



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

## **Policing Authority meeting in public with the Garda Commissioner**

**13 June 2016**

### **Prepared opening remarks by Chairperson Josephine Feehily**

Good afternoon and welcome to the second meeting in public of the Policing Authority with the Garda Commissioner. I would like to welcome Commissioner O'Sullivan and her colleagues, to welcome members of the media and the public here as observers and those watching us on television or through our webcast.

Since we previously met in public, the Report of the O'Higgins Commission of Investigation was published. The Policing Authority has considered this report very carefully and has expressed its serious concern under a number of headings at what the Report set out. The Authority was particularly struck by the familiarity of some worrying aspects of the performance of the Garda organisation through a range of reports, inquiries and inspections ranging, for example, from the Morris Tribunal to the most recent reports of the Garda Inspectorate. The Authority remains concerned that the good work being done by the women and men of the Garda Síochána every day can be set at naught while doubts remain about these issues.

The Authority is particularly keen to explore what would be different now for victims and for Gardaí on the ground.

Meetings in public are an important part of the responsibility of the Authority to reassure the community about the performance of the Garda Síochána. Because of its scope, we decided to have two meetings in public to examine issues related to the O'Higgins Report and for today's agenda we are examining the service to Victims of Crime, the Garda Protected Disclosure policy and practice, and the Culture of the Garda Síochána.

Since we settled this agenda and advised the Commissioner, the Authority has been formally requested by the Tánaiste to report to her in due course in relation to the policies and procedures in place in the Garda Síochána to deal with whistleblowers and whistle blowing, including any recommendations appropriate to provide assurance that whistleblowers can make complaints or allegations in a safe environment. Today's conversation will be helpful to the Authority in deciding how to approach this review.

Shortly I will invite the Garda Commissioner to introduce her team and to make an opening statement if she wishes after which members of the Authority will lead our discussion on the various topics. I will introduce the members as we go along.