



Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee Report for year ended 31st December, 2021



W I C K L O W

ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Background:

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee (JPC) was established in 2007 as part of the initial pilot phase along with a JPC in each of the Town Council areas of Bray, Arklow, Greystones and Wicklow. Following the abolition of the Town Councils in 2014 there is now one statutory policing committee being the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee.

Membership: Membership comprises 15 Local Authority Elected Members (3 from each municipal District), 5 Oireachtas Members representing County Wicklow, 7 Community Representatives drawn from the PPN, 2 members of An Garda Siochana (The Chief Superintendent for the area and his/her nominee), 2 Local Authority Officials (The Chief Executive and his nominee). The Cathaoirleach of Wicklow County Council is an ex-officio member.

Chair and Vice Chair:

The Wicklow County Council Joint Policing committee was reconstituted following the local elections in May, 2019. At the inaugural meeting of the newly re-established committee Cllr. Gerry Walsh was elected as the Chair and Councillor Irene Winters the vice chair.

Operating Guidelines:

The JPC operates in accordance with the revised guidelines for Joint Policing Committees issued by the Department of Justice and Equality, dated the 29th August, 2014.

JPC Steering Group:

The JPC steering group is established comprising, Councillor Gerry Walsh, Chair, Chief Superintendent Denis Ferry, Chief Executive Frank Curran and/or Lorraine Gallagher, Director of Services, Wicklow County Council (Chief Executive's nominee).

Purpose of the JPC: The JPC provides a forum where the LA public representatives, and senior Garda officers, responsible for the policing of County Wicklow, with the participation of the 5 TDS, and community interests can consult, discuss and make recommendations on matters affecting the policing of the area. It is co-operative in nature, operates with the minimum of formality in accordance with guidelines. The committee identifies, raises awareness of, and finds solutions for issues impacting on or causing concerns for the local community. The JPC meet at least 4 times a year, and on 2 of these occasions holds public meetings in various locations throughout County Wicklow.

Work of the JPC: The work of the JPC is strategic in nature. The committee must prepare a six year strategic plan and an end of year annual report for submission to the

Policing Authority by the 31st of March each year. It must also prepare an annual work plan, hold public meetings and function as a committee.

The Wicklow County Council JPC 6 year Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021: The WCC JPC 6 year Strategic Plan was adopted by Wicklow County Council on the 3rd of October, 2016. It sets out strategic priorities and objectives which link to the relevant objectives of the Garda Annual Policing Plan operational in the Wicklow County Council Area under the following 4 strategic priorities:-

Strategic Priority 1 – Policing Communities

Strategic Priority 2 – Tackling Crime in Rural Areas

Strategic Priority 3 – Supply Reduction

Strategic Priority 4 – Communications

Establishment of Policing Plan Committees by Municipal District Area: Initially four working groups were set up to advance the objectives of the JPC and roll out the agreed above four key areas within the Plan. This structure was identified as a step to achieve successful implementation of the 6 year Strategic Plan. However following an end of year review by the steering committee of the work of the groups and the resources constraints across JPC Membership, Wicklow County Council, An Garda Síochána and community representatives, it was agreed that the structure required adaptation and realignment across municipal districts to complement and enhance work already taking place.

At JPC meeting held on Monday the 2nd of September, 2019 the JPC agreed that 5 Policing Plan Committees be set up by municipal district area. The municipal district area based committees replace the sub committees set up under the 4 thematic areas set out above and set out in the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan.

Terms of Reference for the Policing Plan Committees (5 in number)

1. Policing Plan Committees (PPCs) will operate on a municipal district area basis (Bray, Arklow, Greystones, Wicklow and Baltinglass)
2. Membership of the PPCs will consist :-
 - 1) Municipal District Elected Members
 - 2) Members of the Oireachtas
 - 3) Members of the PPN who are represented on the JPC
 - 4) Superintendent for the District (or his/her nominee)
 - 5) Municipal District Administrator
 - 6) Municipal District Engineer
3. The Chair of the Municipal District will act as chair to the PPC

4. PPCs will be supported by members of An Garda Siochana i.e. the Superintendent for the municipal district (and/or his/her nominees) the Municipal District Manager, Municipal District Administrator and Municipal District Engineer
5. PPCs will meet quarterly and prior to the Municipal District Meetings
6. The work of the PPC will be informed by the objectives of the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan, 2016 – 2021 and the Garda Annual Policing Plan
7. Each PPC will organise its work into an Annual Work Plan, drawing from the objectives of the WCC JPC 6 Year Strategic Plan and the Garda Annual Policing Plan, identifying issues to concentrate on over a 12 month period.
8. While meetings of the JPC are open to the public and the media, PPCs are working committees and as such are not open to the public or the media to attend.
9. Progress on implementation to be monitored and reviewed and reported on to the JPC at its meetings.
10. PPCs will submit an end of year report to the JPC which will in turn feed into the end of year annual report submitted to the Policing Authority in accordance with An Garda Siochana Act, 2005 and operating guidelines issued by the Department of Justice and Equality.
11. PPCs will operate for a period of 12 months following which their status will be reviewed by the WCC JPC.

Meetings of the Policing Plan Committees: Each of the five PPCs held inaugural meetings in the months of October, November and December, 2019. Meetings continued remotely during 2021. Issues discussed concentrated on:-

- Provision of CCTV system for Greystones, 2020
- Wicklow Garda Division Rural Liaison
- Services available from the CRIS (Community Recovery and Integration Supports Services), Merchants Quay,
- Local issues of concern
- Information sharing
- Collaborate response to Covid 19

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Summary of progress in implementing the JPCs work plan: The JPC Work Plan, 2019 is contained within the 6 Year Strategic Plan and set out hereunder within this report. During 2021 meetings took place at municipal district level between WCC and An Garda Siochana. This work will continue under the remit of the newly established Policing Plan Committees across the five municipal districts.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL JOINT POLICING COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2016 - 2021

Strategic Priority 1: Policing Communities

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Policing Communities: Sub committees replaced by Policing Plan Committees by municipal district area (Bray, Arklow, Greystones, Wicklow and Baltinglass/Blessington)	CWJPC	Complete (September, 2019)
2. Develop a strong community collaborative response and work collectively to improve quality of life and enhance community policing	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/WCC/HSE/PPN/Chambers of Commerce/Business Forums/Local Development Agencies/Community Groups/Local Clubs	Ongoing through the work of the Sub committees (Now Policing Plan Committees). Regular meetings/liaison between the Gardai and Tenant Liaison Officer, WCC in tackling anti social behaviour-
3. Support the roll out of the ‘Purple Flag’ initiatives in our Towns to develop safe night time economies	CWJPC/WCC/CWETT/Chambers of Commerce/An Garda Siochana	Initiative replaced by Town Team Initiatives and health checks
4. Support the provision of CCTV for Wicklow and Arklow Towns	CWJPC/WCC/An Garda Siochana/Chambers of Commerce/Business forums	CCTV system approved by the JPC for Blessington at meeting of the 3 rd of December, 2018. An application is due to be

		submitted to the Department of Justice and Equality for funding in January 2021.
5. Work collaboratively to support a safe environment for Older People	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/Older Persons Network/WCC	Ongoing collaboration with Wicklow Network for Older People. Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy.
6. Work collaboratively to assist young people to engage positively with An Garda Siochana	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/An Comhairle Nog/WCC	Ongoing
7. Support the Annual Garda Youth Awards (inaugural presentation held in 2016)	An Garda Siochana/JPC	Ongoing: The Annual 2019 awards announced in December, 2019 for presentation on 21 st February, 2020 were postponed due to Covid. However, an online ceremony did take place with the Garda Commissioner Drew Harris on 29 th October, 2020 which was followed by local presentations in December.
8. Support Estate Management Initiatives and supports to Tenant/Resident Associations	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/WCC	Ongoing: Garda Crime prevention Officer is collaborating with WCC
9. Support and participate in An Garda Siochana's Schools Education Programme to create awareness of and assist young people in dealing	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana	Ongoing: Schools Programme being delivered throughout the

with issues such bullying, alcohol and substance abuse, personal safety, cyber bullying etc.		County
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Strategic Priority 2: Tackling Crime in Rural Areas

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Establish the Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Tackling Crime in Rural Areas	CW JPC	Complete (now replaced by the Policing Plan committees)
2. Develop an awareness raising campaign around the importance of self-vigilance on how to minimise risk of theft to one's own property and personal safety (<i>link in with Communications sub-committee</i>)	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/CWP/	Ongoing – Public Information days being conducted on a quarterly basis and awareness campaigns. Operation Soteria has targeted assaults in public places. Operation Thor set up with checkpoints set up in division to combat and target travelling criminals
3. Develop a programme to address isolation and security fears among older/vulnerable people in both urban and rural areas e.g. ' <i>Operation Conversation</i> ' or a ' <i>Befriending Programme</i> '	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana	On-going – an Garda Siochana are providing a visible and responsive policing tailored to the community needs within

		the resources available. Through the continued engagement with the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older Persons Council. For 2020 there will be a Garda member assigned as an Older Persons Ambassador within each district.
4. Support the Tus Tourism Ambassadors Project throughout the County	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/CWP	Ongoing
5. Promote and encourage establishment of Community Text Alert Systems and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana	Ongoing and monitored to ensure consistency and regular use across the Division
6. Work with representatives from relevant agencies/organisations etc to address the issue of Dog Control in the Uplands	CWJPC/WCC/An Garda Siochana/Wicklow Uplands/ISPCA	Ongoing

Strategic Priority 3: Tackling Drugs – Supply Reduction

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
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1. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Objective: Tackling Drugs – Supply Reduction (Expand objective to include Alcohol)	CWJPC	Complete (replaced by Policing Plan Committees)
2. To highlight the issue of drug related intimidation from the lower level to the most serious with a view to devising appropriate and sustainable local responses to the issue.	CWJPC/ECDTF/SWRTATF	Ongoing: It is anticipated that Divisional Drugs Unit will be formed to enhance the Bray Garda Drugs Unit – drugs unit formed in Bray and Wicklow under Operation Tara. Significant results. They also carried out operations in Baltinglass. Garda Inspector appointed to liaise with families subjected to intimidation.
3. Promote Garda Confidential Line, create awareness of the benefits of reporting incidences to the Gardai (<i>link in with Communications sub-committee</i>)	An Garda Siochana/CWJPC	Ongoing item discussed at JPC public meetings

Strategic Priority 4: Communication

OBJECTIVES	BY WHOM	TIMEFRAME
1. Prepare, adopt, publish and Launch the Wicklow County Council Joint	Wicklow County Council/WCC JPC	Complete

Policing Committee 6 year Strategic Plan		
2. Prepare and adopt the CWJPC Annual Report	Wicklow County Council/WCC JPC	Prepared annually
3. Establish Sub Committee to oversee JPC Communication Objective	WCC JPC	Ongoing
4. Develop a Communications Strategy to inform the general public and the community sector of the work of the JPC (see stakeholder recommendations)	Communications Sub Group of JPC	Quarter 3 2020
5. Develop an awareness raising campaign around the importance of self-vigilance on how to minimise risk of theft to one's own property and personal safety (<i>link in with Tackling Rural Crime sub-committee</i>)	CWJPC/An Garda Siochana/	Ongoing – Use of public media to get safety messages across. Regular item on East Coast Radio and the Wicklow Garda Facebook page
6. Arrange and host two public meetings per annum at various locations in County Wicklow concerning matters affecting the policing of the County	CWJPC	Ongoing: Due to Covid no public meetings were held in 2021 Meeting scheduled for November 2021 postponed

Advice given by the JPC to the local authority/Garda – identify specific recommendations made:

1. Overview of the Wicklow Division 2021 YTD figures (difference and % change) covering the following areas and presented by the Chief Superintendent

- Property Crime – Divisional Overview
- Robbery of an Establishment/Institution
- Robbery from a person
- Aggravated Burglary
- Burglary (not aggravated)
- Theft from a person
- Theft from Vehicle
- Theft of other property
- Theft/Unauthorised taking of vehicle
- Theft/Unauthorised taking of pedal cycle
- Theft from shop
- Crimes against the person – divisional overview
- Rape of a male or female
- Assault causing harm
- Minor assault
- Criminal damage
- Public order and other social code offences
- Possession of drugs for personal use
- Possession of drugs for sale or supply
- Cultivation or manufacture of drugs
- Traffic – Divisional overview
- Other issues.

2. Presentation on the Policing Plan, 2020 covering the following areas:

Mission and Strategy – 2019 – 2021

Key Pillars of the Garda Strategy Statement 2019 – 2021

- Community Policing
- Keeping People Safe
- A secure Ireland
- Transforming our service
- Our people – our greatest resource
- A Human Rights Foundation.

ITEM2 – Highlight three key achievements of the JPC during the year and give reasons why these are considered to be significant

1. Community Response Forum & Wicklow Community Call

The overall objective of the Community Response Forum was to contain COVID- 19, minimise its impact and facilitate the most appropriate community response to the needs of vulnerable people living in the community where their usual sources of support became unavailable. Some of the groups involved in the Community Response Forum were Wicklow County Council, An Garda Síochana, County Wicklow Public Participation Network and Muintir na Tíre. Wicklow Community Call helpline was set up to assist the elderly and vulnerable who need urgent assistance, many tasks are carried out by the various volunteers including dog walking, grocery deliveries, prescription collection and other services. The helpline also referred callers to befriending services where appropriate. In addition to the helpline the forum identified and responded to two particular issues that emerged as a result of COVID -19. These are food poverty and digital poverty.

2. Policing Plan Committees

Policing Plan Committees in Arklow, Baltinglass, Bray, Greystones and Wicklow continued to meet remotely throughout 2021, developing a strong community collaborative response and working collectively to improve the quality of life for the residents of Wicklow. Many common themes were discussed across the committees including

- Progressing CCTV applications across the County
- Collaborative response to Covid 19
- Implementation of measures to tackle rural crime
- Implementation of Road Safety measures

3. CCTV for Blessington

On the 3rd December, 2018, the Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee approved the application for the provision of CCTV system for Blessington. The key objectives of the scheme are to enhance existing policing provision within the community, to assist in the prevention and reduction of local crime, disorder and anti-social activity and to increase community involvement in the provision of legitimate, integrated responses to prevent and reduce crime in local areas in association with appropriate area.

Stage two of the project is scheduled to commence in January 2022 this includes the commencement of civil works and installation of poles. Expected completion date of Blessington CCTV project is May 2022

ITEM 3 – Public meetings hosted by the JPC during the year

Due to Covid, no public meetings were held in 2021
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ITEM 4 – Record of meetings held in 2021 and list of members: Total number of JPC meetings held in the year = 4

Date of each meeting:- Held via Zoom

1st February 2021	14th 2021	June	6th 2021	September	6th December 2021
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Wicklow County Council Joint Policing Committee Membership (reconstituted following the Local elections held in May, 2019)

Name of Chairperson: Cllr. G. Walsh

Number of Members: 15 elected members, 7 community representatives, 5 members of the Oireachtas, 2 Gardai and 2 Wicklow County Council officials

	Name of Member	Organisation of Which member	Title	Meetings attended
1	Cllr. Irene Winters (Vice Chair)	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	1
2	Cllr. Vincent Blake	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	4
3	Cllr. Avril Cronin	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	3
4	Cllr. Tom Fortune	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
5	Cllr. Dermot O'Brien	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
6	Cllr. Tommy Annesley	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
7	Cllr. Gerry Walsh (Chair)	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
8	Cllr. Mags Crean	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	3
9	Cllr. Shay Cullen	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
10	Cllr. Erika Doyle	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	4
11	Cllr. Paul O'Brien	Wicklow County Council	Elected member	2
12	Cllr. Peir Leonard	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	4
13	Cllr. Sylvester Bourke	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	0
14	Cllr. Joe Behan	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	4
15	Cllr. Gerry O'Neill	Wicklow County Council	Elected Member	3
16	Deputy John Brady	Oireachtas Member	TD	0
17	Deputy Simon Harris, Minister for Health	Oireachtas Member	TD	0
18	Deputy Stephen Donnelly	Oireachtas Member	TD	0
19	Deputy Steven Matthews	Oireachtas Member	TD	1

20	Deputy Jennifer Whitmore	Oireachtas Member	TD	0
21	Ms Charlotte Byrne	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	0
22	Ciara Perks	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	2
23	Liz Ferris	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
24	Ann Halpin	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
25	Conor O'Leary	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	4
26	James Dunne	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
27	Stephen Kearon	Public Participation Network	Community Representative	3
28	Denis Ferry	*An Garda Siochana	Chief Superintendent	3
29	Declan McCarthy	*An Garda Siochana	Superintendent Wicklow/Arklow	1
30	Anthony Pettit	An Garda Siochana	Chief Superintendent	2
31	Anthony Farrell	An Garda Siochana	Superintendent	2
32	Sorcha Fitzpatrick	An Garda Siochana	Superintendent	4
33	Ronan Lawler	An Garda Siochana	Superintendent	2
34	Seamus Rothwell	An Garda Siochana	Superintendent	1
35	Frank Curran Chief Executive	Wicklow County Council		4
36	Lorraine Gallagher	Wicklow County Council	Director of Services	4
37	Helen Purcell	Wicklow County Council	Senior Executive Officer	3

* Also in attendance at JPC meetings are the Superintendents of the Baltinglass and Bray Districts and other relevant Garda Officers as the Chief Superintendent considers appropriate.

End.