



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Policing Authority Assessment of Policing Performance 2020

July 2020

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Chairperson's Foreword

The opportunity to review the performance of the Garda Síochána relative to the Policing Plan midway through the year to which the Plan applies, has benefits for the organisation, for the Authority and for the public. That is especially true in the very particular circumstances of the current year.

The requirement to have a Policing Plan was an important element in the revision, over the last decade and more, of the statutory framework within which the Garda Síochána operates. It links, among other things, to the Policing Principles that are set out in the law and to the Policing Priorities that are set by the Authority. But it has a powerful public facing importance. It is the opportunity for the Commissioner to set out each year a clear statement of intent to the public of the way in which the policing service will work, to identify the aspirations, the objectives and the steps to their realisation. Because of its importance for the entire community, the law has rightly determined that the Plan should be approved by an independent, external body and that performance against the objectives of the Plan should be reviewed independently and externally as well. That work of approval and review is undertaken by the Authority.

But the Plan is at all times the Commissioner's statement of intent and of commitment. The Authority considers, consults, counsels, sometimes challenges before it approves, but the Policing Plan must be the Commissioner's and must be owned fully by the Garda Síochána. There must, therefore, be a certainty that the Plan is central to planning and evaluation at all levels of the organisation, national, regional, divisional and local. It must have meaning for everybody in the organisation.

Importantly, it is not just about operational policing, central though that be. The areas of human resources, staff development, financial management, organisational structure and culture are all indispensably part of the achievement of the objectives of the Policing Plan because they are central to ensuring that the public investment in the Garda Síochána will result in the most effective service to the people.

Even before the full extent of the health emergency had revealed itself, it was clear to the Authority, as to the Commissioner, that the Policing Plan as originally developed could not be the framework for policing in 2020. Detailed work within the organisation and with the Authority yielded a revised document which was then submitted to the Minister and which reflected the challenges of the moment. It has been impressive to note that some activities on which work had to be paused due to the commitments of the pandemic were resumed as soon as the intensity of the policing challenge of the health emergency began to abate.

The series of reports on the oversight of policing of the emergency powers produced by the Authority over the past few months have clearly outlined the depth, range and quality of the work of the Garda Síochána during the COVID-19 crisis. It merits acknowledgement here also, and it is reflected in this report. As well as that, it is important to recognise the successes in the detection of crime and the disruption of the activities of criminal gangs – work which will make a real difference to the lives of many.

Side by side with that celebration is the acknowledgment that not all have had the same sense of positive experience of policing during the crisis. A particular area for attention is that of custody facilities, where the COVID-19 emergency revealed again, and exacerbated, some of the problems for those in custody and for their legal representatives as well as for the Gardaí. The Commissioner has imaginative aspirations for developments on which the Authority will work with him. And the forthcoming report from the Garda Inspectorate will be an important contribution to knowledge and understanding of this important topic.

As ever, there will be challenges but there are real opportunities. There is a sense in which the Garda Síochána has, through its actions and as if by accident, designed a new way of valuing itself and the community it serves. There is immense potential for a better, firmer foundation for the essential relationship between Garda and community for the future. The Authority will continue to work closely with the Commissioner on all aspects of this range of new possibilities.

A challenge of our times will continue to be that of responding to the increasing diversity of our society. It has been one of the markers of the maturing of our society that the structure and composition of our population have changed over the years. That process of change has not been matched by a corresponding growth in understanding of how best to respond, how to embrace and reflect our new reality. The world of policing is not exempt. The Garda Síochána has developed new strategies in relation to how it serves a changing society and how it can change its own composition. It is time for a clear setting out of its expectation of how it should be and would wish to be in both these respects. Knowing the destination makes plotting the journey easier. But we all need to know much more about our starting point as we embark.

The evidence of the first half of 2020 shows the resilience, the imaginative capacity and the speed of response of the Garda Síochána. The revised Policing Plan has ambitious intentions which will be difficult to achieve. The focussed application of the talents already demonstrated, coupled with an enthusiastic embedding of the successful approaches of recent months in the future life and work of policing will greatly help.

There is a risk that the very many individual targets may result in a somewhat mechanistic approach to their observance or evaluation. But there is opportunity in seizing the key priorities in the plan and making them real in the lives of each and every person. If they can be made to animate the work of all, then there is much that can be achieved in the remainder of the year.

Bob Collins

Chairperson

1. Introduction

This is the first of two reports produced by the Policing Authority assessing Garda Síochána performance against the Annual Policing Plan 2020. It sets out progress to the end of June 2020. The Report begins by providing the reader with some information regarding the annual Policing Plan and an overview of the Authority's approach to assessing and reporting on performance.

The Report then proceeds to discuss the context in which the Policing Plan 2020 was put into operation, before setting out the Authority's assessment of Garda Síochána performance. The Authority's assessment consists of a number of elements, set out in the report as follows:

- A consideration of the impact of the COVID-19 health emergency on the achievement of the Policing Plan 2020.
- The need to revise the plan for 2020 given that impact and the approach and outcomes of the process of revision.
- A summary of performance highlighting key considerations that the Authority believes have impacted on performance and will be important to address in order to achieve the Policing Plan targets for the remainder of the year. These considerations draw on previous themes that have been highlighted in the Authority's assessment of Garda Síochána performance to date, in addition to themes that have emerged, arising from the Garda Síochána response to policing during the health emergency.
- A high-level assessment of areas of progress and areas of concern in relation to each of the six chapters of the Policing Plan. More in-depth focus is also given to operations developed in response to COVID-19, as well as a consideration of the impact on one of the organisation's major change initiatives.

2. What is the Policing Plan?

The annual Policing Plan sets out the range of commitments made by the Garda Síochána to the community, with accompanying targets and measures, by which achievement is measured. The Policing Plan 2020 is the second of three annual plans designed to implement the Garda Síochána's Statement of Strategy 2019 - 2021 ('the Strategy').

The Policing Plan is drawn up by the Garda Síochána, in accordance with the Garda Síochána Act 2005 ('the Act') and is formally laid before the Houses of the Oireachtas. Individual initiatives and commitments in the Policing Plan are decided upon by the Garda Commissioner. Echoing the performance targets that are established by the Authority, and which accompany the policing priorities, the targets and measures that form part of the Policing Plan are agreed by both the Authority and the Garda Síochána. The Plan is flexible in that the Garda Síochána needs to be able to respond to new situations as they arise and to discuss these changes with the Authority. However, the premise of the Plan is that its preparation should be thoughtful and evidence-based, in order to anticipate as many of these situations as possible. The Garda Commissioner submits the Policing Plan to the Authority and it is approved, with the consent of the Minister, subject to any amendments determined by the Authority under the Act.

The 2020 Policing Plan also addresses the actions assigned to the Garda Síochána under the report '*A Policing Service for the Future*.' That report is the implementation plan for the recommendations arising from the Government's Policing Reform programme.

2.1 2020 Policing Plan

The flexibility inherent in the process to develop the annual policing plan was exercised in 2020 as the Garda Síochána responded to the needs of the COVID 19 health emergency. The Policing Plan for 2020 was revised in light of the additional work and activity that had to be undertaken. This activity involved a significant reorientation and reprioritisation of focus and resourcing, which understandably and predictably impacted on the organisation's capacity to deliver on its prior commitments. It has also introduced a significant number of additional commitments in almost all areas of strategic priority, arising from the health emergency. This process of revising the Policing Plan is discussed later in this report. In practical terms, it means that assessment of Garda Síochána performance in 2020 draws on both the progress made in achieving the initial commitments and the significant additional commitments which the Garda Síochána made, particularly to the community, in its policing response to COVID 19.

2.2 How does the Authority monitor and assess performance against the Policing Plan?

The primary mechanism for monitoring and assessing policing performance is through monthly Authority meetings with the Garda Síochána, a minimum of four of which are held in public each year. Performance is also reviewed in depth by the Authority's Policing Strategy and Performance (PSP), and Garda Síochána Organisation Development (OD) Committees. Throughout the year the Authority and the Committees review and analyse internal and external reporting from and about the Garda Síochána.

The Authority reviews performance in person, through a programme of engagements during the year. As well as engaging with the Garda Síochána, the Authority interacts with Joint Policing Committees, and conducts a stakeholder engagement programme. Information and experience gathered through these different types of engagements are drawn together, along with research when relevant, to inform discussion between Authority members and the senior leadership of the Garda Síochána.

2.3 How does the Authority report on policing performance?

The Authority has typically prepared two assessments of policing performance in a year. These reports focus on the achievement of the initiatives set out in the Policing Plan, progress against strategic crime and public perception targets, and the broader, thematic challenges faced by the organisation. The Authority regards the production of the half-year and full-year reports as important in keeping the community informed of the performance of its policing service and in providing transparency on the depth and breadth of its oversight work.

In its last report, the Authority set out an initiative by initiative assessment that echoes the reporting received from the Garda Síochána throughout the year. It provided the reader with a sense of the information received and upon which, among other things, the Authority makes its assessment. This approach has been maintained where possible in this report. However, the revision of the Policing Plan has meant that the RAG (Red, Amber, and Green) status is not necessarily a true reflection of the Garda Síochána's performance during this time, and this matter is discussed further in the summary of the Authority's findings.

During this extraordinary time for the state, the Authority has also been providing fortnightly reports to the Minister on Policing Performance by the Garda Síochána in relation to COVID-19 regulations. To date, the Authority has produced 6 such public reports on the policing response to the COVID-19 health emergency. These reports have presented a significantly positive picture of the policing response. This half-year report does not attempt to re-present that material. However, the nature of engagements that the Authority has had, both with the Garda Síochána and with a wide range of stakeholder groups, has provided a richer, broader backdrop against which to locate our assessment of the Policing Plan. It would be remiss to consider the Garda Síochána's performance in 2020 without significant regard to the impact, opportunity and learning that has emerged from the experience of policing during this this time. The experience of oversight at this time has also given the Authority pause for thought, in terms of its own approach to stakeholder engagement, particularly in the context of determining policing priorities and desired outcomes. This is a theme to which Authority will wish to return in advance of planning for 2021.

3. Policing Plan 2020 – Building on Success

The Policing Plan 2020 was submitted to the Minister on 24 December 2019. In doing so, the Authority noted the scale of the challenges facing the Garda Síochána. The Authority recognised that real and substantial progress had been made in implementing the Policing Plan in 2019. There was also what was regarded as an increased sense of realism evident on the part of the Garda Síochána in terms of what might be achieved in 2020. There were a number of key themes arising from the full year assessment, as follows:

- Progress was noted in a number of key areas: the new Garda Síochána Operating Model, the development of a number of key strategies in the areas of community policing, diversity & integration, ICT, people strategy, human rights, a more victim-centred service provision; work to improve data quality and data management; ICT initiatives designed to change ways of working; significant progress on signing the Code of Ethics.
- On-going challenges were highlighted in particular the number of strategies requiring implementation in 2020; the increase in road deaths and serious injuries; and challenges with regard to measuring the effectiveness of policing measures.
- The Authority noted a sense that the culture of the Garda Síochána is slowly changing and that progress in this regard is to be encouraged. In particular, the Chairperson signalled that it was this shift in approach and a willingness to listen to voices within and outside the organisation, especially those voices not often heard in the past, combined with an understanding of the changing expectations of the people and society that will make the radical cultural change that is needed in the organisation.

3.1 A Changed Context – A Changed Plan

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic required the reorientation of the Garda Síochána to a range of activities in support of health and social needs. The context in which the Policing Plan 2020 was to be delivered was significantly changed. A Co-ordination Unit was established by the Garda Síochána on 10 March 2020, to manage and co-ordinate the organisation's response to policing, as the situation evolved. In addition, the Commissioner issued four strategic objectives in respect of responding to COVID-19 and requested that the Policing Plan 2020 would be revised, having regard to them. The Policing Plan is the organisation's articulation of its commitments and intent in any year and as such it was important that the Policing Plan 2020 would be revised to reflect the new objectives. The objectives were:

- Act to minimise the risk to the public by promoting, through good practice, the advice of the HSE. This includes acting in a way to thwart the spread of COVID-19 via social transfer.
- Maximise the safety of the public through engaging, explaining, encouraging and ultimately enforcing the Health Regulations.
- Act to prevent and detect crime, preserve the peace and reduce road traffic collision fatalities and injuries.
- Promote confidence in the Garda Síochána through retaining a close connection with our community, providing accurate and timely information, by supporting, as far as possible, the patterns of daily life with civility and courtesy and by continuing to seek out and respond to those who are vulnerable at this time.

Following a number of engagements with the Garda Síochána over the course of March and April, a revised Policing Plan was approved by the Authority and submitted to the Minister for Justice. The revised plan sought to incorporate the measures taken by the Garda Síochána to support the wide-ranging Government response to COVID-19. This created an inevitable draw on the resources available to deliver on the existing strategic objectives, as originally envisaged. The revision to the Policing Plan was an important opportunity to recast and prioritise the organisation's ambitions in light of the resources available to it in this new context.

There was also early anticipation and consideration by the Garda Síochána of the impact of COVID-19. This included the impact on different crime types, the opportunities that this would present for criminality and the risks that restricted movement would pose for vulnerable individuals. These considerations ultimately fed into the revised plan that was submitted. Arising from this, two key associated operations were introduced. Operation Fanacht, to ensure public compliance with travel restrictions, and Operation Faoiseamh, to prevent loss of life and ensure that victims of domestic abuse are supported and protected. There was also a consideration of how best the importance of the Code of Ethics and Human Rights, especially in the context of emergency-type powers, could be reflected and included. The Garda Síochána was mindful of the manner in which operations would be communicated, particularly in respect of Operation Fanacht. The implementation of the strategic objective to engage, educate, encourage and ultimately enforce the Health Regulations, would be a key element of the Garda Síochána response. As is evidenced later in this report, the success of the approach adopted is borne out in the exceptional levels of compliance with the restrictive regulations, in addition to the overwhelmingly positive feedback received regarding the manner in which the Garda Síochána policed the health emergency.

3.2 Impact on oversight of policing

The arrival of COVID-19 also impacted on the Authority's approach to its oversight work. The introduction of additional Garda powers saw the Authority respond with increased reporting of our oversight activity. Additional meetings of the Authority and its Committees were held and while travel restrictions mitigated against on-site engagement, the increased use of technology meant that there was no diminution of oversight. The Authority has reported fortnightly to the Minister for Justice and Equality on the Garda Síochána's use of these powers. It has also significantly expanded its programme of engagement with NGOs, community groups and organisations representing different groups in society to listen and understand the lived experience of policing within different communities during this period. These engagements touched on a range of themes pertinent to an assessment of policing during the health emergency but also an assessment of policing more generally.

4. Summary of Performance

Overall the Authority considers that the policing performance of the Garda Síochána during the first half of 2020 was very positive. In considering performance, the Authority has consistently avoided a mechanistic approach that conceives of assessment purely in terms of the number of initiatives achieved in the Plan. The achievement of the individual initiatives in the Plan is important and is detailed, but the Authority has also focused on the outcomes for the community. Never has this been more pertinent than in assessing performance of policing during this time. For that reason the assessment includes and draws on information on the range of activities undertaken, the approach and consistency with which policing was delivered, and a greater input from members of various communities as to their lived experience of policing during this time.

4.1 Responding to the COVID-19 Challenge

Policing in 2020 has required the Garda Síochána to interpret and respond to an unusual set of complex circumstances. The Garda Síochána is used to responding to emergencies, it is a strength of police services. This emergency is of a particular scope, scale and duration that has impacted on the entire population. This has required the Garda Síochána to enforce regulations that restricted the population in ways that, in the normal course of events, would be unimaginable. The speed with which the Garda Síochána mobilised in response to COVID-19 was notable, and the response displayed agility in assessing risks, redeploying resources and setting up an infrastructure that would allow the organisation to respond on a daily basis. The early identification of risk around vulnerable individuals and groups, and the proactive approach adopted is to be commended. The Garda Síochána implemented two key operations, Fanacht and Faoiseamh, and liaised with key organisations working in these areas. There was a clear recognition that the changing nature of crime and changing vulnerabilities within the community brought about by the restrictions would, and did, demand collaboration. This was with a broad church of statutory and non-statutory organisations, as well as a number of NGOs in order to deliver an appropriate policing response. Those organisations with which the Authority engaged to assess their experience of policing during this time confirmed that the Garda Síochána was proactive in engaging with them and sustained that approach throughout the period.

The nature of the Garda Síochána response was also notable, in terms of the interpretation of the regulations, the communication approach and tone adopted; with enforcement as a last resort. As has been evident in the Authority's fortnightly reports to the Minister on Garda Síochána performance in relation to the regulations, there is ample evidence to suggest that the implementation of the regulations has been proportionate. While the use of powers was modest, the Authority remains of the view that it was critically important that the use of the emergency powers be adequately recorded. There did not appear to be any sense from the Garda Síochána of an anticipation of the relevance of, and need for comprehensive data and information on the use of the powers, particularly for example when the use of the power of direction resulted in no further enforcement action. This information was important to enable oversight and to give confidence as to the proportionate use of new powers. The Authority believes that the opportunity for the Garda Síochána to locate its new powers within the context of the Code of Ethics and human rights was not fully understood. However, it is appreciated that this may partially have been due to the speed with which the Garda Síochána was seeking to act at the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis in a very fast-changing and dynamic situation.

The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive in relation to the effort, the flexibility and the tone employed by the Garda Síochána in dealing with the public. Organisations that the Policing Authority has engaged with reported increased and more effective collaboration with positive outcomes for victims. At a time of anxiety and disruption for many, the Garda Síochána played a pivotal role in providing constancy and confidence. Garda Síochána proactivity and approach to resourcing has meant increased visibility within communities, but has also provided reassurance for victims. As reflected in the Authority's reporting on policing during this period, the majority of the organisations engaged with by the Authority described an approach to policing that used its increased powers economically and fairly, that sought to conduct its work within the context of a relationship rather than a transaction and which saw *'everyone's vulnerabilities become the Garda Síochána's business.'* The increased sense of personal access to Gardaí and confidence as to their interest was described by one organisation as a *'blueprint for community policing'*.

The policing response was not occurring in a vacuum. The experience has highlighted those positives that existed for the Garda Síochána prior to the health emergency and on which it built its response. Not least amongst these is its existing relationships with the community. But it also highlighted pre-existing challenges that were underscored, or highlighted, by the health emergency. The adequacy of custody arrangements, and facilities for suspects and legal representation, came into sharp relief when exacerbated by the safety requirements associated with COVID-19. The relationship the organisation has with young people was also highlighted. There is a huge opportunity for the organisation to lean into its experiences during this time, both positive and negative and draw out the learning that can be embedded into its culture and practice.

4.2 Impact on the 2020 Policing Plan

The need to revise the Policing Plan and the reasons for its revision have been outlined. The manner in which the revision of the Plan was approached and executed is an element of organisational performance in itself. It speaks to the organisation's capabilities in terms of assessing risk and demand, its sense of its resources and how best they could be deployed, the coherence of planning and strategic prioritisation. The process of revising the Policing Plan was not easy given the character of the emergency, the urgency of the response required and the many unknowns as to how it might progress. The Policing Plan is the Garda Síochána's document. In approaching the revision, the Authority asked that the Garda Síochána revert with a clear statement of what it wanted to achieve, and believed it could achieve, in 2020 having considered the likely impact of COVID-19. The Authority has always cautioned against having too many targets in the Plan, reiterating its openness to considering a recasting of the Plan setting out fewer priorities for 2020. A reduced number of targets does not equate to a reduction in ambition given the scale and significance of some of the work planned for the year. The Authority also recommended the incorporation of COVID-19 policing requirements into existing initiatives, where possible, in order to arrive at a fully integrated Plan, reflective of the manner in which the organisation sought to integrate policing health regulations into its day to day operations.

The Garda Síochána's initial assessment of what needed to be done demonstrated an acute awareness of the need for agility, responsiveness and adaptability to meet the challenges of policing during this period. There was a clear articulation early on of the approach to prioritisation and of the range of

initiatives that would remain prioritised. This was welcome as it showed an understanding of the need to maintain momentum in key projects that would deliver significant change for the organisation, even if it is at a much reduced pace during this period.

The lack of certainty impacted severely on planning. As stated by the Garda Síochána, confident planning is difficult in circumstances where the operational needs, the impact on the level of resources available and the duration of those needs were at the time uncertain. There were existing challenges to achieving the Policing Plan and these were exacerbated. The temporary closure of the Garda Training College in Templemore, for example, had significant implications for projects requiring training delivery, training material development and the development of on-line training, which were already strained.

The execution, in terms of what emerged as a revised Plan, might however, come to be seen as an opportunity missed to critically evaluate and radically revise the Plan, not least given the uncertainty that existed. While on the one hand, it might be argued that the requirement to respond to COVID-19 took precedence, the initial approach, of seeing the policing response to the pandemic as something apart from everyday policing raises questions as to the centrality of the Policing Plan as the key plan that guides the organisation's effort and resourcing. More coherence of planning might have seen the linkages between the work already committed to and the opportunity to adapt that work to fit the new context in which the Garda Síochána was operating. This is important because if the Policing Plan is not the articulation of the organisation's priorities for itself but also for the public, what then is guiding decisions around the deployment of effort, resourcing and attention? Against what is the organisation measuring its performance and holding itself to account?

The revised Policing Plan 2020, has seen a significant increase in the number of initiatives to be delivered in the year, now numbering 138. In revising the Plan, a number of targets went from the specific to the general, making measurement problematic and raising questions as to their meaningfulness. Moreover, many targets were pushed back into quarter 3 and quarter 4. Conversely there were other initiatives where an acceleration of their achievement might have been anticipated, in the context of policing the pandemic, particularly in the area of health and well-being.

This increase in the number of initiatives is of concern to the Authority on a number of levels. It calls into question the achievability of the Plan, especially given that so many initiatives have been pushed back into quarter 3 and quarter 4. But also, concerns remain in relation to targets that it is known at this stage are not achievable (for example redeployment of Garda members; targets in relation to the intake of Garda members and Garda staff). The process to revise the Plan involved engagement between Garda Síochána management and the breadth of Members and Staff responsible for the delivery of specific initiatives. Their views were sought as to whether the initiatives remained capable of being delivered. What was perhaps insufficient was a subsequent interrogation as to whether, although considered capable of being delivered, these were the initiatives that should be prioritised. Or whether resources, attention and effort might more usefully be diverted into a smaller number of key areas. In contrast the decision making around the approach to the roll out of the Operating Model was more strategically alert. Bold decisions were made to change course on how the roll out would happen that took cognisance of the circumstances and attempted to leverage as much as possible out of what could be achieved.

The Authority recognises however that the retention of targets, even when it is possible that they may not be achieved, can have a purpose. Annual Plans by their nature should be stretching and

challenging and previous policing plans have been of this character. The inclusion of a target can help in maintaining momentum and a sense of urgency in an area of work. There are areas within the Policing Plan that despite the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic the Garda Síochána is determined to progress and maintaining visibility of that ambition with the Plan was important for the organisation. On that basis the Authority was satisfied to approve the Plan and will bear this in mind when assessing performance against such challenging targets at year-end.

4.3 Achievement of Initiatives in 2020

In previous reports the Authority has set out the number of initiatives that are on track, off target or at risk. This gives as a broad indication of the degree to which the Plan was being achieved in accordance with expectations. In 2019 it was notable that the number of initiatives which were on target and were achieved had increased significantly and this was coupled with a sense that there was an increased focus on performance and delivery. At this halfway point in 2020, a summary of the RAG status of initiatives is again set out. However, at this time and in light of the issues discussed above the summary must be considered with a degree of caution. Initiatives have been in some cases amended, timelines have shifted and these have impacted on how the RAG status has been reported. For example an initiative that may have been at risk in March, may now be green as the target for its completion has shifted to quarter 4.

| Summary RAG status – June 2020 | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Priority | Out of Scope | Not Started | On Target | At Risk | Off Target | No Status | Total |
| 1 – Community Policing | 0 | 0 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| 2 – Protecting People | 0 | 0 | 27 | 6 | 5 | 0 | 38 |
| 3 – A Secure Ireland | 0 | 0 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 13 |
| 4 – A Human Rights Foundation | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| 5 – Our People – Our Greatest Resource | 0 | 0 | 24 | 18 | 3 | 0 | 45 |
| 6 – Transforming Our Service | 0 | 0 | 16 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Total | 0 | 0 | 95 | 35 | 8 | 0 | 138 |
| | 0% | 0% | 69% | 25% | 6% | 0% | 100% |

Other key measures typically included in the assessment of performance are the crime trends and the outcomes of the Public Attitudes Survey. The effectiveness of these measures of performance in the current context have been somewhat reduced. The restrictions introduced by the health emergency understandably impacted on the numbers and types of crimes committed quite apart from any impact of policing performance. Similarly the health restrictions impacted on the carrying out of the Public Attitudes Survey and these measures are not available.

The impact of the health emergency on the usual measures and the extraordinary nature of the emergency required an agility to the Authority’s oversight during this time. The Authority reoriented to seek and place increased emphasis on engagement with the experience of policing. It could be argued that while the absence of the survey makes it impossible to track progress against the range

of specific measures contained within it, taking a more holistic view of performance, the public attitude to policing and the performance of the Garda Síochána during this time has been very positive. Similarly while it is difficult to effectively assess policing performance across those crime types that reduced as a result of the health emergency, the pre-emptive response by the Garda Síochána to those areas of crime that it identified as likely to rise, for example domestic abuse and the positive response to that work is an important measure in itself of performance during this period. Additionally, the Authority gave weight to the level of activity the Garda Síochána undertook during this period, as another measure of performance.

Greater detail regarding the key areas of progress and areas of concern arising from the Authority's assessment in each chapter of the Policing Plan are set out in section 5.

4.4 Challenges to the achievement of the Policing Plan

The Authority has consistently emphasised the critical need for a plan that drives policing activity and is central to the organisation's considerations in prioritising its activity and the effective deployment of its resources. In its assessment of performance in 2019, the Authority found some evidence that the Policing Plan appeared to be more reflective of those activities that the Garda Síochána deemed important and that there was an increased sense that the process of assigning targets to identified priorities had improved. The inevitable and predictable pressures placed on the organisation during this time has seen some reversion of that progress.

The volume of initiatives contained in the revised plan will be challenging to achieve in their own right. This is before any consideration of the impact of the demands placed on the Garda Síochána by the health emergency, and how long those demands might remain. The pre-existing challenges of HR, ICT, accommodation and training remain and have to be tackled within circumstances where there are unforeseen and ill-defined draws on resources. The volume also means that inevitably no more than perfunctory, uneven reporting can be achieved. The Authority has also been consistent in its insistence that it has no desire to create unnecessary administrative burdens for the Garda Síochána. Reporting arrangements should align with existing decision-making structures within the organisation. They should facilitate the provision of focussed, informative updates that chart progress against targets and provide the necessary levels of transparency, in the public interest.

This is challenging from the perspectives of both the Policing Authority and the Garda Síochána. Insufficient information renders oversight difficult and it has the unintended consequence of further time required to elicit quality, relevant information. The Authority is aware, through its own outreach with stakeholders and its engagement with Garda representatives on various individual initiatives, that far more is being done than can be recognised or given credit for through the current reporting regime. There is a serious risk that the current reporting regime will come to be viewed as an unnecessary distraction, and the danger of a perception that it will take Garda members and staff away from the 'real work' of policing. This is in no-one's interest, least of all the public to whom both the Authority and the Garda Síochána is accountable.

Arising from these concerns, the Authority will engage with the Garda Síochána leadership to comprehensively assess an approach to target setting that would allow a tighter more focused level of attention to key priorities in the context of the Policing Plan 2021 to ensure that the emerging plan

drives the business of the organisation in achieving the strategic goals that it has set and its mission of 'keeping people safe'.

4.5 Considering Performance and value

The point regarding performance targets and measures is neither academic nor mechanistic. It is important to consider what good policing performance looks like and what brings value to the public from its policing service. The Authority's sense of the value brought by the Garda Síochána during the health emergency goes beyond the observable outputs of that work to include the manner in which it interpreted and carried out its role. This also endorses the Garda Síochána's legitimacy within society. That legitimacy is underscored by a confidence in how policing is done. The Authority has welcomed the provision of information in relation to use of force and looks forward to this information being published, as the Commissioner intends. The ability of the Authority to publish information on the use of the exceptional powers, although limited, was critical. A more holistic view of performance within the Garda Síochána would see a deeper appreciation as to why the provision of such information in a public, transparent manner is important as a basis for public confidence and legitimacy.

A keen grip on what it is the organisation regards as good performance is also essential to enliven a performance management system. It is disappointing that the estimated usage of the performance management system within the Garda Síochána is around 20%. The organisation is reporting increased levels of morale and a renewed sense of purpose. The absence of a performance culture wherein recognition and acknowledgement of that effort can routinely be communicated through a performance system is a missed opportunity. While some progress has been made in determining the approach to performance management for Garda staff, it is regrettable that this is still not in place.

The Authority welcomes the development of the Public Attitudes Survey down to divisional level. Local garda management will have a sense of what the people they serve in their area think about their performance. This will be particularly important in the context of the new operating model. The challenge for the Garda Síochána is to increasingly see and make explicit the link between the performance outcomes it wants – be they reductions in particular areas of crime, the trust and confidence of the public or increased efficiency within the organisation – and the content and prioritisation of work within the annual policing plan. The necessity for detail within the policing plan is understood. The manner in which the disparate initiatives are presented in the Plan currently does not give a sense as to how achieving the initiative contributes towards the achievement of the higher performance outcome of 'keeping people safe'.

4.6 Learning

There is significant emphasis in this report and in the reports that the Authority has produced on policing during the health emergency on the learning to be taken from the experience. Specifically, learning from the success of Operation Fanacht and Operation Faoiseamh and learning from the feedback from groups and organisations that spoke of the positive tone of policing and the impact it had on confidence and trust.

There is merit to a consideration of garda visibility that moves beyond a simple equation with increased garda numbers and looks at the nature and type of interactions that gave people that reassurance and confidence.

There is evidence that attention is being given by the Garda Síochána to these matters and what implications they might have for its approach to community policing, its strategies around diversity, and how it situates and presents itself to the community physically.

There is also the role the Garda Síochána played within a larger community infrastructure that emerged during this time and how the relationships that were built with NGOs and providers of services in the community can be sustained and built upon. As highlighted by many of these groups, the situations to which the Garda Síochána is called require skills beyond a policing competence. The competence required by the Garda is the ability to leverage the appropriate local supports available. This requires awareness and relationship building at a systemic and not just an individual level. Again this is something that is being actively considered.

Not all engagement has been positive and that presents opportunity. The Authority's engagement with groups and organisations highlighted where experiences have been negative. The Commissioner and his senior team have sought to explore how the organisation might better understand this experience.

One area which has already seen practical development is the link within the Garda Síochána between community policing, the Diversity and Integration strategy and the stated ambition to increase the diversity of the garda workforce. In an organisation that the Authority has often identified as being overly siloed, this is a welcome development.

There has also been evidence of learning outside of the COVID-19 experience. The approach to culture change within the organisation has developed with a recognition of the need to communicate to Members and Staff the link between the issues identified by the workforce in the Culture Audit and the change initiatives that are being undertaken. A renewed emphasis on internal communications that presents this information in a way that speaks to the realities of operational policing and has resonance for the workforce has contributed to this work but also more generally to the organisation's ability to speak to its members and staff.

The change in approach to the roll-out of the Operating Model, arising from the health emergency also showed evidence of organisational learning. The organisation has been criticised in the past for proceeding with significant projects in a way that ignored the starting point or state of readiness to undertake that change but also took little regard in planning and implementation of the availability of key enablers such as ICT, HR, accommodation and finance to support the project. The introduction of a phase to assess the readiness of divisions to engage with the Operating Model is to be welcomed. Also the inclusion of personnel from the enabling functions at decision making level with clear escalation routes when resources are contested demonstrates that some of the lessons from previous attempts to implement change have been learned.

4.7 Articulation of the Resources Required

The Garda Síochána's awareness and understanding of the level, usage and adequacy of its resources is critical to its ability to plan and to hold itself to account as well as its ability to account for its performance externally. The Authority is of the view that human resources and finance can be perceived within the Garda Síochána organisation as disciplines and practices that are separate and distant from the business of policing. The Authority believes that these are not supporting, transaction processing functions but need to be viewed as strategic capabilities that need to be embedded in planning, decision-making and performance management across the organisation. Financial awareness and an understanding of the relationship between resources, objectives and activities, their prioritisation in the context of a limited budget, and the financial impact of decisions is a key requirement for the Senior Leadership Team to support its role in strategic decision-making and managing organisation performance.

The absence of a costed Policing Plan impacts negatively on the organisation's ability to articulate and understand its resourcing needs. In discharging its annual statutory duty to provide advice to the Minister on the adequacy of Garda Síochána resources the Authority has been repeatedly struck by how little the organisation can articulate as to its current use of resources and its resourcing needs. Continuing to frame finance as a supporting function rather than a key operational and strategic capability which crucially impacts on the policing service delivered, will not advance this position. This becomes even more critical in the context of the broader economic fall-out from COVID-19.

4.8 Conclusions and Recommendations.

The assessment of Garda Síochána performance at this point in 2020 is unavoidably and rightly dominated by the unique contribution the policing service has made to the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the positive response of the public to that contribution. The Authority has produced a series of six reports to date which present its assessment of policing performance during the health emergency. While this material is not repeated within this report, the requirements of the policing response drew on resources that inevitably then impacted on the ability of the Garda Síochána to achieve the other objectives set out in the Policing Plan.

The response by the organisation to the impact of COVID-19 highlighted some enduring strengths, but also challenges the organisation has faced. Some of these relate to how it thinks about performance, how it plans and the internal capabilities it draws on to identify what it wants to achieve and how best this can be done.

At this point the Authority reiterates its call that the Garda Síochána rethink its approach to, and format of, the Policing Plan in order to deliver a more focused document better capable of being communicated to Members and Staff, against which they can see a causal link between what they do and what it is the organisation is trying to achieve and values.

In drawing up the Plan the Authority recommends that significant attention be given to the role of finance as a key strategic capability that essentially impacts on operational policing performance

The organisation has had a unique opportunity to engage with all different communities and it is vital that it examines that experience to ensure it understands and captures what brought value for the

public. This has to be considered in the context of what tasks fell away during this time but which the organisation will again need to pick up, what additional tasks are appropriate to retain beyond the health emergency and also what non-resource dependent elements of performance had resonance for the public.

The Authority would also recommend that the organisation consider a more holistic view of its performance and give thought to how best it can publicly account for the use of its authority and powers and why this is important.

5. High-Level Performance Assessment

This section of the report provides a high-level assessment of performance against each chapter, identifying the areas of progress and areas of concern.

5.1 Chapter 1: Community Policing

Strategic Objective: Agree, communicate, resource and implement a new approach to community policing.

The new Community Policing Framework is scheduled for phased implementation in 2020, with further phased implementation planned for 2021. It is intended that there will be dedicated community policing services, based on locally identified need.

There are two strategic key initiatives in this chapter of the Policing Plan: the implementation and evaluation of a Community Policing Framework; and engagement with communities and stakeholders, listening to their needs and working in partnership to address them. The revised Policing Plan saw the inclusion of two additional targets addressing community partnerships and community engagement, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Progress

- Significantly enhanced engagement with the community in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. A sense within the community that the 'tone' of policing has been enhanced.
- There has been ongoing liaison with divisional personnel in relation to lessons learned from community policing during the past four months.
- The new Community Policing Framework has been rolled out in four divisions and mapping has been completed. Two out of five modules of training have been delivered.
- Implementation plan for Diversity & Integration Strategy has been developed and roll-out has commenced. There has been significant liaison with vulnerable individuals, marginalised and hard to reach groups in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A drugs related intimidation seminar was held for nominated Inspectors in February, in conjunction with the National Family Support Network.
- A plan to embed Garda Reserves within community policing units has been developed and an oversight committee and working group has been established. Work continues on a communications strategy for Garda Reserves.

Concerns

- Learning from the experience of policing within the community for COVID-19 will not be captured and the Community Policing Framework will not be adapted accordingly.
- The return to 'business as usual' policing will signal a diminished Garda presence in the community and a diminution of the good will and trust built up.
- The Public Attitudes Survey is paused meaning that many of the performance indicators contained in the Policing Plan cannot be tracked.

- There is a sense from stakeholders that the implementation of the Diversity and Integration Strategy is not being felt on the ground.
- Variance in the degree of engagement between Garda leadership and the Chairpersons of Joint Policing Committees.
- Falling numbers of Garda Reserves and disconnect with the Garda organisation.

Policing COVID-19 and Emergency Powers

The Garda Síochána response to COVID-19 has brought community engagement to the fore and generated significant positive commentary. Feedback from stakeholder groups, minority groups and community representatives expressed appreciation with response by the organisation with respect to the work done within communities and to the manner in which members conducted themselves, in providing contact, comfort and confidence in difficult circumstances. Cohorts of the population which may otherwise be regarded as being distanced from the Garda Síochána, cited positive interactions with members of the organisation, as a whole and in terms of individual examples of exemplary practice. While there have been some inconsistencies noted, particularly in relation to the views of young people, these interactions have served to boost the morale among Garda members and provide valuable learnings in terms of community engagement.

The positivity of engaging with communities has been balanced against the Garda Síochána's responsibilities in enforcing restrictions, which at the start of the year would have been unthinkable. With the introduction of temporary restrictions of movement, temporary powers were granted to the Garda Síochána on 8 April 2020. In exercising these powers, during engagements with the public, the Garda Síochána adopted a graduated approach in ensuring compliance restrictions. The approach was colloquially referred to as the four E's – Engage, Educate, Encourage and as a last resort Enforce. Only the last of these represented exercising of the five powers afforded to Gardaí under the emergency legislation, which were:

- Direct a person to comply with the Regulations;
- Arrest for failure to comply with such a direction;
- Demand a person's name and address;
- Arrest for failure to comply with the demand for name and address; and
- Arrest for failure to comply with the Regulations.

The Authority closely monitored the Garda Síochána's use of these powers throughout the period and reported on a fortnightly basis to the Minister with its assessment. For the period 8 April to 11 July, the Garda Síochána reported the exercise of the temporary powers 353 times.

A key issue throughout the period has been recording of these interactions and availability of data. These 353 incidents only refer to those which reached the stage of enforcement as opposed to the use of powers. No recording took place of those interactions which involved directing members of the public to return to their homes, disperse gatherings and/or remain within the given permitted travel radius and where they complied with this direction. Furthermore, despite requests from the Authority, the Garda Síochána were not able to record or report on which of the five powers were used during the 353 incidents. Further issues arose in the course of the period in relation to the organisations inability to record ethnic identifiers, particularly in relation to use of anti-spit hoods.

The response by the Garda Síochána to the public health emergency was significant. It commenced with Operation Fanacht on 8 April which saw in excess of 2,500 members assigned to checkpoints on main arterial routes, mobile checkpoints in towns and secondary routes and at tourist locations and beauty spots. While data was not provided in relation to checkpoint numbers in the earlier stages, indicative information suggests there were in approximately 10,000 checkpoints carried out during each week of May, while sample data suggested high levels of compliance by members of the public and relatively low numbers of people being turned back at checkpoints or having powers

used against them. Furthermore the number of complaints received about Garda members has been relatively low.

With the easing of restrictions and revocation of some penal provisions on 8 June, the focus shifted to Operation Navigation and the policing of licenced premises. The initial operation from 3 to 5 July, involved 6,830 visits to licenced premises, of which 2,785 were found to be open while only 26 of these were found not to be in compliance with health regulations and/or licensing laws. While there have been further incidents since then, these remain a tiny minority.

Beyond the specific use of powers, a number of key oversight issues have emerged. A key concern from the outset was the introduction of anti-spit hoods, which represent a more draconian approach to policing. Their introduction also gave rise to a number of human rights concerns, not solely in the very nature of their use but also in the ability of the organisation to provide assurance that such measures were not being used disproportionately against ethnic minorities or any other segment of the population. The Commissioner has provided assurances that these would be strictly limited to the current crisis and, separately, that a review would be carried out in September. In addition to this the Authority sought detailed reporting on each incident in order to monitor how these were being used. From 12 April to 11 July these were deployed 86 times including four incidents of use on persons under the age of 18.

The welfare of members and staff was also a key consideration. Initially there was a lack of clarity around the issuance and use of personal protective equipment within the organisation. It was not until 15 May when guidelines were introduced which specified the circumstances by which PPE should be used. Assaults by spitting and coughing at members by a small minority of the public were a much denounced feature of the period, with 134 such incidents reported between 8 April and 11 July.

The period has been one which has presented significant challenges for both policing and society as a whole. However, the largely positive approach by the Garda Síochána, matched with a positive approach by communities has provided the opportunity for valuable lessons in terms of the policing response, in terms of reaching in to vulnerable communities, the recognition of differing policing needs for different cohorts of the population, and the responsiveness of the organisation. This has been balanced against the need to develop organisational capabilities in terms of the adequate recording, reporting and transparency of data and the organisation's need to further embed a human rights focus in the organisation.

5.2 Chapter 2: Protecting People

Strategic Objective 2019 – 2021: Protecting people from crime and keeping people safe on our roads.

There are seven strategic initiatives in this chapter relating to capacity to manage and coordinate responses to crime through information-led policing; reduction in crime and fear of crime; improvements in criminal investigations; the provision of victim-focused services; and road safety and reduced criminality. This chapter contains 38 targets the current year, with five additional targets included in the revised plan.

Progress

- The establishment of a COVID-19 Co-ordination unit, operating on a 24/7 basis, co-ordinating operational instructions and providing guidance and assistance to frontline staff.
- The roll-out and implementation of Operation Fanacht in support of the implementation of the emergency Health Regulations, with a strong focus on community engagement.
- The roll-out and implementation of Operation Faoiseamh, in support of victims of domestic violence. Over 8,000 contacts/attempted contacts have been recorded since 1 January.
- Establishment of a new Divisional Protective Services Unit (DPSU) in Clare, bringing the total number of units to 16, with staffing competitions concluded for 5 units. Further review is being undertaken to determine scope, capacity and resources levels for DPSUs.
- Work to consider how the national intelligence model will enhance coordination and tasking function and integrate with the Operating Model is progressing.
- 12 of 39 recommendations contained in the Youth Referral Report Recommendations have been completed, with the remaining recommendations progressing in line with timelines.
- Implementation plan agreed for the Homicide Investigation Review Team.
- 82% of victims of domestic abuse have received contact from the Garda Síochána within 7 days of the reported incident, while 86.88% of victim assessments have been completed within 3 days of the reported incident.
- Significant increase in intelligence entries created by roads policing personnel. Increase in lifesaver offence detections since the easing in travel restrictions. The roll-out of mobile devices to front line members has enabled to identification of those driving while disqualified.

Concerns

- The remaining uncertainty in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic and the required policing response.
- The impact of a suspension of training on the roll-out of the domestic abuse risk assessment tool.
- Resourcing in the area of data analytics and impacts on front-line policing.
- The lack of meaningful engagement on the recommendations contained in the Crowe Horwath report on FCN/MIT, rendering effective oversight difficult.
- Concerns in relation to Driver Training Policy and links to fleet strategy

Operation Faoiseamh

Operation Faoiseamh was established by the Garda Síochána in anticipation of an increase in domestic abuse call for service during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was launched on 1 April and its aim is to prevent loss of life and to ensure that victims of domestic abuse are supported and protected.

Operation Faoiseamh is built on four pillars in support of victims:

- Media campaigns, videos and advice
- The execution of court orders in relation to the Domestic Violence Act 2018
- The completion of domestic abuse call-backs
- Proactive follow-up calls to all victims by the Garda Victim Services Offices

The key message from the Garda Síochána has been that no-one should feel threatened in their own home, help is only a phone call away and if reported, assistance will be there.

The Garda Síochána also worked closely with state and non-state agencies to facilitate continuity in terms of support and court services. Arising from the range of activities, the Garda Síochána issued information in relation to Operation Faoiseamh on 9 June, reporting that:

- There has been a 25% year on year increase in calls for assistance in respect of domestic-related issues.
- A total of 8,229 contacts or attempts at contact to victims of domestic abuse had been made.
- 107 prosecutions, linked to Operation Faoiseamh, have commenced.

The Garda Síochána has expressed the view that in addition to the volume of calls made, it is also focused on qualitative measures of impact. These measures are increased levels of trust among victims; recognition from NGOs of an improved service; and, understanding among Garda members that proactivity produces results in domestic abuse cases.

Stakeholder Response & Authority Assessment

Operation Faoiseamh has been welcomed as a significant response by the Garda Síochána to an identified risk that the pandemic would result in an increase in domestic abuse. Reported crime figures demonstrate that this has been the case and domestic abuse rose during this period. The Authority has engaged regularly with a number of organisations and groups which work with victims of domestic abuse throughout the country to understand how the situation has evolved over the last number of months and the impact of the Garda Síochána's work.

The Garda Síochána's early engagement, proactivity and the resourcing, focus and tone of the policing response has been highlighted by those working in this area. The Garda Síochána has worked well with local groups and organisations to meet the needs of victims. Key points highlighted include the benefit of the proactive engagement by the Garda Síochána with groups and organisations prior to the launch of the operation. This maximised the opportunity for NGOs to

Operation Faoiseamh

support and amplify the key messages. The publicity undertaken was important in sending a clear message to perpetrators that despite the 'lockdown', domestic abuse would be policed, and to victims that services remained open and able to help. Stakeholders have given examples of the Garda effort, collaboration and innovation that has happened at local level and have referenced significant interventions undertaken that they believe may have averted domestic homicides. The policing response to domestic abuse has been broadly consistent throughout the country and where issues arose, NGOs reported an ability to raise and escalate issues. These issues sometimes reflected a lack of understanding of the dynamics and dimensions of domestic abuse. Strong relationships between local Gardaí and local support organisations have been important and there is a hope expressed by NGOs that these relationships, the tone of engagement and the proactivity will endure beyond the pandemic.

In summary, the response to Operation Faoiseamh has been overwhelmingly positive with one stakeholder group characterising the current policing response to domestic abuse as 'the best it has ever been in Ireland.' The question now arises for organisations and indeed for the Garda Síochána as to which components of that response will become embedded in Garda practice and policy.

The Authority would note that Operation Faoiseamh builds on the significant progress made over the past number of years on the resourcing and policy infrastructure within this area of policing. Operation Faoiseamh emerged against a backdrop of the continued roll-out of Divisional Protective Services Units (DPSU) around the country. Sixteen such units are now operational, with responsibility for the investigation of sexual and domestic crimes. In revising the Policing Plan 2020, a firm commitment was given by Garda leadership that targets in respect of victims would remain unchanged. By the end of June, the interview process for resources for a further five DPSUs was complete and the process of recruitment for the remaining eight units was in train. In addition, further analysis is being undertaken to inform the scope, capacity and resourcing requirements for the units.

Both the Garda Síochána and groups and organisations working in the area of domestic abuse are keen to evaluate the impact of Operation Faoiseamh and it will be important that the learning is captured and considered in light of the implications for the roll out and resourcing of the DPSUs, the Operating model and the approach to community policing.

5.3 Chapter 3: A Secure Ireland

Strategic Objective 2019-2021: Maintain state security.

There are three strategic initiatives under this objective encompassing state security, intelligence capacity and capability and contributing to national and international security.

Progress

- A framework for a new security and intelligence operating model, aligned with the Operating Model for the wider organisation has been completed for sign-off.
- Scoping work to enhance the capability of Security and Intelligence is ongoing in the areas of technology, techniques and methodologies.

Concerns

- The need for significant resources to enable the integration of both operating models.
- Capability enhancement in security and intelligence dependent on accommodation, the approval of IT related business cases and legislative changes.

5.4 Chapter IV: A Human Rights Foundation

Strategic Objective 2019-2010: Human rights as the foundation upon which we deliver policing services.

There are two strategic initiatives under this chapter relating to the establishment of a human rights infrastructure for the Garda Síochána and embedding human rights and ethical behaviour into policing.

Progress

- 12-month review of the human rights framework has commenced.
- Interim IT process to support reporting of the use of force complete. Work has commenced on the development of a fully automated mechanism for recording use of force.
- The Garda Síochána Ethics strategy has been published.
- 87.2% of Garda members, 64% of Garda staff, and 32.9% of Garda Reserves have signed the Code of Ethics. An extensive review of the database of figures for those who have signed continues.
- Ethics content for inclusion in training on the GS Decision Making Model has been completed.
- The suicide intervention training programme, safeTALK, has been piloted in four policing areas.
- A review of the Custody Record Risk Assessment Form has been completed and is the subject of consultation.
- The specification requirements for enabling comprehensive recording of Use of Force Data has been agreed and is scheduled for release on the PULSE system in October.
- Training for the Anti-Corruption Unit has been developed.

Concerns

- The conclusion of the human rights review of five prioritised areas (to include Use of Force) is off target. The requirement to address the overarching use of force policy is identified as a risk.
- Training on the Code of Ethics and the GS Decision Making Model cannot be progressed.
- The delivery of human rights based policing training is off track.

5.5 Chapter V: Our People – Our Greatest Resource

Strategic Objective 2019-2021: Invest in our people, our greatest resource, providing continuous professional development.

7 strategic initiatives relating to staff engagement, workforce planning, leadership capacity, training, performance, ethical behaviour and health and well-being. 33 targets in the current year.

Progress

- Establishment of the HR Transformation Implementation Group to drive the work of implementing the People Strategy.
- Step-change in the approach to culture change in the Garda Síochána organisation. Links being made between the findings of the cultural audit and the initiatives contained in the Policing Plan 2020 that are designed to address these issues. The explicit communication on cultural matters in Newsbeat. Preparation in 2020 to conduct a second audit in 2021.
- eLearning programme for Property & Exhibit Management (PEMS) has been deployed.
- The BA (Applied Policing) has been revised to a blended learning approach and changes approved by accrediting linked partner, University of Limerick.
- The Garda Síochána workforce comprises 3,278 staff and 14,680 members. The process to appoint 15 Assistant Principal Officers to manage new business services hubs in each of the 19 divisions has been completed, with four positions outstanding.
- Sanction has been received for a Learning & Development Director.
- Situational Judgement Exercises for Sergeant and Inspector promotion process developed and validated.
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy drafted.
- Progress being made on PALF (Performance, Accountability and Learning Framework) usage; guides to performance conversations have been developed.
- Agreement has been reached in relation to the provision of ePMDS for Garda use.
- New Performance & Conduct Regulations/Arrangements have been developed, as well as revised Performance Policy & Procedures.
- High levels of support and guidance provided to all personnel, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, by the Health & Safety Unit.
- Remote working solutions put in place from almost 5,000 additional staff members.

Concerns

- The procurement of an Electronic Training Management System has been deferred for up to six months and the current tender process has been withdrawn.
- 275 Garda recruits have commenced training and due to the impact of COVID-19 there is no capacity to take the remaining 425 in the current year, meaning the target of 700 will not be met.
- Delivery of training across a multiplicity of areas impacted, having regard to ongoing social distancing requirements.
- Update to probationer training is off track.
- Upgrade required of IT systems to allow for delivery of online training across the organisation.
- No training provided to Garda Staff via One Learning, due to COVID-19.
- Learning & Development Strategy remains in draft format.
- The recruitment of front office staff for Garda stations has not progressed, negatively impacting re-deployment opportunities. Overall redeployment targets will not be reached in the current year.
- Absence of data to evidence progress against the Equality, Diversion & Inclusion Strategy.
- Indications that PALF (the system for performance management) usage is less than 20% across the organisation.
- Post-Traumatic Incident Support Review & Signposting Policy & Procedure off-target and absence of clinical staff will cause further delays.

5.6 Chapter VI: Transforming Our Service

Strategic Objective 2019 – 2021: “Restructure our organisation and transform how we deliver our services”.

This chapter contains six strategic initiatives aimed at the development of a re-structured organisation, that is efficient, effective and responsive and that enjoys public confidence. Confidence within the organisation is also an area of focus through enhanced communications and a renewed confidence in organisational data.

Progress

- Significant work undertaken on the on the roll-out of the Operating Model. An adjusted implementation plan has been agreed that will be involve roll-out based on division readiness across a range of key criteria.
- Establishment of a HR transformation implementation group to drive the People Strategy.
- Processes and procedures for the Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF), to align with the Operating Model, have been developed.
- The development of a Vision for the Garda Síochána’s Information and Technology.
- A review of core technology platforms has been undertaken and a draft roadmap has been developed.
- A Data Quality Assurance Plan has been developed and priority actions for 2020 identified.

- Just under 4,000 mobile devices have been rolled out to front-line members (2,000) and sergeants and selected members, as part of the COVID-19 response (1,800). Front line members have access to two policing applications-vehicle look-up and fixed charge notices (FCN). The roll-out of the 'end-to-end' FCN application is continuing.
- A number of key initiatives contained in the Internal Communications Strategy have been delivered.

Concerns

- The capacity to produce a costed policing plan, based on reliable data, is unlikely to be achieved in 2020.
- Successful progression of internal communications targets for 2020 is dependent on sanctioned posts being filled.
- Staff shortage in GISC risks impacting on the roll-out of the Data Quality Assurance Plan.
- Core technology roadmap likely to be impacted by resource requirements and budgetary constraints.
- The rollout of the enterprise content management (ECM) system has been paused and functional and technical issues with the system remain. There is a risk of a loss of confidence in the system.
- Implementation of the Roster and Duty Management System (RDMS) is off-target and it is unlikely that its roll-out to three divisions will happen by the end of 2020.

Garda Síochána Operating Model

The Garda Síochána Operating Model is a key initiative being delivered by the Garda Síochána under A Policing Service for the Future. The Model's implementation involves the re-configuration of the organisation into four regions, 19 divisions, each with four functional areas. It also entails the reorganisation of the national structures, an alignment between its security and policing services. Building on the divisional and local policing model pilot programmes, the Operating Model seeks to improve structures, processes, technologies and specialist capabilities. This organisational restructuring aims to ensure the delivery of a consistent policing services and is a flagship initiative for the organisation, signalling, as it does, the most significant structural change for the Garda Síochána since its foundation.

The Authority has previously welcomed and supported the model's potential to deliver a policing service that is more visible, more efficient and more responsive to local need. However, it signalled an urgent concern that challenges to roll-out in respect of planning, prioritisation, resourcing, focus and agility existed. In addition, the cultural dimensions to changes in work practices and structures could not be underestimated.

Prior to the COVID-19 health emergency, the Operating Model had launched in five Garda divisions and the plans for the roll-out of a further three phases over the course of 2020, encompassing the remaining fourteen divisions had been developed and launched. With the onset of the health emergency, it was agreed that the roll-out would be restricted to those elements that would not impact on the operational capacity of the divisions responding to the pandemic. As a result, the revised approach has seen a continuation of roll-out in those Phase 1 divisions that had capacity to continue establishing their functional areas, while responding to COVID-19. In addition however, the decision was made to progress with the implementation of the business services functional areas in all 19 divisions, based on a detailed business readiness assessment. This needs assessment is critical in dictating the pace of roll-out of the Operating Model in each division, with the roll-out plans happening on the basis of readiness in terms of personnel, accommodation and ICT, among other things. Work has also progressed at regional level to ensure alignment of the GNCSIS Operating Model and Garda HQ level with the development of organisational design blueprints for corporate services, organised and serious crime, and community engagement and roads policing.

Authority Assessment

The added policing responsibilities brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic required a radical re-think in relation to the roll-out of the Operating Model. It provided a vital opportunity to reflect and re-assess the approach to roll-out. The decision to unpause the roll-out and the manner in which this was approached was strategically alert and reflects the significance the organisations attaches to the roll-out of the Operating Model and what it is intended to achieve. This is a welcome development and through engagements with Garda Síochána representatives, it would appear that two key issues raised by the Authority in previous reports have been taken on board in the approach to the roll out of the Operating Model. Firstly, the need to assess the degree of readiness of any division to implement the significant level of change required is being addressed with the readiness assessment exercise. The second matter relates to the need for those enablers of changes, be they

ICT, accommodation or HR, to be involved throughout the process. In the past, commitments were made based on assumptions regarding ICT/HR/Accommodation supports, absent of any engagement with these functions and their capacity to support and deliver the change required. The approach to the rollout of the Operating Model sees these functions centrally involved at every level of the decision-making process, with clear escalation routes in the event that priorities have to be identified.

In considering the scale of the Operating Model initiative, it could be said that the COVID-19 health emergency and the reflection it precipitated has served to inject a degree of reflection and the injection of increased realism to the planning process. The approach to revising the project plan has demonstrated foresight, reflection and agility on the part of the Garda Síochána. That is not to underestimate the challenge in implementing the change required to bring the new Operating Model to fruition and realising the anticipated benefits. However, on the basis of the information provided to date, it appears that the manner in which it is delivered should increase the chances of successful implementation. The Authority will give more detailed consideration to the Operating Model initiative in the second half of the year and will report further at that time.