



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

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Policing Authority meeting 27 July 2017

At its scheduled July meeting yesterday (27 July 2017), the Policing Authority welcomed the publication of the Garda Síochána Public Attitude Survey on a quarterly basis for the first time. The continuing very strong community trust in the Garda Síochána is hugely encouraging and very important, as are the increases in satisfaction expressed by victims of crime, which was a specific performance target set by the Authority for the Garda Síochána in the 2017 Policing Plan. The public perception that the Garda Síochána is a well managed organisation at 43%, up 1% year on year will be an important indicator in the period ahead.

The Authority noted with regret the resignation of Dr. Vicky Conway from the Authority with effect from 28 July 2017 in order to avoid any perception of conflict of interest arising from her membership of the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland. The Authority expressed its deep appreciation for the enormous contribution made by Dr. Conway to its work to date.

Among its agenda items, the Authority considered the Report of the Committee of Public Accounts in relation to Financial Procedures at the Garda College. The findings of this Report and the Garda Internal Audit Reports further elaborate matters of significant concern to the Authority in relation to the management of public funds and the governance of the Garda Síochána. The Authority considers that the governance failures are very serious and that remedial action ought to have commenced much earlier.

The Authority noted that further internal audits are underway and that the Comptroller & Auditor General is completing his statutory audit of the Garda Vote. The Authority is also mindful of the statutory relationship between the Accounting Officer and the Committee of Public Accounts, that the Committee has now formally reported to Dáil Eireann, and that in due course the recommendations will be officially responded to by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform in the normal way.

In the circumstances where such considerable work is still underway, the Authority decided, for the present to:

- continue its oversight of the implementation of the recommendations of the Internal Audit;
- approve a report on those recommendations for submission to the Minister for Justice & Equality as requested by the Minister;
- prioritise with the Garda Síochána the advancement of a business case for increased resources for the Internal Audit function;

- proceed with its previous decision to commission a review of elements of the governance of the Garda Síochána and, in this context, to discuss with the Garda Commissioner matters raised by the PAC regarding the structures and coherence of senior management;
- consider in the autumn in light of developments whether there are specific oversight gaps which it may wish to pursue.

The Authority also approved for finalisation and submission to the Minister for Justice and Equality, its third report on the implementation by the Garda Síochána of the Garda Inspectorate report on Changing Policing in Ireland. In line with the two previous reports, this will be published when the Minister has had an opportunity to consider it.

In its meeting with the Garda Síochána, the Authority considered a number of recent unsuccessful prosecutions, including the Garda review of the Jobstown case. The Authority considers that there are situations where, as a matter of good practice, when prosecutions fail there should be a review to learn what went wrong. Mindful of cases still before the Courts, the Authority was keen to understand the full scope of the lessons- learned review being undertaken by the Garda Síochána in relation to the Jobstown case. They were reassured to note that the review would encompass the incident on the day, the investigation and the evidence. The Review will consider the events in the context of the rule of law, human rights, the Code of Ethics established by the Authority, and Garda policy. The Authority will keep in touch with the review as it proceeds. The Authority encouraged the Deputy Commissioners to ensure that learning from Inquiries, GSOC cases and internal Garda reviews feeds into the training curriculum in order for the lessons learned to be embedded.

The Authority expressed its intense frustration and impatience with that the report in relation to the Mandatory Alcohol checkpoints and Fixed Charge Penalty Notices issues is again delayed. The absence of a timeline for a completed report in relation matters related to homicide data is increasingly difficult to understand. Garda Síochána representatives outlined practical and governance factors which are affecting finalisation. The Authority noted that GSOC, in its recent Annual Report, also expresses its continued concerns about response timelines, as did the Committee of Public Accounts suggesting potentially deeper cultural aspects at play.

All the matters considered at yesterday's meeting are not simply matters of technical or academic interest; they are matters of which are impacting on public confidence in the Garda Síochána with implications for the rule of law and Garda morale and they will remain on the Authority's work programme.

At its next scheduled meeting with the Garda Commissioner in public is on 28<sup>th</sup> September the Policing Authority's will examine the Confronting Crime chapter of the 2017 Policing Plan [here](#)

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