

COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

AN COMHCHOISTE PÓILÍNEACHTA - JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

Miontuairiscí an Chruinnithe a tionóladh Dé Luain, 11ú Méan Fómhair
2023 ag 11 a.m..

*Minutes of Meeting held on 11th September 2023 in the
Council Chamber, County Hall at 11 a.m.*

Chair: Cllr. Martin Brett

Present: Cllrs., John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen, Michael Doyle, Pat Dunphy, Pat Fitzpatrick, Michael McCarthy, Eugene McGuinness & Cllr Tomás Breathnach. Chief Superintendent Anthony Petit, Detective Sergeant Brian Sheeran, Inspector Alma Molloy .
Anthony Morrisson, Vintners Association,
Marion Acreman Chamber, Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce,
Sean McKeown, A/Chief Executive.
Tim Butler, Director of Services.
Anne Maria Walsh, Senior Executive Officer.
Michael Leahy, Senior Executive Officer.
Martina Walsh, Staff Officer.

Remotely: Cllrs. John Brennan & Joe Lyons

Apologies: Detective Inspector Seán O'Meara, Superintendent Aidan Brennan, Deputy John Paul Phelan and Cllr Fidelis Doherty.

Cllr. Martin Brett, Chairperson, opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

Item No. 1: Minutes of Kilkenny JPC Meeting

Minutes of Kilkenny Joint Policing Committee meeting held on, 12th June, 2023 were:

Proposed By: Cllr Michael McCarthy

Seconded By: Cllr. Deirdre Cullen

And Agreed:

"That the Minutes as presented to the meeting are hereby approved as accurate."

Item No. 2: Crime /Drug Statistics Update from An Garda Síochana.

Detective Sergeant Brian Sheeran and Inspector Alma Molloy gave a presentation to the Committee which outlined the following:

- Kilkenny & Thomastown Districts responded to 2,429 crime incidents since 1st January, 2023.
- Kilkenny & Thomastown Districts responded to 5,033 calls from members of the public through the Regional Control Centre from 1st January,2023
- Burglaries & Fraud offences were down from 1st January to June 2023 compared to the same period in 2022.
- Thefts from shops were up from 138 for the first six months in 2022 to 230 for the same period in 2023.
- There was a decrease in Assault charges from January to June 2023 from the same period last year.
- Alcohol and Drug related charges saw an increase for the first period of 2023.
- Public Order Offences increased from 252 from Jan to June 2022 to 285 for the same period for 2023.

There were also a number of Community Initiatives taken by An Garda to date in 2023 as follows:

- Secondary School Talks- Safer socialising and Transition Year work experience
- Community Safety Talks and Community Mini Bus tours – Active Retirement Groups, Scouts and Cubs.

Cllr Martin Brett thanked Detective Sergeant Brian Sheeran & Inspector Alma Molloy for the Presentation.

Issues raised by Cllrs Eugene McGuinness, Pat Fitzpatrick, Deirdre Cullen, John Coonan and Marion Acreman included the following:

- Garda numbers and lack of visibility,
- Increase in Thefts from shops,
- Growing problem of Domestic Violence.
- Anti-social behaviour – particularly youths racing through High Street on bikes/scooters.

Chief Superintendent Anthony Petit responded and informed the Committee that 10 Garda have left or retired from the Force in Kilkenny since January 2023 and there has only been one new recruit. He said that resources are an issue across the country but that the new recruitment drive & the proposed increase in the age limit for new recruits should alleviate the situation in due course.

Chief Superintendent Petit advised that if the Public call 999 that this call is routed through the Regional Office and the nearest Garda will be despatched to the call-out. In relation to the problem of shop thefts, Chief Superintendent Petit advised that the number of patrols in the City have increased in the recent months and that Operation City Safe was ongoing. He also advised that a new system for the testing of drugs was being rolled out and there would be a zero tolerance approach.

With regard to the increase in Domestic Violence incidents, Chief Superintendent Petit responded that the Go Purple initiative launched this year to raise awareness around domestic violence has resulted in more reporting of incidents. He advised that the policy is a call-back within 24 hrs and a follow up a week later and also a month later in all cases.

Item 3 . Anti Social Behaviour Presentation

Mr Michael Leahy, Senior Executive Officer gave a presentation on the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy 2020-2025.

He outlined the measures that Kilkenny County Council Housing Section are taking to implement this policy.

- All applicants are Garda Vetted prior to allocation of a tenancy
- All new tenants will be required to attend a compulsory Pre-Tenancy Course.
- All complaints are dealt with in a confidential manner.
- Liaising with other Agencies such as Tusla,,Garda, Health Service Executive & Department of Social Protection
- Issue of Verbal Warnings, Tenancy Notification Letters or Tenancy Warning Letters.
- Overview of Tenancy Management Section.

Mr Leahy informed the Committee that there were over 500 Anti- Social Behaviour incidents to date in 2023 . Main categories of complaints were as follows.

- Animals 30%
- Threats and intimidation 13%
- Noise 15%
- Refuse 15%
- Violence 5%

The Members thanked Mr Leahy for his Presentation .

Issues raised by Cllrs Deirdre Cullen, Eugene McGuinness and Pat Fitzpatrick .

- Can Kilkenny County Council adopt their own policy in relation to Anti-Social Behaviour
- Inability to deal with anonymous complaints – fear factor by the complainant in being identified.

Mr Leahy responded that there are many challenges in implementing the Strategy including staffing issues with Tenant Liaison Officers, but a process has to be followed in the interests of fairness and this can take time. He said the aim of the policy is to promote co-operation with all the relevant agencies. He also advised that Kilkenny County Council cannot act unless those involved in anti- social behaviour are in the vicinity of their own house. He reiterated that Kilkenny County Council adopts a zero tolerance approach to behaviour that jeopardises a peaceful neighbourhood.

Item 4. Date of the Next Meeting

It was agreed to hold the Joint Policing Committee Public Meeting on 7th November, 2023 in Gowran at a venue to be decided. The Quarterly Meeting will be held on the same evening at 5.30p.m.

Item 5. Any Other Business.

Update on the installation of extra CCTV cameras in the City to be included as an item on the Agenda for next meeting.

Signed:

CHAIRPERSON

Date:
