

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2020

Introduction

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was established in 2009 and is a partnership between Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Community. The membership comprises of senior Garda Officers, elected Councillors and Oireachtas members and representatives of community & voluntary groups.

The DLR Joint Policing Committee is intended to be a forum for discussion and a means of building confidence, trust and safety in the County. In doing this, the DLR JPC seeks to prioritise key community policing policy issues and identify initiatives which will contribute to improved community policing and prevention or reduction of future crime in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Role of the JPC

The legislative framework for the establishment of Joint Policing Committees is set out in [Section 36 of An Garda Síochána Act 2005](#) and the amendments to this Act in 2014. Section 36(2) of the Act provides that a JPC's function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area, and in particular to:-

36.—

(2) The joint policing committee's function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area, and in particular to—

(a) keep under review—

(i) the levels and patterns of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour in that area (including the patterns and levels of misuse of alcohol and drugs), and

(ii) the factors underlying and contributing to the levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the area,

(b) advise the local authority concerned and the Garda Síochána on how they might best perform their functions having regard to the need to do everything feasible to improve the safety and quality of life and to prevent crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour within the area,

(c) arrange and host public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area,

(d) establish, in consultation with the local Garda superintendent, as the committee considers necessary within specific neighbourhoods of the area, local policing fora to discuss and make recommendations to the committee concerning matters that it is to keep under review under paragraph (a) or on which it is to advise under paragraph (b), in so far as those matters affect their neighbourhoods, and

(e) co-ordinate the activities of local policing fora established under paragraph (d) or otherwise.

Garda Districts Covered by the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Joint Policing Committee

The majority of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is located within the Dublin Metropolitan East District.

Within the DMR East District, there are two sub districts of "F" covering Dún Laoghaire, Shankill & Cabinteely and "W" covering Blackrock, Dundrum & Stepside areas.



Joint Policing Committee Meetings in 2020

In 2020, the DLR Joint Policing Committee was chaired by Cllr Mary Hanafin, Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. Due to the restrictions imposed on foot of the Covid-19 pandemic, the JPC held only two meetings in 2020, on 27th February in DLRCC County Hall and 25th November (virtual meeting). A meeting was scheduled for 30th September but had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 situation at the time. The papers for the meeting and replies to all of the questions raised by members, were circulated to the members following the postponement.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Joint Policing Committee Membership 2020 (at 31st December 2020)

Dún Laoghaire - Rathdown County Council	
Cllr. Ann Colgan	Elected representative
Cllr. Anna Grainger	Elected representative
Cllr. Carrie Smyth	Elected representative
Cllr. Denis O'Callaghan	Elected representative
Cllr. Elizabeth Eva Dowling	Elected representative
Cllr Frank McNamara	Elected representative
Cllr. John Kennedy	Elected representative
Cllr. Kazi Ahmed	Elected representative
Cllr. Lettie McCarthy	Elected representative
Cllr. Lorraine Hall	Elected representative
Cllr. Mary Hanafin	Elected representative
Cllr. Michael Clarke	Elected representative
Cllr. Oisín O' Connor	Elected representative
Cllr. Séafra O'Faoláin	Elected representative
Cllr. Shay Brennan	Elected representative
Therese Langan	Director of Service, Community & Cultural Development
Mary Ruane	Senior Executive Officer, Community & Cultural Development
An Garda Síochána	
Matthew Nyland	Chief Superintendent
Martin Creighton	Detective Superintendent
Ronan Barry	Superintendent
Paul Reidy	Superintendent
Community Representatives	

Eimear McAuliffe	DLR Public Participation Network
Anne Harrington	DLR Public Participation Network
Bébhinn Murphy	DLR Public Participation Network
Tony McCarthy	DLR Public Participation Network
Georgina Potts	Loughlinstown, Shankill LPF
Reverend Asa Bjork	Dún Laoghaire, LPF
Liz Roche	Sandyford / Stepside LPF
David Bradshaw	DLR Drugs & Alcohol Task Force
Members of the Oireachtas	
Deputy Cormac Devlin	Member of the Oireachtas
Deputy Jennifer Carroll MacNeill	Member of the Oireachtas
Deputy Josepha Madigan	Member of the Oireachtas
Deputy Neale Richmond	Member of the Oireachtas
Senator Barry Ward	Member of the Oireachtas

Changes in Membership in 2020

There were a number of membership changes in 2020.

Chief Superintendent Matthew Nyland replaced Chief Superintendent Anne Marie Cagney due to her promotion to Assistant Commissioner in April 2020. Superintendent Martin McGonnell retired and Superintendent Paul Reidy and Superintendent Ronan Barry joined the Committee. Therese Langan Director of Service replaced Dearbhla Lawson. Liz Roche replaced Frank Cruise on the Sandyford Stepside LPF. Cllr Kazi Ahmed replaced Cllr Barry Ward. Cllr Frank McNamara replaced Cllr Jennifer Carroll MacNeill. Cllr Oisín O' Connor replaced Cllr Deirdre Ni Fhloinn. Deputies Cormac Devlin, Jennifer Carroll MacNeill and Neale Richmond and Senator Barry Ward joined the Committee as Oireachtas members.

Joint Policing Committee Work Programme

A six year Strategic Plan was developed for the DLR JPC and adopted in June 2016.

The JPC Strategic Plan 2016-2021 contains 18 individual actions across three strategic Goals:

- 1. Supporting and promoting Crime Prevention in DLR*
- 2. Enhancing Community Safety & Security in DLR*
- 3. Facilitating Community Engagement and Collaboration on Safety Issues*

The 2020 Work Plan was based on the current guidelines and code of practice which apply to JPCs and the Goals/Actions set out in the six-year Strategic Plan.



Monitoring of key safety/security issues in the County

The Chief Superintendent presented an overview of the key policing priorities for the DMR East District at each of the DLR JPC meetings, noting some of the key crime statistics and approaches proposed to address identified priorities.

Progress reports on the JPC Strategic Plan 2016-2021 were provided at each JPC Meeting as well as updates from each of the three Local Policing Fora.

The JPC meetings also included the following presentations:

1. Presentation by Commissioner Drew Harris

At the February meeting Commissioner Drew Harris presented the new Garda Operating Model and outlined how it will impact on policing policy generally, front-line community policing, administration and criminal investigation in relation to the DMR East Division. He also discussed how to keep people safe from Cyber Crime, Trafficking/Slavery, Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. The Commissioner also responded to questions from the floor on issues pertinent to the DLR County area.



Commissioner Harris at the February JPC meeting



In attendance to welcome Commissioner Harris prior to the February 2020 JPC meeting were: An Cathaoirleach, Cllr Shay Brennan, Cllr Mary Hanafin, Chairperson of the DLR JPC, Chief Superintendent Anne Marie Cagney and members of the JPC. Also in attendance were Tom McHugh, Deputy Chief Executive of DLRCC and Mary T. Daly, Director of Services, Corporate Services

2. Garda Youth Awards

Inspector John O'Driscoll gave a presentation on the Garda Youth Awards and the National Awards. The presentation included the following points:

- The Awards took place in the Mill Theatre, Dundrum in January 2020
- All nominees were presented with a Citation for their good work and four overall winners were selected under the following categories
 - Individual award
 - Group award
 - Special achievement
 - Community safety award
- The winners of the four categories were forwarded to the National Garda Youth Awards and three of the nominees received a National Award.

3. Workplan highlights and achievements

The advent of the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted on all strata of life. Policing has been altered dramatically due to the lockdown and regulations imposed by the Government. An Garda Síochána have had to adapt to a model of policing focused on checkpoints, public safety and the enabling of health restrictions. The amendments to the Health Act 1947 (Section 31A-Temporary Restrictions) imposed through Statutory Instruments, have conferred the responsibility to An Garda Síochána to act to minimise the risk to the public by promoting, through good practice, the advice of the Health Service Executive (HSE). This has included the

monitoring of travel restrictions, social distancing, face-coverings and liquor licensing inspections. Summer operations included refocusing our policing to the large public amenities and the maintenance of social distancing amongst the multitudes flocking to the beaches and parks of the County. An Garda Síochána has deployed the graduated approach of engaging, explaining, encouraging and the final resort of enforcement.

The impact of the pandemic has had the unfortunate corollary of hindering the progress of the Joint Policing Committee's shared priorities and goals contained within the 2020 workplan. The inability to convene meetings and schedule events has had a negative effect on the completion of our goals. However, much excellent work has been achieved and the interagency collaboration between An Garda Síochána and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council in combatting and ameliorating the impact of the pandemic on our community has been particularly positive. This inter-agency collaboration has been one of the key highlights of the year.

DLRCC and An Garda Síochána worked collaboratively in the response to Covid 19 on the following:

- The Community Call response. Regular meetings of the Community Response Stakeholder Forum took place for engagement regarding operating under Levels announced as part of the Government's [Resilience and Recovery 2020 - 2021 Plan for Living with Covid-19](#), and the previous plan 'Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business'.
- A senior representative of An Garda Síochána attended these meetings and gave an update. An Garda Síochána assisted with the collection and delivery of prescriptions, food shopping etc. to assist vulnerable people during this time
- Policing of the DLR Co Co Markets- An Garda Síochána patrolled the markets on weekends to ensure the public were adhering to social distancing guidelines.
- Consultation and engagement on a number of mobility measures including the coastal mobility route and the Blackrock Village one way system.
- During the Summer An Garda Síochána policed the large public amenities and the maintenance of social distancing on dlr beaches and in the public parks.
- Consultation and engagement on the Active School Travel initiative regarding the 3 new pilot safe routes to upgrade and connect the existing walking and cycling network in the County.
- DLRCC and An Garda Síochána made an appeal to the public to refrain from visiting bathing areas and specifically the 40 Foot, Sandycove and Seapoint for the traditional annual swim on Christmas Day and St Stephens Day.

The key highlights and achievements under each Goal in 2020 are as follows:

1. Supporting and promoting Crime Prevention in DLR

Burglaries

An Garda Síochána reported a 23% decrease in burglaries across the Division this year. This is a continuing trend since 2015, due to increased high visibility patrolling, stringent application of bail laws to put recidivists in custody, zero tolerance application of law in regard to anti-

social/public order and targeting of suspects via operation hybrid and other intelligence led operations.

Prolific Offender Reports:

A greater emphasis has been placed on targeting identified prolific offenders within the Division with notable results achieved.

All outstanding matters regarding prolific offenders are dealt with expeditiously and where these individuals are found to be committing crimes or in breach of current bail conditions, all efforts are made to bring them before the Courts and ensure, where applicable, Section 2 Bail applications are made.

Operation THOR target list:

The DMR East THOR target list was constantly reviewed to ensure identified persons who engage in criminality have assigned case managers. This results in a more proactive managerial approach, which represents an effective strategy for managing crime recidivism and preventing crime.

High Visibility Policing

The policing response to the COVID-19 Pandemic has been predicated on maintaining the highest levels of visibility across all endeavours. The tireless schedule of Checkpoints, liquor licensing inspections, retail inspections and proactive patrols have put An Garda Síochána in constant view of the public. An Garda Síochána has utilised the graduated approach of engaging, explaining, encouraging and the final resort of enforcement to ensure public safety.

A new Bicycle Theft Reduction Operation is currently being implemented across the DMR East. Covert manoeuvres informed by local policing knowledge and intelligence are being employed to target criminals engaged in the stealing of bicycles from DART, LUAS and other identified hotspots. This operation has resulted in numerous arrests and continues to be a high priority in the disruption of thefts.

Road Safety

Education

The Community Policing Units schedule of face-to-face talks to School Children was greatly diminished due to COVID-19 Pandemic. Consequently, the Community Policing Unit have, in consultation with School authorities throughout the County, developed a package which is being delivered to schools combining electronic and interactive measures.

An interagency planned day of action was conducted on the 24th July, 2020, with advice and fluorescent high visibility vests being disseminated.

Engineering

Cycle schemes completed in 2020

- Goatstown Road Protected cycle route
- Benildus Avenue Protected cycle route
- Cruagh Wood Greenway - Ballyogan Road to Cruagh Wood
- Nutgrove Avenue Phase 2

Cycle schemes under construction in 2020

- Drummartin Link Road/Kilgobbin Road cycle route
- Stillorgan Road Cycle Scheme (UCD Nova)

Cycle schemes at design stage

Dundrum area

- Clonskeagh Road (UCD to Clonskeagh)
- Sandyford Business District Cycle Routes
- N11 Brewery Road Junction improvements
- Dodder Greenway (being led by Dublin City Council)
- Blackglen Road/Harold's Grange Road Improvement Scheme
- Brides Glen Luas Link
- Cherrywood Greenways Network

Dún Laoghaire Area

- East Coast Trail (Merrion Gates to Seapoint)
- Wyattville Road Phase 2
- Stillorgan Park Road cycle scheme

Public consultation

Public consultation commenced on 20km of cycle routes to schools

- The Sea to Mountains route - Blackrock to Marlay to the Wicklow Way
- Park to Park route Blackrock to the sea via Loughlinstown
- Mountains to Metals route - Sandyford to Sandycove

Bus Connects Schemes - Round 3 of Public Consultation including cycling improvements

- Bus Connects – Merrion Road (Blackrock to Merrion)
- Bus Connects – Stillorgan Road (Bray to City Centre)

Enforcement

The main focus of DMR East Roads Policing Unit is to address the key factors that contributed most significantly to the causes of fatal and serious injury collisions. An Garda Síochána focus enforcement on a number of key 'Lifesaver' offences:

- Speeding;
- Driving while intoxicated (DWI);
- The use of seat belts – front and rear; and
- The use of mobile phones while driving.

Operations to identify speeding, non-wearing of seatbelts, use of mobile phones and driving under the influence have been ongoing since throughout the year.

Neighbourhood Watch

The County hosts 157 existing Neighbourhood Watch schemes. The re-establishment of the Dún Laoghaire District Neighbourhood Watch Steering Committee and its progression have been hampered due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Similarly, the pandemic impacted significantly upon the delivery of the hospital/campus/business watch initiatives. Liaison with businesses has been conducted to inform and direct on Health Act 1947 Regulations and the implications and responsibilities of business in the delivery of services during the pandemic.

Campus Watch has recommenced with the express goal of educating and empowering the third-level student population through the delivery of relevant and cogent clinics addressing the pertinent concerns of the day.

2. Enhancing Community Safety & Security in DLR

Domestic Violence

During the Covid-19 Pandemic An Garda Síochána have witnessed a dramatic increase in reported incidents of domestic abuse and domestic violence. The DMR East Protective Services Unit have been relentlessly investigating these crimes and pursuing those responsible. In response to the increase, the Protective Services Unit were tasked with implementing Operation Faoiseamh to provide call-backs to victims of domestic violence which offered updates, support & protection. This has further bolstered the extant initiatives of the Domestic Abuse Coordination Team, which sees a dedicated liaison officer appointed as a singular point of contact for victims of escalating domestic abuse, and the Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment Tool which provides a framework to highlight potentially vulnerable people to An Garda Síochána.

Age Friendly

The COVID-19 Pandemic has severely curtailed An Garda Síochána's usual schedule of events and outing for the Elders of our Community, including GOPA (Garda Older Persons Association) events.⁷ However, Community Policing have been keeping up a rigorous rota of visits to the elderly providing prescriptions, shopping, and a bit of socially-distanced company throughout

the DMR East. Increased awareness of the effect of the Pandemic led to the development of greater interaction with the vulnerable elderly in the County. The additional fleet of vehicles made available to Community Policing greatly facilitated these initiatives.

3. Community Engagement and Collaboration

Drug and Alcohol Task Force

The DMR East Divisional Drugs Unit, based at Blackrock Garda Station, is actively involved with the DLR Drug & Alcohol Task Force / Southside Partnership / Community Action Network and participates in the Youth-At-Risk Network (YARN)

Members are working closely with the Youth Prevention Coordinator employed by Southside Partnership, in respect of developing group based preventive activities for young people, 15-24 years.

COVID-19 has imposed restrictions in respect of workshops. However, An Garda Síochána have actively engaged with meetings and conference calls covering such topics as:

- Drug Related intimidation
- Gang Culture
- Transition for young people at risk, going through & emerging from the COVID Pandemic.

Garda Youth Diversion Programmes

Three Youth Diversion Projects are currently delivered in the Division:

- Castle Project – Ballyogan
- LAB (Loughlinstown & Ballybrack)
- SAY – Sandyford Area Youth Project

Garda Youth Diversion Projects have proven to be an over-arching success, within their respective communities, and they have yielded an extremely low rate of recidivism amongst the youths who engage with the programmes.

There are already established official protocols in place as per Children First between An Garda Síochána and the TUSLA Agency in regard to the protection and safety of children. The DMR East fully participate with the DLR Children and Young Persons Services Committee (CYPSC) Safety Subgroup. The Subgroup is now jointly chaired by Ciara Murphy (Principal Social Worker Child Protection, TUSLA Child & Family Agency) and Chief Superintendent Matthew Nyland and met suitably socially distanced in July 2020.

The role of the Subgroup has been to develop a detailed interagency action plan for 2019-2021 that is evidence informed, outcomes focused and which is actively supported by participating services. The key priorities this Subgroup are focused on improving outcomes for children vulnerable to or impacted by homelessness, domestic abuse, and cyberbullying/abuse. An

identified key priority for this group is to establish a Domestic Violence Refuge with the support of DLRCC.

Garda Diversity Committee

A meeting was to be convened in the second quarter of 2020 in order to re-establish the Diversity Committee. This meeting was regrettably postponed due to the pandemic.

Presently, Chief Superintendent Nyland has tasked an Inspector to review and provide firm recommendations in respect of the re-establishment of the Multi-agency Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Garda Diversity Committee (DLRGDC) in order to ensure the longevity and success of the Committee and its activities.

DMR East Community Policing Members regularly engaged with the Dún Laoghaire Refugee Project assisting Asylum seekers and refugees from across Dublin who meet weekly. Unfortunately the Project ceased to hold meetings in Dún Laoghaire, in March 2020, upon the closure of the hostel where they were facilitated.

Development of Local Policing Forums in the County

There are three Local Policing Forums established in the County under the auspices of the Joint Policing Committee. These are:

1. Loughlinstown/Shankill & Ballybrack (Chaired by Inspector James Murphy)
2. Sandyford/Stepaside (Chaired by Inspector John O' Driscoll)
3. Central Dún Laoghaire (Chaired by Inspector John Dowling)

The role of these Policing Forums is to enhance the collaboration and communication between An Garda Síochána, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, the main Transport companies, and local Residents' Associations and organisations.

Meetings held in 2020

- Loughlinstown/Shankill and Ballybrack LPF met on 5th February
- Sandyford/Stepaside met on 14th January and 3rd March
- Central Dún Laoghaire LPF met on 29th January

Consideration is being given to the establishment of a LPF for the Dundrum/Stillorgan area.

Submission of DLR JPC Annual Report 2020

In accordance with Section 36(5) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 this report will be submitted to the Minister for Justice and Equality, the Commissioner of An Garda Síochána and the Policing Authority.