



2022

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.

JPCs operate under revised guidelines issued by the Policing Authority in 2022 after consultation with the Minister for Justice, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Garda Commissioner.

The functions of the Joint Policing Committees are set out in Section 36 (2) of the Garda Síochána Act, which states:

“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”

a) keep under review:

(i) the levels and patterns of crime, disorder, and antisocial 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

(i) or on which it is to advise under paragraph

(ii), in so far as those matters affect their neighbourhoods, and

(e) Co-ordinate the activities of local policing fora established under paragraph (d) or other

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.”

### ***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 2022.**

In 2022 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 2022. The 2022 JPC meetings were held on line via MS Teams and in office on the following dates:

- **Monday, 10 January 2022**, @ 10am on line ONLY.
- **Monday, 11 April 2022**, @ 10am on line and in office, Athlone Civic Offices
- **Monday, 11 July 2022**, @ 10am on line and in office, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar.
- **Monday, 10 October 2022**, @10am on line and in office, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar.

There were two Public JPC Meetings held in 2022 :

## Westmeath Joint Policing Committee Membership 2022:

<b>Westmeath County Council Representatives</b>	
Cllr Paddy Hill – Chair	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Emily Wallace	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Bill Collentine	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Tom Farrell	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Andrew Duncan	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Frankie Keena	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Frank McDermott	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr John Dolan	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Ken Glynn	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Liam McDaniel	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Michael Dollard	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Hazel Smyth	<b>Elected Representative</b>
Cllr Denis Leonard	<b>Elected Representative</b>
<b>Westmeath County Council Officials</b>	
Mr Pat Gallagher	<b>Chief Executive</b>
Mr Sheila Healy	<b>Mullingar Municipal District Manager</b>
Ms Jacqueline Finney	<b>Athlone Municipal District Manager</b>
<b>An Garda Síochána</b>	
Mr Fergus Healy (retired July 2022)	<b>Chief Superintendent</b>
Mr John Dollard (Oct 2022 to present)	<b>Chief Superintendent</b>
Mr David Nolan	<b>Superintendent – Mullingar Division</b>
Mr Alan Murray (retired January 2022)	<b>Superintendent – Athlone Division</b>
Ms Michelle Baker (April 2022 to present)	<b>Superintendent – Athlone Division</b>

<b>Community Representatives</b>	
Mr Pat Grimes	<b>Dalton Park (RAPID), Mullingar</b>
Ms Kathleen Grennan	<b>Rosemount Tidy Towns</b>
Ms Marie Reddin	<b>Ashdale/Woodlands Grove Residents Association</b>
Mr Dave Raftis	<b>Kinnegad Combined Community Employment Scheme Ltd</b>
Michael Mulvey (resigned summer 2022)	<b>Independent People with Disabilities</b>
Mr John Bawle (Oct 2022 to present)	<b>Mullingar Tidy Towns Association</b>
Ms Joyce Furlong	<b>Athlone Streetwise</b>

<b>Oireachtas Members</b>	
Deputy Peter Burke	<b>Oireachtas Member</b>
Deputy Robert Troy	<b>Oireachtas Member</b>
Deputy Sorca Clarke	<b>Oireachtas Member</b>
Senator Aidan Davitt	<b>Oireachtas Member</b>
Senator Paul Daly	<b>Oireachtas Member</b>

## **Changes in Membership in 2022:**

There were two changes to the Garda representatives and one change to the community representatives (as indicated above) to the Westmeath JPC membership in 2022.

### **Item No. 1:**

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

- The Chief Superintendent Mr John Dollard 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.
- Mr Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive of Westmeath County Council at each of the Westmeath JPC meetings gave a report on the work of the Council. As part of this, the success of the Local Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) which are being piloted in three locations (Dublin North Inner City, Waterford and Longford) were also highlighted.
- At each of the Westmeath JPC meetings a Community Representative, or Ms Laura Costello 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. **PPN Property Marking machine** – The Westmeath PPN purchased a high-end property marking machine which is hugely beneficial in helping to track stolen property. The Westmeath PPN plan to loan the machine to groups of volunteers to train them in how to use the machine. WPPN issued an expression of interest invitation to its member group across Westmeath to take part in a training day where they would learn how to use the marking machine in their area. The groups involved included members from the Men’s Sheds, Community Alert groups and Tidy Towns groups.
3. **Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2022** - Mr Pat Gallagher Chief Executive reported on the successful running of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2022 held in Mullingar from 31<sup>st</sup> July to 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022. He stated that a competent Event Controller was key to the smooth running of such an event and to manage the collaboration between the organisers and the Emergency Services/Statutory Authorities, including An Garda Síochána. Mr Gallagher acknowledged the tremendous support and engagement by An Garda Síochána, led by Superintendent David Nolan and his team who assisted the Council and the Fleadh Executive Committee in ensuring an event of that scale could be held in the County in a safe manner. Mr Pat Gallagher said there was a lot of learning from this year, and this will inform the planning for 2023.

Signed:



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Cllr Paddy Hill, Chair of Westmeath JPC