

ANNUAL REPORT 2021



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Annual Report of the Policing Authority 2021

In accordance with section 62O (1) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 (as amended) and in compliance with the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies

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“....a body to be known as An tÚdarás Póilíneachta or, in the English language, the Policing Authority for the purpose of overseeing the performance by the Garda Síochána of its functions relating to policing services.”

Policing Authority establishing legislation



Chairperson's Foreword



In a way that could not have been foreseen when 2020 was drawing to a close, the COVID health emergency entered a third and very active phase in early 2021. That, in turn, caused the government to adopt more rigorous measures in respect of the penalties attaching to certain breaches of the regulations. In its response, the Garda Síochána reflected the fact that the seriousness of the pandemic was now very clear to all.

Inevitably, the impact of the resurgent pandemic once again dominated much of society and had significant impact on the work of our policing service. Although some developments were inhibited or delayed, a considerable momentum was maintained across a wide range of change and reform projects. The work of the Authority was also maintained throughout the year but with less in person engagement that it had been hoped might have been possible.

For the Garda Síochána, it was a further opportunity to demonstrate the closeness of the relationship with the community and, especially through the much-appreciated Operation Faoiseamh, to be a source of reassurance and safety to those who would otherwise have been more vulnerable.

Inevitably, perhaps, public patience with restrictions frayed somewhat, making the policing task more difficult and there were some increasing signs, too, that the very positive experience of the work of the Garda Síochána was not universally shared. Events in Dublin in February conveyed in a vivid and serious way the risk to Gardaí and the public when a lawful protest against COVID restrictions became an outlet for violence by a minority.

The Authority continued its particular oversight of the policing of the pandemic regulations and the sixteen reports submitted to the Minister represent a valuable record of the policing effort and a rich source of the responses of community organisations across the state. The report of the Garda Síochána into the lessons to be learned from the Dublin events was also the subject of careful attention with the Commissioner.

A special focus of the oversight role of the Authority during the year was the inappropriate cancellation of 999 incidents, that is to say the inadequate recording of or response to emergency calls made to the Garda Síochána. This is, of its very nature, a matter of great seriousness and one of considerable concern to the public. Much of the uncertainty and doubt created might have been avoided had the Garda Síochána been more forthcoming with the Authority and with the public and had the very good work that was undertaken when the nature of the problem was first identified in September 2020 been more directly and openly linked to the nature of the circumstances involved.

The Authority commissioned an external independent examiner to review and report on the issues. His interim report was published in the autumn. This work continues and will be the subject of sustained engagement between the Authority and the Commissioner.

This was and is a very serious issue, one that had very considerable risks attached. It is not at all clear that the reality of those risks, although fully appreciated by the Commissioner, is shared across the entire organisation. A key priority of the Authority's work, and that of the Garda Síochána, is to ensure that the confidence of the public in the emergency call system is preserved and strengthened.

The risks to which members of the Garda Síochána are exposed was yet again revealed in those incidents where Gardaí were shot, attacked or subjected to assaults of various kinds. All such attacks are utterly condemned by the Authority. They are a reminder that community safety cannot be secured without risk and, sometimes, at considerable personal cost.

Violence against women was again a focus of attention for the Authority. This is, and will be, a continuing priority topic in its engagements with the Commissioner and his colleagues. The vulnerability of children to criminals and the consequences of their being lured into their nets are also of special interest. The Authority published the results of research it had commissioned into the experiences of children being interviewed by Gardaí.

A further piece of research on the experience of policing by diverse and minority communities is also to be commissioned. That is part of the work of the Authority in respect of the increasing diversity of the population and of the policy and practice of the Garda Síochána in that regard.

The Authority appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Justice on three occasions as part of the Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny of a number of important Bills that are in preparation. These were valuable opportunities to offer for consideration the Authority's considered views on these measures. The General Scheme that will give effect to the government's decisions arising from the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing was the subject of very detailed review by the Authority and it is important to reflect its appreciation that a range of the proposals it had made arising from the Draft Scheme had been incorporated into this latest version. Schemes for a Digital Recording Bill and a Garda Powers Bill were also under review and important issues were addressed by the Authority in its engagement with the Committee.

The Authority undertook a review of its effectiveness covering its first five year from 2016 to 2020, as the statute requires, and engaged an external consultant for the task. The report, which was published in April 2021, was reassuring to the Authority that its focus, strategic direction and ways of working were appropriate and effective. It also identified a number of recommendations which have been implemented.

Finally, I wish to convey appreciation to my Authority colleagues for their commitment, energy and enthusiasm. I also extend thanks and appreciation to the Chief Executive and all her colleagues for their exceptional and professional work which achieved the objectives for the year despite the difficulties of the health emergency.

Bob Collins

22 April 2022

Chief Executive's Review of the Year



The Policing Authority recognised early in 2021 that while the impact and challenges of COVID-19 continued, the Authority response to said challenges had adapted since the onset nine months previously. The focused assessment of policing performance related to COVID-19 continued but the Authority's robust oversight of the Garda Síochána also focussed on a number of other topics in 2021. This included the invalid and unwarranted closure of CAD/999 incidents, Garda integrity, drugs policing, and the Garda response to sexual offences and domestic abuse. This work was informed by engagement with Garda Síochána, Joint Policing Committees (JPC), research and the further enhancement of our stakeholder engagement programme, including:

- 76 engagements with the Garda Síochána to assess Policing Plan progress;
- 20 JPC meetings attended; and
- 46 stakeholder engagements to understand the experience of policing from the perspective of communities.

In addition to the six published reports for the Minister for Justice and Cabinet on the Policing Response to COVID-19, the Authority also published a number of other reports in 2021 including:

- Bi-annual assessments of policing performance;
- Review of the Garda Síochána Adult Cautioning Scheme;
- Children's Rights and Police Questioning: A Qualitative Study of Children's Experiences of being interviewed by the Garda Síochána;
- Five year review of performance of functions of the Policing Authority; and
- The Garda Síochána and Child Mental Health: An investigation of pathways to crisis mental health care.

The Authority undertook a large-scale public consultation in May, asking the public what it believed the policing priorities for the Garda Síochána in 2022 should be. The consultation, which received over 3,000 responses from around the country, saw significant consensus as to what areas of crime should be prioritised. The responses provided an important input into the Authority's determination of the new Policing Priorities and in tandem with our continued programme of engagement with communities and NGOs around the country gave practical effect to our values of listening and acting in the public interest.

The full status of our achievements against our 2021 Corporate Priorities are included in Appendix 1 to this report, but at a glance the Authority:

- Determined the 2022 policing priorities;
- Approved the Garda Síochána Strategy Statement for 2022 – 2024 and the 2022 policing plan;
- Published an interim update and preliminary examination of the CAD closures by Mr Derek Penman;
- Commenced a project to understand the means by which the public expresses its dissatisfaction with the policing service provided, the nature and volume of the views expressed and how the Garda Síochána responds to the issues raised.

- Oversaw the embedding of Human rights in the Garda Síochána and receipt of a draft Garda Síochána Human Rights Strategy;
- Held eighteen Authority meetings, five of which were streamed live and remain available for public viewing on the Authority's website;
- Made a significant number of senior appointments in the Garda Síochána, including seven Chief Superintendents, one Executive Director, one Director, ten Principal Officers and 19 Superintendents;
- Nominated two Deputy Commissioners for appointment by the Government;
- Utilised funding from the Public Service Innovation Fund to transform the approach to the consultation on the policing priorities and engage an online consultation and prioritisation tool.
- Completed a targeted engagement approach with Garda Síochána management, front-line Divisional Drug Units in 13 Divisions, and with communities.

The COVID-19 crisis challenged the Authority but also offered huge opportunity to enhance how we conducted our oversight work and how we worked internally. Work began in 2021 to determine, in consultation with staff, the future workplace model and significant progress was made to deliver the IT, cultural, HR and structural changes that would be needed for this change to be successful.

2021 was the final year of the Strategy statement 2019-2021 and over the year the Authority took the opportunity to reflect on its oversight approach to date and the upcoming proposed legislative changes. This reflection highlighted the ability of a previously unknown external factor such as the pandemic to affect the work of the Authority and provide opportunities for the organisation to remain agile and adapt. This agility ensured that the statutory obligations and functions of the Authority continued to be met and highlighted how some of our methods and approaches benefitted from the crisis and were developed in unexpected ways.

In 2021, we continued to receive support from the Department of Justice, the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, the Public Appointments Service and other agencies in the Criminal Justice system, of which I am very appreciative. The depth and generosity of engagement we have had with many civil society organisations and statutory bodies also was of huge benefit to the Authority and enabled us to better understand the public's experience of policing.

As with last year, 2021 highlighted the dedication of my team. They continuously adapted to the changing working and non-working environment while never faltering in their commitment to support and deliver the work of the Authority. I would also like to thank the Authority members for their passion and support which enabled us to deliver so much in 2021. Finally, I would like to thank the Garda Commissioner and the people in the Garda Síochána at every level who provided information and continuously engaged with the Authority in a productive and professional way.

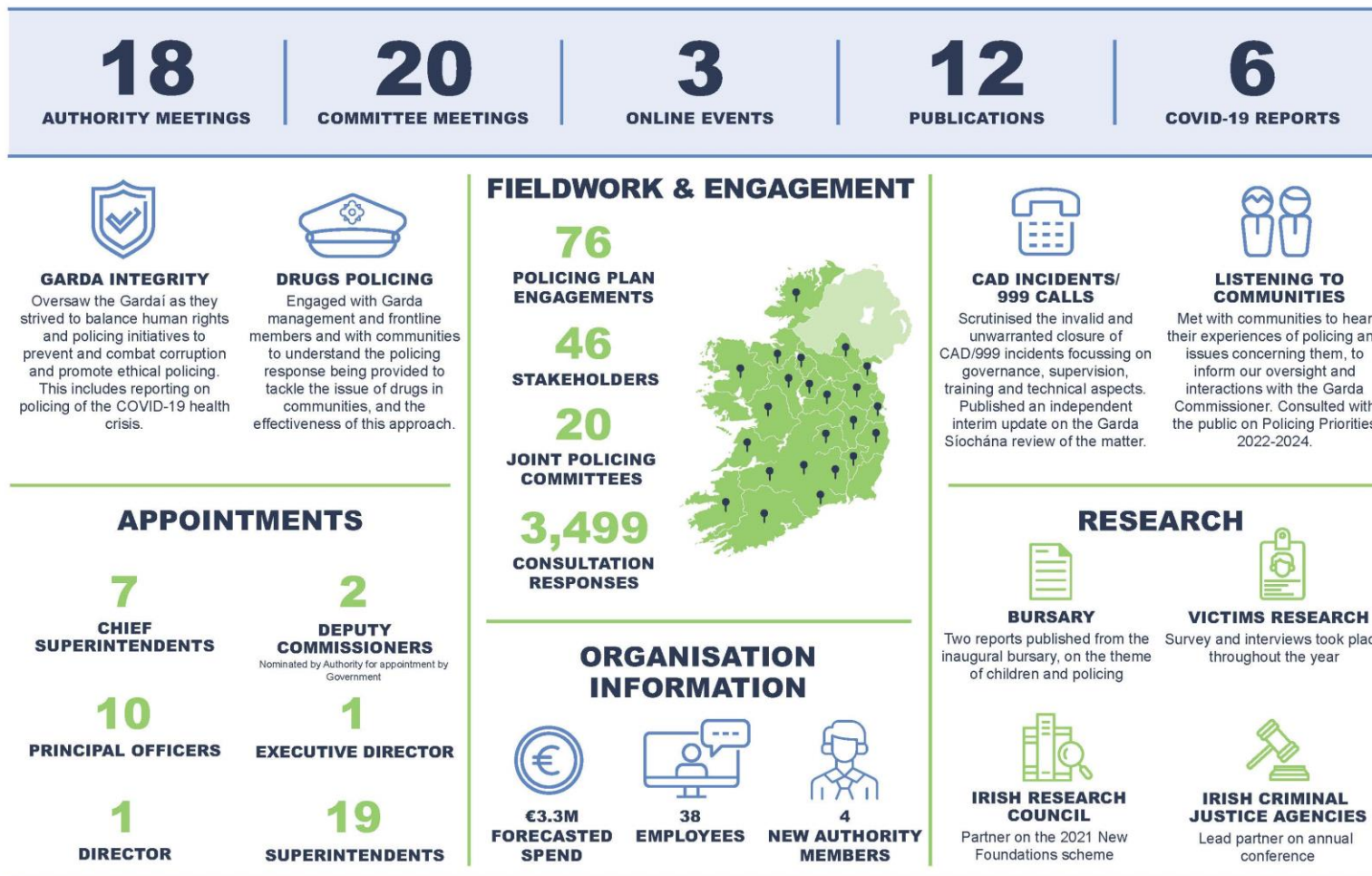
Helen Hall

22 April 2022

1. Policing Authority Review of 2021



REVIEW OF 2021



2. What the Policing Authority does

The Policing Authority is an independent statutory body with a key role to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in the provision of policing services in Ireland. It was established on 1 January 2016 by the enactment of the Garda Síochána (Policing Authority and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2015 which amends the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

The Authority's role is likely to change in the coming years, as the Department of Justice is currently drafting legislation to implement the recommendations of the report of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland. The plan is that a new Policing and Community Safety Authority (PCSA) will be established by a merger of the Policing Authority and the Garda Inspectorate. Until such time as the PCSA is established, the Policing Authority's existing statutory functions and oversight role will continue.

The Authority works across four principle areas outlined below. Some of these functions were previously the responsibility of Government or the Minister for Justice. The full range of functions is available on the Authority's website.

Oversight of Policing

The main function of the Policing Authority is to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in the provision of policing services. We do this in a number of ways, including by:

- Approving the three year Garda Síochána Strategy Statement and Annual Policing Plan;
- Setting annual Policing Priorities and performance targets for the Garda Síochána;
- Holding monthly meetings with the Garda Commissioner, including meetings in public at least four times each year, as required by statute;
- Building independent sources of evidence to assess performance through engagement with a broad range of stakeholders;
- Reviewing arrangements and mechanisms within the Garda Síochána;
- Reporting and providing advice to the Minister for Justice arising from the Authority's functions and on request; and
- Monitoring and assessing the measures taken by the Garda Síochána in relation to recommendations made in reports of the Garda Síochána Inspectorate and other third party reports.

While the Authority is responsible for oversight of the performance by the Garda Síochána of its policing services, under section 26(3) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005, the Garda Commissioner is accountable to the Minister for Justice for the performance of the Commissioner's functions and those of the Garda Síochána.

Appointments

The Authority undertakes a range of activities relating to the selection and appointment of personnel in the Garda Síochána, such as:

- Nominating persons for appointment by the Government to the positions of Garda Commissioner and Deputy Garda Commissioner;

- Undertaking selection competitions for appointments to the senior ranks of Assistant Commissioner, Chief Superintendent and Superintendent and making appointments to these senior ranks and equivalent senior Garda staff positions.

The Authority also oversees a range of other functions relating to workforce planning, recruitment, promotion and training by the Garda Síochána.

Public Awareness and Engagement

The Policing Authority places a high value on transparency to promote awareness of policing performance and related issues in Irish society including to the general public and other interested parties.

The Authority communicates and engages directly with key stakeholders to learn about and gain feedback about expectations and experiences which inform our work whilst also holding consultations with the general public.

In order to achieve this the Authority holds meetings and other events in public. In addition, the Authority is committed to publishing agendas and minutes of Authority meetings, reports and other relevant material on our website.

Research

An important objective of the Policing Authority is to add to the body of knowledge in respect of policing in Ireland, to identify best practice, and to contribute to national and international benchmarking.

This is achieved by undertaking in-house research to support the organisation's statutory functions and corporate priorities. Alternatively, the Authority may commission or assist in research projects in respect of matters relating to policing services. This includes the launching of a Research Bursary, with up to €25,000 being made available in 2019 to fund a project or projects covering the research themes selected by the Authority

The Authority also builds networks with others in the policing and oversight arenas, nationally and internationally, including oversight bodies, academic and research institutions, and other stakeholders.

Our Vision

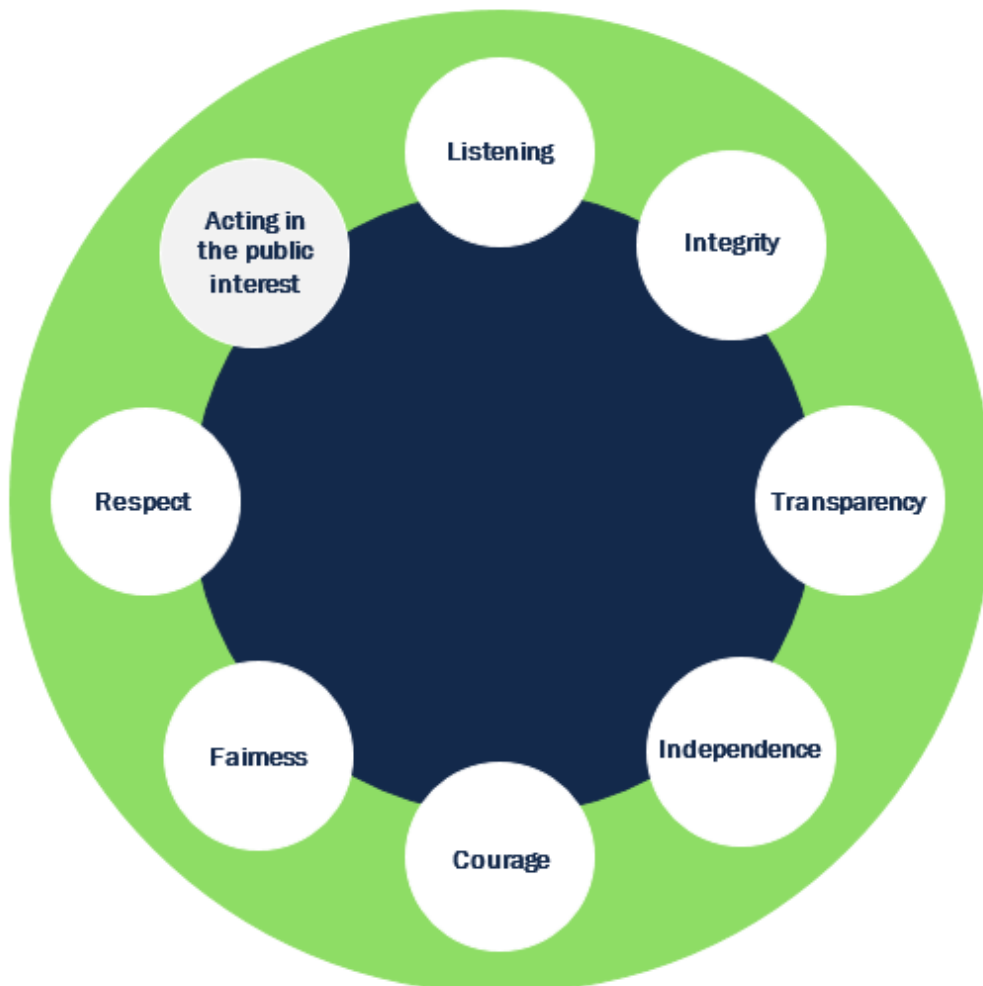
Our vision is of a society served by a professional, impartial, constantly improving police organisation which deserves and enjoys the trust and support of the people.

Our Mission

Our mission is to drive excellent policing through valued and effective oversight and governance.

Our values are important to us.

**They *reflect* our core culture and identity
and *guide* us in our approach to how we
get things done.**



Our values

3. Progress against Strategic Objectives

Desired Outcome 1 - Continuous improvement of policing in Ireland and public resources being used by the Garda Síochána in an efficient and effective way.

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
An implemented effective performance measurement and accountability framework for the Garda Síochána	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further developed and extended stakeholder engagement approach to inform oversight work, human rights and equality and assessment of Garda performance. • Policing Priorities for 2022-2024 were set by the Authority following a month-long public consultation process and the undertaking of research on matters relating to policing nationally and internationally. • The Garda Síochána Statement of Strategy 2022-2024 and the Policing Plan 2022 were approved by the Authority, with assurances they spoke to the above Priorities. • Ongoing engagement took place with the Garda Síochána in relation to performance, including for example through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eleven engagements by the Authority with the Commissioner on a range of oversight themes, five of which were in public. • Oversight of performance against the Policing Plan 2021 on a monthly basis; • Seven meetings of the Policing Strategy and Performance Committee and five meetings of the Organisation Development Committee, involving engagement with senior Garda representatives ; • Publication of bi-annual Assessments on Policing Performance; and; • Publication of six reports on the Performance of the Garda Síochána during COVID-19. • Focussed oversight on key areas including: drug and drug related policing; the inappropriate cancellation of CAD/999 calls; the response to sexual offences and domestic abuse; human rights and Garda integrity.
Modernisation and systematic improvement of the Garda Síochána	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participated in the Joint Working Group on Garda Resources. • The Authority's Garda Síochána Organisation Development Committee addressed progress made by the Garda Síochána in relation to key themes of Garda integrity, human resources, governance and infrastructure.

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considered progress by the Garda Síochána in the implementation of a range of strategies including the Information & Technology vision, the Diversity and Integration Strategy and the Equality, Diversity and Integration Strategy. Engaged with the Garda Síochána in the area of Anti-Corruption and the progression of its second Cultural Audit. Continued to oversee the implementation of the Operating Model. Engaged on a quarterly basis with the Central Implementation Team and held five meetings with Divisional Operating Model teams.

Desired Outcome 2 - A culture of high performance and strong ethical values throughout the Garda Síochána

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
Contribution to enhanced practices to support human rights and improvement of the culture of the Garda Síochána including through (a) ethical standards of conduct and practice, and (b) provisions to encourage and facilitate the reporting of wrongdoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversaw and quality assured the steps taken by the Garda Commissioner to embed the Code of Ethics. Participated in meetings with the Culture and Ethics Bureau to consider quarterly reports and report findings to the Garda Organisation Development Committee. Engaged with the Garda Síochána with regard to a wide range of integrity issues, including discipline, suspensions, protected disclosures and anti-corruption. Attended as an observer at Strategic Human Rights Advisory Committee meetings chaired by the Garda Commissioner. Provided observations in relation to the draft Garda Síochána Human Rights Strategy.
Well established, fully operational appointments system for all staff of the Garda Síochána that come within the Authority's appointment remit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued to evolve the process for appointments to the senior ranks of the Garda Síochána in line with best practice and developed bespoke psychometric testing for the 2021 Superintendent selection competition. A selection competition was undertaken and a panel of candidates established for appointment to the rank of Superintendent (July 2021). This competition was held remotely while continuing to be delivered effectively, efficiently and promptly. During 2021 a total of 26 candidates were appointed to the senior ranks (One Assistant Commissioner, seven Chief Superintendents and 18 Superintendents). Processed requests and approved grades and numbers for 100 new Garda staff positions. Eleven people were appointed to senior Garda staff positions at Principal Officer level. Additionally there was one appointment at

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
	Executive Director level, and one Director, which was an acting position.
Keep under review the arrangements for the recruitment, training and development of Garda members and Garda staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the Garda College was still closed throughout the early part of 2021, the Authority continued to engage on the revised approach to the provision of training to probationer Gardaí. A series of meetings was also held with tutor Gardaí throughout the latter part of 2021, to understand their experience of mentoring probationers and students. • There was considerable engagement with the Garda Síochána in relation to probationer training. A series of meetings was held with tutor Gardaí throughout the latter part of 2021 in order to examine levels of probationer training and support throughout the pandemic. • Ongoing oversight of the Garda e-learning management system (LMS) and the new Digital Learning Hub. • Engagement regarding the Learning and Development Expert Review Group. • Oversaw recruitment targets of Garda members and staff, to include engagement regarding drop-out rates. • Engaged with the Garda Síochána Senior Leadership Team regarding workforce planning. • Engaged on a regular basis with Garda Síochána Human Resources and People Development regarding workforce planning and received a plan regarding priority positions in late 2021. • Continued oversight on the progress in Garda participation with Performance and Learning Framework.

Desired Outcome 3 - Strong public awareness and engagement regarding policing matters

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
Have effective working relationships with key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed and implemented the Authority's Communications Work Plan 2021. • Engaged with key stakeholders to inform the Authority's oversight work. This involved an expanded programme of engagement with 46 stakeholder groups and organisations on their experience of policing to inform the Authority's assessment of police performance during the pandemic, as well as policing in general. The Authority reached out in particular to groups representing the vulnerable members of our community and those whose voices and views are seldom heard.

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raised awareness of policing matters and the content of the Authority's oversight work through the media and relevant publications. • Published a range of material on the Authority website in order to provide transparency on the Authority's work to stakeholders and the public. • Hosted online webinar events relating to Diversity, Joint Policing Committees (JPCs) and Community Policing.
<p>Communities engage actively with the Garda Síochána through the Joint Policing Committees in a way that facilitates crime prevention and improved safety and quality of life for citizens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaged with 20 JPCs over the course of the year. • Responded to queries from JPCs and Fora and provided assistance and support where required. • Convened the 6th annual consultation event with Chairpersons of Joint Policing Committees, Chief Executives of Local Authorities and representatives from the Garda Síochána to support the performance of JPC functions and to provide community input for the Authority's work. • Consulted on and revised the JPC guidelines.
<p>Improve public awareness of policing matters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two reports published from the inaugural Policing Authority Research Bursary, on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The Garda Síochána and Child Mental Health: An investigation of pathways to crisis mental health care'; and • 'Children's Rights and Police Questioning: A Qualitative Study of Children's Experiences of being interviewed by the Garda Síochána' • Research (survey and interviews) commissioned by the Authority on 'Victims' Experiences with the Garda Síochána' was carried out throughout 2021. The final report is in draft and scheduled for publication in 2022; • Partnered with the Irish Research Council on its 2021 New Foundations scheme. Arising from this, research on mental health Crisis Intervention Teams is to be carried out in 2022. • The Authority was the lead partner in the 7th Annual Irish Criminal Justice Agencies (ICJA) Conference which took place on 4 June and addressed the theme: <i>"Protecting the Human Rights of Vulnerable Suspects and Offenders: Defining, Identifying and Responding to Vulnerabilities"</i>. • Ran a consultation on Policing Priorities during which consultees were provided with information on the work of the Gardaí. Results indicated that 53% of respondents found that consultation had increased awareness of the breadth of work undertaken by the Garda Síochána.

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A call for research on the experience of policing by diverse and minority communities published on E-tenders. • The Authority produced six reports on the Policing Response to COVID-19 in addition to two bi-annual assessments of policing performance. • Held a public conversation on community policing, focusing on Mayfield and The Glen, Cork and considering ‘What does effective community policing look like?’

Desired Outcome 4 - The Authority being a high performance, innovative, responsive and respected organisation focussed on its vision and mission

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
Be an effective organisation with a culture of high performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively managed human resources matters in the Authority including recruitment, retention, training and development and performance management. • Complied with governance, risk and reporting requirements in line with legislation and Codes of Practice. • Engaged extensively and on a remote working basis with staff through a series of engagement days and workshops, including a consultation process on the implementation of hybrid working for the organisation. • Commenced planning for a return to office by staff, including a programme of work to ensure on-site re-configuration and readiness for hybrid working.
Provide appropriate and timely reports to the Minister and advice on policing matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced six reports on the Policing Response to COVID-19. • Provided advice on resources required by the Garda Síochána as required under Section 62H(2)(b) of the Garda Síochána, including a supplementary response at year end. • Delivered two reports assessing performance of the Garda Síochána against the Policing Plan. • Reported on the Authority’s assessment of the measures taken by the Garda Síochána to implement the recommendations contained in the Garda Inspectorate report ‘Responding to Child Sexual Abuse’. • Determined and submitted Policing Priorities for 2022 – 2024 for approval by the Minister for Justice.
Transition arrangements to implement the agreed recommendations of the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided observations and engaged extensively with the Department of Justice on the legislative agenda in relation to the general schemes

Objectives	Achievements in 2021
Commission on the Future of Policing	for the Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill, the Garda Síochána (Powers) Bill and Garda Síochána (Digital Recording) Bill.

In accordance with its Statement of Strategy and to reflect additional requests from the Minister, the Authority set its Corporate Priorities for 2021 at the start of the year to guide it in prioritising its work in 2021. The status of the achievement of these priorities at end 2021 is included for information at Appendix 1.

4. Feature Article: The invalid and unwarranted closure of CAD incidents

In December 2020, the Garda Síochána advised the Authority that an issue had arisen concerning the cancellation of 999 calls and that an examination of Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) Priority 1 Incidents had been initiated by the Garda Síochána as a result. Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) is a system that uses real-time data to prioritise, assign and dispatch Garda Members to incidents based on the categorisation and prioritisation of 999 calls. The provision of an appropriate response to people who call 999 by their local Garda Station is a fundamental part of the performance of a policing service. This issue has been dealt with as a high priority matter by the Authority and was discussed at Authority meetings with the Garda Commissioner throughout 2021. Detailed and comprehensive information was made available to the Authority by the Garda Síochána throughout the year.

In July 2021, the Policing Authority appointed Mr Derek Penman to conduct an external preliminary examination of the adequacy of the internal review being undertaken by the Garda Síochána. The purpose of the review was to provide independent, expert assurance and advice to the Authority, to the Commissioner and most importantly to the public. The review sought to provide assurance that the methodology used by the Garda Síochána in its review would deliver on its objectives and provide an understanding of what had occurred, the impact of what had happened and how the Garda Síochána could prevent its reoccurrence.



As Mr Penman's report was underway, the Garda Síochána informed the Policing Authority that it had identified further issues which raised questions about the appropriateness of management and cancellation of CAD incidents in October 2021. These issues related to several calls that were cancelled other than through the remedial arrangements that were introduced to resolve the original problem. The Authority sought to understand how these issues had persisted despite the intense focus on this matter and to establish how remedial measures may have been circumvented or their intention frustrated.

In November 2021, the Policing Authority published the interim report by Mr Penman. This report included 25 key findings indicating that the internal CAD Review process was "reasonable and

proportionate to the challenges identified from the cancellation of CAD incidents” but that “access to call recordings is essential to provide assurance to the Policing Authority”. However, due to legal issues, access was not granted at that time and legal advice was then sought jointly by both the Policing Authority and the Garda Síochána in order to resolve the matter. The Penman report also offered 13 recommendations. The Report was accepted by the Garda Síochána.

Calling 999 is often the first point of contact between someone experiencing a crime or in a moment of crisis. The adequacy, timeliness and appropriateness of that response is central to the performance of the Garda Síochána and the confidence the public can have in its police service. As such, the Authority will continue to closely oversee and scrutinise this issue until an adequate resolution is delivered. The requirement for close scrutiny and oversight of this issue by the Authority is likely to continue for some time.



5. Feature Article: Public Consultation on Policing Priorities



In 2021, the Authority transformed its approach to public consultation, using an online tool which was funded by the Public Service Innovation Fund.

The Authority from time to time consults with the public on matters including Policing Priorities and the Code of Ethics. In the past, the majority of responses to these consultations have come from Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations and other public sector bodies. While the responses received were meaningful and valuable, they lacked the input of individual citizens. A need was identified to find a way of reaching beyond these organisations to gain feedback from individual citizens, and allow them to have an opportunity to have their say on important policing matters. It was also necessary to achieve this without creating too much of a burden in terms of analysis.

The Policing Priorities establish what the Policing Authority want the Garda Síochána to give the most attention to in any given period. These priorities assist the Garda Commissioner in identifying areas that require extra focus and/or investment of resources to improve the service delivered to the public and the enhancement of the Garda organisation. The Policing Authority has a role under the Garda Síochána Act 2005 Section 20 (1a) to determine or revise the priorities for the Garda Síochána in performing its functions relating to policing services.

In 2020, the Authority was one of just 34 successful applicants to the Public Service Innovation Fund. The funding was used to purchase a subscription for a prioritisation deliberation tool called the Simulator, which was used to consult with the public on Policing Priorities for the Garda Síochána. This is an interactive exercise, whereby the consultee is presented with a list of policing priorities, and a finite amount of points that they can spend on their priorities. Not everything can be a priority, so the consultee is forced to make difficult choices.

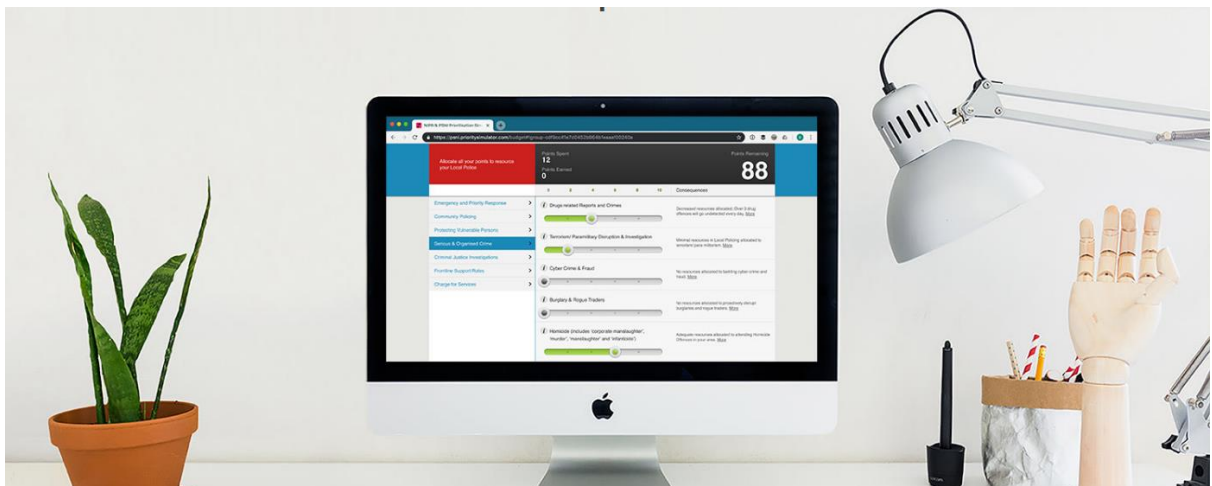
The Public Consultation took place throughout the month of May, with a busy communications campaign running alongside it. An animated explainer video was produced, as well as a series of clear, simple, consistent images which were disseminated, along with the video through social media and other digital channels. The text was reviewed by the National Adult Literacy Agency to ensure that Plain English guidelines were adhered to. Other efforts to make the consultation accessible included subtitles on the animated video, and the use of screen reader compatible

software.

The Authority's existing relationships with a large network of stakeholders such as NGO and civil society organisations were leveraged so as to reach a wider public audience. Support from external stakeholders was strong, with social media sharing from many including the Department of Justice and other Government departments, the Garda Síochána, local authorities, Women's Aid, Irish Council for Civil Liberties, Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, ALONE and the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. A small scale advertising campaign included Facebook, Twitter and Instagram ads, one online news outlet, and two print newspaper ads. A press campaign saw the Chief Executive carry out a series of interviews on regional and national radio, including the Louise McSharry Show, which aimed to introduce the consultation to a fresh audience.

The Public Consultation on Policing Priorities received almost 3,473 responses. Feedback was generally positive, with people finding it user-friendly and accessible. The responses represented a reasonably robust sample, considering that it was convenience sampling, and self-selecting, as opposed to a representative sample. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the most points were spent on sexual offences and child sex abuse; assault in public; and domestic abuse. At the other end of the scale, the least amount of points were spent on areas related to Garda systems and structures. The consultation outcome aligned and reaffirmed the outcomes of other steps taken in the development of the priorities, such as desk-based research. The software also has the option to attach a short survey, which was used to gather demographic data. Overall, the consultation provided a form of public engagement that was more interactive and accessible than had been available hitherto. It also provided a tangible data set of both quantitative and qualitative data to inform the Authority's oversight of policing.

The Policing Priorities for the Garda Síochána 2022-2024 were finalised and submitted to the Minister for Justice following consultation with the Garda Commissioner, and are due for publication in early 2022.



6. Governance and Structure

1. Authority Members

The Authority's establishing legislation provides for a membership of a Chairperson and eight ordinary members, appointed for a 3 or 4 year term with the possibility of reappointment for a further term subject to a maximum of 8 years. The Chairperson and members of the Authority were selected for appointment by the Government following selection processes run under the Stateboards.ie process by the Public Appointments Service. Members of the Oireachtas or Local Authorities, serving members of the Garda Síochána, GSOC or the Garda Inspectorate are not eligible to be members of the Authority.

There were nine members of the Authority throughout 2021. Four new members of the Authority, namely Shalom Binchy, Stephen Martin, Elaine Byrne and Donal de Buitléir, were appointed to the Authority with effect from 9 March 2021 for a period of three years or until the dissolution of the Authority, whichever is the sooner.

Members of the Authority were engaged on the basis of a commitment of 4 to 6 days per month and the Chairperson's formal commitment is on the basis of 2.5 days per week. Details of the Authority Members are listed in Table 1, including their term of office and meetings attendance during 2021. Table 2 shows annual fees and travel and subsistence costs for Authority Members for 2021.

Table 1: Terms of office and 2021 meeting attendance of Authority Members			
Authority Member	Expiry of term	Authority Meetings attended	Committee and Representational Meetings ¹
Bob Collins	31/12/23	18	22
Shalom Binchy ²	08/03/24	13	6
Stephen Martin ²	08/03/24	12	6
Elaine Byrne ²	08/03/24	13	4
Valerie Judge	31/12/23	17	6
Donal de Buitléir ²	08/03/24	14	4
Paul Mageean	31/12/23	18	5
Moling Ryan	31/12/23	17	15
Deborah Donnelly	31/12/23	18	7

¹ A total of 20 Committee meetings were held. In addition, Members attended a number of working group meetings and represented the Authority at a number of other meetings and events throughout the year.

² This member was appointed on 9 March 2021 and therefore only eligible to attend 14 of the 18 Authority meetings. All new members attended the meeting of the 25 February 2021 as members designate, this is included in the figure reported.

Table 2: Annual Fees and travel and subsistence costs for Authority Members

Authority Member	Annual Fees ³ paid in 2021 €	Costs reimbursed to Member in 2021 €	Costs paid directly to suppliers in 2021 €
Bob Collins	32,450	-	100
Stephen Martin	12,124	-	-
Elaine Byrne	12,124	-	-
Shalom Binchy	12,124	-	-
Valerie Judge	14,963	-	-
Paul Mageean	14,963	-	-
Moling Ryan	14,963	-	-
Deborah Donnelly	14,963	147	-
Donal de Buitléir	12,124	-	-



³ Fees paid to Authority Members are approved by the Minister for Justice with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

2. Committees of the Authority

The Authority had a number of Committees in 2021 to oversee the governance and progress the work of the Authority in relation to its statutory priorities under Terms of Reference which set out their purpose, guided their work and set out the details of matters which are delegated to the Committee for decision. The Terms of Reference for each Committee and the approved minutes of their meetings in 2021 are published on the Policing Authority website.

Updates from Committees are a standing agenda item at each Authority meeting, where the Chair of each Committee provides a verbal update on the Committee's work to the Authority. Papers setting out matters for the decision or approval by the Authority arising from the work of Committees are submitted for consideration at Authority meetings. Each Committee is provided with a secretarial resource and the Committee Chair keeps the Chief Executive informed of any work which may require additional resources.

Four committees were in place in 2021. All members of the Authority are members of at least one committee with the exception of the Chairperson who, while not a member of any Committee, may attend committee meetings from time to time. At the end of 2021 there were two external members of the Audit and Risk Committee, one external member of the Policing Strategy and Performance Committee and one external member of the Organisation Development Committee. The Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee is chaired by an external member who is a senior independent recruitment expert. Details of each committee, together with membership and meetings in 2021 are set out In Table 3.

Table 3: Authority Committees 2021		
Committee	Membership	Meetings in 2021
Audit and Risk	Moling Ryan (Chair)	5
	Ronan Nolan (External member)	5
	Melanie Pine (External member)	5
Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance	Bryan Andrews (Chair) (External member)	3
	Valerie Judge	2
	Moling Ryan	3
Garda Organisation Development	Paul Mageean (Chair)	5
	Elaine Byrne ⁴	4
	Valerie Judge	4
	Melanie Pine (External member)	4
	Donal de Buitleir ⁴	4
Policing Strategy and Performance	Shalom Binchy ⁵	6
	Moling Ryan	7
	Stephen Martin ⁵	6
	Ronan Nolan (External member)	6
	Deborah Donnelly (Chair)	7

⁴ Both Elaine Byrne and Donal de Buitleir were appointed in March 2021 and therefore only eligible to attend four committee meetings.

⁵ Both Shalom Binchy and Stephen Martin were appointed in March 2021 and therefore only eligible to attend six committee meetings.

3. Executive Team

The role of the Executive, led by the Chief Executive, is to implement the policies and decisions of the Authority. In addition, the role of the senior management team is to keep the Authority informed through its regular meetings of relevant developments including any material risks and to support the Authority's work by providing the relevant support, information and expertise in relation to governance and policy development at both Authority and Committee level.

The role and responsibilities of the Chief Executive are set out in legislation and in the Authority's Governance Framework. In addition, the Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer for the Authority's Vote and this responsibility is separate to the governance responsibilities of the Authority members.

Membership of the senior management team is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Senior Management Team 2021	
Role	Name
Chief Executive	Helen Hall
Director	Aoife Clabby
Director	Cormac Keating
Director	Margaret Tumelty

The Chief Executive's salary on 31 December 2021 was €164,549 on the salary scale for Assistant Secretary in the civil service, which is the amount approved by the Minister for Justice with the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. Travel and subsistence costs reimbursed to the Chief Executive arising from the performance of her duties amounted to €97 in 2021.

4. How we work

Authority meetings

The Authority plans for a day long plenary meeting each month, except in the month of August. Each meeting includes a meeting with the Garda Commissioner and the senior Garda team. The Authority is required by the Act to hold no less than four meetings in public with the Garda Commissioner annually. The schedule of meetings for the year is published in advance, including indicating which meetings will be held in public with the Commissioner. From time to time, the Authority holds additional or exceptional meetings on a needs basis, which may include meetings with the Garda Síochána. In addition to 11 scheduled meetings in 2021, 7 additional meetings were held in 2021 to deal with emerging issues.

Meetings with the Commissioner in public are generally held in a public venue and admittance to observe is available to the public and the media. Due to the health measures in place arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, meetings with the Commissioner in public were held online, the meetings continued to be advertised in advance on the Authority's website and were live streamed via the Authority's website and available to broadcast by the media. Archived recordings are available to view on the Authority's YouTube channel.



In 2021, the Authority met a total of 18 times, meeting with the Garda Commissioner and his senior colleagues on 11 of these occasions, of which five were held in public.

The Authority publishes the draft agenda for meetings on its website one week in advance and approved minutes are also published on the website. In 2021 the Garda Commissioner's monthly report to the Authority was published on the Garda Síochána and Authority websites.

The Authority makes provision for meeting in private at each monthly meeting without the Executive present and this was availed of on six occasions during 2021.

Transparency and consultation with stakeholders

In keeping with the high value placed by the Authority on openness and transparency the Authority is committed to communicating and engaging with stakeholders throughout its day to day operations by:

- Publishing agendas and minutes of meetings on the Authority's website;
- Holding meetings in public, by holding consultations with stakeholders and with the public and by engaging directly with key stakeholders such as joint policing committees and civil society; and
- Publishing reports and other material on its website.

5. Governance Arrangements

The Policing Authority is established as a statutorily independent body. In the exercise of its statutory functions, the Authority is wholly independent and as a publicly funded body it is appropriately accountable to the Oireachtas and the Minister for Justice.

The overall Governance and Control Framework within the Authority is guided by:

- The Garda Síochána Act 2005 as amended;

- The Code of Practice for the Governance of State bodies, which has been adopted by the Authority;
- The Corporate Governance Standard for the Civil Service, with which the Authority is required to comply in light of its funding by an Exchequer Vote;
- The recommendations of the Report of the Working Group on the Accountability of Secretaries General and Accounting Officers (the Mullarkey Report);
- The Code of Ethics for the Garda Síochána, which has been adopted, where applicable, by the Authority;
- Public Financial Procedures;
- The Public Spending Code; and
- Such other legislation, government and public service policies and circulars as are applicable to civil service organisations.

Governance Framework

The governance arrangements in place in the Authority are set out in detail in the Authority's Governance Framework document. This is supported by a suite of other governance documents including:

- Code of Conduct for members and staff;
- Standing Orders;
- Scheme of delegations and matters reserved to the Authority;
- Strategy Statement 2019-2021; and
- Oversight Agreement and Performance Delivery Agreement with the Department of Justice.

These documents were revised as appropriate during 2021 to reflect any changes considered necessary and are published on the Authority's website.

Responsibilities

The Authority is responsible for:

- Leading and directing the Authority's activities;
- Compliance with all applicable statutory obligations;
- Holding the CEO and senior management to account for the effective performance of their responsibilities;
- Matters relating to audit, governance and risk management;
- Ensuring that there are effective systems of internal control in place and implemented;
- The preparation and adoption of a strategic plan; and
- The preparation of this annual report of the Authority.

The Chief Executive is responsible to the Authority for the performance of her duties and for providing it with such information in relation to the performance of those functions as the Authority may from time to time require.

The Authority operates under a financial provision voted by the Dáil annually, for which the Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer with associated responsibilities for the internal control environment.

Code of Conduct

The Policing Authority Code of Conduct sets out the standards of principle and practice which govern the conduct of Members and staff of the Policing Authority, including external members of Authority Committees. The purpose of the Code is to:

- Establish an agreed set of ethical principles for Members and staff of the Authority;
- Prevent the development or acceptance of unethical practices; and
- Promote and maintain confidence and trust in Members.

By setting out the key principles to which members and staff should adhere, namely:

- Acting in the Public interest;
- Integrity and Independence;
- Transparency;
- Confidentiality;
- Participation; and
- Fairness.

The Code underscores the Authority's commitment to the highest standards of business conduct and has been prepared to assist Authority Members and staff in understanding their duties, rights and obligations. It also commits Members and staff to abide by the Code of Ethics for the Garda Síochána. The Authority undertakes an annual review of the Code to ensure it remains appropriate.

Conflicts of Interest

Procedures are in place to ensure that the members and staff of the Authority comply with the provisions of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995 and the Standards in Public Office Act, 2001, where applicable. In addition, in accordance with the Policing Authority Code of Conduct for Members and Staff, Members of the Authority register their interests in other undertakings with the Secretary on their appointment. The Code of Conduct also governs conflicts of interest in the context of selection competitions run by the Authority and other circumstances where conflicts of interest might arise. All members of the Authority complete an annual Ethics return in accordance with the requirements of the Ethics in Public Office Act.

Standing Orders

The Authority's Standing Orders set out the procedures by which the Authority conducts its business.

Scheme of Delegations

The Authority has agreed a scheme of delegations for the Authority. This sets out:

- Delegated authority to approve expenditure below agreed thresholds to the Chairperson and Chief Executive;

- Matters relating to governance which are reserved to the Authority; and
- The statutory functions of the Authority and the extent to which these have been delegated to a Committee of the Authority, the Chief Executive or are reserved to the Authority.

Performance Evaluation

A self-assessment review of the effectiveness of the Authority in 2021 was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies.

Oversight by Parent Department

There is in place an Oversight Agreement and a Performance Delivery Agreement with the Department of Justice which clearly defines the terms of the Department's relationship with the Authority. It also describes the key roles, responsibilities and supports which underpin the relationship between the Authority on the one hand and the Department, the Minister and the Oireachtas on the other. This agreement reflects and documents the extent to which the compliance requirements of the Code of Practice are suitably adapted to the circumstances (including the size and independence) of the Authority.

A number of the functions of the Policing Authority set out in the Act require the Authority to either consult, advise or inform the Minister or the Government on various matters.

Governance liaison meetings between senior management of the Department and senior management of the Authority take place on a bi-annual basis to monitor performance and consider items of common interest in relation to the Authority's remit. As part of the new policing accountability and oversight arrangements, there is at least one meeting each year of the Department, the Garda Síochána and the Authority, with a view to discussing and reviewing matters arising in relation to policing services and the various responsibilities of each organisation.

Audit and Risk Committee

An Audit and Risk Committee, consisting of two members, who are external to the Authority, together with one Authority member, was established in July 2016 under an Audit and Risk Committee Charter and met on 5 occasions in 2021. The Committee provides independent advice to the Authority and the Accounting Officer, including in relation to the suitability and robustness of the organisation's internal control, internal audit, risk management and governance systems and procedures.

Risk Management

The Authority has a comprehensive risk management policy and systems in place, including a detailed up to date risk register. The risk register includes a detailed assessment of the Authority's principal risks, and a description of the risks and internal controls and measures to mitigate risk. The Risk Register is maintained by the Authority's Chief Risk Officer and is updated on an ongoing basis to reflect new risks arising at all levels in the organisation and changes in controls to mitigate risks. The Risk Register is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee each quarter. The Authority reviews the full register at least once per annum. Risk management is a standing item on the Authority's monthly meeting agenda and a monthly Risk Management report is reviewed and specific risks discussed. Risk and measures to mitigate risk are addressed in the context of all significant Authority discussions and decisions. Procedures to manage risk are in place throughout the organisation and are an agenda item at management, team, staff and project meetings.

System of Internal Controls

Robust and effective internal controls systems and procedures are in place in the Authority to ensure compliance, as appropriate, with the relevant principles, requirements and guidelines of the Public Spending Code and to mitigate against risk. An annual review of the effectiveness of internal control systems has been undertaken by the Internal Audit provider to ensure all aspects of risk management and internal control for the year have been considered and to provide significant assurance regarding the adequacy of internal control systems to mitigate and/or manage key inherent risks.

Internal Audit

An Internal Audit function for the Authority is outsourced to Crowleys DFK following a procurement process undertaken in late 2020, after which a three-year contract was awarded with an option to extend for a period of one year. An Internal Audit Charter and Work Programme is in place and a number of internal audits were carried out in 2021 in line with the plan.

Procurement

All procurement activity is guided by the Public Spending Code published by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and a Corporate Procurement Plan was in place for 2021. The Authority has policies and procedures in place for the procurement of goods and services. Formal sanction is sought from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for all expenditure above an agreed threshold.

Financial Reporting

All appropriate procedures for financial reporting were in place within the Authority in 2021, including:

- An annual budget against which expenditure was monitored by the Authority, by reference to the achievement of the Authority's statutory remit throughout the year;
- A financial overview provided by the Chief Executive to Authority Members on a monthly basis;
- Formal reports on actual expenditure against budgets are submitted to the Department of Justice and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform on a monthly basis and are reported to the Authority each month and to the Audit and Risk Committee at each its meetings;
- The Authority is represented at the Justice Sector Vote Financial Management Committee meetings to monitor and review expenditure for the Vote Group, discuss any common financial issues and to review significant items of new expenditure;
- The Annual Appropriation Account is prepared and submitted for audit to the Comptroller and Auditor General; and
- Relevant and timely reports containing Financial and non-Financial information are provided to Senior Management.

Compliance with Legislation

The Authority was established under the Garda Síochána Act 2005 and operates in accordance with the provisions of that Act. It also has arrangements in place to ensure that it is in compliance with the following statutory provisions, where applicable:

Data Protection

The Authority is in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Arrangements are in place to ensure compliance with the GDPR which came into effect on 25 May 2018 and work continued throughout 2021 to ensure compliance with GDPR. These arrangements are managed by the Authority's Data Protection Officer who has received appropriate training and has a direct reporting line to the Chief Executive. The Data Protection Commission (DPC) has been notified of the Authority's Data Protection Officer.

The Authority has a Data Protection Policy in place which includes a set of guidelines for staff based on the eight Data Protection Rules to ensure that the Authority is in compliance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. In 2021 the Authority received two Subject Access Requests under the Data Protection legislation. No data breaches were reported to the DPC in 2021.

Freedom of Information

The Authority provides comprehensive information on its website in relation to its compliance with the Freedom of Information legislation. This includes a publication scheme that provides information about the functions of the Authority and what material it makes publically available. The Authority made a decision early in its existence to provide for maximum transparency in relation to its work and routinely publishes agendas and minutes of all its meetings and committee meetings on its website. Its public meetings with the Garda Commissioner are streamed live and available on our website. In 2021, the Authority received 16 Freedom of Information requests, details of which can be found on the disclosure log on the Authority's website.

Section 42 Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

The Authority is committed to ongoing review of its policies and procedures so as to maintain compliance with the principles of human rights and specifically the obligations under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 which places a duty on public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of those to whom they provide services and staff when carrying out their daily work.

The Authority places a strong emphasis on the right to fair procedures, the right to privacy, equal access and equal treatment in all aspects of its functions and strives to ensure that we conduct all of our activities through the lens of human rights and equality. Our obligations in this regard are inherent in all of the objectives and activities set out in this Annual Report.

We continuously work to ensure that the dignity and welfare of all our staff is protected and a culture of participation and respect is encouraged having regard to these rights and principles. We continue to explore and implement reasonable accommodation and positive actions to ensure that our workplace, our work practices and communications are accessible to our diverse workforce and stakeholders. All internal policies and practices are kept under review to ensure compliance with best practice in those areas.

The Authority has regard to Section 42 in its procurement, research and delivery of its services. In 2021, Professor Yvonne Daly provided training for Authority members and staff in relation to the public sector

duty under Section 42 of the 2014 Act to ensure awareness of the responsibilities that arise. In addition, five members of the Executive completed their participation in the accredited course on Human Rights provided by University of Limerick (UL) to the Garda Síochána, with a further five scheduled to commence the programme in January 2022. A meeting has also been held with UL to discuss further, bespoke accredited training for the Executive.

In 2021, a review of the Authority's website and internal documents took place to ensure adherence to accessibility guidelines and the principles of clear and accessible communication. Proposals were put forward relating to amendments to internal documents and the Authority's style guide and the upgrading of our website in line with the European Union (Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications of Public Sector Bodies) Regulations 2020.

The Authority's core function is to oversee the performance of the Garda Síochána in its functions relating to policing services. This includes ensuring that policing services are delivered according to the highest ethical standards and in a manner which vindicates the human rights of each individual. The Authority will continue to situate policing and the performance of the Garda Síochána firmly in the context of the Code of Ethics and its domestic, European and international human rights and equality obligations.

Promoting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Authority is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion and acknowledges that the key metrics of performance for State bodies are not only economic, but also include culture, diversity and inclusiveness together with the well-being of those employed, fostering greater engagement among staff and stakeholders and leading in turn to better outcomes for citizens and communities. Women and men working and governing as equals leads to outcomes that deliver positive benefits for Government and society.

While the appointment of Authority members is a matter for the Minister for Justice, appropriate gender balance in relation to the Authority is set out in the Statute⁶ which states that "in appointing the members of the Authority, the Government shall have regard to the objective of there being no fewer than 4 members who are women and no fewer than 4 members who are men".

In 2021 of the nine Authority members there were four women and five men and the senior management team is made up of 75% women.

The Authority allocates the necessary funds to ensure that appropriate accommodation is made for staff with disabilities to enable them to participate fully in the workplace.

Diversity of views is promoted by inviting and welcoming a wide range of views from Authority members, committee members and staff.

The self-assessment of the Authority for 2021 confirmed the presence of diversity of perspectives, which supports the Authority's deliberations and debate and promotes wider perspectives in its decision making process. Members are willing to constructively challenge both the Executive and also each other, to ensure that diversity of opinions and perspectives are real and encouraged. The Evaluation further confirmed the independence of judgement and contributions, and the favourable environment that exists within the Authority where everyone feels free to speak and, when necessary, dissent, which reflects well on the tone and climate at the Authority.

⁶ Section 62C of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 as amended.

The Authority promotes diversity, equality and inclusion through its Stakeholder Engagement Programme, as discussed above, by listening to a diverse range of stakeholders, on an ongoing basis, to inform the Authority's oversight work. During 2021, the Authority placed a strong emphasis on engaging with groups representing different communities, including minority groups and those who are marginalised and seldom heard, to assess the degree of fairness and equity exercised in the use of police powers. We also engaged with Garda members and staff and their associations and unions.

Protected Disclosures Act 2014

There was one Protected Disclosure made to the Policing Authority in 2021.

As the Authority is not a prescribed body, for the purposes of the Protected Disclosure Act 2014 a determination was made in respect of the disclosure, further to section 10 of the Act. The discloser was liaised with and the Authority ensured that the matter was brought to the attention of the more appropriate party. Thereafter, the matter was closed.

The Policing Authority is committed to fostering an environment where everyone who works at the Authority feels able to "speak-up". By speaking-up, workers can improve the organisation and help to ensure that high standards are maintained. The Authority is committed to ensuring that any concerns raised by staff members are carefully listened to, so that prompt action can be taken to address problems. The Authority is committed to the Transparency International Integrity at Work programme.

The Act provides for certain legal protections to workers where they raise concerns regarding potential wrongdoing in the workplace. It sets out what is a protected disclosure and the legal safeguards in place to protect workers who make protected disclosures. In accordance with the Act, the Authority has a Protected Disclosures Policy in place which sets out the procedures in place for reporting of wrongdoing in accordance with the requirements of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 and training was provided in relation to making a protected disclosure. The Policy sets out the principles underpinning the development and maintenance of an ethical culture in the organisation and the operational details of how protected disclosures may be made by staff and members of the Authority.

Procedures are in place for the making of protected disclosures in accordance with section 21(1) of the Protected Disclosures Act 2014. The annual report required under section 22(1) of the Act has been published on the Authority's website.

7. Financial Information

The Authority, in carrying out its mandate, is directly funded by the Exchequer in the form of an annual allocation of Voted Expenditure.

The Chief Executive is the Accounting Officer for the Authority's Vote and, in that capacity, is accountable to the Oireachtas in respect of all funds voted to the Authority for the provision of services.

2021 Expenditure⁷

Gross expenditure from the Policing Authority Vote for 2021 amounted to €2.975 million. This included staff payroll of €2.236 million, representing 75% of total expenditure.

The Financial statements of the Authority take the form of the Annual Appropriation Account which is submitted by the Accounting Officer for audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Authority's 2021 Account will be published by the C&AG in the Appropriation Accounts publication in September 2022.

The summary financial report to 31st December 2021 in Appendix 3 provides an analysis of the Vote position and related information for 2021. This report is subject to audit by the Comptroller and Audit General during 2022.

Apportioned Costs

In addition to costs directly incurred by the Authority, costs incurred by other Departments and offices must be considered in order to present an overall picture of the cost of operating the Authority.

The following apportioned costs were incurred elsewhere on behalf of the Authority:

- €8,000 under Vote 9 – Office of the Revenue Commissioners;
- €263,000 under Vote 13 - Office of Public Works in respect of rent and associated services for the Authority's offices;
- €5,000 under Vote 18 – National Shared Services in respect of HR and Payroll Shared Services; and
- €56,000 under Vote 24 – Department of Justice and Equality in respect of Financial Shared Services.

Fees, Salaries and Expenses

The annual fee payable to Members of the Policing Authority for 2021 is in accordance with the rate approved by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform. In accordance with Department of Public Expenditure and Reform guidelines no fees were paid to public servants serving on the Authority.

Government pay guidelines on the pay of CEOs and State Body employees are complied with in full. All employees of the Authority are civil servants and are remunerated in accordance with the civil service salary scales appropriate to their grade and service.

The total staff payroll cost for the Authority in 2021 was €2.236 million. The staff complement of the Authority was increased from 36 in January 2021 to a total of 38 at 31 December 2021.

⁷ All financial data is subject to audit by the C&AG.

The number of employees whose total employee benefits (including Employers PRSI but excluding employer pension costs) paid in 2021 fell within each of the following pay bands is shown in the following table:

Pay Band	No. of Employees
€60,000 - €70,000	-
€70,000 - €80,000	3
€80,000 - €90,000	3
€90,000 - €100,000	3
€100,000 - €110,000	1
€110,000 - €120,000	1
€120,000 - €130,000	-
€130,000 - €140,000	-
€140,000 - €150,000	-
€150,000 - €160,000	-
€160,000 - €170,000	1
€170,000 - €180,000	-

The aggregate compensation for the senior management team of the Authority in 2021, comprising salaries and Employer's PRSI, was €498,354. In addition, total expenses of €82 were paid in relation to travel for the senior management team in the performance of official duties.

Travel expenses are paid to Authority Members and staff as appropriate and in accordance with the Authority's Travel Policy. Total expenditure in relation to hospitality and gifts in 2021 was €60.

Consultancy Expenditure

A total of €44,165 of expenditure in 2021 related to external consultancy and adviser fees, categorised as follows:

- Legal €42,881
- Advisory €1,284

Taxation

The Authority has complied with its obligations under tax law in 2021.

Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997

It is the policy of the Policing Authority to fully comply with the terms of the Prompt Payments of Accounts Act 1997. The Authority has procedures in place to ensure that invoices are paid within the statutory time limit. While the procedures have been designed to ensure compliance with the Act, they only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance against material non-compliance with the Act.

In 2021 one invoice incurred late payment penalties. The total penalties paid during 2021 resulting from late payments amounted to €41.66 (made up of €1.66 in interest and €40 in compensation). This amount represents 12.1% of the total value of invoices paid late, which was €344.51.

Appendix 1 – Status of 2021 Corporate Priorities at 31 December 2021

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
1	Contribute to the Government programme for policing reform	1A: Advise the Minister as appropriate as to the details of the Government decision on policing and oversight reform (ongoing throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	Have provided submissions to Minister and engaged with officials in the Department.
		1B: Proactively engage with the legislative process relating to Policing Reform (as required throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	Have provided submissions to Minister and Oireachtas and have appeared before the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice.
		1C: Seek opportunities to prepare and engage for likely future statutory functions (ongoing throughout 2021)		Completed	Complete	The Chief Executive continues to liaise with Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission (GSOC) and the Garda Inspectorate (GI). The Executive continues to engage with the Department on the legislative agenda and the transition process.
2	Develop and agree the Authority's next three year strategy	2A: Develop Authority's Statement of Strategy for 2022 - 2024 and submit to the Minister by 31 December 2021.		Completed	Complete	Strategy Statement approved by the Authority at 16 December meeting and submitted to the Minister on 22 December 2021.
3	Implement Strategic Policing Oversight Frameworks	3A: Engage with the Garda Síochána on and approve the Strategy Statement 2022-2024 and the Garda Síochána Policing Plan 2022 (within 6 weeks of receipt of the relevant final documents from the Garda Síochána).		Completed	Complete	The Garda Síochána Strategy Statement was been provided to the Minister on 24 November, 2021. The Policing Plan 2021 was approved in December and submitted to the Minister on 20 December 2021.
		3B: Policing Priorities submitted to the Minister (by end Q4) following consultation (by end Q3).		Completed	Complete	Policing Priorities submitted to the Ministers on 24 November, 2021.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
3	Implement Strategic Policing Oversight Frameworks	3C: Engage in public and private with the Garda Commissioner and senior Garda representatives (Authority meetings and Committee meetings monthly throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	All of the meetings took place as scheduled in 2021 - with the exception of the December Policing Strategy and Performance (PSP) Committee which took place in January 2022.
		3D: Review the performance framework through the development of relevant performance measures, with reference to international best practice (by end Q2).		Completed	Complete	The "One Report" has now been embedded as part of the Executive's oversight. The Executive continues to gather evidence, assess and report on performance. Staff undertook Masterclass training on the measurement of policing performance in November.
4	Monitoring and assessment of Garda Síochána policing performance	4A: Evaluation of policing performance with the production of monthly reports and publication of key reports (including monthly performance reports, bi-annual assessment of policing performance)		Completed	Complete	Monthly reports provided to the Authority and Committees (Executive Overview of Policing Performance). Bi-annual assessments published in March and August with the approach to the next iteration - a Strategy period review of 2019-2021 - agreed at the November meeting.
		4B: Continue to identify and implement innovative solutions to assist in the delivery of effective oversight and enhanced policing services (ongoing throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	The "One Report" has now been embedded as part of the Executive's oversight. The executive continues to gather evidence, and assess and reporting on performance. Staff undertook Masterclass training on the measurement of policing performance in November.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
4	Monitoring and assessment of Garda Síochána policing performance	4C: Focused oversight of Garda Síochána policing performance in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, including periodic public reporting.		Completed	Complete	Report 16 was published in December. The Executive engaged with stakeholders throughout the country and across many sectors as well as with the Garda Síochána regarding the policing service provided during this period.
		4D: Focused oversight of key Garda Síochána performance areas based on risk assessment to include: - Property Exhibit Management System; - Implementation of the recommendations of the Garda Inspectorate report on Child Sexual Abuse; and - Management of suspects in custody and progress of implementation of the CPT and Garda inspectorate reports. - Divisional drugs units and policing of drugs within the community	Property Exhibit Management System;	Not started yet	N/A	Deferred.
			Implementation of the recommendations of the Garda Inspectorate report on Child Sexual Abuse; and	Completed	Complete	Progress in the implementation of recommendations and the proposed approach to oversight of this area in 2022 discussed by the Authority in December 2021. A letter providing an update on the progress made and key issues arising was sent to Minister on 22 December, 2021.
			Drugs Policing in the Community	Completed	Complete	Detailed engagement was completed with Garda Síochána management, front-line Garda Síochána (Divisional Drug Units in 13 Divisions), and with communities. Preliminary report provided to Members and the PSP Committee. Matters for further engagement in 2022 have fed into business planning.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
4	Monitoring and assessment of Garda Síochána policing performance		Management of suspects in custody and progress of implementation of the CPT and Garda inspectorate reports	Not started yet	Not completed	At the end of the year the publication of the report was still awaited.
		4E: Oversight of the unwarranted cancellation of Computer Aided Dispatch 999 Calls	Review examination and actions being undertaken by the Garda Síochána to understand and address the factors which contributed to the cancellation of CAD 999 calls in order to ensure an appropriate service exists and confidence exists in the CAD 999 system.	In Progress	Delayed	The interim report was considered by the Authority in November and initial legal advice was obtained in December with a view to resolving a remaining obstacle. The completion of the review and associated oversight is likely to take considerably more time than initially anticipated.
5	Improve, implement and monitor the system for Appointments in the Garda Síochána	5A: Conclude arrangements relating to the appointments of Deputy Commissioners		Completed	Complete	This Competition was successfully completed.
		5B: Appoint, on a timely basis, as relevant, Assistant Commissioners, Chief Superintendents and Superintendents and continue to evolve underlying processes in line with best practice.		Completed	Complete	The Appointment process is ongoing with all competitions required in 2021 held and appointments made as required.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
5	Improve, implement and monitor the system for Appointments in the Garda Síochána	5C: Develop new competency frameworks for Assistant Commissioner, Chief Superintendent and Superintendent with project to commence by Quarter 4 2021.		In Progress	On Target	This project has commenced. A project group was formed and a Request For Tender for a service provider has been prepared and will be advertised on eTenders shortly.
		5D: Approve in a timely manner grades and numbers of Garda Staff and make appointments in accordance with statutory functions.		In Progress	On Target	The Authority has engaged closely with the Garda Síochána on business cases. Garda HR has submitted cases which are under active consideration by the Authority, some of which have been approved and are now with the Department of Justice (DoJ) and Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) for consent.
		5E: Oversee Garda recruitment and promotion processes.		In Progress	On Target	The Executive engages on a monthly basis with Garda HR to discuss all HR matters including recruitment. The Sergeants' competition has now reached interview stage and the Inspector's competition has commenced.
6	Review and oversee the organisational reform of the Garda Síochána	6A: Evaluation of the progress and benefits realisation from Garda Síochána organisational reform with the production of monthly reports and publication of key reports (including monthly performance reports, bi-annual assessment of policing performance)		In Progress	On Target	<p>Monthly reports provided to the Authority and Committees (Executive Overview of Policing Performance).</p> <p>Bi-annual assessments published in March and August with the approach to the next iteration - a Strategy period review of 2019-2021 - agreed at the November meeting and scheduled for publication in April 2022.</p>

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
6	Review and oversee the organisational reform of the Garda Síochána	6B: Focused, risk based oversight of key Garda Síochána organisational elements including: - HR and workforce planning; and - Garda Síochána Resources (to include Physical infrastructure and finance)	6B (i) HR and workforce planning;	In Progress	On Target	The Executive engages on a monthly basis with Garda HR to discuss all HR matters including workforce planning. The development of a long term strategic workforce plan is ongoing
			6B (ii) Garda Síochána Resources (to include Physical infrastructure and finance)	In Progress	On Target	The Authority continues to participate in the Joint Resources Working Group meetings which is a forum to discuss and address Garda Resources. The Executive engage regularly with the head of Information and Technology (I&T) regarding progress in the implementation of the I&T Strategy and Vision and the head of Finance in the Garda Síochána with regard to the budget allocation and progress on the project to improve its finance capability.
		6C: Oversee the implementation of the new Garda Síochána Operating Model, assessing and reporting quarterly on its effectiveness in supporting the Garda Síochána stated mission of 'Keeping People Safe'.		In Progress	Delayed	In Quarter 4 the Executive continued its engagement with the Operating Model Central Implementation Team. The continuing industrial action by Superintendents and Chief Superintendents is posing a risk to the delivery of the model. A meeting with the Garda Síochána Op Model team to assess progress made to the end of Q4 is scheduled for 28 January 2022.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
6	Review and oversee the organisational reform of the Garda Síochána	6D: Continue to assess progress in enhancing the cultural behaviours and embedding of the Code of Ethics in the Garda Síochána and report on a bi-annual basis.		In Progress	On Target	Quarterly (rather than bi-annual) updates provided to the Organisation Development Committee (ODC); engagement with the Garda Síochána as required; Item on the October ODC meeting agenda and lengthy discussion with the Garda Síochána held; The external review of the Code of Ethics was discussed and agreed to be shared with the Garda Síochána; Letter requesting the Garda Síochána to conduct an effectiveness review of the Code was sent; The Executive is participating in an observer capacity on the Steering Group of the Second Cultural Audit and has attended the first meeting.
		6E: Focussed oversight of the governance arrangements and structures with the Garda Síochána, which based on risk assessment would include: - Continued cooperation and interaction with the Garda Síochána audit committee; - Continued oversight of the Garda Síochána Protected Disclosures system, Discipline Regulations and the establishment of the Garda Anti-Corruption unit.	Continued cooperation and interaction with the Garda Síochána audit committee (GSAC);	Completed	Complete	Ongoing liaison with GSAC. In tandem, engagement ongoing re Garda Síochána assurance and governance procedures in respect of recommendations. Work in this area will feed into the Authority's strategic priority for 2022-2024 to monitor and assess Garda Síochána governance arrangements.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
6	Review and oversee the organisational reform of the Garda Síochána	6E continued: - Assessing the efficacy of the systems and processes for managing expressions of dissatisfaction about the Garda workforce, both internal and external.	Continued oversight of the Garda Síochána Protected Disclosures system	In Progress	On Target	Ongoing engagement and quarterly briefing papers on all 3 subjects provided to the ODC and the Authority. Ongoing engagement with the GACU to oversee the implementations of the recommendations made in the Garda Inspectorate report. Detailed information on Discipline and Suspensions received quarterly. No response received from the Department to our correspondence regarding changes required to the Discipline regulations.
			Continued oversight of the Garda Síochána Discipline Regulations	In Progress	Delayed	
			Continued oversight of the establishment of the Garda Anti-Corruption Unit (GACU)	In Progress	On Target	
			Assessing the efficacy of the systems and processes for managing expressions of dissatisfaction about the Garda workforce, both internal and external.	In Progress	Delayed	This project was originally scheduled to be completed in 2021. As part of the project initiation and development, the full complexity of the project became clear and it has now been reclassified as a longer term project with a completion date in 2022. To date, extensive desk research has been conducted and a wide range of engagements with various stakeholders took place. Key shortcomings in the current system, as well as levers for change were identified. A draft briefing paper mapping the current processes, shortcomings, mitigations and recommendations is being prepared and is due to be completed in Q2 2022. Further stakeholders to engage with were identified, and meetings are scheduled to take place.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
7	Develop and implement procedures to ensure policing accountability at a local level	7A: Engage with and contribute to Community Safety Pilots and suggested mechanisms of local policing oversight.		In Progress	Not Completed	We have not had the opportunity to engage with any of the 3 pilots to date, which remain at an early stage of development, despite numerous requests to observe meetings. Meetings with the three chairs are planned for 2022.
		7B: Engage and oversee performance of Joint Policing Committees (JPCs) and Local Fora including convening meetings with JPC and other stakeholders and planning for delivery of training.		Completed	Complete	In total 20 JPCs were engaged with during 2021. Engagement with Fora was limited due to their constraints on availability and the impact of COVID on meetings. Training relating to the revised Guidelines has been considered and is proposed for 2022 in tandem with the publication of the revised Guidelines
		7C: Consider Guidelines concerning Joint Policing Committees (by end Q2).		In Progress	Delayed	Guidelines are finalised. They will be published in early 2022 and guidance will be provided to assist implementation
8	Embed a Human Rights Focus in Authority Oversight	8A: Oversee the embedding of Human Rights in the Garda Síochána and report quarterly.				Update meeting with the Garda Síochána Human Rights Unit was held in October and the Policing Plan targets were discussed, as well as the HR Strategy; A Garda Actions Register (GAR) request for additional material was submitted (material not received yet); A submission re the new Garda Síochána strategy will be delivered; The new Garda Síochána Human Rights Strategy (draft) was received and shared with members of the Authority at the December meeting; ongoing attendance at Strategic Human Rights Advisory Committee (SHRAC) meetings; presentation of the new format of reporting 'Use of Force' was provided to the Executive

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
8	Embed a Human Rights Focus in Authority Oversight	8B: Monitor and oversee the Garda Síochána implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategies, both in terms of diversifying the workforce and in terms of policing and communicating with diverse communities. Report on Garda Síochána compliance with their duties under Section 42 of the IHREC Act (by end Q2).	Continued oversight of the implementation of both the internal facing and external facing Diversity Strategies.	In Progress	On Target	Quarterly briefings provided to the ODC per material received from the Garda Síochána within a recurring GAR request made to facilitate oversight; Items were on the agenda of the July and October ODC meetings and discussed in length; ongoing participation of the Executive at the National Garda Diversity Forum; Academic paper completed and awaiting Senior Management Team (SMT) approval.
		8B: Monitor and oversee the Garda Síochána implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategies, both in terms of diversifying the workforce and in terms of policing and communicating with diverse communities. Report on Garda Síochána compliance with their duties under Section 42 of the IHREC Act (by end Q2).	Commissioning and managing research on the experience of policing by diverse and minority communities in Ireland.	In Progress	Delayed	The call for research yielded only one application, which the Evaluation Board deemed to be unsuccessful, therefore there is a need to re-tender and preparations are underway; Fieldwork was made to get a better understanding as to the low number of submissions; A series of recommendations re the new tender were made and presented to the SMT; re-tendering expected to commence in January 2022.
			Continued oversight of the progress on the collection of ethnic data.	In Progress	Delayed	External advice commissioned by the Authority was received and affirmed the Garda Síochána position that legislative changes are required to allow collection of ethnic data; Process of contracting same group to provide specific legislative provisions for insertion is in progress; no further progress made by the Garda Síochána; briefing note provided to the November Authority meeting.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
8	Embed a Human Rights Focus in Authority Oversight	8C: Enhance expertise and capacity in Human Rights within the Authority and embed a Human Rights focus in the oversight work of the Authority (ongoing throughout 2021).		In Progress	On Target	Human Rights training for all staff delivered by Professor Yvonne Daly in November; A session to discuss CAD incidents in the context of Human Rights took place on 15th December; Five members of the Executive completed their participation in the accredited course on Human Rights provided by University of Limerick (UL) to the Garda Síochána, with a further five scheduled to commence the programme in January 2022. A meeting has also been held with UL to discuss further, bespoke accredited training for the Executive.
		8D: Assess on a quarterly basis the Authority's compliance with its statutory duty under Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014		In Progress	Delayed	Procurement of training on the Authority's duties under S.42 of the IHREC Act is complete and training has commenced. Review of the Authority's website and internal documents to ensure adherence to accessibility guidelines continues to progress. Proposals relating to amendments to internal documents and the Authority's style guide have been forwarded to the SMT and a response is awaited
9	Fieldwork and engagement with stakeholders to inform and promote oversight work and assessment of Garda performance	9A: Undertake fieldwork to support the assessment of policing performance and the oversight of key enablers (ongoing throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	As of 03/12/21, 67 engagements have taken place in support of our assessment of performance and the oversight of enablers.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
9	Fieldwork and engagement with stakeholders to inform and promote oversight work and assessment of Garda performance	9B: Develop (by end Q1) and implement targeted stakeholder engagement plan (Q2-Q3).		Completed	Complete	Stakeholder engagement plan has been implemented, as envisaged.
		9C: Maintain and deepen effective relationships with other policing oversight bodies nationally and internationally (ongoing throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	Executive staff meeting with Scottish Institute Policing Research and Scottish Policing Authority for informal knowledge sharing purposes took place in December.
		9D: Build and facilitate research networking and collaborations with national and international research, policing and oversight organisations. (Ongoing throughout 2021).		Completed	Complete	Irish Research Council award accepted by applicant.
		9E: Arrange two public conversations or events as relevant to promote improvement in policing standards and to facilitate access to accurate information		In Progress	Not Completed	Public conversation on September 15th successfully concluded. However, capacity did not allow for a second conversation.
		9F: Commission and manage research projects to facilitate policing oversight and to improve knowledge and awareness of policing matters		In Progress	Delayed	University College Dublin Bursary report on young people and mental health has been published, and seminar held in collaboration with the Association for Criminal Justice Research and Development (ACJRD). A draft final report of victims' research was received in late December and is being reviewed by the Executive prior to its publication in early 2022.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
10	Organisational Adherence to best practice Governance, Internal Controls and Corporate Services	10A: Drive transition arrangements with regard to Government proposals for new oversight arrangements (ongoing throughout 2021).		Not Started Yet	Delayed	A meeting was held with the Department of Justice to discuss the programme to give effect to the legislative provisions contained in the PSCS Bill. A further meeting involving the Garda Inspectorate is planned for the New Year, in order to consider a project plan to give effect to the Policing and Community Safety Authority.
		10B: Ensure that the Authority's finance and governance practices are operated in full accordance with relevant legislation, public sector codes and duties, and the organisation's policies and procedures.	Finance	Completed	Complete	
			Procurement	In Progress	Delayed	Legal services procurement is being carried out by Office of Government Procurement (OGP) and indications are that the procurement will be completed in early 2022.
			Governance	Completed	Complete	
		10B: Ensure that the Authority's finance and governance practices are operated in full accordance with relevant legislation, public sector codes and duties, and the organisation's policies and procedures.	Internal Audit	Completed	Complete	<p>The External Review of Board Effectiveness and audits on the impact of COVID-19 on business operations and ICT Controls have been completed.</p> <p>An audit on Value for Money and procurement and the final audit of the year on Internal Financial Controls commenced in December. Both will be provided to the February 2022 Audit and Risk Committee.</p> <p>Audit Plan for 2022 is agreed.</p>

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
10	Organisational Adherence to best practice Governance, Internal Controls and Corporate Services	10B: Ensure that the Authority's finance and governance practices are operated in full accordance with relevant legislation, public sector codes and duties, and the organisation's policies and procedures.	External Audit	Completed	Complete	External audit took place as scheduled in 2021.
			Enquiries	Completed	Complete	All enquiries dealt with in line with organisational policy.
			Media/Press management	Completed	Complete	Communications workplan relating to media/press management delivered
			Risk Management	Completed	Complete	Risk Management reports provided to both the Audit and Risk Committee and Authority on a monthly basis. Risk is discussed at Management Team meetings.
			Coordination of legal advice	Completed	Complete	
			Freedom of Information (FOI)	In Progress	On Target	FOI Log for Q4 scheduled to be uploaded to the website shortly; Publication Scheme uploaded to the website; All requests are responded as per the statutory timelines.
			Data Protection	Completed	Complete	
		10C: Ensure a high performing organisation, supported by talent management strategies to build the capacity of the organisation.	Human Resources (HR) management	In Progress	On Target	HR matters are ongoing and HR is preparing an L&D strategy for 2022. One AP started in Quarter 4 and an internal competition for Executive Officer was held resulting in 1 promotion.
		10D: Corporate Services arrangements in place to support the Authority and staff in performing their functions in an efficient and effective manner.	Facilities	Completed	Complete	All necessary arrangements were put in place to enable the Authority and staff to operate effectively in 2021 in line with Government restrictions.

Priority		Action	Sub-Action	Progress	RAG Status	Q4 Progress Update
10	Organisational Adherence to best practice Governance, Internal Controls and Corporate Services		ICT	Completed	Complete	All necessary ICT supports were put in place to enable the Authority and staff to operate effectively in 2021. Meetings have been held with the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO) to consider transfer of ICT service provision from the DoJ in 2022. Due diligence work being undertaken with OGCIO has been completed and arrangements to commence the transition process are in train.
		10E: Implement and monitor the ongoing operation of the Authority's Business Continuity Plan to maintain the Authority's functions and ensure the well-being of staff (SMT)	Business continuity	In Progress	Delayed	Work identified and progressed as far as possible in 2021. Work will continue in to 2022 but has been delayed due to Government restrictions.

Appendix 2 – Competition Statistics for Senior Garda Appointments 2021

Selection Competition: Assistant Commissioner 2021					
By rank	No. of Applicants	By gender	No. of Applicants	By Employing Organisation	No. of Applicants
Chief Superintendent	N/A	Male	N/A	Garda Síochána	N/A
Other ranks	N/A	Female	N/A	PSNI	N/A
Total	N/A	Total	N/A	Total	N/A
Selection Competition: Chief Superintendent 2021					
By rank	No. of Applicants	By gender	No. of Applicants	By Employing Organisation	No. of Applicants
Superintendent	N/A	Male	N/A	Garda Síochána	N/A
Other ranks	N/A	Female	N/A	PSNI	N/A
Total	N/A	Total	N/A	Total	N/A
Selection Competition: Superintendent 2021					
By rank	No. of Applicants	By gender	No. of Applicants	By Employing Organisation	No. of Applicants
Inspector	131	Male	112	Garda Síochána	131
Other ranks	0	Female	19	PSNI	0
Total	131	Total	131	Total	131

2021 Panels established and Appointments			
Rank	No. of candidates on panel	No. of candidates appointed (at 31/12/21)	Date of Expiry of Panel
Assistant Commissioner	N/A	N/A	N/A
Chief Superintendent	N/A	N/A	N/A
Superintendent	26	16	28/07/22

Appendix 3 - Summary Financial Report 2021

A summary of expenditure in 2021⁸ on the Authority's Vote is presented in the table below.

Financial Summary for Policing Authority Vote 2021		
Subhead	Estimate Provision	Expenditure
	€000	€000
A (i) Salaries, Wages and Allowances		
Salaries, etc.	2,247	2,236
Overtime	0	-
Total A (i)	2,247	2,236
A (ii) Travel and Subsistence		
1. Travel and Subsistence	48	2
2. Air Travel Emissions Offsetting Payment	2	-
Total A (ii)	50	2
A (iii) Training and Development and Incidental Expense		
1. Staff Training & Development	60	46
2. Public Relations and Advertising	65	7
3. Public Meetings	40	23
4. Publications, Reports, Periodicals etc.	20	22
5. Entertainment	10	02
6. Miscellaneous	685	247
7. Members Fees and Expenses	215	202
Total A (iii)	1,095	549
A (iv) Postal and Telecommunications Services		
Postal Services	11	2
Telecommunications	39	11
Total A (iv)	50	13
A (v) Office Equipment and External IT Services		
1. Computer, etc. (Current)	105	128
2. Office Machinery & Stationary	20	2
Total A (v)	125	130
A (vi) Office Premises Expenses		
1. Maintenance	39	22
2. Heat, Light & Fuel	36	20
3. Furniture & Fittings	55	2
Total A (vi)	130	44
A (vii) Consultancy Services and Value for Money and Policy Reviews		
	100	1
Total Expenditure	3,797	2,975
<i>less</i>		
B. Appropriations-in-Aid		
Pension Levy	47	65
Total A-in-A	47	65
Net Expenditure	3,750	2,910

⁸ Subject to audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General

Appendix 4 – Chairperson’s Statement of Internal Control

I acknowledge the Authority’s responsibility for the system of internal control.

Any such system of internal control can provide only reasonable, and not absolute, assurance against material error. In considering the effectiveness of internal controls the Authority has regard, among other things, to the requirements of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and has made every effort since its establishment and continuing during 2021 to follow the requirements of the Code insofar as is appropriate to a small, non-commercial, independent agency.

The procedures that have been put in place, designed to provide effective internal control, have been tailored to reflect the size and complexity of the organisation and reflect the evolving nature of the Authority. In this context, I note that a large proportion of the Authority’s expenditure in 2021 was pay related costs which were administered by the Payroll Shared Service Centre in the National Shared Services Office (NSSO) and are consequently subject to the internal control systems, including internal audit, in place in that organisation. Other HR, ICT and financial transaction processing services are undertaken on the Authority’s behalf by NSSO and the Department of Justice.

The Authority has taken steps to ensure that an appropriate control environment is in place by:

- Clearly defining management responsibilities;
- Formalising a clear separation between the functions and powers of the Authority and the Executive;
- Setting regular reporting requirements concerning financial, risk and governance matters;
- Establishing an Audit and Risk Committee;
- Establishing and publishing Codes of Conduct for members and staff of the Authority;
- Ensuring that staff are appropriately skilled and experienced; and
- Seeking to establish a strong culture and values, which encourage high standards of ethical behaviour across the organisation.

During 2021, the Authority continually had regard to the operation of its risk management system to identify business risks and to evaluate their implications. The operation of the Risk Management system is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee. Risk is a standing agenda item at monthly Authority meetings where the Risk Management report is reviewed, high risks and mitigation actions are monitored and risk is addressed in the context of all significant Authority decisions.

The Senior Management Team, Audit and Risk Committee, Internal Auditors and the Authority have paid close attention on an ongoing basis to the impact of COVID-19 on the Authority’s operations in general and the control environment in which the Authority operates. Initially the significant risks identified were those relating to business continuity and health and safety, in response to which the Authority took immediate and ongoing actions in response to the developing situation. Actions have included the following:

- Allocation of responsibility for business continuity to the designated Business Continuity Manager;
- Remote network access to all staff to facilitate working from home;
- Development and implementation of strict infection control measures in the Authority’s offices;
- Communication to all staff of guidelines/reminders on how to work from home safely and effectively, and with due regard to data protection and appropriate internal controls;

- Provision of the necessary equipment to enable home-working including intra-organisation communication;
- Implementation of a policy of frequent direct communication between managers and staff while working from home;
- An on-going focused approach of staff engagement and well-being throughout the pandemic.

With specific regard to internal controls during the COVID-19 emergency period:

- The work of the Audit and Risk Committee and internal audit oversight has continued without interruption and in particular the annual internal audit of controls took place as scheduled and paid particular attention to the impact of COVID-19;
- Key financial controls have been maintained, with adaptation of certain processes to suit remote working. Payment timelines were affected while adapted processes were being bedded down, but have since recovered. Close attention is being paid to this particular area by the Audit and Risk Committee, the internal auditors and staff in the finance area.
- In mitigation of the obvious risk of personnel loss during the period, HR and personnel functions have also been maintained, with successful recruitment and introduction of new personnel at both Authority and staff levels.
- All Authority Members and staff have continued to work from home during the emergency period, with office attendance by prior arrangement, on condition of provision of an appropriate COVID-health form and only in exceptional circumstances. A record of any such attendance is maintained on an on-going basis.
- The Authority held 18 Authority meetings in 2021, 11 of them with the Commissioner and 5 of those in public. All such meetings were held remotely, with the public meetings being live streamed.

The procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of internal controls include:

Audit and Risk Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee met on 5 occasions in 2021. The Annual Report of the Committee was presented to the Authority and is available to view on the Authority's website. I am satisfied that the Committee discharged its role appropriately during the year.

This Statement is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee and by the Authority to ensure that it accurately reflects the control system in operation during the reporting period. This assessment is supported by a review of the internal controls system, which was carried out by the Internal Audit provider in February 2021.

Financial and Management controls

Appropriate financial controls are in place and documented, including financial procedures, separation of duties, appropriate supervision, authorisation and approval limits, accounting processes, control over physical assets and management review.

Appropriate budget and monitoring systems are in place, based on financial records maintained by the Financial Shared Services in the Department of Justice under a Shared Service Agreement. Assurance has been received from the Department's Accounting Officer of the adequacy of these systems and related internal controls. Further operational systems for the management of information by the Authority are in place or being developed in line with business activities and requirements.

The Authority is compliant with relevant current procurement rules and guidelines as set out by the Office of Government Procurement. A review of the effectiveness of the system of internal controls was conducted by Internal Audit in February 2021.

Internal Audit

An internal audit function for the Authority was established for the Authority in January 2017 and has been provided by an external service provider since that time. An OGP procurement process to re-tender the internal audit function commenced in late 2020. A contract was put in place with Crowleys DFK in January 2021 for a period of three years under an Internal Audit Charter. Three internal audits were carried out in 2021. In addition a review of effectiveness and control was carried out in February 2021 for the period 2016-2019.

In reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of the Internal Control system, reliance has been placed on:

- The Internal Audit risk based audit planning and work undertaken in 2021, and associated internal audit reports, in particular the annual review of internal controls undertaken in February.
- Management reports and reviews, including on the progress in implementing audit recommendations, corporate priorities and Authority actions;
- The Authority's Risk Register;
- The work undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee;
- The report of the C&AG on their audit of the Appropriation Account; and
- Assurances from external organisations to which functions have been outsourced, including:
 - From the Secretary General, Department of Justice in relation to Financial Shared Services;
 - Department of Justice Internal Audit report on Financial Shared Services;
 - From the Department of Justice in relation to ICT; and
 - From the NSSO in relation to the provision of HR and Payroll Shared Services.

The internal control system, including this Statement of Internal Control, is reviewed by the Comptroller and Auditor General's Office as part of the audit of the Appropriation Account to confirm the Authority's compliance with the requirements of Paragraph 1.9 (iv) of the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies and is consistent with the information of which they are aware from their audit work.



Bob Collins
Chairperson
22 April 2022

Appendix 5 – Energy Usage 2021

Managing Energy Usage

The Policing Authority is located on one floor of a five-story building at 90 King Street North, Smithfield, Dublin 7. The number of employees increased by two over the year of 2021, with 38 members of staff in place at 31 December 2021.

The Authority remains committed to the all-of-Government plan for carbon abatement. The Authority was represented at the 2021 Public Sector Energy Forum and values all available opportunities to identify measures for improvements in energy efficiency and green initiatives.

All appropriate procedures for managing energy usage were in place within the Authority in 2021, including:

- The Authority has continued its efforts to minimise energy usage and has a number of initiatives in place including encouraging staff to use the stairs whenever possible and ensuring that all appropriate electrical equipment and all lighting and heating is switched off at close of business each day.
- Timers that have been fitted to water heaters and to the water boiler continue to help reduce energy consumption.
- A “Green Team” had previously been formed to explore and put in place improvements but due to COVID-19 has had limited opportunity during 2021 to drive further changes. It is hoped to re-establish a similar initiative with a return to hybrid working in 2022.
- During 2021 staff worked remotely with office attendance only in exceptional circumstances. Due to the reduced occupancy of the Authority’s premises its energy requirements have been significantly reduced. Lighting is only used while a staff member is present in the office and then only in areas that are in use. A large reduction in the use of printers, photocopiers and computers has also contributed to a lower use of power in the office. There has been a reduced carbon footprint arising from reduced travel by staff who are working remotely.
- Due to the use of a shared building, specific details of energy savings at the Authority’s premises in 2021 are not currently available.
- The energy consumption of the Authority is included in the annual report provided by the Department of Justice to the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland.

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