

Joint Policing Committee

Tuesday 29th September 2015

Report of Assistant Commissioner John Twomey Dublin Metropolitan Region.

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

- Crime
- Traffic
- Policing of Events
- Supporting Safer Communities
- Strategic Partnership

1. Crime

Up to the end of 22nd September 2015, Property Crime in DCC is down 1% to the same period in 2014. Violent Property Crime remains similar to 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 the person (-5%) and Theft of other property (-10%). Business Watch schemes are being reinvigorated and the Garda National Crime Prevention Unit has 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 -11% 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 under the auspices of Operation Acer.

Theft of pedal cycles is now down 7% on same period last year. This is a significant improvement from what was 10% up on last year in April. In mid June An Garda Síochána in the City Centre commences 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. This initiative has had a positive effect on this crime category.

Public Order incidents have increased, within the DCC area. This is similar to the situation in non DCC areas, where public order offences within the DMR as a whole showed an upward trend overall. An Garda Síochána continues to put hi-visibility patrols in place to target key hotspot areas, with a view to addressing this trend.

An 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 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.

At the last meeting there was mention of including trends for firearms/ offensive weapon offences in the report. Indications are that in the Dublin City Council area, discharge of firearms shows no significant change to last year with one incident more in 2015. Possession of firearm shows a downward trend at -19%, which is 6 incidents less than last year. Possession of offensive weapon also remains on a par with last year.

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. Traffic

At the time of writing this report the number of people killed on the roads of the Capital in 2015 is six (10); compared with eight (17) 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:-

- Summer Enforcement Campaign
- Operation Pedal Cycle/ Pedestrian
- Operation Taxi/ PSV
- Operation Learner Permit
- Operation Slow Down – Reduce speed related collisions

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

3. Policing of Events

During the months of July, August and September, An Garda Síochána was responsible for the policing of a number of events, including the Ed Sheeran Concert at Croke Park, Marley Park Concerts, Ironman, Great Dublin Bike Ride and GAA Hurling and Football Championship Finals. I am happy to report that there were no major incidents and each of the events was policed successfully. 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 continues to plan for future events including the Dublin City Marathon and the policing of the Halloween period. The Halloween period present a challenge to An Garda Síochána each year and we look forward to again working closely with our partners in Dublin City to ensure these periods pass off with major incident, and to ensure a safe and secure environment for all.

4. Supporting Safer Communities

The Quarter Four Late Night League will run from the week ending the 30th October to the week ending the 4th December, 2015. The Late Night Leagues will take place in the following areas within the Dublin City Council Area; Ballymun, Coolock, Aghrim Street, Hardwick Street, Crumlin, Pearse Street, Inchicore, Liberties, Ballyfermot and Finglas. This is a combined partnership with An Garda Síochána, FAI, Local Authorities, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, and Dublin Bus. The Leagues are designed to encourage at risk young people to participate in meaningful activities, thus reducing anti-social behaviour involving young people in disadvantaged areas. The Leagues take place on Friday and Saturday Nights during prime anti-social hours. The Regional Finals will be played in Irishtown Stadium, Dublin 4 on Friday the 11th December 2015.

In September, we saw the launch of the Burglary, Crime Prevention and Reduction Strategy. This campaign will focus on Burglary and crime prevention and the key message will be 'Do the light thing, illuminate to eliminate burglary'. The public are encouraged to take the 'home security checklist challenge' to identify weaknesses which they can address through use of security lighting, timer switches and other such crime prevention measures. Particularly coming into the winter evenings it is important that we deliver this message to the communities we serve.

5. 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 continues to engage in the Street Outreach initiative, and the Dublin City Centre Business Forum. These multi agency collaborative framework 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.

The time spent by all involved in this project has been well received and extremely worthwhile for An Garda Síochána. New relationships have been created in areas not previously open to Gardaí, and old ones strengthened. From its inception there was awareness that the issues being addressed were of a long term nature, and the individuals involved needed a protracted approach to deal with their long term problems. The target group for this project were by their nature the most chaotic and high risk in the city, and any progress gained would be small and take time. Successes were achieved on a case by case basis; however, for other individuals the underlying issues of substance abuse and social exclusion remain.

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 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