

Dublin City Joint Policing Committee
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 5th December 2011
at 3.30 p.m., Council Chamber, City Hall

Attendance: Committee Members

Councillor Gerry Breen (Chairperson)
Councillor Larry O'Toole (Vice-chairperson)
Councillor Edie Wynne
Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan
Asst. Commissioner Mick Feehan
Mr. Tom Coffey, Dublin City Business Association (D.C.B.A.)
Mr. Philip Maguire, Deputy City Manager
Ms. Ruth Treacy, Senior Staff Officer, City Manager's Department

Councillor John Redmond
Councillor Bríd Smith
Inspector Gerry Murphy

Apologies: John Tierney (City Manager), Dick Brady, Deputy Catherine Byrne, Peter O'Connor, Community Policing Forum (North East Inner City), Cllr. Cieran Perry

Non-Members: Councillor Marie Metcalfe & Paul McAuliffe, Jim Kelly (North Central Area), Maeve Ryan, Eileen Brady & Geraldine Kelly, Crime Victims Helpline

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 3rd October 2011

Order: Agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Order: Noted

3. Presentation from Ms. Maeve Ryan, Service Co-ordinator, Crime Victims Helpline

Correspondence noted and presentation welcomed. The objective of this presentation is to raise awareness of the existence of this service. Freephone no. 116 006, which can also be used from any European country. Assistant Commissioner Feehan commended the work of the helpline.

Action: Copies of information leaflets and cards containing contact details for the service are to be placed in the 52 Councillors' pigeonholes.

4. Presentation by Mr. Tom Coffey on Community Courts & Restorative Justice

Presentation noted and welcomed by the Committee

Action: It was agreed to write to the Minister for Justice, Equality & Defence requesting that at a Community Court be established in Dublin.

5. Manager's report

Order: Noted.

The Committee extended their condolences to the family of Conor Hickey, the 14-year old from Cabra who was killed in a hit and run accident last weekend.

6. Report of Assistant Garda Commissioner

Order: Report noted.

7. Garda Visibility on the streets

Order: Assistant Commissioner noted that he is hugely conscious of the need for garda visibility on the streets, in estates etc., which is one of the reasons pushbikes were rolled out and have proven hugely successful. Preliminary investigations on the feasibility of segways are being conducted. These are currently in use in some European cities. However he stressed that it is not possible to have gardaí on every street corner.

Tom Coffey, D.C.B.A., offered to part-fund segways for use in Dublin City Centre and will speak to colleagues in other business organisations at a meeting later this week to ascertain if they would also be willing to provide some funding.

8. Funding of Local Policing Fora

Order: Noted.

9. J.P.C. Work Plan 2011 – 2012

Order: Noted.

10. Motion from Councillor Mannix Flynn

That this Committee examines ways that will enable An Garda Síochána to obtain driving licence information through their pulse computer system by linking it to the relevant computer systems in motor taxation offices. This will enable effective policing with regards to the management of vehicles and drivers and their licence documentation. At present there is no link between these two computer systems; in many cases drivers who are not in possession of their licences must bring them to the Garda Station etc. In some instances there is no way of ascertaining the validity of a driver. It is now time to make these systems compatible and share this information.

Order: Assistant Commissioner Feehan confirmed that the Pulse System is linked to the National Vehicle Driver File (NVDF) system.

11. A.O.B.

The Committee extended their congratulations to Seán Ward, Superintendent, Store Street Garda Station, whose son Stephen (Irish international soccer player), captained the Wolverhampton Wanderers to victory over Sunderland last weekend.

The Committee also wished luck to Assistant Commissioner Feehan and Inspector Murphy, who are part of a group partaking in "Polar Plunge" at the Forty Foot in Sandycove next weekend to raise funds for Special Olympics.

12. Next meetings

23rd January 2012

All meetings are scheduled to take place at 3.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall, Dame Street, Dublin 2.

Manager's Report to Dublin City Joint Policing Committee (J.P.C.)

05/12/2011

Lord Mayor's Commission on Antisocial Behaviour

The Lord Mayor set up this Lord Mayor's Commission on Anti-Social Behaviour to address the effects of anti-social behaviour on the lives of communities. In particular issues such as noise, name calling, graffiti, vandalism and public drinking and drug taking can be very intimidating and frustrating for communities.

Anti-Social behaviour will be examined under the following headings:

- Early Intervention & Prevention
- Education
- Alternatives to Prison
- City Centre issues
- Organisational Structures & Governance
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Discrimination & Prejudice

The system in Ireland currently reacts to anti-social behaviour after it has happened. What kind of savings could be made if we put our resources into early intervention and prevention? In these difficult times everyone is under pressure regarding both financial and human resources – could all relevant services work together to achieve an end result? I am a strong believer that bad behaviour should have appropriate and timely consequences. However, prison is not always the answer and can lead to new problems if networks are formed resulting in worse behaviour. Our prison system deals with everyone from fine defaulters to murderers. I want to examine alternatives to the prison system for anti-social behaviour including restorative justice and community service.

I will also examine the issues which affect the city centre which is our major business and tourism hub. I have seen alcohol and other drugs destroying lives and affecting the morale of communities – is there anything can be done regarding pricing of alcohol to reduce harm; or are there better ways to reduce drug usages in our communities?

A conference will be held in early 2012 and a Report produced that will outline the findings of the Commission, give examples of evidence-based research, highlight the experience of other cities and make recommendations for Dublin. Some of these recommendations may mean re-examining existing services and seeing how these can be improved. Some will be passed on to Dublin City Council, National Government and other agencies for their attention and action.

Three meetings of the Commission have taken place to date on the 2nd, 9th and 23rd November.

Halloween update

Dublin City Council put in place an extensive action plan for the Halloween period. The main focus was to promote a safe and enjoyable Halloween for the citizens of Dublin through various events and festivals across the City and to minimise the impact of environmental and social consequences of bonfires and illegal fireworks through preventative actions and awareness raising activities. This involved a range of Council Departments such as Local Area Offices, Waste Management, Parks, Corporate Services, Dublin Fire Brigade and Civil Defence working with the Gardaí and local community groups.

Each year we arrange one large media event hosted by Dublin Fire Brigade at which we seek to get the Council's message across. This year's campaign was entitled "**Be Safe, Stay Safe**". In conjunction with the launch a Halloween Safety Pack containing leaflets and posters was sent to primary schools in Dublin. In addition a safety DVD was made by DFB and was available for viewing on the Dublin City Council Website.

For the past number of years, Dublin Fire Brigade and Dublin Bus have been working together on a Community Education Programme, visiting schools and explaining the roles that both organisations have to play in society, and how respect for both services can be a life enhancing experience for everyone. The scheme was first rolled out seven years ago and since then; the initiative has been extended to include a number of areas in the Dublin region including Tallaght, Cherryorchard, Blanchardstown, Finglas and Ballymun. Approximately in excess of 2,000 school children received The Halloween Safety and Respect for the service workers talk.

On 20th October Dublin's Lord Mayor Andrew Montague launched this year's Halloween Safety Campaign in the Finglas Civic Centre, at which the Lord Mayor and the represented services highlighted the potential dangers at Halloween time in addition to taking the opportunity to publicise the wide range of events organised, usually through the Local Area Offices in conjunction with various community groups.

Dublin Fire Brigade received approximately 720 calls between the hours of 4pm 31st October to 8am 1st November 2011, the majority of which related to bonfires and fireworks. The number of calls was slightly up on last years.

Overall the Halloween period passed off quite well with thousands of people enjoying the many local events organised across the City. Whilst emergency callouts were slightly up there were less incidences of bonfires and associated damage reported. Unfortunately there were still a few unsavoury incidents where staff were subjected to verbal and missile attacks but thankfully no injuries were sustained nor were there any records of any vehicular damage. DCC is unaware of any serious damage to playgrounds / hard surface areas; damage to open spaces was down 50% on 2010 figures.

The overall cost associated with Halloween 2011 was approximately €750,000 and there was in excess of 700 tonnes of bonfire material removed in the lead up and post Halloween.

Statistics on road deaths

As a result of the 3-year campaign jointly run by An Garda Síochána with the introduction of the Casualty Reduction Strategy, Dublin City Council, other Local Authorities & the Road Safety Authority (RSA), the number of fatal collisions on our roads has reduced from 26 (2009) to 16 (2010) to 8 (2011) which represents a drop of 50% of the deaths against 2010 and a drop of 70% versus the deaths in 2009.

Philip Maquire
Deputy City Manager

Joint Policing Committee

Monday 5th December 2011

Report of Assistant Garda Commissioner Michael Feehan

At this sixth meeting of the Joint Policing Committee for 2011 I intend to concentrate on the developments in regard to the crime and traffic statistics for 2011. I will also outline developments with regard to the confronting of Organised Crime, Garda/FAI/Local Authority initiative and Policing over the Christmas period.

Crime

Burglary incidents continue to be a cause for concern despite the fact that there has been a decrease compared with the same period last year. Targeted operations are in place and trends would suggest that incidents of Burglaries across the Dublin Region are likely to show an annual decrease by the end of 2011.

There has been a continued increase in incidents of Robberies and Theft from the Person, particularly in the city centre. This matter is constantly on the agenda of meetings with my Senior Management team who are developing policing initiatives to address the increasing trend. Operations are in place to tackle the receivers of this type of crime which have derived some success.

I am happy to report that Crime against the Person (Assaults etc.) is showing a significant reduction over the last three months and drunkenness offences are at the lowest level in the last four years.

Community Policing – Problem Orientated Approach

You will be aware from previous reports that the process of rolling out Problem Orientated training for Community Gardaí, initially where Local Policing Fora have been established has commenced. This training is being well received which was evident at a recent seminar which I myself attended in Ballymun. The objective is to develop shared solutions to the problems encountered in local communities.

Traffic

As a result of the 3-year campaign jointly run by An Garda Síochána with the introduction of the Casualty Reduction Strategy, Dublin City Council, other Local Authorities & the Road Safety Authority the number of fatal collisions on our roads has reduced from 26 (2009) to 16 (2010) to 8 (2011) which represents a drop of 50% of the deaths against 2010 and a drop of 70% versus the deaths in 2009. Each of these deaths is a tragedy for families and the wider community. This is an area which I am monitoring continually through the Regional Casualty Reduction Strategy and, over the festive season a Christmas Drink Driving Campaign will be enforced throughout the Region.

Policing Halloween

A successful operation was put in place to prevent any large scale outbreak of disorder. Monday the 31st October 2010 was in line with last year's event and was quieter from a policing perspective than in previous years. There was a very noticeable decrease in incidents over the Halloween period as compared with last year. Some factors were at play here, which involved early engagement with all our partners to ensure a successful policing operation and in this regard I would like to thank the Local Authorities for all assistance given over the Halloween period.

Initiative with the F.A.I. and Local Authorities

On the 4th November the Late Night League programme commenced. As with previous years the league is run by the FAI's co-funded development officer in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council and Young People's Facilities and Services Fund (YPFSS). The League was set up in 2008 throughout Dublin and has seen an increase in centres from nine to 18 centres.

It is open to young people aged 13-21; this diversionary programme takes place in disadvantaged areas during prime anti-social hours such as on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. I am conscious of the need to foster positive relationships between An Garda Síochána and young people. We have worked at building such relationships over the years through the active participation of local gardaí in initiatives such as Garda Youth Diversion Projects and Schools Programmes.

The Late Night Soccer Leagues continue to provide opportunities for young people and local gardaí to engage with each other in a social environment in which each side can learn about the other.

This can only be a positive development which will lead to an improved policing service and ultimately to safer communities.

Dublin Regional Policing Plan... 2012

My Policing Plan 2012 for the Dublin Region is currently being drafted and you will be aware that I have requested any submission that you may have to this Plan. For those that have made submissions already I thank you for taking the time to submit your views. Your views and suggestions will be considered in formulating the 2012 Policing Plan.

THANK YOU