



Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee Report for year ended 31st December, 2020

DRAFT



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Background:

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was established in 2007 as part of the initial pilot phase along with a JPC in each of the Town Council areas of Bray, Arklow, Greystones and Wicklow. Following the abolition of the Town Councils in 2014 there is now one statutory policing committee being the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee.

Membership: Membership comprises 15 Local Authority Elected Members (3 from each municipal District), 5 Oireachtas Members representing County Wicklow, 7 Community Representatives drawn from the PPN, 2 members of An Garda Síochána (The Chief Superintendent for the area and his/her nominee), 2 Local Authority Officials (The Chief Executive and his/her nominee). The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council is an ex-officio member.

Chair and Vice Chair:

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing committee was reconstituted following the local elections in May, 2019. At the inaugural meeting of the newly re-established committee Cllr. Gerry Walsh was elected as the Chair and Councillor Irene Winters the vice chair.

Operating Guidelines:

The JPC operates in accordance with the revised guidelines for Joint Policing Committees issued by the Department of Justice and Equality, dated the 29th August, 2014.

JPC Steering Group:

The JPC steering group is established comprising, Councillor Gerry Walsh, Chair, Chief Superintendent Denis Ferry, Chief Executive Frank Curran and/or Lorraine Gallagher, Director of Services, Wicklow County Council (Chief Executive's nominee).

Purpose of the JPC: The JPC provides a forum where the LA public representatives, and senior Garda officers, responsible for the policing of County Wicklow, with the participation of the 5 TDS, and community interests can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area. It is co-operative in nature, operates with the minimum of formality in accordance with guidelines. The committee identifies, raises awareness of, and finds solutions for issues impacting on or causing concerns for the local community. The JPC meets at least 4 times a year, and on 2 of these occasions holds public meetings in various locations throughout County Wicklow.

Work of the JPC: The work of the JPC is strategic in nature. The committee has prepared a six year strategic plan and at the end of each year prepares an annual report for submission to the Policing Authority by the 31st of March. It must also prepare an annual work plan, hold public meetings and function as a committee.

The Wicklow County Council JPC 6 year Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021: The WCC JPC 6 year Strategic Plan was adopted by Wicklow County Council on the 3rd of October, 2016. It sets out strategic priorities and objectives which link to the relevant objectives of the Garda Annual Policing Plan operational in the Wicklow County Council Area under the following 4 strategic priorities:-

- Strategic Priority 1 – Policing Communities
- Strategic Priority 2 – Tackling Crime in Rural Areas
- Strategic Priority 3 – Supply Reduction
- Strategic Priority 4 – Communications

The Strategic Plan will be due for review in 2021.

Establishment of Policing Plan Committees by Municipal District Area: Initially four working groups were set up to advance the objectives of the JPC and roll out the agreed above four key areas within the Plan. This structure was identified as a step to achieve successful implementation of the 6 year Strategic Plan. However following a review by the steering committee of the work of the groups and the resources constraints across JPC Membership, Wicklow County Council, An Garda Síochána and community representatives, it was agreed that the structure required adaptation and realignment across municipal districts to complement and enhance work already taking place.

At JPC meeting held on Monday the 2nd of September, 2019 the JPC agreed that 5 Policing Plan Committees be set up by municipal district area. The municipal district area based committees replace the sub committees set up under the 4 thematic areas set out above and set out in the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan.

Terms of Reference for the Policing Plan Committees (5 in number)

1. Policing Plan Committees (PPCs) will operate on a municipal district area basis (Bray, Arklow, Greystones, Wicklow and Baltinglass)
2. Membership of the PPCs will consist :-
 - 1) Municipal District Elected Members
 - 2) Members of the Oireachtas
 - 3) Members of the PPN who are represented on the JPC
 - 4) Superintendent for the District (or his/her nominee)

- 5) Municipal District Administrator
 - 6) Municipal District Engineer
3. The Chair of the Municipal District will act as chair to the PPC
 4. PPCs will be supported by members of An Garda Síochána i.e. the Superintendent for the municipal district (and/or his/her nominees) the Municipal District Manager, Municipal District Administrator and Municipal District Engineer
 5. PPCs will meet quarterly and prior to the Municipal District Meetings
 6. The work of the PPC will be informed by the objectives of the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan, 2016 – 2021 and the Garda Annual Policing Plan
 7. Each PPC will organise its work into an Annual Work Plan, drawing from the objectives of the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan and the Garda Annual Policing Plan, identifying issues to concentrate on over a 12 month period.
 8. While meetings of the JPC are open to the public and the media, PPCs are working committees and as such are not open to the public or the media to attend.
 9. Progress on implementation to be monitored and reviewed and reported on to the JPC at its meetings.
 10. PPCs will submit an end of year report to the JPC which will in turn feed into the end of year annual report submitted to the Policing Authority in accordance with An Garda Síochána Act, 2005 and operating guidelines issued by the Department of Justice and Equality.
 11. PPCs will operate for a period of 12 months following which their status will be reviewed by the WCC JPC.

ITEM 1

Summary of progress in implementing the JPCs work plan: The JPC Work Plan, for 2020 is contained within the 6 Year Strategic Plan and set out hereunder within this report.

Due to the onset of Covid 19 in March, 2020 face to face meetings were suspended and only limited statutory meetings took place having regard to Covid 19 physical distancing requirements, and Standard Operating Guidelines for the holding of statutory meetings.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2016 - 2021

Strategic Priority 1: Policing Communities

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Policing Communities: Sub committees replaced by Policing Plan Committees by municipal district area (Bray, Arklow, Greystones, Wicklow and Baltinglass/Blessington)	CWJPC	Complete and operational (September, 2019)
2. Develop a strong community collaborative response and work collectively to improve quality of life and enhance community policing	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/WCC/HSE/PPN/Chambers of Commerce/Business Forums/Local Development Agencies/Community Groups/Local Clubs	Ongoing through the work of the Sub committees (Now Policing Plan Committees). Regular meetings/liaison between the Gardaí and Tenant Liaison Officer, WCC in tackling anti social behaviour-
3. Support the roll out of the ‘Purple Flag’ initiatives in our Towns to develop safe night time economies	CWJPC/WCC/CWETT/Chambers of Commerce/An Garda Síochána	Initiative replaced by Town Team Initiatives and health checks – meetings ongoing particularly through the Town Reopening Committees having regard to the Covid 19 pandemic and the need to assist

		business and community in a return to safe work having regard to government restrictions in place at the time.
4. Support the provision of CCTV for Wicklow, Greystones and Arklow Towns	CWJPC/WCC/An Garda Síochána/Chambers of Commerce/Business forums	<p>Community CCTV Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arklow Town: Community CCTV went live in Arklow Town on the 23/6/2020 with 11 cameras in the town • Greystones: Application submitted to the CCTV Advisory Committee on the 26/06/2020 and a decision is awaited • Blessington: Authorisation received from the Commissioner to proceed on the 14/10/2020. The scheme can now proceed to the next stage.
5. Work collaboratively to support a safe environment for Older People	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/Older Persons Network/WCC	Ongoing collaboration with Wicklow Network for Older People. Wicklow Age Friendly

		Strategy.
6. Work collaboratively to assist young people to engage positively with An Garda Síochána	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/An Comhairle Nog/WCC	Ongoing
7. Support the Annual Garda Youth Awards (inaugural presentation held in 2016)	An Garda Síochána/JPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2019 awards took place in the Park View Hotel Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow on the 21st of February, 2020. The National Awards ceremony took place on line with Commissioner Drew Harris on 29th October, 2020 which was followed by local presentations in December.
8. Support Estate Management Initiatives and supports to Tenant/Resident Associations	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/WCC	Ongoing: Garda Crime prevention Officer is collaborating with WCC
9. Support and participate in An Garda Síochána's Schools Education Programme to create awareness of and assist young people in dealing with issues such bullying, alcohol and substance abuse, personal safety, cyber bullying etc.	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána	Ongoing: Schools Programme being delivered throughout the County

Strategic Priority 2: Tackling Crime in Rural Areas		
OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Establish the Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Tackling Crime in Rural Areas	CW JPC	Complete (now replaced by the Policing Plan committees) which meets quarterly.
2. Develop an awareness raising campaign around the importance of self-vigilance on how to minimise risk of theft to one's own property and personal safety (<i>link in with Communications sub-committee</i>)	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/CWP/	Ongoing – Public Information days being conducted on a quarterly basis and awareness campaigns. Operation Soteria has targeted assaults in public places. .
3. Develop a programme to address isolation and security fears among older/vulnerable people in both urban and rural areas e.g. ‘ <i>Operation Conversation</i> ’ or a ‘ <i>Befriending Programme</i> ’	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána	On-going – an Garda Síochána are providing a visible and responsive policing tailored to the community needs within the resources available. Through the continued engagement with the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older Persons Council. Garda

		member assigned as an Older Persons Ambassador within each district
4. Support the Tus Tourism Ambassadors Project throughout the County	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/CWP	Ongoing
5. Promote and encourage establishment of Community Text Alert Systems and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána	Ongoing and monitored to ensure consistency and regular use across the Division
6. Work with representatives from relevant agencies/organisations etc to address the issue of Dog Control in the Uplands	CWJPC/WCC/An Garda Síochána/Wicklow Uplands/ISPCA	Ongoing

Strategic Priority 3: Tackling Drugs – Supply Reduction

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Tackling Drugs – Supply Reduction (Expand objective to include Alcohol)	CWJPC	Complete (replaced by Policing Plan Committees) and meeting quarterly.
2. To highlight the issue of drug related intimidation from the lower level to the most serious with a view to devising appropriate and sustainable local responses to the	CWJPC/ECDTF/SWRTATF	Ongoing: Operation Tara was introduced

issue.		in march 2020 which has seen the deployment of a Divisional Drugs Unit who are dedicated to target towns/villages in the Division in completing pro-active operations, high visibility activities as required. Garda Inspector appointed to liaise with families subjected to intimidation.
3. Promote Garda Confidential Line, create awareness of the benefits of reporting incidences to the Gardaí (<i>link in with Communications sub-committee</i>)	An Garda Síochána/CWJPC	Ongoing item discussed at JPC public meetings

Strategic Priority 4: Communication

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Prepare, adopt, publish and Launch the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee 6 year Strategic Plan	Wicklow County Council/WCC JPC	Complete – Strategic Plan due for review in 2021.
2. Prepare and adopt the CWJPC Annual Report	Wicklow County Council/WCC JPC	Prepared annually
3. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Communication Objective	WCC JPC	Ongoing

4. Develop a Communications Strategy to inform the general public and the community sector of the work of the JPC (see stakeholder recommendations)	Communications Sub Group of JPC	Ongoing.
5. Develop an awareness raising campaign around the importance of self-vigilance on how to minimise risk of theft to one's own property and personal safety (<i>link in with Tackling Rural Crime sub-committee</i>)	CWJPC/An Garda Síochána/	Ongoing – Use of public media to get safety messages across. Regular item on East Coast Radio and the Wicklow Garda Facebook page
6. Arrange and host two public meetings per annum at various locations in County Wicklow concerning matters affecting the policing of the County	CWJPC	Ongoing: Due to Covid no public meetings were held in 2020

Advice given by the JPC to the local authority/Garda – identify specific recommendations made:

1. Overview of the Wicklow Division 2020 YTD figures (difference and % change) covering the following areas and presented by the Chief Superintendent

- Property Crime – Divisional Overview
- Robbery of an Establishment/Institution
- Robbery from a person
- Aggravated Burglary
- Burglary (not aggravated)
- Theft from a person
- Theft from Vehicle
- Theft of other property
- Theft/Unauthorised taking of vehicle
- Theft/Unauthorised taking of pedal cycle
- Theft from shop
- Crimes against the person – divisional overview
- Rape of a male or female
- Assault causing harm
- Minor assault
- Criminal damage
- Public order and other social code offences
- Possession of drugs for personal use
- Possession of drugs for sale or supply
- Cultivation or manufacture of drugs
- Traffic – Divisional overview
- Other issues.

2. Presentation on the Policing Plan, 2020 covering the following areas:

Mission and Strategy – 2019 – 2021

Key Pillars of the Garda Strategy Statement 2019 – 2021

- Community Policing
- Keeping People Safe
- A secure Ireland
- Transforming our service
- Our people – our greatest resource
- A Human Rights Foundation.

ITEM 2. – Highlight three key achievements of the JPC during the year and give reasons why these are considered to be significant

1. Online meeting with Commissioner Drew Harris: An online meeting with Commissioner Drew Harris was held on 11th November, 2020 with the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee. Commissioner Drew Harris gave a presentation on the new Garda Operating Model. Questions which had previously been submitted to the Garda Commissioner were responded to. Both the Chair of the JPC, Councillor Gerry Walsh and the Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council, Cllr. Pat Kennedy welcomed Commissioner Harris on behalf of the committee.

2. An Garda Síochána Youth Awards 2020

The Wicklow Garda Youth awards is now in its sixth year. This initiative recognises the great work being carried out by young people in many communities throughout County Wicklow and is something that An Garda Síochána wishes to acknowledge, recognise and reward through the Garda Youth Awards. The 2019 awards were to take place in the Park View Hotel in Newtown, Co. Wicklow on the 21st of February, 2020. The awards are sponsored by the County Wicklow Partnership and is identified in the 6 year strategic plan as a strategic priority objective. The National awards ceremony took place on line with Commissioner Drew Harris on 29th October, 2020 which was followed by local presentations in December.

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee congratulates An Garda Síochána for this fantastic initiative and looks forward to its continued success into the future.

3. Community CCTV Projects: Arklow Town Community CCTV went live in Arklow Town on the 23rd of June, 2020 with 11 cameras in the town. The Greystones CCTV application was submitted to the CCTV Advisory Committee on the 26th of June, 2020 and a decision is awaited. The Blessington CCTV project received authorisation from the Commissioner to proceed to the next stage on the 14th of October, 2020. The aim of the scheme is to support local communities to install and maintain CCTV in their area with the aim of increasing public safety and deterring illegal or anti social behaviour.

ITEM 3 – Public meetings hosted by the JPC during the year

Due to Covid, no public meetings were held in 2020

ITEM 4 – Record of meetings held in 2020 and list of members: Total number of JPC meetings held in the year = 3

Date of each meeting:-

3rd February, 2020	7th September, 2020	11th November, 2020 Online Meeting with Commissioner Harris
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Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee Membership (reconstituted following the Local elections held in May, 2019)

Name of Chairperson: Cllr. G. Walsh

Number of Members: 15 elected members, 7 community representatives, 5 members of the Oireachtas, 2 Gardaí and 2 Wicklow County Council officials

	Name of Member	Organisation of Which member	Title	Mtgs attended
1	Cllr. Irene Winters (Vice Chair)	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	3
2	Cllr. Vincent Blake	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	3
3	Cllr. Avril Cronin	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	2
4	Cllr. Tom Fortune	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	2
5	Cllr. Dermot O'Brien	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	3
6	Cllr. Tommy Annesley	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	3
7	Cllr. Gerry Walsh (Chair)	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	3
8	Cllr. Mags Crean	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	2
9	Cllr. Shay Cullen	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	2
10	Cllr. Erika Doyle	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	1
11	Cllr. Paul O'Brien	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	2
12	Cllr. Peir Leonard	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	3
13	Cllr. Sylvester Bourke	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	2
14	Cllr. Joe Behan	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	2
15	Cllr. Gerry O'Neill	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	1
16	Deputy John Brady	Oireachtas Member	TD	1
17	Deputy Simon Harris, Minister for Health	Oireachtas Member	TD	0
18	Deputy Stephen Donnelly	Oireachtas Member	TD	1
19	Deputy Steven Matthews	Oireachtas Member	TD	1
20	Deputy Jennifer	Oireachtas Member	TD	0

	Whitmore			
21	Ms Charlotte Byrne	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	1
22	Godfrey O'Byrne	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
23	Liz Ferris	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
24	Ann Halpin	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
25	Conor O'Leary	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
26	Brendan Gilroy resigned and replaced by James Dunne	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	1
27	Stephen Kearon	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
28	Denis Ferry	*An Garda Síochána	Chief Superintendent	3
29	Declan McCarthy	*An Garda Síochána	Superintendent Wicklow/Arklow	1
30	Frank Curran Chief Executive	Wicklow County Council	Chief Executive	3
31	Lorraine Gallagher	Wicklow County Council	Director of Services	3

* Also in attendance at JPC meetings are the Superintendents of the Baltinglass and Bray Districts and other relevant Garda Officers as the Chief Superintendent considers appropriate.

End.