

## **Donegal Joint Policing Committee** **Annual Report 2020**

### **Introduction**

Donegal Joint Policing Committee is a partnership between Government (as represented by Council members and executives, and Oireachtas members) our local communities (represented through Donegal PPN) and An Garda Siochana. The objective of the JPC is to attempt to allow the three pillars of the partnership to achieve more working together than they would working individually for the communities of our county.

2020 was a difficult year for Donegal Joint Policing Committee as we encountered difficulty in progressing our programmes and aims due to the impact of the COVID pandemic and restrictions.

The five themes that we have selected represent the major social and community safety issues that communities face in this county.

Attempting to address common issues along with communities that we share a border with is a logical thing to do and hopefully we can continue to work with Councils across the border to develop projects similar to the annual cross border drink driving campaign.

The five themes of the Donegal JPC Strategic Plan are:

- Rural Isolation & Community Policing
- Public Order & Anti Social Behaviour
- Drugs
- Road Safety
- Cross Border Crime Prevention Initiatives

Implementation of the Strategic Plan is facilitated through a number of committees and structures, including the secretariat, steering committee and the road safety working group. The JPC carried out a review of the three sub groups throughout the year and agreed to include Cyber Crime as one of the themes to be considered. The Sub Groups of the Donegal JPC are now Rural Isolation, Community Policing and Cyber Crime, Public Order & Anti Social Behaviour and Drugs. The role of the sub groups is to consider in detail the issues relating to these themes, along with sector experts, and revert to the JPC with proposed interventions.

Donegal Joint Policing Committee continued to meet on a regular basis throughout 2020 despite the challenges of COVID 19 restrictions. Crime trends and statistics are discussed at meetings which highlight issues that the JPC strive to respond to through its Strategic Plan. Local issues are continuously highlighted by elected members and PPN community representatives which allow them to be dealt with by the relevant stakeholders. The JPC has continue to try deliver initiatives that have a positive impact on our communities, such as discouraging anti social behaviour, promoting an anti drink driving message and developing a network of community alert and neighbourhood watch groups. A consistent message coming from all stakeholders continues to be the lack of Garda resources and the JPC take every available opportunity to raise this issue nationally.

ITEM 1 – Summary of progress in implementing the JPC’s work programme.

	Strategic Objectives (please list in the same order as on JPC Annual Work Plan)	Summaries the actions taken and the progress achieved during the year and any significant difficulties which were encountered	Summarise the advice given by the local authority/ Gardaí – identify specific recommendations made	Results of advice / recommendations – identify the feedback received from the local authority / Gardaí
	High Priority Objectives			
1	Road Safety	<p>Donegal is fortunate to have an active and successful Road Safety Working Group in the county and it is beneficial to the work of that group that the JPC have identified road safety as one of our strategic themes.</p> <p>The Donegal Road Safety Working Group is an interagency group consisting of Donegal County Council, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, An Garda Síochána, Road Safety Authority, Donegal Youth Service, Donegal ETB, Pro Social Ireland, Foróige, and An Taisce. The group continue to meet on a monthly basis to develop and implement road safety initiatives and</p>	<p>Unfortunately in 2020 because of the Covid restrictions the Donegal Road Safe Show was cancelled. With the continued uncertainty regarding this health crisis, the DRSWG have provisionally scheduled the show for 5<sup>th</sup> &amp; 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021, when it is hoped a safer environment will exist to hold the show.</p> <p>A full calendar of road safety awareness campaigns is agreed at the start of each year by the group and these are rolled out consistently as education and awareness continues to be the key elements required for improving safety on the roads. The behaviours identified are impaired driving through alcohol,</p>	<p>The Donegal Road Safety Working Group currently has partnerships in place with CLG Dhún na nGall, Ulster GAA Health &amp; Wellbeing Committee, Finn Harps FC, Donegal Daily website and Donegal Democrat in relation to the promotion of Road Safety in Donegal. Education is the central focus of the DRSWG, changing attitudes, behaviour and the culture of road users are key targets we will continue to work to improve these and in turn save lives.</p> <p>The DRSWG with the assistance of An Garda and Pro Social Ireland launched the Your Life Your Choice programme in 2020 and was being delivered in secondary schools pre covid. It is hoped when schools reopen and when it is safe</p>

		<p>campaigns with the objective of improving road safety for all road users. The DRSWG is committed to working with local communities and groups throughout the county so as they can work towards playing their part in reducing road collisions. Education is the central focus of the Donegal Road Safety Working Group who continues to work to improve the behaviour of road users and in turn reduce road deaths</p>	<p>drugs or fatigue, speed, non wearing of seatbelts, distracted driving and the continued awareness campaigns focussing on cyclists and pedestrians.</p>	<p>to do so that the programme will continue to be delivered to secondary school and youthreach students in Donegal.</p> <p>The DRSWG along with Pro Social Ireland and Donegal Youth Service successfully completed the Peace IV funded initiative called the Garage Project. The Garage Project was aimed at teenage boys and girls who had an interest in cars and who were at risk as a result of their behaviour on the road. They were taught the basics of car mechanics and panel beating and were also educated about the importance of good driving behaviour and the consequences of not doing the right thing. In essence, the programme instilled good driving practice and behaviour before the young participants commence their driving career. In total seventy five participants completed the course, during very challenging times and it was a huge success. It is hope that further funding opportunities can be explored to continue the project.</p>
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2	Public Order and Anti Social Behaviour	<p>The Public Order and Anti Social Behaviour sub group considers issues of public order and anti social behaviour and how the JPC can best respond to these issues. Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic the Sub Group did not formally meet in 2020.</p>	<p>Donegal JPC continue to consider applications for Community Based CCTV Scheme for installation of CCTV in areas throughout the County. Letterkenny remains the only town in the County to have a CCTV System</p> <p>Two Property Marking Machines were purchased in late 2019 to allow for the roll out of a scheme where property can be marked using the eircode of the owner which assists in recovering stolen goods and also acts as a deterrent to thieves. One machine was purchased by Donegal County Council on foot of petition by the JPC and the other was purchased by the PPN.</p>	<p>To date, Donegal JPC have approved two applications for Grant Assistance for installation of CCTV. Progressing the applications was delayed due to GDPR Compliance issues but these were resolved in 2020 and the applications are being progressed.</p> <p>One Training Session on the use of the Property Marking Machines was commenced in early 2020 to nominated Gardai, JPC members and PPN Groups. Unfortunately the additional Training sessions scheduled and the formal launch of the Property Marking Machines Programme were postponed due to the COVID 19 Pandemic restrictions.</p>

			<p>Donegal JPC hosted the Donegal Garda Youth Awards again in 2020.</p>	<p>The Awards Ceremony was held in February 2020 with four award winners selected. These winners went on to represent the Division at the National Garda Youth Awards, with one of the winners being awarded the National Award. The JPC will host the 2021 Awards. The Nomination process and evaluation of applications is ongoing and the Awards Ceremony will be held in early 2021.</p>
3	<p>Rural Isolation, Community Policing and Cyber Crime</p>	<p>The JPC identified the growing concerns and issues around Cyber Crime and agreed to add this as a theme for the Sub Committee in 2020. Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic the Rural Isolation, Community Policing and Cyber Crime Group were unable to meeting in 2020.</p>	<p>Arising from the proposals of the Rural Isolation and Community Policing Sub Group previously, the JPC, in conjunction with Muintir na Tíre continued to develop the network of Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch Groups in the county which has allowed sharing of information and practices to happen between the groups.</p>	<p>Information aimed specifically at older and safety in the home and in the community were a major theme at the online Social Inclusion Week online events in 2020</p>

			<p>The Garda Community Information Broadcasts, which had commenced in 2019 arising from petitions made by Donegal JPC Members to Gardai continued in 2020 on a weekly basis. The Garda Community Information Broadcasts on local Radio update people on local Crime Alerts, Security Tips etc</p>	<p>The weekly Garda Community Information Broadcasts continued throughout 2020 and became a vital link and platform for providing advice and updates to citizens of the County, particularly those who were cocooning during the COVID 19 Pandemic in 2020.</p>
4	Cross Border Crime	<p>Joint Gardaí and PSNI operations continue to target drink drivers and enforcement of the drink-driving legislation remains a major priority as part of the ongoing commitment to reducing road casualties. The campaign is supported by the Donegal Road Safety Working Group as part of their ongoing road safety awareness programme.</p>	<p>The development of cross border crime prevention initiatives remains a priority for Donegal JPC and the steering committee continue to seek potential collaborative actions with colleagues in Derry City and Strabane District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.</p>	<p>The model of the Policing and Community Safety Partnerships that are part of the Council structures in Northern Ireland offer proof that a partnership approach to crime prevention and community safety work provided budget can be provided to allow collaborative initiatives to be implemented. Donegal JPC have made submissions to national policy consultations to highlight that fact that further funding is required to allow full implementation of JPC strategies. A Presentation from the Policing &amp; Community Safety Partnership, Derry City &amp; Strabane District Council, was scheduled for November 2020 but had to be postponed due to COVID 19 Restrictions. It is intended to reschedule in 2021.</p>

5	Drugs	<p>The fifth theme of the Donegal JPC Strategic Plan is drugs, the Drugs sub group have met on a number of occasions in relation to what initiatives could be developed to assist in the fight against drugs. The sub group is aware of the need to avoid duplication. The negative impact that alcohol and drug use has and the knock on effects of alcohol and drug abuse on individuals, families and wider society are regularly highlighted by JPC Members.</p>	<p>The sub group reported to the JPC the need to re-evaluate the role of this sub group and what value it can bring to the implementation of the Strategic Plan. No meetings of the sub group to advance this discussion were possible in 2020 due to the COVID 19 Pandemic.</p>	<p>The JPC continued to support the Donegal Alcohol Forum in the roll out of their programmes and the Safer Socialising Initiative by CAAP LK. A presentation by the National Canine Unit was scheduled for 2020 but was postponed due to COVID 19 restrictions.</p>
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ITEM 2 - Please highlight three key achievements of the JPC during the year and give reasons why these are considered to be significant?

**Achievement 1**

Donegal JPC members were active participants in the 'Community Call' and Covid Response Community Forum during the Covid 19 crisis. Community Gardai and PPN members provided invaluable support throughout with shop & drop, prescription collection, Chef Aid, meal delivery, check in services

**Achievement 2**

The Garda Information Slots on local Radio, which had commenced following a request from Donegal JPC continued in 2020. They became an invaluable medium for informing people who were cocooning or self isolating of the supports and services available to them from An Garda Siochana and other agencies during the Covid 19 crisis.

**Achievement 3**

Donegal JPC successfully lobbied Donegal County Council to purchase a Property Marking Machine and the PPN to also purchased a machine. Delivery of the machines was made in late 2019. Training sessions on the use of the machines commenced in early 2020 and were attended by members of An Garda Siochana, PPN Members and JPC members who had expressed an interest in receiving training on their operation. Unfortunately due to the Covid 19 pandemic additional training had to be postponed. It is intended to resume delivery of training as soon as possible and to formally Launch the Property Marking Programme which would be rolled out throughout the county.

ITEM 3

**Public meetings hosted by the JPC during the year.**

\*Please provide details of the public meeting that the JPC hosted during the year concerning matters affecting the policing of the local authority's administrative area.

Donegal Joint Policing Committee did not hold a formal a public meeting in 2020 due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, however the JPC did participate in Social Inclusion Week 2020 which was delivered through a programme of online events and presentations. This event allowed members of groups to hear about current initiatives as well as potential projects that groups could undertake. The event took the format of online presentations. Among the topics discussed were road safety, cyber crime, fire safety and community supports available to groups and individuals.

ITEM 4

**Record of members and meetings held during the year.**

Please enter the total number of JPC meetings held in the Year **2020**

\*Date of each meeting

14 <sup>th</sup> February 2020	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2020	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
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The JPC Steering Group comprises of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, the Chief Executive of the local authority (or representative) and Senior Garda representative\*

Membership and attendance 2020 is as follows:-

<b>NAME OF MEMBERS (AND TITLE)</b>	<b>ORGANISATION REPRESENTED</b>	<b>NO OF MEETINGS ATTENDED</b>
<b>Steering Group Member</b>		
Chairperson Cllr Gerry McMonagle	Local Authority	3
Vice Chairperson Cllr Barry Sweeny	Local Authority	3
Chief Superintendent Terry McGinn (Or nominated rep)	An Garda Siochana	3
Seamus Neely/John McLaughlin, Chief Executive	DCC Executive	3
Liam Ward, DOS	DCC Executive	3
<b>Other Members</b>		
Pearse Doherty, TD	Oireachtas	
Charlie McConalogue, TD	Oireachtas	
Joe McHugh, TD	Oireachtas	
Padraig MacLochlainn	Oireachtas	
Thomas Pringle, TD	Oireachtas	
Marc McSharry, TD	Oireachtas	
Senator Niall Blaney	Oireachtas	1
Senator Eileen Flynn	Oireachtas	
Clr Kevin Bradley	DCC Member	3
Clr Paul Canning	DCC Member	3
Clr Donal Coyle	DCC Member	3
Clr Gerry Crawford	DCC Member	3
Clr Nicholas Crossan	DCC Member	2
Clr Terry Crossan	DCC Member	3
Clr Liam Doherty	DCC Member	1
Clr Niamh Kennedy	DCC Member	2
Clr Michael McBride	DCC Member	2
Clr Michael McClafferty	DCC Member	3
Clr Noreen McGarvey	DCC Member	3
Clr Michael McMahan	DCC Member	3
Clr Michael Naughton	DCC Member	2
Clr Rena Donaghey (Cathaiorleach DCC)	DCC Member	1
Sgt Patrick M Conway	Gardai	
Chief Supt Terry McGinn	Gardai	3
Joe Boland	PPN	3
Virgina McLoone (Resigned)	PPN	1
Mary McGowan	PPN	2
Dermott McLaughlin	PPN	1
James Trearty	PPN	3
VACANT	PPN	
Billy Banda	PPN	1