



COUNTY KILDARE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Introduction

The following is a report on the work of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee for 2016:

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee (JPC) aims to develop greater consultation, co-operation and synergy on policing and crime issues between an Garda Síochána, Local Authorities and elected local representatives and also facilitate the participation of the community/voluntary sectors in this regard.

The function of the JPC is set out in section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, which states: “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”.



Membership of County Kildare JPC 2016: (33 Members)

There are Thirty Three members of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee. Fifteen Local Authority members. seven Oireachtas members, two members of An Garda Síochána, two Local Authority Officials and seven members from the Community/Voluntary Sector.

Local Authority Elected Members (15)

Martin Miley MCC – Chairperson
Aoife Breslin MCC – Vice Chairperson
Padraig McEvoy MCC
Fintan Brett MCC
Ivan Keatley MCC
Morgan McCabe MCC
Paul Ward MCC
Carmel Kelly MCC
Michael Coleman MCC
Tim Durkan MCC
Anne Breen MCC
Ide Cussen MCC
Mark Lynch MCC
Anthony Larkin MCC
Suzanne Doyle MCC

Oireachtas Elected Members (7)

Deputy Catherine Murphy
Deputy Fiona O’ Loughlin
Deputy Sean O’ Feaghail
Deputy Martin Heydon
Deputy Bernard Durkan,
Deputy James Lawless
Deputy Frank O’ Rourke

Local Authority Officials (2)

Peter Carey, Chief Executive KCC
Peter Minnock, Director of Services

An Garda Síochána (2)

Chief Superintendent Barry McPolin
Superintendent Declan McCarthy

Community/Voluntary (7)

Monica Byrne, Kildare Older Persons Council,
Michael Farrell , Comhairle na nOg
Conor O’ Leary, Muintir na Tire
Stephen Joyce, SW Regional Drugs and Alcohol Task Force
Public Participation Network (PPN), (Note; Representative yet to be appointed)
Emma Berney, Kildare Children & Young People’s Services Committee
Sean Darcy , Celbridge Community Council

Meetings of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

The JPC Committee met four times in 2016;

1. Monday 7th March 2016
2. Tuesday 14th June 2016
3. Monday 24th October 2016
4. Monday 5th December 2016 – Annual Public Meeting

Policing Report

The meetings included the Policing Report as a standing item. The matter of Garda resources was still a major concern for the committee and Chief Superintendent McPolin reported that the pressure from local representatives and members of the Joint Policing Committee was working to secure more resources. In total there were thirty five probational Gardaí appointed in Kildare since the moratorium on recruitment ended in 2015.

Working with and being part of the community is one of the major strengths of the police force. An Garda Síochána have committed to continue to protect and support communities through committed and active collaboration.

Local Information meetings between an Garda Síochána and Municipal

Districts

An Garda Síochána continued to meet with members of each Municipal District throughout 2016. At the annual public meeting in December reports were received from each Municipal District on the workings of these meetings, a common theme emerging from these meetings is that engagement at local level in this manner can and does eliminate problems such as anti-social behaviour and public property damage. The members of each Municipal District noted the importance of these meetings being held “in committee”. The members all stated that the format of these meetings are beneficial as they are an informal exchange of information at a local level.

County Kildare JPC Six Year Strategy 2016 -2021

The County Kildare JPC Six Year Strategy 2016 – 2021 was adopted by the committee at its meeting on 14th June 2016. The Goal of the Strategy focuses on “Safer Communities“ and aims to facilitate and support Kildare as a safer place to live in, while being cognisant of the Policing Plan for the Kildare Division.

The Strategic Plan contains nine Strategic Objectives:

- 1. Garda Resources – to increase the numbers of An Garda Síochána in Kildare in line with national and regional levels.*
- 2. Crime Prevention*
- 3. To focus on anti-social behaviour and street crime – to make our streets and town centres safer through the use of CCTV.*
- 4. To focus on the misuse of drugs, alcohol and related crime.*
- 5. To focus on the protection of wildlife and increase initiatives to respond to cruelty to animals.*
- 6. To increase public safety of newly designed roads and developments across Kildare.*
- 7. To liaise with older people in the county through the Kildare Older Persons Council.*
- 8. To strengthen the relationship between An Garda Síochána and the local community, with a particular focus on children and young people. To strengthen inter-agency relationships and the interagency response to identified issues.*
- 9. To support the local implementation of the National Strategy on domestic, sexual & gender based violence.*

County Kildare Annual Public Meeting – 5th December 2016

The County Kildare Annual Public Meeting took place on Monday 5th December 2016 in the Glenroyal Hotel Maynooth. Members of the public were invited to this meeting and those attending numbered up to fifty and subsequently these members of the public participated in the workshop sessions.



Guest Speaker – Ms. Josephine Feehily

Ms Josephine Feehily, Chairperson of the Policing Authority who was the guest speaker on the night, presented an overview of the work of the Policing Authority and informed the meeting that the role of the Policing Authority is to “oversee the performance of An Garda Síochána in relation to policing services, to promote public awareness of policing matters and to promote and support the continuous improvements in policing in Ireland” . Ms Feehily spoke of the Policing Authorities function in relation to JPC’s which included issuing guidelines for the establishment and maintenance of JPC’s, convening meetings of JPC Chairs and co-ordinating/facilitating the performance of their functions.

Ms Feehily commended County Kildare JPC for its dynamic work and complimented the Six Year Strategy.

Public Discussion

The meeting then convened into a “round table format” where all attendees discussed the matters that they would like to see the Joint Policing Committee address in 2017 and the following issues were an example of the topics raised

- The issue of Garda resources was prevalent from all attendees who called for more resources.
- The attendees called for designated opening times for Garda stations in North Kildare as members voiced their anger at the fact that when they go

to Garda stations during opening hours they can often be closed as Gardaí are out dealing with incidents on the ground.

- There was a call for the re-instatement of Community Gardaí who are viewed as a valuable asset to the community.
- To increase numbers of Garda patrols in Maynooth and co-operation with Maynooth University with regard to anti-social behaviour from students.
- The need for representation from Maynooth Community Council on the JPC.
- A greater emphasis on the issue of street begging.
- There was a call for the upgrade of the radio room in Kildare

In response Chief Superintendent McPolin announced at this meeting that Community Gardaí will finally be delivered for Kildare and that each Garda Station in North Kildare that is not open 24 hours such as Celbridge, Maynooth and Kilcock is to be designated two hours a week to deal with public enquires. Chief Superintendent McPolin stated that another area where improvements are to be made is the upgrade of the radio room in the Kildare Division which will be modernised over the coming year. All calls have to be recorded manually at the moment and with this modernisation the system will be turning electronic and would mean that all calls and incidents recorded will then be given a pulse I.D. number.

This news was broadly welcomed by all and Chief Superintendent McPolin reminded the members and all who attended that these engagements through the work of the JPC strengthens relationships in order to improve responsiveness to community concerns.



Looking ahead to 2017

For 2017, County Kildare Joint Policing Committee looks forward to again aiming to support state agencies, communities and An Garda Síochána to make Kildare a safer place to live and run business.

