**Minutes of Meeting of County Cavan Joint Policing Committee held on-line over Microsoft Teams, Cavan on 04th December 2020 at 3pm.**

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**Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr Sarah O’ Reilly, Cllr John Paul Feeley, Cllr Paddy Mc Donald, Cllr Carmel Brady, Cllr Madeleine Argue, Cllr. Brendan Fay, Cllr. Trevor Smith, Cllr. Patricia Walsh, Cllr. T.P. O’Reilly

**Community Representatives:** Vanessa Clarke, John Magee, Stanley Nwaneri, Elizabeth Ormiston, Tony Mc Govern

**Executive**: Brendan Jennings (Director of Services, CCC)

**Garda Officers**: Chief Superintendent Aiden Glacken, Superintendent Paudraic Jones, Superintendent Gordon Englishby

**Oireachtas Members:** Deputy Brendan Smith, Deputy Pauline Tully

**Apologies:** Cllr. Aiden Fitzpatrick, Deputy Niamh Smyth

**In Attendance:** Inspector Nial Mc Kiernan (An Garda Síochána), Sergeant J. Gallagher (An Garda Síochána), Eilish Mc Donagh (Road Safety Authority), Gráinne Boyle (CCC), Eddie Butler (Norther Sound), Damian Mc Carney (Anglo Celt)

Chair Cllr. J.P. Feeley welcomed everyone to the meeting. He stated that the media were present at the meeting and reminded members that no individual cases are to be discussed during the meeting.

He welcomed Superintendent Paudraic Jones to the meeting and congratulated him on his appointment as Superintendent for the Cavan Division. He also welcomed Chief Superintendent Aiden Glacken who has recently be given the additional remit of serving over the Cavan & Monaghan Division on top of his existing division, Sligo & Leitrim.

**Minutes & Matters Arising**

The minutes were proposed by Cllr. P. Walsh and seconded by Cllr. B. Fay.

Cllr. B. Fay enquired if there had been any further update from the Garda Commissioner in relation to the CCTV applications submitted from County Cavan. Chair J.P. Feeley informed him that there has no further updates as checked by G. Boyle prior to the meeting. He advised that this is now a matter for the Oireachtas members to pursue now. It is not something that An Garda Síochána or the Cavan County Council can do anything about at this stage.

**Cavan Roads Policing**

Chair J.P. Feeley welcomed Sgt. Gallagher, An Garda Siochana’s Road Safety Officer to the meeting and thanked him for agreeing to provide a presentation to the committee.

Sgt Gallagher’s presentation covered the following:

* Fatalities on the Roads of County Cavan for 2020
* Driving under the influence of intoxicants
* Enforcement of Road Traffic Legislation
* Life saver offences, Drink Driving, Speed, Mobile Phones and Seat belts
* On Going Operations regarding Roads Policing
* Initiatives on Road Safety going forward for 2021

Chair J.P. Feeley thanked Sgt. Gallagher for his presentation. He said following the changes to the speed limits in certain parts of the county on the 1st September there were still a mix of road speed signs up from the old and new limits. He is aware of a number of people who received fines as a result from Traffic Vans. He enquired what would happen in this situation. Sgt. Gallagher said he was not aware of any charges made over this period.

Deputy B. Smith welcomed the new Superintendent and Chief Superintendent to the meeting and wished them well on their posts. He stated that he has attended many of the Educational Events delivered through the Roads Policing Unit and believes that they are very effective, the more of these that could be delivered the better.

Cllr. P. Walsh was happy to see that the number of Drink Driving detections are down and suggested this may be due to the pandemic, however she also believed that people’s eyes have been opened more to the dangers od this now. There is still an issue on Drug Driving and the large number of detections taking place in County Cavan.

**Road Safety Authority Updates**

Chair J.P. Feeley introduced Eilish Mc Donagh Senior Roads Safety Promotional Officer from the Roads Safety Authority.

Ms Mc. Donagh’s presentation focused on the following areas:

* Winter Ready Campaign
* RSA Timetable of Campaigns over December 2020
* Road Safety Strategy 2021- 2030

In relation to the Road Safety Strategy, she informed members that they hope to finalise and launch the policy 2021. The consultation process has closed with over 800 submissions received. She advised members if they would like to make a submission they were welcome to contact her and she would forward them on a submission form.

Chair J.P. Feeley said that Hi Vis Vests are very important and they need to be worn at this time of year especially. He enquired around the long waiting time for Driver Testing as this is presenting a huge inconvenience for so many people. Ms Donagh replied that this is not an area of her responsibility however she will make enquiries as to what the situation is around the waiting times.

Ms Ormiston agreed with what the Chair had stated around the need for Hi Vis Vests. She stated that this is an issue raised by many IFA members at their meetings also. Ms Donagh advised that the RSA provide these vests for free to the public, they can be ordered online. She also offered to provide a presentation on Road Safety to any other organisations or groups who would like one. Cllr. M. Argue noted that she had also raised the issue on Hi Vis Vests as a motion at a recent MD meeting.

**Senior Alerts Personalised Panic Alarms & Muntir na Tire Updates**

Vanessa Clarke, Development Officer with Muntir na Tire welcomed the opportunity to present to members and provide an update on the Panic Alarms Scheme and other Muntir na Tire activities.

She referred to Community Alert Group activity levels at this time and informed members that up to 70% of the groups are not meeting physically however they are still committed to continuing the work. They are currently waiting on guidelines which are to be issued by the Department for groups around how to host on-line meetings. In relation to Text Alert many groups are currently waiting to receive Rebate Funding. It can be extremally difficult for groups to fundraise at this time and they are working on supporting groups in this area also. There was initially at the start of the pandemic a lot of activity through the Text Alert system however they are not as active now.

Muntir na Tire are linking in with ALONE and have referred many groups to them to access their supports for vulnerable older people in the community.

She informed members that Muntir na Tire are currently exploring the possibility of developing a Community Support Register. She said that they have found many of the Community Alert Groups wouldn’t actually know if the most vulnerable people within their community were getting the support that they needed. They have decided to re-invigorate the vulnerable people’s register that would have previously been developed in some areas through their previous Crime Prevention Ambassadors Initiative. They want to ask all Community Alert Groups to identify vulnerable older people within their communities who should be on the register and ask them to seek consent for their names to be added to it. The Community Alert Groups would be the data holders for the register. It is hoped that in this way a better and targeted structure around providing supports to vulnerable older people within our communities can be provided.

Chair J.P. Feeley thanked Vanessa Clarke for her updates. He said that the Community Gardaí have been doing great work in updating the Older People’s Register within their local areas also. Ms Clarke agreed, she added however that this activity is not taking place in all areas and the focus of the Community Support Register would be to identify the most vulnerable members of the community who would be considered the hardest to reach.

Ms Clarke referred to the Senior Alerts Personalised Monitored Panic Alarm, stating that it is a very useful piece of equipment for any older person to obtain. They facilitate other add on features such as reminders to take medication etc. There is a cost of 60 euros after the first year. Members will be forwarded on further information on the Panic Alarms.

**Crime Figures (Incidents Reported) for County Cavan – YTD 2019 & 2020**

Chief Superintendent A. Glacken acknowledged Superintendent J. Coen’s contribution to policing in Cavan. He welcomed and introduced Superintendent P. Jones as his replacement adding that he has every confidence in him as a professional who he has no doubt will work well with the community and councillors.

Chief Superintendent Glacken presented the Crime Statistics for County Cavan. The COVID pandemic has had a substantial effect on crime figures in a positive way. Many of the crime categories were down on this time last year, he referenced burgalries (down 35%); thefts (down 470 to 320) and assaults (down 15%). The support shown by the public for the gardaí has been greatly appreciated.

Under roads policing there has been an increase in Drug Driving detections. Drugs for personal use / sale and supply is also on the increase, he said this can be viewed in two ways, either there is an increase in the number of drugs circulating within the County or the Gardaí have been getting better at detecting them. He stated however that tackling the drugs issue is a wider societal issue and not one that An Garda Síochána can tackle on their own.

He went on to give updates under some key areas for members. Over 2019 to 2020 there has been a 5% increase in garda resources for the County. The Divisional Protective Services Unit has been established in County Cavan since July 2019. This Unit consists of a Sergeant and 5 personal. The Divisional Arms Unit will be set up by the end of 2021. This will be a fully delivered 24/7 service by front line personal.

There are Contingency Plans in place for Brexit and An Garda Síochána continue to work closely with PSNI in relation to this.

There have been some substantial drug seizures in Cavan and Kingscourt recently that An Garda Síochána are very happy about.

Cllr. P. Mc Donald welcomed Chief Superintendent A. Glacken to the post. He welcomed the fact that the crime figures are decreasing overall. However he pointed out that the issue of drugs is of serious concern still and is getting worse. He complemented the Drugs Unit for all the work they do in this area.

Chief Superintendent A. Glacken responded that the issue of drugs detections was with all members of the Garda Síochána and welcomed Cllr. P. Mc Donald’s comments.

Deputy Tully welcomed also welcomed the two Garda members to their posts and to the JPC. She asked if the figure on Assaults also include Domestic Violence Assaults, she added that she would have imagined that these figure would have dropped otherwise due to the pandemic. Chief Superintendent A. Glacken that Assualts Figures do not include Domestic Violence Assaults.

He stressed how important it is for victims to be encouraged to come forward and engage with An Garda Síochána’s Domestic Violence Unit around this matter as they can offer specific supports.

Cllr. P. Walsh welcomed Chief Superintendent A. Glacken to the county. She reiterated the earlier comments around the seriousness of the issue of drugs within the county. She referred to how invaluable the Drugs Unit is and stated the importance of it being retained within the county. Deputy B. Smith also concurred with these comments around the drugs issue. He went on to say that a fully resources dedicated Drugs Unit for the county is the only effective way of dealing with the issue. It is a problem in every parish unfortunately now.

Chief Superintendent A. Glacken reassured members that there will be a permanent dedicated Drugs Unit in Counties Cavan & Monaghan Division. There is also an established Drugs Satellite Unit based in Cavan Town which will also continue to operate. They have also allocated additional personal to this issue and this will continue going forward. However he referred to the need for a collective response to tackle the issue of drugs within the County and the need for personal responsibility.

Cllr. B. Fay wished Chief Superintendent A. Glacken and Superintendent Jones every success and wanted to acknowledge the work of Superintendent J. Coen.

Superintendent P. Jones stated that he looks forward to working with members of the Cavan JPC. He has read the JPC Strategy and let members know that they can contact him at any time for assistance.

 **AOB**

Chair J. P. Feeley thanked the JPC members for their inputs and contributions during 2020. He acknowledged that meetings have been more challenging as they need to take place on-line but he acknowledged members great commitment to this work.

He also thanked G. Boyle for her support to the JPC throughout the year.

**Next Meeting**

The JPC Steering Committee will meet in early in 2021 to set dates for JPC meetings over 2021.