



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Policing Authority commissions review of the Garda Síochána Adult Caution Scheme

18 October 2019

The Policing Authority has today announced that it has commissioned a review of the Garda Síochána Adult Caution Scheme. The purpose of the review is to understand whether issues which arose in the Youth Diversion Programme exist or have the potential to exist in a broadly similar diversionary programme for adults. The terms of reference for the review are available [here](#) and will be carried out by Crowe.

Schemes which divert offenders away from the courts are widely used as a swift, proportionate response in certain circumstances. They also have the objective of avoiding criminalising appropriate offenders and reducing the risk that they will reoffend. They are an important, positive component of the criminal justice system.

The issues arising from the management of the Youth Diversion Programme have been an enduring topic of Policing Authority oversight throughout 2018 and 2019. The final report on Youth Diversion, along with a detailed implementation plan was received by the Policing Authority in May 2019 and was discussed in the September 2019 meeting in public between the Authority and the Garda Commissioner. One of the main issues of concern that arose was that youth referrals which the Garda Youth Diversion Office deemed unsuitable for inclusion in the programme were subsequently not actioned in another way by the Garda Síochána.

The Adult Caution Scheme is a diversionary programme for adults which, although applicable to a narrower range of offences, is the nearest parallel to the Youth Diversion Programme. The Policing Authority has commissioned this review to examine the Adult Caution Scheme to ascertain whether similar issues or behaviours might exist in relation to it. This also follows the recent announcement by Government that the Adult Caution Scheme is to be extended to include simple drug possession offences.

It is expected that an interim progress report will be provided to the Authority before the end of the December 2019 and that a final report, including any recommendations, will be delivered in the first quarter of 2020. Once finalised, it is expected that the matter will be on the agenda for a meeting in public between the Policing Authority and the Garda Commissioner. The Authority continues to engage with the Garda Síochána on the roll-out of the implementation plan which addresses the issues arising from the Youth Diversion Programme report.

Notes to Editor

[Garda Síochána Policy on the Adult Caution Scheme](#)

[Policing Authority Chairperson's opening statement regarding the Youth Diversion Programme \(17 January 2019\)](#)