



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA  
POLICING AUTHORITY

## Minutes of Meeting of the Policing Authority

**Date:** 30 May 2024

**Venue:** 90 North King Street, Dublin 7

### Part A – Authority Meeting

#### Attendance

**Authority:** Elaine Byrne (Chairperson), Anthony Harbinson, Paul Mageean, Donal de Buitléir, Jane Mulcahy, Deborah Donnelly (items 5, 9-20 ).

**Secretary:** Aoife Clabby.

**Staff of the Authority:** Helen Hall (Chief Executive), Margaret Tumelty, John Gallagher, James Kiernan (item 9), Clare Kelly (item 10), Michal Hanley (item 10), Karen Shelly (items 9-12).

**Garda Inspectorate:** Mark Toland (Chief Inspector) (Items 2-11), Alywin Barton (Items 10,11) , Kayleigh Canning (Items 10, 11).

#### 1. Meeting of Members in Private

The Authority exercised its option to have a meeting in private, with the Chief Executive and Secretary in attendance. A confidential minute was produced by the Secretary.

#### 2. Chairperson's Opening Remarks

The meeting agenda was approved, as drafted. No conflicts of interest were declared by the Members in relation to any of the items for consideration.

The Chairperson advised members that she had attended the oversight forum comprising the Garda Síochána Inspectorate, and GSOC on 21 May, along with the Chief Executive. Members noted the overview of information provided by GSOC in relation to recent complaint trends and patterns. The Chairperson highlighted the importance of enhancing and strengthening the existing relationship with GSOC, in the context of the Authority's oversight of conduct and discipline in the Garda Síochána. The importance of the Commissioner having access to such thematic information was also noted by the Members.

The Chairperson updated Members on a meeting with the Garda Commissioner, providing an overview of matters discussed, including road safety initiatives, stakeholder engagement relating to road safety and the constraints still existing for the Garda Síochána's access to third party motorist data.

The Chairperson advised that both she and the Chief Executive had participated in communications/media training on 1 June and that she had undertaken an interview on Prime Time to discuss the Authority's oversight of public order policing.

Members noted correspondence received from the Commissioner in relation to the retention of personal data by the Garda Síochána and the extent of the organisation's compliance with data protection legislation. While noting the measures outlined in the correspondence, Members expressed their continuing concerns and agreed that the matter should continue to be monitored on an on-going basis at Executive level.

Members noted a response received from the Commissioner regarding the Garda Síochána's Public Attitudes Survey and the Authority's observations on the reinstatement of questions previously asked in the survey, in particular those relating to experience of unacceptable behaviour by a Garda. Members expressed disappointment with the response received, in particular the emphasis placed on the impediments to asking such questions from a data collection practice perspective, rather than a consideration of the value of such information to the organisation and how it might be obtained in a statistically valid manner. They also discussed the Authority's enduring concern regarding the impact on the perceived independence of the survey, in circumstances where the Garda Síochána Analysis Service conducts the analysis of the survey results. Following discussion, it was agreed that further correspondence would issue to the Commissioner outlining the matters discussed by the Authority.

Members noted receipt from the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána's Memorandum of Understanding with the Coroner's Society of Ireland.

<i><b>Action Number</b></i>	<i><b>Action point</b></i>	<i><b>By Date</b></i>	<i><b>By Whom</b></i>
<b>A_137_01</b>	Issue correspondence to the Commissioner in relation to the GS response received regarding the Garda Public Attitudes Survey, further to section 27(2) of the Garda Síochána Act 2005	ASAP	Chief Executive

### **3. Consent Agenda Items**

#### **3.1. Minutes of Meeting and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April were approved and cleared for publication.

#### **3.2. Policing Authority and Garda Síochána Actions Logs**

The Log of Actions was noted and proposals to close actions were approved. In addition, Members agreed to close an action relating to a review of the impact of the Policing Authority on policing oversight.

Members noted receipt from the Garda Síochána of an extract from the Call Handling and Incident Response procedures document addressing 'Resolution without Deployment', which had been the subject of engagement at the March meeting. This was in the context of the introduction of GardaSAFE into regional control rooms and the risk of under cancellation of emergency calls to the

999 service. It was agreed that the updated procedures document would be discussed with the Commissioner in Part B of the meeting.

Members noted that correspondence from the Commissioner in relation to seized drugs removed from Carlow Garda station was still awaited and expressed continuing concern over aged action items in the Garda Síochána Actions Log. It was agreed that the both matters would again be raised with the Commissioner.

#### **4. Chief Executive's Report**

The Chief Executive's report was taken as read and further updates were provided to Members on a number of matters in the context of the report, including in relation to:

- A meeting with Deputy Commissioner, Policing Operations and senior Garda colleagues regarding the approach to defining 'adverse impact' from a policing perspective, arising from a recommendation contained in the report by Derek Penman on improvements to emergency call handling and an initial, proposed definition that had been received from the Garda Síochána. The Chief Executive advised that there had been positive engagement at the meeting and arising from the discussions, text had been forwarded to the Garda Síochána, encompassing potential elements for inclusion in the definition of 'adverse impact'. The Chief Executive also advised that the various elements for inclusion in the definition were still under consideration by the Garda Síochána and that a further proposal was awaited. Members discussed the relevance of this definition beyond emergency call handling and the importance of having a shared understanding, in the context of all policing performance. It was agreed that Members would revert to the Chief Executive with observations, if any, to the initial text that was currently being considered by the Garda Síochána.
- The online launch of 'Police Custody in Ireland', edited by Dr Yvonne Daly, on 20 June. Members noted that the book was dedicated to former Authority Member, the late Dr Vicky Conway and that Authority Director, Margaret Tumelty would be speaking at the event. It was agreed that the e-invite would be circulated to Members wishing to attend.
- A meeting that had taken place with representatives from the University of Limerick (UL) subsequent to the April Authority meeting, in the context of the university's role in the accreditation of core Garda training and as a key course facilitator for the organisation. Members noted the range of matters discussed including opportunities to further enhance training, education and research opportunities, in addition to the desirability of the Garda Síochána having subsequent access to research conducted by its personnel and funded by the organisation. The Chairperson advised that the matters discussed at the meeting with UL had been conveyed to the Commissioner.

Members were provided with a baseline assessment of the Garda Síochána's current approach to human rights, produced by Ms Jane Gordon as part of work to support the Authority's development of a human rights framework for oversight and inspections. The Chief Executive provided an overview of the remaining stages involved in the delivery of the framework and sought Members' views and comments on the document, as presented. Members were advised that Ms Gordon

would give a presentation to the Authority at the July meeting and that there would be an opportunity for more detailed engagement at that point.

Members considered the status of the achievement of the Business Plan 2024 to end of April. Members noted a number of proposals with regard to the work plan for the remainder of the year, in the context of the prevailing uncertainty regarding the commencement of the PSCS Act and the establishment of the PCSA. Members agreed the approach to public meetings and a number of proposed areas of oversight. Members discussed other areas of potential oversight focus and engagement, in the context of ongoing work and having regard to the future functions of the PCSA. It was agreed that any additional proposals for inclusion in the work plan would be forwarded to the Secretary and that an updated work plan would be provided to the next subsequent meeting of the Authority.

<i><b>Action Number</b></i>	<i><b>Action point</b></i>	<i><b>By Date</b></i>	<i><b>By Whom</b></i>
<b>A_137_02</b>	Members to revert with observations on Authority meeting agenda planner for the remainder of 2024 and based on this, a rolling calendar to be presented by the Executive for further Authority consideration	ASAP	Authority

## **5. Committee Updates**

### **5.1. Garda Appointments Quality Assurance and Selection Governance Committee**

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

### **5.2. Garda Organisation Development Committee**

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority. It was agreed that a meeting of the Committee would be scheduled to discuss matters relating to Garda Síochána finance and human resources.

<i><b>Action Number</b></i>	<i><b>Action point</b></i>	<i><b>By Date</b></i>	<i><b>By Whom</b></i>
<b>A_137_03</b>	Schedule a meeting of the Organisation Development Committee in June/July	June	Chief Executive

### **5.3. Policing Strategy and Performance Committee**

The Committee Chair provided the Authority with an update on the committee meeting that had taken place on 28 May and the key areas of engagement with senior Garda colleagues including, the Garda diversity forum, immigration, community policing and public order policing. The Committee Chair advised that the committee had also discussed the pause in publication of use of force statistics by the Garda Síochána in recent months, in the wake of the riots that had taken place in

Dublin in November. Members noted the challenges highlighted by Garda representatives in recording use of force in such circumstances and expressed concern in relation to the publication pause, in particular given that it had taken the Authority a number of years of oversight work to ensure such publication happened. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed with the Commissioner in Part B of the meeting.

#### **5.4. Audit and Risk Committee**

The Committee had not met since the last meeting of the Authority.

#### **6. Risk Management Report**

The Authority considered the monthly risk report, provided in accordance with its Risk Management Policy. Members noted that while no significant new risks had been identified since the last Authority meeting, the risk register had been reviewed in detail and a number of changes to the register had been made, to reflect staffing changes, the passage of time, and risk mitigations that have had effect. Members briefly discussed the future approach to risk management and noted work being undertaken to consider the approach to risk management in other organisations, as part of the PCSA transition work stream.

#### **7. Appointments**

Members were presented with the outcomes of the clearance process in respect of the appointment of a candidate to the rank of Chief Superintendent in the Garda Síochána. The Authority was satisfied to appoint the candidate to the rank of Chief Superintendent, with effect from the date on which the candidate takes up the position assigned by the Garda Commissioner.

Members were presented with the outcomes of the clearance process in respect of the appointment of three candidates to the rank of Superintendent in the Garda Síochána. The Authority was satisfied to appoint the candidates to the rank of Superintendent, with effect from the date on which the candidates take up the position assigned by the Garda Commissioner.

Members noted that a request had been received from the Garda Síochána for an Authority nominee to participate on the selection board for Executive Director, Finance and Services and agreed to nominate an Authority Member for the interview panel.

<b><i>Action Number</i></b>	<b><i>Action point</i></b>	<b><i>By Date</i></b>	<b><i>By Whom</i></b>
<b>A_137_04</b>	Notify the Commissioner of the appointment of a candidate to the rank of Chief Superintendent in the Garda Síochána and notify the candidate of their appointment.	ASAP	Chief Executive
<b>A_137_05</b>	Notify the Commissioner of the appointment of three candidates to the rank of Superintendent in the Garda Síochána and notify the candidates of their appointment.	ASAP	Chief Executive

## 8. Policing, Security & Community Safety Bill-Implementation Update

Members noted the comprehensive update provided on the implementation of the Policing, Security & Community Safety Act, including in particular confirmation received from the Department of Justice that the commencement of the Act would not proceed on the planned date.

The Chief Executive advised that the proposed Irish language name for the Policing and Community Safety Authority had not received positive consideration by the Department of Justice, which was noted with disappointment. Members also noted the protracted nature of engagement with Department officials on the matter and the extent of work that had been undertaken in the preceding months in support of the development of associated branding and identity for the new organisation, in light of a desirability to address the future requirements of the relevant provisions of the Irish Language (Amendment) Act, once commenced. Having regard to need for an agreed organisation name in order to proceed with branding and the further development of HR, IT and financial systems, which had been paused, pending feedback from the Department, the Authority was satisfied with the proposal to revert to the use of the full name in English, i.e. the Policing and Community Safety Authority.

## 9. Ministerial request-public order policing

Members were provided with a detailed overview of the engagements and key themes arising from the review work undertaken to date on public order policing. Members discussed the manner in which the emerging themes might address the request received from the Minister and feed into a final report. Members were advised of the likely timelines for finalisation of the report and it was noted that an advanced draft would be provided for consideration at the 25 June meeting.

<i>Action Number</i>	<i>Action point</i>	<i>By Date</i>	<i>By Whom</i>
A_137_06	Provide an advanced draft of the review of Public Order Policing for Authority consideration at the 25 June meeting.	June	Chief Executive

## 10. Garda Síochána Property Exhibit Management-post-implementation review

Senior colleagues from the Garda Síochána Inspectorate presented an initial overview of key themes emerging from a post implementation review of a recommendation contained in its Crime Investigation Report relating to the Garda Síochána's management of property and exhibits, with specific reference to drugs exhibits. Members engaged with Inspectorate colleagues on a number of the key themes and considered associated risks. Following discussion, it was agreed that a draft report would be provided to the Authority for its consideration at the June meeting. Members noted the valuable opportunity the review had provided in having colleagues from the Inspectorate and the Authority working together on the review, in the context of the transition to the Policing and Community Safety Authority.

Members separately discussed their ongoing concerns with the Garda Síochána's Property and Exhibits Management System, arising from their engagement over recent months with the

Commissioner on the disappearance of drugs from Carlow Garda station. They also reflected on discussions with senior Garda management in the Limerick division, in preparation for the April Authority meeting, regarding their audit work on PEMS. It was agreed that these concerns would be discussed with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues at the meeting in the afternoon.

### **11. Transnational Crime Inspection - update from Garda Síochána Inspectorate**

Senior colleagues from the Garda Síochána Inspectorate briefed the Authority on its ongoing inspection to review the structures, strategies and processes in place in the Garda Síochána to address transnational and organised crime. Members were provided with an overview of the transnational crime landscape, the impact on victims, Garda Síochána performance in this area and key recommendations arising from the work. The Chief Inspector confirmed that the final report is expected to be submitted to the Minister imminently.

### **12. Policing performance quarter one**

Members considered the quarter one overview of policing performance prepared by the Executive. Members noted the status of the implementation plan for the second culture audit conducted by the Garda Síochána and that planning for a third culture audit in 2025 had commenced. Members considered potential areas of beneficial focus in the audit. Members also noted the recommencement of the recording of informal cautions, enabling incidents to be marked as detected, where discretion was used and an informal caution was issued. It was agreed that it would be helpful to monitor governance and assurance in this area and that a copy of the new Garda HQ Directive would be requested from the Garda Síochána. There was a broad discussion about the level of training provided to Garda members and it was noted that the request for a copy of the Garda Síochána Training Strategy remained outstanding.

### **13. Advice to the Minister on adequacy of Garda Síochána resources**

Members discussed the Authority's function under the Act to advise the Minister on the adequacy of Garda resources, in the context of a range of suggestions by the Executive for inclusion in such advice. It was agreed that a draft letter would be prepared by the Executive and finalised in cooperation with the Chairperson and the Chair of the ODC.

<i><b>Action Number</b></i>	<i><b>Action point</b></i>	<i><b>By Date</b></i>	<i><b>By Whom</b></i>
<b>A_137_07</b>	Draft letter to be prepared on the adequacy of Garda resources to include recommendations by the Executive in cooperation with the Chairperson and the Chair of the ODC.	ASAP	Chief Executive

#### 14. Preparation for meeting with Garda Commissioner

Members discussed the agenda for the meeting and agreed the matters to be discussed with the Commissioner and his team.

#### Other Business

The Chairperson drew attention to an invitation received for Members to attend a Garda Síochána Body Worn Camera launch event.

#### Documents for Noting by the Authority

<i>Document</i>		<i>Action Required</i>
<b>D_137_01</b>	Submission to the Minister for Justice on Garda Síochána (Recording Devices) (Amendment) Bill (IHREC)	For noting
<b>D_137_02</b>	Learning the Lessons (Edition 5): Professional Boundaries and Abuse of Power for Sexual Gain (Garda Síochána publication)	For noting
<b>D_137_03</b>	Human Rights in Irish Policing: Analysing the Implementation of Recommendations from the Commission on the Future of Policing in Ireland (ICCL)	For noting



## Part B – Authority Meeting with the Garda Commissioner in private

### Attendance

**Authority and Executive:** Elaine Byrne (Chairperson), Anthony Harbinson, Paul Mageean, Jane Mulcahy, Donal de Buitleir, Deborah Donnelly, Aoife Clabby (Secretary), Helen Hall (Chief Executive), John Gallagher, Margaret Tumelty.

**Garda Síochána:** Drew Harris (Commissioner), Shawna Coxon (Deputy Commissioner), Yvonne Cooke (Acting Executive Director).

#### Attendance for items 15-18, 20:

Paula Hilman (Assistant Commissioner), Justin Kelly (Assistant Commissioner), Angela Willis (Assistant Commissioner) Niamh O’Hara (Assistant Principal).

### 15. Garda Síochána Property Exhibit Management

Following previous engagement by the Authority with the Commissioner and across Garda divisions on matters relating the management of property and exhibits, Members sought the assessment of the Commissioner and his senior colleagues in relation to the status of the operation of the Garda Síochána Property Exhibit Management System (PEMS). In particular, Members sought to understand the extent of assurance the senior leadership team has regarding the effective and consistent operation of the system across the various Garda divisions. Members sought an assessment of the safety and security of property and exhibits and the efficacy of the current controls in place, in the context of the recent reportage of firearms and drugs that had gone missing.

The Commissioner outlined the extent of investment in PEMS technology and storage facilities to date, in addition to outlining the various governance and assurance mechanisms and responsibilities at divisional and business policy owner level, currently held by an Assistant Commissioner. While noting development in the area of PEMS to date, Members challenged the Commissioner and his senior colleagues on the effectiveness of current PEMS controls and the extent to which they enable the senior leadership team to become aware of, and rectify, poor practice and to guard against the theft or criminal misuse of items stored. The Commissioner accepted that further work was required to improve the effectiveness of PEMS storage and controls, noting that significant work was ongoing in certain divisions that would benefit from replication across the country.

The Commissioner also advised that a review of PEMS in the Waterford and Kilkenny/Carlow divisions had been undertaken and was currently being finalised. It was agreed to provide a copy of the final report to the Authority. Members advised the Commissioner that correspondence in relation to seized drugs that had gone missing from Carlow Garda station was still awaited.

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>By Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>A_137_08</b>	To provide the Authority with a copy of the divisional report in relation to PEMS, conducted in the Waterford and Kilkenny/Carlow divisions	ASAP	Garda Síochána

## 16. Policing Performance

Members engaged with the Commissioner on a number of matters under this agenda item, including in relation to:

- Use of Force Statistics: Members discussed concerns in relation to the collection of information relating to use of force and the pause in data publication following the violent public disorder that had occurred on 23 November. Members sought and were provided with clarification about when publication of the data would re-commence. They noted the revamped methodology and the importance of the availability of such information, in supporting Garda leadership decision-making and in the public interest. It was agreed that use of force statistics would be discussed at the next Policing, Strategy and Performance Committee.
  - Road Safety (including e-scooter legislation): Members discussed the impact of new e-scooter legislation since its introduction. The Commissioner advised that the introduction of the legislation had been communicated to Garda members through a combination of circulars, guides and briefings. The Commissioner also advised that engagement with local communities had elicited concerns in relation to the use of e-scooters, in particular in relation to anti-social behaviour. Members noted that more time and data would be required to fully gauge the impact of the legislation on e-scooter use and to adapt the policing response, if necessary.
  - Under-cancellation of 999 calls: Members acknowledged receipt of the updated procedures for dealing with the legitimate cancellation of calls – ‘Resolution without Deployment’. Members engaged with the Commissioner in relation to what the data now available is indicating in relation to the proportion of calls being resolved without deployment, in the context of previous concerns surrounding the risk of an under-cancellation of calls. Members also sought clarity on the extent to which the requirement for ‘exceptional’ circumstances to justify cancellation was clearly understood by control room personnel, in addition to what would fall within the parameters of ‘exceptional’.
- Members were provided with an overview of data available and were advised that trends in relation to call resolution without deployment were improving. Members of the senior leadership team highlighted the robustness of the revised processes since the introduction of GardaSAFE and the increased supervisory controls in place, emphasising the importance of constant oversight in this regard. Members were also advised that a working group was in place to address call volumes in the Dublin Metropolitan Region.
- Garda National and Local Diversity Fora: Members engaged with the Commissioner and his senior colleagues in relation to the National Diversity Forum and the proposal to roll out diversity fora at a local level. Senior Garda representatives acknowledged the value and potential of the forums

at national and local level. Members briefly discussed the future operation of the fora in the context of the PSCS Act and the provisions relating to community safety.

- **Immigration - policing service impacts:** Members sought the Commissioner’s views on the extent of the workload across the organisation, arising from policing activity associated with immigration services and the impacts on resourcing of other areas of policing service delivery. The Commissioner noted the variety of service response required, highlighting the role of organised crime groups in preying on the vulnerability of those wishing to seek safety in Ireland and profiting from their illegal movement. Members noted planned work with international partner agencies in this regard. Senior Garda representatives outlined available resources within the Garda National Immigration Bureau and their various areas of responsibility in relation to border control, including deportation and the prevention and detection of smuggling operations. Members were also briefly apprised of trends including the increasing use of UK visas to travel via Northern Ireland into the Republic. The Commissioner also highlighted the dangers faced by Garda members in policing anti-immigration protests where violent disorder arises, including verbal abuse and physical assault.
- **Safety in Dublin’s inner city:** Members engaged the Commissioner and his senior team on the perceptions of the safety of Dublin’s inner city. Senior Garda colleagues advised that crime statistics had improved when compared against pre pandemic levels, indicating increased safety, but noted that public sentiment and perception on this matter was not aligned. An overview of the factors impacting this perception was provided, as was the extent of the Garda Síochána’s involvement with other statutory agencies and retail groups concerned with ensuring public safety and the enjoyment of Dublin city centre. Senior Garda representatives also highlighted participation in the government taskforce, recently established to recommend improvements to the public realm, safety and experience in the city centre and ways in which to contribute to the city’s vibrancy.

In the context of the Authority meeting held in the North East Inner City in April 2023, Members asked the Commissioner and his senior team about the extent to which the experiences of the community of policing had been responded to. Members were provided with an overview of the efforts being made to improve relationships between the Garda Síochána and various communities in the area, in addition to the role played by community policing, juvenile liaison officers and the youth diversion programme. Senior Garda representatives also emphasised the importance of ongoing feedback gathered from communities and the importance of outreach activities and engagement with young people at an early age to break down barriers and improve relationships.

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>By Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
A_137_09	Table drug testing & e-scooters legislation at subsequent Authority meeting	ASAP	Chief Executive

## **17. Ministerial request to review public order policing**

At the outset of the agenda item, the Authority expressed its appreciation to the Commissioner for the engagement of Garda members across multiple individuals and units with the review process and the prompt provision of information.

The Commissioner and his senior colleagues were provided with a detailed overview of the emerging themes arising from work undertaken to date on the review of public order policing. These included the demonstrable dedication and commitment to public order policing among Garda members; an inconsistent view of how and when public order policing is deployed; issues relating to the appropriateness and effectiveness of current governance and risk assessment structures; the availability and adequacy of resources including personnel and equipment; and the reliance by the Garda Síochána on its overtime budget to fund public order policing.

In considering the emerging themes, the Commissioner expressed his concern at the extent of abuse experienced by members of the Garda Síochána during public order incidents, in addition to post-incident abuse and attempts to intimidate members via social media. The Commissioner also expressed his overriding concerns in relation to the maintenance of public confidence in policing, in circumstances where the Garda Síochána is required to address public disorder while concurrently trying to build and maintain relationships with communities and people locally.

Members had a detailed and wide-ranging discussion with the Commissioner in relation to the emerging themes from the review work undertaken to date. The Commissioner was also provided with an overview of the timeline for the report's finalisation and submission to the Minister.

Members then discussed a recent public order incident with the Commissioner that had been widely circulated on social media, involving serious verbal abuse of a female Garda member, which Members condemned as abhorrent and unacceptable. They were advised that a number of matters were under investigation and were provided with further information regarding the circumstances surrounding the event. Members were also apprised of the Garda Síochána's engagement with social media platforms in efforts to remove media clips of this nature, noting that those efforts had been unsuccessful. The Commissioner highlighted the prevalence of social media and the speed and capacity to distort communications via social media platforms. The Commissioner expressed his concern regarding the impact of the spread of disinformation on public sentiment.

Members discussed the updated guidance on public order policing that had been issued to Garda members. While noting the Authority's observations in relation to the guidance, the Commissioner emphasised the necessity for Garda members to be able to respond dynamically as situations evolve and to appropriately determine what does and does not constitute peaceful protest and to police accordingly.

<b>Action Number</b>	<b>Action point</b>	<b>By Date</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
<b>A_137_10</b>	To provide the Authority with clarification as to how use of force was recorded by the Garda Síochána in public order events which took place before 23rd November 2023	ASAP	Garda Síochána

### **18. Report of the Task Force on Safe Participation in Political Life**

Consideration of this agenda item was deferred to the June Authority meeting.

### **19. Adequacy of Garda Síochána resources**

Members had a detailed and wide-ranging engagement with the Commissioner in relation to the adequacy of Garda Síochána resources in the context of the Authority's statutory function to provide advice to the Minister and having regard to the current budgetary estimates process. The Commissioner highlighted a number of key priorities including in relation to:

- **Recruitment and Retention:** The Commissioner highlighted the organisation's desire to grow considerably and outlined the factors impacting this capacity including the throughput of Garda trainees; challenges to the speed of delivery of initiatives relating to terms and conditions for personnel; the impact of continuing uncertainty regarding the commencement date of the PSCS Act on Garda staff members; and the prevailing buoyant employment market conditions and impacts on staff churn. Matters relating to forecasted personnel growth were discussed and Members noted that the numbers in the service, both Garda members and Garda staff would likely remain flat over the medium term without some radical interventions. The impact of this position on resource distribution and service provision was highlighted by senior Garda representatives.
- **Garda Equipment and Estate:** Members discussed the condition of the Garda estate and equipment with the Commissioner, noting that equipping members is progressing in line with requirements and escalation paths, based on need. The Commissioner expressed concern in relation to the impact of the planning cycle on capital estate projects.
- **Information and Technology:** Senior Garda representatives highlighted the importance of investment in information and technology to date in supporting policing service delivery. Members were advised that similar investment would now be critical in the operational areas of HR and finance, in order to provide better data and support decision making in relation to resource identification and allocation.

Members had a wide-ranging discussion with the Commissioner in relation to the organisation's overtime budget, with a projected over-spend by year end noted. The Commissioner highlighted the key drivers of overtime spend including the extent to which overtime is increasingly used to support day to day service delivery, due to a shortfall in Garda numbers, in addition to policing extraordinary events. Members discussed the impact on the welfare of Garda members, in the context of working considerably extended hours and questioned the realism of the current overtime budget allocation. In concluding the discussion, the Authority again highlighted the critical importance of financial

forecasts for the organisation. It was agreed that this matter would be further discussed at the next Organisation Development Committee meeting. The Authority further the advised the Commissioner that the matters discussed would be given consideration in the context of the to the Minister.

**20. PSCS Act implementation update**

It was agreed to defer consideration of this agenda item to the next meeting of the Authority.