

**DRAFT Minutes of Tipperary Joint Policing Committee
held on the 16th of December 2022 at 10.00 a.m. at
Thurles Municipal District Offices and Via Zoom**

In Attendance: -

Cllr Noel Coonan (Chairperson), Eddie Meegan (Secretary), Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan, Brian Beck Acting Director of Services, Deputy Mattie McGrath, Cllr Marie Murphy, Cllr Fiona Bonfield, Cllr Richie Molloy, Cllr Ger Darcy, Cllr Shane Lee, Cllr Pat English, Cllr Tony Black, Cllr Annemarie Ryan Shiner, Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr Hughie McGrath, Pat Carroll (IFA), Cathal Ó hÉanna (PPN), Anne Williamson (PPN), Michelle Aylward (PPN) Margaret Sheehy (PPN) Marie Cox (TCC) Cliona Tobin (TCC) and Mairead Winters Tipperary County Council.

Also in Attendance: -

Inspector James White,
Shannon Sweeny Tipperary Star, Darren Keegan Iconic News, Catherine Fogarty Tipperary Mid-West Radio, Peter Gleeson, Nenagh Guardian, Aileen Hahessy Nationalist, Sheila Naughton Tipp FM,

Apologies: - Deputy Alan Kelly, Deputy Michael Lowry, Deputy Martin Browne, Deputy Jackie Cahill, Cllr John Crosse, Cllr Mark Fitzgerald, Gerard Fogarty (PPN), Cllr David Dunne, Cllr Imelda Goldsboro, Sabela Mavuso,

Welcome

Cllr Noel Coonan (Chairperson) opened the meeting, welcomed all present and noted apologies received.

He welcomed Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan of the Tipperary/Clare Division and Brian Beck Director of Services Community and Economic Directorate of Tipperary County Council.

Cllr Coonan noted that it is Eddie Meegan and Cliona Tobin's last attendance at the JPC meeting and thanked them both sincerely for their work within the JPC and wished them well in their future career endeavours.

The Department of Justice hosted two Zoom meetings in early December 2022 about the proposed change from the JPC to the Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP). The LCSP will focus on interagency collaboration and community participation. There will be fewer public representatives in the partnership and the chair highlighted how this is another example of how local democracy is being undermined. The proposed change is expected to happen in early 2024.

Item 1 - Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

Verification of the minutes of the previous meeting held on the 14th of October 2022 was approved on the proposal of Cllr Pat English and seconded by Cllr Ger Darcy.

Item 2 – To Review levels and patterns of crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in the County

Chief Superintendent Colm O Sullivan gave a presentation on the Tipperary Division Statistics up to 01/12/2022 with objectives noted as

1. Domestic Abuse Incidents
 2. Property Crime at a Divisional Level (broken down by District)
 - Additional attention afforded to Burglary
 3. Crime Against the Person at a Divisional Level (broken down by District)
 - Additional attention afforded to Assault
 4. Proactive Policing Measures
 - Includes Possession of Drugs, Sale of Drugs, Offensive Weapons
 5. Traffic
 - Fatalities/Serious Injuries figures YTD
 - Drink Driving and Drug Offences
 - LifeSaver Offences
- ***All information is based upon operational data from the PULSE System as was available on 01/12/2022 unless otherwise stated, and is liable to change. Crime Counting rules are applied unless otherwise stated. Incident counts are based on the data reported.***

Chief Superintendent Colm O Sullivan provided statistics for each of the Municipal Towns in the County - Nenagh, Thurles, Clonmel, Tipperary Town and Cahir.

The statistics for the overall Tipperary Division indicate: -

- An increase in Domestic Abuse Incidents Year to date (30-Nov) is 13% Domestic incidents include; Breach of Interim Barring Order; Breach of Protection Order; Breach of Barring Order; Breach of Safety Order; Domestic – No Offence Identified; Breach of Emergency Barring Order and any incident with Domestic M.O.
All information is based upon operational data from the PULSE System as was available on 05/12/2022 and is liable to change. Incident counts are based on date reported.
- An increase in Property Crime which includes all robbery, all burglary and various theft offences – up 35% (1,079 to 1457). Detections are +9% YTD (572 to 623). The breakdown within Tipperary County is as follows; Tipp Town +63% (119 to 194) Nenagh+36% (215 to 292), Thurles +46% (226 to 331), Cahir +8% (148 to 160) and Clonmel +29% (371 to 480)
- An increase in Non-Aggravated Burglary which includes residential and non-residential up 11% (212 to 236) Residential Burglary is +3%, and YTD Non-Residential Burglary is +37% YTD. Detections are -9% YTD (82 to 75). The breakdown for each district is as follows; Nenagh -25% (56 to 42) Tipp Town +80% (25 to 45) Thurles +67% (36 to 60) Cahir +17% (18 to 21) and Clonmel -12% (77 to 68).
- An increase in Crimes Against the Person which includes murder, murder threats, all assaults, harassment, child abandonment and neglect or abuse – is up 20% (522 to 624). Detections are -5% YTD (330 to 314). The breakdown for each district is as follows; Tipp Town -9% (55 to 50) Nenagh+28% (101 to 129) Thurles +30% (110 to 143) Cahir +58% (57 to 90) and Clonmel +7% (199 to 212).
- An increase in Assaults which include assaults causing harm and minor assaults – YTD the Division is +18% (381 to 450) Assaults Causing Harm: +43% YTD (116 to 166) Minor Assaults: +7% YTD (265 to 284) Detections

are -2% YTD (239 to 235). The breakdown for each district is as follows; Tipp Town -22% (50 to 39), Nenagh +39% (70 to 97), Thurles +32% (75 to 99) Cahir +67% (42 to 70), and Clonmel+1% (144 to 145).

Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan updated the Committee on other proactive Policing Measures under the following headings:

Overall Searches within the Division are down 33% YTD with Possession of Offensive Weapons Down 19% YTD, (70 to 57).

Crime Counting Rules not applied; Possession of Drugs for Personal Use was Down 35% YTD (540 to 349) and Possession of Drugs for Sale/Supply was Down 14% YTD (122 to 105).

Fatal Collisions: There were 8 Fatal Collisions compared with 8 for the same period last year and Serious Injury Collisions are up 18% (33 to 39). There have been 3,421 MIT Checkpoints conducted in the Division – (up 38% from 2,478 YTD last year). This has resulted in 262 Driving While Intoxicated Offences (up 3% from 255 YTD last year). This figure includes 58 Drug Driving Offences (down 19% from 72 YTD last year). The most recent data regarding LifeSaver Offences shows the following Jan to Oct Trends show the use of mobile -34% (818 to 540 +28%)

Driving without a seat belt (203 to 260), those that are speeding -20% (4,156 to 3,324).

Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan remarked that it is essential that people take care on the roads during these adverse weather conditions. The advice is to reduce speed significantly as weather dictates the conditions of the roads.

In relation to domestic violence reporting that it is essential that people come forward as An Garda Síochána can link with other agencies to support the person affected. The increase in domestic violence incidents is likely due to an increase in those coming forward to report.

The Chief Superintendent noted that The centenary of the formation of An Garda Síochána was marked with ceremonies on the 14th of November in Mullinahone; the 15th of November in The Source Arts Theatre Thurles and a ceremony to commemorate the murder of Garda Hugh Ward, (Reg No: 5663), 96 years ago was held in Hollyford, Co. Tipperary, on Wednesday last November 16th, 2022.

Superintendent Pat Murphy located in Thurles is due to retire in January 2023 wishing him the very best in his retirement. Thanking him sincerely for his service.

Chairperson Noel Coonan thanked Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan for the comprehensive report.

The following questions were put to Chief Superintendent Colm O' Sullivan

Cllr Hughie McGrath agreed with Cllr Noel Coonan's assessment of the JPC with reservation towards change as it instils a dilution of public representation. With regard to burglary what percentage of these statistics constitute home invasion? There is a trend of people breaking in when families are there which is worrying for families. It would be important to know what homes are occupied and non-occupied within the stats.

Cllr Pat English noted the increase in Domestic Violence of 13% is concerning as centres like Cuan Saor are at max capacity. Is there more we can do as a JPC? Searches appeared to have decreased, and Clonmel is seeing an increase in drug dealing offences, Is there a resource for a dedicated drug unit in Clonmel?

Cllr Ger Darcy agreed with the Chairperson's comments regarding the dissolving of the JPC as we formerly known them as public representation is essential to the communities in Tipperary. The trajectory of the rise in all incidents across the board is worrying and support to An Garda recruitment and to communities is important in tackling crime.

Cllr Shane Lee welcomed the Chairperson's comments regarding JPC and agreed with the comments regarding the work of JPC as a valid contribution. Cllr Lee welcomed Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan and new superintendent Ollie Baker to Nenagh Garda District. Cllr Lee expressed his passion regarding the importance of recruiting more members of An Garda to Roscrea as people in the area are frustrated with the delay in services such as passport signatures. Cllr Lee does not believe the figures presented are not indicative of what is happening on the ground.

The government set a target of 800 recruits with only 96 achieved. Clare Tipperary is a large area to cover under the new divisions and therefore the work will be very challenging for existing guards, morale is at a low. In essence, something needs to happen in Roscrea to address the gap in An Garda's presence in Roscrea.

Cllr Annemarie Ryan addressed the lack of visibility of An Garda on the street in Tipperary Town. Cllr Ryan requested that more garda presence is required as people are encouraged to report but the garda can't respond in time, It was promised that visibility of An Garda in Tipperary Town would occur and it has not happened to date. People within the community are concerned as reported non-aggravated burglary is up.

Cllr Fiona Bonfield acknowledged the challenging times regarding the lack of An Garda Recruitment and that perhaps a proactive approach is to encourage community partnership in addressing the objective of combating the rise in incidents.

Deputy Mattie McGrath thanked Chief Superintendent for the presentation. Deputy McGrath wanted to offer sincere sympathy to the family of Irish peacekeeper Seán Rooney who had been killed in Lebanon.

Deputy McGrath acknowledged the work of the JPC and that it appears public representatives are a nuisance to agencies.

Deputy McGrath thanked the members of the An Garda Siochana for their operation carried out in Clonmel last week this was important to the community there is a genuine fear as demonstrated at the large meeting that took place in Monroe. Deputy McGrath questioned the number of resources within the drug squad. Numbers of An Garda are depleting and this is a concern as he believes the statistics are not reflective of what is happening on the ground, he has received complaints from the public that stations are not answering phones or calls are not been returned more action is required in this department.

Cllr Marie Murphy raised the issue of the reduction in the number of Garda affecting the statistics in relation to crime and how many of these are repeat offenders.

Cllr Richie Molloy thanked An Garda for their work in carrying out a crucial operation last week in Clonmel. Cllr Molloy requested more An Garda presence in Clonmel as visibility is important to deter crime. Cllr Molloy addressed the concern from parents over the 12 pubs of Christmas and the selling of drinks to underage people. He asked if there was a plan in place to target this issue.

Cllr Black mirrored the Chairperson's comments regarding the dissolution of the JPC. In addition to this, Cllr Black acknowledges that communities require reassurance through an increase in An Garda presence and this needs to come from more recruitment.

Cllr Siobhan Ambrose offered sympathy to Irish peacekeeper Seán Rooney's family and added well wishes to Soldier Shane Kearney. Cllr Ambrose acknowledged the improvement in presence in An Garda in Clonmel but there is always a need for more presence. Cllr Ambrose acknowledged the work of Cuan Saor but more needs to be done in terms of prostitution and trafficking and perhaps stats regarding this need to include in the presentation.

Cllr Coonan as Chairperson acknowledges the requirement of a recruitment drive in An Garda to combat the increase in crime, Lack of An Garda in Roscrea is an ongoing concern and needs to be addressed. Communities require a visible presence and this in turn gives reassurance to those that are vulnerable within our communities.

Chief Superintendent Colm O'Sullivan response questions are as follows: -

The Chief Superintendent understands that the configuration of services within An Garda Síochána is a concern for members here but it works as work programmes are distributed.

The Chief Superintendent will ask the analyst to look at the breakdown of burglary as that of invasion or otherwise. The legislation doesn't define the act of burglary or invasion.

There are processes in place when addressing the occurrence of domestic violence example taking the person out of the situation, providing support with relocation and engaging with other agencies to assist the person.

There is an increase in checkpoints combating incidents of drunk and drug driving and also ascertaining people coming into the area. Higher visibility in one area results in lower requirements in another area which contributes to a decrease in searches.

The drug unit in Clonmel retains three members of An Garda, The Chief Superintendent will seek clarification on the plainclothes unit or otherwise.

Burglary increases in Winter months and this has been the trend over the last three years Garda Síochána prepared an operational plan for a Winter Phase of Operation Thor, involving the undertaking of targeted enforcement and preventative activity, designed to prevent potential burglars from exploiting the reduced hours of daylight.

The Recruitment figures are set out by the Oireachtas, A new recruitment campaign where one thousand are hoped to pass the application process, Templemore are equipped to train new recruits. Career change reflects societal change.

Chief Superintendent will discuss with Superintendent the promise of visibility of Garda presence in Tipperary Town. If a commitment was given it should be honoured.

Chief Superintendent O'Sullivan will confirm the number of guards within community policing in Tipperary County Council.

Chief Superintendent O'Sullivan will confirm the number within the drug unit and will revert back early next week. The Chief Superintendent requested to put those in contact that have not received a response from the unit, if the person did not get a service they will rectify this.

Domestic Violence is more in line with national figures and more people are reporting.

Chief Superintendent O'Sullivan requested that people are conscious of their habitual safety example leaving phones unattended or cars unlocked. It is important not to create an opportunity for crime. Chief Superintendent will return with a statistic for repeat offenders.

The Chief Superintendent will discuss with counterparts the number of prostitution and trafficking incidents in Tipperary.

The Chief noted there are consequences for those pubs that serve drinks to those that are underage, there is a societal issue present.

At the next meeting, the Chief Superintendent has offered to present an operational model to demonstrate the different functions and their detail to members of the JPC.

The Chief Superintendent will offer support to the inspector in Roscrea but recruitment is a process and additional resources are unlikely in the imminent future.

Item 3 – Property Marking

Eddie Meegan informed members that it is best to contact Ballingarrane House to request this service.

Item 4 – CCTV Update

Eddie Meegan confirmed that at present there are six schemes recommended for authorisation. Clonmel CCTV will be sent to Dublin for a recommendation for authorisation in early 2023. Roscrea CCTV is at the design stage and the Roscrea Community CCTV Group will be looking at potential funding options in 2023. Borrisokane Community CCTV has funding and will work in partnership with Tipperary County Council in bringing it to tender in 2023. Cllr Annmarie Ryan asked about the process for getting CCTV in Tipperary Town as it is badly needed.

-The MDs are the budget controllers with regard to CCTV. The Garda Commissioner is responsible for signing off on CCTV. It is best to discuss with the MDs first as the scope of requirement is required budget, planning etc.

Tipperary County Council acts as Data Controller. Application to be submitted for authorisation of all CCTV. The District work with communities on the drawdown for funding, a huge amount of data control involved with where the cameras are placed there are logistics involved. The MD require a budget but will also require budgetary planning for years ahead with regard to CCTV.

Item 5 – Presentation by the Irish Coursing Club

The presentation was unable to commence due to unforeseen circumstances.

It was noted that continued encouragement is required for people to control their dogs in particular with regard to chipping and the use of leads.

The members agreed to bring forward the Irish Coursing Club Presentation to the next meeting in February 2023.

Item 6 – PPN Issues

Eddie Meegan confirmed that he will request comments from PPN as they had to leave zoom early.

Item 7 – Vote of Sympathy

Cllr Noel Coonan conveyed a vote of sympathy on behalf of the JPC

on the passing of Tim Joe Hayes R.I.P.'s father Colleague Margo Hayes.
Cllr Ger Darcy conveyed a vote of sympathy on behalf of the JPC
on the passing of An Garda Deirdre Hogan to Deirdre's husband Noel and children
Thomas, Sarah and Jack.
Cllr Hughie McGrath conveyed a vote of sympathy on behalf of the JPC on the
passing of former Senior Engineer Pat Crowe of Tipperary County Council.

Item 8 – AOB

Eddie Meegan will draft a letter to support the South East Regional Taskforce with
regard to the requirement for more support with extra resources. Eddie requested
that Cllr English will assist with the wording of the letter.

Cllr Shane Leahy suggested that with technology advancing is there an easier
means of requesting passport signatures? At present, the system that is in place
involves the passport office ringing the superintendent's office if there is no
attendance at the station. It is the only system in place.

Item 9 – Date Time and Location of Next Meeting

The dates for 2023 were agreed to note 24-02-2023, 12-05-2023, 15-09-2023, and
15-12-2023