

Annual Report of County Laois Joint Policing Committee 2021

A. Summary of progress in implementation of Laois County JPC Strategy Work Plan 2021

	Strategic Objectives	Actions	Challenges/Barriers encountered	Actions taken and progress achieved during 2021
1	Community Engagement & Communication	Continue to promote Crime Prevention initiatives in the county.		Crime Prevention Officer well established and development of processes ongoing.
		Identify priority areas for re-launching community crime prevention schemes or developing new ones.		Crime Prevention Officer in place and processes in place.
		Make available relevant crime prevention information to groups and also in respect of community schemes available		Crime Prevention Officer in place. Ongoing through Local Media and via Community Alert/Neighbourhood Watch Schemes throughout the County.
		Coordinate networking of Community Alert Groups.	Covid-19 disruption	Community Alert Working Group established, Quarterly meetings disrupted due to Covid-19.
		Convene District Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch Meetings with An Garda Siochana and the Local Authority at least once per annum.	Covid-19 disruption	Working Group meetings ongoing.
		Reintroduce and reinvigorate Community Gardaí in strategic locations in Laois.		Community Policing Unit reintroduced in Portlaoise

		Establish a Joint Policing Committee web page / portal to disseminate crime prevention and other information to the public.		<p>Dedicated page to Laois JPC on www.laois.ie</p> <p>Laois Co. Co. in regular contact with Garda Press Office in relation to keeping up to date links on Council's website – JPC page currently being updated.</p> <p>All relevant crime prevention advice on Garda Laois Offaly Facebook page</p>
2	Crime Prevention & Education	Promote Crime Prevention initiatives in the County.		<p>Crime Prevention Officer has processes in place.</p> <p>Local Media, by way of print, social media, podcasts and Crime call</p>
		Promote supports for vulnerable people at home, through promotion of Seniors Alert and other schemes		<p>Schemes promoted by all stakeholders. Information received disseminated to all members on an on-going basis. Feedback/concerns from members of our older/vulnerable communities are passed to relevant reps on boards and committees for discussion. All PPN events run throughout the year cater for all members of our society eg CRP, Irish Sign Language and "Access for All" Disability Awareness Workshop. PPN reps and members are active in Community Alert meetings – Muintir na Tire</p> <p>CPO works with all stakeholders to raise awareness when tasked</p>

		Support engagement of young people with Juvenile Liaison system, Youth Diversion Projects and/or miscellaneous diversion programmes operated by the local Sports Partnership	Covid-19 disruption	Local Authority represented on Advisory committees of both Garda GYDP's in Laois. Community Coaching and Street Leagues programmes supported annually at local level by both An Garda Siochana and the local authority.
		Support vulnerable groups, diverse and/or marginalized communities to engage with policing authorities		Regular engagement with Laois Traveller Action Group and local communities in marginalised areas in Laois by both An Garda Siochana and the local authority. Child Protection Unit and Crime Prevention Office in place and involved.
		Commence development of education awareness programmes for primary and secondary schools in respect of crime prevention	Covid-19 disruption	Schools programme in place.
		Collaborate with other agencies to develop proactive ways to heighten public awareness of the potential harm of cyber crime		Ongoing collaboration in place.
3	Address Priority Crime Related Issues	Promote the 'Dial to Stop Drug Dealing' campaign and contact details.	Covid-19 disruption	An Inspector appointed to the Midland Regional Drug and Alcohol Task Force and process in place. MRDATF continued to promote the Dial to Stop Drug Dealing Campaign at regional/local events and the range of funded drug and alcohol

				prevention & treatments support services available in County Laois
		Encourage support for victims of crime and engage with victim support organisations.		Victims Support Office in place in addition to engagement by both regular and Detective Branch personnel. Operation Faoiseamh in operation since March 2020, concentrating on Victims of Domestic Violence.
		Housing Department have commenced review of the Anti-social Behavior Policy		Housing Dept will consult with the JPC and AGS during the review process
4	Road Safety, Litter and Emergency Management	Encourage ongoing commitment of all parties to the Working Together Safely Group.	Covid disruption	The Working Together Safely Group did not convene last year due to impact of Covid-19.
		Promotion of national and local Road Safety campaigns and educational initiatives.		A local road safety campaign promoting social distancing was organised and an internal competition was held for a slogan for the promotion. The local Authority works annually with the Road Safety Authority to promote national road safety campaign, such as check and fit, national slow down day.
		Work collaboratively to commence development of measures to address illegal dumping in the County		Implementation continued of the Litter Management Plan 2018-2020 in relation to tackling illegal litter around the county, and work commenced of the preparation of a new Plan.

				A no. of initiatives and clean ups have also been undertaken in response to illegal dumping in the county. The local authority is precluded from using CCTV to detect such activity at present, due to recent investigations and opinions of the Commissioner for Data Protection. It will be necessary for the legislation to be updated to allow the use of CCTV by local authorities to facilitate the prevention, investigation, detection and prosecution of the offence of illegal dumping.
		Engagement by all parties with Major Emergency initiatives including Severe Weather Inter-Agency Committee		Engagement ongoing.

B. Key Achievements of Laois JPC in 2021

- Laois County JPC collaboratively prepared and adopted its first Strategy in 2016, containing a number of strategic objectives across several key areas of work:
 - Community Engagement and Communication
 - Crime Prevention
 - Address Crime related issues
 - Road Safety, Litter and Emergency Management
 - Community CCTV
- The Federation of CCTV Groups increased its membership and there are now 15 members of the Federation.
- Garda Commissioner Drew Harris attended the June meeting of the JPC. He made a presentation to the members on the new Operating Model of AGS, outlining the efficiencies and benefits that will accrue as a result of implementation, and took questions afterwards.

- During 2021, 3 Working Groups of the JPC were established at Municipal District Level. 2 meetings per MD were held, in May 2021 and September 2021.

C. Public Meetings of Laois County JPC

Laois County JPC hosted one public meeting last year, on 15th November 2021. All meetings of Laois County JPC are held in public, however this meeting invited submissions/questions from the public, allowing members of the public to participate in certain parts of the meeting.