



WESTMEATH COUNTY COUNCIL
Comhairle Chontae na hIarmhí

2021

**Westmeath Joint
Policing Committee
Annual Report**



Introduction:

Westmeath Joint Policing Committee (JPC) is a partnership between Westmeath County Council, An Garda Síochána and the Community. The membership comprises of senior Local Authority Officers, senior Garda Officers, Elected Representatives, Oireachtas Members and Representatives of Community & Voluntary groups.

The Westmeath Joint Policing Committee is intended to be a forum for discussion and a means of building confidence, trust and safety in the county. In doing this, the Westmeath JPC seeks to prioritise key community policing policy issues and identify initiatives which will contribute to improved community policing, prevention and reduction of future crime in County Westmeath.

Role of the Joint Policing Committee:

The Purpose of the Joint Policing Committee (JPC):

As set out in *Section 36 (2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005*, and the amendments to this Act in 2014, the main purpose of the JPC is to provide a forum where the Local Authority and Garda, responsible for policing the area, consult with Oireachtas Members and community interests who can make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area to contribute to the improved safety and quality of life of the community.

Strategic Approach:

In accordance with national JPC guidelines the focus of the JPC's work is "*strategic*" rather than "*operational*". The JPC is required to develop a six year Strategic Plan linked appropriately with the Local and Economic Community Plan for the area. County Westmeath JPC adopted its new Strategic Work Plan 2020– 2025 in October 2020. The plan sets out five strategic goals:

1. Misuse of drugs, alcohol and related crimes
2. Community Policing
3. Prevention of Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
4. Public Safety
5. Road Safety

A number of objectives and actions are linked to each goal.

Membership of JPC:

Each JPC is made up of:

- Chairperson – Local Authority Representative
- Garda Officers nominated by the Commissioner
- Local Authority Representatives
- Members of the Oireachtas for the area.
- Local Authority Officials
- Community / Voluntary Sector Representatives

Westmeath Joint Policing Committee Meetings held in 2021.

In 2021 the Westmeath Joint Policing Committee was chaired by Cllr Paddy Hill (JPC Chairman) and Cllr Liam McDaniel (Vice JPC Chairman).

The Westmeath Joint Policing Committee scheduled four Committee meetings in 2021. The 2021 JPC meetings were held on line via Go To Meetings / MS Teams on the following dates:

- **Monday, 13 January 2021, @ 10am on line.**
- **Monday, 12 April 2021, @ 10am on line.**
- **Monday, 12 July 2021, @ 10am on line.**
- **Monday, 11 October 2021, @10am on line.**

There were Public JPC Meetings held in 2021 due to Covid 19.

Westmeath Joint Policing Committee Membership 2021:

| Westmeath County Council Representatives | |
|---|---|
| Cllr Paddy Hill – Chair | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Emily Wallace | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Bill Collentine | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Tom Farrell | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Andrew Duncan | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Frankie Keena | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Frank McDermott | Elected Representative |
| Cllr John Dolan | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Ken Glynn | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Liam McDaniel | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Michael Dollard | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Hazel Smyth | Elected Representative |
| Cllr Denis Leonard | Elected Representative |
| Westmeath County Council Officials | |
| Mr Pat Gallagher | Chief Executive |
| Mr Pat Keating | Mullingar Municipal District Manager |
| Ms Jacqueline Finney | Athlone Municipal District Manager |
| An Garda Síochána | |
| Mr Fergus Healy | Chief Superintendent |
| Mr Alan Murray | Superintendent – Mullingar Division |
| Mr David Nolan | Superintendent – Athlone Division |
| Community Representatives | |
| Mr Pat Grimes | Dalton Park (RAPID), Mullingar |
| Ms Kathleen Grennan | Rosemount Tidy Towns |

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Ms Marie Reddin | Ashdale/Woodlands Grove Residents Association |
| Mr Dave Raftis | Kinnegad Combined Community Employment Scheme Ltd |
| Mr Michael Mulvey | Independent People with Disabilities |
| Ms Joyce Furlong | Athlone Streetwise |

| Oireachtas Members | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Deputy Peter Burke | Oireachtas Member |
| Deputy Robert Troy | Oireachtas Member |
| Deputy Sorca Clarke | Oireachtas Member |
| Senator Aidan Davitt | Oireachtas Member |
| Senator Paul Daly | Oireachtas Member |

Changes in Membership in 2021:

There were no changes to the Westmeath JPC membership in 2021.

Item No. 1:

Summary of Progress in implementing the JPC's Work Programme:

- The Chief Superintendent Mr Fergus Healy at each of the Westmeath JPC Meetings presented an overview of the key policing priorities for the Westmeath Divisions, including quarterly crime analysis, crime prevention, national and international security, community policing measures and organisational development and capacity improvement.
- *Government Launch of pilot Local Community Safety Partnerships* – Mr Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive of Westmeath County Council informed the JPC Members of a recent announcement made by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee regarding a new local partnership project to strengthen community safety.
- **PPN Report:** At each of the Westmeath JPC Meetings a Community Representative, or Ms Brigid Geoghegan presented the PPN Report to the JPC Members.

Item No. 2:

Key achievements of the JPC during the year:

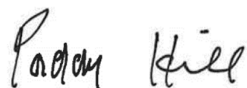
1. Regular engagement and communication with An Garda Síochána in Westmeath Division (encompassing Athlone and Mullingar Districts) regarding crime analysis, crime prevention and community policing in the County.

2. **Westmeath Keep Well Campaign** – At our January 2021 JPC Meeting, a presentation was given by Ms Annette Barr Jordan, Community Development Section of Westmeath County Council – Ms Jordan presented an overview of the Campaign, its main themes, the local authority’s role, the funding made available and examples of community resilience initiatives being carried out.
3. Visit and Presentation by An Garda Commissioner Mr Drew Harris to Westmeath JPC on 11 October 2021. Mr Harris shared a detailed presentation on **“A new Operating Model for An Garda Síochána”**. Following the Garda Commissioners’ informative presentation, Mr Harris allowed time for a Questions and Answers session.
4. **Report Updates from Westmeath County Council regarding Covid 19 Community Response Forum and Council Helpline:** At our July and October 2021 JPC Meetings, Mr Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive of Westmeath County Council, continued to provide informed updates to all JPC Members on actions taken by Westmeath County Council during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Westmeath County Council established the Westmeath Community Response Forum, bringing together Local Government and the community and voluntary sectors, to respond to the community need in the current public health emergency – The Community Call Helpline.

The Forum coordinated community, voluntary and statutory agencies and assisted them to effectively support our communities, particularly our elderly and most vulnerable members.

Signed:



Cllr Paddy Hill, Chair of Westmeath JPC