

Mayo Joint Policing Committee

Minutes of Meeting

Friday September 9th, 2022 at 11.00am (Online and in-person in Aras Chambers).

Present: Cllr. Al McDonnell (Chair), Cllr. Neil Cruise, Cllr. Michael Loftus, Cllr. Christy Hyland, Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne, Cllr. Damien Ryan, Cllr. Sean Carey, Cllr. Mark Duffy, Cllr. Tom Connolly, Cllr. Gerry Coyle, Cllr. Michael Burke, Rose Conway Walsh T.D., Alan Dillon T.D., Dara Calleary T.D., Louise Glynn PPN, Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon, Superintendent Joe McKenna.

In attendance: Superintendent Gabriel Moran, Superintendent Gary Walsh, Insp. David Tiernan, Mary Gildea, Assistant Principal Officer, Sergeant Thomasina McHale, Deirdre Finnerty MCC, Maura Murphy MCC, Michael Galvin MCC.

Apologies Edith Geraghty PPN,

1. Welcome

Cllr. Al McDonnell opened the meeting and welcomed everyone present. He informed the meeting that PPN committee members Micheal Larkin and Keelan Moran have stepped away from the JPC due to work commitments and replacement PPN representatives will be nominated in due course.

An Garda Síochána were complimented on the excellent event held in Newport on August 17th to celebrate Michael Staines, the first Commissioner of An Garda Síochána. He thanked the Newport 300 committee and Superintendent Joe McKenna on the successful organising of the day.

Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon thanked Cllr McDonnell and wished to be associated with these comments and he also thanked all the JPC members who attended the celebration.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting and matters arising

Proposed: Cllr. Damian Ryan **Seconded:** Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne

3. Reports from An Garda Síochána

Superintendent Gary Walsh – Ballina/Belmullet Area

Superintendent Walsh gave an update for the Ballina area. The Summer months had been very busy due to the large amount of festivals and events held in the region but there were no serious incidents to report.

A serious incident which occurred in Belmullet last May was solved and two people have been arrested.

There were also two people arrested following an intervention by Gardai when a suspicious car was stopped and Cocaine with a street value of €13k was seized.

Superintendent Gabriel Moran – Claremorris Area

Superintendent Moran also reported that there had been a large amount of festivals and events held in the area and all passed off successfully without serious incidents.

Activity is beginning to return to pre-pandemic levels with over 700,000 pilgrims visiting Knock this year.

There was a significant drugs detection from a traffic stop and drink driving detections have increased considerably recently.

There are a lot of roadworks ongoing and he appealed for drivers to exercise caution to avoid collisions.

He welcomed new Inspector Michael Gibbons to Claremorris.

Inspector David Tiernan reported on Roads Policing

Inspector Tiernan now has responsibility for Roads Policing and reported that the unit was sufficiently resourced at present. The following figures to July 2022 were reported:

Offence	Total	Change
Fatal RTA	4	Up 1
Serious Injury RTA	4	Down 7
Traffic Accidents	20	Down 2
Material Damage	275	Down 90
Speed detection	2054	-
Use of Mobile phone	584	Down 163
Drug /Drink driving	127	35

AGS are continuing with “Operation Surround” and the motorbike safety campaign. There is also an ongoing campaign on the safe use of level crossing to make the public aware of the dangers involved in their use.

Supt. Joe McKenna – Drugs and public order offences:

Superintendent McKenna updated on crime figures in the Mayo Division. He recommended to compare statistics to the same period in 2019 figures to get an accurate reflection of trends.

He reported that in the last three months there were several significant detections and the total monetary value of drug seizures in Mayo to date amounts to €2,270,897.67 with cash of €189k being seized.

Figures reported to date:

Crime	Total	2019
Burglary	85	Down 24%
Serious Assault	52	Up 21%
Minor Assault	203	Up 14%
Theft from Shops	180	Down 22%
Theft from Car	22	Down 277%

Crime	Total	2019
Theft from Person	6	Down 16%
Theft – Ordinary	144	Up 9%
Public Order offences	242	Up 3%
Criminal Damage	181	Down 14%
Sexual crime- Rape	14	Up 75%
Sexual crime – Assault	29	Up 11%
Drink Driving	90	Down 58%
Frauds (Scams)	316	Up 76%

4. Presentation on CCTV

Superintendent Joe McKenna gave a presentation to the members on CCTV. He outlined on the various schemes, their operation, the guidelines, and application process that is involved with these schemes. He also outlined the details of the new Digital Recording Bill that will govern the operating of these schemes. Details of the presentation were forwarded to the members after the meeting.

This was then followed by a discussion with those present. Some of the items raised were as follows:

Cllr. Al McDonnell:

Thanked Superintendent McKenna for his presentation and suggested we have CCTV on the Agenda for another JPC meeting in order to afford members time to digest all the information that is involved in the schemes. He said there was widespread dissatisfaction with the administration/bureaucracy of the CCTV scheme, and it should be opposed.

Cllr. Tom Connolly:

Regarding the violence in the Claremorris had anyone been arrested and has CCTV assisted AGS in the area?

Cllr. Michael Kilcoyne:

Congratulated Dara Calleary on his ministerial appointment and wished him well in his new role. These wishes were echoed by all present at the meeting.

He complimented AGS on their recent successful raid in Castlebar. He said regarding the CCTV procedures that local Community Groups will not have the time, expertise or funds to get a CCTV system and the new procedures and legislation were all about protecting those who get caught and not the law abiding citizens.

Cllr. Christy Hyland:

Asked when would the new Digital Recording Bill be in place and would it replace all previous Bills and would evidence captured be admissible in court? He said politicians can tell the bureaucrats to simplify the application process.

Cllr. Michael Burke:

There will be very few applications for CCTV because of all the complicated paperwork involved and it was unfair that community groups must do all the research and funding to keep our towns safe.

He asked if the people responsible for the damage to a barrier in the car park in Cong are being prosecuted?

He also referenced the speeding around the Ballinrobe area has become a serious problem.

Cllr. Damien Ryan:

The paperwork involved in getting a CCTV scheme would be a deterrent and it is only the consultants that will benefit from all of this.

Garda John Doherty was complimented for his excellent work in the Cong area and suggested a pilot traffic free flow system be implemented for Ballinrobe particularly on Fridays to alleviate congestion

Cllr. Michael Loftus:

CCTV should not be a replacement for Gardai and he will be meeting Superintendent Walsh regarding CCTV in the Ballina area.

Would there be a replacement for the Sergeant in charge of drugs as he was recently promoted?

Cllr Mark Duffy:

There was far too much bureaucracy surrounding CCTV and referenced a recent case in Ballina where a car was damaged but the CCTV footage could not be used as it was in place for the purpose of surveying the recycling area only.

Cllr. Gerry Coyle:

Extended sympathies to Dara Calleary on the recent passing of his mother and to the family of Jack de Bromhead on his recent passing. These sympathies were echoed by all present at the meeting.

The amount of regulations and red tape involved in CCTV will prohibit volunteers from getting involved due to the time involved in making and application.

In response Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon thanked Superintendent McKenna for the very detailed CCTV presentation and agreed with all the comments but said CCTV was hugely helpful to AGS in the prevention of crime. There are people with vast expertise in AGS that can assist groups with CCTV applications if needed.

The speeding issue in the Ballinrobe area will be addressed and the promoted Garda, Cllr. Loftus referred to will be replaced.

Also, in response Superintendent Moran thanked Cllr. Connolly and reported that following the violent incident seven people were charged and are before the courts and that social media and CCTV were very helpful to AGS with their investigation. AGS are continuing with their investigation into the Cong incident and Go Safe and Speeding checkpoints in the Ballinrobe and Claremorris are constantly being reviewed and assessed.

5. Update on Sub-Committees

Maura Murphy gave an update on the formation of the four sub-committees.

6. Public Meeting Topic

A topic needs to be chosen for the Public Meeting on December 9th, 2022. No topic was put forward, members were invited to submit idea's on same to Maura.

7. Advance Question

Cllr. Christy Hyland:

- When is the new system commencing where one Superintendent oversees three districts, precise date please?
- Is there a prioritising system with calls made by the public to their local Garda Station?

Chief Superintendent Ray McMahon replied to the above:

The IT solutions that will enable the merging of the three information systems of Longford, Roscommon and Mayo are due to commence on September 18th, 2022 which will help with the move towards the new operating model. This will also help reduce the administration burden on stations and enable extra inspectors to be appointed to assist the Superintendents.

**This concluded the business of the meeting, the next JPC meeting is on
9th December 2022, at 11.00 a.m.**

X. O'Donnell

9/12/22

