



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

## Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

**Date:** 23 November 2023

**Venue:** The Tower Hotel & Leisure Centre, The Mall,  
Waterford

### Part A – Authority Meeting

#### Attendance

**Authority:** Bob Collins (Chairperson), Elaine Byrne, Deborah Donnelly, Paul Mageean, Moling Ryan, Donal de Buitleir (items 4-20), Anthony Harbinson, Jane Mulcahy, Valerie Judge (items 9-20).

**Secretary:** Aoife Clabby

**Staff of the Authority:** Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Margaret Tumelty, Mark Nother (items 8-10), Karen Shelly (items 8-10)

**Apologies** Mark Toland, Chief Inspector, Garda Síochána Inspectorate

#### 1. Meeting of Members in Private

The Authority exercised its option to have a meeting in private and a confidential minute was provided to the Secretary.

#### 2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks.

The Chairperson advised Members that a notification had been received from the Department of Justice, confirming the decision on the categorisation of the Policing and Community Safety Authority. Members welcomed the decision.

The meeting agenda was approved as drafted. No conflicts of interest were declared by the Members in relation to any of the items for consideration. Members noted a number of pieces of correspondence received.

#### 3. Consent Agenda Items

##### 3.1. Minutes of Meeting and Matters Arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 October were approved and cleared for publication.

##### 3.2. Policing Authority and Garda Síochána Actions Logs

In response to questions about delays in response to request for information, the Chief Executive advised that a meeting would be taking place with the Commissioner's office in the coming weeks. It was also confirmed that, as agreed by Members, an agenda item had been

tabled for the December meeting to discuss Garda actions outstanding directly with the Commissioner.

The Log of Actions was noted. Members considered a response received from the Garda Síochána in relation to how the standard of safety of custody cells is assessed. Following discussion, Members were not satisfied that the response received addressed the information requested by the Authority. It was agreed that the matter would be the subject of further engagement with the Garda Síochána. Proposals to close remaining actions were approved.

#### **4. Chief Executive's Report**

The Chief Executive's report was taken as read and further updates were provided to Members on a number of matters in the context of the report, including in relation to:

- An offer of contract to Ms. Jane Gordon for the development of a human rights framework for policing oversight and inspections. The Chief Executive advised that an initial meeting had been scheduled for 5 December which would be attended by the Authority Executive and that it was her intention to invite Garda Inspectorate colleagues as well.
- The review and revision of the Policing Authority Official Gifts and Hospitality Policy, which had been updated. The Chief Executive advised that the updated policy would be added to the Members' Handbook.
- A recent governance meeting with the Department of Justice which took place on 20 November.
- An agreement made, in principle, to jointly provide some limited financial support for a restorative justice initiative in west Dublin in cooperation with the Garda Síochána and the Department of Justice.
- The status of the selection competition for appointment to the rank of Deputy Commissioner. Members noted that shortlisting of eligible candidates was planned for 27 November.

Members enquired as to the status of the request for a temporary increase to the Employee Control Framework at the rank of Chief Superintendent in the Garda Síochána and were advised that a response from the Department of Public Expenditure, National Development Plan Delivery and Reform was still awaited.

Members noted the receipt of the Garda Professional Standards Unit Annual Report 2022, compiled and submitted in accordance with statutory provisions. In addition to the late provision of the report, Members considered that the information provided was of limited value. It was agreed that the matter would be raised with the Commissioner in part B of the meeting.

The Chief Executive provided Members with an overview of developments in relation to CAD 999 and the review of the status of the recommendations from the Penman Report of September 2022, the fieldwork for which had commenced on 13 November. Members were advised that a briefing had been provided to the Executive by Mr Penman, arising from the completion of the fieldwork and that a summary report was expected for the Authority's consideration at its meeting on 19 December.

The Chief Executive apprised Members of significant engagement that had taken place with senior Garda representatives, seeking to resolve matters relating to the Terms of Reference for this phase of the review, in particular in the area of call listening and associated data protection concerns. Members were advised that arising from these engagements and pending their resolution, the Chief Executive had directed that this particular aspect of the review would be paused by Mr Penman. The Chief Executive further advised that renewed consideration was being to the provisions of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill as they relate to the oversight and inspection functions of the Policing and Community Safety Authority to ensure requisite capacity to access, in an appropriate manner, information required to deliver these functions. Members noted that the Chief Executive had been engaged with Department officials in this regard.

Members considered the Baseline Evaluation Report for Ireland, published by GREVIO, the independent human rights monitoring body mandated to monitor the implementation of the Istanbul Convention. In particular Members had regard to commentary contained in the report about the Authority’s approach to the CAD 999 review. The Chief Executive advised that Ireland’s engagement with GREVIO had been co-ordinated by the Department of Justice and that a proposal that the Executive would be available to meet with GREVIO representatives to outline the process associated with the CAD 999 review had not been taken up by the Department. Members agreed that concerns expressed by GREVIO in its report were based upon an inadequate and inaccurate understanding of both the Authority’s role and position in respect of the CAD 999 review. In addition, Members considered that the findings demonstrated a misunderstanding of the work done, and continuing to be done, by the Authority to ensure an effective service for victims of domestic abuse. Following discussion, Members agreed that a response would issue to GREVIO, outlining the Authority’s position and seeking a correction of the inaccuracies contained in the report. It was further agreed that correspondence would issue to the Department of Justice, expressing concern in relation to the process of engagement that had culminated in the commentary contained in the GREVIO report.

Members considered the Garda Síochána Quarterly Workforce Planning Update, noting that the revised format provided less information than previous iterations. It was agreed that the capacity of the revised format to inform, in an adequate manner, the Authority’s consideration of strategic workforce planning would be addressed under item 10.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>By Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>A_129_01</b>	Write to GREVIO, setting out the Authority’s approach to the CAD999 review and seeking a correction of the inaccuracies contained in the Baseline Evaluation Report for Ireland.	ASAP	Chief Executive
<b>A_129_02</b>	Write to the Department of Justice in relation to the process of engagement that had taken place with GREVIO for the report’s production.	ASAP	Chief Executive

## 5. Committee Updates

### 5.1. Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

### 5.2. Garda Organisation Development Committee

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

### 5.3. Policing Strategy and Performance Committee

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

### 5.4. Audit and Risk Committee

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

## 6. Risk Management

Members considered the monthly risk report, provided in accordance with the Authority's risk management policy, noting that there were no changes to the Risk Register since the October Authority meeting.

## 7. Appointments

Members were provided with the outcomes of the clearance process in respect of the appointment of seven candidates to the rank of Superintendent in the Garda Síochána. The Authority was satisfied to appoint the candidates to the rank of Superintendent, with effect from the date on which the candidates take up the positions they are assigned by the Garda Commissioner.

Members considered and approved a request received from the Garda Síochána for the renewal of the temporary appointment of the Acting Director, Human Resources and People Development, subject to the consent of the Ministers for Justice and for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform. While noting that the request received was for a further period of six months from the current expiry date to 30 August 2024, the Authority again agreed that approval would be sought until 31 October 2024 to allow for the changes that will be brought about by the new PSCS Bill and to enable the Commissioner to determine if the matter required engagement with the Garda Board.

Members considered a draft revised Competency Framework for the senior Garda ranks. Members expressed general satisfaction with the revised competencies and it was agreed that any additional feedback would be provided to the Secretary in advance of the framework's finalisation and approval by the Authority at a subsequent meeting.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Action point</i>	<i>By Date</i>	<i>By Whom</i>
A_129_03	Notify the Commissioner of the appointment of seven candidates to the rank of Superintendent in the Garda Síochána and notify the candidates of their appointment.	Immediate	Chief Executive

<i>No.</i>	<i>Action point</i>	<i>By Date</i>	<i>By Whom</i>
A_129_04	Seek the consent of the Minister for Justice and Minister for Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform, for the temporary appointment of the Acting ED, HR&PD to 31 October 2024.	ASAP	Chief Executive

## 8. Policing, Security & Community Safety Bill-Implementation Update

Members noted the update provided in relation to the implementation of the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill. The Chief Executive advised that delays relating to the Bill's progression to Committee stage would impact upon its enactment date and potentially on the date being worked towards for the commencement of the Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA). The Chief Executive further advised that she had met with senior staff in the Garda Síochána Inspectorate to discuss the approach to PCSA transition to date and that the engagement had been very constructive, in particular in considering ways to give practical effect to the change management process. Members noted that clarity had been sought from the Department of Justice at a recent governance meeting in relation to the budget and employee control framework (ECF) for the Policing and Community Safety Authority, in the context of budget allocations for the Authority and the Garda Inspectorate in 2024. The Chief Executive noted that confirmation of the ECF would be important in facilitating the development of a workforce plan for the PCSA and the commencement of recruitment.

## 9. Planning for 2024

Members considered the proposed approach to business planning 2024, noting the initial focus on the first six months of the year, in recognition of planned transition to the PCSA. Members considered key strategic areas of oversight and it was agreed that there would be value in focussing on the approach to training in the Garda Síochána in this regard. The Authority also discussed the manner and extent to which human rights accountabilities are embedded in oversight work. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to this matter by the Executive, including whether there would be value in taking a particular area of oversight to explore how this might be better achieved. In this regard, the Chief Executive proposed to have an initial discussion with Jane Gordon in the context of her work to develop a human rights framework for policing oversight and inspections. The Authority noted the body of work proposed to give effect to the establishment of the Policing and Community Safety Authority. Following discussion, it was agreed that a more detailed Business Plan would be developed and presented to the Authority for its approval in January, including a public-facing element to be made available on the Authority's website.

Having regard to the outline plan for 2024 and the forthcoming conclusion of the terms of office of the Chairperson and two Authority Members, consideration was given to the overall operation of the Authority and its Committees in 2024. Members were agreed on the importance of the continuity of the current oversight structures in operation by the Authority. It was proposed and agreed that Authority Member Jane Mulcahy would be appointed as a member of the Policing,

Strategy and Performance Committee. It was further proposed and agreed that subject to their agreement, Authority Members Moling Ryan and Valerie Judge would be invited to continue to participate in the Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee, following the conclusion of their terms of office, serving as external committee members. The Authority noted that the number of selection competitions to be run in 2024 would be dependent on the commencement date for the PCSA. Following discussion, the Chief Executive advised that consideration would be given to Committee meeting dates in the context of the finalised business plan.

Members discussed the transfer of records and data, as provided for in the PSCS Bill and in particular in relation to the Authority’s appointments function. The Chief Executive advised that this work was provided for as part of the PCSA establishment work streams and that while the formal handover of records was provided for in the legislation it would require careful consideration.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Action point</i>	<i>By Date</i>	<i>By Whom</i>
<b>A_129_05</b>	Provide a final copy of the 2024 Business Plan to the January meeting of the Authority for approval and the publication of a public-facing aspect to the plan.	January	Chief Executive

#### **10. Preparation for meeting with the Garda Commissioner**

Members discussed the agenda for the meeting and agreed the matters to be discussed with the Commissioner and his team.

#### **Documents for Noting by the Authority – September 2023**

The following documents were noted by the Authority:

<i>Document</i>		<i>Action Required</i>
<b>D_129_01</b>	Research paper on dialogue between Gardaí and young black adults in West Dublin	For noting
<b>D_129_02</b>	Organisational Diagnosis - Article in Garda Review, October 2023	For noting

## Part B – Authority Meeting with the Garda Commissioner in private

### Attendance

**Authority and Executive:** Bob Collins (Chairperson), Elaine Byrne, Deborah Donnelly, Anthony Harbinson, Valerie Judge, Moling Ryan, Donal de Buitléir, Jane Mulcahy, Elaine Byrne, Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Aoife Clabby (Secretary), Margaret Tumelty.

**Garda Síochána:** Drew Harris (Commissioner), Anne McMahon (Deputy Commissioner) Shawna Coxon (Deputy Commissioner), Yvonne Cooke (Acting Executive Director), Niamh O’Hara (Assistant Principal).

### 11. PSCS Bill Implementation Update

Members engaged with senior Garda leadership in relation to their assessment of the organisation’s level of preparedness and capacity, at this juncture, to give operational effect to various aspects of the PSCS Bill. A number of constraints were discussed including the time required to give effect to new regulations, ongoing uncertainty in relation to certain aspects of the status of Garda staff once the legislation is enacted and the consequential impacts in relation to recruitment and retention of such staff.

### 12. Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

#### 12.1 Garda Síochána Diversity Forum

Members were provided with an update on the status of the Garda National Diversity Forum, noting that Terms of Reference for the Forum had been agreed with a targeted re-launch in the early months of 2024. While acknowledging that the Forum was not currently operational, Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security advised the Authority that the organisation continued to engage extensively with a variety of diverse communities.

#### 12.2 Garda Síochána Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

Members sought clarification from senior Garda leadership in relation to the inputs of various representative groups on the development of the Garda Síochána’s EDI Strategy. Confirmation was provided that those groups consulted would have sight of the draft EDI Strategy prior to finalisation and that an action plan arising from the Strategy was under development. It was agreed that the Garda Síochána would provide the Authority with a copy of the key groups consulted with as part of the process of the development of the EDI Strategy.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>By Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
A_129_06	Provide the Authority with a copy of key groups consulted with as part of the development of the Garda Síochána EDI Strategy	ASAP	Garda Síochána

### **13. Garda Síochána Strategy Statement 2025-2027**

Members briefly discussed the Garda's Síochána's approach to the development of its Strategy Statement with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues, noting an additional, consultative element that would have a 'whole of government' basis, in recognition of the interdependencies between a range of government and statutory agencies in the provision of a policing service to people in Ireland.

### **14. Garda Discipline Regulations and associated outcomes**

Arising from engagement on recent progress on conduct and disciplinary processes at the 28 September meeting in public, and in the context of the current perceived low levels of complaints in respect of harassment, Members were provided with an overview of the approach to the codification of complaints. Members noted that current systems and codifications accorded with the existing statutory framework. Members noted that a case management system was being looked at and that the need to establish a benchmark and measure complaints over time was acknowledged. Members discussed with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues the organisation's approach to the provision of references including a consideration of the current system in operation and its attendant risks.

### **Other Business**

Members sought an update from the Commissioner in relation to the investigation into the circulation of inappropriate messages via What's App within the Garda Síochána, including in relation to the likely form the investigation will take, any challenges anticipated in relation to the investigative process and the suite of measures available to address the behaviours demonstrated.

The Commissioner and his senior colleagues outlined a number of matters being progressed, arising from the incidents, including in relation to corporate risk and potential actions arising. Members sought the Commissioner's assessment of the degree to which there is an environment of psychological safety within the organisation and whether there was an appreciation among Garda personnel of the capacity for the behaviours demonstrated in this and other, similar incidents, to create psychological harm. The Commissioner highlighted the dangers of exclusionary language and the importance of the organisation's leadership adopting a firm position against such language, in keeping with the Garda Síochána's values. The significant need for training in this area was acknowledged and approaches being considered in this regard were outlined.

The Chairperson conveyed the Authority's views in relation to the limited value of the Professional Standards Annual Report, submitted in accordance with the statutory provisions. Members were apprised of factors contributing to the status of the report.



**Part C– Meeting with the Garda Commissioner (in public) 15.00 to 17:00**

**Attendance**

**Authority and Executive:** Bob Collins (Chairperson), Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Elaine Byrne, Moling Ryan, Valerie Judge, Donal de Buitléir, Anthony Harbinson, Debbie Donnelly, Jane Mulcahy.

**Garda Síochána:** Drew Harris (Commissioner), Anne McMahon (Deputy Commissioner) Shawna Coxon (Deputy Commissioner), Paul Cleary (Assistant Commissioner), Antony Petit (Chief Superintendent), Andrew McLindon (Director of Communications) Niamh O’Hara (Assistant Principal).

This meeting with the Garda Commissioner and his team was held in public. In accordance with the Authority’s Standing Orders, the official record of the meeting is the recording which is available to view at <https://www.policingauthority.ie/en/authority-meetings>

The following matters were then discussed during the meeting:

Item Number	Agenda Item	Principal matters discussed
15	Responding to Local Policing Challenges	<p><b>a) Community Safety in Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Update given on the Crypto Currency investigation that arose out of a Phishing/Smishing text message scam.</li> <li>● Discussion on the Health Education Enforcement Drug driving (HEED) drug prevention strategy and its impact locally.</li> <li>● Consideration given to the strategy of identifying individuals responsible for the spread of drugs, and actions being taken against them.</li> <li>● Discussion on the ongoing issue of drug related intimidation (DRI), in particular the extent of public awareness locally of DRI Inspectors and who to contact if they fall victim to drug gangs.</li> <li>● Consideration of approach to tackling DRI nationally</li> <li>● Consideration given to the impact and the successes of the DPSUs, with particular focus on the extent of training provided to frontline members to improve the experience of the victim at the first point of contact with Gardaí.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>b) Effective service delivery to young people and diverse communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion around “overzealous” or inappropriate policing of young people or some communities, and the difficult relationship this can cause between these communities and the Garda Síochána.</li> <li>● Consideration given to the Garda organisation’s approach to engaging with young people, specific communities of young people and minority groups, with reference to the role of community policing.</li> </ul>

Item Number	Agenda Item	Principal matters discussed
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion around the regular use of armed support units in communities, and how situations are risk assessed, tracking proportionate response and review mechanisms.</li> <li>• Engagement on issues highlighted by the Traveller Community, consistent with the findings of The Traveller Access to Justice Report.</li> </ul>
16	Policing Performance	<p><b>a) Policing challenges and opportunities presented by the GS Investigation Management System (IMS)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the experience within the division of IMS, including a consideration of its impact on investigative processes, case assignment and handover.</li> <li>• Discussion in relation to perceptions of the administrative burden of IMS.</li> <li>• Consideration given to additional adjustments to improve IMS for members, including the importance of incorporating changes based on recommendations and feedback from users of the system, gathered from the ground up through user group workshops.</li> <li>• Engagement on plans for a national rollout of IMS.</li> </ul>
		<p><b>b) Custody management</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the custody implementation plan and an overview provided of the process for implementation of recommendations.</li> <li>• Consideration of the online digital custody management system, and the timeframe of its introduction.</li> <li>• Discussion on the current custody facilities and maintenance carried out, with particular focus on anti-ligature checks. Confirmation that all custody cells currently in use by the Garda Síochána meet the required standards.</li> </ul> <p>*** In light of tragic events and subsequent public order incidents unfolding in Dublin on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the requirement for the Commissioner to leave the meeting, there was a reduced interaction on this agenda item.</p>
		<p><b>c) Roads Policing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion on the adequacy of resources needed in roads policing, including personnel, technology, analytics, transport and legislative remit.</li> <li>• Consideration of the impact that new insurance data sharing processes will have on the capacity of frontline members to perform their duties.</li> <li>• Discussion on the Garda Síochána's approach to the investigation of dangerous driving and sulky racing, videos of which were posted on social media. Outline provided of proactive, inter-regional operations in response to sulky racing.</li> </ul>

Item Number	Agenda Item	Principal matters discussed
17	CAD 999 Call Quality Review update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmation of the intention of the Policing Authority to submit a report on this matter to the Minister before Christmas.</li> </ul> <p>**In light of tragic events and subsequent public order incidents unfolding in Dublin on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the requirement for the Commissioner to leave the meeting, there was a reduced interaction on this agenda item.**</p>
18	Human Resources in the Garda Síochána	<p>a) <b>Quarterly update on strategic workforce planning</b>  b) <b>Garda Discipline Regulations and associated outcomes</b></p> <p>**In light of tragic events and subsequent public order incidents unfolding in Dublin on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the requirement for the Commissioner to leave the meeting, consideration of this agenda item was deferred.**</p>
19	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	<p>**In light of tragic events and subsequent public order incidents unfolding in Dublin on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the requirement for the Commissioner to leave the meeting, consideration of this agenda item was deferred.**</p>
20	Giving Effect to Key Legislation	<p>a) <b>Sex Offenders Amendment Act 2023</b>  b) <b>Assisted Decision Making (Capacity) Act 2015</b></p> <p>**In light of tragic events and subsequent public order incidents unfolding in Dublin on 23<sup>rd</sup> November and the requirement for the Commissioner to leave the meeting, consideration of this agenda item was deferred.**</p>

At the end of the meeting, Deputy Commissioner, Policing and Security noted the forthcoming completion of the terms of office of the Chairperson Bob Collins, and Authority Members, Moling Ryan and Valerie Judge. On behalf of the Garda Síochána, the Deputy Commissioner acknowledged the Chairperson and Authority Members' contribution in service of the public over the duration of their terms of office and the fruitful engagements over that time with the senior leadership team. The Deputy Commissioner extended her good wishes and those of the Garda organisation to the Chairperson and Members and wished them well for the future.