

Mayo Joint Policing Committee

Minutes of Meeting

November 27th, 2020 (Held Online)



Present: Cllr. Al McDonnell, Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne, Cllr. Neil Cruise, Cllr Gerry Coyle; Cllr. Michael Loftus, Cllr. Michael Burke, Cllr. Mark Duffy, Cllr. Sean Carey, Rose Conway Walsh TD, Alan Dillon TD, Cllr. Damien Ryan, Dara Calleary TD, Cllr Christy Hyland, Michéal Larkin, Killawalla Community Council. Edith Geraghty MTSG, Keelan Moran Westport Youth Activities Club, Peter Duggan, Interim Chief Executive, Mayo County Council, Chief Superintendent Tony Healy, Superintendent Joe McKenna.

In attendance: Superintendent Joe Doherty, Superintendent Thomas Calvey, Superintendent Gabriel Moran, Superintendent Paudie O'Shea, Mary Gildea AP, Sgt. Derek Lynotte, Anne McCarthy, Maura Murphy, Michael Galvin,

1. Welcome

Cllr. Al McDonnell opened the meeting and welcomed everybody present. He welcomed Superintendent Paudie O'Shea to his first JPC meeting and wished Superintendent Kevin Gately well in his retirement.

He congratulated Peter Duggan and his team on being voted Chambers Ireland Local Authority of the Year 2020.

Peter Duggan said he was delighted with the award and it was a reflection of the huge work and dedication of all the staff put into delivering for the people of the County.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and matters arising

Proposed: Cllr Michael Loftus

Seconded: Edith Geraghty

There were no matters arising.

3. National Joint Policing Committee

Cllr Al McDonnell gave an update on the National Joint Police Committee meeting that was held online on October 9th, 2020. He attended the meeting with Peter Duggan and Superintendent Gabriel Moran; it was a very interesting and informative meeting.

The meeting was addressed by the Commissioner, his assistant and contributions from the floor. The meeting distinguished between the priorities and focus that existed between different counties and the variety in strategy in other areas. It was reported that Mayo has a very effective police force and offences in Mayo are a lot lower than other Counties. It was also reported that Mayo has a very effective anti-drugs campaign. This information reflected Mayo very positively. The NJPC was a very informative event and an opportunity to network with neighbouring Counties.

4. Report on CCTV operated by Local Authority

Superintendent Joe McKenna gave a report on the operation of CCTV systems in County Mayo. There are a total of 110 CCTV's in operation in Mayo; detail of report attached as requested at meeting.

Elected members raised the following issues / queries:

Cllr Michael Loftus raised the matter of the high cost incurred by the MD in operating CCTV in Ballina which could be as much as €20K and asked if it could be transferred to the Dept. of Justice.

Cllr Michael Kilcoyne asked if there was any proposal to extend CCTV to outlying towns such as Balla.

Cllr Christy Hyland queried the amount of work that had to be put in to applying for the €40k CCTV grant and asked could anything be done to make it more user friendly.

Cllr Michael Burke was very disappointed that Ballinrobe is still fighting to have it's CCTV taken over. He said it was a great asset to policing in the area.

Cllr Gerry Coyle agreed with Cllr Kilcoyne and was disappointed that Belmullet was not included and they should all be in the care of AGS.

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Cllr Mark Duffy asked what would it take for AGS to take over the CCTV in Ballina. It was a very good help in the policing of the town but if Gardai were looking for footage at the weekend they would have to wait until Monday to access it.

Chief Superintendent Tony Healy replied on importance of CCTV, they're an enormous asset as they act as a deterrent and actively change people's behavior. The area of CCTV requires a County strategic approach. A subcommittee will be established to investigate and action how to approach such a strategy. Committee will report back to JPC. It was agreed it was not appropriate to have two use GMA funding to pay for CCTV.

Dara Calleary to follow up on the Grant Application process for purchase and installation of Community CCTV and report back to the Chair.

Peter Duggan welcomed the setting up of the subcommittee and said that Mayo County Council will support AGS, emphasized the importance of a coordinated approach towards CCTV in the County.

5. Reports from An Garda Siochana

Superintendent Joe McKenna and Superintendent Tom Calvey gave an update on crime figures in the Mayo Division up to November 24th 2020. Some of the statistics were as follows:

Crime	2020	2019	Change
Assaults	48	68	Down 29%
Minor Assault	208	255	Down 18%
Theft from properties	87	157	Down 55%
Theft from shops	198	303	Down 34%
Theft from cars	47	76	Down 61%
Criminal Damage	314	323	Down 3%
Drugs for sale or supply	49	49	Up 191%
Drugs-personal use	111	222	Up 100%
Drug Cultivation	16	4	Up 300%
Fatal Road Collisions	5	3	Up 166%
Serious Road Collisions	18	34	Down 50%
Drink Driving	168	246	Down 32%
Speeding offences	4367	5080	Down 15%

Most crime figures have shown a decrease and Drug detection figures continue to rise with cultivation detections rising by 300% and Drugs to the value of €1,382,980.00 have been seized.

There is a new mobile app being trialled for Road Traffic monitoring. Information inputted to the new “mobilityapp” will automatically transmit to a central database, which will reduce administration required as it records information in real time.

Garda vehicles are being equipped with a Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) device. The device detects whether a car has insurance or not. Mayo is first County in it’s division to implement.

POLICING DISTRICT REPORT:

Ballina / Belmullet:

Supt. Doherty reported on recently launched Costal Watch, which has over 550 people involved. The emergency services, volunteers and local community groups were thanked for their input.

Opening of stations in Bonniclon, Crossmolina and Foxford is working well.

There is a decrease in theft and burglary offences.

Westport / Castlebar:

Area shows most offences show a decrease, however there is a slight increase with Drug Detection. Community Policing is very important and effective especially for Schools and the Youth. AGS continue to have a high level of engagement with Communities and Schools, the importance of eliminating issues with people from a young age was emphasized.

AGS have also carried out considerable work on their vulnerable/elderly register and are now focussing on Business Watch in an effort to prevent crime.

Claremorris / Swinford

Superintendent Gabriel Moran expressed sincere sympathy to the family of the late Michael McDonagh on his tragic loss and commended all involved on their rapid response and efforts in the case. He expressed interest in re-engaging in conversation around a Community Forum for the area. The issue was raised in 2019, and while steps had been taken earlier this year, Covid took over. Supt. Moran is looking to reinvigorate this group and to include key partners, i.e. Housing, HSE, Tusla and support from the JPC. It was suggested that this group could be set up as a subgroup of the JPC.

6. Divisional Protective Services

Chief Superintendent Tony Healy gave an overview of the new Divisional Protective Services that deals with sexual crime, serious domestic violence and serious offences against children. It was set up as part of AGS on the 20th September 2020 future policing of Ireland strategy. It is managed by Supt. Joe McKenna and established in partnership with other bodies such as Tusla; it's task is to investigate sexual crimes, serious domestic abuse and human trafficking. So far to date there have been 23 referrals. Initial referrals are taken by frontline Gardai and are then investigated by the divisional protective service. As it is only in its infancy it is too early to gauge its impact.

He also thanked Superintendent Kevin Gately for all his service and wished him well in his retirement.

Chief Supt. Healy also addressed other issue's / items raised:

Chief Supt. Healy had meeting with Dara Calleary regarding the profound impact of recent events in Swinford had on the community. Dara Calleary suggested there should be designated opening times for every Garda station in East Mayo.

Deputy Calleary also highlighted the value of the previous urban area JPC's; this would be a route to determining issues locally and then raising the issues formally with the Joint Policing Committee proper.

The establishment of local policing fora separate to the Joint Policing Committee, for example, Ballina, Castlebar etc was discussed; provision for the establishment of these fora can be found at Section 2.1 (d) (a) of Joint Policing Committees Guidelines – Amended August 2014.

Dara Calleary: suggested there should be designated opening times for every Garda station in East Mayo. He questioned the Local Authorities policy on nominating tenants into Housing Esate's; is there any pre-consultation prior to housing allocation.

The role of the JPC is very valuable in assisting AGS as it informs is of priorities in the area that need resourcing but resource is are not unlimited.

The area of housing allocation is an issue for Mayo County Council.

Christy Hyland: Westport is short one detective and when should they expect a replacement?

The DPS would take away substantial work from detective workloads. They're also looking at taking away the burden of administrative work from frontline Gardai as investigation of crime is very much a policing role.

Cllr. Michael Loftus: the new app is an excellent development and asked could it be presented to the JPC.

The coastal watch app is an example of innovation by AGS and he would welcome an opportunity to present to the JPC.

Cllr. Neil Cruise: "When should Foxford expect replacement for Jim Murphy in Foxford GS.

The replacement of a Sergeant in Foxford is a priority but has been delayed by Covid19.

Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne: Requested a report be given to the JPC outlining the number of complaints from neighbors in the area of anti-social behavior.

Cllr Kilcoyne and Cllr Duffy requested the JPC's approval to establish a Community Forum and agreed to have it has an item on the agenda of the next meeting.

Cllr Kilcoyne said that anti-social behavior is a major issue and requested a report on the number of complaints by neighbours received by the Council should be available at the next meeting.

Dara Calleary seconded this proposal.

7 Update on Drone Regs.

Maura Murphy gave an update.

"The European Union rules on the regulation of drones; Regulations (EU) 2019/947 and 2019/945 will come into force on 31 December 2020".

The sub-committee will regroup and report at the next meeting.

8 Cyber Bullying

Correspondence to Dept. of Justice, Cyber Bullying legislation – *A letter issued on the 11th August to Minister McEntee, two further emails were issued on the 16th October and the 25th November respectively for update on legislation.*

No response has been received to date Deputy Calleary will make contact with Dept. of Justice on behalf of JPC.

Cllr Loftus congratulated Garda Donald O'Donovan in the prosecution of Patrick O'Brien in the in the Ian Wright case. he said he was amazed to find out the case was brought about as a non-fatal offense under the post office act 1951 and suggested we write to the Department as the legislation needs updating.

9. Advanced questions:

Dara Calleary:

The number of community-based Garda available at Swinford, Charlestown, Kiltimagh Claremorris and Ballyhaunis Garda Stations?

The daily opening hours to the public at Swinford, Charlestown, Kiltimagh and Claremorris and Ballyhaunis Garda Stations?

What plans there are to review the level of Community Policing Resources in County Mayo?

Keelan Moran:

Would Community Policing be introduced in Westport due to the increase in Graffiti/Anti-Social Behaviour / Littering at McConville Park, Westport.

Chief Superintendent Tony Healy said different opening hours have been trialed in Ballina and Castlebar to identify key times. They have tried to implement opening times to suit local needs particularly in response to the COVID-19 situation. Different communities have different requirements and their priority is community engagement, high visibility and more patrols.

AOB:

Cllr McDonnell said that this year it was not possible to hold a public meeting due to the restrictions imposed dealing with COVID-19. He said he hoped to have a public meeting early next year if the guidelines permit holding one.

This concluded the business of the meeting and he thanked everybody for their participation and wished everybody happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Next Meeting:

To be confirmed

Summary of Actions:

No.	Action	Organisation
1	Letter to Minister of Justice from JPC regarding updating legislation dealing with online abuse/bullying.	Dara Calleary
2	Follow up on grant applications process for purchase and installation of Community CCTV	Dara Calleary
3	Report on number of complaints MCC Housing Department received regarding anti-social behaviour	MCC

Signed:


Cllr. Al McDonnell, Chairperson of JPC

Date: 12/3/2021