



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes – Policing Strategy and Performance Committee Meeting

Date: 19 September 2019

Venue: 90 King Street North, Smithfield,
Dublin 7

Part A – Committee Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Judith Gillespie (Chair), Moling Ryan, Vicky Conway, Ronan Nolan

Secretary: Fiona Larthwell

Executive: Helen Hall, Margaret Tumelty, Karen Shelly, Mark Nother

Apologies: Maureen Lynott

1. Closed session – Committee members

The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised.

2. Minutes of previous meetings 18 July

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved, including amendments received from the Garda Síochána. There were no matters arising.

A brief summary of the June Authority meeting, the Authority's July Community Safety Discussion Event, and an August meeting with the Commissioner concerning the new Operating Model was provided for external Committee members. It was noted that concerns highlighted by this Committee on the monitoring of use of force statistics were raised at the Authority meeting, particularly with reference to non-weapon based use of force.

3. Evidencing Update

The evidencing update was reviewed and thematic issues arising were discussed, including some implications of the current crime counting rules. The Committee recommended that the evidencing update be shared with the Authority.

4. Policing Performance July – August

The two latest monthly reports on performance against the Policing Plan were discussed with particular focus on the RAG statuses assigned to certain initiatives and on the number of initiatives relating to victims that were reported as either off track or at risk.

The absence of substantive reporting against a number of initiatives in the July report was noted, and it was agreed to discuss this with Garda Síochána representatives in Part B of the meeting, in the

context of previous assurances that dual reporting structures in place for the Authority and the Implementation Group for Policing Reform would not impact the monthly updates to the Authority.

The Committee also welcomed the receipt of a number of sample performance improvement plans, detailing the actions to be taken to address off target key performance indicators.

5. Policing Priorities

The Committee agreed to recommend that the Policing Priorities for 2020 remain unchanged from 2019. This decision was arrived following discussion and consideration of:

- the recency with which the Policing Priorities 2019 were determined and approved;
- their alignment with the current Garda Síochána Statement of Strategy 2019-2021; and,
- the absence of any new issues arising since those Policing Priorities were determined, either organisationally or within a crime context, which might suggest that they require revision.

The Committee will maintain its focus on ensuring that the Policing Plan has a clear connection with the Priorities.

6. Policing Plan 2020

The Committee noted that the Garda Síochána's internal consultation on the Policing Plan is underway.

The Committee considered known issues around prioritisation and the affect that ongoing large scale projects such as IMS and the Operation Model were likely to have on the drafting of the Plan. In this regard it was agreed that the Committee would hope to see a clear evidence based approach to the planning process for the new plan with a coherent sense of prioritisation where necessary and clear linkages with the Strategy Statement.

It was agreed that future meetings, where applicable, would include an agenda item allowing for a discussion on recently published reports of the Authority such as the half-year assessments of the Policing Plan.

7. Preparation for Garda Síochána updates

The Committee's preparation for Garda Síochána updates included formally acknowledging receipt of the July quarterly update on the implementation of the Crowe Horwath report. It was also noted that the review of the Crowe Howarth Implementation Plan is due to be completed by year end and the final report of the Homicide review team is expected before the November Authority meeting.

Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána representatives

Attendance

Authority: As previous, including Josephine Feehily (Authority Chairperson) from item 11.

Executive: As previous

Garda Síochána: Assistant Commissioner Orla McPartlin (Community Engagement and Public Safety), Assistant Commissioner John O'Driscoll (Special Crime Operations), Executive Director David Gilbride (Strategy and Transformation), Detective Chief Superintendent Brian Sutton (Homicide Investigation Review Team), Inspector Paul Franey (Strategic Planning Unit), Ms Grainne Shortall (Policing Authority Liaison Office)

8. Closed session

The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised. Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed, subject to minor amendments.

9. Homicide Review

Garda Síochána representatives confirmed that the final report is expected to be completed in time to be placed on the agenda for the November meeting of the Authority, and that it will cover the revised Terms of Reference.

The Committee emphasised the need to ensure that concerns it raised previously relating to the disparity between the narrative on review cases and the conclusions provided are addressed in this report.

The Committee was informed that 200 members of the Garda Síochána have been trained in the peer reviewing of cases and that work was ongoing on a HQ Directive covering peer reviews. It was also noted that a multi-agency project had been established with other Criminal Justice agencies to update and share court outcomes within 3 months.

10. Organised Crime and National Drugs Strategy Quarterly Update

A verbal update was provided on progress made in relation to the National Drugs Strategy and the tackling of organised crime gangs (OCGs). Successes were noted in relation to threat-to-life interventions, international cooperation, and recent seizures and arrests.

The Committee raised concerns regarding reported resource issues within the GNECB and GNCCB and sought clarity on the processes for securing and allocating resources within SCO. Garda Síochána representatives stated that resources had been prioritised towards tackling OCGs in recent years, which had led to successes in this area but had reduced resources available for other areas within Special Crime Operations. It was noted that there are plans in place to respond to challenges now facing the organisation by addressing these resource deficits, in areas such as Cyber and Economic Crime: dedicated competitions are planned. It was noted that the ongoing Hamilton Review may produce findings that will feed into the future direction of the organisation in regard to tackling white collar crime.

A report on the staffing of all bureaus under SCO is also expected to be delivered to the Commissioner before the next Committee meeting.

National Drugs Strategy

The Committee was informed about a number of developments, including:

- an imminent report into the cost of policing drugs;
- the establishment of a Garda Portal page had been established concerning drugs intimidation
- the nomination of an Inspector in each division to be responsible for drugs intimidation.

The Garda Síochána committed to supplying the written quarterly updates as provided to the National Drug Strategy Oversight Committee to the Committee.

11. Community Policing Framework

The Garda Síochána confirmed that the test phase of the Model would be carried out from October or November in the 4 pilot divisions of the divisional model and that this had been communicated to the Chief Superintendents. The linkages to the Rural Safety Forum and existing initiatives within certain divisions were highlighted, as well as the connections in the model to the Code of Ethics and the decision making model. The Committee was made aware of an upcoming Community Engagement Day (November 22nd) and was invited to arrange to attend local events once details are made available.

The Committee enquired as to the extent to which this model represented a significant cultural change within the organisation and the how the Garda Síochána would ensure that there was a consistency of approach given the delegated authority that it allowed at a divisional level. Garda Síochána representatives stated that the model was a method of formalising what was already occurring in communities and, as such, was a recognition of the existing culture. This formalisation was expected to help ensure consistency through the provision of a toolkit for Garda members in community policing.

The Committee was informed that the Community Engagement Office would hold the national remit for evaluation of the pilot (due in March 2020), as well as ongoing accountability and evaluation, but that the primary responsibility for the model would be at the divisional level with analysis and evaluation support offered through GSAS. It was stated that a variety of measures will be used to measure performance including the Public Attitude Survey, the number of calls made to dedicated local hubs and the aggregate effect on the number of 999 calls. A Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) is expected to be implemented, which would be complementary to PULSE, and would produce useful data in the longer term.

The Committee was informed that the inconsistency of approaches taken by JPCs nationally made defining a consistent, national role for JPCs for feeding into community policing structures difficult. Instead, community feedback would be made primarily through individual consultation based on a community policing directory in each area.

A number of challenges were highlighted for the Garda Síochána, including the potential for frustration in the community if there is regular turnover of Garda members assigned to a particular community policing area. Garda Síochána representatives acknowledged that retention of Garda members in community policing can be difficult given loss to promotion or transfer to specialist units. Garda Síochána representatives noted that redefining Community Policing as a specialist function, with bespoke training, might address this.

The Committee noted that given the Garda Síochána's regularly stated position that "all Gardaí are Community Gardaí", there might be an argument to provide this community policing training to all members as part of basic training for new Garda members. Garda Síochána representatives stated that the training would provide additional specialist skills and that it is not planned that this level of training would be made available for all Garda members.

The recruitment of Garda Reserves was discussed, and Garda Síochána representatives confirmed that those members will be recruited nationally, but deployed locally. It was noted that this process was subject to ongoing discussions with the Public Appointments Service.

12. Policing Plan 2020

The Committee Chair informed the Garda Síochána of the discussions in Part A of this meeting regarding the Policing Priorities.

The Garda Síochána confirmed that the planning process for the Policing Plan 2020 had commenced. It was noted that discussions had been held at senior levels of the organisation that had included considering changing the approach to the plan in order to ensure that it was more relevant to local plans and to members and staff. It was stated that the next stage of consultation was expected to include management at the local level as well as a public consultation.

The Committee was informed that there would be a need to balance the crime and organisational development elements of the plan, given significant resource demands on the organisation due to the Operational Model and commitments to key ICT projects.

The Committee confirmed its receptivity to having a different format or style or presentation in the Policing Plan 2020, provided there is an evidence based approach, a realistic sense of deliverability and a degree of prioritisation, where required. Garda Síochána representatives acknowledged this position. However, it was noted that the data quality concerns encountered throughout the organisation would have an impact on the validity of the available evidence.

The potential impacts on the Plan of the budget and of Brexit were also highlighted.

13. Policing Performance July-August

A number of areas in the monthly performance report were discussed; points of note include:

DPSUs: A report is being drafted on the DPSUs, including consideration of remit and role. 4 new DPSUs expected by end Q3 although this might be delayed depending on the progress of the recruitment campaign. It was confirmed that future deployments of these units would be in line with the new Operating Model.

Specialist units: It was confirmed that all future specialist units would be rolled out in line with the Operating Model and its new regional / divisional structures, with the possible exception of the satellite cyber-crime units as these were branches of the national GNCCB rather than divisional units. Garda Síochána representatives noted there had been historical uncertainty around the relationships between national, divisional and local units and that it was expected that the rollout of the Operation Model would clarify these.

RAG statuses: some apparent inconsistencies between RAG statuses reported were discussed, and it was noted that statuses can be assigned following negotiation between interested parties, including the Implementation Group for Policing Reform. This could result in similar descriptions of progress receiving different RAG statuses.

Tusla protocol: Garda Síochána representatives stated that the understanding was that differing legal advices had been subject to discussion between parties but that significant progress had been made in the preceding days.

Non-reporting: The absence of reporting on some initiatives in the July report was discussed and the Garda Síochána provided assurances that this would not recur.

Performance improvement plans: The Committee provided feedback on the sample Performance Improvement Plans provided, and requested that the Garda Síochána reflect on that feedback.

14. Any other business

No other business was raised.