

Joint Policing Committee

Tuesday 17th November 2015

Report of Assistant Commissioner Jack Nolan Dublin Metropolitan Region

At this fifth meeting of the Joint Policing Committee for 2015 I intend to concentrate on the updates/ progress in the following areas,

- Crime
- Operation Thor
- Traffic
- Supporting Safer Communities
- Strategic Partnership

1. **Crime**

Up to 10th November 2015, Property Crime in DCC is down 3% to the same period in 2014. Violent Property Crime is down -2% on 2014 levels. While Thefts from shop remains higher than 2014 levels, there has been a positive trend in this crime category since February. The increase in theft from shops was offset by reductions in all other theft categories including theft from vehicles (-6%) and Theft of other property (-9%). Business Watch schemes continue to be reinvigorated and the Garda National Crime Prevention Unit have produced a 'Retail Security Guide' on the Garda web-site to provide theft and robbery prevention advice.

Despite initial increases experienced in Burglaries, this crime type is now -13% with the same period in 2014. Indications are that there has been a downward trend in Burglaries, which is greater than what would have been expected due to seasonal trends. This can be largely attributed to the continued work of the dedicated Burglary Response Units throughout the Region.

Theft of pedal cycles is now down 11% on same period last year. This is a significant improvement from what was 10% up on last year in April. An Garda Síochána have continued with a Garda Information Campaign which involved the painting and marking of 'end of life bikes' with signs stating that 'Gardai were monitoring the location' and 'have you securely locked your bike' and placing them at key hot-spot locations.

Overall Public Order incidents have increased, within the DCC area. An Garda Síochána continues to put hi-visibility patrols in place to target key hotspot areas, with a view to addressing this trend, and special Public Order patrols are put in place in key areas particularly at the weekends. Criminal Damage incidents are down -12% on 2014.

A continued increase in begging detections has been seen in the DCC area. It is worth noting that the detection of begging incidents is enforcement led, and an increase in incident volume is indicative of an increase in Garda activity in the area.

Comparing 2014 to 2015, there has been an increase in Crimes against the Person (+13%) with the greatest increase in the category of Assaults. While this is however off the back of significant decreases in 2012, 2013 and the first quarter of 2014, it continues to present a challenge to An Garda Síochána to address this trend. Hi-visibility strategies will remain in place to address this trend, utilising mountain bike and foot patrols in key areas. Operation Spire and Operation Pier remain in place in the City Centre to tackle these crime categories.

Trends for firearms/ offensive weapon offences indicate that in the Dublin City Council area; discharge of firearms show slight increase to last year with four incidents more in 2015. Possession of firearm shows a downward trend at -25%, which is 10 incidents less than last year. Possession of offensive weapon shows an increase of 6%. It should be noted that this crime category is impacted upon as a result of increase Garda activity.

A number of specific Operations are ongoing in 2015 to tackle various crime categories that were a cause of concern throughout the DCC area. These operations were intelligence led and targeted at the areas of concern and included the optimal the use of technology; crime analysis and crime mapping strategies and close cooperation with the communities we serve.

Further operations will take place in 2015 to maintain a focus on the key challenges ahead.

2. Operation Thor

OPERATION THOR was launched in the Dublin Metropolitan Region on 2nd November 2015. This will be a National Anti-Crime Strategy, which will build on the successes of previous operations such as ACER. Operation Thor has been developed following an analysis of current crime trends and patterns and will have a particular focus on crime prevention and the targeting of individuals involved in the commission of crime.

Operation Thor is structured around the following five (5) strands:

- **Crime Investigation and Operations:** This strand will focus on a range of policing activities including specific operations and disruptive tactics designed to target prolific offenders and those involved in serious crime.
- **Crime Prevention:** This strand will focus activity on preventing offences from occurring in the first place and, where they have occurred, from re-occurring. It will include hi-visibility policing, crime prevention advice and enhanced management of offenders through case management.
- **Working in partnership:** This strand will focus activity on working together with other relevant stakeholders and departments in order to expand policy options available to reduce Crime.
- **Education and awareness:** This strand will focus activity on improving people's knowledge of the issue of crime, in particular burglary and what they can do to improve the security of their homes and property.
- **Victims support:** This strand will focus activity on providing support and advice to victims of crime. Garda Victims Service Offices will enhance the existing service provided to victims of crime by all Gardai in line with An Garda Síochána Victims Charter and domestic legislation.

3. Traffic

At the time of writing this report the number of people killed on the roads of the Capital in 2015 is thirteen (13); compared with twenty (20) for 2014 during the same period. This can be attributed to a number of ongoing and focused operations run in this period. Since June such focussed operations have included:-

- Safer Roads For Dublin Initiative 1-Oct to 30-Nov
- Tispol (Commercial Vehicle) Operation 5-11 Oct
- Operation Motorcyclist 16-Oct
- Bank Holiday Enforcement Campaign 23-26 Oct
- Pedestrian/ Pedal Cycle Campaign 8-Nov

The **Safer Roads for Dublin” initiative**, 1st October – 30th November 2015 is the overarching initiative, the aim of which is to reduce the number of fatal and serious injuries in the Dublin Metropolitan Region through high visibility and enforcement during a key high risk period of the year.

The main theme of the initiative is “**Red means Stop for All**”, focusing on compliance with red traffic lights by all road users and achieving a reduction in red light infringements, along with intercept speed. A particular emphasis will be on pedestrians and cyclists who are by far the most vulnerable road users groups in the Dublin Metropolitan Region.

Road Deaths is an issue which is the subject of ongoing discussion with my Senior Management Team.

4. Policing of Events

During the months of October and November, An Garda Síochána was responsible for the policing of a number of events, including the Dublin City Marathon and the Halloween period.

Dublin City Marathon proved was once again to be a great success. I am happy to report that there were no major incidents and the event was policed successfully.

The Halloween period presented a challenge to An Garda Síochána this year. A significant number of resources were deployed throughout the Region for the period who worked closely with our partners in Dublin City to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

Examination of the 24 hour period between 12 p.m. on 31st October and 12 p.m. on 1st November, indicates an overall decrease in the number of incidents recorded this year in comparison to 2014 (-17%). There were significant decreases in property and theft related crime, however there was a noted increase in incidents of Criminal Damage and Assaults.

Enforcement led incident types such as liquor licensing and public order have increased on last year, which is indicative of Garda activity than other incident categories.

As with such significant events the policing plans were put in place with the assistance of our partners within Dublin City. I would like to thank all our partners in assisting to ensure the success of the policing operation. An Garda Síochána will continue to work with our partners in planning for future events coming up to and over the Christmas Period.

5. Supporting Safer Communities

At our previous meeting issues were raised regarding specific issues in the Cabra and Ballyfermot sub-districts. Specific operations have been put in place within the respective Communities and it is understood from reports from Local officers that the Garda actions are having a positive effect in reducing crime in these areas and improving public safety. From our perspective we are seeing tangible results. The challenge for An Garda Síochána is to maintain this pressure, and ensure that these areas remain safe. It is intended that An Garda Síochána will maintain these operations for the immediate future.

As part of Operation Thor a national advertising campaign is running during the week of the 16th November, 2015 in order to inform the public on how they can enhance the security of their property. The theme of the campaign will be **Lock-UP, Light UP**. This initiative will be supported by Local Awareness initiatives within the respective Communities.

6. Strategic Partnership

Partnerships form a very important part of our policing strategy in 2015, through a variety of community and interagency initiatives.

An Garda Síochána is working with Dublin Regional Homeless Executive in support of their Cold Weather Initiative 2015-2016. The initiative will run from Mon 2nd Nov 2015 – Friday April 1st 2016. The aim is to prevent fatalities and/or serious harm due to rough sleeping in very cold weather, and to have a variety of additional options for people who do not or cannot avail of existing services.

The initiative will improve communication and coordination between An Garda Síochána and the Dublin Region Homeless Executive with a view to improving outcomes for people who may be rough sleeping.

In addition to this, An Garda Síochána continues to engage in the Street Outreach initiative, and the Dublin City Centre Business Forum. These multi agency collaborative frameworks are at a strategic level and are designed to enhance the various stakeholder/agencies capabilities to work together to both improve public safety and break the cycle of crime. It is clear that An Garda Síochána has a role in working on social and anti social issues within the city centre and any involvement in the Assertive Case Management Team (ACMT) can be seen as a benefit, offering the organisation a pathway to take on these issues.

Conclusion

I have outlined above the current position in respect of policing and our plans going forward in 2015. These initiatives are primarily focused on addressing policing issues in a collaborative manner involving our strategic partners and I look forward to continuing to develop these initiatives throughout the year.

Thank You