

Annual Report 2020

Monaghan Joint Policing Committee



Presented for approval at Co Monaghan JPC meeting on 23rd March 2021

Annual Report of Monaghan Joint Policing Committee for year: 2020

Overview

2020 was a difficult year in which to hold meetings, and especially to engage with the public, due to the emergence of the Coronavirus pandemic in March which continued for the rest of the year. This made it impossible to hold a public meeting during 2020.

Two Committee meetings were held; one before the Covid outbreak in February, and one between the first and second lockdowns in November.

The February meeting saw the adoption of the final annual workplan under the current Strategic Plan (2015-2020). While we may not have been able to deliver on the public meeting, we still managed to keep active and move forward on many fronts.

Projects

The JPC continued to run the following initiatives during 2020:

Property Marking:

The arrival of Covid-19 into Ireland made it difficult for community groups to organise community days where people could bring in their items to be marked, so we changed the focus of the initiative to prioritise tradespeople, who could be visited individually by a member of An Garda Síochána to mark their tools etc. As many tradespeople were unable to work during the lockdown, they took advantage of the down time to have their tools marked.

Monaghan Community Alerts:

The county-wide community alert scheme now has over 4,300 users. It sent out 170 messages from An Garda Síochána during 2020, and a further 22 from Monaghan County Council. As the app allows subscribers to respond 'yes' or 'no' to messages, it was an invaluable asset in distributing age friendly cocooning packs and other services during the pandemic.

Additional features were developed on the app, with financial assistance from the Public Sector Innovation Fund. It is now possible to send messages to users within a given radius of a selected location. We see this as being a potentially lifesaving feature in the event of a person going missing, as it will enable the Gardai to alert everyone within a chosen radius of the last known location of the person.

During 2020 we have given assistance to a number of other JPC's who are considering setting up a similar all-county messaging system, notably we have delivered a presentation to Meath JPC, and assisted Kildare JPC with preparing their tender documents.

CCTV Steering Committee

During 2020, under the guidance of Monaghan County Council's GDPR Officer, the JPC set up a CCTV Steering Group to oversee all matters related to CCTV. The steering committee developed a draft CCTV policy, which was adopted at the November JPC meeting.

All requests to set up CCTV schemes which monitor public areas must be approved by the JPC before being sent to the Garda Commissioner for final approval. It was therefore a very important and necessary piece of work for the JPC to have a policy in place which lays down how it will handle CCTV requests.

Road Safety High Visibility Campaign

County Monaghan Joint Policing Committee and Monaghan County Council Roads Section reminded all road users of the importance of remaining safe at all times on our roads. It is important for cyclists, pedestrians and motor cyclists to be seen from a distance by wearing high-visibility or other reflective or fluorescent clothing.

Pictured below is Cllr Brian McKenna, Chairman of County Monaghan Joint Policing Committee at the launch of the Road Safety High Visibility campaign, with Adrian O'Sullivan, Road Safety Officer, Monaghan County Council (picture Rory Geary, Northern Standard



Visit by Commissioner Drew Harris

Garda Commissioner Drew Harris addressed the JPC in February 2020, to explain the new operational model which will see Monaghan become part of a three county district which will include Cavan and Louth, to have headquarters in Drogheda.

Commissioner Harris heard the concerns of the Committee regarding border activity, particularly post Brexit, and that a greater distancing of the district headquarters from the border may be in opportune at this time.

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

	Strategic Objectives	Summary of actions taken & progress achieved during the year, and any significant difficulties which were encountered	Summary of advice given by the JPC to local authority/Gardai, specific recommendations made	Results of advice given – feedback received from LA/ Gardai
	High priority objectives			
1	Policing Communities Co-ordinate community events into an overall Migrant Integration Strategy	Funding secured by Monaghan County Council to deliver ‘Monaghan Together Unique and United’ 2 year project	n/a	n/a
2	Crime Prevention Continue to improve Monaghan Community Alerts initiative	€20,000 investment from Public Sector Innovation Fund enabled new functionalities to be added, including geolocation of subscribers, and targeting of messages to a radius of a point location	n/a	n/a
	Other Objectives			
	To use the high media profile of the JPC to raise public awareness of issues of high priority in the county	Local media attended both JPC meetings and gave prominent coverage to all issues covered for a number of weeks following the meetings		
	To be an effective voice			

ITEM 2 – Highlight 3 key achievements of the JPC during the year & explain why they are considered to be significant

Adoption of CCTV policy - This will ensure that the JPC handles all issues around CCTV in an efficient and effective manner, and in line with GDPR.

Addition of geo location functionality to Community Alerts app. This enables the app to plot the users on a map of the county for the first time. It is now possible for the Gardai to pick a point on the map and extend a circle out from that point, then send a message to all users within that circle, regardless of what Community Alert group they belong to. This feature may be valuable in the case of someone going missing, allowing the Gardai to alert everyone within a 5km or 10km radius of the location they were last seen, for example, and could be a critical tool in a case where time is of the essence to ensure a positive outcome.

ITEM 3 –Details of public meetings held during the year

No public meetings held in 2020 due to Covid 19 pandemic

ITEM 4 – Record of members and meetings held during the year

Total number of meetings held:

2 meetings held: 11/02/2020; 10/11/2020

Attendance of Members:

Name	Organisation	Number of meetings attended (2 meetings held in 2020)
ClIr Raymond Aughey	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Cathy Bennett	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Aidan Campbell	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Colm Carthy	Monaghan County Council	1
ClIr Aoife McCooney	Monaghan County Council	1
ClIr Richard Truell	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Sean Gilliland	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Noel Keelan	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr David Maxwell	Monaghan County Council	1
ClIr Hugh McElvaney	Monaghan County Council	1
ClIr Brian McKenna	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr P.J. O’Hanlon	Monaghan County Council	2
ClIr Pat Treanor	Monaghan County Council	2

Ms. Edel Fitzsimons	Community Rep	2
Mr. P.J. Harte	Community Rep	1
Mr. Michael Watters	Community Rep	1
Ms Linda Moore	Community Rep	1
Ms Siobhan McKenna	Community Rep	2
Mr Alan Johnston	Community Rep	2
Chief Supt. John O'Reilly (Retired)	Garda	1
Chief Supt. Aidan Glacken	Garda	1
Supt. Fergus Treanor (Retired)	Garda	1
Supt. Gareth Walsh	Garda	1
Insp Kenneth Coughlan	Garda	-
Supt. Pat O'Connell	Garda	2
Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D.	Oireachtas	0
Senator Robbie Gallagher	Oireachtas	0
Mr. Cathal Flynn, Director of Service	Monaghan County Council	2
Ms. Carol Lambe	Monaghan County Council	2
Chief Exec., Mr Eamonn O'Sullivan	Monaghan County Council	1

Meetings Administration:

Carmel Thornton	Monaghan County Council	2
Mary McGarvey	Monaghan County Council	2