars but Courts have the power to put people off the road.

7. Advanced questions

Keelan Moran submitted questions regarding the increase in cyber-bullying in society and raised concerns that not enough is being done to deal with the perpetrators. He questioned what legislation is in place to deal with online abuse/bullying, what processes are in place for reporting online abuse/bullying and how are they dealt with and what statistics are available around charges, convictions and sentencing. He asked how the JPC could help to ensure that Gardai have the power and tools to act against such perpetrators and to ensure that they are severely reprimanded.

In response Superintendent Joe McKenna stated that there was no specific offence for online abuse/bullying and cases were dealt with as *harassment* under Section 10 of the Non-Fatal Offences against the Person Act 1997.

Penalties currently include fines up to €2,000.00 and prison sentence not exceeding 12 months for a summary conviction and up to 7 years imprisonment for conviction on indictment. All Gardai are trained in report taking and Gardai can examine electrical equipment if necessary.

Statistics are only available on overall harassment cases as there is no sub-analysis done for cyber-bullying.

There are currently 10 cases under investigation in the Mayo Division.

Cllr Michael Loftus complimented Keelan on putting forward such a good question on a very important and ever-increasing crime.

Cllr Michael Kilcoyne requested that the JPC should now write to the Minister for Justice seeking an updating of legislation to cater for this modern-day crime as Gardai need the proper tools in place to enable them to combat such crimes.

Summary of Actions:

No.	Action	Organisation
1	Letter to Minister of Justice from JPC regarding updating legislation dealing with online abuse/bullying.	MCC/JPC

8. **A.O.B.**
There was no other business.

9. **Date of next meeting:**
TBC


