



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

Date: 15 May 2020

Venue: Video Conference

Attendance

Authority: Bob Collins (Chairperson), Vicky Conway, Pat Costello, Deborah Donnelly, Judith Gillespie, Valerie Judge, Paul Mageean, Moling Ryan.

Secretary: Aileen Healy

Staff of the Authority: Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Margaret Tumelty, Cormac Keating

1. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

The draft agenda was approved. No conflicts of interest were declared in relation to any of the matters for discussion.

The Chairperson updated Members on his recent engagements with the Commissioner including in relation to COVID-19 policing and plans for the next intake of Garda recruits, in relation to which a detailed specification for their training has been requested.

The Chairperson clarified that the decision of 29 April in respect of the member of the Garda Síochána Audit Committee to be appointed under Section 44 (2) (a) would take effect when a Deputy Commissioner with responsibility for governance would be appointed from the forthcoming competition. Until then the Chief Administrative Officer will continue to be a member of the Audit Committee.

2. Update on Covid 19 Policing Oversight

The Chief Executive briefed Members on the approach to preparing the next report to the Minister on the Authority's oversight of COVID-19 policing. Matters for inclusion in the report were discussed, including:

- Reporting from the Garda Síochána ('GS') on the use of additional powers under the public health regulations. Members reviewed the most recent reports received and agreed that the information provided was appropriate for inclusion in the Authority's next report in the form presented. It was noted however that not all of the data requested by the Authority is being received at all or on a sufficiently timely basis to facilitate the Authority's oversight reporting and, despite continuing efforts, difficulties remain in this regard. Members emphasised that full reporting of the use of all additional powers under the regulations is essential and requested clarification regarding some apparent inconsistencies in the data received to date and the patterns of data on GS activities.
- The importance of ethnicity as a factor for analysis of the data in order to comply with human rights obligations;
- The GS policy on use of personal protective equipment (PPE) by the GS both for the protection of Garda Members and from a public safety dimension;
- Clarification required regarding the apparent inconsistency in the policing of protests, and

- Continuing concern regarding the deployment of armed Gardaí at COVID-19 checkpoints.

The Chief Executive outlined additional activities that are proposed to deepen the Authority's oversight of COVID and to resume normal oversight activities over the coming weeks including some site visits, subject to Health and Safety considerations, and attendance at PAF and other meetings.

3. Other Business

Members noted that the annual Garda Memorial Day to remember Gardaí who died on duty, would be held on 16 May with a small representative attendance.