

DUBLIN CITY JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday, 1st February 2010
at 3.30 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

Councillor Tom Brabazon

Deputy Seán Ardagh

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

Mr. Philip Maguire, Asst. City Manager

Asst. Commissioner Michael Feehan

Mr. Ciaran McNamara, Asst. City Manager

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

Councillor Eric Byrne

Councillor Edie Wynne

Councillor Cieran Perry

Councillor Kevin Humphreys

Deputy Maureen O'Sullivan

Ciaran Dunne, Executive Manager, Housing Dept.

Non-members: Councillor Marie Metcalfe, Mr. Vincent Jennings & Mr. Joe Mahoney
(Convenience Stores & Newsagents' Association)

Apologies: John Tierney, Lord Mayor, Councillor Emer Costello, Deputy Catherine Byrne

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 30th November 2009

Minutes agreed.

Chairman stated that, going forward, a hard copy of the Agenda and associated documentation will be forwarded to Members 5 days in advance of meetings.

2. Matters Arising

Annual Report summarising the activities of Dublin City Joint Policing Committee and the 5 Area Joint Policing Subcommittees is to be brought to the next meeting of Dublin City Joint Policing Committee meeting on March 22nd for discussion, following which it will be brought to the April meeting of City Council.

3. Head Shops - – legal advice attached

Members expressed concern at the opening hours of these establishments, their close proximity (in some cases) to Drug Rehabilitation Centres and the fact that younger members of society are purchasing goods from them.

Members requested that Manager look into the possibility of amending the planning legislation to exercise greater controls over such premises and/or seeking to take action as part of the Review of the Dublin City Development Plan as we are not empowered to take action under the current planning legislation.

Action: Manager to write to Minister for Justice, Equality & Law Reform supporting the ban on these shops and calling for legislation to be introduced to effectively deal with them.

Manager to also refer issue to the Economic Development, Planning & International Affairs Strategic Policy Committee (S.P.C.) to tackle under the Development Plan.

Gardaí are also monitoring their activities and working closely with Customs Officials to monitor the goods being imported.

4. Gold for Cash – see above

Noted increase in burglaries, believed to be as a direct result of the recent Gold for Cash advertisements in addition to flyers being dropped in doors. However Asst. Comm. Feehan reported that the Gardaí have not linked any stolen jewellery to this to date.

Action: Philip to investigate reports of the Ballybough Community Centre being used for buying/selling gold the weekend of 30th/31st January. Committee requested that this not be repeated.

5 Presentation by Vincent Jennings of the Convenience Stores & Newsagents' Association (copy to follow)

- *Garda Age Card* – any individual (18 or over – no upper age limit) can apply for this once it's done in person at a Garda Station. They are generally issued within 3 weeks of application being submitted. It eliminates need to carry passport / driving licence as proof of age. Additional information can be uploaded on card over time so it could possibly be used to restrict the volume of alcohol purchased by individuals according to their age.

Action: Vincent Jennings to discuss this further with Assistant Commissioner Feehan

- *Cigarette Smuggling* – Mr. Jennings made the point that retailers rely enormously on tobacco sales for revenue as it represents a huge percentage of their turnover therefore sale of counterfeit cigarettes and cross-border smuggling has significant implications for business' survival.

Asst. Comm. Feehan drew attention to his newly drawn-up Policing Plan for 2010; one of the actions incorporated into this is getting the message out there that purchasing counterfeit goods, including cigarettes, is feeding into Organised Crime.

Committee expressed concern re cross-border smuggling and the tar content of counterfeit cigarettes. It was suggested a campaign should be organised to draw attention to this issue and Members feel DCC has to bear some responsibility for this as they issue trading licences for the City.

Action: Manager is unaware of any reported incidences of casual traders, whose licences are granted by DCC, currently using their pitch to sell counterfeit goods, including cigarettes. Any such incidences, hitherto, are reported to the Gardaí who have the powers to seize the goods in question and prosecute the offenders.

- *Newspaper Vendors*: There are in excess of 350 locations in the City at which newspapers and free sheets are being distributed without licences, which is both dangerous from a road safety / traffic obstruction aspect and represents unfair competition for premises which, unlike such vendors, are paying commercial rates.

Members highlighted that this is in total breach of the Road Traffic Act. However others feel that this is a popular service and would not like to see it discontinued. It was noted that newspaper selling is specifically excluded from Casual Trading Byelaws.

Action: Manager to write to Health & Safety Authority (H.S.A.) to ascertain what arrangements, if any, are in place, to deal with street vendors or if it is the responsibility of Newspaper Publishers.

6. Manager's report

- Update on Workshop on White Paper on Crime & Correspondence from Dept of Justice in response to submission

Manager's report noted.

Copy of Department's response to be forwarded to Members when received.

Members again highlighted fact that there is no HSE representative attending these meetings.

7. Report of Assistant Garda Commissioner

Report noted.

In response to Committee's request at previous meeting that a leaflet be circulated to members of the public in relation to measures they can take to increase security in their homes (following a spate of recent break-ins / robberies), Asst. Commissioner Feehan reported that arrangements have been made to assign personnel to carry out leaflet drops and speak to vulnerable members of society. In addition they have even addressed some congregations at Mass.

The issue of Begging, also as discussed at last meeting, is on the agenda for Gardaí across the City.

Some Members welcomed the introduction of the reduced speed limit which came into effect in the City Centre today.

Clampdown needed on continuous use of footpaths by Cyclists.

8. Boardwalk

Deferred to March meeting.

9. Correspondence from Department of Justice, Equality & Law Reform re Review of Gaming & Gambling

Deferred to March meeting.

10. Report on Evictions for Anti-Social Behaviour

Noted.

11. Any other business

Members requested that a lo-call or freephone number be made available to members of the public and that email addresses for each Garda Station should be supplied for the purpose of reporting crimes or providing information in relation to criminal activity anonymously.

Action: Asst. Comm. will bring Committee's suggestions to the appropriate fora going forward. He also confirmed that there are already both a Crimestoppers number and an E-business watch was rolled out prior to Christmas.

Action: Report on activities of the various Area Drugs Taskforces to be provided for inclusion on March agenda.

12. Suggested future meetings

Next meeting scheduled to take place on **Monday 22nd March at 3.00 p.m. (note earlier start time), Council Chamber, City Hall.**

It was noted that a meeting between the Chairperson, Dublin City Joint Policing Committee, Chairpersons of the 5 Joint Policing Subcommittees, Area Managers / Assistant Area Managers and Assistant Commissioner Michael Feehan will take place immediately after this meeting (on Monday March 22nd) at **5.00 p.m.** in the Council Chamber, City Hall.