



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Garda Organisation Development Committee

Date: 12 April 2022

Venue: Online Meeting

Part A – Committee Meeting

Attendance

- Authority:** Paul Mageean (Chair), Valerie Judge, Elaine Byrne, Dónal de Buitléir, Melanie Pine (external Committee member)
- Secretary:** Mark Nother
- Executive:** Helen Hall (CEO), Cormac Keating, Margaret Tumelty, Sharon O'Brien, Karen Shelly, Alexandre Eisenbarth, Aoife Clabby, David Murphy
- Apologies:** Dr. Cormac Keating, Michal Alfasi-Hanley

1. Closed session – Authority Members only

- The Committee did not exercise the standing option to conduct a closed session.

2. Chair's Opening Remarks

- There were no declarations of interest from the members in respect of any of the agenda items.
- There were no updates from the last Authority meeting.
- The coordination of agendas between the ODC and the PSP Committees was discussed.
- A short update on CAD 999, including the receipt of legal advice was discussed.
- The Committee was informed that the Risk Register will be on the agenda of next Authority meeting.

3. Consent Agenda Items

- The minutes of the previous meeting (21st February 2022) were approved.

4. Discussion to inform the Resources Letter to the Minister

- The Committee discussed the letter to inform the Minister on the Resources of the GS as part of the Authority statutory requirements.

- It was agreed that the budget for ICT and the costing of the Policing Plan would be discussed with the GS CAO in Part B of the meeting. More information is needed for Capital Investment; man saving numbers; a sense of the savings that could be achieved through recruitment instead of relying on contractors; the progress on the implementation of the Mazars report on Finance; the budget for Cyber security; the integration of IOT (Information Operation Technology) in the Risk register.
- It was agreed that the GS need to make more compelling arguments, such as implications and impact of time needed to achieve a project on policing and on frontline members, as well as clear cost/benefits figures. Most of these facts should be included in the GS Risk register.

5. GS Risk Management and Governance

- The Committee discussed the GS Risk register and concerns were raised on several issues such as the document not being very informative; the lack of mitigation and prioritisation; the information being out of date and not comprehensive; the lack of target dates and clear ownership.
- While the Committee was informed that the GS is working on a fundamental rethink and refresh of the Register, a few questions were raised regarding what happens once a risk is added to the Register; what governance and insurance processes are in place and what are the effective mechanisms to manage risks.
- It was agreed that these questions will be raised in Part B of the meeting.

6. Diversity

- Garda National Diversity Forum: The Committee expressed concerns that there could be a disconnection between the term of references and the expectations of the members.
- GS Hate Crime report:
 - The report was provided to the members and discussed.
 - The Committee was informed that legislative changes are needed in order for the GS to collect the information needed.
 - It was agreed that it will be further discussed during B of the meeting (to include, actions taken by the GS to progress the required changes; what is being done in the meantime; how confident are they that everything is reported).
- Ethnicity and Garda recruitment: Clarification is needed regarding the GAR on the vetting process (GAR 725). This will be discussed at par B of the meeting.

7. Policing Plan Performance Assessment

- The Policing Plan performance report was not received, however the Executive gave a verbal update on the preview provided by the GS.
- The new report will be based on outcomes and is envisioned to clearly show the impact of the key enablers across all areas of Policing.

8. Preparation of the meeting with the GS representatives

- This was done in the previous agenda items.

9. Executive updates on oversight activity

- The Executive provided the Committee with updates on: Culture, Code of Ethics, Discipline and suspensions, and the revised syllabus for the Qualifying Professional Examination for the rank of Inspector.
- The Committee raised concerns regarding suspensions, the length of the civil cases, the learnings from the latest court cases and the internal processes in place in the GS.
- It was agreed that information is needed regarding the GS internal processes to ensure the cases are dealt with in a timely manner.
- Regarding the new syllabus, the Committee questioned the lack of modules on soft skills.

10. GAR requests and Administration

- The Committee noted the receipt of an update on the “Health and Wellbeing App”, following GAR 756.
- The Committee discussed the latest update on the “Informal chats between Superintendents and applicants as part of the interview process” (GAR 725). It was agreed that questions should be raised in part B of the meeting regarding the process.
- The Committee noted the receipt of an update regarding “Backfill for Maternity leave”, following GAR 747.
- The Committee noted the receipt of an update regarding “GACU staffing”, as requested at the 21ST February 2022 ODC meeting.

Actions:

To close GAR 756 – Health and Well Being App

To close GAR 747 – Backfill for Maternity Leave

Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána Representatives

Attendance

Authority:	As per Part A above
Garda Síochána:	Joseph Nugent, Chief Administrative Officer Kate Mulkerrins, Executive Director Legal Paula Hilman, Assistant Commissioner Roads Policing and Community Engagement Yvonne Cooke, A/Executive Director HRPD Deirdre Morris, PO, Strategic Transformation Office Paul Timoney, PO, Finance Brian Gill, Superintendent Garda Risk Management Unit Gráinne Shortall, AP, Policing Authority Liaison Office
Apologies:	Alice Donovan, PO, Strategic Transformation Office

11. Closed session

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

* GAR 725 – “Informal chats with local superintendents during the recruitment process”:

- The Committee enquired if the local superintendent was writing a report or recommendations after the chat.
- The GS clarified that the local superintendent writes the report which is then sent to the Commissioner.
- The GS also informed the Committee that the vetting process is currently being revisited and that the revised process would be provided if/when updates were made.
- The GS also informed that the local Superintendent’s role in terms of vetting will be looked at as part of the preparations to the 2022 competition. Further details will be provided to the Authority once available.

Actions:

To close GAR 725

To follow up with the GS (via PALO) on updates re the review of the vetting process

12. Advice to the Minister on adequacy of Garda Resources

- The yearly letter to the Minister regarding the adequacy of the GS resources was discussed.
- ICT budget:
 - The Committee asked the GS representatives if they could quantify the man-hour savings and time saving for each initiative where investment is required. For instance, the impact of Mobility (FCN) or the productivity of remote meetings..

- The GS representatives said some initiatives such as RDMS can provide data on time saving for planning major events, while other initiatives such as IMS would provide data of a qualitative nature.
- The Committee noted that the division between Capital Expenditure and Current Expenditure can sometimes be unclear and enquired if the GS could reclassify some expenditures such as the cost of contractors. In response, the GS representatives noted that this will be discussed with the DPER in June or July but also in the context of the five years plan.
- The Committee enquired about the possibility to quantify the cost of the loss of opportunity in case the required budget was not approved. The GS mentioned the recent strong comments by a staff association regarding Body Worn Cameras, as a prime example of where funding has not been provided.
- The GS representatives informed the Committee that following a discussion with NSSO, they would not be permitted for HR Shared Services as a result of the complexities of their rank/grade structures. As such, the GS will need additional budget to explore other solutions. This will be added to the list of asks for additional budget and the support of the Authority will be required.
- The Committee reiterated that any new HR system would need to be linked to the GS financial system, in order to get a clear picture of costs and savings.
- Implementation of the Mazars report:
 - The GS noted the project had not progressed at the desired pace, mainly due to recruitment issues.
 - The implementation group is being rejuvenated and the meetings did not always take place due to COVID restrictions.
 - Currently, the plan is slightly off-target and the GS will provide the Committee with further updates.
- Estate Management:
 - The GS referred to a total estate of 500 buildings, a number of which are in poor condition. It was noted that this creates delays on new buildings.
 - It was agreed that a report on Garda Estate will be provided to the Policing Authority.
- The Committee concluded by requesting the GS to examine to possibility of reclassifying the expenditure.
- It was agreed that the CAO would engage with the Authority when the GS gets additional information.

Actions:

The CAO to engage with the Authority regarding the budget asks once the information required is gathered.

The GS to provide the Committee with an update on progressing the implementation of the Mazars report as the implementation group is reconvening.

The GS to provide the Policing Authority with a report on Garda Estate.

13. GS Risk Management and Governance

- The Committee enquired if the Risk Register was an active management tool and how it was utilised across the organisation.
- The GS representatives stated that the Risk Register is a standing agenda item in management meetings. It is discussed at local and functional level but also in the context of internal audit reviews. It is populated by units across the entire organisation. However, it is still paper based so it is limited.
- The GS representatives noted that there is a need for an IT system to make the Risk Register more efficient.
- The GS representatives stated that the Corporate Risk Register is a summary document that is supported by a detailed Risk Action Plan which clearly sets out the actions necessary to mitigate the risk with defined target dates. This document also provides information on the assigned risk owner, risk rating and the controls that are in place to mitigate the risk and the effectiveness of same. This document is updated on an ongoing basis.
- Members also asked about the Governance mechanism for the register. The GS representatives told the Committee that since the Risk function was established in 2017, there has been huge improvements in embedding the Risk Management in the organisation.
- The Committee enquired on the process of adding items to the risk register and what learnings did the GS have from the recent cases regarding Discipline in terms of risk management. It was explained by the GS representatives that such cases, and other broader matters (such as court decisions and third party reports), were considered by a standing cross-functional working group chaired by legal services in order to ascertain any learnings/impacts.

14. Diversity

- Garda National Diversity Forum:
 - The GS representatives informed the Committees that while a lot of work has been done within the Diversity forums, the ToR's needs to be updated in order to implement the EDI strategy.
 - It was also noted that it should be a two way forum and the members should encourage and support the recruitment efforts of the GS, but also encourage members of the communities they represent to report hate-crime incidents to the GS.
 - AC Hillman will write to the forum members to address their concerns and a copy of this letter will be shared with the Policing Authority.
 - It was noted however, that the GS cannot deal with individual cases raised in the forum.
 - Garda representatives outlined that they wish to ensure that any new forum, when established, represents diverse, marginalised and minority groups, recognising vulnerability.
 - The Committee expressed concerns regarding the disconnection between the forum members and the GS in term of expectations.

- The Committee further noted that the level of trust between the parties needs to be increased, before the GS may expect the forum members to support their initiatives such as recruiting or reporting of hate crime.
- Hate Crime Reports:
 - The GS representatives noted that the hate crime reporting figures and trends will be shared with the Committee when available.
 - The Committee asked the GS representatives how targets in the Strategy are measured or how reports are created in the absence of collection of ethnic data.
 - The GS noted they are currently using data from the Public Attitude Survey and anecdotal information.
- The Committee asked the GS representatives about actions taken to remove the silos between various Units, such as Human Rights, Human Resources, Ethics and Culture in terms of diversity initiatives. The GS replied that Diversity was a cross-organisation initiative.
- The Committee enquired about the processes by which the GS is reaching out to new minorities as they emerge.
The GS noted they have initiatives as a case happens and gave examples on how they were reaching out to Ukrainian refugees.
It was agreed the GS will provide updates at the forthcoming meetings on how it ensures it is reaching minority / diverse communities.
- The Committee asked about the policy of the GS on using a diverse workforce to serve specific communities.
The GS noted it has to be balanced with Human Rights considerations, as they need to ensure skills and consistency of service provided instead of basing it on gender or ethnicity.
It was agreed the GS will revert to the Policing Authority on how it plans to operationalise community Gardaí with specific skills or backgrounds in diverse areas.

Actions:

The GS to formalise a written reply to the GNDF and provide with a copy to the Policing Authority.

The GS to link with the Policing Authority on the developing GNDF ToRs and as the forum proceeds to address the issues raised in the recent letter from the Chairperson.

The GS to provide updates at forthcoming meetings on how it ensures it is reaching minority / diverse communities.

The GS will revert to the Policing Authority on how it plans to operationalise community Gardaí with specific skills or backgrounds in diverse areas.

15. Policing Plan – Performance

- The GS representatives gave a brief verbal overview on updates regarding the reporting on the Policing Plan, specifically the move to outcome based reporting – as agreed with the Authority.
- While the Policing Plan Performance report is not available, the majority of the updates are finalised and the Authority should receive it next week.
- It was also reiterated that the Enablers will be listed across all initiatives.