

DUBLIN CITY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 22nd March 2010
at 3.00 p.m., Council Chamber, City Hall

Attendance: Committee Members

Councillor Gerry Breen (Chairperson)

Councillor Larry O'Toole (Vice Chair)

Councillor Mannix Flynn

Councillor Eoghan Murphy

Councillor John Redmond

Deputy Seán Ardagh

Deputy Tommy Broughan

Deputy Aengus O'Snódaigh

Asst. Commissioner Michael Feehan

Mr. Peter O'Connor, Community Policing Forum (North East Inner City)

The Archdeacon of Dublin, The Venerable David Pierpoint

Mr. Tom Coffey, Dublin City Business Association (D.C.B.A.)

Mr. Ciaran McNamara, Asst. City Manager

Mr. Vincent Norton, A / Assistant City Manager

Ms. Ruth Treacy, Senior Staff Officer, City Manager's Department

Councillor Eric Byrne

Councillor Edie Wynne

Councillor Bríd Smith

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan

Deputy Catherine Byrne

Inspector Gerry Murphy

Non-members: Councillor Marie Metcalfe, Ms. Valerie Gaughran, Mediation Co-ordinator, Northside Community Law Centre

Mr. Enda Martyn, Centra, Dame Street, Mr. Derek Mansfield, Musgraves

Ms. Anne E. O'Brien, Play Development Officer, Housing & Residential Services

Apologies: Philip Maguire, John Tierney, Lord Mayor Councillor Emer Costello, Deputy Cyprian Brady

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 1st February 2010

Minutes agreed.

2. Matters Arising

Manager has written to Minister in relation to Head Shops. Cllr. Breen spoke with Jim Keogan (Executive Manager, Planning Department) who confirmed that a significant change to the opening hours of Head Shops would constitute a material change of use and, therefore, planning permission would be required.

3. Matters Arising

Introduction of new Members:

- The Archdeacon of Dublin, The Venerable David Pierpoint
- Mr. Tom Coffey, Dublin City Business Association (D.C.B.A.)

The new Members were formally welcomed by the Committee.

4. Presentation by Enda Martyn, Centra, Dame Street (attached)

Presentation noted.

Traders reduction in income and associated job losses, together with Mr. Martyn's efforts to sensitively deal with the sale of alcohol in his shops, noted. However the Committee are not in favour of extending the opening hours of Off-licenses.

Committee expressed concern at the level of under-age drinking and the purchase by adults of alcohol for minors. They also criticised the inappropriate naming of some Off-license establishments and the blatant advertising of alcohol, in some cases with irresponsible window displays where only alcohol is presented.

Greater emphasis should be placed on education of young children and addressing the issue from classroom age.

It was suggested that warning notices should appear on alcohol, as they do on cigarette boxes.

Actions:

Committee requested a report from the Gardaí outlining the impact of the changes to the opening hours of Off-Licenses, in terms of the effect on the number of crimes such as public order offences etc.

Report requested from Planning Department on the number of Off-licences now in existence as compared to previous years. Possibility of DCC introducing byelaws to address the situation to be explored.

Enda Martyn to be requested to provide a report on the loss of revenue to his businesses since the change to the opening hours.

Item to remain on the agenda.

5. Report on Cyber bullying

Report noted.

6. Manager's report

Report noted.

"White Paper on Crime Discussion Document No. 2 – Criminal Sanctions" to be listed as Agenda item for next meeting. Link from Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform circulated to Members on 25th February & 15th March to be sent again and Members to be requested to email any comments on the Discussion Document to Ruth Treacy prior to the next meeting of the Dublin City Joint Policing Committee.

Head Shops:

Asst. Commissioner confirmed that several Garda operations were mounted over the last 3 years. Search warrants were obtained, premises searched and material seized around Dublin and the country. However prosecutions could not be brought as the substances generally do not come under the misuse of drugs legislation. The Gardaí will prosecute if evidence is obtained.

Actions

Planning Department to look at the possibility of addressing issue under planning enforcement legislation.

Gardaí to provide a report on Head Shops – the number in existence, issues around public liability insurance, opening hours and reports of products being purchased in Head Shops and re-sold in Bars / Clubs by staff

Health Service Executive needs to tackle this issue. Councillor Breen (Chairperson) to meet with a representative of HSE in coming weeks with a view to having one attend the next meeting.

Letters to be circulated to the following regarding the packaging / labelling and sale of such products:

- **National Consumer Agency**
- **Food Safety Authority of Ireland**
- **Office of Tobacco Control**
- **Revenue Commissioners**
- **Irish Health Trade Association**

7. Annual Report - Summarising activities of Dublin City Joint Policing Committee & 5 Area Subcommittees

Report noted and will be submitted to the April City Council Meeting.

8. Report of Assistant Garda Commissioner

Report noted.

Committee conveyed their appreciation to both Dublin City Council and An Garda Síochána for the way in which the St. Patrick's Day festivities were handled. Streets were thoroughly cleaned prior to the parade and immediately afterwards, with DCC actively encouraging attendees to take their rubbish home with them. Feedback from the Communities has been very positive and Asst. Commissioner Feehan attributed this to the level of co-operation between the Gardaí, DCC and communities.

Regarding the sale of prescription drugs on the boardwalk this does not come under the misuse of drugs legislation; it is the responsibility of the Irish Medicines Board. Chairperson to meet with Asst. Commissioner Feehan and a representative from the Irish Medicines Board prior to next meeting of the J.P.C.

Actions

Manager to contact Waste Management Services requesting that additional bins be installed in Dublin City for the duration of the St. Patrick's Festival period.

Garda Community Unit to be represented in the St. Patrick's Day parade in future years to acknowledge the huge amount of work they do in terms of dealing with antisocial behaviour etc.

Letter to be sent to the Licensed Vintners Associations (LVA) acknowledging the role the off-licenses (who participated) played in complying with the change to opening hours agreed last year.

Gardaí to provide reports on the following to the next meeting of the Dublin City JPC:

- 1. Selling of "Street Tablets" and any legislation that could be used to prosecute offenders***
- 2. Report on Head Shops – Number in existence, issues around public liability insurance, opening hours & reports of products being purchased in Head Shops and re-sold in Bars / Clubs by staff***

9. Report on Area Local Drugs Task Forces

Awaiting outstanding reports. Item deferred to next meeting.

10. Presentation by Ms. Valerie Gaughran, Mediation Co-ordinator, Northside Community Law Centre

Presentation noted.

11. Workplan for City / Local Joint Policing Subcommittees (sample work plan from Fingal County Council attached for reference)

Deferred for discussion at meeting to follow immediately afterwards between the Chairpersons of the Dublin City & 5 Joint Policing Subcommittees, Area Managers and the Gardaí.

12. Any other business

(i) Correspondence from Health & Safety Authority regarding Newspaper Vendors
Correspondence noted.

13. Suggested future meetings:

Next meeting scheduled to take place on **Monday 31st May at 3.30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.**

**To the Chairperson and Members of the
Dublin City Joint Policing Committee**



Dublin City Council

Comhairle Cathrach Bhaile Átha Cliath

Managers Report to Dublin City Joint Policing Committee

White Paper on Crime

The White Paper on Crime, Discussion Document No. 2 – Criminal Sanctions issued in February 2010 follows on from the White Paper dealing with Crime Prevention and Community Safety. The purpose of this White Paper dealing with Criminal Sanctions is to set out the current range of Sanctions applied in Ireland and to ask:

- What role should sanctions play as part of an overall response to crime?
- How well is the existing approach to Sanctions and Sentencing working to prevent and reduce crime?
- How should policy in this area best be developed and implemented?

The Discussion Document is aimed principally at the general reader and addresses the current penalties available in Irish Law as well as seeking views on the existing measures on how policy and practice in this area can be developed in the future. Work is currently in progress on further discussion documents which will be circulated once published. As public consultation is a critical and ongoing part of the White Paper on Crime process, submissions are invited from Members of the Public and other interested parties on issues raised in this document. The closing date for submissions is the end of May 2010.

The email from the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform together with the link in this document:

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Minister%20Dermot%20Ahern%20launches%20Consultation%20on%20Criminal%20Sanctions>

was circulated to all Dublin City JPC members on the 25th February 2010.

Head Shops

At the last meeting of the Dublin City Joint Policing Committee, Members expressed concern at the proliferation and trading hours of Head Shops and requested that the Manager look into the possibility of amending the Planning Legislation to exercise greater control over such premises and/or seek to take action as part of the review of the Dublin City Development Plan. The Planning Department have

been asked to take all possible steps to word the new Development Plan so as to be able to control the opening and operation of these shops many of which operate 24hours a day or all through the evening/night. I am advised that in the absence of Government Regulations it would not be possible for deal with this matter effectively under the Planning Code. Departments of Justice and Health are making arrangements to ban a range of dangerous substances that have been freely on sale in head shops in June 2010. The Government will notify the EU of this list and by June, these products will be illegal for sale or possession. The Department of Health is currently looking at other measures to regulate this industry by way of planning laws and consumers' laws. The Minister of State with responsibility for the National Drugs Strategy has indicated that any product that proves to have any detrimental health affects will be added to this controlled list for banning. A letter dated 9th February 2010 has been sent to the Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform referring to the Members of the Dublin City Joint Policing Committee's request that legislation be introduced effectively controlling and prohibiting the opening of "headshops".

Representation from Health Service Executive

Letters were once again issued to Mr. Dermot Ahern, T.D., Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform and Professor Brendan Drumm, Health Services Executive, seeking representation from the HSE on the Dublin City Joint Policing Committee, particularly in relation to issues of child welfare and substance abuse. A reply to these letters is still awaited.

Gaming/Gambling

The Head of Casino Gaming Control at the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform has been advised of the Councils views in relation to the major review of gambling and has asked that these views be considered as part of the ongoing review. Reference was made to a cross-party gambling review sub-group that had been set up following the City Council Meeting on the 1st February and the submissions of this subgroup have been forwarded to Mr. Michael Walsh, Head of Casino Gaming Control with a request for a meeting in respect of the ongoing review. A copy of the submission is attached for your information.

Philip Maguire
Deputy City Manager

March 15th 2010

Joint Policing Committee

Monday 22nd March 2010

Report of Assistant Garda Commissioner Michael Feehan

At this second meeting of the Joint Policing Committee for 2010 I will focus mainly on developments across the city in the first two months of the year.

CRIME

For the first two months of 2010, most of the main crime categories show a welcome decline. Crimes involving thefts of property (such as theft from shops) have decreased, as have assaults and public order offences, which have reduced significantly. However, the number of robberies has been on the increase and is being focussed on in each of the problem areas.

I mentioned the level of burglaries across the City as being a particular problem, at the last meeting. I am delighted to report that the numbers of burglaries has shown a decrease in the first two months of the year. I have put a number of operations in place across the city to deal with these crimes, which have resulted in several arrests. We have also had some successes in identifying and bringing before the courts a number of persons for "Distraction Burglaries". We have also had Gardaí actively engaging with elderly members of the community to offer crime prevention advice on these types of crimes.

At our last meeting I also mentioned the problems being encountered in relation to so called 'organised crime' in some parts of the city.

I have put in place a number of initiatives across the city to target gang related crime. These operations are intelligence driven and are being seen locally as having an effect on the activities of persons involved in armed and serious crime. In the recent past, we have had a number of successful investigations into murders carried out in the Dublin Region. These investigations have resulted in a number of people being charged and brought before the courts. Tackling armed and serious crime will remain a key area of focus of Garda activity across the city for the foreseeable future.

TRAFFIC

The number of people killed on the roads in the city for the first two months of the year stands at 3, compares to 1 death for in the same period in 2009. Significant resources are deployed in Roads Policing across the city on a daily basis, in an effort to curb the level of offending behaviour on the roads. Each of the divisions in the city has been tasked with developing and implementing individual Roads Policing Plans, which are designed to address local problem areas. The overall coordination of the city wide traffic strategy is being led by my Regional Traffic Unit, which is based at Dublin Castle.

St. Patrick's Festival 2010

At the time of writing this report plans are in place for the policing of St. Patrick's Festival. A comprehensive operational plan has been devised in co-operation with the festival organisers.

The focus of the plan is to facilitate people's enjoyment of the events which have been organised, while at the same time proactively tackling any instances of public disorder which might potentially occur over the festival period.

Meetings have taken place with representatives of Off Licences within the City Centre. I wish to commend these business people, many of whom have agreed to keep their premises closed until 3pm.

Meetings have also taken place with Dublin City Council in regard to their cooperation with the policing of the event. On the day of the parade, liaison has been put in place to coordinate joint working, for example in the removal of bottles or any other potentially harmful objects.

Boardwalk

The issue of criminality along the Boardwalk has been on the agenda at the last meeting of the Joint Policing Committee, and indeed has arisen from time to time in recent years. I can report that very significant Garda activity has been in place on the Boardwalk in recent times. This activity was in response to the proliferation of drug addicts, homeless persons, beggars and individuals drinking on the Boardwalk during daylight hours. In addition to the ongoing attention a special operation, codenamed "Operation Stilts" was mounted at appropriate times. The objective of the operation was to curb the dealing of illegal drugs in the Dublin City Centre area along the North Quays and the Boardwalk. The operation is performed by plain clothes personnel attached to the Divisional Drug Unit based at Store Street.

During the last quarter of 2009 there have been a very significant number of searches of suspect persons carried out as part of the operation. These have resulted in a number of arrests for possession of drugs for sale/supply. These matters are currently before the Courts, pending directions from the DPP or awaiting result of analysis.

Conclusion:

The mission statement of An Garda Síochána, as set out in our corporate strategy document 2010 – 2012 is 'Working with Communities to Protect & Serve'. I am very conscious that if we are to succeed in achieving that mission, we must work in partnership with communities throughout the city in trying to provide a policing service which addresses the needs and priorities of people in those communities. I am also well aware of the role which you, the elected representatives for those communities, can play in bringing those priorities to my attention and that of Garda officers across the city. I will certainly welcome any views and observations which you may wish to make in respect of the service being provided to communities in the city, by An Garda Síochána.

THANK YOU