



AN TÚDARÁS PÓILÍNEACHTA
POLICING AUTHORITY

Minutes – Policing Strategy and Performance Committee Meeting & Presentation

Date: 12 December 2023

Venue: 90 North King Street & Zoom

Authority: Deborah Donnelly (Chair), Moling Ryan, Jane Mulcahy, Gillian Imery

Secretary: Philip Cox

Executive: Helen Hall, Aoife Clabby, Mark Nother, Barry Smith

1. Closed session

Committee members did not exercise the standing option to conduct a closed session.

2. Committee Administration

The Committee Chair opened the meeting with the minutes of the previous meeting. A few minor adjustments were suggested and agreed upon, and no Declaration of Interests and Matters Arising were made.

Brief discussions were had on the Derek Penman report received, as well as the resistance that still exists around live listening. It was noted that the report to the minister on child sexual abuse was moved to the New Year due to the public order issues. In terms of the Log of Actions, the committee would decide if today's presentation on the Outcomes project satisfies their request. There were no other items identified for closure.

The issue of police involvement in mental health cases was raised as a concern, and some areas of this were identified for further engagement with An Garda Síochána. Interaction with victim services was mentioned and some issues identified for follow up engagement. The importance of a link between An Garda Síochána and stakeholders in terms of Court Services was discussed, and some issues identified for follow up.

3. Presentation on Coercive Control

Presentation on Coercive control given by a Detective Sergeant of the Garda National Protective Services Bureau (GNPSB).

The Detective Sergeant began by introducing the work of the GNPSB and outlining the scope of the remit of the including its work in Sexual Crime Investigation, Online Child Exploitation Investigation, Child Protection, Human Trafficking Investigation, Organised Prostitution Investigation and a number of other connected areas. She then further described the work of the National Domestic Abuse Unit within the Bureau.

The presentation lead on to a description of the extent of domestic abuse in Ireland and discussed the links between domestic violence, gender based violence and coercive control. A description of what constitutes coercive control was given and some of the common patterns and impacts were outlined. The presentation went on to outline the current legislation on coercive control, challenges for detection and Investigation and court processes.

Links between coercive control, domestic violence and domestic homicide were outlined and discussed. A typical timeline of coercive control leading to homicide was described and the presentation went on to outline possible things to consider for Gardaí during investigations were then talked about.

During the and after the presentation, committee members and executive staff asked a number of questions on the nature of coercive control and what can be done to address the issue. The Detective Sergeant described how Children who grow up in a household where abuse takes place can often become “apprentice abusers”, meaning they can follow the example being set and take up carrying out the abuse themselves, or keep the abuse informed of anything going on within the household while they are not there. Victims can often become so dependent on their abuser that even if they do manage to leave the situation, in many cases they return as they think it is easier to live with the abuse than make it on their own.

4. Presentation on Outcomes Project

A presentation on the pilot incident outcomes project was given to the PSP committee by the Chief Information Officer, GSAS, GISC and GNPSB senior managers. It was agreed prior to the meeting that the content of this presentation would be kept confidential as the report into the Outcomes project was still in the process of being prepared and was not ready for publication.

The committee heard a number of Recording of outcomes has now been expanded to all crime types in all divisions, with over 9,000 outcomes defined in the first four weeks.

The presentation covered the background to the establishment of the Outcomes pilot project and the benefits expected to arise. Details of the working group established in January 2022 and pilot project in Galway division were given to the committee. The committee heard descriptions of the outcome types that can be entered in PULSE including non-sanction outcomes which have been newly added. It will be mandatory to record an outcome or detection before an incident can be closed on PULSE.

Roles and responsibilities in the reporting system were described including the oversight of outcomes entered by senior members. The recommendation to close incidents can come from the Director of Public Prosecutions or a Superintendent (through the PAF process) in less serious crime types. It was reported that an audit of decisions by Superintendents in one Division (Cork City) by the DPP is underway for assurance purposes.

The presentation showed in detail how outcomes are entered on the PULSE system via a number screenshots taken from the system. A description of the internal communications within the GS on the subject and training module taking approximately one hour the members will be expected to undertake. The go live date was expected to be 12 November 2023. GSAS intend to report on these outcomes at the end of 2024 when a baseline has been established.

In response to questions on data retention, the Chief Information Officer confirmed that the Garda Síochána still does not have an explicit data retention policy. He stipulated that the capacity to put in place the structures needed (for full compliance) will not exist until the role of Chief Records Officer (CRO) is filled.

5. AOB

No other business was raised.