

# COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL CHAINNIGH KILKENNY COUNTY COUNCIL

## AN COMHCHOISTE PÓILÍNEACHTA - JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE

**Miontuairiscí an Chruinnithe a tionóladh 4 Ú Márta, 2024I Seomra na Comhairle  
ag 2.00pm.**

*Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
in the Council Chamber, County Hall at 2.00 p.m.*

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**Chair:** Cllr. Martin Brett

**Present:** Cllrs. Tomás Breathnach, , Fidelis Doherty, Michael Doyle, David Fitzgerald,  
Pat Fitzpatrick, John Coonan, Michael McCarthy, Andrew McGuinness,  
Deputy John McGuinness,  
Chief Superintendent Antony Pettit,  
Superintendent Aidan Brennan, Superintendent Seán O'Meara,  
Inspector Alma Molloy.  
Lar Power, Chief Executive.  
Tim Butler & Mary Mullholland, Director of Services.  
Anne Maria Walsh, Senior Executive Officer.  
Martina Walsh, Staff Officer.

**Remotely:** Cllrs Deirdre Cullen, Michael Delaney, Joe Lyons & Patrick O'Neill.

**Apologies:** Deputy John Paul Phelan. Anthony Morrisson.

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

**Item No. 1: Minutes of Kilkenny JPC Meeting**

Minutes of the Quarterly and Public Kilkenny Joint Policing Committee meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were:

**Proposed By:** Cllr. Andrew McGuinness.

**Seconded By:** Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick.

**And Agreed:**

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

### **Item No. 2: Draft Annual Report 2023.**

The Draft Annual Report was presented to the meeting. The report contained details of activities of the Joint Policing Committee over the year.

The Draft Annual Report 2023 was:

**Proposed By:** Cllr. Pat Fitzpatrick.

**Seconded By:** Cllr. Andrew McGuinness.

**And Agreed:**

### **Item No. 3. Draft Work Plan 2024**

The Draft Work Plan 2024 was presented to the meeting. The Work Plan outlines the actions to be undertaken by the Committee in 2024.

The Draft Work Plan 2024 was :

**Proposed By:** Cllr Andrew McGuinness

**Seconded By:** Cllr. John Coonan

**And Agreed:**

### **Item No. 4 : Crime Statistics Update**

Superintendent Sean O'Meara presented an overview on Crime Statistics for the Kilkenny/Thomastown Districts. In his PowerPoint Presentation he gave an overview on the following since 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2023 based on data extracted on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2024.

Overview of statistics included the following:

- Burglary Offences 183 for 2023 similar to 2022.
- Fraud Offences reported 205 in 2023 down from 258 in 2022
- Theft from Shops up from 329 in 2022 to 365 in 2023
- Theft from MPV down from 83 in 2022 to 41 in 2023
- Minor Assaults 137 slightly down from 2022
- Assaults causing harm decreased from 71 in 2022 to 51 in 2023.

### **Item No. 5 : Drugs Statistics Update .**

Superintendent Sean O' Meara gave an overview of the Drug statistics for 2023 which included the following:

- Possession of Drugs for sale/supply up from 37 in 2022 to 53 in 2023.
- Driving while under the influence of Drugs increased from 30 in 2022 to 59 in 2023.
- Reported Sexual Offences decreased slightly from 37 in 2022 to 31 in 2023
- Domestic Incidents reported increased substantially from 266 in 2022 to 330 in 2023.

- Road Deaths increase from 155 in 2022 to 188 in 2023.

The Gardai also carried out 650 mandatory alcohol checkpoints in 2023 of these 19 had positive results for alcohol and 21 positive for drugs.

Cllr Martin Brett thanked Superintendent O'Meara for the Presentation .

Contributions were received from Cllrs Martin Brett, David Fitzgerald, Pat Fitzpatrick, Andrew McGuinness, Eugene McGuinness, John Coonan, Deirdre Cullen & Fidelis Doherty.

Issues raised :

- Installation of CCTV cameras in areas of anti-social behaviour such as Canice's Steps and Skateboard Park.
- Harsher penalties for Drink/Drug Driving.
- No helmets being worn by riders of Escooters.
- Need for appointment of Community Guards in rural areas.
- Social Media campaign to highlight the need for reporting of Domestic Violence crimes.
- More checkpoints needed on roads.
- Illegal parking during match times at Nowlan Park
- Unauthorised parking in Taxi Ranks.
- Issue with Garda recruitment.
- Protection money being sought by certain members of society from Contractors of a Housing Development.
- Need for extra Driver Feedback signs outside schools in rural areas.
- Amber Campaign to highlight Domestic Violence issues.
- Cars with foreign number plates involved in traffic offences.
- Increase number of patrols for Driving under the influence of Drugs.
- Anti-Social behaviour ongoing at St Kieran's Cemetery.

Superintendent Aidan Brennan responded to all issues raised.

He advised that when a call comes into the Regional Control Centre that it is tracked to conclusion and a robust system is in place.

Bennettsbridge Station is currently being refurbished and upon completion will be a Garda Traffic Corps centre.

In regard to the issue of "Protection Money" being sought in certain areas. Superintendent Brennan reported that a number of interventions have taken place and meetings with the individuals involved and engagement with Neighbourhood Watch to ensure the issue is resolved. He stressed that the issue of extortion is a serious matter and will be dealt with accordingly.

He also advised that traffic offenses involving cars with foreign number plates is dealt with under Section 41 of the Road Traffic Act.

Superintendent Brennan advised that tackling the issue of Anti-Social behaviour in areas such as St Canice's Steps is ongoing and the legislation regarding the use of CCTVs in such incidents is now in place. He also advised that the Blue Light Patrol is being reintroduced.

Chief Superintendent Pettit spoke of how Covid had affected Garda training but is now back on track and a big drive on recruitment with over 6,000 applicants to date. He advised that the number of domestic/sexual violence incidents reported has increased aided by

the “Always Here” awareness campaign launched last year . He stressed that the Gardai will continue with social media campaigns to highlight the issue.

Mr Butler advised that Draft Bye-Laws for St Kieran’s Cemetery on the regulation of burial grounds will be brought before the Members in the coming months to help deal with the issue of anti-social behaviour.

#### **Item No. 6: Road Safety Strategy Update.**

Mr Tim Butler gave a presentation on the Road Safety Plan 2022 to 2023. The aim of which is to reach Vision Zero that is zero road deaths and injury by 2050. The report showed a 21% increase in road deaths in 2023 from 155 fatalities in 2022 to 188 in 2023.

The Plan incorporates a Safe System approach with 7 intervention areas.

These are as follows;

1. Safe Roads & Roadsides.
2. Safe Speeds.
3. Safe Road Use.
4. Safe & Healthy Modes of Travel.
5. Safe Vehicles.
6. Safe Work Related Road Use.
7. Post Crash Response.

Mr Butler outlined Safety Works already underway/completed as follows:

- N78 Castlecomer Pedestrian Footbridge.
- N24 Tower Road Junction Improvement Scheme.
- Low Cost Accident Scheme- Bateman Quay.
- Western Environs Infrastructure Improvements and Ossory Bridge Safety Works
- Realignment of N77 Ballyragget to Ballinaslee .
- Update of Speed Limit Bye-Laws.

He advised that Kilkenny County Council will work with various agencies to promote sustainable and active modes of transport.

The Members thanked Mr Butler for his Presentation.

Issues raised as follows:

- Traffic congestion on Ossory Bridge due to safety work and lack of signage .
- Need for more Driver Feedback signs.

Mr Tim Butler advised that increase in the number of Driver Feedback Signs will be looked at under a Low Cost Safety Project.

He also advised that a safety audit of Ossory Bridge would be conducted.

#### **Item No. 7. Garda Operating Model Update.**

This item was deferred.

**Item No. 8. Property Marking Presentation.**

Mr James O'Neill, Property Marking Ireland gave a follow up presentation from his previous presentation at the Joint Policing Public Meeting in November 2023 at which he introduced a device which his company has developed which marks property with an owner's Eircode and address thus making it easier to be recovered in the event of the property being stolen. It is part of a Crime Prevention Programme in conjunction with the Gardai. Mr O'Neill advised that the marking machine has been purchased in 26 Local Authorities to date. Training will also be provided.

The Members commended Mr. O'Neill for his Presentation and agreed the roll out of the Property Marking System should take place in 2024.

**Item No. 9 Any Other Business**

Sympathy was extended to Cllr Matt Doran and Cllr Tomás Breathnach on their recent bereavements

**Item 7. Date of the Next Meeting**

The next Joint Policing Committee meeting will be held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May at 9.30am.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**CHAIRPERSON**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_