**Minutes of Meeting of County Cavan Joint Policing Committee held in the Council Chamber, Cavan on 7th December 2018 at 3pm.**

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**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr Sarah O’ Reilly, Cllr Winston Bennett, Cllr John Paul Feeley, Cllr Paddy Smith, Cllr Damien Brady, Cllr Clifford Kelly, Cllr Peter Mc Vitty, Cllr Shane P. O’Reilly, Cllr Fergal Curtin,

**Community Representatives:** Bob Gilbert, Noleen Brady, Brian Mc Dermott

**Executive**: Tommy Ryan (Chief Executive), Eoin Doyle, (Director of Services), Gráinne Boyle (Community & Enterprise).

**Garda Officers**: Chief Superintendent John O’Reilly, Superintendent Timothy Burke, Inspector Nial Mc Kiernan

**Oireachtas Members:** Senator Joe O’Reilly, Deputy Niamh Smyth

**Apologies:** Cllr Paddy Mc Donald, Cllr Carmel Brady, Vanessa Clarke, Frank Mc Dermott, Cllr Madeleine Argue, Cllr Noel O’ Connell, Superintendent James Coen, Deputy Brendan Smith, Senator Diarmuid Wilson, Aisling Tobin

**In Attendance:** Thomas Lyons

Chair Cllr J. P Feeley welcomed everyone to the meeting and commenced by offering condolences to Vanessa Clarke on the passing of her husband.

Chief Executive Tommy Ryan was hoping to be in attendance but may not be arrive on time and if so wanted to forward his apologies.

**Minutes from meeting 14th September 2018 & Matters Arising**

No matters were arising from the previous meeting.

Minutes were proposed by Cllr. P Mc Vitty and seconded by Cllr. W. Bennett.

**Crime Statistics for Quarter 3 2018 compared to Quarter 3 2017**

Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly presented the Crime Statistics comparing the third quarters of 2017 to 2018 which had been circulated to all members. He said there is normally an increase in the number of burglaries at this time of year which is reflected in the statistics, however they are still lower when compared to the same quarter in 2017.

He followed up on a query regarding the breakdown in statistics on domestic violence figures which was queried at the previous meeting. In quarter 3, 2017 there were 33 offences in the Cavan jurisdiction and 17 in Bailieborough and in quarter 3 2018 there were 37 offences in Cavan and 34 in Bailieborough.

There were 31 drug driving offences over 2018.

Cllr. W. Bennett congratulated all the gardaí involved in the recent drugs seizure made in Kilnaleck in early November. He referred to an x-ray machine used by Customs to scan large vehicles which detects drugs in packages. He queried if An Garda Síochána could obtain more of these machines as they are very beneficial in detecting drugs.

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly replied that the x-ray machine referred to is owned and managed by Revenue, he agreed more of the machines are needed as they are extremely beneficial to the gardaí in their work but he could not speak on behalf of Revenue on what their plans are in relation to the purchasing of new machines.

Cllr. D. Brady commented on the visible increase in Garda presence on the ground and suggested that this may be contributing to the decrease in crime statistics. He queried when there would be additional Gardai allocated to County Cavan. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly replied that on the 18th January 2019 the following additional Garda allocations would be made, 3 to the Bailieborough, 5 to Carrickmacross and 2 to Monaghan.

Senator J. O’Reilly commented that the increase in Garda numbers is most welcome and would help make An Garda Síochána operations easier.

Cllr. C. Kelly stated that there have been a large number of Garda retirements over the years which still leaves the allocations significantly lower than where they should be at. There are only two officers in Kingscourt and any increase to these numbers would be greatly appreciated.

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly said that they are actively looking for replacements to cover Kingscourt.

Cllr. P. Mc Vitty queried the increase in total allocations to the Cavan & Monaghan Division to which Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly responded that the total allocations made was between 75 to 80 and this leaves a net gain in allocations after retirements, etc are taken into consideration of 44.

**Cavan - Monaghan Divisional Policing Plan 2019: Inspector Nial Mc Kiernan**

Inspector N. Mc Kiernan provided a presentation on the Cavan & Monaghan Division Policing Plan for 2019 covering the following areas:

* Background information to the plan
* Policing priorities under the following areas: Community Engagement / Road Safety / Confronting Crime

Members were invited to put forward their comments for consideration in the 2019 Divisional Plan following his presentation.

Deputy N. Smyth asked how the priority of Community Engagement manifests itself. She specifically referred to the loss of Community Gardai and asked is there is a possibility that this role would be re-instated.

Inspector N. Mc Kiernan replied that Community Engagement is a work in progress. However all Community Alert groups have now been allocated a garda contact who would provide support to them.

Chief Superintendent O’Reilly commented that the Policing Authority are currently recruiting civilian staff so the hope is that Gardai can be re-deployed to community policing following this process.

Deputy N. Smyth welcomed this news, commenting that the Community Guard is a very effective role which is badly needed to be re-introduced into local communities.

Senator J. O’Reilly concurred with Deputy Smyth’s points. He asked if there are any plans to tackle the issue of repeat offenders. He also invited Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly to put forward his views on how he views the Garda Drugs Unit progressing over 2019.

Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly replied that in relation to the case management of repeat offenders a specific Garda has been allocated to deal with this issue and keep track of repeat offenders. This Garda can attend courts within the different counties where necessary. The Cavan Drugs Divisional Unit is still in operation and the interview process is near completion for further members. These will be in addition to the existing staff members of a sergeant and three additional guards.

Chair Cllr. J. P. Feeley welcomed the news of a Garda assigned to deal with repeat offenders. He enquired if there would be a cross border element in relation to this. Chief Superintendent O’Reilly replied that there is a Cross Border Task Force set up and this has direct contact with agencies in the north of the border. Essentially it operates under a different system but has the same objective.

Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly informed members that the final agreement on the new Bailieborough Garda Station has been received and signed off on.

Deputy N. Smyth along with Senator J. O’ Reilly, Cllr. S. O’ Reilly and Cllr. P. O’ Reilly all welcomed this news.

Deputy N. Smyth enquired into the timeframe and Chief Superintendent replied that they would expect the station to be occupied by Summer 2021.

**"To ask Cavan County Council to extend bye laws for Anti Social Behaviour to the Castle Lake in Bailieborough". – Motion request by Niamh Smyth TD.**

Deputy N. Smyth referred to the high levels of anti-social behaviour taking place at the Castle Lake Recreational Facility in Bailieborough over the summer months of 2018. However, she wanted to redraw her motion as she has been reassured following a meeting with Superintendent T. Burke that the Gardaí will crack down on any anti-social behaviour taking place at the facility.

Superintendent T. Burke explained that extending bye laws are not necessary as changes in legislation have extended the powers of the Gardaí to deal with a range of offences, they now have enough powers to deal with offences including public drinking and littering.

Cllr. S. O’ Reilly commented that the facility is on private land owned by Coillte so therefore it would not be possible for the Council to create bye-laws. She was unhappy that continually raising the issue of anti-social behaviour at the facility was only giving it and the town of Bailieborough a bad reputation and believed that the good work taking place by the local community should be highlighted more. She commended everyone who works to keep the area tidy.

Cllr. C. Kelly referred to the great relationship which exists between Coillte and Cavan County Council. However he believes that there has always been a grey area around what powers An Garda Síochána had on enforcing the law on Coillte’s property. He was happy to hear there was now some clarity on this now.

Cllr. S. P. O’ Reilly said that the bigger issue is around young people’s access to alcohol, stating that something needs to be done to tackle this.

Superintendent T. Burke informed members that they are currently in the process of developing localised policing plans. He offered the example that in Quarter 3 2019 there will be a step up in Garda patrols around the Castle Lake facility and this is in direct response to the issues raised. He welcomed further such feedback from members and the public to go into their plan.

**JPC Public Meeting**

Chair Cllr. J. P. Feeley congratulated the Gardaí and G. Boyle on the recent JPC Public Meetings. Two Public Information Meetings took place on the 6th and 8th November in Ballyjamesduff and Cootehill and the main JPC Public Meeting took place on the 26th November in the Slieve Russell Hotel. The focus of the meetings was on the Property Marking Scheme and this was very effective as bookings for the machine have significantly increased with the machine fully booked up now to the end of May 2019.

In relation to the Public Meeting Cllr. S. P. O’ Reilly said that there was an encouraging response received in relation to a question raised on the potential of a Garda Dog Unit been set up within County Cavan. Chief Superintendent O’ Reilly responded that he would be fully in favour seeing the establishment of a regional Dogs Unit if Gardaí resources allow for it. There is a move towards regionalisation of services so there is always a possibility for this to happen, adding that it looks very likely that the Gardaí’s Regional Computer Crime Unit may be set up in County Cavan.

Cllr. P. Mc Vitty said that the recent Public Meeting was very enlightening and referred to an issue which was raised around CCTV cameras and the implications of GDPR. He asked if further clarification could be provided in relation to the implications of the recent legislation and the operation of CCTV cameras. Superintendent T. Burke said that GDPR has not changed what people can or can’t do in terms of using the cameras. The Gardaí still have the legal authority to seek CCTV footage from private individuals if it aids an investigation.

Deputy N. Smyth thanked the local Gardaí in Bailieborough and Cavan County Council for their assistance on the local implementation of the Property Marking Scheme. They had up to 60 bookings for the machine, it was a slow process but believes it is very beneficial and worth the effort. She said that Bailieborough Community Alert Group wish to borrow the machine again next year.

Cllr. P. Smith concurred with Deputy Smyth’s comments and encouraged other areas to avail of the machine also. He hopes to get the machine out to Ballyjamesduff in the near future.

Superintendent T. Burke stressed the importance of getting property marked with identifying information as it is hugely beneficial to the gardaí in enabling them to return property items to their owners.

Chair Cllr. J. P. Feeley wanted to wish a speedy recovery for the Garda Officer who was recently injured in Castleblaney, all members concurred.

The meeting was concluded by the Chair wishing everyone a happy Christmas and best wishes for 2019.

**Next Meeting**

22nd February 2019, 3pm in the Council Chamber.