



2020

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 2020.**

In 2020 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 2020. However, due to Covid-19, our April JPC Meeting was cancelled. The 2020 JPC meetings were held on the following dates:

- **Monday, 13 January 2020**, @ 10am in the Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar.
- **Monday, 20 April 2020**, @ 11am in the Athlone Civic Offices, Athlone – **Cancelled due to COVID-19.**
- **Monday, 13 July 2020**, @10am in the Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar via on line **Go To Meeting.**
- **Monday, 12 October 2020**, @10am in the Council Chambers, Áras an Chontae, Mullingar, via on line **Go To Meeting**

The following two Westmeath Public JPC Meetings which were scheduled to take place on :

- **Monday, 20 April 2020** at 1 o'clock following the JPC Committee Meeting in Athlone Civic Offices, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
- **Monday, 12 October 2020** at 12 o'clock following the JPC Committee Meeting in Áras an Chontae, Mullingar, Co Westmeath were cancelled due to COVID-19.

## **Westmeath Joint Policing Committee Membership 2020:**

<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 Pat Keating	<b>Mullingar Municipal District Manager</b>
Ms Jacqueline Finney	<b>Athlone Municipal District Manager</b>
<b>An Garda Síochána</b>	

Mr Fergus Healy	Chief Superintendent
Mr Alan Murray	Superintendent – Mullingar Division
Mr Aidan Minnock (July 2019 – July 2020)	Superintendent – Athlone Division
Mr David Nolan (October 2020 – present)	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 2020:

In October 2020, Superintendent David Nolan, Athlone Division replaced Superintendent Aidan Minnock.

### 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.
- **JPC Strategic Plan 2020-2025 Preparations:** Ms Anne Galvin, Meetings Administrator arranged a Workshop in March 2020 inviting all stakeholders named in the proposed Draft JPC Strategic Plan to attend and participate.

- **PPN Report:** At each of the Westmeath JPC Meetings a Community Representative, or Ms Brigid Geoghegan / Ms Annette Barr Jordan 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. Completion of ***Westmeath JPC Strategic Work Plan 2020-2025*** , which was approved and adopted at the Westmeath October 2020 JPC Meeting
3. Westmeath Public Participation Network

During the year a discussion around property theft arose and the possibility of purchasing an engraving machine for use in the community by the community in Westmeath. Discussions were held during the year with Westmeath PPN and they agreed to finance and subsequently purchased the Property Marking machine in Q4 2020. Westmeath PPN will host and roll out of the programme in collaboration with the Garda and the Westmeath Local Authority in the community in 2021 and into the future as Covid restrictions allow.

4. **Report from Westmeath County Council on their response to COVID – 19:** At our JPC July and October 2020 Meetings, Mr Pat Gallagher, Chief Executive of Westmeath County Council, provided informed updates to the 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.

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

A dedicated Community Support helpline is now available from 9am-5pm, 7 days a week to assist members of the public affected by COVID-19, with a focus on the elderly and most vulnerable, in accessing non-emergency community supports.

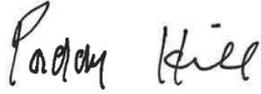
**Call: 1800 805 816**

**Email: [covidsupport@westmeathcoco.ie](mailto:covidsupport@westmeathcoco.ie)**

Visit <https://wccapps.westmeathcoco.ie/Covid19/>

An information booklet with advice on the Community Call initiative and contact information for each Local Authority's Community Response Forum was delivered to all households nationwide

**Signed:**

Handwritten signature of Paddy Hill in black ink, written over a horizontal line.

**Cllr Paddy Hill, Chair of Westmeath JPC**