



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

## Minutes – Policing Strategy and Performance Committee Meeting

**Date:** 21 November 2019

**Venue:** 90 King Street North, Smithfield,  
Dublin 7

### Part A – Committee Meeting

#### Attendance

**Authority:** Judith Gillespie (Chair), Moling Ryan, Maureen Lynott, Ronan Nolan

**Secretary:** Fiona Larthwell

**Executive:** Helen Hall, Margaret Tumelty, Aoife Clabby, Mark Nother

**Apologies:** Vicky Conway

#### 1. Closed session – Committee members

The Committee members began with a closed session.

#### 2. Minutes of previous meetings 19 September 2019

Minutes from the previous meeting were approved. There were no matters arising.

No conflicts of interest were disclosed concerning the meeting agenda.

A brief summary was provided by the Chair to Committee members on various matters arising from the September and October Authority meetings and the Authority's Annual Meeting of Joint Policing Committee Chairs and Chief Executives of the Local Authorities, held in September.

#### 3. Committee Self-Assessment

The Committee provided the Executive members with an appraisal of the Committee's work in 2019. The Executive were thanked for their support of the Committee during the year including the preparation and provision of briefing materials and evidencing activities undertaken. The Executive was requested to redraft the proposed meeting dates (agenda item 4) in light of the Committee's preference to alter meeting times and formats in 2020.

It was noted that a recurring theme in the Committee's self-assessment was dissatisfaction with the timeliness of papers and the subsequent impact on the Committee's effectiveness. It was highlighted that this was dependent on the timely provision of materials from the Garda Síochána, which has remained a difficulty throughout the year. It was agreed that this would be raised with the Garda Síochána and that it would be emphasised that the timely provision of information must include time for the Executive to assess the materials and provide its assessment to the Committee.

#### **4. Meeting Dates 2020**

As noted under item 3, above, further consideration of meeting date was deferred to the December meeting of this Committee.

#### **5. Evidencing Update**

The evidencing update was reviewed and thematic issues arising were discussed.

#### **6. Policing Performance September – October**

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. There was a brief highlighting of some specific issues where progress has been consistently hampered throughout the year by the lack of key enablers and an apparent lack of effective corrective actions.

Ongoing issues relating to the provision of data were noted, particularly a recent anomaly in the figures provided through the monthly Key Performance Indicator Report. The Committee noted the need for the Garda Síochána to establish clear and consistent baselines and procedures concerning recording and measurement.

#### **7. Progress with the Policing Plan 2020**

The Executive provided an update to the Committee on interactions with the Garda Síochána concerning the drafting of the Policing Plan 2020 ahead of its submission to the Authority in time for its November meeting. It was agreed that clarity would be sought regarding initiatives on the reporting of use of force, redeployment, roads policing, and resourcing.

#### **8. Preparation for Garda Síochána updates**

The Committee discussed the items scheduled for updates from the Garda Síochána in Part B of this meeting. It was noted that as the report of the Homicide Investigation Review Team was due to be discussed in depth in the November meeting of the Authority in public, the relevant Garda Síochána representatives had been released from attendance at this meeting. The Committee noted that the quarterly update and another related, expected paper had not been received from the Roads Policing Bureau, and that this deficiency would be raised in Part B.

## **Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána representatives**

### **Attendance**

**Authority:** As previous

**Executive:** As previous, except for Mark Nother

**Garda Síochána:** Deputy Commissioner John Twomey (Policing and Security), Assistant Commissioner David Sheahan (Roads Policing / Governance and Accountability), Executive Director David Gilbride (Strategy and Transformation), Sarah Parsons, Deputy Head of the Analysis Service, Inspector Paul Franey (Strategic Planning Unit), Gráinne Shortall (Policing Authority Liaison Office)

### **9. Closed session**

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

It was noted that there was a query in relation to the minutes of the previous meeting, which was to be resolved with the Authority's Executive after the meeting.

### **10. Homicide Review (standing item)**

Although a standing item, it was agreed prior to this meeting that the item would be deferred to the Authority meeting on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November.

### **11. Roads Policing (quarterly standing item)**

The non-provision of a written report or update in advance of the meeting was discussed. The Committee expressed its expectation that documents would be provided in future, sufficiently in advance of meetings to allow for review by the Executive of the Authority.

A verbal report was provided of progress with a number of recommendations from the Crowe Horwath review of breath tests. While this was welcomed, the Committee expressed the difficulty inherent in immediate interrogation of relatively complex data that is provided verbally.

It was reported that there were 26 open actions; 7 dependent on other agencies. Of the 19 open actions for the Garda Síochána, 5 were described as at risk. The at-risk and open actions were reported on in further detail, and were considered briefly by the Committee.

The Garda Síochána committed to providing an update report in advance of the 5<sup>th</sup> of December meeting of this Committee.

It was noted that a decrease in the time delay between issuance and recording of Fixed Charge Penalty Notices (FCPNs) had been reported, bringing the time delay well within target. However, it was noted that while this would be welcome, it was not consistent with the written update provided in the monthly performance report, which stated that the delay was unchanged, and several days over the target. Garda Síochána representatives confirmed that this was an example of an error in the new performance reporting. It was also noted that the Executive of the Authority had been advised of a separate error in the reporting shortly before the meeting.

The importance of valid, accurate reporting to the Committee and the Authority was highlighted and the Garda Síochána committed to providing an explanation for the identified errors by the Authority meeting on November 27. It was stated that once the reason for errors had been identified, a subsequent commitment would be given as to the timeline for issuance of corrected reports.

Garda Síochána representatives were asked how they were assured that breath tests are now being recorded accurately. It was noted that all devices are update and counted at checkpoints, KPIs exist to prevent mis-recording, and there is a chain of governance through the Performance Accountability Framework (PAF) meetings. It was further noted that as well as increased supervision, technical solutions had been put in place to prevent mis-recording. The detection of the use of mobile phones, the replacement of outdated speed guns, and the use of Dräger devices was also discussed.

Driver training was discussed and it was confirmed that there is no database for recording the status of driver training across the Garda Síochána. However, it was noted that figures from 2012 onwards had been extracted from records; these were provided to the Committee via handout. It was confirmed that there is no longer any driving on 'Chief's authorisation'. It was also noted that all members of Roads Policing had received appropriate CBD driver training. The national coverage of Garda vehicles was discussed, and representatives provided absolute assurance that there is no part of the country that is not adequately covered by Roads Policing.

The Committee noted that the numbers of Garda members in Roads Policing is still significantly below target (695 vs 891 target), however assurance was provided that a competition due to take place before the end of the year would bring the numbers much closer to the target. It was also noted that the numbers and distribution of Roads Policing members in being reviewed in the context of the new Operating Model.

## **12. Approach to the recording of use of force**

The Committee was provided with a detailed handout, setting out the flowchart for the use of force, including the decision points. Garda Síochána representatives stated that the flowchart was provided in order to demonstrate the complexity involved in collecting all relevant data on all types of use of force.

It was noted that while there is currently one overarching use of force policy, there are 8 sub-policies, owned by 3 different Assistant Commissioners. It was stated that Internal Affairs are developing a governance structure for use of force and will revert to the Authority when this has been developed.

The existing reporting on 4 incident types to GSOC was discussed, and it was agreed that reporting on these incidents to the Authority would commence in the New Year. It was further agreed that a proposal on the recording and reporting of the remaining types of force used would be provided in Q1 2020, for discussion with the Authority. It was noted that reviewing the 2019 figures would be instructive in providing an indication of how force is currently used. It was confirmed that a PULSE release would issue in 2020 that would allow recording of use of force to facilitate recording.

The armed footprint of the organisation was discussed, and it was confirmed that this is expected to reduce as the Armed Support Units achieve 24/7 coverage nationally.

### **13. Policing Performance September – October**

Progress against a number of initiatives and groups of initiatives was discussed, including:

#### Initiatives relating to victims

The Committee expressed concern at the low rate of victim call-backs recorded, particularly in the DMR. The Deputy Commissioner stated that this metric is being scrutinised in his regular meetings with Regional Assistant Commissioners. It was stated that after Regional ACs had investigated the low level of call-backs in their regions that in some areas the call-backs had not been recorded in the correct area of PULSE, but had been conducted. Improvements in recording and in the performance against target are now expected.

It was also stated that 2 Garda members had been assigned in each region to ensure that call-backs take place. The change in the policy to allow call-backs that were not done in person to be recorded as a valid call-back, in certain circumstances, was discussed. Garda Síochána representatives stated their confidence that the target would be reached by the end of 2019, and a stretched target is proposed for 2020. The link to the new domestic abuse risk assessment tool was also discussed.

#### Assaults Strategy

The roll out of the Assaults Strategy was discussed; the Committee sought clarity on the role of operational managers, and the extent to which the Strategy is being rolled out consistently throughout the country.

Garda Síochána representatives responded that there is some regional variance, but that local action plans have been developed across the country, working with the Analysis Service. It was reported that there has been a substantial increase in activity, which is likely to lead to a short term increase in the level of incidents. It is expected that Regional ACs will report in December on progress with the Assaults Strategy in their area; this will be reported to the Committee. It was noted that overtime will be made available if necessary to ensure that resources are deployed effectively for this operation.

The Committee indicated that the Authority would expect to see follow up in this area in early 2020, in which the Garda Síochána would report what the analysis to support this operation showed, how it was acted upon, and what the effects were.

#### Changes of status of initiatives in the Policing Plan monthly reporting

The worsening in the RAG statuses of approximately a quarter of the initiatives in the Plan between August and September/October was discussed. The Committee received assurances from the Garda Síochána that a significant number of off track initiatives are expected to move on track by the end of the year. It was noted that there is focused attention being given to a number of initiatives to ensure that this occurs. However, it was not possible to provide an estimate of the number of

initiatives expected to move on track, or an indication of which initiatives this might relate to, beyond 'a significant number'.

#### Policing Plan 2020

Although not explicitly considered, the Policing Plan 2020 was discussed briefly in the context of the targets. The Committee highlighted that the Garda Síochána should have regard to the consistency of baselines used, its capacity to measure certain metrics, the soundness of the methodology for measuring targets, and the need to understand what success or failure / improvement or dis-improvement would look like for each indicator.