



Comhairle Contae
Ros Comáin
Roscommon
County Council



Roscommon Joint Policing Committee (JPC)

Annual Report 2019 & 2020

Message from the Chairperson of Roscommon Joint Policing Committee

As Chairperson of Roscommon Joint Policing Committee (JPC) I welcome the publication of the Annual Report for 2019 and 2020. The report details the work of the committee in delivering on its work during 2019 and 2020 and is an important means of communicating the role and work of the committee.

The Joint Policing Committee aims to develop greater consultation, cooperation and synergy on policing and crime issues between An Garda Síochána, Roscommon County Council, Community Representatives and Elected Local Representatives. During 2019 and 2020, the JPC continued to take a strategic approach to its work in addressing local issues collectively and strategically.

2019 was an election year for local authorities, which meant that all committees set up under the local authorities were reconstituted. This included the JPC, which saw a change in the local authority members for the lifetime of the Council and also the appointment of a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson thereafter. I would like to thank the previous members of the JPC for their support and work and would also like to welcome our new members to the Committee and look forward to working with you all.

I want to record my appreciation to An Garda Síochána and acknowledge the excellent level of participation by the elected and community representatives on the Committee and to each member of the JPC for their continuing support in fulfilling the role and purpose of the JPC. Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank Roscommon County Council for the administration of the Committee.

Councillor Tom Crosby

Chairperson of Roscommon Joint Policing Committee

Introduction

This document constitutes the Annual Report on the operation of the Roscommon Joint Policing Committee (JPC) for 2019 and 2020. This report has been prepared in the context of the Joint Policing Committee Amended Guidelines 2014 jointly issued by the Minister for Justice and Equality and the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government and in specific accordance with Section 36(5) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005.

Background

Section 36(1) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005 provides for the establishment of Joint Policing Committees to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the Local Authority's administrative area.

Functions of a JPC

The functions of a JPC set out in section 36(2) of the Garda Síochána Act, state the following:

'The Joint Policing Committee's function is to serve as a forum for consultations, discussions and recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the Local Authority's administrative area, and in particular to –

- (a) Keep under review –
 - i. The levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in that area (including the patterns and levels of misuse of alcohol and drugs), and
 - ii. The factors underlying and contributing to the levels of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the area.
- (b) Advise the Local Authority concerned and the Garda Síochána on how they might best perform their functions having regard to the need to do everything feasible to improve the safety and quality of life and to prevent crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour within the area,
- (c) Arrange and host public meetings concerning matters affecting the policing of the Local Authority's administrative area,
- (d) Establish, in consultation with the local Garda Superintendent, as the committee considers necessary within specific neighbourhoods of the area, local policing fora to discuss and make recommendations to the committee concerning matters that it is to keep under review under paragraph (a) or on which it is to advise under paragraph (b), in so far as those matters affect their neighbourhoods, and
- (e) Co-ordinate the activities of local policing fora under paragraph (d) or otherwise'.

Section 37(1) also provides:

'A Local Authority shall, in performing its functions, have regard to the importance of taking steps to prevent crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour within its area of responsibility.'

ITEM 1:

Progress made in implementing the JPC's work programme for the year 2019 and 2020

- Gardaí in Roscommon and Castlerea districts continue to be proactive in the drug area as drug related incidents are on the increase. Roadside drug testing is being carried out and more staff members are undergoing training in this area.
- More check points to take place across the district, especially during the day, due to a worrying rise in the level of drink driving convictions.
- All victims of domestic incidents are receiving a call back from the investigating member within seven days and the details of the visit are recorded on the PULSE system.
- A register of vulnerable persons in Roscommon and Castlerea Districts has now been created and all persons on the register have been assessed in relation to their needs. This register was of great assistance during Covid-19 restrictions.

Roscommon CCTV:

- On the 1st of March 2019 Garda John O'Connor made a presentation to Roscommon JPC on behalf of Roscommon Town Team. The project was delivered by Roscommon Town Team in conjunction with Roscommon County Council. Funding of €78,413 was secured for the project. €59,000 was received under the Town and Village Renewal Scheme 2016 with the remainder coming from the Roscommon Town Team budget for 2015 & 2016. A further €20,000 (Approximately) was provided in works and materials by Roscommon County Council.
- The project was officially launched on the 11th April 2019 in Gleeson's Townhouse, Roscommon. Chief Superintendent Healy attended along with members of Roscommon Town Team and Roscommon JPC.
- A total of 25 cameras were installed as part of the new system at 10 locations in Roscommon Town. There is also authorisation for 11 more cameras at 5 other locations. This is subject to future funding.
- Roscommon County Council are the data controllers of the system and the hard drive for the system is stored securely in Aras an Chontae, Roscommon The 25 cameras can be monitored in Roscommon Garda Station.





Photos from official launch of Roscommon CCT Project on 11th of April 2019

Community Policing and the Covid-19 Pandemic:

Vulnerable Persons:

- A list of vulnerable persons was compiled by liaising with Community Alert schemes, Neighbourhood Watch schemes and Community Health Nurses. All persons were visited initially to ascertain what supports they had. Arising out of the visits, the most vulnerable were prioritised to receive regular visits.
- All persons on the list were assessed and then divided into 3 categories. The three (3) categories were in turn been colour coded.
 - **RED** – The persons listed in Red require regular attention especially during heightened Covid-19 restrictions.
 - **Amber** – The persons listed in Amber may require assistance periodically and a monthly visit is recommended.
 - **Green** – The persons listed in Green do not require regular attention as they are generally self-sufficient and they also have good supports. Quarterly visits are recommended.

Community Groups:

- Roscommon and Castlerea Community Policing Units, during the year have been in regular contact with all the Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the District and they were all asked to closely monitor any vulnerable persons living in their communities.
- Community Policing Units have been to the fore front in terms of community engagement duties during the various lockdown periods since March 2020 and continue to offer essential supports within their communities in particular to vulnerable and elderly residents. These engagements may be in relation to the collection of shopping, medication or prescriptions. The contacts conducted may be by way of directly calling to the individuals and knocking on the door or window to check in on the person and have a chat with them or by way of phone contact given the particular circumstances presenting at that time in terms of prevalence of Covid-19 to negate any potential risk or the preferences of the individual in question.

Text Alert:

- The Text alert system has been utilised throughout 2020 to deliver messages to the various schemes. Below are two examples of text messages that were sent to the different schemes.
 - 18/10/20 - "In these strange times with the evenings getting longer, everyone is asked to check in on vulnerable neighbours to make sure that they don't feel isolated."
 - 2/11/20 - "COVID-19 – If you need any assistance, advice or support during lockdown, you can call Roscommon Gardaí on 0906638300. We're here to help!"

Non-Nationals:

- HSE Covid-19 Information leaflets were printed in Portuguese, Polish and Slovak. A number of information folders, including these leaflets were placed in all district vehicles for distribution to non-English speaking members of the public.
- A delegation from Roscommon Garda Station and Roscommon County Council visited Kepak in Athleague to convey the importance of completing with the restrictions.

Initiatives:

- A leaflet was designed for leaving on vehicles that were from accessing an amenity that was outside 2km/5km of their residence
- The leaflet outlined the specific regulation and pointed out that the vehicle was registered at an address, which was more than 2km/5km from the location that it was parked.

Domestic violence:

- In line with Operation Faoiseamh (dedicated domestic violence operation) Community Policing Members have been assigned responsibility to assist in the completion of the initial 7 day in-person call back to victims of this type of incident. The members act as a liaison with victims providing them with support information, advises regarding orders and a listening ear in terms of the situations that present in individual cases.

Patrols:

- Roscommon Community Policing Unit performed High visibility mountain bike patrols in Roscommon Town, with priority given to explaining Covid-19 regulations to the public.
- In addition, Castlerea District Community Policing Unit conduct dedicated Covid-19 community patrols during their tour of duty at parks, lake shores, scenic areas and any other locations deemed relevant in each area of responsibility in an effort to reduce the spread of Covid-19. This high visibility outreach has and is being conducted in an effort to monitor and encourage adherence to the current government restrictions and guidelines whilst simultaneously providing the local people with evidence of our commitment to keep their communities safe. In order to facilitate this, additional vehicular resources were obtained in Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen and Boyle for use in terms of Community Policing duties.
- The Community Policing members in both Districts are also providing assistance in terms of various operations ongoing in the districts in an effort to curb the spread of infection including Operation Fanacht (Checkpoints), Operation Navigation (Licensed premises inspections) and Operation Treoir (Retail inspections).

Retail:

- All Retail Outlets were visited on a regular basis and their obligations in relation to the Covid-19 regulations were explained. All premises were monitored on a regular basis and as a result compliance has been very high.

Nursing Homes:

- All Nursing Homes were visited in the districts and assistance was offered if it was required.
- In addition, over the Christmas period a community engagement initiative was undertaken in the Boyle area where local schools made Christmas cards for the residents of every Nursing home in the town, local stores donated a small treat for each resident and the cards and gift were presented at a small carol singing service conducted in line with guidelines by children from each of the schools at the respective Nursing Home closest to their location. It was a wonderful initiative and was received very well by all involved and concerned.

Social Media:

- Where appropriate, Social Media has been used to deliver messages to the public.

ITEM 2:

Key achievements of the JPC during 2019 and 2020 and why they are significant:

Key achievements

1. Ongoing development of Boyle as an Age Friendly Town. Continuing participation of key stakeholder members of the JPC, including An Garda Síochána, in the Age Friendly Strategy which was officially launched in Boyle on Friday 21st of August 2020.
2. Support of An Garda Síochána for the Town Team Initiative continues. Participation of members of An Garda Síochána on the Town Teams is significant as along with the participation of other key stakeholders it demonstrated a commitment to close involvement in the economic and community development of these six towns.
3. A decision was made not to hold the Harvest Gathering Event in 2019 as numbers of persons attending the event in 2018 had reduced. However, it was hoped to organise the event again in 2020, but due to the pandemic, this was not possible.
4. A property marking machine was purchased by Roscommon County Council and it is stored at Roscommon Garda Station. A number of events were held in Roscommon District during 2019 where members of the public were invited to attend and have their 'Eircode' engraved onto their property.
5. Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic many of the goals set out in planning for 2020, have not been able to be achieved. However, Roscommon and Castlerea Community Policing Unit was predominately responding to the needs of the Community, as a result, of Covid-19. Community Policing and Engagement has never been more heavily relied upon, in respect of all community group and proactive policing in the community has been achieved across the board in the County Roscommon area, as referred to above.

ITEM 3:

Public Meeting:

There was no public meeting hosted in 2019 or 2020.

Record of meetings held in 2019 and 2020 and list of members.

Please enter the total number of JPC meetings held in the years 2019 and 2020:

1 meeting took place on the 1st March 2019

Name of Chairperson: Councillor Paddy Kilduff:

NAME OF MEMBER	ORGANISATION OF WHICH MEMBER	NO. OF JPC MEETINGS ATTENDED
Cllr Ivan Connaughton	Roscommon County Council	0
Cllr Domnick Connolly	Roscommon County Council	0
Cllr Michael Creaton	Roscommon County Council	0
Cllr Nigel Dineen	Roscommon County Council	0
Cllr Rachel Doherty	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Laurence Fallon	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Pascal Fitzmaurice	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Liam Callaghan	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Paddy Kilduff	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Joe Murphy	Roscommon County Council	0
Cllr John Naughten	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Kathleen Shanagher	Roscommon County Council	1
Cllr Tony Ward	Roscommon County Council	0
Senator Terry Leyden	Seanad Éireann	1
Senator Maura Hopkins	Seanad Éireann	0
Deputy Eugene Murphy	Dáil Éireann	0
Mr Brian Nerney	Business Community	1
Mr Bernie Kearney	Muintir na Tíre	1
Niamh Petrie	Comhairle na nÓg	1
Caroline Haran	Frenchpark Development Committee (PPN)	1
John Macklin	Knockcroghery Community Alert (PPN)	1
Chief Superintendent Tony Healy	An Garda Síochána	1
Ursula Hussey	An Garda Síochána	1
Superintendent Seamus Boyle	An Garda Síochána	1
Superintendent Fran Nicholson	An Garda Síochána	1
John O'Connor	An Garda Síochána	1
Mr Eugene Cummins, Chief Executive	Chief Executive, RCC	0
Ms. Majella Hunt, Director of Services	Director of Services, RCC	0
Pat Murtagh	Senior Executive Officer	1