



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes of Meeting of the Garda Organisation Development Committee

Date: 5 December 2022

Venue: Online Meeting

Part A – Committee Meeting

Attendance

Authority: Paul Mageean (Chair), Elaine Byrne, Donal De Buitléir, Valerie Judge

Secretary: Michal Alfasi-Hanley

Executive: Helen Hall (CEO), Cormac Keating, Margaret Tumelty, Mark Nother, David Murphy

Apologies: Aoife Clabby

1. Closed Session

The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised.

2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

- There were no declarations of interest from the members in respect of any of the agenda items.
- The Chair noted that part A of the meeting will end at 10.30 with part B commencing at 11, to facilitate Donal's participation in the engagement around the Policing Plan
- The Chair noted the excellent quality of papers provided.

3. Consent agenda item

The minutes of the previous meeting (27 October 2022) were approved.

4. Policing Plan Performance

- Helen Hall provided an update on the development of the Policing Plan for 2023. It was further noted that the Policing Plan is not finalised to the extent the Authority anticipated at its meeting last week. In particular, there is still a lack of clarity as to how the targets are achieved.
- Specific issues which were highlighted in the Executive Review are staffing at GISC, the governance around the new alcohol detecting devices, delays in the next phase of the Schengen project, Forensic Science Ireland (have had to prompt Garda in relation to fingerprint form submissions and Garda Vote).
- The members noted that although the GS was behind profile in October, supplementary funding was requested.

- Member further noted that overtime is €21.4 million over profile due to operational demands and under-staffing.
- Members referred to Portlaoise accommodation issues and queried about the estate situation nationwide. It was noted by the Executive that the GS CAO committed to provide the Authority a report on the GS Estate Management, however this was not provided.

ACTION: The Secretary to engage with PALO in relation to the Estate Management Report.
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5. Diversity

- The Executive provided a verbal update in relation to the Diversity Forum, noting that arrangements are made to have the 'Forum-GS Away Day' in late January or early February, with a preparation meeting between AC Hilman and members of the Forum to take place in advance.
- The Executive highlighted the following, based on information gathered from the Policing Performance Report, the Commissioner's Report and information received within GAR requests:
 - Online hate crime training – 60% uptake.
 - Hate Crime Recording – Clarity needed.
 - GS Online Diversity survey – although a GAR request was made, this was not provided yet.
 - The progress in merging the internal facing and external facing strategies was mentioned. It was further noted that Diversity should be integrated in the whole organisation, not being specific to certain units.
 - Internship Programme – Lessons learned.
 - Progress on transitioning interns into Garda Members.
- It was agreed to address all the above at part B of the meeting.

6. Human Rights

- The Executive highlighted the following based on recent engagement with the GS Human Rights Unit (GSHRU), information gathered from the Policing Performance Report and from the Commissioner's Report:
 - It appears that the GSHRU is focused on actions listed in the strategy and advising other units.
 - The Unit has recruitment difficulties and is under staffed.
 - Silo nature to the work of the Unit.
- It was agreed to address the above at part B of the meeting, as well as:
 - How well the Human Right Strategy does imbed human rights within the organisation?
 - To what extent the Human Rights training received in the Garda College has an impact on the behaviours of Garda members in their everyday policing and those receiving policing services?
- The members further noticed the inability of the Unit to monitor developments in the court.

7. Committee Administration

- The members reviewed the Committee's ToR and consideration was given to the following:
 - Whether or not to add Human Rights
 - Focus on the enablers – ICT, Finance, and Estate.

- Focus on Garda Integrity
- It was agreed that the agenda for 2023 Committee meetings will include 2 items, to allow more focus and a thorough engagement with the GS.
- It was further noted that early engagement with the GS in relation to the resources letter is useful.

8. Executive updates on oversight activity

Garda Integrity

- The Executive provided a briefing on Garda integrity matters, based on information gathered from the Policing Performance Report, the Commissioner's Report and information received within GAR requests. The following points were highlighted:
 - Legislation for drug testing approved, but no information as to the timeline.
 - High amount of suspensions over 2 year old.
 - 3 suspensions lifted and the Garda Members were redeployed into a "*Suitable non-public facing role...*". It was agreed to address this at part B of the meeting.
 - A recent report by Transparency International Ireland (TII) noted that financial transparency in the GS is an issue.
- The Executive further noted that although the 'high level governance framework for the ACU' is marked as complete in the Joint implementation report, the document was not shared with the Authority within GAR request 769. The reason provided was that the GS are currently reviewing governance structures in preparation for the PSCS Bill.
- The members also queried at some stage does carrying over 100 suspensions is going to affect the performance of the organisation.
- The members further noted that there is a need for a broader discussion in relation to suspensions and retirement/redundancies.

9. GAR requests and Administration

Code of Ethics

- The 2nd report on the CoE effectiveness review was received from the GS. It was noted that the report is missing information and a subsequent GAR request was made to address these gaps. It was further agreed to raise this at part B of the meeting.
- The report mentioned a 'refresher course' on the CoE, however it is unclear whether it is mandatory and what it contains. It was agreed to address this at part B of the meeting.

2nd Cultural Audit

- A GAR response was received in relation to the cultural audit. It was noted that it is lacking a lot of information, such as the results of the in-depth analysis, mentioned in the Commissioner's report. It was further noted that a subsequent GAR request was made to address it.

Part B – Meeting with Garda Síochána Representatives

Attendance

Authority: As per Part A above

Garda Síochána: Shawna Coxon, Deputy Commissioner Strategy, Governance and Performance; Kate Mulkerrins Executive Director, Legal; Yvonne Cooke, Acting Executive Director HRPD; Eimear Bourke, Executive Director, STO; Deirdre Morris, Principal Officer, STO; Michael McNamara, Superintendent, Crime Legal; Gráinne Shortall, Assistant Principal, PALO.

10. Closed Session

- The standing option to conduct a closed session was not exercised.

11. Policing Plan Performance

- The members noted that spending was behind profile in 2022 and requested some clarification in this regard. The GS representatives noted that there is a spending gap and that staffing and associated skillsets remain challenging.
- The members further noted that although expenditure to end of October was below profile, there was a request for supplement funding. Deputy Commissioner Strategy, Governance and Performance outlined data verbally to committee members.

ACTION: The GS to provide further figures in relation to the request for supplement funding for 2023.

- The members queried prioritisation within the estate project. The GS representatives noted that there is a high-level plan and work is ongoing with OPW. It was further noted that the move to Harcourt square is significant and the biggest priority. The Portlaoise Estate is located very high on the prioritisation list and it was noted that OPW made a commitment in relation to it. The members noted that if additional funds are required in relation to the estate management, the Authority should be made aware of it.
- The members queried the progress in implementing the Mazars report. The GS representatives noted that staffing remains an issue.
- The members queried the reduced target for the recording of crime by GISC to 65%, while noting their awareness to the difficulties in recruiting staff for those positions in Castlebar. The members asked about the organisation's plan to address this. The GS representatives noted that this issue is reflected in the risk register, that a competition is being run and there is currently a healthy list of COs, pending vetting. It was further noted that improvement is anticipated in the next 6 months.
- The members queried the reminder sent to the GS by The National Forensics Co-Ordination Office in relation to the fingerprint submissions, and requested an update. The GS representatives committed to revert with an update on this matter at the December Authority meeting.

ACTION: The GS to revert at the next Policing Authority meeting with the Commissioner (on 15 December 2022) regarding the issue in respect of the National Forensic Co-ordination Office and fingerprint non-submission.

12. Human Rights

- Executive Director, Legal presented slides and noted the following:
 - Human Rights sit in the centre of the Garda Decision Making Model.
 - Human Rights training course in UL – It was noted that information was gathered from the first cohort in order to understand the impact of the course on the day-to-day work of the members. Since the first cohort included a high percentages of senior managers, a second cohort will be targeted. ED Legal agreed to share with the Authority the finding of the thematic analysis conducted in relation to the first cohort.

<p>ACTION: The GS to provide a report on the thematic analysis conducted on the impact of the UL Course on member's day to day practice, based on information gathered from the first cohort of participants</p>

- S.12 – in the process of updating the MoU with the HSE to move away from detaining in a Garda station persons with mental health issues.
- Ongoing engagement with NGO's, victim-centred education programs, autism awareness training, suicide awareness training.
- Keeping the organisation abreast of Human Rights in a manner that is linked to the practical reality of day to day practice of members.
- The members noted that the challenge is in embedding the strategy in a meaningful sense, queried the timelines for doing so and asked how practical guidance is given in reality. The GS representatives noted the work of the Human Rights Champions in the organisation, as well as the importance of communications and training. While the Human Rights Unit (GSHRU) is working with the College on communications and training, there is a need to adequately resource the Unit.
- The members referred to a recent death in custody incident and queried how the human rights champions would be utilised. The GS representatives noted that Garda members meet people at vulnerable points, such as family members of a deceased person. Therefore, a clear understanding of vulnerability is embedded in the training. The GS representatives further noticed the importance of the GSHRU engaging in operational planning. This is assisted by screening tools provided to each operational policy. The GS is currently looking at applying this to strategies as well.
- The members expressed concerns that the GSHRU is working in silo and is not embedded enough in the organisation. The GS representatives noted that the unit is providing screening tools, however it is the responsibility of the policy owner to apply it. Nonetheless, the Unit is always available for particular queries. It was noted that this way of working is avoiding siloing. The intention is for the GSHRU to be involved at key points, but the units will be self-managing in this regard. Furthermore, it was noted that in addition to the Human Rights section, there is a legal section and human rights are embedded in legal advices provided, with 700 requests per year.
- The members queried about the involvement of the GSHRU in the development of the EDI Strategy. The GS representatives noted that ED Legal participated in the EDI Strategy steering group and works closely with AC Hilman on this matter. It was further noted that the GSHRU were at the forefront of planning and implementing the internship programme.
- The members acknowledged the high uptake in the Human Rights training course.
- The members queried the timeline to fill the vacancies in the GSHRU. The GS representatives noted that the difficulties are in recruiting garda staff with legal expertise. This matter has been escalated and the Commissioner has addressed it with the DoJ and DPER. The Authority's support is required in the engagement with DPER, to allow new recruits to start higher on the

pay scale. Alongside this, the organisation is training internally. With respect to the latter, the members noted the risk of internal staff being trained and then leaving. The members also referred to alternative ways to recruit legal staff, to which the GS representatives noted that the organisation in the early stages of seeking to recruit from outside universities.

13. Diversity

Internship Programme

- With regard to the Internship Programme the members queried whether it is considered a success and whether there is a plan to recruit the interns.
- The GS representatives noted that the GS have been shortlisted for the CIPD award. It was further noted that in general, interns want to stay in the GS and have a positive view of the scheme. The GS have engaged with DPER, seeking to get sanction to make interns permanent. The hope is that the GS will be able to offer full employment for interns within the next cohort.
- Furthermore, work is ongoing with the Diversity Unit in relation to the schools Transition Year group.

New EDI Strategy

- The members queried the progress in developing the new EDI Strategy.
- The GS representatives noted that it is near completion. It was further noted that few items from the previous strategy will be carried over to the new one.
- The GS representatives noted that three key areas in the new strategy are: (1) increasing the reporting on hate crimes; (2) improving support for victims; (3) updating the ToR of the Diversity Forum.
- The members asked about actions from the previous strategy which are yet to be completed. The GS representatives noted that those actions refer mainly to training, and that this is a continuum rather than a gap.
- The members raised the issue of the strategic management of areas that require continuous training. The GS representatives noted that there is an annual training plan in the Garda College, which is reviewed on an ongoing basis. In addition, the introduction of online training is helpful.
- The members queried the uptake of the hate crime training and whether it is mandatory. The GS representatives noted that the course includes 4 modules, with all 4 being mandatory for members and 2 for staff. Correct updated figures will be provided to the Authority.

ACTION: The GS to provide figures in relation to Garda members and staff completing the hate crime training course.
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- Regarding hate crime reporting the members asked whether the GS are satisfied that these incidents are recorded appropriately. The GS representatives noted that 2021 was the baseline year, with a total of 448 reports, of which 389 were reported as crimes and 59 were reported as incidents. Additional work was done with GISC call handlers and the Diversity Unit was monitoring cases every day. There is high assurance at the moment, but this level of monitoring may not be appropriate on an ongoing basis.
- The members queried whether there is enough awareness to reporting on hate crime among the public. The GS representatives noted that the Diversity Unit uses Social Media to raise

awareness, as well as Garda Diversity Officers (GDO), but undoubtedly hate crime is an under represented crime globally.

- With respect to the GDOs, the members asked whether they purely focus on diversity matters. The GS representatives noted that it is not a full time roll and they are primarily Community Officers. It was further noted that not all of the Community gardaí need to be trained in this area. Noting the high degree of specialism required to fulfil this role, the members highlighted that it would be important to have an appropriate HR system in place, which the Authority supports.
- The members queried the GAR request on the Diversity Survey, noting that a response wasn't received yet. The GS representatives stated that the response is finalised and will be sent to the Authority.

ACTION: The GS to provide a response to GAR Request 744 which sought information on the "First Annual Baseline Diversity Survey".

Code of Ethics

- The members inquired about the refresher training course on the CoE. The GS representatives committed to revert with information.

ACTION: The GS to provide further information on the refresher training course on the CoE.

- The members asked about the impact of the CoE on garda members behaviours and noted that lack of information on this matter within the relevant GAR request. The GS representatives committed to revert with additional information.

ACTION: The GS to provide the missing information within GAR 780.

- The members asked for more information with regard to the failure of Garda members and staff to sign the CoE. The GS representatives noted there is a report on this matter, which will be shared with the Authority.

ACTION: The GS to provide a report containing detail of the reasons persons have refused to sign the CoE.

Suspensions

- The members asked about 3 recent suspensions which have been ended were members were placed in non-public facing role. The GS representatives committed to revert with additional information.

ACTION: The GS to provide a report regarding three suspensions lifted recently.