

Annual Report 2019

Monaghan Joint Policing Committee



Approved at Co Monaghan JPC meeting on 11 February 2020

Annual Report of Monaghan Joint Policing Committee for year: 2019

Overview

2019 was an election year for local authorities, which meant that all committees set up under the local authorities were dissolved in May, and reformed during the summer/ autumn. This included the JPC.

In addition to implementing the JPC's work programme, the workplan for 2019 therefore also included dissolving the JPC, finding new representatives through a structured process, providing the new Committee with induction on the work of JPCs in general as well as introducing them to the 6-year Strategic Plan developed by the previous JPC. As this document is now mid-way through its cycle, we took the opportunity to use the appointment of a new JPC to facilitate the new Committee to carry out a review of the document. This enabled them to familiarise themselves with the Plan, and also to put their own touch on it where they wished.

Projects

The JPC enjoyed notable success during 2019 with a new project, Monaghan Community Alerts, which was launched in April. This saw the coming together of Monaghan Co Co, An Garda Síochána and all 29 Community Alert groups in the county to create one county-wide Community Messaging service, which the Gardai use to get alerts out to almost 4,000 subscribers in every corner of the county. The service uses the Komeer app, but users can still receive messages by text if they prefer. Monaghan County Council covers the cost of the service. The local communities still retain control of their databases, and can issue messages to their local subscribers in their own name, so the scheme has the potential to become a powerful communication tool for communities as well as for the Gardai and the Council. The project has received funding from the Public Sector Innovation Fund to develop further functionality, which will be launched in early 2020.

The JPC's very successful teen anti-alcohol campaign continues to be delivered in the run-up to the Junior Cert results each year. This year, some youth groups and schools in neighbouring counties also used our message to deliver their own version of the campaign. In response to a request from schools to expand the programme to reach a younger age group, we reached out again to Comhairle na nOg, who helped to design the initial programme, and asked them to advise on how to approach designing a programme to make an impact on 12-14 year olds. Comhairle presented their recommendations to the JPC's Policing Communities sub-committee, and their ideas have been used by CYPSE to develop a new peer-led drug and alcohol awareness programme, which is to be rolled out in 2020.

One of our previous projects, the Property Marking Scheme, which is still running successfully, is now gaining traction at a national level. The national charity behind the procurement of the marking machines and signage received a Social Entrepreneurs Ireland bursary, which will help them to roll out the scheme throughout the county. 14 counties have now schemes in place, and are using the procedures and materials devised by Monaghan JPC to run their schemes. Over Christmas, the first pieces of stolen property were recovered which had been marked through the Scheme. The reading of the Eircodes enabled the Gardai to return two bikes promptly to their very relieved owner.

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	<p>Work in the county to address teenage drinking continues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prove It’s Me ID Campaign – initiative aimed to reduce false IDs among young people and to prevent alcohol abuse with the support of license premises and vintners. - Don’t Pour Your Dreams Away involves delivering a message directly into the schools in the week leading up to the release of the Junior Cert results. <p>Both programmes are delivered via a collaborative approach, involving a large number of stakeholders and agencies, and using the relationships built through the JPC to deliver practical interventions on the ground.</p>	<p>Acting on advice of JPC, it was agreed to broaden the campaign and deliver to a younger age group.</p>	<p>Comhairle na nOg were asked to consider how to adapt the current Junior cert programme to target 1st and 2nd years. They presented their recommendations to the JPC sub committee in April 2019.</p>

		<p>CCTV for Monaghan town centre – initially delayed in 2018 due to GDPR concerns on the part of the Local Authority. Successful application made in 2019</p> <p>JPC collaborated to bring the Lithuanian community together with Monaghan County Museum and others to organise an event to mark Lithuanian Statehood Day – in a civic space used by the general community, and in an event publicised to the general community. This was a big step for the Lithuanian community in reaching out to the wider population</p>	<p>Due to change in circumstances of An Garda Siochana (Comms room moved to regional HQ), the equipment required had to be re-designed and the scheme re-presented to the JPC in December 2019.</p> <p>The event was a huge success, and it has been agreed to increase the number of activities of this nature in the county</p>	<p>As a result of their recommendations, CYPSE is now designing a peer education programme which will be rolled out in 2020</p> <p>The Municipal District now has more funding available than when the scheme was originally designed, so it took the opportunity to represent a larger scheme for more cameras than originally planned, taking into account the feedback from the public consultation for the original scheme. This has been approved by the JPC, and is now gone to Garda HQ for sign-off.</p> <p>MCC pursued funding for a Migrant Integration Officer, who is to be appointed in 2020. A key part of their work will be to support migrant communities to hold events such as Lithuanian Statehood Day</p>
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2	Crime Prevention	<p>Continued operation of the Property Marking Scheme. Machine has been out constantly all year, to community groups, IFA, and directly to local businesses, including a plant hire company</p> <p>County-wide Garda Alerts messaging service launched, co-ordinating all 26 local text alert groups into one streamlined service, to support the local groups, which were struggling under the administrative weight of GDPR, and to simplify the sending out of messages from the Garda perspective</p>	<p>JPC recommend a continued support of the scheme</p> <p>Project grew from JPC's priority action to extend Community Alert over the entire county</p>	<p>Gardai report a marked decrease in theft across Co Monaghan</p> <p>Recovery of first marked items in December 2019 – instantly reunited with their rightful owner.</p> <p>Garda report the system is much easier to use than having to handle separate messaging procedures for each group. As a result, they are sending more messages out and engaging more with the public.</p>
	Other Objectives			
	To use the high media profile of the JPC to raise public awareness of issues of high priority in the county	<p>Presentations were delivered by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Criminal Assets Bureau – Chief Supt. Patrick Clavin 2. Garda Cyber Crime Unit - Detective Sergeant Adrian Kelly 3. MCC Housing Section presented the Revised Anti Social Behavior Policy 	<p>The issues raised in the presentations by the speakers received significant coverage by the local media, raising awareness of their work, and encouraging people to make contact.</p>	
	To be an effective voice	<p>No opportunities arose during 2019 to exercise this function</p>		

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

The new Monaghan Community Alerts, launched on 25th April, has been an outstanding success. All 29 local community alert and community text alert groups have signed up to the service and have taken the opportunity to update their subscriber lists to ensure they are compliant with GDPR. The all-county nature of the scheme means that people living in areas of the county which do not currently have an active community alert group can also sign up, which means that for the first time they can receive Garda alerts about crime activity in their area.

The system is very easy to use: any garda can issue an alert simply by sending an email to a designated Komeer email address. The number of messages being sent out by the Gardai rose from less than one a month under the old text alert system to almost daily with the new system.

Each local group can also send messages to their local subscribers, making the system a powerful community communication tool. Monaghan County Council, which is underwriting the cost of the scheme, can also send messages out via the system. A unique feature of the app is that subscribers can respond to messages, which opens up a world of possibilities for consultations, investigations etc. (eg, 'have you seen this man?'). Monaghan County Council and the local groups used this response feature to roll out a free smoke alarms scheme. By asking subscribers to 'click yes if you want an alarm', group admins had an instant list of names of people who wished to avail of the offer, and could then follow up with these people when the alarms arrived.

The innovation of the scheme was recognised by the Dept of Public Sector Reform, which awarded us funding from the Public Sector Innovation Fund to develop further functionality within the app, so that more services can be rolled out through the app. These will be launched in early 2020.

The property marking scheme also continues to be a fantastic success. The machine has been out constantly, with community groups and sports clubs organising marking events in their areas. The IFA has also been supportive. The JPC has advised several other JPC's on setting up their own scheme, and there are now 12 other counties operating schemes. All are using the same signage, which is provided by the national charity, Property Marking Ireland, which in October won a bursary from Social Entrepreneurs Ireland to help them to grow the project. The video made by SEI for the occasion was made in Monaghan. The ordering system used by Property Marking Ireland for the signs and stickers was designed by Monaghan Co Co., as is the Operators Manual for the machines.

The decision by the JPC to once again expand its 'Don't Pour Your Dreams Away' campaign, this time to target a younger audience, has been borne out by the recently published WHO report into teenage drinking behaviours which once again listed Ireland as one of the worst countries in the world for binge drinking amongst adolescents. Research also shows that almost 50% of those who drink alcohol before the age of 14 go on to develop a dependency on alcohol.

Following a request in October 2018 to Comhairle na nOg to advise the JPC in how to design an intervention to reach 1st and 2nd years, Comhairle presented their ideas to the JPC's Policing Communities sub-committee in April 2019. These ideas were taken up by CYPSE and have been developed into a peer education programme, which will be rolled out from 2020 onwards.

ITEM 3 –Details of public meetings held during the year

A public meeting of Co Monaghan JPC was held on 30 January 2019 in the Iontas Centre, Castleblayney. Detective Inspector Brian Roberts from the Drugs & Organised Crime Bureau was the guest speaker.

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

Total number of meetings held:

Eight (including sub-committee meetings)

Meeting dates:

Five County JPC meetings: 30/01/2019; 05/03/2019; 25/04/2019; 11/10/2019; 10/12/2019
One Strategic Plan Review Workshop: 13/11/2019
One Crime Prevention sub committee meetings: 09/04/2019
One Policing Communities sub committee meetings: 11/04/2019

Steering Group Membership:

** ceased membership following Local Elections held in May 2019

new member following re-establishment of JPC committee following Local Elections May 2019

Name	Organisation	Number of meetings attended (6 meetings held in 2019)
Clr Raymond Aughey	Monaghan County Council	5
Clr Cathy Bennett	Monaghan County Council	4
Clr Aidan Campbell	Monaghan County Council	5
**Clr Paudge Connolly	Monaghan County Council	2
**Clr Seamus Coyle	Monaghan County Council	1
**Clr Jackie Crowe	Monaghan County Council	2
##Clr Colm Carthy	Monaghan County Council	2
##Clr Aoife McCooley	Monaghan County Council	3
##Clr Richard Truell	Monaghan County Council	0
Clr Sean Gilliland	Monaghan County Council	2
Clr Noel Keelan	Monaghan County Council	4
Clr David Maxwell	Monaghan County Council	5
Clr Hugh McElvaney	Monaghan County Council	4
Clr Brian McKenna	Monaghan County Council	5
Clr P.J. O'Hanlon	Monaghan County Council	5
Clr Pat Treanor	Monaghan County Council	6
Ms. Edel Fitzsimons	Community Rep	5
Mr. P.J. Harte	Community Rep	6
Mr. Michael Watters	Community Rep	2
Ms Linda Moore	Community Rep	2
Ms Siobhan McKenna	Community Rep	2
Mr Alan Johnston	Community Rep	3
**Mr. Eugene Treanor	Community Rep	1
**Mr. Brendan McNally	Community Rep	1
Chief Supt. John O'Reilly	Garda	5
Supt. Fergus Treanor	Garda	4
Insp Kenneth Coughlan	Garda	5
**Supt. Noel Cunningham	Garda	2
**Insp Pat O'Connell	Garda	1

Ms. Heather Humphreys, T.D.	Oireachtas	1
Mr. Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin, T.D.	Oireachtas	1
**Ms. Niamh Smyth T.D.	Oireachtas	0
Mr. Cathal Flynn	Monaghan County Council	5
Ms. Carol Lambe	Monaghan County Council	5
Carmel Thornton	Monaghan County Council	5
Mary McGarvey	Monaghan County Council	4