

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL



COUNTY KILDARE JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Table of Contents

Message from the Chairperson..... 3

Membership of County Kildare JPC..... 5

Meetings of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee 6

CCTV sub-committee 11

Text Alert Working Group..... 11

Youth Diversion Programme Funding Initiative..... 11

An Garda Síochána and Municipal Districts councillors..... 12

APPENDIX 1 13

APPENDIX 2..... 15

APPENDIX 3..... 16

..... 16



County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Message from the Chairperson

As the chairperson of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee, I welcome the publication of the 2022 Annual Report. This report details the main activities of the committee during a year in which activities largely returned to normal following the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions.

The Joint Policing Committee aims to develop greater consultation and co-operation on policing and crime issues between the Gardaí, the Local Authority, community representatives, relevant agencies and elected public representatives.

The JPC held four meetings during 2022 and all were held in person as previously. The committee was very pleased to return to this format for meetings as easy public accessibility is a key part of the JPC's strategy.

My colleagues and I are conscious of the significant changes being introduced to Garda structures and operations nationally and the committee looks forward to the new model being fully developed. Additionally, the committee is aware of the planned introduction of community safety partnerships in the near future. Linked to this, the committee has been circulated with the revised JPC guidelines and we look forward to implementing them in 2023 and beyond.

I wish to acknowledge the roles of Chief Superintendent Scanlan and his Garda colleagues and their valued service. The dedication of An Garda Síochána was again evident throughout 2022 and the service has the full support of members of the JPC and the wider council in this regard. I also acknowledge the contributions of the members of the JPC and their continuing support. Finally, I wish to thank the Community Section of Kildare County Council for the ongoing facilitation and support of this valuable forum.

Councillor Fintan Brett

Chairperson of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

March 23rd, 2023.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

The following is a report on the work of the County Kildare Joint Policing Committee for 2022.

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, elected local representatives and relevant agencies. The committee facilitates the participation of the community/voluntary sectors in this regard through its membership profile.

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”.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Membership of County Kildare JPC

Kildare Joint Policing Committee Members	
Name:	Representing:
Cllr. Fintan Brett (Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Aoife Breslin (Vice Chairperson)	Elected Member
Cllr. Pádraig McEvoy	Elected Member
Cllr. Ivan Keatley	Elected Member
Cllr. Tim Durkan	Elected Member
Cllr. Brian Dooley	Elected Member
Cllr. Ciara Galvin	Elected Member
Cllr. Nuala Killeen	Elected Member
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell	Elected Member
Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil	Elected Member
Cllr. Chris Pender	Elected Member
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin Healy	Elected Member
Cllr. Anne Connolly	Elected Member
Cllr. Bill Clear	Elected Member
Cllr. Colm Kenny	Elected Member
Dep. Catherine Murphy	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Reada Cronin	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Seán Ó Feargháil	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Patricia Ryan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Martin Heydon	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Bernard Durkan	Oireachtas Member
Dep. James Lawless	Oireachtas Member
Dep. Cathal Berry	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Mark Wall	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin	Oireachtas Member
Sen. Vincent P. Martin	Oireachtas Member
Sonya Kavanagh	Kildare County Council
Chief Supt. John Scanlon	An Garda Síochána
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre
Steven Joyce	SWRDATF
Emma Berney	CYPSC
Joe Burke ¹	Kildare Older Persons' Council
Michael Corcoran	Public Participation Network
John Daly	Public Participation Network

NOTE: There are 37 members of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee: 15 Local Authority members; 11 Oireachtas members; 2 members of An Garda Síochána; 2 Local Authority officials and 7 members from the community/voluntary/agency sector.

¹ Replaced Monica Cox, who retired in June 2022.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Meetings of County Kildare Joint Policing Committee

2022 meetings of the committee

The JPC Committee met four times in 2022 as follows:

1. Monday 7th March
2. Monday 13th June
3. Monday 5th September
4. Monday 5th December

All four quarterly meetings were held in person following on from the lifting of Covid restrictions generally.

See Appendix 1 for attendance details.

Policing Reports

Chief Superintendent John Scanlan and his team presented an overview of the key policing activities for the Kildare Divisions at each of the Kildare JPC Meetings, including quarterly crime analysis, crime prevention and community policing measures, road traffic statistics and details of Garda resources.

The Chief Superintendent and his colleagues responded to questions and additional matters raised in regard to the policing reports from members of the committee at each meeting as required.

Some sample questions and answers and points made during these discussions of the reports are included below.

Q. 1

- The community bus had been an excellent initiative and allowed the Gardaí to undertake actions not previously possible e.g., evacuating a family at short notice in a domestic violence situation and bringing civilian witnesses to court in Dublin
- One community bus was sufficient for now and councillors might be minded to allocate LPT funding to other initiatives in 2022
- Have Gardaí liaised with Local Link to ensure no duplication of existing services?
- How were crimes such as online bullying and intimidation categorised in the statistics?
- 10 new probationer Gardaí had been allocated to Kildare division (eight to Kildare and one each to Naas and Leixlip)

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

- 800 Gardaí would be recruited in a new campaign and Kildare would be seeking its share of these Gardaí when available
- Three further probationers should be available soon (one for each district)
- Were the new Gardaí additional i.e., not simply replacing retirees or transfers?
- In line with the new policing model, a divisional drugs unit will be implemented
- What actions could Gardaí take to prevent fuel thefts, particularly in rural areas/farmyards?
- Could Gardaí assist community groups as far as possible as they restart after two years of inaction in many cases, particularly text alert groups?

Q.2

- Recorded crime in most categories were up significantly which is a major cause for concern
- Was it possible to expand the report to clearly indicate issues such as cybercrime, suicides or online harassment?
- The numbers of drugs offences reported were reduced which seemed to run counter to everyday experience
- Monitoring of persons taking part in drugs rehabilitation programmes was required
- Drug debt intimidation was impacting many communities, including older persons
- Are pubs and clubs targeted, including undercover operations?
- Are most public order offences alcohol-related?
- Is Athy station sharing a vehicle with Kildare due to shortages?
- There should be funding available for respite for families dealing with intimidation issues
- It could be useful to arrange parenting skills/resilience-building courses (a possible project for the Community Safety Innovation Fund in 2023)
- What is current drug squad capacity in Kildare division?
- Could Gardaí liaise with the housing SPC to discuss drugs/social issues in certain locations?
- Is there a breakdown available of males/females in drug detections? The quarters were probably not comparable in real terms as Q1 2021 was still a Covid environment with reduced activity generally
- Most public order offences are alcohol-related
- There are supports available to assist those dealing with drug debt issues, but clearly many affected persons will struggle to report such matters
- There is no shortage of Garda vehicles in Athy station
- Clubs and pubs are routinely monitored for illegal drugs activities and the Ask Angela programme is being rolled out successfully
- Searches produced about a 10% success rate (recent examples given)
- The format of the report would be examined to see if some of the points raised could be incorporated
- Current Garda resources are good, with assistance from CAB as required
- Larger gangs are being targeted both regionally and nationally
- TLOs should contact the local community policing sergeant to discuss issues
- Gardaí can opt to give cautions for first-time drugs offences
- There are two detective sergeants assigned to the drugs squad, with four Gardaí in Kildare and Naas and two in Leixlip.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Q.3

- Recorded crime in most categories seems to be back to pre-Covid levels
- There is significant exposure to the depiction of extreme violence on TV and in media generally and it could be causing issues in society
- Legalisation of drugs must not be considered but every assistance should be provided to addicts and their families
- Can Gardaí indicate any particular drivers for the increase in property crimes?
- There is an approved group of tradespersons available for small jobs based in Allenwood which might assist in addressing bogus traders in some cases
- There is very good work being done in youth diversion and some feedback from the Gardaí on this would be helpful
- Have the Gardaí adequate resources to deal with all issues currently?
- There was a significant increase in violence against women during Covid and this issue remains very important
- Hate crimes appear to be increasing in general
- Instances of accommodation fraud are being reported linked to students attending Maynooth University
- Gardaí should begin reconnecting with community groups in the post-Covid scenario as many of them are only starting to reform
- What guidance is offered to pharmacy staff in the Safe Spaces initiative?
- The numbers of drugs offences recorded seems low for the size of the county
- Is there any liaison with mobile phone companies regarding phone scams?
- Are Gardaí aware of instances of so-called “boy racers” adapting their vehicles post-NCT tests?
- Is it possible to expand the policing report to better capture the range of domestic violence offenses?
- Could Gardaí elaborate on a reported kidnapping in Newbridge?
- Public order issues in Dublin are spilling over the border into Kildare
- Could Gardaí liaise with the housing SPC to discuss drugs/social issues in certain locations? Garda numbers had improved generally in the county with 33 new appointments.
- Any instances of accommodation fraud should be referred directly to Leixlip Gardaí for investigation
- The Protective Services Unit continues to engage with all victims of domestic violence
- Gardaí are not aware of the nature of training provided to pharmacy staff
- Community Gardaí are available to re-establish links with community groups as they restart activities
- There are no reports of cars being adapted post-NCT but Gardaí will follow up on any cases notified to them
- Gardaí cannot comment on matters currently under investigation

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Q.4

- Is it possible to open Maynooth Garda station on a 24-hour basis and/or replace the existing station altogether given the growing population?
- How will the new Garda operational model impact on the existing text alert and community alert groups?
- Would it be possible for community Gardaí to link in with the council's cycling officer with a view to promoting sustainable transport options particularly for students and young people?
- Is it possible to identify the amount of vehicle collisions with pedestrians and cyclists withing the overall numbers?
- Is there an increase in the use of crack cocaine?
- Does the chief superintendent have a particular view of the number of administration-type tasks currently being undertaken by the Gardaí?
- Are Gardaí aware of the level of drug-dealing taking place at Kilcock and other rail stations?
- Are domestic violence incidents included in the overall figures being reported?
- Are the drugs offences figures correct as they seem low compared to apparent widespread abuse of drugs?

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Specific presentations and reports

In addition to the Policing Reports, the JPC hosted several presentations and received updates in line with the objectives of the JPC's adopted Strategic Plan².

Item	Strategy Element	Comment
Community text alert (Standing item)	Objective 2	Service planned to start Q1 2023.
South West Regional Drugs & Alcohol Task Force (Steven Joyce)	Objective 4	Background, role, and activities of the SWRDATF.
Comhairle na nÓg (Maura Littlewood and three young persons)	Objective 8	Structure, membership and work plan of Comhairle.
Community CCTV (Standing item)	Objective 3	Consultant appointed to Clane pilot project. To commence project end 2022.
Policing and community safety- an overview (Dr. Johnny Connolly, University of Limerick)	Objective 8	Review of existing community policing arrangements and future of community safety partnerships.
Community policing initiatives (Inspector Gavin Dunphy)	Objective 8	Update on recent and ongoing community policing initiatives in the district

² See Appendix 2.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

CCTV sub-committee

Co. Kildare JPC has one dedicated sub-committee whose role is to assist with the implementation of Community CCTV schemes as envisaged by the national scheme announced in 2017. The sub-committee is chaired by Cllr. Aoife Breslin. In addition to nominated JPC members, this committee includes relevant Garda personnel and Kildare County Council staff members working in this area.

Kildare County Council has agreed to act as data controller for proposed CCTV feeds. Accordingly, it has prepared a CCTV specification for groups to use to ensure any systems to be installed will be compatible with existing and future traffic management infrastructure. The sub-committee has endorsed this document.

A pilot scheme for Community CCTV was prepared for Clane and this design was approved by the committee and wider JPC. The approved consultant commenced work in late 2022. It is planned that the Clane project will provide a template for other groups wishing to introduce CCTV schemes in their own areas.

Text Alert Working Group

Following a public procurement process in 2021, the council selected the tender of Muintir na Tíre/BeAlert to operate its new countywide message alert service. Unfortunately, a late challenge to the selection process and some other unforeseen delays meant the service did not commence in 2022 as hoped. (An information meeting for existing text alert groups was held in January 2023 and the service has commenced operations).

Youth Diversion Programme Funding Initiative

Local property tax funding of €8,500 per municipal district was allocated by councillors to assist service providers working in the Kildare Garda division with developing and implementing three-year work programmes. The two service providers will be required to present annual reports to the JPC commencing in October 2023.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

An Garda Síochána and Municipal Districts councillors

Locally based representatives of An Garda Síochána meet with members of each of the five Municipal Districts and the JPC community and agency representatives. In addition, local community development workers, area engineers and Directors of Service are invited to sit in on these meetings as needs be. These meetings take place on a quarterly basis linked to the formal JPC meetings. This process continued in 2022. Discussions at this local level can and does help eliminate problems such as anti-social behaviour and damage to public property. Councillors will often have access to information that An Garda Síochána may not have, or they may be in contact with residents more frequently. Councillors regard these meetings as a vital part of their engagement with An Garda Síochána.

The members of each Municipal District have stressed the importance of these meetings being held without press or public attendance. The members believe that the formats of these meetings are beneficial as they are an informal exchange of essential information at a local level.

The essential role of An Garda Síochána as frontline community support was again in evidence in 2022 and continued to receive favourable comment from all elected members throughout the year at meetings.

MD meetings dates 2022

	Athy	Clane/Maynooth	Celbridge/Leixlip	Naas	Kildare/Newbridge
Q.1	21 st Mar.	4 th Mar.	14 th Mar.	8 th Mar.	16 th Mar.
Q.2	20 th June	3 rd June	17 th June	14 th June	15 th June
Q.3	19 th Sep.	2 nd Sep.	16 th Sep.	13 th Sep.	21 st Sep.
Q.4	21 st Nov.	8 th Nov.	18 th Nov.	8 th Nov.	16 th Nov.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

APPENDIX 1

Record of members and meetings held 2022.

Number of meetings held: Four.

Dates of meetings: 7th March; 13th June; 5th September; 5th December.

Name of member (and title)	Organisation represented	Number of meetings attended
Steering Group		
<i>Chairperson</i> Cllr. Fintan Brett		4
Ch. Supt. John Scanlan	An Garda Síochána	1
Sonya Kavanagh	Kildare County Council	4
Elected Members		
<i>Vice-chairperson</i> Cllr. Aoife Breslin		1
Cllr. Padraig McEvoy		4
Cllr. Ivan Keatley		0
Cllr. Tim Durkan		3
Dep. Catherine Murphy		0
Dep. Reada Cronin		3
Dep. Séan Ó Fearghaíl		0
Dep. Cathal Berry		1
Dep. Martin Heydon		0
Dep. Bernard Durkan		2
Dep. James Lawless		0
Dep. Patricia Ryan		2
Sen. Fiona O'Loughlin		1
Sen. Mark Wall		0
Sen. Vincent Martin		2
Cllr. Brian Dooley		0
Cllr. Ciara Galvin		2
Cllr. Nuala Killeen		1
Cllr. Bernard Caldwell		1
Cllr. Naoise Ó Cearúil		2
Cllr. Chris Pender		1
Cllr. Fiona McLoughlin Healy		3
Cllr. Anne Connolly		4
Cllr. Bill Clear		2
Cllr. Colm Kenny		1

Cont'd on next page.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

Name of members (and title)	Organisation represented	Number of meetings attended
Supt. Oliver Henry	An Garda Síochána	4
Marian Higgins	Kildare County Council	4
Conor O'Leary	Muintir na Tíre	3
Steven Joyce	SWRDATAF	3
Maura Littlewood	Comhairle na nÓg	3
Emma Berney	CYPSC	0
Monica Cox ³	Older Person's Council	2
Joe Burke ⁴	Older Person's Council	0
John Daly	PPN	1
Michael Corcoran	PPN	4

³ Retired in June 2022; only two attendances possible.

⁴ Replaced Monica Cox; only one attendance possible.

APPENDIX 2

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Strategic Plan

The plan was adopted in June 2016. The plan's primary goal is to support safer communities by focusing on nine strategic objectives to support enhanced policing and crime prevention.

These objectives are:

1. Garda resources.
2. Crime prevention – assignment of Gardaí to specialist posts such as Community Gardaí, drugs specialists etc.
3. Anti-social behaviour and street crime.
4. Misuse of drugs, alcohol, and related crime.
5. Wildlife protection and cruelty to animals.
6. To increase public safety of newly designed roads and developments across Kildare – An Garda Síochána and Kildare County Council working in partnership.
7. To liaise with older people in the county through the Older Person's Council.
8. To strengthen the relationship between An Garda Síochána and the local community.
9. To support the local implementation of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

The Joint Policing Committee aims to develop greater consultation and co-operation on policing and crime issues between the Gardaí, the local authority, community representatives, agencies and elected public representatives.

County Kildare Joint Policing Committee Annual Report 2022

APPENDIX 3

**NOTE: Copies of all policing reports, annual reports, minutes of meetings and details of events etc. are available for consultation at:
www.kildarejointpolicing.ie**

Further information on joint policing committees is available at:

www.kildarejointpolicing.ie

www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Joint_Policing_Committees

www.policingauthority.ie/en/joint-policing-committees

<https://www.garda.ie/en/Crime-Prevention/Community-engagement/>